

# Week 7: Gentle Nutrition

You don't have to eat perfectly to be healthy.

One snack, one meal or one day of eating does not define your health.

A single food will not kill you or cure you.

## Our Sad Food Culture

- Anxiety about our food choices
- Lack of food enjoyment
- Reductive focus on nutrients and numbers
- Constant self-monitoring
- All this stress may be worse than the food itself

## I Know. It's Boring.

- Variety, balance, and moderation are the bedrocks of eating well.
- It may feel easier and safer to eliminate foods; this is an illusion.
- It's what you eat most of the time, over time, that matters.
- Removing guilt and morality from food is essential to eating well.

“

Moderation. Small helpings. Sample a little bit of everything. These are the secrets of happiness and good health.

- Julia Child

”

# The Nutrition Trifecta

## TASTE

In matters of taste, consider nutrition, and in matters of nutrition, consider taste.

## QUANTITY

Not too much, not too little. It takes practice to figure out what that is for you.

## QUALITY

View nutrition recommendations as suggestions, not mandates.

## Play Food, Not Junk Food

Not every food that graces your plate needs to be packed with boatloads of nutrients. Give yourself permission to eat foods simply for enjoyment.

## What Gentle Nutrition Looks Like

- You use what you know about nutrition as a guide.
- You focus on the big picture.
- You focus on addition, not subtraction.
- You honor your health AND your taste buds.
- Your way of eating feels good, physically AND mentally.
- Your way of eating feels sustainable.

body's  
needs and  
wants

gentle  
nutrition

nutrition  
knowledge

# How to Practice Body-Food Choice Congruence

Food-Body Choice Congruence means exploring how foods feel in your body – that is, how eating a particular food or meal makes you feel, physically. This internal awareness causes a shift in how you decide what to eat, going beyond what your taste buds may crave. It means that the tongue is not the only part of the body that we honor when making food choices.

- In the past, how did my body feel after eating this food or meal? Did I like this feeling?
- Were there any ill effects from my meal? For example, excessive gas or bloating, stomachache, headache or tiredness? Do I want to repeat this distress?
- Did I have more energy after eating that meal?
- Did I feel sufficient satiety from my meal? Did my meal or snack hold me long enough, or did I get hungry too quickly?
- What specific foods and meals leave me feeling most nourished, sustained & strong?
- What motivates my food choices? Do I eat a certain way because it gives me an identity, or makes me feel good about myself? If so, how might that be effecting my connection to my body?

Adapted from the Intuitive Eating Workbook, 2017.