

Sensible Eating Rules-of-the-Game

Our steering committee agreed before our initial class meeting to make a game of our course work. Since every game has a win/lose dimension, I assume that winning the Sensible Eating Game can be couched in terms of significantly improving our health and wellness before our next class meeting in January 2025.

Since every game must have rules that set the framework within which winning might be accomplished, our class (Brian, Devon, Arby, Lara, Jorge, and Jessie) decided to institute the following rules for the group as a whole. Note, Brian stood in for Felicia (on objects of desire), and Donna is encouraged to submit a rule for her topic: healthy eating.

Our Sensible Eating Rules-of-the-Game:

- **Missing Meals.** Each of us has a daily meal regimen, i.e., times when we are scheduled to eat a meal. If we miss eating in one of those time slots, the rule is to eat as soon as possible after the scheduled mealtime, without postponing a meal or at least a snack until the next scheduled mealtime.
- **Weight Management.** The rule is to track our weight by weighing ourselves at least once a week, without letting our weight increase by more than 10% above our initial/base body weight. The caveat: It's okay to gain weight according to normal fluctuations within that 10% range. More than 10% gain is cause for concern.
- **Mindful Eating.** The rule is to eat at least one meal per week without distractions from electronic devices (e.g., TV, computer, phone) or other distractions (e.g., talking with friends). Rather, our focus should be on the food (taste, texture) the eating process (filling, chewing), and the way our body is responding (good/bad).
- **Garnering Support.** The rule is to check in once a week with our buddies from the original class meeting (i.e., Brian/Felicia; Jorge/Lara/Arby; Donna/Jessie/Devon), by phone, email, text, or in person. The rule assumes that conversation opens the way to insight. The onus is on those who need support to reach out for it from a buddy.
- **Life Priorities.** We all have daily "have-to-do" stuff. Our rule is to make our personal health and wellness a conscious and non-negotiable daily priority. The rule includes establishing regular times to be mindful of (among other things) our foods (healthy/not healthy), our eating pace (too fast?), and our body's responses.
- **Objects of Desire.** Make a baseline list of every life-object (edible and non-edible) that attracts us through our five senses (taste, smell, sight, touch, sound). Then, on a monthly basis between now and January, monitor our levels of desire on this scale: Freedom, Attraction, Abnormal Craving, Dependence, and Addiction.