

# Nutrition DeJunked

## Four Strategies to Rebuild a Better Relationship with Food

### *Honoring your hunger*

Hunger is not something to fear. Hunger is not meant to be tricked into disappearing. Hunger is simply your body signaling for more food. Diet culture creates “rules” to follow, such as when we can eat, how much we can eat and what to eat. This disconnects us from our bodies internal wisdom and natural appetite. So, the first step in order to rebuild a better relationship with food is to simply eat when your body wants food. Focus on leaving all the rules behind and reconnect with your body again. Our bodies typically like to eat every few hours; however, that is not a set rule. Therefore, if you are hungry more often, then eat! If you find that you are not getting hungry every few hours, try paying attention to early signs of hunger. Early signs of hunger are individual but some things to pay attention to are feeling lethargic, shaky, grumpy and light-headed.

### *Remove all judgment about your eating choices*

Give yourself unconditional permission to eat and make peace with all foods – even the “off-limit” ones. Restricting or avoiding certain foods can lead to feeling deprived, which can lead to uncontrollable cravings and bingeing. No one food is good or bad. A health-promoting way of eating includes a wide variety of both “nutritious” and “fun” foods.

### *Enjoy your food*

You deserve to eat delicious, satisfying foods. Dieting is about restricting and denying yourself the foods that you truly enjoy eating. Therefore, when you quit the diet, you end up bingeing on all the previously forbidden foods and vow that you will start again on Monday. Finding satisfaction in your meals will help to stop the vicious cycle of all-or-nothing thinking. One of diet culture’s biggest myths is that eating the foods you enjoy is not healthy. However, that idea is harmful to your true health and well-being. Food is so much more than energy, and a healthy relationship with food is about allowing food to nourish, not just your body, but also your mind and your soul.

### *Focus on how you feel rather than how much you weigh*

You are not going to be able to learn to eat intuitively and listen to your body if you’re still trying to control the size of your body. Your body size does not determine your worth. If you want a better relationship with food, it’s essential to shift the focus away from how much you weigh and instead focus on how you feel physically and mentally.