



DITCH THE RULES



Food rules: beliefs about food that may come from family, friends, teachers or diet culture.

- 01 Get crystal clear about what food rules have been running your life, some of which you may not be aware of.
- 02 Use the notes section on your phone or keep a journal with you to write down your rules as you notice or think of them. To get your mind thinking, some of my former food rules were only allowing certain foods if I exercised that day; needing to clear my plate to not waste food; eat fruit, but not bananas or pineapples; no white foods; no snacking between meals. Get the idea?
- 03 Break the rules and see what happens. Oftentimes, we have no idea what foods make us feel great or terrible. Giving yourself permission to break the rules gives you the power of choice. Instead of saying, "I can't have __," it becomes, "I'm choosing not to eat __ because I don't feel well after eating it." Or, " __ makes me feel tired, but I choose to enjoy some anyway because I know the feeling will pass." This process takes the power away from food, and more importantly, gives it back to you- setting you well on the path to building body trust and acceptance.
- 04 Take your time. If the thought of breaking the rules provokes anxiety or overwhelm, order your rules from easiest to hardest to break. Work through the rules one at a time, making them part of your daily doable plan. Be compassionate with yourself. Set realistic goals and adding "for the most part" to your thought patterns to release "all or nothing" thinking.
- 05 Get curious. For example, if the thought of eating potatoes makes you nervous, start by asking yourself what it is about potatoes that brings up this feeling? What else could be true? (For example: *My body is going to feel nourished from this food.* OR, *It's been so long, I want to check in with my body and see how it tolerates this food.*)

THIS PROCESS OF BREAKING DOWN FOOD RULES TO LOOK WITHIN FOR YOUR UNIQUE FEEDBACK IS THE PATH TO FINDING FOOD FREEDOM AND WHAT WORKS SPECIFICALLY FOR YOUR BODY.