

MIND • BODY • FOOD

Add, Don't Automatically Take Away

Explore satisfaction and nourishment without beginning with restriction

Food advice often focuses on removing, limiting or replacing foods. For some people, especially those with restricted intake, anxiety around food or a history of dieting, an additive approach can feel safer and more sustainable. It begins with a meal or snack you already enjoy and asks whether anything acceptable could be added.

Space to Breathe Therapy

Understanding the idea

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Why this may help

- Adding can preserve pleasure, familiarity and adequate intake.
- An addition may support energy, satisfaction, variety or staying power.
- Beginning with curiosity reduces the all-or-nothing pressure of making a meal “perfect”.

Keep the experiment gentle

Use this as an invitation to notice what supports you. There is no correct outcome, and you can stop, simplify or adapt the exercise whenever it increases pressure or makes eating less possible.

Try this in your own way

A practical approach

- 1 Choose a meal or snack you already enjoy.
- 2 Ask what could make it more satisfying, nourishing or substantial.
- 3 Consider an acceptable carbohydrate, protein, fat, fruit, vegetable, drink or simply more food.
- 4 Try one addition and notice hunger, energy, comfort and satisfaction afterwards.

Pause and notice

What felt easier? What felt difficult? Did the change affect energy, comfort, hunger, satisfaction or stress? Treat every answer as information rather than evidence of success or failure.

Your reflection worksheet

Meal or snack I already enjoy

What already works about it

Something acceptable I could add

How I want it served

Hunger, energy or satisfaction afterwards

A supportive reminder

Adding is an option, not an obligation. Allergies, intolerances, sensory needs, ARFID and medical advice matter; choose only foods that are safe and appropriate for you.