Intuitive Eating for the Win: Practical Tips and Strategies for Applying Intuitive Eating in Counseling Settings

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Objectives

1. Define intuitive eating and understand the application of the Intuitive Eating Assessment Scale 2.
2. List at least 3 benefits of using a weight-inclusive approach in nutrition counseling and/or medical nutrition therapy. Describe weight-inclusive practice and why it is useful in our current healthcare model.
3. Apply 3 motivational interviewing techniques to introduce intuitive eating concepts to clients.
What connects us?
What connects us all as dietitians?

- The desire to help people
- The belief that food and behavior impact health and wellbeing
- Standards for evidence-based practice
- A pride in this profession that is dynamic
"We can only take our clients as far as we have been ourselves." -- Unknown
INTUITIVE EATING - INTRODUCTION

- Self-care eating framework
- Evidence-based model that ties together mind and body via 10 principles.
- Impacts one’s relationship with food
- Promotes embodiment
- Compassion-centered
- Empowering - Gives permission for choice
INTEROCEPTIVE AWARENESS

- Our ability to perceive physical sensations that arise within the body.
  - Hunger and fullness
  - Noticing a full bladder
  - Feeling your heart race
  - Physical response to emotion

- Increases body awareness
What Intuitive Eating IS and what it ISN’T

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Intuitive Eating IS:

- Listening to your body
- Behavior focused
- Making the client the expert
- Improving ability to cope
- Promotes acceptance

Intuitive Eating Is NOT:

- A rigid food plan
- Body-size focused
- Something you can fail
- Promoting eating to pursue weight loss
10 Principles of Intuitive Eating

“This is NOT the “hunger and fullness” diet!”
10 Principles: Going in order in practice is not required

1. Reject the diet mentality  
2. Honor your hunger  
3. Make peace with food  
4. Challenge the food police  
5. Respect your fullness  
6. Discover the satisfaction factor  
7. Honor your feelings without using food  
8. Respect your body  
9. Exercise—feel the difference  
10. Honor your health
Intuitive Eating - Let’s Review the Research
Once evidence “inspired” is now evidence-based

- To date over 90 research studies are validating the use of the intuitive eating model
- Intuitive Eating Assessment Scale: Tylka
- Valuable tool in Diabetes Management, Eating Disorder Treatment, “Weight Management”, etc.
Characteristics of IE-based on the research

Intuitive Eaters have lower:

- Triglycerides
- Body Mass Index
- Emotional Eating
- Self-silencing
- Rates of disordered eating

Intuitive Eaters have higher:

- Body appreciation
- Food variety
- Motivation to be active because of enjoyment
Using Intuitive Eating with Medical Nutrition Therapy
Goals for the provider

- Promote positive relationship with food.
- Maintain a weight-inclusive approach.
- Work toward meeting clients where they are at.
  - Know the stage of change
  - Ask permission
  - Avoid IE terminology that doesn’t apply
- Support modest physical activity: moving the body.
- Fill in the gaps when basic knowledge of nutrition is lacking.
Client Centered Work

- You do not have to start with principle 1 and go in order, in fact this is rarely the case

- Learning what the client hopes to learn in session can be a guide:
  - “What do you hope to get out of today’s appointment?”
  - “How do you feel I can best help you?”
  - “I understand you have weight concerns, I am curious to learn when that started for you?”
  - “What have you already tried and what did it teach you?”
Getting the history

- Learning about the clients dieting history
  - Helps to know what they have already tried and get a sense of their nutritional knowledge
  - Can put their weight concerns into perspective
  - Can be a great time to highlight reflective listening and help the client focus on what changes they want to make or what is most important to them
Principles + MNT: An example using Challenging the Food Police

- Principle 4. The food police can be in our thoughts, from others and even from healthcare providers and can affect our behaviors around food and activity.

- Questions for clients:
  - What are some of your food beliefs?
  - Where did those beliefs come from or from whom?
  - How we can challenge these thoughts:
    - Example: “I should never eat carbohydrates during the day, even if I crave them.”
    - Could Ask: How do I feel when I don’t eat any carbs all day? Do I know what foods have carbs?
    - Example reframe: “I notice when I don’t eat carbs all day, I end up with little energy and often binge on carbs at night.”
  - How do some of these extreme thoughts make you feel?
Principles + MNT (continued)

- Remains client centered
- Unpacking their behaviors can lead to change-talk and guide toward behavior modification
- Using the principles can help focus the work to improve their relationship with food and empower the client.
Practical Applications

Intuitive Eating Meets Motivational interviewing
A Quick Example- “All these boxes”
ADDITIONAL READING

- Intuitive Eating 3rd Ed- Evelyn Tribole MS, RD & Elyse Resch RD
- Intuitive Eating Workbook - Evelyn Tribole MS, RD & Elyse Resch RD
- Motivational Interviewing for the Nutrition and Fitness Professional- Dawn Clifford and Laura Curtis
- Body Respect – Linda Bacon PhD & Lucy Aphomore, PhD
- Health at Every Size- Linda Bacon PhD
- Sick Enough– Jennifer L. Gaudiani, MD, CEDS, FAED
- Eat What you Love, Love What you Eat With Diabetes– Michelle May MD & Megrette Fletcher, RD, CDE
Online resources & Podcasts

- Intuitive Eating  https://intuitiveeating.org
- Health At Every Size®  https://haescommunity.com/
- ASDAH  https://sizediversityandhealth.org
- Unpacking Weight Science:  https://www.unpackingweightscience.com

PODCASTS

- Food Psych - Christy Harrison MPH, RD
- Nutrition Matters- Paige Smathers MS, RD
- Don’t Salt My Game- Laura Thompson RD, PhD
- RD Real Talk- Heather Caplan RD
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION
References


4. Intuitive Eating: Research Update by Evelyn Tribole, MS, RDN; | SCAN’S PULSE Summer 2017, Vol. 36, No. 3

5. Koster-Rasmussen, R., M. Simonsen, V. Siersma, J. Henriksen, B. Heitmann, and N. Olivarius. 2016“Intentional Weight Loss and Longevity in Overweight Patients with Type 2 Diabetes: A Population Based Cohort Study” PLOS One 11 (1)


Questions
Answers