

BY
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Intuitive Nourishment Guide

Heal your relationship with nourishment by
slowing down and connecting with your intuition.

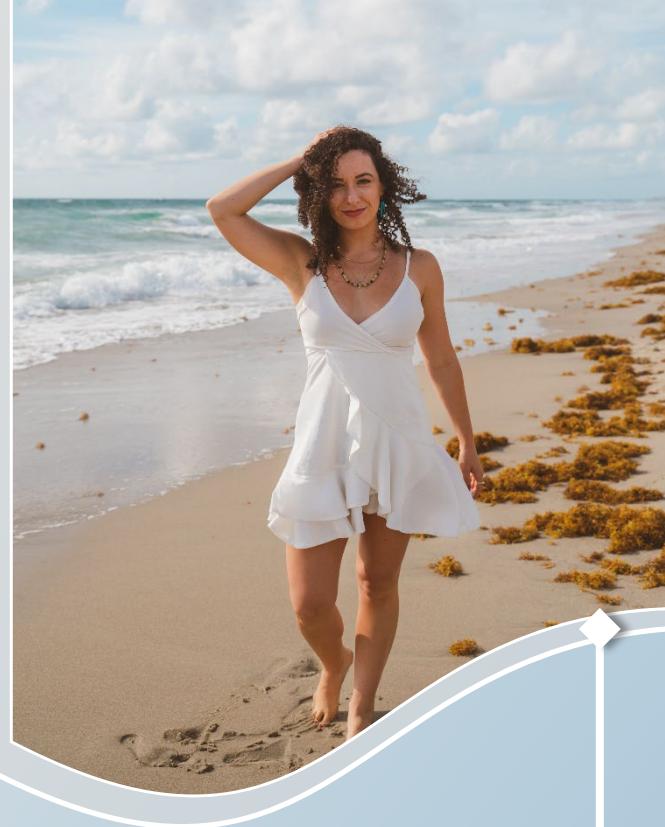
A note FROM THE AUTHOR

Nourishment was a prioritization for me from a young age. Without fully realizing it at the time, my Persian grandma taught me about seasonal cooking. Certain dishes were best to be made during specific seasons of the year, which not only took advantage of available ingredients, but also served the body.

Fesenjan, for example, the delicious tangy chicken and walnut stew with a pomegranate sauce, was technically only for winter-time. The rich flavors were known to be “warm” in nature, which didn’t have to do with the actual temperature of the food, but rather, how it affected digestion and metabolism. In retrospect, I was learning a Persian version of Ayurvedic Medicine.

I continued to practice cooking, and I became passionate about health and nutrition. Cooking and sharing meals was a baseline in my family, but also incorporating the aspect of nutrition helped me cope with food and body image insecurity I was experiencing as a young girl. (Let’s face it: societal programming and media biases do not necessarily teach teenagers to create an empowering relationship with food or their bodies.)

In high school, I began practicing yoga & meditation, interests which led me to teaching fitness and yoga classes during my first year of college in Arizona. Then, during my semester abroad in Italy, I had an accident that broke my collar bone and fractured my ribs.





This forced me into a period of healing and recovery, during which I couldn't partake in the usual physical activity that I was accustomed to.

At the time, my lean body was maintained through disciplined exercise. Having that outlet unavailable during my recovery made me feel uneasy. I was concerned that if I missed my workouts, I would no longer be "healthy," or I would lose my figure and be set back in my progress. After the accident, however, I had no choice but to step back from the exercise regimen. My body needed to rest.

Surprisingly though, the period of rest was gratifying. I realized I enjoyed the slower pace. As I slowed down and healed, I also observed the Italian culture, and I had a massive mindset shift that transformed the way I saw health.

I witnessed Italians eating amazing food—pasta, gelato, pizza—rarely partaking in intense workouts and still maintaining lean bodies. I saw them drinking espresso and eating a small pastry as they walked to work and thought, "I thought breakfast was the most important meal of the day!" Yet, here was a whole culture thriving without that rule. I realized that certain health fads I learned weren't necessarily universal "truths." Not only that, but there was also passion and liveliness in their culture.

I began implementing aspects of the Italian lifestyle into my own, and I intertwined them with the yoga and mindfulness ideology I was practicing. Not another health fad, but a nourishment healing that inspired long-term health, wholesome choices, and a bigger passion for life.

The following guide—accompanied by a short daily meditation—was designed to impart that wisdom to you, while also honoring that your body has its own unique needs!

My hope is that it helps you make intuitive choices that deeply nourish you, by encouraging exploration of the physical and emotional ways that you feel nourished. Please keep what resonates, leave the rest, and—of course—enjoy!

INTRODUCTION

The Need to Slow Down

Nourishment healing is not only about *what* you eat, but *how* you eat.

Diet is an important element of physical & mental healing; as Hippocrates is credited with saying, “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.”

However, while many health programs teach you *what* to eat, not many focus on the equally important factor, *how* to eat.



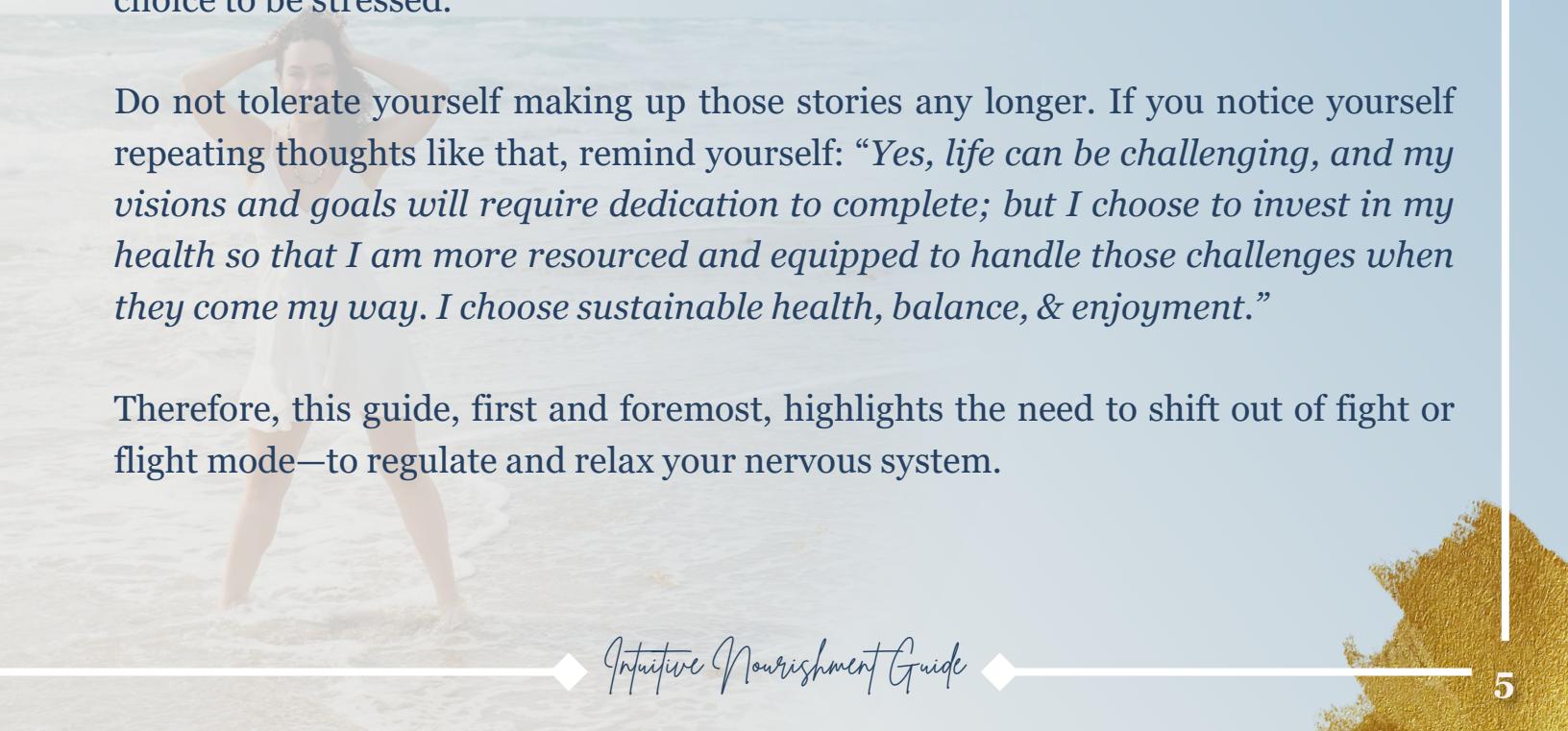
And here's the thing: it doesn't matter if you're drinking celery juice or eating a croissant; if you're rushing through the experience, not enjoying the food, or eating to stuff down your emotions, your nervous system is in a high-stress mode.

And sure, you can go through the motions of some diet or health program and lose 5-10 pounds by following the protocol to a T, but if your nervous system is on edge the whole time, the weight release or overall health results will catapult in the opposite direction the minute you go off course.

When the body is in a state of high stress, you are likely to overeat, eat to numb your stress, have a harder time digesting, and plain old feel lousy because you're not allowing yourself to slow down and enjoy the beautiful nourishment you have in front of you!

In a reactive stress mode, you are ping-ponging from one decision to the next and stuffing down random food decisions along the way. Your internal systems work harder to manage the stress, your adrenals can't keep up with that chronic fight or flight lifestyle, and your body weight and overall health will reflect the excess stress.

But, of course, "relaxing and enjoying yourself" is easier said than done. Our society is unconsciously addicted to the idea of struggle. How often do you hear yourself or others say, "life is so hard," "I have to do everything," or "I don't have enough time to take care of myself." These statements all reflect the decision to struggle. The choice to be stressed.



Do not tolerate yourself making up those stories any longer. If you notice yourself repeating thoughts like that, remind yourself: *"Yes, life can be challenging, and my visions and goals will require dedication to complete; but I choose to invest in my health so that I am more resourced and equipped to handle those challenges when they come my way. I choose sustainable health, balance, & enjoyment."*

Therefore, this guide, first and foremost, highlights the need to shift out of fight or flight mode—to regulate and relax your nervous system.

It doesn't matter how "healthy" you eat, how often you exercise, how many times you go to hot yoga, or how many Vipassana meditation retreats you attend; if you are stuck in a chronic state of survival mode, your body will only hold on to excess stress, which may appear as unwanted weight, internal distress, or anxiety.

Starting with a regulated and grounded nervous system will support improved digestion, healthy weight, and an overall sense of well-being. When your nervous system is regulated & relaxed, you can enjoy your food, and you are able to eat for joy rather than as a reward or punishment. Eating does not have to be a hyper-control mechanism. With this guidebook and accompanying daily meditation, you will learn how to listen to your body to make intuitive choices based on what your body uniquely needs.

Begin the journey of learning to regulate your nervous system with the three-minute [Intuitive Nourishment Meditation](#). In this brief meditation, you will be guided to slow down, breathe, and connect to yourself.

When I first created this meditation, I loved it so much that I listened to it every day—often multiple times a day—for months. Anytime I wasn't sure what I wanted to eat, I would pause for three minutes to do this meditation; it helped me return to my heart and surrender the need to be perfect. Consider using it the same way, until you feel the message in the meditation ingrained in your way of being.

To couple the meditation, embark on the questions and exercises below. You may choose to finish them in one afternoon. Or you may choose to complete them over a longer period, such as a couple of weeks. You may also like to return to the guidebook in different seasons of your life or every few months to uncover new layers of healing or discovery.

Regardless of how you use the guidebook, *practice the [Intuitive Nourishment Meditation](#) every day or multiple times a day!* It will serve as a daily reminder to connect with your body and strengthen your intuition.

Your body knows what works best for you. You know how to heal! The questions and exercises below are meant to remind you of your natural intelligence.



Take a deep breath.
Let's begin!



INTUITIVE NOURISHMENT GUIDE

PART ONE

Self-Awareness

INSTRUCTIONS:

Fill out the following chart to check in with where you are right now. No need to judge your responses as good or bad. Just start with awareness!

How would you rate the following:

PHYSICAL

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Almost Always
I move my body regularly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I include nutritious food in my day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get enough restful sleep	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I stay hydrated through the day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I receive a healthy amount of sunlight	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How would you rate the following:

Emotional

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Almost Always
I acknowledge my feelings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to my physical body	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel connected to my inner-self	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I allot time for nourishing my body & soul	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

GET INSPIRED

Choose 1-2 items in each column to try. Aim to complete your chosen items every day for a week.

You may dive into the next section, Part Two, right away or wait until the week is over to continue with Part Two.

PHYSICAL

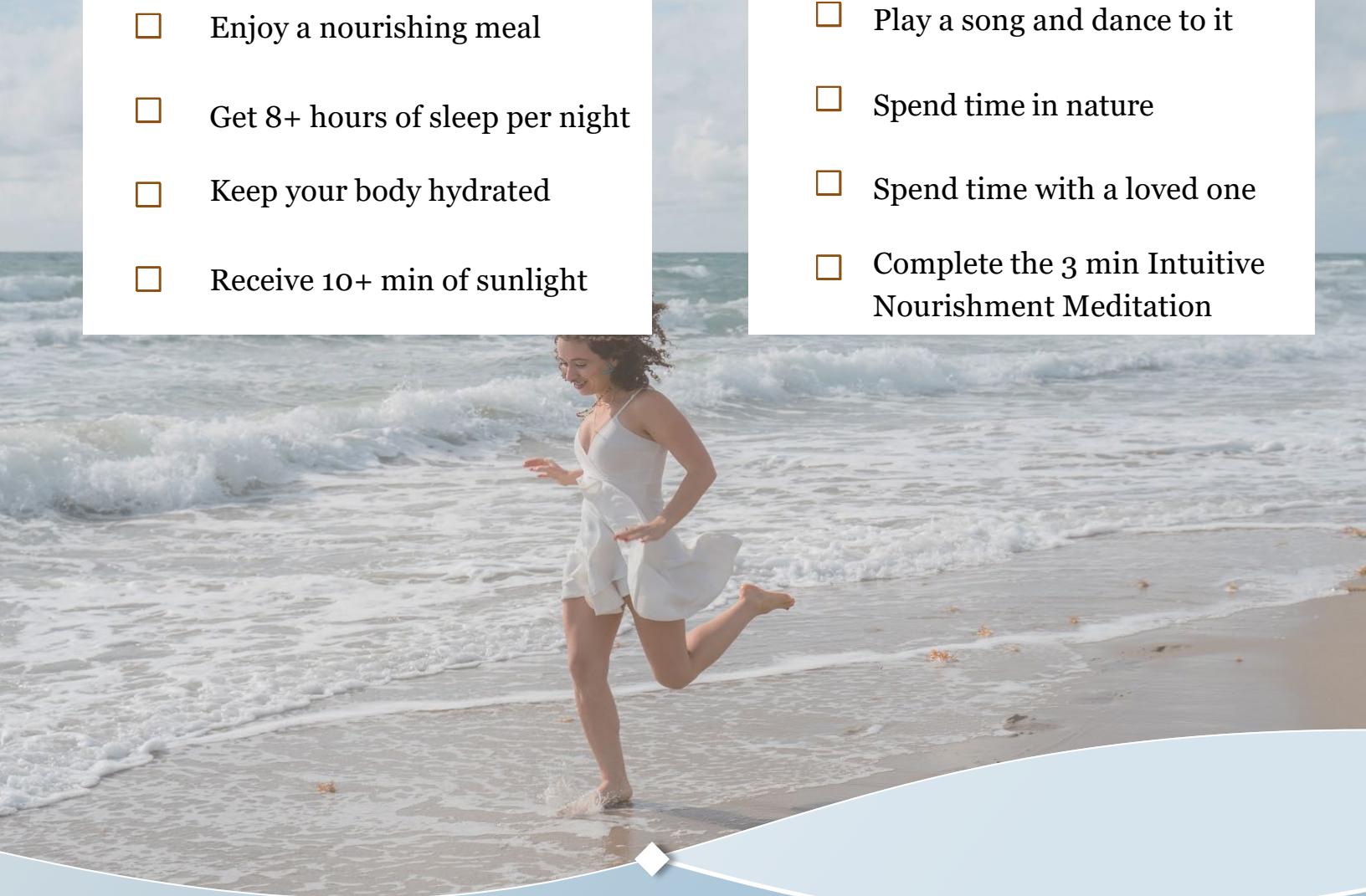
activities for the week

- Move your body for 10+ min
- Enjoy a nourishing meal
- Get 8+ hours of sleep per night
- Keep your body hydrated
- Receive 10+ min of sunlight

Emotional

activities for the week

- Freestyle journal for 15 min
- Play a song and dance to it
- Spend time in nature
- Spend time with a loved one
- Complete the 3 min Intuitive Nourishment Meditation



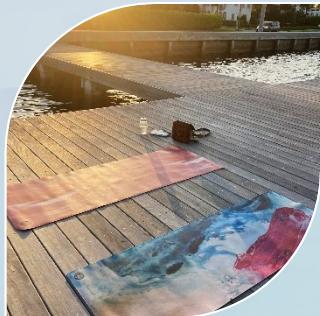
PART TWO

Self-Reflection

Now that you have some inspiration, reflect on what ways you uniquely feel nourished.

Journal three ways that your body and heart receive nourishment.

Sometimes the body needs nourishment, and we automatically assume it needs food or drink, when it's possible it requires emotional or spiritual nourishment. Consider nature, family, friends, art, music, prayer, or exercise, as well as foods you love!



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REFINE YOUR *Reflections*

Reflect on the following questions to determine where you need to heal your relationship with nourishment.

Where do you need to make a change with your relationship to nourishment?

1

How committed are you to slowing down, tuning into your intuition, and nourishing yourself well? (Scale 1-10?)

2

What forms of nourishment (food or otherwise) do you feel inspired to add back into your life?

3



COMMIT TO YOUR *Goals*

Write down 1-3 goals for each section below. You *don't have to make rigid goals that force you to be exactly the same every day*. Remember, quantities—like your weight or the number of calories you need to eat—will fluctuate day-to-day based on the cyclical rhythms of your body. Instead, focus on what kinds of physical and emotional nourishment you want to add to your life and how that will make you feel.

PHSYICALLY

Example 1: I want to cook wholesome meals most days, so I feel more energized.

Example 2: I want to receive massage therapy regularly, so I feel more relaxed.

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body

EMOTIONALLY/SPIRITUALLY

Example 1: I want to talk to my friends more often, so I feel more connected to others.

Example 2: I want to journal most days a week, so I feel more connected to myself.

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heart
& soul

PART THREE

Moving Forward

Listen to the [Intuitive Nourishment Meditation](#) every day and journal any insights you have below. Or use this space to follow-up in a few weeks on the goals you set in Part Two. Where has shifted? What do you still need to focus energy on?

Daily Reminder

*Practice the Intuitive Nourishment Meditation daily or
multiple times a day until it feels ingrained in your way
of being.*

My greatest wish in creating the Intuitive Nourishment Guide is that you too can feel relief from the burdens of rigid diet plans and feel inspired to slow down and connect back to your natural intelligence and intuition. My hope is that this will not only help you heal your relationship with food and nourishment but also with the beauty of living as a whole.

-Layla Brook

WANT MORE?



www.laylabrookhealing.com

Try Our Self-led Online Course –
[INSPIRED CONNECTION](#)

Book Recommendations

[Super Italian](#): More Than 110 Indulgent Recipes

◊ [Using Italy's Healthiest Foods](#) by Giada de Laurentiis

◊ [Woman Code](#): Perfect Your Cycle, Amplify Your

◊ Fertility, Supercharge Your Sex Drive, and Become a Power Source by Alisa Vitti

◊ [The Archetype Diet](#): Reclaim Your Self-Worth and Change the Shape of Your Body by Dana James