

# Episode: Healthy Eating Goals



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HEALTHY EATING FOR BUSY WOMEN PODCAST  
WITH KAT RENTAS

# Episode: Healthy Eating Goals

Hello, my friend. Can you believe it? We have made it to the end of 2020. At the time this is coming out we are only a couple of days out from the New Year. And this week between the holidays and New Years is one of my favorite times of the year. Because it's really a time for reflection on what we accomplished over the past year. Or on what lessons we've learned. And we get to think about our goals for the upcoming year. Which is super fun. In terms of eating healthy and losing weight, this is most definitely the time of the year for New Years resolutions. Like clockwork, every year on December 31st, I would set my resolution for the upcoming year in terms of how I wanted to eat or how much weight I was going to lose. And it was during this time that it always felt really good, right? It feels very fulfilling and motivating. Because it's at this point that our brain's are anticipating that reward. Our dopamine levels are going up. And we're excited for what's to come in terms of our health. But something I've also done in the past, and I know many of you have done this as well, is set those fulfilling goals only to lose sight of them by the end of January. Or maybe if I was lucky at the end of February. Every year looked exactly the same pretty much. I would legitimately believe before that New Years countdown that next year would be different. I would finally have the eating habits I wanted. I would have the fitness routine I wanted. I would have the body I wanted. And life would just be shiny, magical and great. That this year was the year I would finally feel fulfilled and happy with myself. Now there's a good chance you may be sitting there listening to me like, "Yup. I totally get this. Every damn year this is how it goes". And I want you to know that this is so normal. And there is a way to prevent this from happening. Where we're setting these exciting goals only to let ourselves down a month later. I'm going to explain how you can set healthy eating goals in a way that actually allows you to make progress and get the results you want.

But first, I want to talk about the purpose of goal setting. Because it's really where so many of us go wrong. Especially at the start of a new year. The

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purpose of setting a goal, whether that comes to healthy eating or weight loss or anything else in your life, isn't to become a better person. It's not to reach something on the other side that is better than where you are now. The purpose of setting goals is only for fun. Because you are already perfectly whole as you are, right now. Achieving a goal doesn't make you a better person. And it actually doesn't make life better. Achieving a goal can simply enhance your experience as a human being by participating in the growth that is available to you. This is the truth. And it's important I clarify that the purpose of me telling you this, that goals are only for fun, and that you're perfectly whole as you are now, isn't to make you feel good. I want you to feel good, but that's not why I'm telling you this. It's because it's true. Achieving a goal, like healthy eating or losing weight, can't make you a better person. Because how you see yourself as a person, whether that's quote unquote better or worse, is determined by your thoughts. It's not determined by the number you see on the scale. Or whether you followed through with your meal plan that week. You can decide that you are the best version of yourself right now. And that anything else is just a bonus. This is looking at your goals from a place of abundance. Which means, you're looking at your goals from a place of already having enough now. You're not trying to achieve healthy eating for weight loss to be better. You're setting those goals for fun. To engage in the growth that is available to you in this life. Most of you, including me in the past, will approach your goal from a place of lack. Which means, you set goals from a place of not having enough or being enough right now. The purpose of the goal is to make you better. Or to make your life better. And coming from this place of lack, will only lead to you feeling inadequate, pressured, hopeless – all of the emotions that won't really make it easy for you to achieve that goal with ease. When you approach your goal from a place of not having enough, or lack, you will create more lack in your life. Because you will be coming from those heavy, not enough, emotions.

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Here's an example of how this can work with food. Maybe you set a new year's resolution to stop emotionally eating and lose 20 pounds this year. In your mind, achieving this goal will allow you to finally be happy and achieve the version of yourself you've always wanted. Like, you've never been able to be your true self without that weight loss. So, you're excited and you're very motivated to make this happen. You tell yourself it's do or die. So you create a new food plan, maybe a workout plan, and you set the start date for that first week of January. And you find, the first week goes pretty well. You feel motivated and you're able to stick to that food plan. Honestly, you thought it'd feel a bit harder than this. So, you're excited and feeling good. Like maybe this is something you can stick with. Then, a couple of weeks later, you notice you start craving unhealthy foods and you start losing your motivation to workout. You notice that you're wanting to fall back into old patterns. And at the time, you make this mean all of the things. You start thinking, "I can never trust myself to get the results I want". You think, "I'm not capable of change" and "What's the point of even trying?". And you may think, "I'm just totally out of control with food". So, because you're feeling horrible and having all of this doubt, you end up self-sabotaging. And going back to your old ways. Because the experience of achieving this goal feels terrible to you. Nothing about it feels fulfilling. You're trying to suffer your way to the results you want. And it's unsustainable. All because you believe that achieving this goal will make you a better person. And like you aren't enough right now. You're putting all of this weight and pressure on yourself to change. And in doing that, you're building this brick wall in front of you. That's preventing you from growing and moving forward with these healthy eating changes. When you set goals to be better, this will be your experience. You will make the entire process personal to you. And you will make your setbacks mean that something has gone wrong. Alternatively, when you can set goals from a place of abundance, and from the place of having exactly what you need right now, then you will create more

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abundance in your life. Because how much better does it feel to set healthy eating goals from that place? Where eating healthier, losing weight, and caring for your body is just for fun? And just to enhance your experience of life? It feels so much lighter. This is the best possible approach you can take with you into the new year with your goals.

So, in this scenario, you're not setting goals to eat healthier and lose weight because you think you'll be happier on the other side. You set the goal because, why not? It's for fun. You don't feel like you have to create that food plan and change your eating habits. You do it because you genuinely want to. Because it's fun to grow. And it's fun to take care of your body and see those positive changes in your life. It's enjoyable to show yourself what you're capable of. So, you create the food plan and maybe the workout plan. You feel really good the first week. Things are going great. But then, the same thing will likely happen as the other scenario, and eating healthier and working out will feel more difficult after a couple of weeks. Because motivation has left, which is natural. And your brain is going to feel like the new actions you're taking are wrong and inauthentic to you. Now, if you're just totally detached and making progress on this goal for fun, how will your thought process be different? What will you make this mean? It's going to be a lot lighter, right? From the place of lack, you made that resistance mean you're not capable. And that something is wrong with you. Because you have all of this pressure to be this person who eats healthy, because in your mind that version of yourself is somehow "better" or more worthy. From a place of abundance, you don't make that resistance mean anything about you. Because the goal is just for fun, you can allow yourself to just be curious and compassionate. When a setback occurs, or you feel that resistance, you think, "Oh. That's so interesting. I wonder why that's happening?". You get genuinely curious. And you see yourself as the most fascinating science experiment in the world. You also can think, "Of course I

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feel resistance right now. I'm new to this. And I'm learning. How can I help myself move through this resistance right now?". Basically, you're able to look at your healthy eating goals more objectively when you come from abundance. Because when it's all for fun, there's no negative emotion attached to it. So you can move forward with curiosity and compassion. And this is a non-negotiable to following through with your healthy eating goals this year.

So, as you're creating these resolutions and goals for this upcoming year, really evaluate if you're setting those goals from a place of lack. Where you feel like you're not worthy as a human now, because you eat a certain way or because you're not at the weight you would like, and that achieving that goal will make you more worthy. This mindset and approach will keep you stuck. I promise you. Instead, I want you to start asking yourself, how is my life already whole and perfect as is? Right now? Then, bring that energy of abundance into your goals for the new year. This isn't to say that you don't want things to change. You can want to end your overeating and reach your ideal weight. But do so from a place of having enough right now. This completely clears the path for you to achieve those goals with ease. Where you're having your own back along the way. And to add to that, achieving any goal can't possibly make you more worthy. Because you're already 100% worthy on default. This applies to all of the humans. You are 100% worthy, Oprah is 100% worthy, and that criminal on death row is 100% worthy. Worthiness doesn't come from what we do or don't do. We are automatically 100% worthy by just being human. Whether you choose to spend the next year changing your eating habits or whether you spend the next year continuing to emotionally eat. Your worthiness isn't up for debate here. It's always at 100%. This is just the way of it.

Now, I know there's a few of you who may find some of this information unsettling. That goals are just for fun and that your experience of achieving the goal should be from a place of abundance. From a place of having enough. This

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may be unsettling to you, because you may think if you do this that it will lessen your chance of achieving the goal. Like, if you go too easy on yourself that there's no way you can trust yourself to follow through. And I hear you. But I want you to know why you feel this way. Right now, you think that if you're not punishing yourself to the results you want with food, that it will not work. You think you need to give yourself that tough love. That you just need more willpower. And that you just need to eat the right things. But don't mistake tough love for self-punishment. I give my clients tough love every now and then. And that just means I'm not afraid to tell them the truth, even when they might not want to hear it. But self-punishment is totally different. You're not telling yourself the facts. You're trying to force yourself to a result, or a goal, instead of doing the actual internal work necessary to achieve that goal. You can achieve a goal just for fun. In fact, this gives you the greatest likelihood of achieving that goal. Because you remove the resistance from it.

Alright, so now that we know that the purpose of setting goals can just be for fun, we also want to understand why setting goals is important to our brain. As we've talked about a lot on this podcast, your brain is hardwired to seek pleasure and avoid pain, always. So, without a goal that gives your brain focus, your brain is always going to want to choose the thing that makes it feel most comfortable. Which is the scope of healthy eating is usually eating more foods. Or eating the foods that don't really serve us, right? So, in the moment when a negative emotion comes up for you, maybe you come home from work feeling overwhelmed, your brain is going to want to reach for that instant-gratification, quick-fix to make it feel better. It's going to want to cover up that emotion with food. Without a goal, you have no concrete reason to not do these things. There's no thought of "Maybe I should choose my future instead". It's all just very primitive and present. A goal simply gives your brain focus. So, while they can be just for fun, in a more functional sense they also allow your brain to

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observe your progress from a higher level so you're not constantly just repeating the past with food. Without a goal your brain will pull from past eating experiences to determine what food actions you should take in the future. And the purpose of a goal is to allow your brain to stop and consider whether you want to continue taking those actions. On top of this, a healthy eating goal allows your brain to understand that this is a journey, right? There are specific mile markers of progress that need to be made to achieve your goal. Meaning, when you set a goal, your brain is less likely to make your setbacks or struggles with food mean as much. Because you have this higher level awareness that you're on this journey to achieving a goal. And that steps need to be taken to do that for yourself.

And I want to clarify that your healthy eating goal for the new year can be anything. But I highly recommend not setting a healthy eating goal that is focused on what you're eating. So, for example I wouldn't set goals for eating a certain amount of calories. Or a certain macronutrient balance. Or cutting out sugar entirely. Nothing that strictly limits what you're eating. I recommend setting healthy eating goals that are higher level. That are focused on how you're eating instead of what you're eating. So, some examples of goals you could set for this year. "Processing my emotions instead of eating through them". "Honoring the decisions with food I make ahead of time". "Checking in with my hunger and fullness throughout the day". "Making each setback with food a lesson rather than a failure". "Looking at my body each day and having compassion for the thoughts that come up". "Looking inside of myself for the food answers rather than dieting". So, see how this works? I want you to feel empowered by your goal instead of restricted. Notice how your goal makes you feel. If it brings up feelings of doubt, helplessness, or desperation, I would consider taking a look at that goal and changing it. Start with a goal that allows you to feel empowered. Maybe right now, the goal shouldn't be to stop eating sugar. Maybe the goal for you is to simply acknowledge and process one

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negative emotion per day. And if you don't know your big, healthy eating goal for the year, that's okay too. Maybe instead of one big goal, what you need right now is to begin observing your eating habits and seeing what's there. But here's the one big thing: there is no rush. I know there's an energy that comes with the new year. Like, now is the time to prioritize our eating habits and achieve those goals. Like, it's now or never. But I want you to see every single day of this next year, like it's New Year's Day. Like every morning you wake up is an opportunity to put yourself and your eating choices first. From a place of fun. From a place of love. And from a place of having enough right now. Because at the end of the day, there is no finish line for our eating habits. We are eaters for life. It comes with the package of being a human being. So, set those New Years goals knowing that there is no finish line. And that the goal isn't to reach a certain weight or eat a certain amount of calories by December 31st of next year. It's all just for fun, because this work with healthy eating is for life. Alright, my friends. Happiest of New Years. Thank you for sticking with me today. And I'll talk to you next week.