

HOW TO GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD & EAT NORMALLY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

-  **Introduction**
-  **1 Time for a REVOLUTION**
-  **2 Getting out of your head...and into your body in 4 simple steps**
-  **3 Tips to start eating normally again...because you used to, I swear!**
-  **4 Bringing it all together**
-  **Connecting with me**





Introduction



People come to me because they are sick and tired of feeling exhausted and crazy around food. They are plagued by worried and obsessions about what they should and shouldn't eat and how it will impact their weight.

Eat this, Don't eat that, You shouldn't have more than x amount of that per day, I'd better exercise to burn that off, That's going to give me a heart attack...

These thoughts will drive you nuts!

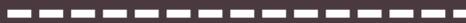
If you're tired of this too, then it's time for a change. Scratch that, it's time for a **REVOLUTION**.

In this ebook I'm going to give you simple steps for getting out of your head so that you can get back into your body and start eating normally again.





CHAPTER ONE



Time for a REVOLUTION



It's time to get out of your head.

*"I used to think about food all the time. It was on my mind every second of the day. I was constantly counting calories or grams or obsessing about what I ate earlier or would allow myself to eat later. It was exhausting." -- Cindy**

*Names of those who contributed have been changed for privacy.

Wouldn't it be great if you could go out for dinner without "saving up" your calories all day, or eat cake at a birthday party without the guilt? These behaviors are ways that you are *externally* regulating your eating with disregard for what your body may be telling you.

How's that workin' for ya?

Chances are, not so great if you are reading this. I'm guessing you are tired and frustrated. You've tried all of these ways to control your eating and control your weight and none of it works, at least not for the long haul.

That's part of the problem with dieting, restricting, cutting back, or trying to "eat healthier" - it is deceitful because it may "work" for a bit by making you feel lighter and more in control. It may even result in weight loss.

And then it stops working because you can't sustain it forever. You feel like a failure. The problem is, the game is rigged, and the diet, beauty, fashion, fitness, and even health industries will prey on you like a tiger in the jungle. They convince you that you blew it. You dropped the ball. You fell off the wagon. If only you could have stuck to the plan your life would be rainbows and unicorns.



So you try again. And again. And again. Diets, measuring, weighing, pills, potions, cleanses, lotions, exercises, whatever might work.

Has it ever occurred to you that perhaps you aren't the problem? That maybe, just maybe, they were counting on you coming back for more of whatever they are selling?

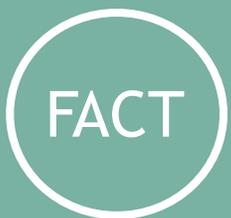
The truth is, restricting your eating is a form of biological deprivation that your body interprets as a threat of starvation.

Your body's #1 job is to keep you alive.

In the threat of starvation, your body will rebel against it and seek out food and weight gain. To protect you.

This was advantageous to our ancestors who faced famines and food scarcity. It drove them to seek out food for survival.

Your body doesn't realize that the current threat of starvation is self-induced.



Over 95% of people who go on a diet regain the weight they lost...often plus more.

Diets. Don't. Work.



Have you ever watched a toddler eat?

It's fascinating.

She will only eat if she's hungry. If not, she's not interested in food and would rather go play. But if she is hungry she isn't ashamed about it and will demand food. She will eat what she wants from what is offered, and she'll eat it with gusto.

And when she's satisfied she's done eating and wants to go play. No need to keep eating as long as she trusts that she will get food again the next time she's hungry.

This is called **INTUITIVE EATING**.

You were born an intuitive eater. We all were.

It was somewhere along the way, most likely in early childhood, that we learned to disregard our body's signals for hunger and fullness. It may have been a loving parent who forced you to eat your veggies or clean your plate. Or perhaps your friends had food at their houses that you weren't allowed to eat at your own, so you filled up when you had the chance. Maybe your grandparents gave you ice cream when you were upset, or told you that you couldn't have dessert because you hadn't finished your meal.

Most of these instances come from well-intentioned caregivers who only wanted the best for you.

Yet they were unwittingly teaching you *not* to listen to your body.

Just like this behavior was learned, you can learn new behaviors, or rather, return to your original state of intuitive eating.

That's the cool thing about our brains.

They are highly adaptable. It's sort of like training a muscle. It takes reps and consistency, along with fuel and rest, to train yourself to be an intuitive eater again.

It's totally possible.

LET'S GET STARTED.





CHAPTER TWO

Getting out of your head... and into your body in 4 simple steps



Step 1: Have an out of mind and body experience

I'm fat

Pretend you are hovering over yourself as an observer and that your thoughts are being transcribed in a cartoon thought bubble.

Ugly

Shouldn't have eaten that

I need to lose 5 lbs

Disgusting

No judging the thoughts, simply notice them.



Step 2: Check in with your body

Scan your body from head to toe.

How does it feel?

- Tense or relaxed?
- Energized or tired?
- Hot or cold?
- Comfortable or uncomfortable?

Now check in with your stomach.

- Are you hungry?
- If so, how strong is your hunger?
- Are you “meal hungry” or “snack hungry?”

Perhaps you are unsure if you are hungry because you’ve lost touch with what hunger feels like. That’s ok. Just notice it.

You might even have an urge to eat if your not hungry. Be curious and nonjudgmental about this. What are you feeling emotionally? What else might you need right now, outside of food?

What is your body telling you?
Are you **able** and **willing**
to honor this need?



Step 3: Redirect your “monkey mind”

We may be human but we have minds like monkeys. Anyone who has ever attempted to meditate or sit through a boring lecture will tell you that the mind wanders. You'll start noticing or thinking about random things. You might remember a conversation you had earlier with your friend, or think about your to-do list for later. Maybe you notice that speck of dirt on the wall that doesn't belong or the number of tiles on the ceiling.

**This isn't a flaw, it's normal.
Accept it.**

When you are checking in with your body, every time you notice your mind has wandered, bring it back to the body. You may have to do this a zillion times. No biggie. Just keep coming back. It will get more natural over time as you train your monkey brain!





Step 4: Rinse and repeat

Keep returning to your body.

It's wisdom lies within.

Everything your body does is because it loves you and wants to protect you.

Rather than being hateful, practice being grateful.

- “I’m grateful for my **arms** because they allow me to give hugs.”
- “I’m grateful for my **lungs** that breathe in the fresh air.”
- “I’m grateful for my **brain** because it is wise and curious.”



“I hated my body and everything about it. It seemed like my body only wanted the foods I thought I shouldn’t eat. It wasn’t until I started trusting my body that I was able to start liking it again.”

*-- Taylor**

RECAP

We've just covered the
4 steps to getting out of your head
and into your body

1. Have an out of body experience.
2. Check in with your body.
3. Redirect your monkey mind.
4. Rinse and repeat.





CHAPTER THREE

**3 Tips to start eating
normally again...
because you used to,
I swear!**



As I said earlier, you were born an intuitive eater. Babies and toddlers eat when they are hungry and stop when they are satisfied.

It's instinctual.

Let's get you back to that.

The steps outlined above for getting out of your head and into your body are the key to this way of eating - because it requires you to listen to what your body is telling you.

A person can't eat when they are hungry if they don't know what hunger feels like or if they don't pay attention to their body's signals for hunger.

Same with fullness.



“When I started listening to my hunger I was so confused. I couldn't tell the difference between real hunger and emotional hunger. It took a lot of practice.”

*-- Kate**



Tip 1: Eat when you are hungry

Ask a room full of people to describe what hunger feels like and you'll get answers like, "When my stomach growls," or, "Lightheaded or shakiness," or, "When I'm cranky or hangry." These are signs of extreme hunger and maybe even hypoglycemia.

There were more subtle signs of hunger that you drove by before you reached that destination of desperation for food. Your gas tank got to E. It's more ideal to eat when you are moderately hungry while you can still think clearly and don't have a biological drive to eat that is so strong you are driven to overeat. We all know the feeling of ravenous eating, and it tends to land us in Stuffed City.

Practice checking in with your body often enough that you are noticing the subtle signs of hunger and can identify moderate hunger. Each person's experience of this feels different, so you'll have to discover it for yourself.

And no worries if you miss the mark and end up eating even though you weren't really hungry. Sometimes we confuse other signals, such as thirst or fatigue, as hunger. Make note of this when it happens so that you'll be able to tell the difference in the future.

You can also trust that your body will let you know if you missed the subtle signals and have become extremely hungry. The signs of hunger become more physical and more intense as your hunger gets stronger. It's your body yelling louder, "FEED ME!" Which makes sense, because you can die immediately of severe hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), so your body is going to do everything it can to prevent you from getting to that point.



Tip 2: Eat what sounds good - without judgment!

Remove the labels from food - including good/bad, healthy/unhealthy, junk, clean, etc. When you were eating intuitively as a toddler you didn't know anything about food, other than what tasted good. Your toddler body also knew what it needed. You ate extra fat when you needed it, same with carbs and protein. When you were going through a growth spurt you ate more food. When you were sick you ate less. You had no need to label the food - until adults taught you to. It's time to strip away the labels and the judgment that accompanies them.

Why is this so important? Because the labels interfere with your ability to truly listen to your body. If your thoughts are clouded by judgment about the goodness or badness of the food, you aren't fully attuned to what your body is saying it wants.

Also consider this: How do you typically feel after you have eaten an "unhealthy" or "bad" food? Chances are you feel guilty, as if you've done something wrong. For many people, the guilt propels them into eating more for comfort, or throwing their hands in the air and saying, "Screw it! I already messed up so I might as well keep eating."

On the flip side, how do you typically feel after eating a "healthy" food or a "good" food? You might feel "healthy" or "good" yourself, as a person. You might give yourself a pat on the back. You feel in control. But are you satisfied? Perhaps. However, if these are the only foods you allow yourself to eat, you are going to eventually crave a "bad" food and will feel deprived if you don't eat it.

This is a total set-up for binge eating.



The Halo Effect:

Studies show that people will overeat foods they have labeled as “healthy.”

When you initially start allowing yourself to eat what sounds good, you will probably find that you want the foods you’ve previously labeled as “bad” or off-limits. This is normal. Sometimes the pendulum must swing the other way before it settles in the middle.

If you keep listening to your body, eventually you truly will crave the entire spectrum of food. Don’t bail on the process just because you only wanted “unhealthy” foods for several days or weeks! Your body needs to trust that it truly, unconditionally, can have what it wants. That trust takes time to establish, especially after years of distrust.



“Shifting away from labeling foods as good and bad was really hard for me. It still is. I’ve done it for so long that it’s hard to think any other way. But I have noticed that I am starting to think differently about some of the foods I used to call bad, and that’s a really big deal for me because I don’t always feel guilty after I eat anymore.”

-- Taylor

Tip 3: Stop when you are comfortably full

Think of this process like throwing darts. A novice will sometimes miss the dart board entirely, and will sometimes nail a bullseye. With practice you gain accuracy and confidence. The more frustrated you get the more your emotions will interfere with your focus and ability to hit your target. So stay calm. Be gentle and compassionate with yourself.

With practice you gain accuracy and confidence.

Even people who are totally normal eaters sometimes over- or undereat. It happens. Accept this fact and don't beat yourself up when it happens to you, because it will.



Play around and experiment with what comfortable fullness means to you.

You will find that different foods have different satiety value. Some foods make us feel full because of food volume (e.g. lettuce, rice cakes) but don't "stick to your ribs" like more energy-dense foods do (e.g. burritos, peanut butter). That's in part because the rate of digestion depends on the type and amount of nutrients that are in the food.

Think of it this way - your goal after eating is to feel better than you did before you started.

Because theoretically you were hungry when you ate and comfortably full when you stopped.

This is the body's preferred ebb and flow of hunger and fullness.

If you're grazing all day long you aren't giving yourself the opportunity to actually feel the hunger and fullness.

Food is perceived by your brain as tasting better if you eat it when you are actually hungry. You'll get more satisfaction out of food this way.

Fun Fact

RECAP

Tips to start eating normally:

1. Eat when you are hungry
2. Eat what you want - without judgment
3. Stop when you are comfortably full





BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

While this is organized in simple steps for connecting with your body and tips for eating normally, I don't mean to imply that it's easy. Not at all. My goal is to break it down into pieces that feel manageable and doable. But don't forget that our relationship with food and our bodies is super complicated. There are a lot of factors at play - genetics, psychology, the environment, culture, your body's biology and metabolism, and the biochemistry of food and nutrition just to name a few.

This is certainly not a replacement for individualized nutrition therapy from a Registered Dietitian or psychotherapy from a licensed therapist, but it is a tool and a resource that you can use to work on these skills at home.

HOW TO CONNECT WITH ME

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think could use it!

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