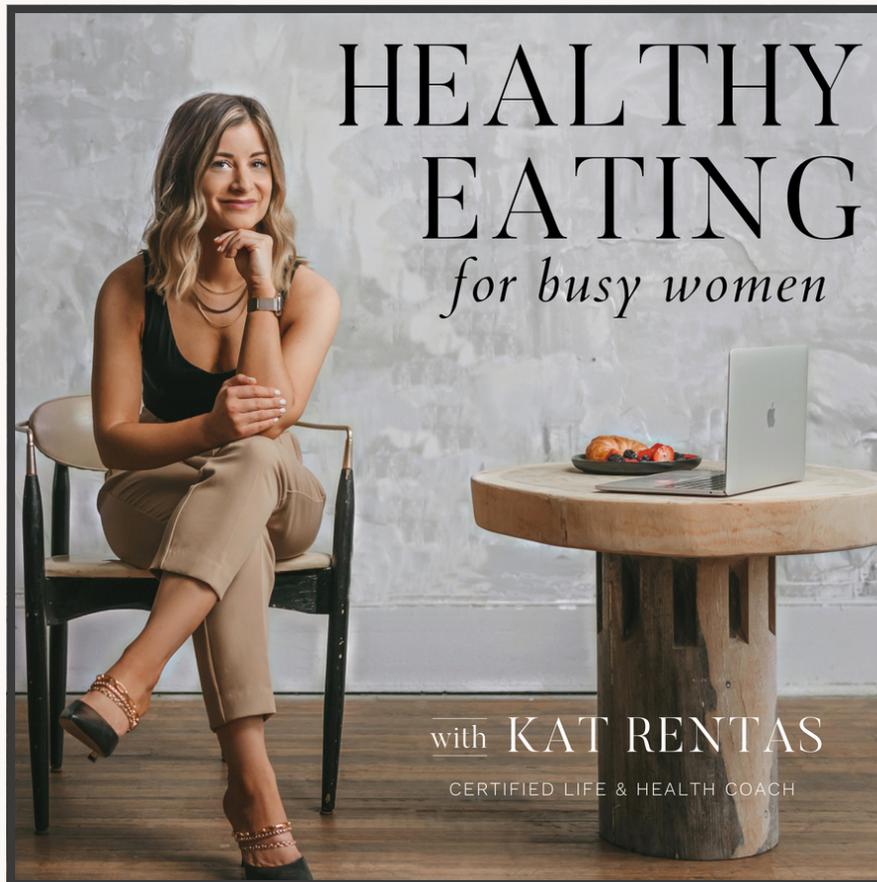


Episode: Emotional Cravings



FULL TRANSCRIPT

HEALTHY EATING FOR BUSY WOMEN
PODCAST WITH KAT RENTAS

Episode: Emotional Cravings

Welcome back to the podcast this week. Thank you so much for being here with me today. I am excited today to talk about the concept of emotional cravings. And I know that sounds weird, that I'm excited to talk about the concept of cravings, but this is a point of confusion I see with so many who are struggling to eat healthy long-term in a way that feels natural.

We get really hung up on this idea of having cravings and it really feels like this problem that we're helpless to when it comes to food will feel like we're just too addicted to sugar or carbs, or in my case it's cheese and chocolate in the past. And so for you, you can just start off today's episode, really just thinking for yourself how you identify your cravings now and what is the relationship you have to your cravings?

Why do your cravings feel like a problem? And we're going to have a lot of clarity in today's episode in terms of what our cravings actually mean, how we can solve for them, how we can identify them, because there is a lot of confusion on this topic. So I am excited to provide you that clarity today. And so here's how you'll know if your cravings feel like a struggle to you.

You can think about does it feel like that you're having a constant desire for food? So it doesn't necessarily mean that at every point of the day you're constantly having these heightened cravings, but it can also mean that it's kind of this constant low-grade hum that you're feeling to eat more. And this can often present for us in our thoughts, will constantly be thinking about food, our next meal, what we want to be eating.

It just feels very top of mind. And so think about if this relates to you, do you feel like you're having in some type of way, a constant desire for food? And then it feels like when you do eat your meals or make food decisions that you're never quite fully satiated or satisfied. So it feels like no matter how much you eat, what foods you eat, how much you indulge, it's never quite enough and you never fully get there in terms of your satisfaction.

And the cravings don't stop. The desire doesn't calm down and you still find yourself constantly thinking about food. I painted quite an extensive picture there, but truly consider if this relates to you, because what will happen when

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we're in this place, and it's not the same case for every single person, but in some type of way, we will feel helpless with food.

So we won't feel deliberately in control with our eating decisions because we're having this constant desire for food. And because of this, we feel like we're always eating, we're always snacking. We can't really recall what our meals actually looked like. A lot of it's feeling unconscious. And then we feel helpless when it comes to our overeating and our weight gain. And so if you're having this constant hum or desire for eating and pour food, it's likely that you're feeling helpless when it comes to your eating decisions.

And maybe as a result you're feeling helpless when it comes to overeating and weight loss. And if you can relate to this, then it's likely you in some way believe that your cravings are a problem. That this pool you have to eat more is a problem and that something is terribly wrong because you are feeling this way. And oftentimes what happens, I had this same thing as well, is well really think it's legitimate to believe that I just love food too much or I'm just too addicted to foods to have control with it. And really this can never be the case. And I don't want to sugarcoat this. I want to say this firmly here. It can never be the case that you just love food too much or that you're addicted to any food. There will never be a point in your life where you find a food so pleasurable that you do not have control with it.

But this is how it will present. So I want you to validate yourself for that. If you are in this place, it will present as if your desire and your cravings for the foods you love is the problem. And what we need to know to establish a boundary with ourself is that we do always have control with food by default. So for most of us, there is not some entity that is forcing our hand when it comes to our eating decisions, right? We have that deliberate control. But in order to help you see this clearly, you're going to need to understand the difference between natural food cravings that are expected and urgent emotional cravings that feel like this constant pool to eat more where it's never enough. Now, let's talk first about food cravings.

And we really want to establish an understanding here that it is completely

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normal and useful and healthy for you to have food cravings. And when I say food cravings, I'm referring to the natural cravings that come from your body. So I'm not referring to the emotional cravings which we'll get to later. Food cravings, they come from your body and they are not urgent or compelling. So they are completely natural.

And the function of natural food cravings is to communicate to us a need with food that our body is having.

So our body is actually always communicating to us it's needs with food. This is where we can eat healthy in the way nature intended when we develop this understanding that our body has everything we need to know what eating decisions to make. And so this is when we'll feel that slight pull to have more protein in a meal or maybe eat more and have more calories, more fat. This is how we can learn our healthy eating preferences and what foods most satisfy us by really developing a relationship to the natural food cravings from the body. Alright, so that's what I want you to consider first, what that would look like to just be fully aware of natural non-urgent food cravings from the body that are simply offering you suggestions on what your body needs to feel satisfied from food with your meals. Now let's separate that from the concept of emotional cravings. And this is what so many of us have struggled with, and you may be struggling with this now. Emotional cravings come from your brain. They don't come from your body communicating a need with food and they will always be urgent. It will always feel like an urgent pull where you are very, very compelled to eat in that moment. And the function of emotional cravings is to literally compel you to seek comfort in food so you can suppress any emotional discomfort that you are having.

So when we talk about emotional discomfort, we're just referring to vibrations in your body, emotional frequencies that are harder for you to sit still with. So when you think about things like anxiety or stress, fear, overwhelm, things like that, anything that feels uncomfortable for you to emotionally sit with, this is when emotional cravings will present with food from your brain.

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And the function is to compel us to suppress those uncomfortable vibrations that we're having in our body. Now here's the thing about emotional cravings. Their function isn't to eat more of the yummy foods that we love. The function is to suppress our uncomfortable emotions. So your emotional cravings for food aren't really even about food. Alright, stay with me here. They're not about food, they're about you seeking comfort for your emotions.

And this is why not everyone you'll meet in this world identifies as an emotional eater because they will have urgency and feel compelled to seek comfort in other ways. So we can overdrink, we can over Netflix, we can overscroll on our phones. There's a lot of ways that we can seek emotional comfort. For so many of us who struggle with food. Food is the most readily available source of emotional comfort cuz we've gotta eat.

We can't get away with not eating to stay alive. So we will have multiple opportunities to engage with these emotional cravings that we're having throughout our day. But I want to mention this, that let's say you have a partner. For a lot of you, it's your husband's who don't have an emotional relationship with food, where they're feeling emotionally compelled throughout the day to overeat and indulge. And what you can know about their human brain for people who don't have this struggle is they will feel emotionally compelled to suppress emotion in different ways.

And so when we talk about emotional cravings, I want you to set the boundary and have the understanding that this really is not about the foods or you loving the foods or you being addicted to the foods. It's just your brain's way of compelling you to seek emotional comfort. That is the function of these emotional cravings.

So this is why food cravings, the natural food cravings from your body feel like a suggestion. They feel like a tap on the shoulder and they're going to be more specific. Emotional cravings on the other hand that come from your brain will feel like a strong, compelling, urgent push to make a food decision. And really when you think about separating these two things for yourself, you really will be able to see that a food craving from your body isn't going to feel

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that compelling. It's going to be something that you identify that informs you of the eating decisions you can make to feel satisfied. You're not going to feel very compelled or convinced to make that decision. Your emotional cravings are going to feel like if you do not make that decision in that moment and something very bad is going to happen, you're going to feel very, very compelled.

And so this is why, just to sidetrack for a moment in my coaching program, own your eating habits. Something that makes it extremely different is we do not teach you how to eat healthy by forcing yourself through these really strong, urgent emotional cravings because that's a lot to compete with because this feels very, very compelling for you to overeat throughout the course of your day. The first thing we take clients through is we lower your stress levels and your emotional urgency that you are having.

So then it becomes easier for you to make intentional food decisions. So in other words, rather than pushing you through these emotional cravings to make food decisions deliberately, we lower the cravings first and we lower the urgency first by removing stress from your life. And so when you think about separating food cravings and emotional cravings, the most important thing to know, most important thing to know is that natural food cravings are solved by focusing on the foods.

And this is legitimate. We want to be able to provide our body the foods it needs to be satisfied. But urgent emotional cravings, which is what the majority of you are going to be experiencing, are only solved by focusing on the emotions and the emotional work. It has nothing to do with the foods. My friends, I want you to separate these two things completely. They are two completely different types of cravings solved in two completely different types of ways.

And if we believe that our emotional cravings are food cravings and we mistake these two things, then we will feel compelled to micromanage the foods thinking that the foods are the problem. And for so many of you, myself as well in the past, this is where we get it really wrong and we struggle so

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much to eat healthier and lose weight because we're misidentifying the problem.

And this is why despite all of the food planning we've ever done, all of the meal prep, all of the diet protocols, it still won't solve your emotional urges with food because it was never a food problem. You are not having emotional cravings with food because of food. You're having emotional cravings with food because of unprocessed emotions, and that work looks completely different than having a food plan when you solve for the emotional cravings and that is managed.

Your food cravings are so simple to solve. And I wanna offer that some of you will think you need more nutritional knowledge or protocols to solve your food cravings. I wanna bet that you have all of the knowledge you'll ever need right now. And when you solve your emotional cravings and that comes down, your body is going to be so ready to communicate its needs to you and tell you exactly what it needs from its meals.

So don't think that to solve food cravings, you have to completely outsource everything from your body because your body is ready to communicate when you're having heightened emotional cravings. This is going to take precedent and it's going to be difficult to see cravings as food cravings when you're having all of this emotional urgency around food. So that means before you can solve the quote unquote food problems, you've gotta solve the emotional problem. And the main takeaway from here that I want you to consider is you really wanna make sure you're not misidentifying emotional cravings as food cravings because then you will feel compelled to micromanage the foods in your external world.

You will think you loving foods is the problem. You will think that you are the problem, that you are addicted to the foods. None of this is the case. You do not need to micromanage the foods.

What you need to do is you need to begin acknowledging and understanding your emotions, which is a completely different skill that so many of us as high-achieving women, we're not taught. We were taught to perform. We were

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taught to take action, which means for a lot of us, we have developed this habit of bypassing our emotional world. And with healthy eating and weight loss, we can't get away with not learning how to process our emotions because then our emotional cravings will heighten and they will sabotage us from making progress.

And we don't want you competing with your emotional cravings to eat healthier and lose weight permanently. We want to heal them, bring them down and remove them as a struggle for your life. So then the only cravings you have are in the form of food cravings, which are neutral cravings that your body has to communicate and need.

It's having to you, right? So know this, we can satisfy a food craving. We cannot satisfy an emotional desire. So if you are trying to micromanage your nutrition, your food choices, your protocols to satisfy yourself so you don't emotionally eat, know that you can't satisfy an emotional desire you are having with food.

You can't ever satisfy that urgency from foods you eat that will keep increasing and developing if you do not make this an emotional problem. The good news, and this is the good news my friends, is we can satisfy a food craving that feels more neutral. And so I would love if you just took a moment for yourself to think about that difference for you, what would be the difference between neutral food cravings and urgent emotional cravings?

If you're here with me listening to this podcast, it's likely that what's most presenting are the emotional cravings.

So I want you to get specific. If it's not about the foods and it's about the emotions and escaping that discomfort, what is the discomfort that you feel compelled to escape through food? Where is that urgency coming from? Just play here and come up with some answers for yourself. It's going to be so helpful. And separating your food cravings or emotional cravings will give you so much clarity. It will remove so much confusion and it will give you so much freedom over making eating decisions.

Because when we misidentify these two things and confuse them, it's going to

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feel a little bit impossible and you're going to feel helpless with food. And so we want to remove a lot of that. So take some time with yourself, consider what I offered you in this episode today, and think about how would you need to see food cravings versus emotional cravings differently to be able to identify them separately within yourself. Alright, so I hope that this was so helpful for you today. If it was, let me know and I'll talk to you next week.