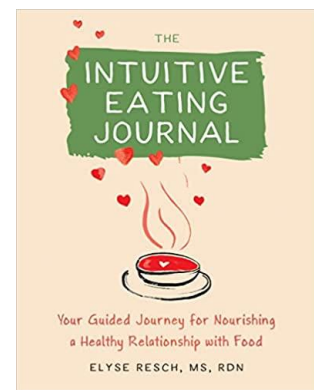
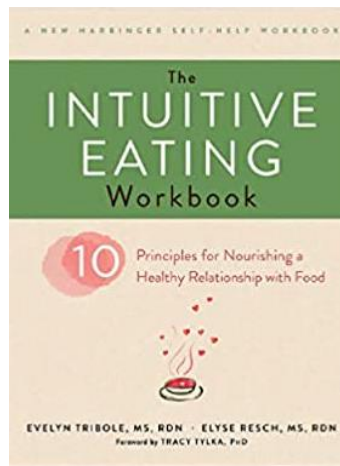
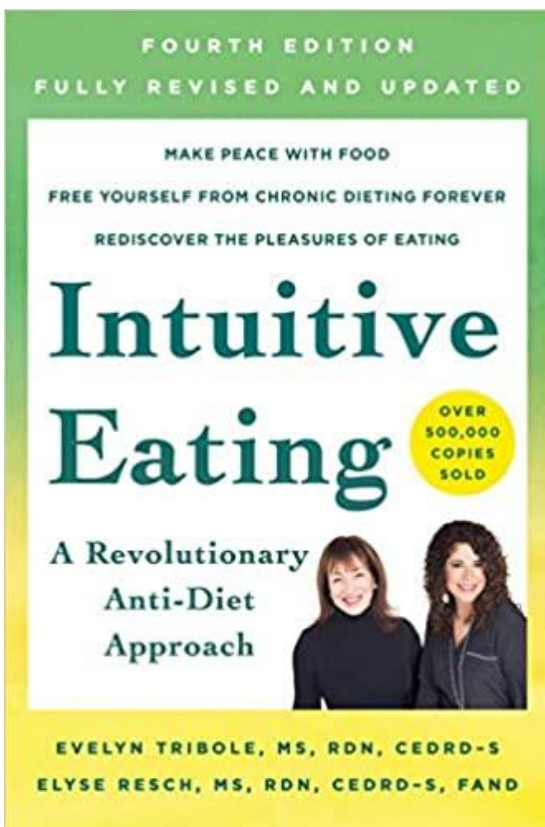




# Intuitive Eating Self-Assessment & Frequently Asked Questions



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# Intuitive Eating Self-Assessment

If you would answer yes to some or all of the following statements, I encourage you to continue exploring whether Intuitive Eating is a good fit for you at this time.

- I feel discouraged or exhausted when I think about dieting. I just don't know if I can start or sustain a diet at this point in my life.
- I feel I can try to set aside any weight loss goals at least temporarily, and be open to a new way of thinking about eating and movement.
- I have lost weight on purpose previously, then regained it within months or years.
- No matter what I try, I cannot seem to lose weight.
- I wish I felt better about my body and my appearance. I have considered whether I should be changing my thoughts about my body, instead of forcing my body to change.
- I wonder about how much of my body size and shape is determined by my genetics, how much is determined by my lifestyle, and how much is related to factors like aging.
- I wish society was more accepting of people with all types of bodies. I am interested in learning more about the body acceptance movement.
- I have felt stigmatized, judged, or dismissed in health care settings because of my body.
- I want to have more enjoyment, and less stress, in my relationship with eating and movement.
- I want to be mindful in my eating and movement, and more in tune with the needs of my body.
- I can commit to spending time and energy each week on applying the intuitive eating materials and skills in my day-to-day life.



# Intuitive Eating - Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. How often would I need to attend IE Counselling sessions?

Most people attend Intuitive Eating Counselling sessions about once per month. Your initial few sessions allow you to begin exploring the principles and assess where you are at in your own eating beliefs and habits, and start practicing skills. We will review your integration of each of the 10 Principles of Intuitive Eating, and delve deeper into the areas where you would like additional support. Between sessions, you work on your own using the materials, with the Intuitive Eating Workbook being the most important resource. Your self-reflections (thoughts, feelings, and experiences), assessments, and other records form the basis of your counselling sessions.

Some people may choose to carry on by themselves after a few sessions, while others may wish to continue receiving support through ongoing sessions. Every journey is unique to the individual.

People who are integrating Intuitive Eating with other types of healing in my counselling services, such as Inner Child Healing or trauma recovery, may find that sessions twice per month are more suitable to their needs. I am available by email for questions that come up between sessions.

## 2. Can I just do Intuitive Eating on my own?

Absolutely. All of the materials are readily available to the public through most booksellers, and there are many online resources available as well. You do not need all of the materials to get started. As a Certified Intuitive Eating Counsellor, I provide a blended model of counselling support, coaching and guidance, and self-study/practice at home – but by no means is this the only way to learn and practice Intuitive Eating.

I do recommend working individually with a Certified Intuitive Eating Counsellor if your concerns about eating and your feelings about your body are closely linked to other issues such as painful childhood experiences, trauma, low self-worth, relationship problems, or shame.

## 3. Will Intuitive Eating help me lose weight?

Maybe. Some people do lose weight over time while practicing Intuitive Eating, because their weight normalizes to their genetic blueprint. However, weight loss is not considered to be a goal of Intuitive Eating, and people entering into this journey are encouraged to put weight loss goals on the back burner for the time being. In fact, movement and nutrition come in at the very end of the 10 Intuitive Eating Principles. Intuitive Eating is explicitly opposed to diet mentality, does not use measures such as the Body Mass Index, and encourages accepting and nurturing your body *exactly as it is now*. If you have seen Intuitive Eating promoted as part of a weight loss strategy, please know that the model has been misrepresented by the weight loss company.

If you are tired of trying to diet, and if diets have not worked for you or only worked for limited periods of time, Intuitive Eating is likely to feel refreshing and liberating. Diet culture is exhausting, and it thrives on

people blaming themselves. The dirty secret of the diet industry is: diets do not work and they cause harm, and the people who sell you diet strategies know this is true. Up to two-thirds of “successful” dieters will eventually be unable to sustain the diet and will regain more weight than they lost, and most will incorrectly believe weight gain is their fault. It is through this process that the diet industry creates its repeat customers. These days, diet culture rarely uses the word “diet” and instead hides behind a variety of other labels that sound more appealing.

Setting aside weight loss goals allows you to explore a new (and initially unfamiliar) approach to healing your relationship with eating and movement. Intuitive Eating will not cause your eating to be out of control. Nor is Intuitive Eating just eating whatever and whenever you feel like it (that’s mindless eating or emotional eating). All of this being stated, I fully recognize that many people will embark on their intuitive journey with a hope of losing weight and/or making other changes to their bodies – and I’m 100% here to support you in exploring everything that you feel and experience. I just can’t promise that you will lose weight, because that’s not the goal of Intuitive Eating and I’m not a diet coach. I can tell you that Intuitive Eating will help you feel better about yourself overall, and that you will learn to take exceptionally good care of your body, mind, and sense of yourself.

#### **4. Is Intuitive Eating Counselling a treatment for eating disorders?**

Intuitive Eating can be part of eating disorder recovery. Those with restrictive eating patterns should first normalize their weight and achieve adequate nutritional intake by working with a treatment team. One of the impacts of restrictive eating is that a person may have lost their body’s natural signals of hunger and fullness, which can interfere with obtaining sufficient nutrition through intuitive eating. A person with active patterns of restrictive eating may also find that Intuitive Eating feels unsafe if they begin it too early in recovery, or without enough structure.

For those who struggle with binge-eating, nighttime eating, stress eating, exhaustion eating...you get the idea...Intuitive Eating can gently help you understand what needs have been “starved” in your life, and to know you’ve done your very best to meet your own needs in a resourceful way up until now. Intuitive Eating will increase your self-knowledge and coping strategies.

#### **5. Is there any research on Intuitive Eating? Is it a proven approach to well-being?**

Yes and yes. Intuitive Eating was developed by Registered Dietitians Evelyn Tribole and Elyse Resch, and right from the beginning it has been based on solid research and science. The Intuitive Eating model includes a validated self-assessment tool created by Tracy Tylka, a psychology professor and intuitive eating researcher based at Ohio State University. To date, there have been more than 120 research studies conducted on Intuitive Eating. Certified Intuitive Eating Counsellors are directly trained and supervised by Evelyn and Elyse, and we receive extensive training on the theory and research, as well as the practice. As a Certified Intuitive Eating Counsellor, I can help you to access some of the studies, if you would like to learn more.

## **6. Is Intuitive Eating compatible with management of chronic illnesses and disabilities?**

For the most part, yes, and you will likely find it more empowering than prescriptive or restrictive diets (unless you have a medical condition that strictly requires a very specific diet, or a condition that interferes with feeling your hunger and fullness signals). Intuitive Eating does not tell you what to eat, when to eat, how much to eat, or what foods to avoid. These decisions come entirely from your own development of skillfulness around knowing about what your body needs.

Let's say you are managing a condition such as diabetes. The choices you will make when you are eating intuitively will be in harmony with the needs of your body, and therefore you will feel better as a result of eating this way. Intuitive eating also encourages gentle education about nutrition and especially about your own individual needs. If you aren't sure if Intuitive Eating would be appropriate for your health concerns, I recommend you consult your doctor and other key members of your health care team. I would be happy to speak with them as needed, with your permission.

## **7. Is Intuitive Eating suitable for children and teens?**

Intuitive Eating is a wonderful approach for children and teens, especially because it can help young people build a positive relationship with food, movement, and their bodies before diet culture becomes too damaging of an influence on them.

There is an Intuitive Eating workbook created especially for teens which is available from most booksellers (The Intuitive Eating Workbook for Teens by Elyse Resch). There is also a fantastic new book by Ameer Sevenson and Sumner Brooks called How to Raise an Intuitive Eater.

If you are interested in benefits of Intuitive Eating for children and teens, I recommend that parents/caregivers get to know the program and do the work themselves first, then introduce the model to the young people in their household if they are open to it. This gives children and teens the best chance at a positive and effective experience with Intuitive Eating that is well supported and normalized within the family home.

**Want to know more? Please reach out!**

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