

The Diet Mentality Quiz

Score: 1 = always; 2 = very often; 3 = often; 4 = sometimes; 5 = rarely; 6 = never

- _____ I am unhappy with myself the way I am.
 - _____ I am preoccupied with a desire to be thinner.
 - _____ I weigh myself several times a week.
 - _____ I am more concerned with the number on the scale than my overall sense of well-being.
 - _____ I think about burning up calories when I exercise.
 - _____ I am out of tune with my body for natural signals of hunger and fullness.
 - _____ I eat for other reasons than physical hunger.
 - _____ I eat too quickly, not taking time to focus on my meal and taste, savor and enjoy my food.
 - _____ I fail to take time for activities for myself.
 - _____ I fluctuate between periods of sensible, nutritious eating and out-of-control eating.
 - _____ I give too much time and thought to food.
 - _____ I tend to skip meals, especially early in the day, so I can "save up" my food for one big feast.
 - _____ I engage in all-or-nothing thinking.
 - _____ I try to be all things to all people.
 - _____ I strive for perfection in my life.
 - _____ I criticize myself for not achieving my goals.
- _____ **TOTAL + 4 = _____%**

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Dieter Profile:

- Compliant
- Need for perfection
- Preoccupied with weight
- Body dissatisfaction
- Lost touch with internal signals
- Salivate more when faced with attractive food
- Higher levels of digestive hormones and elevated levels of free fatty acids in their blood
- Go longer without food
- Eat less under “ideal situations” than nondieters
- Once dieters start to eat, they binge or eat more, then experience guilt

Source: Janet Polivy, PhD, Researcher, University of Toronto

These individuals would benefit from the nondiet approach.

Recommended References:

Miller, W.C., Jacob, A.V., The Health at any size Paradigm for obesity Treatment: The Scientific Evidence, *Obesity Reviews* 2001 2, 37-45

Bacon, L, Judith Stern, et al, Evaluating a “non-diet” wellness intervention for improvement of metabolic fitness, psychological well-being and eating and activity behavior, *International Journal of Obesity* (2002) 26, 854 – 865.

"Nondietering Approaches: Principles, Practices, and Evidence" by Gary Foster and Brian McGuckin in book entitled *Handbook of Obesity Treatment* by Guilford Press (Wadden and Stunkard eds.), 2002

Nondiet references available at www.hugs.com

Gauging your Stage of Change

Classic Model Of Change	Applied To Getting Off The Diet Rollercoaster
Stage 1: Pre-contemplation—I'm not even thinking about changing my behavior or thinking.	Dieting.
Stage 2: Contemplation—I'm not doing anything differently but I'm seriously considering making some changes in the next six months.	Frustrated and aware that dieting doesn't work.
Stage 3: Preparation—I'm not doing anything different but I plan to in the next thirty days, and I've tried over the past year.	Find out about alternatives, educate yourself.
Stage 4: Action—I'm doing some things differently but this is new for me, only over the past six months.	Buy resources to help you get off the diet rollercoaster; perhaps take a program.
Stage 5: Maintenance—I've changed my behavior and have maintained that change for more than six months.	After the book, after the program, a lifestyle without diets won't work without support. Get support.
Relapse—I'm having trouble maintaining changes and feel I'm slipping into old patterns. Although discouraging, relapse is a normal aspect of change. Most people cycle through stages several times before experiencing maintenance.	It's spring. You went back on another diet. You're feeling discouraged—don't be! It's quite normal to go back to old patterns, especially when you are trying to make a change for the first time. Find out what motivated you to go back once more. Look again at why you decided to stop dieting and reclaim your nondiet attitude. Move to whichever phase will put you back on track.

The first column describes the classic stages of readiness for change adapted from the "Stages of Change" model developed by Brian P. Dutton.

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