

Episode: Accountability



Full Transcript

HEALTHY EATING FOR BUSY WOMEN PODCAST
WITH KAT RENTAS

Episode: Accountability

Hi, there. Welcome back to the podcast this week. So happy you're here. We have made it more than halfway through January and this is the time of the month where people collectively start looking for ways to be accountable with food. They've set their big, amazing health goals for the year and this is the time when motivation starts wearing off a bit. And real life is setting in. And these people are realizing that this may be a little harder than they initially thought. So, to solve this problem people are looking for all of the ways in which they can hold themselves accountable. And they can commit to those food plans. And follow through with those workout plans they set. It's funny I remember that every January it literally felt like do or die for me, every single year. Like, if I didn't get it together this month, then I would never achieve my goals. I put so much pressure on myself to begin my new healthy eating habits in January and then that was it. I was never allowed to fall off track again. And I would convince myself that I would forever be accountable from that point on. Logically, I probably knew that this method of thinking wasn't accurate. And that I couldn't just force myself to change overnight. Or over the course of one month. But at the time I was totally convinced. I believed in the power of those New Year's resolutions. And I one-hundred percent convinced myself that after January 1st I would forever be accountable with my health goals. Like, if I just willed that into existence that it would happen for me, no matter what. Now, obviously this was from a very desperate place. It was from a ton of wishful thinking. And this approach never, ever worked out for me. What would happen every single year, is I would start off January feeling motivated as hell. Like I could finally make this the year when I stepped into that version of myself who ate healthy effortlessly. But then, as January went on, the motivation started gradually decreasing. Until the end of January when I had zero motivation left. And I was hit with the painful realization that I was never going to really change. Or so I thought, right? Clearly I made big changes. But, the point of me telling you this, is I want you to know that if you're already starting to feel that

Episode: Accountability

lack of motivation to keep up with your healthy eating changes, that this is completely normal. And the truth is, that the motivation that you were depending on at the beginning of January, was always going to leave. It was never planning on sticking around. Because this is just the way motivation works. It should never, ever, ever be depended on to make changes in your life. Especially when it comes to changing the way you eat. It's literally just a spike in dopamine levels when you're anticipating a reward. And after that spike in dopamine comes the drop. And this drop normally starts to happen a few weeks after the New Year. When life starts setting in. And you're left with all of the same thought patterns, circumstances, and eating habits that you were left with before. Now, if you haven't listened to the episode "Healthy Eating Motivation" be sure to go back and listen to that after this episode. Because I go further into this topic. But the point is, that motivation was never what you needed to eat healthy this year. What you need to change your eating habits for the rest of the year is Self-Accountability. As in, you need to learn the skill of being accountable to yourself only.

So you don't need to be accountable to your best friend who's on the same food plan as you. You don't need to be accountable to your personal trainer. You don't even need to be accountable with me as your coach. If you're one of my clients. You need to be accountable to yourself. That is it. That is the only way you will ever make lasting change with your eating habits. Or really, with anything else in your life. And the truth is, most of us are way more comfortable being accountable to someone or something outside of us. Because we don't trust ourselves to hold ourselves accountable, right? Think about it. Back in the day, when I didn't trust myself to be accountable, and I wasn't keeping promises to myself with food, I would always look for things outside of me to hold me accountable. So I was forced to follow through with my food plans. Examples of this are finding an accountability buddy. It's buying

Episode: Accountability

all of these fancy planners for you to write your food plan in. Because you hope that this will motivate you to follow through. It's setting up reward systems for yourself if you eat what you say you're going to eat, right? Maybe you decide that you're going to buy yourself a new wardrobe if you eat healthy for the next few months. And, first off, there's nothing inherently wrong with this. Please celebrate your wins and reward yourself. There's nothing wrong with doing that. But, if we're being honest, you're probably not setting up that reward system out of pure self-love. You're setting up that reward system because you don't trust yourself to follow through with your food plans, and to hold yourself accountable, without the promise of a reward. It's because you're trying to convince yourself that you should be accountable and follow through with your food plan. And, I know sometimes in this podcast it can seem like I'm in the business of just calling you guys out on your shit all of the time. But this is literally because I have been there. I know how this works. And I know you're so desperate to be accountable with food, that you're willing to try anything outside of yourself to hold yourself accountable. Rather than looking into yourself to determine what it would take for you to trust yourself fully to follow through with your food plans. And with your goals. This is what being self-accountable really is. It's having unshakeable self-trust that you will keep your promises with food. So, if you don't have that unshakeable self-trust right now, it will be very difficult for you to stay accountable with your food plans long-term. I know this seems like bad news. But it's actually not. Because it means, if you're having trouble committing to healthy eating right now, it's not personal at all. It just means you need to practice the skill of self-accountability.

It's so interesting. Many women who get on a consultation with me who want to receive 1:1 coaching, tell me that they're looking for someone to hold them accountable with food. So they can finally eat healthy long-term, reach their ideal weight, and see those results that they've wanted for so long. But I want

Episode: Accountability

to share what I always tell these women. I tell them that me holding them accountable with food wouldn't serve them. As in, me tracking their food intake and checking in with them everyday to make sure they're eating the right things, wouldn't serve them. And what would happen, without exception, is we would work together, and they would make some progress, and then as soon as our coaching was over, they would go right back to the same eating patterns. What I tell them, instead, is that I'm not going to hold them accountable. I am going to teach them how to be forever accountable to themselves with food. Where they are the boss. They are the captain of the ship. They are the driver of the car. And they can trust themselves to step up and keep promises to themselves with food. This is the skill you need to develop to eat healthy with ease long-term. To reach your ideal weight long-term. If you can learn the skill of self-accountability, then you can achieve anything. Because you only need yourself to do it. And to follow through.

And I want to clarify what accountability is, because many get confused. Accountability is simply, according to the dictionary, "an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions". You are the one taking responsibility for your actions. In this case, with food. While understanding that no one else is going to do it for you. That you are the solution. Self-discipline is slightly different. And I want to clarify this, because many of you get these two confused. Self-discipline is defined as "the ability to pursue what one thinks is right, despite temptations to abandon it". So, basically self-accountability is holding yourself responsible for your actions. Self-discipline is taking action on what you say you're going to do, despite any temptation to abandon those plans you set. So, you can be accountable for your own self-discipline, right? You can hold yourself responsible for pursuing what you think is right. You can hold yourself responsible for follow through with your food plan. And having that discipline to follow through, despite it

Episode: Accountability

feeling really hard. This is a very small, but worth mentioning distinction that I want to make here.

Now, I want to touch on what makes self-accountability so hard for most of us. I know for me, trusting myself to be responsible for my own food actions felt impossible. It felt so hard to follow through with the promises I made at the beginning of each week with food. And I want to explain exactly why this may be happening for you. To do this, I want you to think about what it feels like to be accountable to other people. Or other things outside of you. So, most of you would never miss a meeting with your boss, right? If your boss told you that at 10am on Monday you two would be having a meeting, most of you would show up without fail. Or, for most of you, if you had a flight to catch at 5am on Friday, most of you wouldn't miss that flight. I know it's early, but most of you would make it onto that plane, right? I want you to really think about that feeling of accountability. And how it feels inside your body to be certain that you're going to show up. Most of us have no problem feeling that emotion, when it comes to other people or things outside of us. Most of us have the ability to be accountable when it comes to those things. So, then what's stopping us from creating that same accountability with ourselves? What's preventing you from doing this, is the relationship you have with yourself. And if you're not holding yourself accountable, it's because you don't trust yourself to follow through. I want you to really think about this. Next time you write your food plan, or your healthy eating goals, I want you to look at that plan, knowing that you're only going to depend on yourself to follow through, and I want you to see what thoughts and feelings come up for you. Most of you will likely experience feelings of doubt or maybe helplessness. When looking at that plan, where you're expecting yourself to show up everyday and follow through, you're likely going to feel heavy emotions. Because you're having thoughts similar to "I can't be trusted with food" or "I've never done this successfully before" or "I don't

Episode: Accountability

know how". Right? Your brain is going to come up with a list of really seemingly good reasons why you can't be trusted to do this yourself. This lack of self-trust is what's preventing you from holding yourself accountable with food. On top of this, you'll know from listening to this podcast, that your brain is comfortable doing what it's always done with food. So, making changes to your diet and creating new food plans will feel very, very wrong to it. Your brain intentionally brings up those thoughts that create feelings of doubt. That creates feelings of helplessness. Because it wants to convince you that any change is a horrible idea. Because it's seeking comfort and avoiding pain. It always wants to stay the same. When you're depending on things outside of you to hold you accountable in life, you're skipping over all of this work that you need to be taking to be accountable to yourself. To practice self-accountability you'll need to change the relationship you have with yourself. So, you're increasing that self-trust over time. And you're continuously providing evidence to your brain that you are someone who follows through with their food plans. And that you are someone who keeps their promises with food.

So, here's how you start practicing the skill of self-accountability. Because it is a skill. There's no person on this planet that was born being totally accountable to themselves. I used to be the least accountable person to myself ever. And this is a skill I have learned. And this is a skill you can learn. The first way you start doing this is by meeting yourself where you are. So, when you're creating your food plan, you're not going to plan your meals as if you're someone who eats perfectly healthy. You're not going to limit your food intake as if you're not someone who overeats. You're going to meet yourself where you are first. And for you, and many of my clients, this may mean you're not yet changing what you eat. So, you're not even incorporating a new diet yet. This may mean that your food plan is simply you planning what you're going to eat ahead of time,

Episode: Accountability

without changing the types of foods you're eating. This is meeting yourself where you are. Instead of focusing on changing your diet in your food plan, I want you to first develop the skill of keeping promises to yourself with food. Of holding yourself accountable with a food plan. So, just meet yourself where you are and make decisions with food ahead of time. Regardless of what food that is. As in, you're creating a food plan with all of the same foods that you've been eating. And then, once you've proven to yourself that you're someone who can keep promises with food, then and only then, will you move on to changing what you're eating. Alright? I hope that makes sense. Second, you need to decide exactly how you're going to react when you have a setback. As in, you need to decide how you're going to think and feel when it doesn't go as planned. So, for example maybe you decide ahead of time that you're going to cook at home for dinner. And then something happens where you find yourself getting takeout. And afterwards you know that this wasn't the plan. And maybe it could have been avoided. But what are you going to do after this setback? What are you going to decide to make your setbacks mean? Are you going to make it mean something has gone wrong and that you're not capable of keeping promises with food? Or are you going to stay in the energy of curiosity and compassion? And think to yourself, "Oh. That's so interesting. I wonder why I did that? Let me figure this out." Decide ahead of time how you will react to your setbacks. Because they will happen. This is a process. And decide when that setback occurs, how you will better help yourself succeed in the future? Always be curious and compassionate with yourself throughout this process. And then, third, you're going to evaluate progress along the way. This is the difference between you growing throughout your food journey or you staying stagnant. Whether you're actually evaluating your progress to see what works and doesn't work along the way. This means you're paying attention. And you're seeing what makes you tick with food. So you can keep planning for success, tweaking things as you go, and seeing what works. My most successful clients

Episode: Accountability

see their journey with food like one big, personal science experiment. Where they are the subject. And they're just really curious and seeing what works for them as they go. This is how they always find the answers. And this is how you ultimately create lasting self-accountability with food. You meet yourself where you are, decide how you're going to react to setbacks, and you're evaluating your progress along the way. And what this practice really is, is learning how to parent yourself with food. It's you learning how to take responsibility when it comes to your eating choices. And what's crazy, is many of us don't even know we have this responsibility, or this power with food, in the beginning. I certainly didn't know I had the option of parenting myself with food and taking responsibility for my food choices in the past. If I did know that, my history with food would have been totally different. And instead of feeling pressured with this information. Of knowing that you have total responsibility. I want you to feel empowered by it. Because it really is the best news. You are always in control. Not in a way where you're forcing yourself to eat the right things from this desperate place. But in a way where you know everything you eat can be an intentional, loving decision that you make. Regardless of what the food choices are. When you build this skill of self-accountability you can do anything. Not just completely change your eating habits. Not just reaching your ideal weight with ease. I know that's why you're here. But with self-accountability and with that unwavering self-trust you can do anything. I say this so seriously. And this self-accountability is available to you now. You just start by meeting yourself where you're at, keeping little promises with food gradually, and proving to yourself that you are a badass who keeps her promises with food. And you are someone who has self-trust where you know you have your own back. And you know you can trust yourself to make intentional decisions with food – always. Alright, my friend. I hope this was helpful to you. I can't wait to see you become accountable to yourself this year. And I'll talk to you next week.