

# *Peaceful Eating Roadmap*

The Path from  
Dieting to  
Eating Well Easily



# PEACEFUL EATING ROADMAP

## The Path from Dieting to Eating Well Easily

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This short guide is meant to be the 30,000-foot view of what the path from dieting to easy healthy eating can be. Many of us want to eat “better,” and the only way we’ve been told that’s possible is to go on a diet of some type. But we’ve tried that. Over and over again, diets have failed us. They were too hard, too unsustainable, and too unrealistic to actually fit into our lives. We ended up stuck in The Diet Cycle – one in which we start, stop, and restart diet after diet in endless frustration. It’s time to break that cycle and find our way to an eating style that works *for* us, not *against* us.

How the heck do we “eat better” without driving ourselves bonkers in the process? What does that path to food peace even look like? This roadmap will show you what steps to take in the journey of putting diets behind you (for good!) so you can finally find peace with eating.

### Step 1: Stop Dieting

Diets do not work in the long term. Research has shown time and time again that people who diet frequently are more likely to end up *gaining* weight, developing disordered eating patterns, and feeling guilty about food. Dieting may produce short-term results in weight loss, but it ultimately creates more problems than it fixes, partly because the weight doesn’t stay lost, but also because the cycle of being on and off diets causes a lot of mental angst.

If we want to reach our goal of eating well, dieting is not the way to get there. So step 1 is to stop jumping on each new diet bandwagon. I know they all make glorious

promises, and those promises are amazingly tempting. But every single time you feel tempted by some new diet plan, ask yourself “what happens when the diet stops?”

A better approach to changing your eating patterns? Find a way of eating that is *flexible* and *realistic* for the long-term. There are a myriad of ways you can make health-boosting changes to your eating, and they don't have to be miserable. In short: you need to like the way you eat if you're going to do it for a long time!

## **Step 2: Call a Truce with Your Body**

Did you know that being unhappy with your body is one of the primary causes of dieting? So often, we spend our time focusing on all the parts of our bodies that we dislike and what to change. It's a very negative focus, and it means we are almost always coming into diets from a place of wanting to escape our current situation.

It's important to realize that a huge step in this journey toward peace with eating is finding peace with your body as well. If it's like most bodies, it doesn't look like an airbrushed cover model. And that is absolutely 100% okay! You are a whole person, who is loved and valued for so many reasons that have nothing to do with what size or weight your body is. Call a truce with that body of yours (you only get one, after all). Stop trying to fight it and beat it into diet submission. Instead, work *with* your body to find a way of eating that feels good to you.

## **Step 3: Stop Demonizing Foods**

The idea of good/bad foods has been really drilled into us. We can thank all those various diets (and the media) for that. While there are certainly nutritional differences between foods, and some that are more nutritious than others (and less nutritious too), no food is morally good or bad. It's all just food!

Viewing foods through a black and white lens of good versus bad is one of the aspects of dieting that contributes so much to our mental angst and to our feelings of guilt with food.

To take a first step away from demonizing foods, pick a food that is currently on your “naughty list” and find a way to purposely include it somewhere in your eating plan for the week. The key part of this is to plan for it in a way that you’re sure you can come out of the experience feeling good about it.

For an example, let’s pick ice cream. If you tend to view ice cream as a “bad” food, and avoid it all costs because you feel like you can’t stop at a reasonable amount, then planning to buy a gallon of ice cream and only eat ½ a cup isn’t the best plan.

Instead, pick a day that you will go out for ice cream. Go there (bonus points if you take awesome friends along), and order a small serving. Enjoy your ice cream. Eat it completely guilt-free (because there is nothing bad going on here)! When your serving is gone, you’re done. And you’ll have had an experience of allowing a formerly forbidden food, in a reasonable amount, and coming out the other side to tell a happy tale!



## Step 4: Focus on Your Health

If we’re not going to be viewing our bodies as being “bad” and needing to be fixed, and we’re not viewing foods as “bad” either, why would we want to still eat healthfully? The answer is because eating well helps us be the healthiest version of ourselves.

We all need to eat in order to live. We can choose to eat donuts and bon-bons 24/7, which may seem fun at first, but will certainly take a toll on our health and how we

feel. Or we can eat foods that give us a slew of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other health-promoting components. It also doesn't have to be all one or the other, of course. Eating is never all or nothing. Having a brownie doesn't make you an unhealthy eater. You can eat well, or "better", and have an easier time doing so, if you focus on the benefits to your health. Find a balance of more-nutritious and less-nutritious foods that works for you and helps you feel your best.

## **Step 5: Use How You Feel as a Guide**

Most of us with a dieting background have used calorie counts, macros, points, or some other portion-controlled way of determining how much to eat. We've probably done this for a very long time, too! All of these things are external guides though, and external guides will rarely serve us best.

If we want to eat healthfully, and not too much or too little for our needs, then the best way to do that is to start re-learning how to listen to our body signals. Eat when hungry. Stop when satisfied. Simply in theory, difficult in practice (because we're not used to it anymore!) But our bodies are built with some pretty incredible mechanisms to help us guide our eating to end up at an amount that averages out to be the "just right." We don't need to micromanage the details. Instead, we need to get back in touch with those feelings we've been ignoring for so many years! It takes time and practice for sure, but start listening in and you'll be surprised at your body's own innate wisdom.

## **Step 6: Practice Self-Compassion**

Not a single human being on this planet is perfect, or does anything perfectly. That includes eating. And it also includes our bodies. There is no such thing as perfect

eating, or a perfect body (even the super models get airbrushed, so even *they* don't look like their magazine cover!)

We all get down on ourselves from time to time, either about how we look, or how “well” we're eating. But striving for perfection in either of those things is an exercise in frustration. The best thing we can do for our long-term health *and* happiness is to practice being a bit more forgiving and compassionate with ourselves. Instead of mentally berating yourself over your perceived body flaws or the brownies you ate last night, try a kinder and more compassionate approach.

An example might look like this:

- Initial thought: *“Ugh, this cellulite on my legs is so hideous! It's so gross!”*
- Revised thought: *“I have cellulite on my legs. I may not like that, but it's also not the end of the world.”*

Notice how I didn't jump to *“I love my cellulite, it's my favorite part of my body!”* That would feel pretty fake, right? Don't shoot for love and adoration right off the bat, shoot instead for “less negative”, or neutral if you can. The same goes for food. “I was so *bad* for eating so much cake last night!” can be revised to “I had more cake last night than I would have liked. Next time I'll work on sticking to just one slice.”

My favorite way of helping people show themselves compassion is to have them imagine that they're actually talking to a close friend instead of themselves. If a close friend complained to you about their cellulite, you wouldn't say “Yeah, it's really offensive, you should really do something about that.” You'd be much kinder and compassionate. Treat yourself with the same kindness!

## Step 7: Manage Emotions Without Food

Emotional eating is something that the vast majority of us struggle with. Somewhere along the way, we started using food to cope with, or escape from, any negative feelings we experienced. And since food is pleasurable, it can certainly be *one* way that we help ourselves feel better sometimes. But it often becomes our default, or the only solution we see, and that can lead to us eating far more than our bodies actually need, and we can end up with some negative health consequences.

So an incredibly important step on this journey is to find non-food ways of managing our emotions. It doesn't have to be all or nothing, food can still be one way you use at times. But try to find other ways to cope too... think of it like gathering more tools for your emotions-management toolbox!

### Wrapping Up

Yes, this is a short overview. The path from a lifetime of dieting to being absolutely free of a diet-based mindset is one that can take a while. But it is one very worthwhile journey indeed! Put in some time with each of these steps. Really work on internalizing them so that they become part of who you are. Eventually, you'll look back and realize that your dieting past is far back in history, and that will feel so incredible!

Of course, if you need help on your journey, that's what I'm here for! You can always reach out to me through the site or my Facebook page to ask me a question. Or, if you know you want some structured guidance on working your way out of a lifetime of diets, check out my signature [Diet Mindset Makeover course](#), which goes in-depth on each of the topics listed here, as well as others. It's a whole program that will help you to makeover your diet mentality so you can finally achieve the peaceful relationship with food that you've been striving for!