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THREE STEPS TOWARD INTUITIVE EATING

Taryn Palmer RND, LD

Intuitive Eating can be defined as nurturing the body's innate hunger and fullness signals to create a healthier relationship with food. It is a way of thinking and eating that allows food and diet culture to lose the powerful hold it has on so many. There are many steps and principles involved with Intuitive Eating, but try starting with the following three ideas.

Challenge the idea of good foods vs. bad foods

In our society, food has been turned into a moralistic weapon. It is no longer simply viewed as a means to fuel our bodies with energy or provide our senses with satisfaction and pleasure, but instead it is used to measure our willpower, our health and our worth.

Of course there are foods that are more nutritious than others, but does that mean those foods are "good" while all the others are "bad?" The answer is no, and we must stop thinking that way if we want to free ourselves from the power food has over us.

Removing these labels from food allows you to stop depriving yourself of what you really want, which in turn decreases guilt and overeating. Many people fear that giving themselves unconditional permission to eat will lead to an unhealthy and out of control diet. When foods are no longer forbidden they lose their specialness, thus making it much easier to feel satisfied by less food than you are used to.

Tune in to your body's hunger and fullness cues

Another important part of Intuitive Eating is recognizing when you are hungry and when you are full. For many people, a lifetime of dieting and being told what, when and how to eat has diminished the natural ability to identify these feelings.

As we become more conscious of our eating we naturally regain control over the reasons we eat, how much we eat, and what we eat. It becomes easier to recognize that our bodies feel better when they are fed mostly wholesome foods, when we eat because of hunger instead of emotions, and when we stop eating at the first sign of fullness.

Stop using food and exercise as punishment

You cannot heal your relationship with eating if you continue to use food and exercise as a form of penance. Food and exercise should both be enjoyable parts of life, and using them as a penalty for some previous behavior will never allow you to fully embrace the idea of Intuitive Eating.

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Apple Cinnamon Baked Oatmeal

Source: www.eatright.org

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups fat-free milk or soy milk
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup egg substitute or egg whites
- 1 tablespoon melted margarine
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 cups rolled oats (not instant)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1½ cups chopped apples

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a small bowl mix the milk, brown sugar, egg substitute/whites, margarine and cinnamon.

In a larger bowl combine the oats and the baking powder.

Pour the wet mixture into the bowl with the oats; add the apples and stir to combine.

Spoon the mixture into a 8-by-8-inch pan coated with cooking spray and bake for 30 to 40 minutes, until top is firm and a toothpick comes out clean in the center.