

## NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT THAT WON'T DRIVE YOU THINSANE

Finding a *genuine* non-diet dietitian is essential. As a figure of authority on healthy eating, a dietitian can powerfully support (or undermine) your progress. Here's how to find an ally who can help you on your journey.

### If you already have a nutrition professional.

Have a similar conversation with them to the one you had with your Doctor\*. If they already practice from a non-diet framework, great – skip ahead to point 3! If they don't, this may be the time to finish up with them, unless they are willing to take the journey into non-dieting with you. While experts are best, I have worked with many weight-focused dietitians who have become co-learners of a non-diet approach with their clients. This open collaborative learning can work, provided the practitioner has the time, interest and courage to do it!

### If you don't have a nutrition professional.

1. *Search for non-diet dietitians.* You will probably have to search for your non-diet dietitian. You can search the Association for Size Diversity and Health (ASDAH) *Find HAES® Expert* registry at [www.sizediversityandhealth.org/content.asp?id=32](http://www.sizediversityandhealth.org/content.asp?id=32) (the tool is a bit clunky, so just search by your country in the search criteria and explore the list from there!) or see my dietitians registry for non-diet dietitians I have trained and/or personally recommend at [www.glennmackintosh.com/health-professionals-non-diet-dietitians](http://www.glennmackintosh.com/health-professionals-non-diet-dietitians). Explore potential dietitians' websites to get a feel for them. Remember, Skype or Zoom consultations may be available if you can't find a non-diet dietitian locally (this is preferable to seeing a local weight-focused dietitian). It's okay to try out a few to find the right feel for you – this person could be supporting you for a while!
2. *Bite the gold.* The non-diet approach is becoming increasingly popular, and many nutrition professionals are claiming to uphold non-diet principles, but (knowingly or unknowingly) failing to deliver them. To tell if your dietitian is the genuine article, simply ask if they weigh or measure clients, or use other measures of body composition or 'fatness' - you can also check out if they have them in their rooms! If you have doubts, ask this (trick) question 'I want to lose X kilos, can you help me?' If they say yes and start talking about how to lose weight – even if in a 'balanced' or 'healthy' way – they're not a non-diet dietitian. If they aren't committal or dance around the question they may or may not be (they get this question all the time and some prefer to slowly introduce the new ideas to their clients over time). If they start talking about the problems of focusing on weight loss, suggesting a new way forward that de-emphasizes weight and focuses on overall health, or talking about the alternative of intuitive eating you're in the right place!
3. *Stay with them.* So often when clients come back after seeing a non-diet dietitian they say 'that was so different.' These guys really are a breath of fresh air! It then becomes important to keep the relationship going. See your dietitian every week or two, then stretch sessions out to every month or so, and then continue to 'check in' to ensure your new mindsets and habits have time to consolidate before you're right to go on your own. There's no need to feel embarrassed if you hit a struggle spot and want to go back to see them either, your non-diet dietitian is there to support you, not to judge - and they know how challenging it can be! Don't fall into the trap of thinking 'I already know what they're going to tell me'. You may already know it, but what *you know* and what *you do* can be worlds apart. A great health professional can help you stay motivated, accountable and bridge that gap.

\*See your [Letter to health professionals about weight neutral support](#) or refer to p. 47 of your book.