



The Non-Diet Approach to Being Healthy at Every Size

Shifting the Way We Think and Feel About our Bodies and Food

Weight

Diet Approach

Achieving and maintaining ideal weight as close as possible, used as measure of success

Non-Diet Approach

Body will seek its natural weight as individual eats in response to physical cues of hunger and fullness as well as sense of well-being

Food

Diet Approach

Moralized as good/bad, legal/illegal, should/shouldn't, on/off diet. Variety, quantity, calories, fat grams, etc. determined by external source such as the diet, health care provider, or a parent...

Non-Diet Approach

Neutralized. All food is acceptable. Quantity, quality, and frequency are determined by an individual exploring and responding to physical cues, sense of well-being, taste and medical values (glucose). It is self-regulated, internally cued and non-restrained.

Exercise

Diet Approach

Reaching and maintaining goal weight is dependent on exercise, which is often dropped when individual falls off diet. It is seen as "have to" or "should", which commonly produces exercise resistance.

Non-Diet Approach

Physical activity, listening to body, seeking play and natural movement are explored. Not connected to weight loss or change of body size or shape.

Hunger

Diet Approach

Suppress or ignore hunger. Transgressions associated with lack of will power or "giving in." Physical and emotional hunger confused.

Non-Diet Approach

Physical cues to eat are valued and relied upon. Responding to physical hunger and fullness will bring about natural weight.

Self-esteem and Size Acceptance

Diet Approach

Individual typically gains a false sense of power and control with weight loss, adherence to diet, and exercise plan. Self-esteem and body acceptance rarely improve. This goal is elusive as one can get thinner, more toned, or both.

Non-Diet Approach

Increase in self-esteem and personal power from self-determined eating style and movement. Bodies come in all sizes and are naturally beautiful. Cultural norms are recognized as hazardous; pursuit of these standards can interfere with quality of life.

Trust/Distrust of Self and Body

Diet Approach

An individual may come to distrust body and sense of judgment, especially with history of failure. Trust is placed primarily in diet or provider.

Shift from Exercise to Joyful Movement

Diet Approach

- TRADITIONAL
- Body centered
- Clinical/diagnostic
- Fear of disease
- External expert
- Competitive
- Cultural conformity

Non-Diet Approach

Trust develops in self and body by discerning physical cues and freely responding to them without judgement or criticism.

Non-Diet Approach

- JOYFUL
- Mind/body centered
- No clinical/diagnostic
- Experiential/pleasure
- Internal expert
- Cooperative
- Individual empowerment

Six Tenants of Health at Every Size

1. Good health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being.
2. Human beings come in a variety of shapes and sizes.
3. There is no ideal body size, shape, BMI or body composition.
4. Self-esteem and body image are strongly linked.
5. Each person is responsible for taking care his/her own body.
6. Appearance stereotyping is wrong.

How to Create a Supportive Environment

- Be aware of media messages and actively support positive media campaigns
- Encourage good self-care in yourself and others (sleep well, eat well, etc)
- Believe in the 6 tenants of health at every size
- Focus on healthy lifestyle vs. weight/obesity