

Ep #452: Why We Eat Too Much



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With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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Welcome to *The Life Coach School Podcast*, where it's all about real clients, real problems and real coaching. And now your host, Master Coach Instructor, Brooke Castillo.

Hello my friends. I am so excited to share this podcast with you today. I have been doing a lot of coaching with all y'all on your weight and overeating and your frustration with eating too much food. And so I decided to go into my Get Coached Scholars program and pull out some parts of a course that I taught in there called Stop Overeating.

And I pulled on a video that's called Why We Eat Too Much that goes into some of the reasons why we overeat, and it's because of over-desire for food, which I think is really a fascinating way to explore what's going on with us mentally, and also over-hunger that is caused by our current food supply and options and our hormones.

So for those of you who are thinking about focusing on eating less and feeling more in the next year, I think you'll really enjoy this podcast. For those of you who are interested in taking my entire course on Stop Overeating, it is a workshop that is inside of Get Coached. You can join Get Coached now and get the entire course immediately. Simply go to TheLifeCoachSchool.com/join.

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So who overeats? Do you know why? Keep your hand up if you know why. Everybody knows why? Why do you overeat? You're bored. Okay, so you do it for entertainment value. Okay, who else? Someone else give me a different answer. Distraction, okay. Overwhelm, yeah, stress, yeah, pleasure, because you enjoy it. I just like the taste, I just like food, that's what I hear all the time. I just like food.

We're going to talk about those reasons. Now, there are personal reasons, there are cultural reasons. I mean, if you want to create an environment for

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overeating, this is how you do it. Basically what we've done in the world, right?

We have been taught and encouraged to overeat culturally, psychologically, neurobiologically, and hormonally. Every single way that we can be taught to overeat, we are, in every area. It's crazy. If you look at it culturally, the last 30 years we've had an increase of obesity, 30%.

I'm not even giving you all the stats on obesity because I know you've heard them all before, but seriously think about that. This is a huge increase. Here's the reason. The low-fat diet, they call it the equivalent of mass murder. Isn't that crazy this idea that the low-fat diet has contributed to obesity?

Which of course, obesity leads to all sorts of crazy death things in our environment. It sounds like such an innocent nice little thing. Snacking. One of my clients said recently, I have to remember it, "Nothing is worth snacking over."

Just having the idea like, I never snack for any reason, snacking is never necessary, snacking is always an entertainment event. Some people are like, "But I snack because I'm hungry." It's okay to be hungry. You don't have to answer hunger with a snack.

Packaged food and corn syrup, this combination in the last 30 years, not good. So if you think about what is normal for us to eat and why is that normal, I think a lot of us think three meals a day is just how we evolved eating, but that makes no sense.

Why do we eat three times a day? Habit? But it's cultural, right? We're supposed to have breakfast, you're supposed to have a snack, you're supposed to have lunch, and then you have a snack, then you have dinner. Why? Why is that that way? Have we even questioned that?

Now, people will say, "I don't want to be fringy, I don't want to have disordered eating, I want to eat like a normal person. I want to have three

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meals a day and two snacks. That's what normal people do." Most normal people are obese.

You have to question everything. The problem with questioning everything is your mind gets upset. It's like, whoa, whoa, whoa, why are we changing anything? It's all working fine, we're very comfortable with this, we have it all conditioned, it's all very efficient. And that's enough. That's enough to make us obese.

But then we're going to add the psychological reasons. When do we learn to cope with and manage our feelings? What grade is that? Anyone know what grade that is? When do they teach us that class?

When do they say, "Hey, just so you know, half of your life is supposed to be negative emotion because otherwise the positive emotion wouldn't exist. You want positive emotion, you have to have negative emotion. It's all normal, it's all going to be fine. Don't freak out when you have a negative emotion." Wouldn't that be great?

Okay, now that you're four, I can explain to you what an emotion is. When you have a negative emotion, don't freak out, it's all normal. This is how you deal with it.

But we create all these cultural and industrial reasons and advertising for overeating and then we don't teach you how to deal with any of your emotions. And in fact, the way that we teach you how to deal with emotion, where do we learn how to deal with emotion? Does anyone know? How do you get happy?

Just look at the TV, it'll tell you how. Buy something, eat something, or drink something, or have sex. Those are the answers. Preferably, just give us money and you'll be happy. I mean, think of that combination together. It's kind of horrifying. How does food step in? What does overeating take the place of?

Alright, neurobiological. So our brains determine when we eat, how much we eat, and why we eat. What is affecting our brains? How can we manage

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these factors? Do you guys know what's affecting our brains? Our brains are - if we rely on our body's wisdom to tell us when to eat, we would be golden, except that we've completely messed it up in there.

Sugar, terrible, right, what it's done to our brain? Our brain, our bodies are not designed to process sugar. They are not. And it used to be that sugar was very expensive so we only had just a little bit of it. But then they invented corn syrup, which is very cheap. And then our brains were like, what? This is perfect, this is great, we're going to live forever, just get more of this.

Think about it. The more sugar your brain is used to having is maybe a little bit of honey, maybe a berry or two, and processing that level of sugar, and then it not being available anymore. I mean, think about people - you drink a soda every day. All of the sugar that your brain is now having to deal with, that dopamine release in your brain, the brain having to down regulate to deal with it.

Your brain thinking that sugar is the most important thing that it's ever been exposed to. That's truly what your brain thinks. So then it starts thinking, "Get sugar, get sugar, get sugar, get sugar." And then the more you eat the sugar, the more you eat the sugar, the more important it thinks it is, the more important it thinks it is, and then it delegates that to the unconscious brain, primal brain, and then all you want is sugar all the time.

So take that horrible idea and combine it with Snackwell's. We had no chance, right? No chance. Don't eat any fat, only eat sugar, and oh, by the way, sugar will completely destroy your brain's ability to decipher desire.

And the last piece is hormones. So our hormones interact with our brains to create a body primed for fat storage and overeating, or fat adaption and freedom. Those are our two options.

The way that our culture has been in the last 30 years, which by the way was when we were all growing up and learning and training our body what to do, we were training it to basically be addicted to sugar and flour, to not eat fat, totally wrecked our hormones.

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So basically, our hormones are primed when you eat the way that we've been conditioned to eat on a low-fat diet, it is primed for fat storage and overeating. Our brain is constantly telling us you need to eat, you need to eat, you need to eat, with that urge. And our body is constantly telling us you're hungry, you're hungry, you're hungry, you're hungry.

We're screwed basically at that point. And we're being told to continue eating that way. And how many of you guys went on a low-fat diet and lost weight and just felt so miserable and thought there was something wrong with you, you're never going to be able to do it? Yes? Amen, sister.

Being in that space of there's something wrong with me. There was something wrong with you and you were causing it to yourself. And then the solution - this is what's so screwed. What's the solution that we gave ourselves for being overweight? Sugar. Eat more sugar. Eat less fat. The exact opposite of what we needed to do.

So what happens when we go on a low-fat diet when we're using food - and this is the thing; when we are psychologically struggling, we are not overeating tofu, right? We're not overeating salad, although some of us do in a crazy kind of way. But most of us are craving foods that provide that explosion of dopamine and serotonin in our brain.

So here's the idea; when you eat a lot of sugar or flour, your insulin goes up. Insulin is a hormone in your body. Its job is to store fat, is to send materials into the body for storage. That's what happens. And then you feel more hungry because your blood sugar drops, you feel more hungry, but because you have so much insulin, you can't just access your fat stores. You have to actually eat more.

So you get into this phase of eating, storing, eating, storing, eating, storing all of the time. Who knows what the most important thing to eat? Someone that I haven't told this to yet. The most important thing to eat when you're trying to lose weight. One thing that's the most important, you should eat it all the time, as often as possible.

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Who's fat? You're fat. The most important thing to eat when you're trying to lose weight is your own fat. We call it dining in. That's what you want to be eating. You have food on your body. That's why it's there. It's the only reason we have fat, right? It's food storage.

So when people are like, "Oh my gosh, I haven't eaten in an hour, I'm going to die," no, you're going to be fine. Just dine in. It's going to be okay. That's what fat adaptation is. Being fat-adapted means that you utilize your own body fat for fuel. Most important thing.

Insulin is a fat storage hormone. If I could give you one line to teach you about this food piece of it, you have to get your insulin down. Get your insulin down, you're going to become insulin-sensitive. When you're insulin-sensitive, then the fat can come out and you can dine on it. When your insulin is high, you will not release fat from your body. You will just eat. That's why you'll be hungry all the time.

Does that make sense? We're going to talk about it more but it's the most important thing. Get your insulin down. Now, when your insulin is high, there are two other hormones that affect your hunger. There's ghrelin and leptin.

Ghrelin tells you when you're hungry, leptin tells you when you're full. So we want ghrelin to be low, and we want leptin to be high. Here's the thing with leptin that I find totally fascinating. So leptin is a hormone that's produced by the fat on your body. So the idea is the more fat you have on your body, the more leptin you would have.

Leptin would be like, "Sister, we're good, stop eating." And in fact, let's go take a walk maybe or run, let's do something. And that's what leptin does. That's leptin's job. So they always study these poor little mice to figure out what's wrong with us, so they started studying leptin in mice.

You guys that listened to the webinar know this, and they basically looked at - they took leptin and measured it in these mice and what they found was that really obese mice had a lot of leptin. So what was the problem?

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Because they were trying to inject people with leptin. They thought that would be the answer when they discovered this hormone and it didn't work.

Does anyone know why it didn't work to just put more leptin? So when insulin is high, it blocks the signal of leptin at the brain. So leptin was very high. Now, in very specific cases, they found people that were low in leptin, they gave them some leptin, problem solved.

But most of us who are overweight have lots of leptin, but the high insulin blocks it. It's very disappointing. But here's the good news. When you lower insulin, leptin can then come in and say you're full, you're good, you're energetic, go do something.

So let's talk about what's happening with insulin on a low-fat diet. So I'm trying to lose weight on a low-fat diet so I'm eating a lot of Snackwell's, a lot of potatoes, and a lot of rice cakes, fudgesicles, licorice. So my insulin is way up here.

I'm blocking leptin. Nothing is telling me I'm full, so I'm starving all of the time. You guys know this feeling. You think you're starving but you're going through sugar withdrawal too, right? So you just feel terrible all of the time. So the answer is I need more fuel.

So at that point, what your body should be doing is going and getting some fat and providing it to you. But your insulin is so high, it's a storage hormone, it won't allow that to happen. Your only answer is to eat more sugar, which produces more insulin.

This is why our diabetes rate is completely off the hook. And this is exactly what was happening with my son. He was insulin-resistant already. So that was the exact thing that was happening naturally in his body, even though he wasn't on a diet.

So that's why he just constantly had to be eating because the insulin, everything was being resisted in his body with insulin, so it was just more insulin, more insulin, more insulin.

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What's crazy when you think about it is when someone has diabetes, the problem is they have too much insulin. Type 2 diabetes. They have too much insulin in their blood. And what happens is it stops being effective. The pancreas keeps trying to pump it out, keeps trying to pump it out, and it just doesn't work. And the way that they solve it - do you guys know how they solve diabetes or treat it?

They give you more insulin. It's the craziest thing. And that's what we're doing. We're trying to lose weight, we're hungry, we're not able to lose weight, so we just keep pounding more food that creates more insulin in our body. No wonder it wasn't effective. You can see it was the perfect storm, and it still is for a lot of people.

Even when I hear Gary Taubes say sugar is fattening, my brain is like, what? What do you mean sugar is fattening? It doesn't make any sense. Gary, do you not know Susan Powter? Fat is fattening, this is not right. Stop the insanity.

So what happens is insulin - you stop producing it. Your pancreas becomes so - it has to overproduce it because it's not working. So you basically end up with not having enough of it. Insulin brings your blood sugar down, so you have to have insulin in your blood, otherwise you'll die if you get too much sugar in your blood.

So they have to, in the beginning, give them some - for some people it's so bad that they have to give it to them to regulate it. But what's crazy about that is a lot of times they don't even have them change their diet. They just accommodate how much sugar they're eating with how much insulin they're taking.

I've been reading so much research about if you don't have to treat with insulin, don't. Change the diet and the insulin falls dramatically naturally and then it can keep up with itself. Because if you don't eat a lot of sugar, you don't need a lot of insulin, so it becomes less of an issue.

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The more sugar you eat, the more insulin you need and if your pancreas can't produce it and you're still eating sugar, then you have to give some to accommodate for the sugar.

Okay, let's talk about allowing and processing urges and feelings. So when you get a feeling that you don't want, kind of like a negative feeling, you can resist it, you can avoid it by eating, or you can allow it and process it. It's a very important distinction.

Most of us spend our entire life avoiding negative emotion. But if you've heard me talk about emotions on the podcast, think about the worst possible emotion you can experience when you have someone describe it. I always picture the Martian saying, "What's it like to feel terror?" And you're like, "Well, your heart flutters a little bit and you sweat and there's a little vibration."

That's how you would describe it, right? And they're like, what the hell is the problem? I don't understand why you're running hysterically screaming. What's going on or why are you eating so much food to avoid that? It's such an important question.

The worst feeling in the world is just a vibration in your body. It's not that big of a deal. What are the feelings that you're trying to avoid? Anxiety, why? Boredom, why? I think that's an important thing to know. What is it about yourself that you're not enjoying? It's so important to know.

You need to be a better person to yourself instead of relying on food to fill that gap. The goal in the weight-loss journey is to learn how to allow and process emotion. We have a misconception that feelings should be good and comfortable most of the time, and this idea ironically, is what perpetuates our misery.

We think we should always be happy and the idea that we should always be happy makes us miserable. So if we just accept that half the time we're not going to be happy, we're not going to be experiencing positive emotion, and we can be at peace with the fact that we have to have the negative emotion in order for the positive emotion to exist.

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There is no happy without sad. How would you define happy if you don't have its alternative? And yet, we don't want to experience any of those alternatives. We want to just numb everything and that's what we do. We don't get to experience while being in happiness because we're so focused on numbing ourselves out from our own life.

When we learn how to truly process emotion confidently, then we stop needing to escape with food. We become less afraid of feeling anything. When we aren't afraid to feel, then everything we do is done with courage. Can you see how most of the things that you don't do in your life is because you're afraid of the feeling?

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