

Episode: Owning Your Food Decisions



Full Transcript

HEALTHY EATING FOR BUSY WOMEN PODCAST
WITH KAT RENTAS

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Hello there. Welcome back to the podcast. How are you doing this week? I hope you're doing so well. I'm so excited. This past week, I had a number of amazing ladies join my Own Your Eating Habits coaching program. This is my private coaching program where I teach women the tools to change their eating habits step-by-step in a customized setting. So we're not giving them a specific meal plan to follow and then saying "Alright, good luck". We're really dissecting and evaluating their eating habits at the deepest level, so they can create the eating habits they want from the ground up. And there's something really inspiring to me when collectively as women we say yes to ourselves and we invest in ourselves in such a powerful way. And with my clients who invest to work with me, it's really amazing to watch what happens when they commit to this process. I'm always telling my boyfriend how much my clients inspire me. They are literally my heroes and they make me a better coach. And it's a privilege to watch them grow every week. So, there's nothing I love more than enrolling new women into this experience. It really fills my heart. And, if you don't know about my program or you're new here, you can learn more at katrentas.com/coaching. But, speaking of my program, "Own Your Eating Habits" that's exactly what we're going to talk about in today's episode. This is really the foundation behind what I teach in my coaching practice. And when I say "own your eating habits" I'm not saying that you should be forcing your healthy eating habits into existence. Or that you should have more willpower and be punishing yourself even more to get the results you want. Really, what I'm saying when I say "own your eating habits" is I'm referring to the process of making your eating decisions feel like your own. Where everything you eat feels like a conscious and intentional decision you want to be making. So you're never left wondering why you ate the way you did and you're never feeling out of control with food. When I was thinking about my program and how I wanted to present it, I thought back to what women were saying when they wanted

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coaching. And they felt out of control of their eating habits. The language that these women used was "I don't feel like my eating habits are my own" and they would say "Nothing I eat feels like my decision". And it's so interesting to me, because this is exactly how I felt. And I feel like for many of you listening as well, this is a perfect description of what we experience with food in today's diet culture and society. Because of years of trying to find the healthy eating answers outside of us, and trying to stick to restrictive food plans, we're left feeling like we have no idea what the food answers are. Like our results with food and our bodies are totally out of our control. And that they're outside of us. So, this is really what I mean when I say we need to own our eating habits. In the sense that we always want to take responsibility for them, but in a way where it feels empowering. And our eating habits feel like our own. Many of you will already be familiar with my food history, but I was always a very big planner. I would meticulously write up the food plans I was going to follow each week, I would buy really pretty planners to write the meals, and I would even buy really nice cookware to motivate myself to create healthy meals. And part of me was on the right track. There's nothing wrong with doing these things. In many ways I was making the process more enjoyable by doing these things. But, even after all of this, I would find myself at the end of the week having no idea how I made my eating decisions. It's like at the beginning of the week, I was one person who had it all together. And then, by the end of the week, I was someone who was totally out of control. And when I looked at the data, I saw that around mid-week, every single week, no matter how much I planned for success, I would begin my overeating episodes. I would begin unconsciously eating every single meal, where I had no recollection of what I ate, how much I ate, how full I was – none of it. My eating decisions became totally unconscious. And, if you know what this is like, or you're in this place now, I know it can feel unstable. I know how emotionally hard this can be. But

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know, that this means nothing about you or your ability to eat healthy long-term. All that's happening here is a lack of awareness. And in case you haven't already realized, none of us are really taught how to be aware of our eating decisions. And we're not taught what causes our eating decisions in the first place. And that's really the theme of this podcast right? We're always talking about the cause, which is what brings you to make eating decisions, rather than just the symptom, which is what you're eating. So, when food feels out of control, and you don't feel like your eating decisions are yours, it's just because you don't know why you're making the decisions with food you do, and there's a lack of awareness. You don't know the reason why you're making food decisions, even when it feels unconscious to you. And the only places you make food decisions are from the brain and body. So, first, let's talk about how you make food decisions from the brain. I like to say that there are two parts of your brain that matter when it comes to the way you eat. There's your emotional mind and your deliberate mind. And your emotional mind is really just your primitive brain. So this is the part of your brain that is the strongest and fastest. It's wired to seek pleasure, avoid pain, and be efficient. And this is the part of your brain that seeks comfort through food. It hates anything that makes you uncomfortable, including negative emotion. And it's from this brain that you'll feel like your eating choices aren't quite your own. Because this brain works almost automatically in terms of the urges it gives you to overeat. Now, how we can begin owning our eating choices is when we focus on the deliberate mind. Now, the deliberate mind is just representative of your prefrontal cortex. And it's from this part of your brain that you make all of your intentional decisions. It's where you're planning and setting goals. Where everything feels under your direct control. Now, here's the part that gets us into trouble. Our emotional mind is much, much quicker than our deliberate mind. So, for instance, let's say your boss tells you at work that you're not

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meeting expectations. Well your primitive, more emotional mind, is going to take this very personally. This will happen in an instant. So maybe it will think "I'm not good at this job" which will make you feel the emotion of maybe inadequate, let's say. And this is all happening in an instant. How your brain chooses to think and feel in any situation is how it's been conditioned. It's a flawless system that acts quickly. So you're feeling this inadequacy in your body and it feels uncomfortable. This primitive, emotional mind hates feeling pain and it seeks comfort. So, it's going to provide an urge for you to overeat. Even though you already planned your meals and made food decisions ahead of time from that deliberate brain earlier this week. So, the deliberate brain makes the food decisions ahead of time. And the emotional brain has tantrums throughout the week that can sabotage our eating goals if we're not managing it. And there's a lot that can go into this. This is something with my clients that we get deep into in terms of their minds. But, the idea here is that you want to be super aware of when this emotional mind is working in this way. Because, if you're not having awareness of this emotional mind, it's going to seemingly make your food decisions for you. It will seem like the real you, is the one who planned for healthy eating. And then it will seem like this whole other person who made the wrong food decision throughout the week. This is why. It's that disconnect between that emotional and deliberate brain. So, watch your emotional brain go to work throughout the week. Watch it seek pleasure and want to avoid pain. Watch the thoughts and emotions that come up automatically for you. And watch your emotional brain try to escape those emotions through food. We do have the power, as humans, to override the decisions our emotional brain wants us to make. And this just comes by being willing to say no to that brain when it's having a tantrum, right? Sometimes this can feel difficult to do, but it can be done my friends. I promise you. So this is a one-thousand foot overview of how we can own our eating choices from the

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mind. Now, let's talk about how we can do that from the body. Because, while our mind and body do work together, we can separate our approaches when it comes to making eating decisions. And why you make the food decisions you do, in terms of the body, is because of our natural eating cues. So you have natural hunger cues, fullness cues, satisfaction factors that your body gives you to help you make the best eating decisions for it. And most of us, as humans, have not been taught to listen to these food cues that our body gives us. Which means we will have been suppressing them throughout our lives. And when we're not accessing these body cues, that tell us when to start eating, stop eating, when we're satisfied from food, we're left wondering what the right eating choices are. And this can lead us to eating unconsciously where we're kind of wandering around not really knowing why we're eating the way we do. And I want you to just become aware of it. And I want you to slowly practice getting in touch with food and your body. I want you to check in every once in a while throughout the day and notice when your body is telling you it's time to eat. When it's telling you that it's had enough food during a meal. When it's telling you that it is needing more of a certain food and less of another food. When it's telling you that it feels really satisfied. Really get curious and observe what answers you get from your own body. Because if you come from this place of total curiosity, where you're writing things down and being a detective of your own body, you're going to come up with so many answers that tell you why you eat the way you do now, and how you can better make food decisions that serve you. Doing this in itself will allow you to feel like your eating choices are your own. As I mentioned, whether it's with mind or body, if you feel like your eating habits aren't really yours, it's just because of a lack of awareness. And this is something I'm still practicing. I'm working at getting more in tune with my mind and body every single day. It's work that never stops. But it's so, so worth it. Because you realize you have all of the power and

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responsibility to make your own eating choices. And the reason why this is the foundations of my coaching is because to eat healthy and see the results you want with your body, you will have to own your food choices. As in, you will need to get to a place where everything you eat becomes a deliberate decision. And this is not in a way where you feel restricted, confined, or punished. It's in a way where you feel completely empowered, knowing you have control of all of it. I know you may have been taught that to be in control of your eating choices you need to practice willpower and grit. But this just isn't the case. A softer, more intentional approach doesn't just feel better but it's actually necessary here. Instead of approaching your eating habits with desperation, so you can get them under control, you have permission to approach your eating habits with curiosity instead. So you can observe and look at the ways that you already have control. So, I really hope that this gives you perspective on what it really means from that higher-level perspective of what it means to own your eating habits and be in control with what you eat. And something I'll mention, is if you find your brain feeling helpless to your eating choices. So, maybe you realize that you fell off track again and didn't keep promises to yourself with food. Instead of indulging in those emotions of helplessness, because trust me, they're going to come up for you, I want you to acknowledge those feelings, have compassion for them knowing that they don't really mean anything about you, and then decide to step into what you do have control over. So, instead of giving up and throwing in the towel, I want you to evaluate why that happened. What led you to neglecting your food plan in the middle of that week. Get really curious. This is where you step into owning your eating decisions, rather than letting them happen to you. So you're not being a victim of them. And if you want to practice owning your eating habits, in the simplest way possible, you can start saying to yourself before you take a bite of food, "I am choosing to eat this". Regardless of what food it is. It doesn't

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matter. Before you start a meal, you think to yourself, "I am choosing to eat this food. This is my decision." And watch how that makes you feel. And watch how it changes the way you show up to your eating habits. I can't wait to hear how this approach works for you. As always, thank you for being here today. And I'll talk to you next week.