

To Eat



or

Not to Eat,



That Is the Question

(...but not the only question!)

Includes
Personality
Questionnaire



**Use the Power of Personality Type
and the Z-Pattern to Make
Healthy Lifestyle Decisions**

Live mindfully and intuitively for a healthier you!

Roberta Schwartz Wennik, M.S., R.D.N.

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Praise for TO EAT OR NOT TO EAT

This book was absolutely fabulous! Thank you for your contribution in this field. There are so many comments I could make, but I gave a stab in the two below.

Roberta proposes a "just right for you" plan that easily navigates how to bring about healthy habits that result in a confirmed, positive life style –no matter the current problems or history to reaching this desired state. Her logic is eye opening and should not only be required reading for all nutrition students but will set the stage for ending all the fad diet books not yet published!

Roberta spells out how to navigate a decent relationship with food based on personality. We all have one, so why not approach our food decisions based on the way we think and act –the same as we do for most all of our daily decisions. These simple and sound principles will set you free because it unleashes the secrets of every individual and once and for all settles the perfect, personal pathway to health. No nutrition professional should be without this book and is a must read for individuals!

Congratulations. I look forward to seeing this on the NYT Best Seller's List!

*Freda Butner, RD LDN
Nutrition Marketing Specialist
NC Dept of Agriculture
www.ncagr.gov*

With this book, Roberta Wennik is marrying her deep knowledge of wellness and diet to the field of type to help answer the question of "So what?" that so often arises after someone is introduced to Psychological Type. Type training clearly has a new voice and application area.

*Hile Rutledge
President
OKA
www.oka-online.com*

This ENTJ really enjoyed reading the book. It makes total sense to me that personality typing can help people build weight management plans that work for how they make decisions. Fundamentally, all diets work the same way- getting you to eat fewer calories. Finding the right lifestyle system for you is the hard part. I think this book gives valuable clues for how to find the right system.

*Melissa Musiker, MPP, RD, LD
Vice President, Food and Nutrition Policy
APCO Worldwide
www.apcoworldwide.com*

Rich in examples and suggestions, To Eat or Not to Eat, That Is the Question, is more like a conversation with author Roberta Wennik. An expert in personality type based on the Myers-Briggs, Wennik explores decision making that can impact health behaviors. If you're ready for change and willing to put in the time to understand what makes you tick, this book is ready to guide you.

*Judy Barbe, MS, RDN
Principal
Live Best
www.LiveBest.info*

I just read your book. I think it is a practical and realistic approach and unique to a better lifestyle. The Zig Zag model is a great way to have people make the best choices with a lens toward their unique preferences. I really liked the very clear distinction that you use (eg p110, Signs of Hunger vs. Signs of Appetite)

I really think that your approach is unique and can be very helpful to people who want to truly understand their motivations and preferences. By honoring one's style, everyone can achieve individual goals, weight wise or otherwise.

Peggy Holtman
Margaret Holtman LLC
Leadership Solutions
www.margaretholtman.com

Roberta's book moves you along a continuum of self-improvement by first identifying your personality preferences and then helping you understand why you make the decisions you do. You learn to tap into other preferences to move you out of established habits.

I appreciate the self-awareness I gained for not only personal but also professional reasons. As I read her book, I considered not only myself but my clients and even my family as I explored the different personality preferences and decision-making influences. With the four finger practice and cheat sheet, she packages her in-depth explanations for on the go decision-making. It's great to see a book that gets to the heart of the matter – personality preferences - when it comes to making lifestyle changes. Roberta's experience rings through loud and clear with her applied examples and excellent nutrition content.

Penny Levy, MPH, RDN, LD/N
Registered Dietitian Nutritionist Consultant

To Eat or Not to Eat provides a new twist on how to approach the dilemma we face each and every day. Whether it's at work during a slow part of the day, at dinner with friends, or any number of other situations, we have to decide when and what to eat. This book outlines helpful ways to make those decisions that feel right because they are geared toward our own personality traits.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test included in the book gives much insight into understanding the characteristics that make us tick and why we come to the conclusions that we do. This is the foundation that sets up the personalized decision making tools so eating is in our control, not a result of outside factors like the clock says 12:00pm, so I should eat now.

I recommend this book for people who have lost sight of when it is appropriate to eat, those that feel they don't have control of their eating, or for people wishing to lose weight in a healthy manner by changing their lifestyle behaviors.

Sandra Meyerowitz, MPH, RDN, LD
Certified LEAP Therapist
Nutrition Works
www.smartnutritionworks.com

This is not another typical quick weight loss diet and recipe book. In fact the author addresses weight loss along with other lifestyle habits including "physical activity" and stress management in terms of how we make decisions about these areas of our lives, and our relationship with food, exercise and stress management. It is all about taking control of our decisions and not feeling guilty about them. It is not a book of what we can and cannot do.

Ms. Wennik writes confidently about all aspects of changing habits around how we make decisions. She is an expert, and one of very few dietitians who is, in the administering and explanation of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator, included in the book and she firmly believes that until we know how we tick, we cannot make good decisions. The "Z Pattern" for decision-making is presented based on the personality preferences and works for all types of decisions.

The author discusses how to gauge hunger and fullness and how to gain more satisfaction; the difference between taste and flavor and how to enhance the latter; key nutrients, shopping tips, and much more in under 200 pages. The book can serve as a workbook for the professional and client or for the general population. It is a definite go-to for healthy lifestyle management.

*Marie Annette Hise, MBA, RD, RDN
Food, Culinary and Nutrition Consultant;
Certification in Weight Management by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*

This process helps the reader consider where they are in their readiness to change, and then gives them practical certainty, a road map to find their way to a different way of thinking about change. So many people are intimidated by change - so I think this process will benefit people who are "stuck" and who want to think more deeply about the way they make decisions. When you know your personality profile, it's the first step toward understanding how and why you make decisions. And then you learn how your current way of operating may be just what's holding you back from moving forward toward weight loss, or toward other areas in your life that you might want to improve.

More than just intuitive eating, this book shows readers how to undertake different thought processes and find their way to thinking and reacting differently - for example, if you are, like me, a ESTJ, you'll find that you are a Manager. But as a manager, I'm also sort of rigid in my thinking, very "black or white", and that can create stressful situations. But now that I know this, I can rethink the way I react to certain people, and create mental strategies to improve my relationships.

This is not a "diet" book, this is a "thinking" book, giving the reader who is seeking a guide excellent information. good information so that if they decide to tackle behavioral change, they have credible, readable, practical resources.

Susan Burke March, MS, RDN, LD/N, CDE
www.susanburkemarch.com

To Eat or Not to Eat, That is the Question - While you might already know your MBTI® personality type, using the Z-Pattern of decision making and relating that to living healthy, is a new approach. The obstacles to eating and living healthy are discussed from the perspective of personality type. The book contains many questions and tips to put you on the correct path to success for your personality type, and provides an eye-opening look at why we do things differently. This is not a diet book, but does provide useful information related to diet and exercise. The result is conscious and guilt free decisions about what and how much you eat. The only thing I would skip in the book is the references since almost all are more than 10 years old.

*Linda S. Eck Mills, MBA, RDN, LDN, FADA
Career and Life Coach, International Speaker, Author
Dynamic Communication Services*
www.dycomserv.com

Roberta's book highlights a new way to apply type theory and offers ideas that will be helpful to all.

Bob McAlpine

www.type-resources.com



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Introduction



To Eat or Not To Eat, That is the Question. With the rate of obesity in the United States, I wonder how many people are even stopping to ask the question. Long-established habits are making the decisions for them.

“We’re going to the movies, let’s have popcorn.”
“What would a baseball game be without the hot dogs and beer?”
“There’s always room for dessert.”

We’re often so trapped by our habits that we can’t even see them as habits. So, how do we get out of the trap? By asking the right questions and learning how to make healthy decisions. More importantly, making healthy decisions in a unique way — by using your personality type. When you’re faced with an eating decision or any decision, for that matter (since you’ll use the same approach), personality-based decision-making will be well thought out and come up with results you’ll be happy with. It won’t be an off-hand, carelessly conjured up choice or a choice bred from habit or a choice made by someone else.

At the root of everything we do is a decision. When the alarm rang this morning, you had a decision to make. “Do I push the snooze button and sleep for another ten minutes or do I just get up?” “Am I going to work out at the gym this morning?” “Do I have time to eat breakfast this morning?” How would you make those decisions? Questions such as these **appear** relatively inconsequential while others, such as, “Do I take that job offer?”, seem to carry a lot of burden and responsibility with them.

I emphasized the word “appear” because we view decisions about simple lifestyle questions as not capable of affecting us very deeply even if, occasionally, we were to make the “wrong” decision. However, the number of times that the “wrong” decision is made adds up and inevitably, the results of those decisions are then no longer so inconsequential. Eating decisions are probably the least thought about choices we make in a day’s time. Yet, they may be some of the most important.

It’s All About the Decisions

Decisions, decisions, decisions! That’s what this book is about — how to make “healthy” decisions regarding all aspects of your life. I could have said the “right” decisions but then that would mean there’s only one way to a healthy lifestyle. If that were true, we’d need lifestyle police stationed all over the country, handing out tickets when we didn’t act according to the “law”.

Life is really a balancing act. For example, if we indulge in something that might be high in calories and fat, we should compensate with something else that’s healthy. For me, I enjoy the taste of butter even though I know it is high in saturated fat. There’s enough research to tell me that too much saturated fat can lead to heart disease. Does that mean I have to give up butter? No. I just decide how I want to spend my saturated fat allowance for the day. It’s my decision, not the decision of the food police.

Now, the hard part is making those decisions. So it helps to know just how we make decisions. When you see the “hot light” on at Krispy Kreme, does it pull you in for a still warm, just-cooked donut? (Just mentioning this is making my mouth water!) It more than likely isn’t hunger that would make you turn into the parking lot. If there were a decision-making process that took place (however doubtful), it had to have been pretty quick and probably not well-thought out. So there’s your first clue about decision-making: you have to consciously think about it.

Just as journalists have their “who, what, when, where, why, how” questions for successful writing, those same questions can serve as the basis for some of the decision-making we need to do when it comes to eating.

- **Who** am I eating with that might influence what I eat and how much?
- **What** should I eat?
- **When** should I eat?
- **Where** do I tend to eat most often? In front of the television? Fast-food restaurants?
- **Why** am I eating this?
- **How much** should I eat?

It's the decisions that answer these questions and many others that serve as the basis for how healthy a life we'll lead and possibly how long a life we get. Every time we eat more than we need, our bodies put the excess away in storage. Too much storage means we're heavier than we should healthfully be. It's a known fact that being overweight can increase the risk of diabetes, heart disease, cancer and a host of other illnesses.

Every time we choose junk food instead of healthy food choices, we've deprived ourselves of good nutrition to sustain a healthy body. The unfortunate thing with poor nutrition is that the body compensates so well for so long that it takes some time before poor nutrition displays itself in health issues. By that time, those unhealthy practices have become habits and possibly caused irreversible health consequences.

These who, what, where type questions could just as well be applied to exercise:

- **What** exercise should I do — aerobics? flexibility? endurance?
- **When** should I exercise?
- **Where** should I exercise?
- **Why** am I exercising? What benefit will I get?
- **How long** should I exercise?
- **With whom** should I exercise, if anyone?

And then there's stress reduction questions to consider:

- **What** can I do to relieve this stressful feeling?
- **When** do I seem to experience these feelings?
- **Where** can I go to get some peace and relaxation?
- **Why** am I feeling stressed out?
- **How long** should I meditate? do a breathing exercise? do a relaxation exercise?

WHO'S IN CHARGE?

The beauty of making decisions consciously is that instead of being controlled by food, people, the environment, or whatever, you'll be in charge. No longer will those cookies in the pantry be calling out to you with you blindly answering their call. Think about how great you'll feel about yourself when you no longer have to find excuses for why you did something that wasn't the healthiest for you. You'll be able to provide a reason for the choices you make, whether that means you decided to eat those cookies or decided against it.

Food will actually become more pleasurable to eat. Instead of acting like your own food police, feeling guilty for eating something you think isn't healthy, you'll have consciously decided to eat it and

enjoy every bite. You won't have to sneak food, worrying about being caught. You'll have only yourself to answer to.

Exercise will also become enjoyable when you're in charge. You won't exercise because *you have to*, you'll exercise because you *want to*. You may not even call it exercise but "play".

I don't need to tell you how much better you'll feel when you control your life rather than getting stressed out by what life throws in your path. We do have a choice whether we'll allow factors outside of ourselves to control how we feel. That is a decision you'll have to make but once you learn how to, you will feel stronger and more content with life. It's life on your terms.

A PERSONALITY APPROACH

You may be wondering what personality type has to do with decision-making. Everything. Every decision you make is influenced by your personality type (which I'll shorten to just "type"). Given the same situation, two people with different types may respond differently. It's just in the nature of who we are and is what Carl Jung used as the basis of psychological type, which he developed in the 1920s.

To Eat or Not to Eat takes a personality approach to decision-making. Unfortunately, even with 16 different personality types — according to Isabel Myers and Katherine Briggs (the developers of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®, also known as the MBTI®) — no one type has the market cornered on making perfect decisions. However, learning about personality typing will show you how to make the best decisions for you.

There's no question that changing habits is hard work. So, here's where you have your first decision to make. Are you willing to do what it takes to change those unhealthy habits? Before you answer that, read on to discover how, with the help of your personality type, making that decision and others will be a lot easier and more guaranteed to last.

Your personality is such an integral part of your behaviors, that to modify those behaviors, you need to truly understand who you are and, quite frankly, what makes you tick. The beauty of using type to make those changes is that it gives you a foundation upon which to understand your not-so-healthy actions and then how to make the necessary changes. Once you've learned how to make more effective decisions, you'll feel empowered to take control — not just in eating, but in all aspects of your life.

To Eat or Not to Eat is most definitely NOT a diet book. It's a book about *how to make healthy lifestyle habit decisions*. You'll find NO diet plans or lists of foods you can't eat. I reiterate — this is NOT a food police book, telling you how bad you've been or handing out tickets for going over the calorie limit. This is all about learning how to make the best-ever lifestyle decisions — decisions about eating, exercise, and stress-reduction. Take a moment to think about some lifestyle decisions you need to make and then read this book to find out how to make them.

INTUITIVE AND MINDFUL EATING WITH A TWIST

The concept of intuitive eating has been around for many years. It's meant to convey the sense that a person "just knows" how and what to eat. Along that line of thinking, a person would just intuitively know how to live a healthy life. If only that were the case!

The dictionary defines the word, "intuition", as "the ability to understand something immediately, without the need for conscious reasoning". In other words, an "intuitive eater" doesn't have to think about what to eat, he or she just knows. But that knowledge has to come from somewhere, whether it's taught to us or learned through books or from previous experiences. For example, when a teacher sees that her student isn't understanding her explanation of a problem, she *intuitively* knows that she needs to approach the problem from a different angle. Her intuition relies on her previous experiences.

Compare this to "instinct", something we're born with. As soon as an animal is born, it "knows" to get up, go to its mother and suckle. There's no thinking involved. It's automatic. It's pure genetic programming. Think of newborn infants. Most eat instinctually. They cry when they're hungry. Then they'll turn their heads away when they've had enough. Even when in a highchair, if allowed to eat without restrictions, they might even push a plate to the floor to prove they're done. I'm always

astonished when my granddaughters actually don't finish dessert because they're full. Admirable, especially from the perspective of a dietitian.

On the other hand, adults will "clean their plate". Whether it's from habit, knowing what they paid for the food, or worrying about hurting someone's feelings by not finishing everything, people have a myriad of reasons for not eating instinctually as children do. We're influenced by so many factors — from what choices are available to us, advertising, free food, who we're eating with, the environment, the price, the situation, the time of day, stress, anger, boredom, reward and celebration. The list could go on and on.

Since so few of us eat instinctually and before we leap to thinking we can just eat *intuitively*, let me introduce the idea that maybe we should be eating *mindfully*. Eating mindfully really is quite different from intuitive eating. It's eating with conscious awareness. It's paying attention. It's asking the right questions. It's using reasoning. Let's face it. If we were all eating intuitively, we wouldn't be having an obesity epidemic in the United States (and what is now happening outside our boundaries).

One of the best ways to live life mindfully (since we not only need to change our eating habits, but also our lifestyle habits), is to learn how to make good decisions. Remember, everything we do is based on the decisions we make. I've found the best decisions come from using our personality type. Call it *mindful living with a twist*. You'll learn in this book how this unique approach will help you create new healthier habits.

By practicing what's in this book, you'll create new mental pathways that become your healthy habits. If you brush your teeth every night, that's an example of having created a mental pathway that no longer needs to be decided upon. You just head to the sink, pick up your brush, add toothpaste and brush your teeth. At first, when you were young, you had your parents nagging you to brush your teeth. However, at some point, it just became natural for you to do it. Brushing your teeth became *intuitively* enforced, needing no conscious reasoning or thinking, by employing *mindful* attention and practice in the beginning to create this healthy habit.

That's how all of your healthy lifestyle behaviors can become habits. Unfortunately, now you won't have your parents telling you to do it! It's now your responsibility to make the decision to do it. At first it will require you to decide if it's right for you and then consciously work at it until you find yourself no longer having to decide to do it. In other words, *become mindful to live intuitively using personality type*.

The fact that Americans go through diet crazes — a low-fat diet one day, a high-protein diet another, a diet for your blood type, a no-wheat diet, the cabbage soup diet — and still have the high level of obesity tells you that it isn't about the food. **It's about the decisions being made regarding the food.** Any diet works because it forces you to consciously be aware of what, when and how much you're eating. But you're not living intuitively because you're living according to a plan created by someone else. Unless that plan coincides with your personality type, you'll be using willpower that won't last.

Once you've learned how to use your type to help you make effective decisions, you'll never have to second-guess your decisions. It means being happy with the results of those decisions because there was no better decision at the time with the knowledge you had.

A Decent Relationship with Food

Sadly, I believe we've lost a decent relationship with food. Our choices are guided by the marketing tactics of food manufacturers. We see a food labeled "no trans fat" and believe it's healthy for us even though it may be high in calories, fat, sugar and sodium. (Yes, you guessed it. Calories, fat, sugar, and sodium are the bad boys of the nutrient world. At least for now, anyway. Give it time—something else might be maligned in the future and these nutrients might be glorified. But don't hold your breath waiting for the change.)

The Nutrition Facts on packaged foods tell us what a serving size consists of even though we may not even want that much. It almost feels as if it's a requirement. Wouldn't one or two bites of chocolate do even though the label says you can have the whole chocolate bar as a serving? (Another opportunity to make a decision!)

We're influenced by the way things are packaged or served to us. If a muffin comes in a muffin cup, it's a serving even though we're full by the time we've eaten half of it (but probably will eat the whole thing so as not to throw it away and lose money on it). McDonald's didn't choose the gold, orange and red

colors for their restaurants by accident. Research shows that those colors stimulate our appetite. None of us is immune to a good deal. If asked, “Do you want to “supersize it?”, some of us may unhesitatingly say “yes” because it costs so little extra for the extra amount.

We’re surrounded by veritable landmines of food and lifestyle option hazards that will continue to plague us if we don’t address them head-on. Every day you’re making decisions — some good and some not-so-healthy. You can know everything there is to know about good nutrition and healthy living, but it’s a known fact that knowledge alone doesn’t get you to change your ways. But knowing yourself better might!

Here are some questions that will help reveal how much you need to learn about making good decisions:

- Do you eat what you’re “supposed” to eat?
- Do you find it hard to stop eating once you’ve started?
- Do you eat so fast that you barely notice the flavors you ate?
- Do you feel stuffed when you finish a meal?
- Do you think about other foods you could be eating instead of what you’re eating?
- Do you eat because you’re hungry?
- Do you eat because of the time of day?
- Do you eat to make yourself feel better?
- Do you eat as a reward for something you accomplished?
- Do you exercise to punish yourself for having eaten what you think you shouldn’t have eaten?
- Do you take time each day to do something relaxing such as reading, meditating, yoga?
- Do you spend time with friends on a regular basis?
- Do you avoid food when you’re hungry to control your weight?

YOUR JOURNEY

First, you’ll take a personality quiz based on the MBTI® to determine what your type is. According to the MBTI®, there are 16 personality types, explaining why not everyone makes the same decision in the same situation. Each type has its attributes, strengths and challenges. Then, I’ll share with you how your type makes decisions. Unfortunately, our natural way of making decisions isn’t really the optimal way. So, I’ll go into the *Z-Pattern* of decision-making, showing you how to make the best decisions.

Throughout the book I’ll be sharing the obstacles to eating and living healthy as seen from the perspective of type. After you’ve read this book, when you decide to eat something, healthy or not, you’ll do so knowingly, consciously and free from guilt. Did you hear what I said? FREE FROM GUILT. You’ll have established a loving relationship with all foods and find no reason to abuse that relationship. That way you can’t be like the man in the antacid commercial when he says to his own incredulity, “I can’t believe I ate the whole thing.”

In this book, you’ll learn the “art of tasting” and how to get the most pleasure out of what you eat. Your decision to eat something will be very much based on having mastered this technique. If you’re not enjoying what you’re eating, the calories are just wasted calories, at least as far as I’m concerned. Remember the title of this book, “To Eat or Not to Eat” as you address your eating decisions. But don’t forget the questions: “to exercise or not to exercise” and “to relax or not to relax”. They easily could have been the title of the book.

You also need to know a little bit about what makes for good nutrition. That is the reason we eat — to feed our body so it can perform optimally. Would you do any less for your car? Would you feed it low-octane gasoline when it requires a higher octane? If you do, you know its performance and the longevity of your car will be compromised. Our bodies are no different. The information I present won’t be giving you orders, just knowledge. What you do with that knowledge will be based on the decisions you make.

I also share information about exercise and various stress reduction techniques. Again, you decide what works for you.

Did you ever see the Indiana Jones movie, *The Last Crusade*? Toward the end of the movie, when Jones must select which of the goblets had been the one from which Jesus had drunk at the Last Supper, the knight tells him, “choose wisely”. I say the same thing to you. **Choose wisely. Your choices (and the decisions that lead up to those choices) make you — literally.**

Here’s your first test. Between the following two desserts, which one would you choose?



Your first thoughts may be — the apple is healthier for me so that’s what I *should* choose. Sounds like your mental food police kicking into action. You may be also thinking, “Roberta would fail me right off the bat if I didn’t say the apple.” (I won’t. I’m not your food police.)

But what if the apple really wasn’t what you wanted but you ate it anyway? I’d say you made a poor decision. Do you know how many people have wanted a piece of chocolate and suffered with celery sticks, thinking that it was healthier for them? And then, still not being satisfied, end up eating some crackers next, figuring that that would shut their minds up about the chocolate. Of course, it doesn’t. They may end up eating several other foods that they think are healthy in their attempt to avoid the “forbidden” chocolate. (By the way, who said chocolate should be forbidden?) In the end, they’ll probably eat the chocolate since they couldn’t get their mind off of it. If they had chosen the chocolate first, they may not have eaten as much as they ended up eating. One bite might have been sufficient (asking themselves another question – “How much should I eat?”), but once they felt they’d been deprived by eating the celery sticks, crackers, etc., they mentally and emotionally had to make up for the deprivation.

It may turn out that once you’ve learned the art of decision making, you choose the apple. It is then done ungrudgingly. You might even choose the sundae and do so without guilt. Either way, you’ve been empowered!

To Eat or Not to Eat will bring back the pleasure of eating. Denial, sacrifice, and avoidance will be terms of the past. Acceptance, empowerment, and freedom will be your new mantra. You’ll be making the rules. I’ll show you how, but the final decision is yours. The responsibility of your decisions and the actions that result from your decisions are all yours. No longer will you be able to blame others for your lack of success, whether it’s weight-loss or some other aspect of your life. This is your life and you choose how you want to live it.

From learning how to make good decisions regarding *what* you eat, you’ll also learn how to make good decisions about how you *live* your life. This approach is the package deal. Learn how to use it in one aspect of your life and you’ll have learned how to use it in all aspects of your life.

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