



\* 4 WAYS  
TO AVOID THE

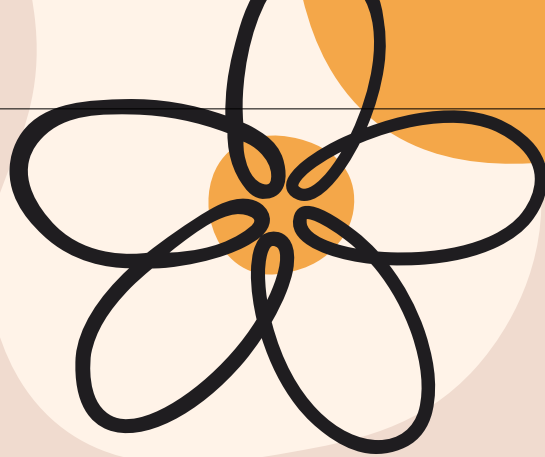
"ALL-OR-NOTHING"



DIET MENTALITY

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1.

## START WITH THE END IN MIND.

This is a tip I commonly give because it can be applied in many situations. In this case, think about how you'd like to feel at the end of the summer, or whenever your potential "diet" might end. This is helpful because, let's face it, if you see yourself as being on a "diet" as opposed to embarking on a healthy lifestyle that integrates foods, habits, and eating behaviors that are beneficial to your health, there has to be a start point and an end point: diets and the all-or-nothing mentality can only last for a limited amount of time. Do you want to feel like you deprived yourself? Do you want to feel physically uncomfortable because of the food choices you made? Do you want to feel satisfied that you had a well-balanced approach? Of course, there is a lot of "in between," but if you think with the end in mind, that can help recalibrate your mindset and give you more confidence and clarity when it comes to your food choices.

## WHILE IT MAY BE COMMON,

the all-or-nothing diet mentality can be harmful, frustrating, and impractical. This is the mindset in which we feel we must be very strict with our food choices—but if we deviate from our restrictive plan, we may as well eat anything and everything, and start over another day (cue the yo-yo diet cycle). As a registered dietitian nutritionist, I encourage and promote an inclusive, balanced, enjoyable, and practical way of eating, where all foods fit. With this in mind, let's be proactive with a few tips to avoid the all-or-nothing diet mentality this summer—and all year round.





## 2.

### **DON'T LABEL FOODS AS "GOOD" OR "BAD."**

In general, all foods have their place within a healthy and well-balanced diet. While there are foods that are helpful toward our health and helpful toward reaching our health goals, or foods that may be harmful to our health if we eat too much of them, foods themselves are neither “good” nor “bad.” When we train ourselves to neutralize how we categorize foods, it helps us make balanced choices, and may also reduce (or potentially eliminate) the guilt we feel—which is often what causes a binge or an all-or-nothing mentality to begin with.

## 3.

### **FOCUS ON WHAT YOU WANT TO INCLUDE.**

With an all-or-nothing mentality, there is a strong focus on which foods are “not allowed,” restricted or forbidden. Shifting our focus to foods we want to include is a game changer! Think about fresh salads you’d like to create or yummy stir-fry combinations that would hit the spot. Reach out to friends to hear about their favorite nourishing recipes. This positive and inclusive mindset has so many benefits.



## 4.

### **PIVOT FROM A FOOD FOCUS.**

Of course, a big component of our day-to-day and week-to-week is the food that will be served and eaten—especially for those of us who are responsible for the food planning and prepping. However, if that focus becomes too consuming, it can take away from other important and beautiful aspects of life. For example, remember to prioritize and cherish quality time with family, the memories you can help create for yourself and those around you, and of course, taking strides toward reaching your potential and accomplishing in the areas that matter most.