

EPISODE 18

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:01] AS: You know battling food and your body doesn't work. You want to love and accept yourself. And because you're insatiable, you want results too. And wouldn't you know, you bring the same intensity to your life, wanting to maximize your time, potential, and experiences you have here on this beautiful and wondrous planet Earth.

Fair warning, it will be a rollercoaster. But for those insatiable, that's your prime time to thrive. We're here to say "YES!" to the hunger of wanting it all. I'm your co-host, Ali Shapiro, a health coach who helps people end the losing battle of dieting and find a truce with food.

[0:00:44] JB: And I'm Juliet Burgh, nutritionist, fitness expert, and a co-owner of Unite Fitness Studio Franchise.

[EPISODE]

[00:00:52.2] JB: Episode 18 on the Insatiable Podcast, "Why Loneliness Triggers Overeating". This topic is very near and dear to my heart as Ali knows. When I first experienced or had kind of a recognition of my own personal overeating, I associated it a lot with feeling very lonely in my life at the time. Being in a bad relationship, having a job I didn't like, living in a city where although it's New York and there's a million people everywhere, I felt very isolated and like I didn't know anybody, and so I found myself coming home and just eating myself away literally and figuratively.

So this episode is going to bring some clarity to a lot of you I think on why is it that loneliness might trigger overeating and what exactly is loneliness? How do we define it? I think that I was talking to Ali a bit before we started recording that I think of loneliness not necessarily as feeling like you don't have enough people in your life or friends, but more as a level of discomfort with the self. That there is some sort of un-comfortability with who you are, what you are, where you are, etcetera, etcetera. So Ali, care to share a little bit about the definition of loneliness?

[00:02:16.6] AS: Yeah and I love that you brought up New York because I have always — love New York and then there are so many of you but it feels like such a lonely city to me. People are very isolated there.

[00:02:27.2] JB: Yeah. There are so many things about it that I love and I was born and raised there although I don't really feel like I have much of a connection to it when I visit now. I last about a day or two before I really cannot wait to go home because it is so frenetic there. There is such an energy that I just don't jive with currently in my life. It's a fun place to visit and also, I might have mentioned this before but every time I'm in New York, I crave sugar.

[00:02:55.3] AS: Yeah.

[00:02:55.5] JB: And when I lived there, I remember distinctly there's always these donut carts and they sell donuts...

[00:03:04.7] AS: Bagels.

[00:03:04.5] JB: ...muffins, bagels like food cart outside and I would be in the middle of my training day, training lots of clients and I would be so burnt out and this was in the throw of me overeating and I'd be thinking about food all the time and I couldn't wait to go escape and go to one of those carts. I would get a muffin, a donut and I would go eat it in secret. It was crazy.

[00:03:32.7] AS: Well, the energy of a place really, I mean it totally influences you, right? It's how much stimulation that wears you down and all that kind of stuff. So it totally makes sense. I'm in the same way. I think I mentioned this in an earlier podcast that we recorded. It might not be live yet but Carlos and I went off sugar for all of February and then I went up to New York and it was the second day and I was like, "I need chocolate." I get the same way.

I've realized my pattern is slow and steady even though I am really enthusiastic and I gun for things like me in general, I thrive better in slow and steady. So New York is wonderful to dip in and out of, but back to loneliness which I think brings a great point. You can be around a ton of people and still feel lonely, but I love that you talked about it being uncomfortable with yourself because that is one of the root issues and it creates this domino effect.

So what the research has shown about when people feel lonely is it isn't about the amount of people around you and it isn't also about how attractive you are or how skinny you are, right? We like to think like, "Oh," even if it's unconscious we're like, "Once we're thin it's going to be easy to be around people. All that social anxiety will be gone," right? But it's not. Even if other people perceive you as popular or intelligent but the definition is really about your perceived isolation, that's how lonely you feel.

Which basically means do your relationships meet your social needs? And so if you're uncomfortable with yourself, often times you don't know what you actually need in social situations and what I've discovered and we'll talk about today especially around food, you often throw your own needs under the bus to look good because you think it is going to give you that connection when really, it just reinforces this domino effect of feeling lonely and nothing feels more alone than being with a bunch of people you should feel connected with.

[00:05:32.6] JB: Oh for sure, that level of feeling like a misfit. I know that was something that I struggled with and still to this day, I catch myself feeling like I just don't necessarily fit in.

[00:05:46.0] AS: I often wonder, do we all feel that way?

[00:05:48.3] JB: Probably, I hope.

[00:05:49.5] AS: Yeah. I feel that way too. I often thought about it. I grew up in a neighborhood where all the moms stayed home and my mom worked and my grandma came over, which I'm very thankful for, and I had a great relationship with. But back then, moms working today seems very normal but growing up in the 80's, that wasn't and we were the only family who didn't go to church. Everyone went to the same church or a division of it which is why I got baptized when I was five. I was like, "I want to go to church."

[00:06:21.6] JB: You asked to be baptized at 5?

[00:06:22.7] AS: Yeah.

[00:06:23.6] JB: “I saw this on TV. Can I have that happen to me too?”

[00:06:26.7] AS: Exactly and my parents were like, “Okay.” They were teachers, so they were like, “You can learn from this,” and then my parents were really progressive and I grew up in a really conservative environment. My dad was Jewish. People thought my last name was Italian because there was no Jews around. So I guess my point in sharing this is that we can all trace back to how we felt different in some way, shape or form. Then if you always struggled with your weight or body image, that really creates years and decades then off think of feeling less which then isolates you even further in that domino of feeling lonely.

[00:07:05.1] JB: I think that it depends a lot too how what you’re taught about feeling like you don’t fit in. If you’re thought that, “That’s totally okay.” Like you’re saying, “We all feel like we don’t fit in. It’s a fine thing to feel.” If you’re open about it and if you have these discussions with your parents or somebody influential in your life versus if you isolate yourself, don’t talk about it because you’re afraid of sounding weird or no one will understand me, that further affects your relationship to yourself and how you feel about yourself.

[00:07:45.2] AS: Oh my God and our culture sends so many conflicting messages right? It’s like America is such an individual society, right? And it’s about being different but you can’t be too different. We always joke that it’s like if you’re really wild and really different and poor, you’re crazy but if you’re really wild and rich, you’re eccentric, you know? There’s so many layers of what we say is “acceptable” to be different and so we navigate that.

I think what’s interesting is, we often use food to then numb out those feelings of loneliness but then food itself also creates the barrier where we can’t get our social needs met. So here is some ways I think that it shows up for people that they probably don’t even realize they’re doing it because it’s so automatic but this is what I’ve seen with my clients and I know I definitely did this when I was really struggling with food and thought that being thin would then make me feel.

Even though I have always been pretty socially, I’m an extrovert, I love conversations, there is certain pockets of places especially in dating and all that stuff that I was always so very on guard about but some of the ways that people begin the isolation process or begin feeling alone is they will compare themselves to someone thinner. Like you are out to eat with a group of

people or everyone and maybe you feel everyone is thinner but you immediately size up the other person or the other people.

Maybe there is some ways you come up short, maybe there are some ways you come up less then but ultimately, there then feels like a hierarchy. It's unconscious but all of a sudden it's like, "Oh, I am not the popular pretty girl," and so we shut down that way and we don't offer our personality or what often would be the common ground to really connecting with that person.

So that's one way. Another way that I see people doing and hearing with my clients is they don't want to look like they're on a diet, right? We all have this idea of what a healthy choice looks like and so if they pick the salad or if they say no to the dessert when everyone else is choosing that and I mean every social situation in America revolves around food.

[00:09:57.0] JB: I was going to say that there is pressure. I think regardless of if you have a healthy relationship with food or not, there is some strange pressures with eating regardless. No matter where you are. Just so much conflicting information out there, so even if you have a healthy relationship with your body and food when you got to eat it, it can be really challenging for anybody.

[00:10:19.1] AS: Oh my, totally. Right, there are layers for sure. Oh my God, totally right? Even if you pick on a certain restaurant or you're not God, yeah, it goes on and on for sure. Yeah, definitely but these are some of the places I think are the most vulnerable for most people and so people think it's not a big deal to say, "Oh, I'm just going to get dessert," or, "I'm not going to mention that I'm experimenting with making lunch, my biggest meal of the day because I am eating so much."

[00:10:48.5] JB: Judged.

[00:10:49.5] AS: Yeah but it's the perception right? You actually don't know. I had one client that that was her homework. I'm like, "I want you to have your biggest meal at lunch," and for her, she felt more comfortable to start a conversation and saying, "I'm exploring the Europeans do having my biggest lunch," and it actually for start of this amazing conversation at her work.

People were like, “That does make more sense,” and then someone was like, “I think that’s why I get heartburn at night because I eat.” And so when we have gone on for years of feeling alone and isolated and different, we get more and more afraid of doing things like that because it feels like such a risk but often, it’s our own internal experience.

[00:11:29.4] JB: What are we afraid of you think? Rejection? What is the underlying fear? Rejection like I think a lot of it is that we tend to walk around with all these negative self-talk like, “I’m too fat. I’m too ugly. I’m not smart enough. I’m not acceptable. I’m different, I don’t fit in with this click. I just don’t feel right about it.” And I think that one of our biggest fears can tend to be that someone’s going to find out that that’s true and they’re going to admit your biggest fear which is that you are right about all of that.

[00:12:06.9] AS: Yeah, I think to even narrow it down more, I think it’s not so much rejection or not being alone as much as being left.

[00:12:15.9] JB: Like abandonment?

[00:12:18.1] AS: Yeah like you know me because if someone doesn’t know you at all and they write you off, it’s kind of like — I mean it sucks but it’s easier to take that less personally than “I opened up, here’s who I am and then you decided to...”

[00:12:33.0] JB: Vulnerability.

[00:12:34.0] AS: Yeah and rejection is vulnerability. There’s plenty of ways. I know I get terrified of being rejection by people I don’t know. So I don’t want to dismiss that but I think when it comes to that, the fear that is great that makes us try to do this, it’s like a dance of like, “Okay, is this good? Am I being good?” And I use the word good as a place holder for approval but I think especially and part of why this is, it’s so terrifying is if you are in this mindset that’s always trying to look good.

And I just don’t mean by your body image but in general right? Never making a mistake, never failing, what you’re also doing from a mindset perspective and this is what I call the “good girl” mindset or “good guy” mindset, I work with men as well is, all of a sudden you are completely

defined in relation to some sort of external stimuli. So without that external approval, when you are in that good girl mindset, without that external approval or validation you don't exist.

So that is not only is a rejection or being left but it's not existing. It's feeling invisible and that is huge, you know we talked about with Dr. Bodenheimer, the episode on trauma about people who are traumatized or in general, this constant negotiation of being visible or invisible and I think a lot of us are terrified of being invisible. So we went kind of deep.

[00:14:02.2] JB: Yeah, no for sure. I think we can go even deeper. We'll get a little deeper for a second and then we'll come back to it, I promise.

[00:14:10.9] AS: Come back for breath.

[00:14:12.1] JB: I always just go back to the whole idea of uncertainty in life. That we have no idea why we're here. We don't really know who we are, like really who we are, what we are and there is this level of underlying uncertainty with everything and we don't know the future. So I think that that creates this level of discomfort and we don't want to disappear. I think eventually, I would love to do an episode on death and fear of death. We could go down that road later.

[00:14:45.9] AS: No, I would love that because I mean, not to interrupt, but that's something right now, I don't know if I told you but I'm struggling with. Not that I think I'm going to die, but is there somethings after we die? And it's something that my grandma who passed away last year at this time, we used to always talk about and she believed in reincarnation and the universal mind.

But it's something that like the past six weeks I seriously, in fact I woke up last night and I was like, "What happens after we die?" And Carlos is laughing at me because he's like, "Ali, you can't control the outcome. You can't change it if you don't like the answer and no one is going to tell you one way or the other." So it's something that, oh my god, I am totally grappling with right now because it brings back to how do we make meaning?

[00:15:31.5] JB: Yeah, for sure. That actually the first time I ever grappled with that was I was three or four years old. It was the strangest thing and I was laying in my bed and it was a little

different than “what happens when we die?” But it was more of like, “Well how did we come to exist?” And if someone brought up the big bang theory or something that I overheard in an adult conversation, I was like, “But how did that happen? It doesn’t make any sense,” and it doesn’t and it won’t. I think you have to come to terms with that uncertainty. You don’t know. There is not an answer to everything and I think it’s so important to just get comfy in that space.

[00:16:15.0] AS: Oh that takes a lifetime.

[00:16:16.6] JB: It takes a lot, but going back to the level of discomfort with the self, you have to get comfortable in the uncomfortable.

[00:16:27.7] AS: Totally and I think you have to get comfortable really owning what you want. What do you need out of a social relationship? What do you need out of a partnership? A lot of my clients as we work like their blood sugar becomes more resilient so they start to have less cravings or whatever but one of the things, the last places, the last hold for them is social events, right? They’re like, “I am pretty good. I don’t have physical cravings anymore and I know I’m not doing this but if everyone’s there,” they think it’s like, “I want to participate and connect. I feel left out on some level.”

But what it really is on a deeper level is there’s a lot of social anxiety there and so we project. You can’t see it until you don’t have it anymore in a weird way unless you know how to look for it, is that we project all the un-comfortability that we have in those social situations. It’s all uncertainty, right? “Am I getting along with this person? What are they thinking?” No one stops to think, “Do I like this person?” Often.

[00:17:29.5] JB: It’s a level of insecurity.

[00:17:31.8] AS: Yeah and so all of that gets put onto food and then food looks so attractive and tempting because it’s like, “Oh,” especially because the foods that look the most attractive are alcohol or pizzas or carbs, right? Something very intense to numb out the social anxiety because that stimulation will totally block out the un-comfortability of, “What am I doing here? Do I want to be here?” All those kinds of — or especially like with the opposite sex. If you’re out

at the bar and it's like, "Oh my god, there's so" — or maybe not the opposite sex but whoever and if there's the potential for romantic interest I should say, that's so nerve racking.

[00:18:14.8] JB: So there's a level of this going on for I would say 99% of people whether it's you hide behind one drink or you're like a client of mine who would drink a bottle of wine before every social outing and then would embarrass herself because she would be really, really inebriated.

[00:18:37.7] AS: Well then it confirms her story right? It confirms like, "Oh my god, I'm so awkward. I need this," when really it's the bottle that is causing the issue.

[00:18:46.7] JB: Yeah. There is a level I think for a lot of people but where I think that it becomes an issue, and we've talked about this with emotional eating in general, is how you feel about it. Do you feel powerless with it? Do you feel like you have no control over your choice of whether or not you're going to have a drink or you're going to overeat? I think when it becomes this feeling of, "I can't stop myself."

[00:19:17.8] AS: I'm so glad that you brought that up because I think that happens a lot of times not in the moment of the social event or at the bar or wherever when you go home and then you eat in private and that, I know I really struggled with that, like coming home at night, being alone and that was when it felt like I could be good in social situations.

Because the pressure to be good, especially when I was 30 pounds heavier, I was like, "Oh, I don't want anyone judging me thinking I'm not trying," and I don't know if I consciously thought this but now looking back, that's clearly what was happening with me. So then it was like, oh my god, all of that anxiety I was just tolerating and tolerating. Then when I would go home is when I would need the release valve.

[00:19:59.3] JB: For sure, well like I said, I wasn't eating those donuts and muffins in the gym. I mean I was on the streets of New York City in the back alley.

[00:20:12.9] AS: That's why I call it the good girl disease, you weren't doing crack but your version of crack.

[00:20:18.1] JB: And then when I was home at night, it wasn't in front of my partner. He wasn't even home from work yet and it was me, I knew how much time I had until he would be there and it was like, "Okay, I have one more hour where I can stuff myself, in private."

[00:20:32.8] AS: Yeah, so the loneliness I think that's a challenge with emotional eating is everyone is always looking for a linear relationship like cause and effect. I feel this and so I did this when it's so much more circular. I mean there's multiple reasons and multiple root causes based on the different beliefs we have but to your point, it's how we feel about all of that stuff.

If you come home and you're like, "Oh I am still single and I am the one who didn't get talked to when my skinny friends always get the attention," then that's how I'm feeling about "not being chosen" at that night. Or "I went to this social event and I said the stupidest thing," and then we tend to think everyone else is still thinking about it when often times it's a blip.

[00:21:21.0] JB: The stories that we create are much more damaging than the actual scenarios that occur.

[00:21:26.8] AS: Oh completely, that's why in *Truce With Food*, we open up first week and we were like, "Okay, this is what's really going on. These are the beliefs that are causing these uncomfortable feelings," and I just opened up the spring semester and everyone was like, "Oh my god, this is amazing," and one woman actually started crying because she's like, "I actually have hope. I've tried everything and when I actually look at my feelings and why I'm feeling that way, it changes everything."

[00:21:55.7] JB: And when she says she's tried everything, do you mean just different plans or has she tried any kind of peeling back the layers of the underlying causes?

[00:22:06.4] AS: Yeah and I think that's a great question because unfortunately, I think when people think they have tried everything, so this person in particular had tried OA, which I went to one meeting and I was like, "The premise that you can't be in control of your food," I was like, "What the F? I survived cancer and I can't survive a bagel? There is something definitely wrong here."

So she had tried that, she had tried other diets and that's very typical, Weight Watchers, so I think a lot of us think we've tried everything but everyone is just looking at the plate when you actually look at how you relate to food and what causes you to then want to eat. And it's even different than, at least my approach is even different than therapy because therapy is super helpful and it tends to look at the patterns and all that stuff.

But I'm looking at how do I create this autonomous mindset? So I call it the Boss Mindset, but how do I go from trying to look good to the outside world? Which then means I'm only defined by that, which then of course you're going to have feelings everyday one way or the other based on what other people want versus this other mindset that, the research calls it "psychologically self-employed."

But being a boss, people understand better at that so I call it that but it's about "What am I choosing?" And then what happens is and initially when people hear that they're like, "Oh my god maybe that's selfish or maybe that's just arrogant?" But when you start to realize that, "What am I choosing? What do I want?" You start to find people and causes and meaning that align with what you want. It's not putting you in an adversarial relationship with life.

I wrote an article about overeating and loneliness and I'll put it in the show notes but I use the example of when you're in this good girl mindset, when it comes to loneliness and wanting and needing your social needs met, you're like a passenger and you're just hoping different people get in and out. Every time new people get in though you're like, "Okay, how do I act now? How do I act now?" Versus when you're in this boss mindset...

[00:24:11.3] JB: Yeah because when you are completely sure of yourself, it doesn't matter who gets in or out. You're able to just be yourself with anybody.

[00:24:21.4] AS: Yeah and the key there is when you are sure of yourself and I think also, it's important to realize that confidence and all of the stuff that's on it is continuum, right?

[00:24:30.0] JB: Totally.

[00:24:30.7] AS: Because I think that you and I are both very sure of ourselves yet I have doubt and uncertainty all the time.

[00:24:35.1] JB: Oh I am so insecure. I'm the first to admit it.

[00:24:37.7] AS: I wouldn't say you're insecure. I think you just know that life is uncertain but you still do things anyway.

[00:24:43.8] JB: Yeah. But I like being insecure. I like owning the fact that I have a level of discomfort in certain situations because I think it makes you more human and I want to have friends that — now when I say insecurity, I don't mean being small. I mean you can still be a boss and still have things that you're working through.

Still have hang ups about things, still feel a level of insecurity in different areas, like I said, it makes you so much more human and quite frankly, those are the people that I want to be around because it's like, "Tell me more about your hang ups. This is great."

[00:25:25.0] AS: Right and that's the paradox, is that when we feel confident enough, we can talk about those things and expose them. Not even expose them but share them, I would say but when you're in the boss mindset, you're the one driving the car. And again, this takes time. You can't turn on a switch and do a couple of tips.

But all of a sudden, you are not looking — when you tend to be in the good girl mindset, there tends to be this black and white thinking like I'm either good or bad or I'm right or wrong or it's all or nothing. Wersus when you're a boss, you're looking for the right fit. You're not, "Everyone has to like me," or, "Everyone has to approve of me." Or like, "I have to eat all the healthy food."

No, actually what's healthy for me, what's good for me? What type of person is in alignment for me and what type of relationship? I think about the relationship Carlos and I have and both of us were ambivalent about marriage but then I met him and I was like, "He is someone that I would want to spend the rest of my life with". I don't think I need to get married but he's someone.

We're both so quirky. I honestly don't know if either of us could be with anyone else but our quirkiness is also what bonds us. I should say our intensity, we are both pretty intense in our own ways but the irony is — and the reason I use boss mindset is because it really is like being in a startup. As a business, you're going to convert what? 2 to 3% of people, if you're lucky. That's a great conversation rate, right?

[00:26:48.0] JB: It's so funny that you say that, the whole business thing because Ali and I recently had one of my clients Morgan Forer who is a sex therapist and that episode, when is that episode going to be?

[00:27:00.8] AS: That's going to be Episode 19, yeah coming up so don't miss it. April 27th, mark it down.

[00:27:05.0] JB: Amazing! So, what we were talking about...

[00:27:07.0] AS: Oh that is next week.

[00:27:09.0] JB: Yes, yes. So next week, you listen in for my client. She is an amazing sex therapist, relationship counsellor and one of the things that we were talking about in having a healthy relationship of course is communication, right? The other thing is re-evaluating your relationship from time to time. I took the advice from our show and I just celebrated my five year anniversary over this past weekend with Macky.

[00:27:38.7] AS: Woo-hoo! Congratulations.

[00:27:39.0] JB: Thank you, and we're sitting at a restaurant and I go, "Okay, so just like a business, let's re-evaluate, like where are we right now in our relationship? Five years in, where have we gone, where are we now? Where do we want to go? What are the strategies we can use," you know? And it makes it fun. I know that may sound like a little wild but I don't know, I like that kind of approach of let's celebrate where we are and let's see where we want to go.

[00:28:12.9] AS: Well yeah and I used the metaphor because first, it invokes curiosity and that is one of the things I just got done with my Truce With Food call for my group and everyone is

like, “wow” when you’re curious rather than judgmental. It seems so simple but it changes everything because all of a sudden you are coming at it from a more open, less defensive and more vulnerable place.

Being open can be more vulnerable but ultimately, it’s a more freeing place to be but if you extend that metaphor, and this is the same thing. I can see the exact parallel with people in dieting, what got you to where you are now is not going to get you to where you want to go. So when you’re a startup just throwing enough shit at the wall until someone sticks like just learning, when you get to a certain point and you want to scale, you can’t.

[00:28:59.5] JB: You have to strategize more.

[00:29:01.1] AS: Right, you have to — that skill set of hustling and work, that will not work to get you to the next level, right? And for a lot of people who work with me like Weight Watchers work for them for a really long time and they have some success with it or I mean they’ve had varying degrees of success with that or meal plans in general.

And it’s like that is helpful especially from an educational standpoint when you are just trying to learn portion sizes or certain things. But what they are really looking for is freedom from food and so that same exact tracking and learning and hypervigilance is not going to get them the freedom. They actually need to be thinking about food less and understand themselves more intuitively.

[00:29:42.3] JB: Loosening the reigns a little bit.

[00:29:44.5] AS: And trusting them.

[00:29:45.4] JB: I had a client very recently and that’s the thing that she is struggling with so much is she’s been so tightly wound with food for so long and has tried so many diets and so now, she’s like, “I don’t trust myself at all. I have no idea what to eat, I have no idea” — for the longest time, she thought of her body as this machine like, “I tell her what to do and she’d do it.”

[00:30:11.0] AS: That’s the American way.

[00:30:12.3] JB: I know, right?

[00:30:13.6] AS: I used to think that too.

[00:30:15.2] JB: Yeah and it's not the case at all like your mind and your body are interconnected.

[00:30:20.2] AS: Well yeah and you know I'm going to get technical here, but no one has been able to locate the mind. It's an invisible projection of your body and your thoughts together. So when people say mind-body connection I'm like, "No one has located the mind." But it really makes you think. We actually had this conversation in Truce With Food.

We separate the physical and emotional but with blood sugar, this week people were realizing when they ate a breakfast that didn't align with their metabolic type, they're like, "I was irritated. I was agitated, everything was pissing me off," and I'm like, "That's what happens. Your physicality influences your emotions and your emotions, your posture."

Think about a simple thing like Amy Cuddy's talk, right? Power posing. When you power pose, you feel more powerful. So there's definitely something to it but yeah to look at your relationship like a business is okay and when people first get together, many people have that infatuation period or whatever but no one can keep that up. I don't care what any books say and that's not necessarily what a relationship needs. So to evaluate what worked for me then but you guys have both changed.

[00:31:32.6] JB: Yeah, 100%.

[00:31:33.7] AS: And so where are we now, who are we now and that's a really important thing and I think even as people get older sometimes age and especially not that I love menopause but when you go through menopause, you come out of there and you have less estrogen and estrogen is what makes women more sensitive to temperature, to other people. You come out of menopause and you're like, "Dude," or not dude, I don't think anyone says dude.

[00:31:58.1] JB: Maybe you are like, “Dude.”

[00:32:00.7] AS: “Dude, I don’t care as much about what other people think,” and so it could be an age thing but our preferences are always changing but the important thing is we need to know what our preferences are and it doesn’t mean that they’re going to be in conflict with everyone around us. Often, what we want other people want and often the people that we love the most want us to want what we want but then it’s knowing that and then it’s having the — feeling, the permission to then make the changes.

[00:32:26.6] JB: We need to give ourselves permission to be more flexible. I think that’s something that is a huge challenge for people is that fixed mindset of, “I need to be this way, this is the right way. This is the way that I’ll be acceptable. This is what I’m seeing on TV. I need to look hot in a bikini.” You know?

[00:32:47.1] AS: And that’s also which keeps the story going that you can’t trust yourself because then you rely on — I was just talking about this with another client, she’s seeing right now that it’s spring. She’s seeing all these people doing the 21 day fix, the isogenics, all of these cleanses, right?

And it is hard until you really get that it’s not about those extremes. She’s like, “I’m seeing all of those on Facebook,” and her issue is not trusting herself and I said, “You know what they’re really selling? You know what’s really the psychology under the 21 day fix?”

[00:33:22.9] JB: The American Dream.

[00:33:25.0] AS: Yeah. Well no, it’s certainty though, right? They are telling you and look, I can promise you that you’re going to do X in seven days but I bet you’re tired of that and she’s like, “No, if I don’t change my relationship to trusting myself,” and for her, it’s giving herself more space in life. We are working on that, she’s like, “We are going to be having the same conversation in six months,” and I’m like, “Exactly.”

So all of these programs, a lot of that, not completely but those short term results, they are selling people certainty but that perpetuates the cycle that you can’t trust yourself and eat

intuitively. So often, they get to a place where they are very conflicting but that is also the same when you talk about I want to be in a bikini and all this stuff that gets into the layers of what we've projected onto weight loss, right? A lot of my clients are like, "Look, I'm not stupid. My life isn't going to change dramatically if I lose 20, 30, 40 pounds."

[00:34:17.0] JB: No but what they think is they're feelings will change dramatically. It's not that they are going to get a promotion and they are going to find a hot sugar daddy.

[00:34:27.1] AS: Or a sugar mama.

[00:34:28.3] JB: Or sugar mama.

[00:34:29.6] AS: Men are more unemployed these days, young men.

[00:34:32.4] JB: It's that they think that the way that they see themselves and the world will just be like, "The cloud will be lifted and the sun will be shining brighter and I am just going to feel more this level of confidence and all is right."

[00:34:46.8] AS: Totally, right. Often the terms my clients will use is, "I'll be more bulletproof. Yeah, I know life is not going to change dramatically but life won't hurt as much or I'll be more confident and take more risks," but what that really is, is resilience. That's what you need to feel that way. Its resilience and that comes from taking on a growth mindset, experimenting to figure out what you want and dealing with uncertainty or whatever feeling you don't want to feel.

But the marketing machine is so brilliant and to get deep and psychological here but you know models, they make models so one dimensional so that you can project as much onto them as humanly possible. That's why celebrities what they disclose about themselves is highly curated. What they look like, all of this stuff is to keep them as neutral as possible so that you can project as much onto them and what it means to be rich, famous, thin, whatever as possible.

[00:35:48.1] JB: It makes me sick inside.

[00:35:50.1] AS: I know but I used to believe it though.

[00:35:53.1] JB: I can't even look at those magazines anymore. I used to read Us Weekly at the nail salon or I would treat myself when I was going on a flight, I can't even do it anymore. Not to say that there is anything wrong if you like that, but it makes me feel just yucky inside. I can't even look through those magazines because it's just so — and I just think that they have gotten worse overtime too.

[00:36:18.5] AS: Yeah, they have gotten worse.

[00:36:19.6] JB: Every other page is, "This is what this celebrity is eating," and you're like, "No they're not," we're not eating this.

[00:36:25.8] AS: Who was it, was it Chelsea Handler? I was watching her on one of the night shows but she was like, "Whatever, I hate these celebrities who are like "I just eat burgers or whatever," and she's like, "No, you don't. They are working out five hours a day and eating lettuce." She's like, "Don't let them fool you," and we needed to hear it from someone in the inside.

But again, they want to make it because people, here's the catch in talking about feeling alone and connected, is people don't want you to try too hard, right? You can't try too hard. It has to look easy but you also can't not care because then you're, "Oh? Who are you to not know where your meat is coming from?" But remember people totally attack Gwyneth Paltrow because they were like, "Oh of course it's easy for her because she has a team," and whatever. Do you remember that? A couple of years ago people were attacking her?

[00:37:18.5] JB: No, I don't remember it. I know that there has been some controversy just about her. I think she is still vegan.

[00:37:25.3] AS: No, no.

[00:37:26.3] JB: No?

[00:37:27.2] AS: No, I don't think so.

[00:37:28.2] JB: I don't know, but I know that she has a very health persona as part of her whole shtick. She is a celebrity but she is also someone people look to for healthy living.

[00:37:41.7] AS: Yeah but she is also very polarizing as a result. People either love her or hate her.

[00:37:46.9] JB: Right, I do remember her saying something about smoking cigarettes as part of her healthy regiment every once in a while or something, and I'm like, "You're more human now to me."

[00:37:57.1] AS: And I don't know about her particularly but they drop those human things but they are curated.

[00:38:04.2] JB: They totally are. It's all made up. None of those celebrities are writing their own diets on there. I always wonder, do they have to sign off on them though?

[00:38:15.7] AS: Yeah, I actually think so. I don't know Gwyneth Paltrow at all but I actually feel that she is probably more informed because of her routines. She does a lot to be healthy and she just wrote out a new organic skin line so I actually feel like she's probably more informed than — celebrities, people assume that they have the best of the best.

But I remember watching Oprah's TV show years ago and she was saying how her audience wrote in to tell her to get her thyroid checked and nurses who had watched her show were like, "What you're describing sounds like thyroid issues," and that was the issue and I was like, "Oh my god, Oprah has access to any doctor or any functional medicine people," and I don't mean to pick on Oprah particularly.

[00:38:59.4] JB: Well anybody, I mean you have to be in charge of your own health at some point. You have to make the decision to get yourselves checked. Nobody can force you. You can only lead the horse to the water, you know?

[00:39:10.3] AS: Right but I'm just saying, just because a celebrity has chosen certain people around them does not mean that they're the best. I think anyone who — I don't know celebrities lives but I think their stress level is probably one quarter of the amount of the average. There is a whole machine to celebrity-ism.

[00:39:29.1] JB: Different kind of stress, depending on what kind of celebrity you are because I can't imagine having a paparazzi or no privacy, you know, people following me around and not having any privacy in my life and I always think about this with celebrities that everybody will "yes" you. Everyone will just make you feel like you're so important and you're right and nobody will really go against you when you have a certain level of fame. So you can't really trust people in the same way I feel like.

[00:39:59.9] AS: That's true but I would probably, I think what affects people's weight in their decisions is not the acute tension. It's the chronic tension, which is in my eyes the beliefs that create a lot of stress for people, right? We talk about things being stressful but all of us identify stress differently and then how we relate to it is very differently.

I would say the chronic tension of financial security and you can afford everything healthy and it's your job to work out and look good. I would say that that chronic tension being absent in it of itself. There is probably a different kind of pressure, a different level of thinness etcetera but yeah, I don't know. I would still say I think it's like Chris Rock.

I love Chris Rock and he did this episode, this one stint about if people knew how rich, rich people had it, there would be riots in the street and he talked about the hospital his mom went to when they were growing up versus the care he gets right now and it's this whole shtick and it's hysterical. Like you have to laugh because the inequality is so great in this country. But I think, yes, we're all human and being rich and famous and beautiful does not solve everything and I think it's a hard truth to swallow that it helps a lot.

[00:41:10.0] JB: So okay, let's get back to this because a client of mine she said, "So why is it that my goal to look hot in a bikini doesn't motivate me?"

[00:41:21.0] AS: Oh my god, I love that question. What a brilliant question.

[00:41:24.8] JB: So Ali?

[00:41:25.6] AS: So here is what I think it is, I think it's what we project onto what I call finish lines. Everyone has — we do this constantly as humans, “Once I make enough money. Once I lose weight. Once I have this partner. Once I am social,” right? So for her, if she hasn't projected anything onto looking hot in a bikini, she doesn't think it means anything.

This is a really good question, “What am I making this mean?” So if you make being hot in a bikini mean, all of this is — I mean I love this topic and this is something that I remember finally figuring out what I had projected onto weight loss. So I have a normal story especially surrounding loneliness of like, “Oh once I lose 30 pounds, I'll meet the right guy for me,” right?

I was like it's not that I couldn't meet anyone. I remember working with the therapist when I was in my 20's and this was in Philly. She's like, “I want you to go around Rittenhouse Square, pay attention to the city and you tell me if you see people who aren't thin who are in relationships.” Because I was like, “Oh, only skinny people date,” or something or thin people. So she was trying to get me to see that.

[00:42:34.9] JB: Could you? Did you see it?

[00:42:36.6] AS: Yeah but then what my justification was because I was so defensive and so wounded around this was like, “Well not the type of person that I want,” right? And Louis C.K. did this great skit. I don't know if — you love him.

[00:42:47.8] JB: I love Louis C.K.

[00:42:49.3] AS: He did a skit where he was dating this woman who, I guess she was overweight or unattractive in some way and in the skit, Louis is actually, “I really like you,” and she's like, “Louis, it's actually not about what I look like.” She's like, “I know you like me, you're more worried about what you think it says about you if you date someone like me.”

And Louis is a feminist. So of course, he did this skit and brought up the brilliance of that but I couldn't see it at the time but I was like, "What would that say about me if someone who found me attractive at this weight, what would that say about them and me?" Am I being clear? Like I was projecting on...

[00:43:29.1] JB: Yeah but again, going back in the beginning when we were defining loneliness, it's the level of discomfort with yourself.

[00:43:37.1] AS: Right but often we can't see that so we project it onto a situation or what not. Projections are so hard to see especially if they've been around for decades and this is the challenging thing about beliefs and stories. I can go and give you thousands of pieces of evidence if that is true.

[00:43:56.3] JB: Yeah and I was just thinking, I had a client who recently was talking to me. She is definitely still working through a lot of her body image issues and I had asked her, "Does your husband know how you feel about yourself?" And she said, "Yeah, he does to an extent but I don't want to burden him too much with talking to him about how much I dislike my body and how I feel about myself. He finds me so attractive," she said, "and I think it's a big turn off if you tell somebody oh I'm gross, oh I'm this, oh I'm that." It was interesting that her perspective on that, that she didn't want to tell her husband. She didn't want to be complaining in front of her husband all the time. She's like, "He finds me beautiful."

[00:44:37.6] AS: Do you see how that good girl mindset is there? It's like, "He doesn't want to hear this. That would make me unattractive," and so it's all about what the other person — meanwhile, granted I don't think your partners wants to hear 24/7. When we are in our beliefs, we tend to be all or nothing but what that really is, is that she has an emotional challenge. To me, it's really not about her body. It's about the level of intimacy that she feels comfortable sharing with him and intimacy being emotional intimacy and we talk a lot about that next week. So really...

[00:45:10.9] JB: I think it's a fear, what you were talking about, a fear of abandonment at the end.

[00:45:16.2] AS: Am I too much?

[00:45:17.6] JB: Exactly. If I put this on my partner, if I really let my guard down and show this true vulnerability, which I think for a lot of people, they're not viewing that negative self-talk as vulnerability. They are viewing it as, again, "There's something wrong with me. I shouldn't be talking to myself like this. I shouldn't be feeling this way."

[00:45:38.3] AS: Yeah. We were just talking about this in Truce With Food today because I always say the medium is the message because ironically then, you are shaming yourself or judging yourself for having the judgements, right?

[00:45:47.3] JB: Yes.

[00:45:48.4] AS: And that is one of the ways though. I always say who's eating at the table, right? We have different voices that are different sides of ourselves that are actually really wounded and actually need compassion but the first way to be compassion is to be curious and question them but then, once we start doing that then the other wounded sides of ourselves is like, "Oh, come on! You haven't figured this out already?" Or like, "Are you really going to say that?" And so it starts to sound like rational and logic and intelligence. I intellectualize things, that's how I know I'm being defensive but you can also justify being intellectual. We all have our quirks.

[00:46:29.4] JB: We just play head games with ourselves.

[00:46:31.4] AS: Yeah but it is about being uncomfortable with yourself but you have to first understand what exactly — you've got to be able to see that and that can be challenging. I want to give people some steps to start connecting better since we've got about 10 minutes left but I hope that through this discussion, people realize that you have to start to see the ways that you're misaligning with what you want and with what you do.

I think that's really important to start to see how you're uncomfortable with yourself including the critical self-talk and it can be about your body and all that kind of stuff but even being curious about why am I making it mean this?

[00:47:11.2] JB: So let me ask you. Going back to when you were working with a therapist and she said, “Go out to Rittenhouse and see all of the people that are not thin and they are still together,” and then you tried to make meaning of that. So how did you work through that piece of it?

[00:47:31.0] AS: Yeah, so I think it was actually shortly thereafter when I met Carlos and I love that you asked this because this is exactly what I am talking about the boss mindset versus the good girl mindset. So it was my last night working for GE and I had made a decision to work in Center City, Philadelphia so I could eliminate my commute.

So I had already started to be like, “Okay, this is a lateral career move. It’s not going to look great on paper but I need to do this,” because I was travelling internationally so much that I was never in Philly and I was like, “Oh glamorous corporate job, working in Italy and Paris” and all these places but I have no life.

[00:48:09.4] JB: But you don’t actually enjoy those places when you have a job like that which is unfortunate.

[00:48:14.3] AS: Yeah.

[00:48:14.5] JB: It sounds good.

[00:48:15.4] AS: Yeah, I did get to live in Paris for six months which had a lot of high for me.

[00:48:18.4] JB: Oh, that’s nice.

[00:48:18.9] AS: Yeah but I also was struggling with irritable bowel syndrome, I was really struggling with reflux and all that stuff. I was switching jobs that night and so we were at the Irish Pub and I was going out with some colleagues because it was the last night and Carlos came up to me and was like, “Hey, do you know anywhere where there’s to dance around here?”

I was like, “You’re going to dance by yourself?” and he told me it was his opening. We were just talking about it because we just celebrated 11 years and this is really interesting in the past and I do really like sports a lot. I grew up like the son that my dad never had and I do like sports but in the past, I would have been what does this guy want to talk about?

What’s going to enable me to connect and try to guess and this guy is asking where you can dance by yourself and then it turns out he worked for AARP at the time and so we were talking about some political issues and I also love politics.

[00:49:13.4] JB: Did you talk about religion too?

[00:49:15.4] AS: Oh my god.

[00:49:16.8] JB: Great first date. Geez!

[00:49:18.1] AS: Yeah but I knew that I love that stuff but I never would have let that part of me out of the bar and so then at the end of the night, he was living in DC at the time, he’s like, “Look, if I stay an extra night, will you go out with me? And I will stay an extra night if you go out with me” and my initial reaction was like, “Oh, I didn’t think this was going anywhere”.

I was being myself. I was just like, “Oh my god, this is how bad I was at assessing the situation” because I had assumed and because Carlos is super attractive. He’s super charismatic. He is everything that I thought he would want someone 30 pounds lighter than I was at the time would want and in my mind, I was like, “You know what? You have to do this for you. You need practice dating,” and so I said yes.

Now, those first times that we’re trying new behaviors and I always tell my clients this, they’re going to be awkward. They’re not going to feel comfortable yet just because they’re unfamiliar. So I don’t recommend this but I did do shots in my apartment before we got together.

[00:50:17.5] JB: That’s fine. I think I had a bottle of wine when Macky and I finally got together. We’re not condoning drinking here at all but it is uncomfortable. I know what you mean.

[00:50:27.2] AS: Yeah and especially because I was like, “Oh my god he is staying here an extra night?” I was like, “You’d better have an extra place to stay.” I am not going to be this sucker or whatever, you are not pulling a fast one on me and so it was really uncomfortable but I was like, “I have to do this for me no matter how awkward.”

[00:50:41.7] JB: But allowed you to be yourself at that bar versus a different way.

[00:50:46.3] AS: Because he told me he was out of town so I was like, “Oh, the stakes are low here,” and we just immediately connected in a way, and this is what I’ve heard other people say but I didn’t believe it because I was caught in this you have to look a certain way to have this kind of connection. Yeah, it was just the quality of the connection.

I didn’t feel like my approval was up in the air. That’s a big thing that I talk about with my clients, when you can’t be yourself, if you feel like your approval is on the table and I just felt like that I didn’t care. He was random guy who I was meeting at a bar who lived in DC but then it turned into something and I do believe it was because I was myself.

Carlos even said to me, you know, he had dated someone for years and he’s like, “I was just shocked before we met.” They had broken up a year and a half before and he had dated this girl since high school and through college. He was like, “I was shocked at how hard it was to have a great conversation with women and I don’t think that the women weren’t interesting or whatnot but you were the first person that I had a real conversation with and that I was attracted to,” and all these kind of stuff.

But that really is a huge help in me getting through that, but what I realized when I started to talk about this is that I realized what I had projected onto weight loss was security and feeling that “bulletproof-ness” or that confidence that I thought would come from ironically making my world smaller and smaller instead of going out bigger and bigger.

[00:52:19.1] JB: Trying to control everything and not only making your world smaller and smaller, making you small too and talked about being afraid and invisible, you’re making yourself invisible when you’re doing that.

[00:52:31.5] AS: That's how we keep the belief going and then each interaction gets built up more and more and the intensity of what you think about other people are saying builds up and you often can't even tell that it's you assuming that. You're just like, "I know that's what they're thinking."

[00:52:48.1] JB: We're so in control of creating our own reality and I don't mean this in the way of The Secret or the universal law or anything like that but when I say we're so in control of creating our own reality, it's what we're talking about which is your projections often times are creating your worst fears. They're coming into fruition and like I was saying, it's almost like you have to prove yourself right.

[00:53:18.7] AS: Yeah. I always say to my clients when they finally realize their beliefs because they're like, "No, that is true," right? It's not just what we think but we feel, I'm like, "Do you want to be right or be happy?"

[00:53:29.6] JB: Yeah, 100% yes.

[00:53:32.8] AS: Just a couple of things before we wrap up, I want to give people a couple of tips that they can start immediately to start to feel more connected and that they're social needs are starting to get met, and you can even do this in little interactions. It doesn't have to be built up but the research shows, and this again is paradoxical, but solitude actually is really helpful in making people feel less alone.

Part of it is it can be walking in the woods, it can be coloring, it can be meditation but really spending some time, start with 10 minutes, built up your tolerance but as you do that, it may be uncomfortable at first but you're going to start getting a sense of your needs, a sense of who you are beyond yourself in relation to someone else or an event or your weight.

So that is something really important that anyone can do. I think that's a big thing and then I think the second thing is, and I always encourage my clients to do this. I'm going to specifically talk about social situations but before you go into a social situation, think about what do you need to feel comfortable there? Some of my clients realize that "I don't want to stay at the wedding for eight hours."

I don't want to stay all weekend. So it's not that you don't want to go, you just don't want to be there all the time or if there is an event and there's going to be all this food, okay ahead of time make sure your blood sugar is balanced and then what do you want to do? Is it some sort of special food that you want? Is this really a special occasion?

Or in extending that outward, do you need to make a deep connection with someone while you're there so that all your social anxiety, you'll feel less social anxiety than if you knew no one. What do you need to get out of the social situation beyond the food? It's going to start to decrease that "bad or good eating" or the after effect. If you're going to a bar like when I said yes to Carlos, it wasn't because, "Oh my god, I'm going to find my husband."

It was like, "I need to practice dating", the keyword is practice. So if you're going to a bar or a social situation or you're set up on a date, what do you need right now? Do you need practice? Do you need practice in being yourself? Don't worry about the outcome, focus on the effort and that's what growth mindset is all about. Knowing that something takes effort but doing the right effort which is always the brave effort.

[00:56:00.3] JB: I love it.

[00:56:02.0] AS: Yeah.

[00:56:02.3] JB: Couldn't have said it better than myself. I love it.

[00:56:04.9] AS: Yeah and again, we could talk about this more forever but I think we'll just end it there. As Carlos says, "We'll put a period there."

[00:56:14.3] JB: Her husband's a writer for those of you who didn't put that together.

[00:56:17.3] AS: And he got that from Eric Marcel who is a creativity coach so he would probably be like, "I didn't come up with that" he's so big on attribution. All right Juliet, great discussion as always.

[00:56:30.5] JB: Yeah, thank you guys so much and if you have any questions at all, if you want us to talk about something on a future episode we would love to hear from you. You can connect with us on social media. We are still looking for reviews on iTunes. We are still in New and Noteworthy on iTunes right now which is fantastic.

[00:56:46.9] AS: Thank you guys.

[00:56:47.8] JB: Yes, thank you for all your love and support with that.

[00:56:49.5] AS: Yeah and if you can each ask one or two people and tell them about the podcast, we'd really appreciate it because we want it to grow and Juliet, we forgot about our new segment, what are you loving?

[00:57:00.6] JB: Oh what am I loving right now? Okay. Well, it's always food or workout pants.

[00:57:08.0] AS: It doesn't matter. No, you already said workout pants.

[00:57:10.8] JB: I know but I got another pair of workout pants.

[00:57:13.2] AS: This is America. You can do what you want, say what you want.

[00:57:16.8] JB: I don't know what they're called, they're from Lululemon of course and they're like pyjama pants but they're not. I feel like I am wearing pyjamas to work which is the best.

[00:57:27.3] AS: Speaking of loneliness, they are totally acceptable.

[00:57:30.0] JB: Well, you know what I'm loving actually is the Eternity Book that we got from Jason Wrobel who's a guest on our show and his book didn't come out yet or is it coming out?

[00:57:38.7] AS: It's coming out in April.

[00:57:40.7] JB: April, yeah so I'm loving some of these recipes in here. Some of the vegan desserts are amazing.

[00:57:46.2] AS: Yeah, you guys have to tune into that episode for sure. Yeah, mine is very simple. I'm just loving the sunshine and day light savings time. It is so nice. It's amazing to how we are connected to our environment right? You were talking about New York, we've come full circle but that's a specific environment that affects us in certain ways. Cities affect us different than the country or the ocean or the mountains but yeah, I am just loving day light savings time.

[00:58:13.1] JB: I often say I'm like a cat because I like to soak up the sun like the way my cat sits on her cat tree on the window and she just sunbathes. I feel like when I'm outside I had to tilt my head like a kitty cat and I just want to sunbathe.

[00:58:27.7] AS: I love it and well, I specifically love this time because I was saying to Carlos I am actually not that summer person when it gets too hot but I love the contrast between winter and spring. It's so metaphorical for life when you are going through a hard time or you are going through a change process and then the lightness and the brightness comes and then you're left with the deep meaning and the wholeness that it creates but that contrast is the best feeling in the world.

[00:58:56.5] JB: This is why you live in a place with four seasons.

[00:58:58.4] AS: Yeah, rock on, yeah. I could never do all sun. People on Facebook are like, "Are you jealous it's sunny all the time here?" I'm like, "Hell no."

[00:59:09.2] JB: Ali always embraces the good and the bad and the in between which is why we love you Ali. So thank you guys so much for tuning in and we will see you soon.

[00:59:18.6] AS: Yeah.

[END OF EPISODE]

[00:59:20.5] JB: Thank you so much for listening to the Insatiable Podcast. We hope you enjoy today's episode. You can connect with us on social media. Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @julietunite and Ali @alimshapiro, M stand for Marie. Please feel free to also e-mail us any

questions. We would love to hear from all of our listeners. You can reach us on ali@alishapiro.com and juliet@unitefitness.com. We'll see you next time.

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