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## **HUNGER IS THE BEST SEASONING**

**By Michelle May, M.D.**

You were born knowing exactly how much to eat. Hunger is your body's way of telling you that you need fuel. By reconnecting with your instinctive signals, you can reach and maintain a healthier weight *without* restrictive dieting and obsessing over every bite of food you put in your mouth.

Perhaps you've ignored hunger for so long that you've forgotten how to recognize it. Maybe you even blame it for your weight problem so you see hunger as the enemy. Perhaps you confuse hunger with all the other reasons you eat, like mealtime, boredom, stress or tasty food.

At the same time, you may have learned to ignore the feeling of satisfaction so you eat until you are stuffed and uncomfortable. Perhaps you "clean your plate," "never waste food," and "eat all your dinner if you want dessert," instead of stopping when you've had enough. And you'll perpetuate this cycle if you teach your children the same things.



### **Hunger is Your Instinctive Guide to Effortless (*well almost*) Weight Management**

Reconnecting with your hunger signals helps you lose weight. Here's how:

- If you eat food your body didn't tell you it needed, it has no choice but to store it until later.
- You'll eat less food when you're eating to satisfy physical hunger than if you eat to satisfy other needs. Think about it. If you aren't hungry when you start eating, how do you know when to stop? When the food is gone of course!
- You're more likely to choose foods that nourish you. If you aren't hungry but you're eating because you are sad, mad or glad, what kinds of foods do you want? That's when I want chocolate, cookies and salty snacks.
- Food actually tastes better when you're truly hungry. Hunger really is the best seasoning so you eat less but enjoy it more.
- You'll feel more satisfied because food is great for reducing hunger but not so great for reducing boredom, stress or other triggers.

## Trust Your Gut Instincts

To break out of the pattern of eating on autopilot, get in the habit of asking yourself, "Am I hungry?" every time you feel like eating. This simple but powerful question will help you recognize the difference between an urge to eat caused by the physical need for food from an urge to eat caused by head hunger.

I know from personal experience that it's not as easy as it sounds. The first step is to recognize that hunger is physical. It's not a craving, a thought or a temptation. By focusing on hunger as your guide, you can become your own internal expert about when, what and how much to eat.

**If you're not sure you're hungry, you're probably not.**

## Food for Thought

- What specific signs of hunger do you usually have?
- What other thoughts and feelings do you confuse with hunger at times?
- Do you know what to do when you feel like eating even though you're not hungry?

**Don't live to eat—love to eat.** Use hunger to let you know when food will be most enjoyable and satisfying.

Michelle May, M.D.

P.S. This article is part of our complimentary Am I Hungry?® Mini E-Course. Sign up for all four short lessons at <http://www.amihungry.com/mini-e-course-intro.shtml>.

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## MOM WAS RIGHT!

**There really are starving children in \_\_\_\_\_** (fill in the blank).

She was wrong about the cleaning your plate part though. Still, your little voice repeats this message and hundreds of others every time you think about eating. Until you recognize and change those messages, you'll stay stuck in your Overeating and Restrictive Eating Cycles.

So I had an idea. Visit our redesigned website [www.AmIHungry.com](http://www.AmIHungry.com) and let us help you undo those overeating messages by buying any of our books, DVDs or other tools. Then we'll make a donation to the **Hunger Project**. They'll match all **donations received before October 14<sup>th</sup>** dollar-for-dollar so please hurry!

The **Hunger Project** [www.thp.org](http://www.thp.org) is a worldwide organization empowering local leaders to provide opportunities for a better life to more than 30 million people in places like Bangladesh, Mexico, Africa, Bolivia, Peru and others. **Their goal is to enable millions more hungry people build lives of self-reliance and dignity.**

**My goal is to enable millions of NOT hungry people build lives of self-reliance and nearly effortless weight management.** Buy anything on [www.AmIHungry.com](http://www.AmIHungry.com) before Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> and you really will help feed the starving children in \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)..

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## GETTING THE WORD OUT

See Dr. May share her non-diet, no-nonsense approach to weight management on *In the Loop with iVillage* live from Chicago on October 5<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 EST. The link to this show and her other television and radio appearances and article quotes can be found at [http://www.michellemaymd.com/press\\_room.shtml](http://www.michellemaymd.com/press_room.shtml).

**Michelle is also available for speaking engagements**, retreats, corporate programs and conferences. Send an email to [MMay@AmIHungry.com](mailto:MMay@AmIHungry.com) or visit <http://www.michellemaymd.com/> to see speaking schedule, demo video or topics.

You can also read her new East Valley Tribune blog called "Consumed" at <http://blogs.eastvalleytribune.com/view.php?blogId=43>.

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## AM I HUNGRY?® WORKSHOPS NEAR YOU, BY PHONE, OR ON YOUR OWN

**Am I Hungry?® Workshops starting soon** in Annapolis, Maryland; Tipp City, Ohio; Somerset, New Jersey; Phoenix, Arizona and other cities. Go to <http://amihungry.net> and look in the lower right-hand corner for "Find a Facilitator."

**Am I Hungry?® Tele-Workshops** – Live, interactive 8-week workshop with the same great content from the privacy, comfort and convenience of your home. The next session starts October 17. **Register for the first session at no charge to decide if a Tele-Workshop is right for you!** <http://www.profc.com/app/netcart.asp?MerchantID=59012&ProductID=3549503>

**Am I Hungry?® Self-Paced Programs** - <http://www.amihungry.com/self-paced-programs.shtml>

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**PAY IT FORWARD!** If you've ever read anything in this Am I Hungry? E-newsletter that inspired or intrigued you, please pass it on! Your friends will get eye-opening content and a bonus copy of "101 Things to Do Besides Eat" to hang on their refrigerator when they order their own complimentary subscription at: <http://www.amihungry.com/enews.shtml>.