

Food Talks But Who's Listening? 6 Simple Steps to Healthy, Sensational Eating

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“Individual taste carries our unique signature. Taste buds are the vehicle. However uniquely we experience them, we all share what we identify as the vibrant tastes of sweet, sour, spicy, and bitter—a rich thread that reveals our commonality.” --Suzanne Kyra, *Welcome Home to Yourself*

SIMPLE DOES NOT MEAN EASY

SIMPLE TIP #1

Understand your relationship with food and how it is predetermined.

How we eat is more important than what we eat. Whether we are stressed, relaxed or unaware determines how we metabolize our food. Understanding the impact of our early childhood memories determines our perception of food today. The foods we ate as children and the emotional associations we have with them impact our emotional eating later in life. Your early experience with food and the culture you grew up with around food determines your comfort and discomfort with food. Even how you eat food is culturally induced. Eating is like our first language. It is our emotional language.

SIMPLE TIP # 2

Recognize the power of the quality of food.

Eating quality food is perhaps the most powerful and foolproof nutritional strategy we can choose. Higher quality food means greater nutritional value. When we eat low quality food, the brain will register a nutrient deficit and signal us to eat more. Food is energy and information. Every experience in the history of a food is encoded within it as energy and information. This is a significant determinant of its nutritional value.

SIMPLE TIP #3

Sense your body and listen to its wisdom.

Sense whether your body is relaxed, tense, tired, refreshed, cold, or hot. Use descriptive words. Identify what happens to your body when you eat certain items. Begin to experiment. Become aware of the food you are sensitive or allergic to. Identify how the foods you are eating might be compromising you. Observe the state of your health,

identifying the underlying causes that create problems when they first begin. What is precipitating those problems? What is it you are sensing and where are you sensing your body? Understand the subtle presence of what is needed and what is missing.

- To listen to your body's wisdom you need to choose life, love, laughter, power, and joy.
- To listen to your body you need to be aware of your language. Speak in precise words and avoid vague, general words. Become conscious of the difference between anger and rage, joy and contentment, fatigue and moodiness.
- To listen to your body you need to understand the relationship between your thoughts and emotions. You cannot care for your body if you do not understand how your thoughts impact your body. Your thoughts drive your emotions, how you care for your body, and all of your relationships. If you want to assess the health of your thoughts, look at the health of your body and the relationships in your life that you care about most.
- To listen to your body you need to understand what your body is telling you, and what it needs. The challenge is to learn how to meet those needs. This is done one step at a time, listening and responding to what matters to you. You need to become honest with yourself and what your needs are.
- To listen to your body, assess your relationships.

SIMPLE STEP # 4

Have a clear relationship with what you are feeling and what your body truly wants. Understand your cravings.

Understand the difference between emotional hunger and physical hunger. When our mind is full of confusion, ambivalence, judgment, second-guessing, and tiredness, there is a lot of difficulty hearing the body. We are then vulnerable to making decisions that are contrary to what is healthy. Feed yourself information. You need to educate yourself on what is a healthy diet, what should you be eating, and what should you be avoiding. Listening to what you eat and listening to your food is a form of taking your power.

Understand what causes hunger. Hunger is often about much more than food. It can be about the need for support, love, compassion, care, empowerment, meaningfulness, or fear of scarcity. Understanding hunger is understanding what needs to be cared for rather than food. Eating without awareness buries these issues. The challenge is to understand the underlying need to eat. See hunger as a metaphor for a deeper issue. What is your food saying to you? What better way to find out than by experimenting?

- Crunchy food—willful, needing some bite.
- Sweet food—looking for more sweetness in life, more focused on pleasure.
- Sour food--something is missing in your life that you are searching for—usually there is a deficiency in your diet and in your life.
- Mushy food--self-nourishing food looking for self-pleasure. “Yum, yum food”, searching for that experience you once had.

SIMPLE STEP #5

Stay grounded and present in the here and now.

Let go of your fantasies, step into reality, and make your dreams come true! Avoid focusing on what was and what could be, and focus on what is now. Stop unconscious behavior, which is any behaviour you do unconsciously and automatically. Your focus is then not on what you are eating.

Learn to listen to yourself with your eyes, heart, and mind wide open. You need to be fully aware of what your body wants, and what food is able to either give you or take away from you when you consume it. You need to understand that your body is your sacred, safe place that wants you to live a long, healthy life. Your body will do whatever it takes to maintain a balance of healthy existence. Your mind needs to be receptive to this, and support your body to feel good. Your body will do its job, but needs the tools from you to do its job. It needs you to live fully sensuously, and be perceptive at all levels to be well.

Only when we are in the moment can we become nourished by the moment, by life. If you are focusing on yesterday or planning what tomorrow should bring, you cannot be nourished by the moment right now.

SIMPLE STEP #6

Develop intuition and boundaries.

“Living with intuition is to live awakened to our inner life and connected to what is outside our being. Following our intuition means perceiving with heightened perceptions and responding to those perceptions. “ --Suzanne Kyra, *Welcome Home to Yourself*

Eating intuitively is making peace with yourself and food. You eat what you want with full intention—what your body needs. Intuition is like love—always available. We just need to make certain choices to capture it and nurture it. The body is always speaking to

us. The food we eat is always talking to us. It is us who often are not making a priority of what it is saying, and hence we fail ourselves.

Everything we eat, drink, touch, and breathe has an impact on our entire body system. By listening to the food we are eating and the impact it is having on our body, we are able to make more choices about what we are eating and determine the best food for us.

To eat intuitively, we need to understand the subtle presence of what is needed and what is missing. The essence of what is needed to eat intuitively is a quiet, nonjudgmental, receptive mind and heart. The more you work at what you are doing, the more you become one with it, and the more your intuition is developed around what you are doing.

To learn to eat intuitively, all you need is to develop your intuition about your body, your surroundings, and the whole foods you eat, by increasing your physical awareness. This ability exists in all of us.

THE CHANGE POINT

Everything we experience impacts us. The environment has a total impact on us. All our symptoms are a result of our lives, what we have experienced, and how we have interpreted our experiences. To make a change in the way you eat and experience life, you need desire as well as information, tools to create sustainable change, take inventory, move out of your defenses, and create a “Yes/And” world.

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