Episode: Fixing Your Eating Habits

Full Transcript

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Hello. Welcome back to the podcast this week. I hope your week has been going exceptionally well so far. And if it hasn't, I hope you're able to relax and take a little bit of a break with me here today. I cannot believe we are in the first week of February. So, so crazy. And as we get further and further into the year and as you're working on those healthy eating goals, I want to bring up a concept that likely needs a bit of attention. And that is the concept of fixing your eating habits. Now, I'll explain in this episode exactly what I'm talking about here. But first, I want to share what fixing my eating habits, or trying to fix my eating habits, looked like for me back in the day when I was really, really struggling with my eating. Really struggling. And it was years and years of me picking up and putting down different methods of healthy eating. Where no method I tried ever stuck with me. I was always disappointed in myself and in the methods that promised me change. Because none of it ever worked out long-term. And I never ended up quote unquote fixing my eating habits. And this approach of trying to fix my eating habits started when I was pretty young. Like most women, I was thrust into this societal narrative of women trying to fix their bodies. Like as women, an overarching main goal should always be fixing our weight, fixing our health, and fixing our eating habits. So we could look the way we wanted to look and meet societal standards of beauty. So, things like diets, cleanses, and other methods that promised fixes to our eating habits were very normal at the time. It's just what was done to change the results with our bodies. And to fix the way we ate. Now, eventually, I obviously realized that these restrictive cleanses, diets, and weight loss programs don't really work out long-term. But, what I didn't realize so quickly, is that I was left with this mentality of trying to fix and control my eating habits. And this relationship with food, and my body for that matter, still prevented me from getting the results I wanted with food for some time. This mindset of needing to fix my body and fix

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my eating habits prevented me from becoming a naturally healthy eater. Because eating healthy was still coming from this desperate and graspy place. Where I felt like my eating habits and body were something that needed to be fixed. And we all know what this energy feels like, right? If you relate to my past at all, I know you know how this goes. You'll approach healthy eating with this kind of urgency. Where it feels like it's now or never, like if you don't change your eating habits you'll never be happy, and like your real, true, authentic self on the other side of weight loss and eating healthier. Basically, it will feel like there's all this pressure associated with changing the way you eat. It's that feeling before you go on a crash diet because you're obsessed with getting the results with your body you want. It's the feeling before you tell yourself you'll eat nothing but what's on your meal plan before the big event. That feeling of urgency and desperation stems from the mentality that your eating habits and body are things that should be fixed. Because in your mind, they are broken. And this is a sneaky mindset that will keep you stuck. Any approach you take with healthy eating will feel punishing and just plain awful. It won't feel fulfilling or enjoyable to you. Which is what healthy eating is always supposed to be.

Now, it's important we understand that most human beings are very desperate for control. As in, if you have a human brain, it's pretty much guaranteed that anything that implies you don't have complete control will freak you out in one form or another. And this is especially true when you feel like you don't have direct control with food or your weight. And there's a specific reason for this. It's because as human beings, we all have a primitive brain. And your primitive brain is your survival brain. The purpose of it is to seek pleasure, avoid pain, and to be efficient. It's purpose is to keep you alive and safe from harm. Which means, your primitive brain absolutely hates uncertainty or anything unfamiliar to it. It hates anything that seems like it's out of your direct control. The idea of

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being "out of control" in any way, shape, or form will trigger a stress response. And this stress response is your brain's way of alerting you that you're in danger and that something needs to be done to escape that danger. And the important thing to realize about this stress response is that it's designed to react to real and perceived threats. Real threats are if a lion was chasing you in the wild. Perceived threats are anything else in your life that's even remotely uncertain. And what's uncertain to you right now may be your eating habits and your weight. You may not know exactly how to control your weight. Or how to control what you eat to reach that ideal weight. And this uncertainty is extremely unsettling to your brain. Because of how your survival brain is wired. So, what do most of us try to do to find this control with food? So we can escape that unsettling uncertainty we're feeling? We will try and force ourselves to control food by attempting to follow strict food plans. Or cleanses. Or weight loss regimens. Because we want that certainty. We want that feeling of control with food and our bodies. This is exactly why you will go into a new food plan or meal plan with this sense of urgency. Where you feel like if you don't follow through then you're going to die. Or that your life almost depends on it. Because what your brain wants is for you to escape the uncertainty and lack of control it feels like it has with food and your body. It's not so much about the result you want at the end of that food plan. That's not what you're actually that desperate for. It's not about the weight loss or health goals you have. That desperation for control comes from your brain's unwilling to feel that uncertainty. Because control to your brain is all about feeling safe. So, to feel more in control of your eating habits, where you feel like your eating habits need to be fixed, you're going to try and force yourself to eat a certain way. You're going to try and force yourself to follow a food plan where you're eating the right things. And then it starts to feel really, really difficult. Because what you're doing here is you're working against your current brain. Right now,

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your brain is comfortable making the food decisions you've always made. Because, remember, it hates uncertainty and loves what's familiar. Because it knows that's what keeps you alive up till this point in your life is what you've always eaten. So, if you try and do new things, follow a new food plan, it will be like, "Hell no. We're not doing that. That's a terrible idea. What if it kills us?". So, new methods of eating will feel very wrong to you.

So, I know this is a lot to take in. But here's what happening in the simplest terms. You feel a natural need for control with food because your brain hates uncertainty. But then, when you try and control food by forcing yourself to eat a certain way, your brain also hates that approach, because it's not comfortable with the uncertainty of doing new things. And eating new foods. So, yes. This is why it feels like you're stuck between a rock and a hard place. You're so desperate to feel control with food. But then when you try and control food, everything in your mind will be like, "Absolutely not. That's a terrible idea". And our lovely, amazing brains are responsible for all of it. But guess what the solution is to all of this? The answer is to learn to relax into uncertainty with food.

And to change your eating habits, follow through with new food plans, and to eat in a way that your brain is not yet familiar with, you need to be willing to relax into uncertainty when it comes to food and your body. Which means, you'll need to be willing to feel uncertainty rather than react to it. Because uncertainty feels uncomfortable. But, it's natural. Because it's just coming from your primitive brain that wants to keep you safe. Uncertainty has been and will always be there. Instead of trying to fix your eating habits and challenges with food, you're going to need to embrace that uncertainty.. Because when you're willing to embrace uncertainty and embrace your eating challenges, you're not in a rush to fix them. And you get comfortable not knowing what the answers are right away. Which you'll need to get comfortable with, because it's

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impossible to know the answers right away when it comes to your body and eating habits. This is necessary for you to create healthy eating habits that feel natural. Because I'll use my clients as an example. When we work together, we go through an entire process throughout a number of months to dissect their current eating habits and to figure out a new method of eating that works for them. That is completely customized to them and their needs, preferences, and goals with food. And if they're coming into the coaching and this process with desperate, urgent energy to fix the problem, then that's what needs to be addressed right away. Because that energy will get in the way. It will prevent them from fully embracing the journey. Because they need to have patience and compassion with themselves so they're not in a rush. So we can actively be curious throughout the entire coaching process and figure out what makes them tick in terms of food. So if you're in a rush to fix your eating habits from that desperate place, it will prevent you from doing the deeper work that needs to be done with food. Because it's meant to be a process that takes time and intentionality and curiosity. And doing this process successfully, where you change your eating habits for life, comes from your willingness to be here now. As in, it comes from your willingness to be completely present with the current version of yourself. With your current weight, eating challenges – all of it. And the truth is, most people aren't even willing to glance at their current eating habits. Or their current selves for that matter. It can feel so much easier to focus on the future and who we'd rather be. But to change your eating habits for life, you'll need to be willing to be with your current self. With that uncertainty. You will need to practice accepting your life, body, eating habits, relationship with food, life challenges – right now. To get different results, you will have to practice accepting and loving your current circumstances with food and body. You will need to be fully present in your body now to improve your

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relationship with it. You will need to be fully present with your eating challenges now to improve your relationship with food. And you can ask yourself "Am I willing to be here, in this body, with these eating challenges, right now? With this uncertainty? Where I'm not feeling the need to escape it? By trying to fix it all?" This is so important.

Now, from a higher level it's important to realize that if you're feeling desperate to fix your eating habits or body right now, it's because you have living in the belief that you are "need fixing" or that you are "broken". And this will leave you feeling unworthy, incapable, and un-whole. Because what you're doing here, is you're chasing perfectionism. The desperation for control with anything, especially when it comes to food and body, is inherently punishing. Chasing perfectionism with food is one of the most self-punishing things you can do. Because it's not possible. Our eating habits were not meant to be perfect. Cravings, urges to overeat, emotional eating – all of these aspects of eating we're trying to fix are natural. They will always exist and come up for you in some way or another throughout your life. Life will always be uncertain. And our bodies were never meant to be micromanaged. If you chase perfectionism and control with food, you will always feel like your authentic self is on the other side of healthy eating. You'll want to eat healthier because of how you think you'll feel on the other side of it. And here's the big secret. You can be whole and "perfect" right now. Because you are worthy by default – always. All of the humans are one-hundred percent worthy. You don't need to weigh a certain amount or eat a certain way to be better. You are already one-hundred percent worthy by default. It's already done. And once you stop trying to fix yourself with food, you will be on a clear path towards true healing and happiness with food. And this is how you develop healthy eating habits that feel loving, natural, and easy for you.

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Alright, my friend. I hope this gave you some valuable perspective. I know I could have really used this perspective back in the day so I'm so happy I can share this with you. And I'll talk to you next week.