

EPISODE 34

“AS: That’s something really important to realize especially for the calorie counters out there. So many times you’d think, “Oh well I’ve had enough calories. I chose the frozen yogurt but I just want more and more.” Because the sugar, the more you eat the more you want.

JB: So you’re having a 250 and 300 calorie smoothies so in your mind you’re like, “This is great, this is so healthy, this is low cal, this doesn’t have a lot of fat in it.” But you’re having 55 grams of sugar. Holy shit, that’s more than a Coca-Cola.”

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:37.3] 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.

[00:01:17.8] JB: And I’m Juliet Burgh, nutritionist, fitness expert, and a co-owner of Unite Fitness Studio Franchise.

[00:01:27.3] AS: Hello Insatiable listeners. Welcome to Episode 34, *Anatomy of a Sugar Craving*. Today, we’re going to talk about what sugars are bad and why and hey salty people, you’re not off the hook. You’ll found out why salty and sugar cravings are often and the same. Number two, how to start of sugar for good and it’s not going to be what you think and finally, we’re going to discuss the question you have to ask yourself to get to the emotional route of why you feel addicted to sugar.

Here we go for Episode 34.

[MESSAGE]

[00:01:58.8] AS: Hello Insatiable listeners, it's Ali here. If you tune in here, you get that diets are a losing battle but are you equally afraid if you give up, you'll blow up? Fortunately, there's a better way and it's called a Truce with Food. Because here's what you already know: When you struggle with food, you struggle with life. As Candace from Pennsylvania, a past Truce With Food participant said, "Truce With Food is not just a plan but a lifesaving journey."

So here's what we do in the program, which starts this September. We stop the sabotage cycle, we get to the root of bad eating and most importantly, we figure out what food combinations work for you. Get the first lesson free and find out which is the better diet for weight loss, vegetarian, Mediterranean or Paleo? Log on to alishapiro.com and find out.

[EPISODE]

[00:02:48.9] JB: "Sugar, oh honey-honey" — hey Ali.

[00:02:56.1] AS: "You were my candy girl and you got me..."

[00:03:01.2] JB: Wanting you." Who doesn't want sugar?

[00:03:05.0] AS: I know and for all you salty people out there realize that chips, pizza and pretzels are really processed sugar when it breaks down in the body.

[00:03:12.0] JB: What are you, are you salty or sweet?

[00:03:14.7] AS: Oh my God, I am sweet. Let me tell you the funniest story that's kind of infamous in our family. So I was five years old and I decided that I was going to go visit my aunt and uncle in Ohio which was an hour away and I was away for a week and I told them that I wanted to give my sister a present for when I returned and they're like, "Okay, what do you want to get her?" And I was like, "Double stuffed Oreo." So I bought her this giant — we give people what what we want — bag and it's a bag of double stuffed Oreos.

It sat on the counter but as the week went on, I started eating them here and there and so there was one sleeve left and we had a 45 minute drive from Stephenville, Ohio to Pittsburg and by the time I got to my sister, there was one left. My sister's name is Julie, I said, "Julie, I brought a present for you," I said, "Here's a Oreo, can we split it?"

[00:04:15.6] JB: Oh my god, you bitch.

[00:04:18.9] AS: I love the sugar. I just feel like that represents so much of how I thought about sugar for so long.

[00:04:25.1] JB: The Oreo was supposed to be one of the most addictive processed foods out there.

[00:04:30.0] AS: Oh my God and it was double stuffed.

[00:04:32.0] JB: And double stuffed, wow.

[00:04:33.7] AS: Yeah, what about you?

[00:04:35.5] JB: I'm sweet, yeah. But if you put salty and sweet together, it's the devilish combination where you really can't stop like a dark chocolate covered pretzel or something.

[00:04:43.5] AS: Oh yeah or like almonds with dark chocolate sea salts.

[00:04:46.7] JB: Yes that's an evil, evil combination for me.

[00:04:49.0] AS: Yeah well it depends on the quality but yeah, totally. So what we want to do today in this *Anatomy Of A Sugar Craving* is really break it down and not just tell you why sugar is bad because I think we all know on some level, we're going to go into it a little bit deeper but also what to do about it because I think that's probably what's most helpful and useful.

So Juliet, you talked about Oreos being really addicting, what about some of the studies you were mentioning right before we got on about what physically happens in the body when you —

oh wait, we should first probably first define sugar because I might have throw the salty people off for a second like, "What? I like salt." But we're talking about how sugar breaks down in the body and how the body registers it, correct?

[00:05:36.6] JB: Yeah, so anything that is a processed or refined carbohydrates like a salty potato chip or she'd mentioned pizza, so that's white flour and flour is refined. It's a powered version of a grain. So the way that your body is breaking that down is that the carbohydrates break it down into sugar and those sugars are absorbing very quickly into the body. So they're simple carbohydrates in the same way that a tablespoon of sugar is also a simple carbohydrate.

So your body is registering those certain salty foods like potato chips or like a slice of pizza except there is a good thing where there's a lot of cheese on pizza right Ali? For blood sugar but.

[00:06:20.0] AS: Yeah.

[00:06:20.3] JB: But at the end of the day, the way that your body is recognizing these foods is as something that is increasing your insulin levels and throwing your blood sugar out of whack.

[00:06:29.3] AS: And it really increases your insulin when the carb is stripped of its nutrients. So this is why we did an episode called Good and Bad Carbs. There are good carbohydrates out there but they have vitamins with them, they have minerals with them. The kind of carbs we're talking and sugar we're talking about that's really addicting is just the sugar part. There's no vitamin B, vitamin E, nothing with it and then it also the traditional sweets that we think about, Oreos, Skittles, frozen yogurt, that kind of stuff. So let's just all make sure we're on the same page.

[00:07:05.7] JB: Yeah and I mean the more processed carbohydrates, the factory made cookies, cakes, candies, Oreo cookies in Pennsylvania, tasty cakes, those kinds of foods are chock full of so many chemicals and preservatives but also this perfect ratio of sugar, fat and salt and if you look at a lot of those foods, there's a ton of sodium in them and when you're eating it, you're not saying, "Oh this is really salty," because it's so covered up with the amount of sugar that's in there.

But there really is that ratio of sugar and salt in there that just keeps you wanting more and more and there's actually been a lot of studies. One really famous study in particular was done on rats and they were basically put in a maze and given a choice of hanging out near rice cakes or Oreos, the tastiest sandwich cookie won the popularity contest obviously. Those results were compared to a different test where the rats were given the choice of loitering in an area of a maze. Where they were injected with saline or in another corner where they could get a shot of cocaine or morphine and the rats in the study liked the cookies about just as much as they liked the drugs. So they were all congregating near the cookie side of the maze as much as they would on the drug side.

[00:08:21.5] AS: Yeah and I think that's really important. Take that in for a second. I think we think that because sugar is everywhere and legal that it's a lot more benign than it really is.

[00:08:32.9] JB: For sure. I don't know about you Ali but I've never tried crack cocaine but I have definitely eaten a lot of Oreos in my life.

[00:08:43.7] AS: And I felt better about myself, more and more, while I was eating the Oreos than the cocaine but I don't know if I really should have judge myself better.

[00:08:54.9] JB: And also just like humans really like the delicious creamy center of the cookie, the rats would break it open and they would eat the middle first.

[00:09:03.5] AS: Interesting.

[00:09:04.6] JB: They liked the white cream more. It's so bizarre.

[00:09:08.5] AS: Yeah and there's so many studies out there about how this light up the reward — how carbs specifically and food manufacturers know this. That ratio that Juliet is talking about has been highly studied, highly fine-tuned, this is not an accident right? If you're a food company, how do you increase profits? You have to get people to eat more and believe it or not, hunger, actually when you eat real food, you can't make people hungrier if you're actually eating healthier food.

So the way that you make people hungrier is you alter the food ratio combinations in “foods” because again, these are products not food. So you make products that will basically bypass the natural appetite control in the body so that you could continue to eat more and I think that’s something really important to realize especially for the calorie counters out there. So many times you’d think, “Oh well I’ve had enough calories. I chose the frozen yogurt but I just want more and more.”

Because sugar, the more you eat, the more you want because it continues to give you that flood of energy. There’s a lot of more biology to it but basically what you need to know is the more sugar you eat, the more you want so you’re not going to ever feel satisfied from it because it in itself is not a whole food. So your body doesn’t really recognize it, I think that is an easier way of explaining why that happens. So that’s an immediate response.

One of my favorite analogies for people to understand what’s happening internally comes from Dr. Oz and he used this 10 years ago. He talks about that when you eat things, processed carbs, you break it down into the body and that sugar coalesces like shards like glass. So it all comes together like glass and it nicks at you on the inside and that causes inflammation and we are going to do a whole episode on “what the hell is inflammation?” Because we can go into that in some detail.

But when you have those chronic cuts, your body is basically inflamed at a low grade level. Think of a fire, a low grade fire. It’s not a raging fire. That’s cancer, that’s autoimmune issues but it’s more low grade and it takes longer to repair your muscles after workouts like that, it increases your body temperature which makes sleeping more difficult. It makes you also more inflamed, which we know makes weight loss harder.

[00:11:33.3] JB: Constipation or irritable bowel.

[00:11:35.5] AS: Yeah all those kinds of things often causes inflammation. So sugar really accelerates that and keeps that low grade fire going and on the immediate level, it makes it a lot harder to control cravings and hunger and on the long term level, it really sets you up for health issues and stubborn weight loss.

[00:11:54.2] JB: How do you know if you're addicted to sugar, right? Is that what we want to say? Is it an addiction, right? Because I have so many clients who come to work with me and I say, "What do you think is holding you back from weight loss?" And they'll say, "My addiction to sugar." Nine out of ten times that's what I get.

[00:12:15.0] AS: Yeah. I tend to look at everything holistically. I don't believe in addiction wholeheartedly. I do think some people have more, are wired differently. We all know everyone is different but I think everything is multi-factorial. So I think probably on physical level, are they eating the right foods for them?

[00:12:33.3] JB: I think they have a dependency on these sweet foods. They're depending on them and we'll talk about that more on this podcast like why would you depend on these things right? Because there's a reason why we eat that but there's a softer way to approach it instead of just putting our hands up and being like, "I'm addicted," which is saying that you really have no control and you're powerless..

[00:12:56.0] AS: Yeah, that's a great point and I also think that the problem is addiction but I actually think that carbs, processed carbs are the solution. What I mean by that is we turn to them when we are not eating the right foods for us and there's emotional stuff that we'll get into. So I think they're actually the solution to underlying problems and not themselves.

So I think it may feel like you're addicted, like you can't just stop but to your point, there is a softer way to approach this that's more empowering. I like that you said that, yeah. Addiction, you guys feel that "woo" but it can be. That's the thing, you do have to definitely put effort into it.

[00:13:33.2] JB: So it's not all about the physiological response that's happening. That's definitely part of it, but there's a big emotional component to why we would be depending on sugar as well. Where do we want to start with this first for our listeners?

[00:13:48.3] AS: I think let's start with the physical because I have found in 10 years with working with clients and also my own journey, that if you can't get the physical piece down, the emotional piece is so hard and I have yet to find a client who once they figure out how to

balance their blood sugar, they don't find that 50% of their "emotional eating" clears up because the physical and emotional, even though we're separating them here, they are so interconnected.

So for example, when your blood sugar is crashing, which is when you're craving carbs, your mood goes down. You get more tired and you think about food more because your body registers it as, "Oh my god a famine, we've got to find food." So you think about food a lot more. So when you are actually physically not having cravings, you just make life a lot easier for yourself and your emotions get very clear because you're not bouncing around and all this stuff, it becomes a lot more clear how you're feeling because it's hard to identify your emotions.

So I think starting with the physical is the best place for people just to make life easier and to build some of that confidence because I find with a lot of my clients, they have such little confidence because they think they've tried everything but they've tend to have tried similar approach just dressed up differently but always listening to the external expert rather than their body. So they think like, "Oh no, I just love carbs," or, "I just can't resist them." When it's like, "No that's a symptom. A real physical symptom."

[00:15:16.7] JB: So what are some of the things that we can do to start feeling with the physical?

[00:15:22.1] AS: I'm always about figuring out your blood sugar and I will say this...

[00:15:28.1] JB: Every episode.

[00:15:30.1] AS: I know and I was reading Oprah Magazine and Gail King did an interview with Tom Hanks. She always asked — in the section, different people that she ask things and she was like, "Tom what advice would you give your younger self?" And he was like, "To learn about blood sugar control."

[00:15:45.4] JB: Really?

[00:15:46.1] AS: Yeah, he's type two diabetes. I think it's type two? I know he has diabetes. I'm not quite sure what kind, I'm assuming it — and so I was like, "Oh my God, finally!" Maybe now that a celebrity has it, everyone will listen?" But it's very true. People think only diabetics but if you have PMS, hormonal issues, PCOS, cravings, hunger, trouble sleeping that means your blood sugar is out of balance.

[00:16:09.8] JB: Basically if you're a human being.

[00:16:11.3] AS: In the 21st century.

[00:16:13.8] JB: Yeah, you should be aware of how your body's metabolism is working throughout the day.

[00:16:19.0] AS: Yeah and really with blood sugar, you have to figure out what are the amount of carbs, proteins and fats that I need for my metabolism. I call this your metabolic typing and actually, I have a new opt in for my website to help you start to figure out if you do better on vegetarian, Mediterranean or Paleo. It's all a continuum but those tend to be, if you can start there and figure out if those are good for you, you can then tweak from there.

[00:16:46.6] JB: Basically higher carb, moderate carb, lower carb.

[00:16:51.0] AS: Yes and a lot of people that we see in the media who are health celebrities, they tend to be the type of people who do do better on higher carbohydrate diets. They're long and lean and they're like, "Oh I'm vegetarian or I'm vegan," or something that tends to be lighter foods and then everyone tries to emulate that because they're like, "Well they're thin," but that works for their body type.

So it's really important to figure out and I think one of the other important things is to start to do — that is a process to figure out your metabolic type. But the first thing maybe even before that is do a sugar audit of how many processed carbs you're actually eating in a day and we talked about this on the moderation episode but I think it's important to repeat here is that four grams of sugar is like one packet of sugar. So when you start looking at your food labels and looking in unsuspecting places, ketchup, dressings even your fortified cereals, granolas.

All of these “health foods”, like your low-fat yogurt that has added fruit in it, those are the worst. People think they’re so healthy. Start looking at how many sugars are in on those foods and really start to get an idea because you can’t change until you’re aware of how much extra sugar you’re eating and probably why you feel hungry all the time and feel powerless over it. So I think that would probably be the sugar audit is the first step.

[00:18:31.5] JB: Yeah and one of the things that I recommend to my clients when you are looking to buy packaged foods whether it be dressings, if it’s a dressing or a sauce I would say that you really want to aim to have the sugars be less than five grams per serving and for a dressing, a serving is really only usually two tablespoons so that’s why less than five grams. If it’s a lot higher than that, then most of us are using more than two tablespoons when we’re putting dressing on a salads.

So you’re ending up with a lot. For things like pasta sauce like tomato sauce, it’s the same thing. Less than five grams. Tomatoes are sweet as is so there really shouldn’t be added sugar in a sauce if anything. If you can find a tomato sauce that doesn’t have sugar as an additive at all that’s great and there are plenty of them out there and then for other things like yogurts, cereal, granolas, I would say less than 10 grams of sugar per serving. You obviously want it to one serving for whatever you’re using.

[00:19:32.5] AS: Yeah and I think for the salty people, it’s a little bit trickier because they may see no sugars in them but if you look at the amount of carbohydrates compared to fiber, you will see the emptiness of the carbohydrates. If it has a serving of 32 grams of carbs and then one gram of fiber, you pretty much know that they’ve removed any of the nutrition. That’s how I eyeball it.

[00:20:00.0] JB: Yeah, definitely. I look at the fiber a lot in relation to the total carbohydrates.

[00:20:03.7] AS: Yeah because fiber will slow that blood sugar response down. It will keep you fuller and satiated longer so those are good amounts and I also think that people need to look at fruit drinks and fruit smoothies. It’s so interesting that all these people are getting into smoothies

but they are adding a ton of fruit, very little vegetables then they will add vanilla yogurt, vanilla almond milk and before you know it, you'd be better off eating ice cream.

[00:20:33.2] JB: With full fat.

[00:20:33.9] AS: Yeah and you'd like it better. This is so important, the audit, it's just to bring awareness not to judge yourself because let me tell you, most people who think they're eating healthy don't realize this is happening.

[00:20:50.8] JB: You are having a 250-300 calorie smoothie, so in your mind you're like, "This is great. This is so healthy, this is low cal, this doesn't have a lot of fat in it." But you are having 55 grams of sugar. Holy shit, that's more than a Coca-Cola.

[00:21:05.9] AS: Yeah and that's why I am trying to do a quick math here. That's like 14 packets pretty much.

[00:21:10.8] JB: Yeah and all you need to do that is like what Ali was saying, some vanilla yogurt, one banana, some berries and some almond milk you're there.

[00:21:23.1] AS: Yeah and people might be thinking, "Well those are natural sugars." Fruit is a natural sugar, right? There is not sugar added to yogurt naturally and it's okay to have natural sugars but usually in nature, the food that have natural sugars also have lots of fiber with them too and so that's really important. I think another food I'm thinking about, I remember I used to buy dried cranberries from Trader Joe's and Whole Foods and last time, I checked in both places, they had added cane sugar to them and I don't buy them anymore.

I'm so disappointed and they added sun flower oil. So these seemingly health foods, I always still have to check because formulas are changing all the time. So really just become aware. Give yourself a week to, "Whoa, look at that," and then start to figure out. I think too with the metabolic typing, most people are deficient in fat, hands down. They're doing low or no fat yogurt for breakfast or egg whites and then at lunch, they're sticking their fork in dressing instead of actually having the dressing over the salad. So I think that's another great place.

[00:22:29.5] JB: What about for the weekend warriors? What I mean by this is those of us who eat really low sugar Monday through Friday, how do we gauge the weekends and overall in the week, you know what I mean? You're saying, "Okay everyday see how much sugar you're having in on a daily basis," but what if Friday through Sunday is a shit show?

[00:22:53.5] AS: Yeah. I don't want to botch what the studies said but there's some data. I am pretty sure it's out there that shows that's actually worse for you than just being consistent because of the shock to the system. Yeah, and I think what happens then, think about it, if you're like, "I'm going crazy," then Monday comes and all of a sudden your blood sugar is going to drop so drastically. I always use the example of an IV drip for your blood sugar, right? So if you've been going crazy all weekend, that IV bag is used to being full.

So your body starts getting adjusted to getting all those fluids and then if all of a sudden you cut back, all of a sudden your body's like, "Wait, where," — and that's where people start to feel good on Monday until Wednesday and they start getting cravings at night. That's where the emotional piece comes in.

[00:23:52.5] JB: Alcohol, we didn't really touch on that but alcohol is sugar.

[00:23:56.5] AS: It is especially the mixed drinks and we should also talk about diet sodas. In fact, I just saw a study that came out today that more and more evidence is mounting that diet sodas, artificial sweeteners actually make you hungrier and they alter the gut bacteria. So you're not getting away with anything with those either.

[00:24:15.5] JB: Is there anything that we can have that's sweet? Because human beings, we have our taste buds. We're meant to taste salty, sweet, bitter, there's a reason for all of this.

[00:24:29.0] AS: Yeah, yeah. So I recommend my clients, and I'd be curious what you would recommend to yours Juliet, but I think, again, I am a naturalist so I think it comes from nature. So honey is a great food. Yes, it has a little bit of a higher glycemic index but we also know that the glycemic index now is unique to each individual. So I think honey is a great one, maple syrup.

[00:24:52.1] JB: But let's clarify, right? Because not all honey, not all maple syrup is going to be the right kind.

[00:25:00.4] AS: Yeah, I don't like to overwhelm people. I like to meet them where you are. So if they're first just trying to clean up their diets I'm like, "Don't worry about the exact honey." You can go to the honey isle and there's 80 different kinds right?

[00:25:12.3] JB: But I would say just look at the label, make sure that the ingredients is just honey. You can't assume that it's just honey nowadays or maple syrup is just maple syrup because these companies like to be cheap and they like to have a little bit of honey but they also like to have a little corn syrup in there too.

[00:25:28.4] AS: Great point. I thought you meant like raw versus.

[00:25:31.1] JB: No, no just to read the label.

[00:25:33.8] AS: For sure, that's why I like shopping at Farmers Markets because you can usually find the pure good stuff and then also, coconut sugar isn't quite as natural but I find it to be really helpful for people and it can be replaced one to one in baking. So that's what I always recommend to people. I used to, when I first started out, I thought agave was really good but it's now come out that especially it really mirrors the chemical structure of high fructose corn syrup.

[00:25:57.0] JB: And that also says how much little we know. At this point, we're saying honey, maple syrup, coconut sugar, those are all natural things but who knows two years from now, a study might come out and say something about coconut sugar just from the same way agave is. So with any of these things we can't abuse them.

[00:26:20.0] AS: For sure and also though, honey and maple syrup really do come directly. Agave you have to extract it from the same plant as tequila. Coconut sugar, you're doing some extraction as honey and maple syrup. I feel like no matter what we learn, we always learn that we always learn that we need to be in concert with our environment. That is just what has been proven and that's what traditional Chinese medicine and Ayurvedic has known for thousands of years.

But I love that you bring that point up because yeah, these sweeteners like Stevia for example, it was really helpful for me when I was cutting back on sugar but I don't do it anymore because there's some things that I'm kind of iffy about. There's the green Stevia which is better than the white Stevia but the green Stevia is hard to find. I dunno. What do you feel about Stevia?

[00:27:05.1] JB: I would love to have an expert come on and talk a little bit more about Stevia because I am not an expert and I was recently listening to a podcast with Dr. Axe, which I would love to have him on the show. I am definitely going to try to reach out to him and have him on here but he was talking about Stevia and the different qualities of Stevia because Truvia isn't Stevia. It's a combination of Stevia and Erythritol, which is a sugar alcohol.

Well they say Erythritol doesn't cause digestive discomfort but everyone is different, right? I know for me, Maltitol sends me into a fart storm. Some people it doesn't bother them but I can't, Xylitol, Maltitol all of those things are all awful. I can't really chew gum, but Erythritol is supposed to be one that's a little bit calmer on the system and you're going to find that a lot in these low calorie, no sugar ice creams like Halo Top ice cream. It's a crazy fad right now. Every whole foods you go to, it's sold out.

[00:28:16.7] AS: What is it? I've never even heard of it.

[00:28:18.4] JB: It's ice cream but I'm guessing that it's a much less — skim milk because to get the calorie count down, they can't have it be heavy cream. Although it says there's cream in. The ingredients don't make sense to me because they say eggs, cream and Erythritol and Stevia and then whatever else. To equal a pint being 240 calories, the equations don't add up to me so I am not really sure how that works. I was thinking about e-mailing them being like, "Can you explain how this works to me because..."

[00:28:47.6] AS: It could be like the case of Pirate Booty, did you hear about what happened to them all those years ago?

[00:28:52.1] JB: No.

[00:28:52.7] AS: This woman was on Weight Watchers and she was allotting her points and Pirate Booty counted as — she used the point calculators based on the calories that they gained and it turned out they have completely mislead and she sued them, won all these money and donated them all to obesity research.

[00:29:12.0] JB: Really? I mean labels aren't perfect. There's not a lot of regulation on stuff. There was a salad dressing that I noticed that randomly went from 30 calories per two tablespoons to 100 and something and I was like, "Whoa, whoah, whoah, what happened here?" So they obviously fucked up. It happens.

[00:29:34.1] AS: I think too, what's this ice cream you're talking about?

[00:29:37.8] JB: Halo Top.

[00:29:38.9] AS: Halo Top, I think this is what cracks me up when I go to Whole Foods. Just because it's in Whole Foods does not mean it's healthy per say.

[00:29:47.1] JB: Or any health food store.

[00:29:48.2] AS: Or any health food store. I am thinking a great substitute my clients like that's super cheap too is to take a frozen banana, put in some plain almond milk or any milk substitute that doesn't have sugar, throw in a little peanut butter in it. If you're allergic to peanuts do sunflower seed butter, a little bit of ice cubes, blend it up in a blender put a little couple chocolate shavings in it and that's cheap and it's going to be lower calorie than whatever is going on...

[00:30:17.3] JB: But not lower sugar and I think that's the thing with what's happening with these companies that are promoting these sugar-free made with Stevia products and there's that coconut, So Delicious has one as well, which is a sugar-free coconut ice cream. I think that people are excited because sugar is the new hot thing to get out of our diets to help us lose weight and burn fat. So people are like, "Well shouldn't I do that versus a 30 gram of sugar banana?"

[00:30:50.7] AS: Well that's interesting because then it brings up why are we judging things just by calories and grams? To me food is information and it's not just a caloric or even a gram. It provides a lot more information to your point that we don't even know right now. We will never know the full extent of what is in a banana but I think the important thing from a mindset standpoint is if you are using these things, I call them bridge foods.

They're to help you as you work on your emotions and clean up your diet to eventually not need them. They aren't a forever food but you do have to be where you are. I used all of those kind of things. I eventually got to the point where I love Elena's Pantry because she does a lot of low glycemic recipes. They have almond flour or coconut flour so they're still blood sugar balanced for most people. So I might recommend that to people if you need something. Try to do something homemade and you'll appreciate it more.

[00:31:47.9] JB: Yeah and you'll save a lot of money because those ice creams out there are really not cheap because it is causing the company a lot to make something that is somewhat tasty.

[00:31:58.2] AS: Yeah and I will tell you, I don't do ice cream that well but sometimes I will do it anyways and I would pay less for an organic regular ice cream over those low sugar substitutes because you need the fat, right?

[00:32:15.3] JB: The problem with those substitutes is often times, people don't know how to regulate and so, "Oh this pint is only 240 calories," and they eat the whole pint.

[00:32:25.8] AS: That's a great point yeah, and in their mind, they're sacrificing somehow. Like, "Oh this isn't the real thing." To that point, that's what we're talking about earlier. The more sugar you eat even if it's artificial or sugar free, the more you want especially if it's not balanced with fat. I thought of another sweetener that's out there that's really popular and the Keto community with Swerve. My sister has that at home.

[00:32:50.4] JB: I never heard of this. What is that?

[00:32:52.9] AS: I don't know what it is. My mom has cooked with it. I just don't really like it so she made this Keto cake and it had the icing with the Swerve and it just tastes different to me, so I don't really like it. I should have probably done more research but I know it's for sometimes for people who are in Keto and are trying to stay under their carb grams and some people have to be on it for truly medical issues, so it can be really helpful for that. But that's another one that's pretty new. I think it has sugar alcohols in it probably.

[00:33:25.5] JB: So far there's no digestive intolerance, no laxative effect with Swerve but everything is so new. There's five grams of Erythritol. I think it's Erythritol, that's what it is, that's what Swerve is.

[00:33:40.3] AS: Oh okay.

[00:33:40.5] JB: So it's Erythritol and then you're going to see a lot of always fiber with this stuff. They always put a lot of fiber in with all these products to keep it together.

[00:33:50.1] AS: Yeah.

[00:33:52.5] JB: But yeah, these is all really new. In the same way, that when Aspartame, Sweet and Low and came out, those were new at some point too. We didn't know that they were causing cancer and inflammation and in the same way that we don't really have enough research to say that your Truvia or your Erythritol isn't harming you. So you just have to, I think it's really important not to overdo it with these things.

[00:34:16.7] AS: Yeah and really know what moderation is.

[00:34:20.3] JB: Like Ali is saying, natural. You don't have to be afraid of natural. You don't have to be afraid of a banana or maple syrup or honey. These are things from the universe.

[00:34:30.5] AS: Yeah, from nature. She's so wonderful, but I think again, I think the big issue that once you get to the physical place, then you've got to look at the emotional stuff because no amount of sugar alcohols are going to give you the emotional satisfaction of why to turn to that. So this is another reason why I think it's the solution not a problem. So let's talk about

some of the emotional stuff. What were some of the emotional reasons, Juliet, that you discovered that you were turning to sugar?

[00:34:59.8] JB: Feeling very overwhelmed from my day and it's still something that I've been struggling with and I'm not perfect with this sugar thing. I definitely still turn to sugar and I think that when I have a day where I haven't had really much time to breath or just let everything kind of sink in and I've been going non-stop, and then sugar is a very calming food for me. That's how it acts in my system where it's like, "Ah okay, a little sugar. Now I can relax."

[00:35:39.5] AS: Well I think you bring up something interesting because most of us when we turn to sugar, we feel down. Overwhelmed, down and sugar brings us back up to that normal, which is relaxed, right? And it does have a numbing out effect especially if you eat enough of it for sure.

[00:35:58.0] JB: Yeah and it's rewarding. It feels rewarding. Sometimes you're like, "I've had a really hard fucking day and I deserve something to make me feel good right now."

[00:36:12.2] AS: Yeah. I like that you said "right now" because it makes you feel great but in the moment or the next day you wake — I remember so many times waking up the next morning being like, "Oh I'm so mad at myself."

[00:36:26.8] JB: Or even right after it, you have that feeling. You eat it and you're like, "Really? Why did you just do that?"

[00:36:32.6] AS: "It's already over? I'm so mad and it's already over." Yeah, I hear from a lot of my clients the deeper in that they get to why they turn to food in general. I was just with a client yesterday and it's just the sheer vulnerability of the moment. It isn't one particular situation, scenario. When you're, to your point when you were saying feeling overwhelmed, and she was describing that for her vulnerability almost meant like she didn't feel like — it's not even control but it's the term "agency" which I use all the time in Truce With Food.

You don't even need to control everything but you need to know you have options in that moment to alleviate some of those feelings and I think that's often times why most people turn

to carbs. I don't know if they would use those specific words, you are using overwhelmed but I think it's so important for people to get clear on what overwhelmed means. Because that "overwhelmed, stressed, I deserve this," you need to get clear on the emotions so you can then say that this is what I'm doing so that I can find a real substitute for it because as we were chatting before we started here, sugar and carbs, they are a symbolic substitute for reward.

[00:37:50.6] JB: Yeah and I think going back to the thing about getting rewarded at the end of the day, I would also say that for me, it was such a habit that it became an end cap to my day. So I would just know that that's the way that my day is ending. I end it with dessert. It's an end cap.

[00:38:09.9] AS: It's the ritual.

[00:38:11.0] JB: It was ritualistic for sure. So it's very challenging to get out of that when it's a habit that you have been doing for years.

[00:38:17.7] AS: For sure and if you're feeling overwhelmed or vulnerable, rituals ground us. They're like, "Oh okay, it's going to be okay," right?

[00:38:26.1] JB: Something that you could count on.

[00:38:29.2] AS: Right, that security but grounding makes you feel also connected to something like Alain de Botton who is this philosopher wrote this book called *Religion for Atheist* and I actually haven't read it but Carlos did and he was talking about, whether you're religious or not, the church provided a lot of wonderful things for people that have kind of gone to the way side and ritual was one of them and I think that's why sports have become obscene in our culture.

I mean I like sports, but they have taken on this importance, they're tribal and then what do people do around it? They eat. Like the Super Bowl is this huge party now, the Final Four is this huge party now, Easter Brunch — the rituals that we do have now is almost like because we don't have them on a daily basis. We have to get them in, in this huge way with other people and so that's another thing that makes it so hard about food but yeah, I think it's the ritual.

When you're feeling overwhelmed and vulnerable, it's like, "I can depend on this. This is what I go to," and this is a conversation episode but then you have to get to what is making you feel overwhelmed? What's making you feel vulnerable? what are the ways that you're seeing life that you're actually creating the overwhelm? And that's challenging. That takes a lot of coaching and reflection but I think once you get physically balanced and then start thinking, "Okay, this sugar and carb issue is not a logical problem anymore."

I can't ask myself why am I doing this or to just stop. I can't say that my willpower is going to solve this. I'm not going to bring it in the house. I tried that. I remember trying that and then I would just go walk to the store and get it. I remember I was making progress though when I wouldn't walk to get it. I was like, "Oh wow, this is progress," you know?

[00:40:21.1] JB: For sure.

[00:40:22.2] AS: But one of the tools I wanted to give people to start to understand the emotional fulfillment that they're getting from this is to ask some of the questions, "What do I love about this?" So instead of being like, "Why do I do this? Why do I come home every night and sit on the couch and eat, what do I love about it? What do I love about it?"

[00:40:45.8] JB: What are some of the responses that you hear from people when you ask that question?

[00:40:50.4] AS: Well it tends to be different for everyone. Some of my clients who do it in that transition time from work to evening it's like, "A chance to catch my breath. It's me time." They're so depleted energetically, it actually is an energy issue. They wouldn't think of that on the surface because they're like, "I have enough energy," but it's almost false energy because at least when we first started working together, over-caffeinated, again sugar stimulates us throughout the day if we aren't aware of how much we're eating.

Then it's that tired but wired feeling but they know they have the whole evening ahead of them so it's a way to regroup. They are using it as a way to, what I call "restore". Restore gives you more energy. So when you go to social media or TV you're zoning out. You are not getting

anything back from that but with sugar and carbs, you get energy back and so we start to try to find...

[00:41:41.4] JB: What do you think about sugar and carbs and TV combined? Are they canceling each other out?

[00:41:50.5] AS: Good question. I guess it depends on the TV, right?

[00:41:52.6] JB: Bad TV.

[00:41:55.1] AS: Bad TV, yeah. That's kind of a salty-sweet, they just cancel each other out. You'll be back for more.

[00:42:01.0] JB: Yeah, that's a fucked up combination you all. Careful with that.

[00:42:05.1] AS: Yeah.

[00:42:05.4] JB: But I think that people do that. When a lot of people watch TV and they just zone out and that's when they eat and they're not even connecting to how much they're eating.

[00:42:17.5] AS: Oh, that's the easiest time to zone out and I think part of that too is so many of my clients have so many rules for themselves during the day, not only around food but life general. It's fun to be symbolically being like, "I don't care." You know you care but it's like, "I'm not going to follow any rules."

[00:42:36.2] JB: You're just over it at that point. You're just like, "I just can't do this anymore," and of course you can. No one is meant to be able to hold it all together like that all day long. That's unrealistic.

[00:42:47.5] AS: Exactly and that's why you have to figure out how you're creating your own tension during the day because sugar, another way that I use to describe it is it's almost like a tea kettle. You come home from the day and you're like, "Ahh," and sugar just takes off the tea kettle like the steamer. So it's like, "Oh finally," right? I think people who eat in private, it's largely

about shame and not wanting to be seen because maybe they were seen in the wrong ways or they felt invisible during the day.

There's so many layers to it. I see a lot of my clients who, after a social event, then they come home and eat. It's like, "I was good," and maybe they didn't have the connection that they wanted or the evening didn't go the way they want it and it's like, "Ugh I was so good eating and I deserve this because I didn't get what I wanted out of the event." But the challenge with these things is often, we've normalized the emotional drought is coming to work. We accept a very low level of emotional fulfillment.

[00:43:50.0] JB: I like the way you put that.

[00:43:51.8] AS: Oh thank you.

[00:43:54.0] JB: That resonated with me and I don't know if maybe I am hearing it wrong, but are you saying that we are accepting that sugar is the fulfillment and very low grade fulfillment, it's like, "Really? You what that kind of shitty fulfillment in your life? Sugar?"

[0:44:14.1] AS: That temporary, right?

[0:44:15.4] JB: Temporary and yeah, it's not good enough everyone .We should have way better fulfillment than that.

[0:44:21.5] AS: Totally. I think yeah, I meant it that way and I also meant that I think so many of us expect that. "Oh I'm just getting older, this is what it's like, life is a drain. Or I have two kids now, this is what it's like," right? We just kind of buy into this narrative that it's all downhill from your 30th birthday. It's lower and lower so they can sell more crap to us, right?

[0:44:46.2] JB: I know, was that a 30th birthday, and all these women or some of them were less, were younger than 30 and they were like, "Oh yeah, I'm going to get Botox." I was like, "What the fuck? Botox? How old are you? 28?" It just made me really sad. No one at the [inaudible] needs any kind of Botox.

[0:45:09.4] AS: I don't know, I just feel like aging is such a privilege, a lot of people don't get to do it and but that's how I feel about it. But we're kind of deviating, but I think I meant like emotional — the level of connection we have with our coworkers or the level of connection we have with our families or the type of friendships we have. Our society is pretty diseased.

[0:45:31.9] JB: I think a lot of people are afraid to burden others, right? It's like, "Oh I don't want to burden them with a phone call, or they're probably busy." But I think everybody is craving that connection. We need to just kind of let those walls down.

[0:45:46.1] AS: Yeah, well and part of why we don't want to "burden people" is often because that means we judge people who need help.

[0:45:53.5] JB: I know for me, I know that connection with people is fulfilling for me but because I work in a job that is with people all day long and I am teaching classes and I'm kind of always connecting with people even if it's on a more superficial level.

I tend to stray away from making calls and having more of those deep interpersonal connections especially at the end of my day because I'm totally depleted from being around people that I actually need to do things that are more calming and introverted, which sugar by the way, if we look at it and read Chinese medicine standpoint, yin and yang, sugar is a very yin food.

If you're very yang and you're go, go, go type A, everything just going a million miles an hour and then you get home and you're like, you need some yin in your life. Sugar is a fast easy way to get yin but it's really just causing more of that energy, it's not actually fixing the problem. What are some things Aly that people can do that that are calm? If they need calm and that's what they're getting sugar from, what can they do to give them calm?

[0:47:02.5] AS: Yeah, you bring up a good point is that there isn't a formula for this, you have to do your own exploration and that's why I think people really sit with that question, "What do I love about this?" The answer might not come right away but just try it when you're in the moment, "What do I love about this?" To Juliet's point, when she was talking about yin, yin and yang are how Chinese medicine evaluates food, they don't look at calories, they look at the energy properties and our lives as westerners are very yang.

Life will always balance you out with yin and yang whether you choose to or not. They discovered yin and yang but first they noticed in nature then they notice it in the body then you can notice it, I see it with people's emotional habits but sugar, alcohol, caffeine are all very yin. So they're very expansive, is basically what that means.

So it gives us that exhale or reward or that contentment that we're really looking for from the day. If people need calm, I think it's an important work calm, right? They're not looking for zoning out which is what TV social media, all of this things that stimulate us in a way and I think that's so important to realize there's a difference because if you want to zone out, that's one thing but if you're looking for calm, that's why I like the word restoration. What do I need to restore myself?

I think everyone's different but I think some of the things I know that — in one program I did, I sent everyone coloring books and they really liked it. Coloring, because it's meditative right? There's so many different ways to be meditative. I think what you're ultimately looking for, what gives you energy back rather than just taking you. Some of my clients love to read fiction, that's something that's really restorative for them, because some hate coloring.

Sometimes giving answers is hard. I think movement for a lot of people like Yin Yoga or stretching. Not thinking, "This has to count for exercise," but what's going to restore your body? Because a lot of this is a physical component which then emotionally drains us. What about you? What ideas have worked for you? A bath with epsom salts?

[0:49:08.5] JB: Yeah, definitely a bath, not as much anymore because I don't have my Jacuzzi tub in this apartment. I know I was really spoiled in my last apartment, had jets and it made me take a bath every single night and it was amazing. Now I don't have a jet so I don't know why I don't use it as much.

But for me it's really calm, quiet, nothing, you know what I mean? Even if it's five minutes of silence, before I do anything like I just need to take a little break. Even in the middle of my work day sometimes I will go into the bath room and just sit on the toilet and just take some deep

breaths and just don't look at my — just don't do anything. How many opportunities do you have where you aren't doing anything?

[0:49:56.4] AS: I think you bring up an interesting — that's an interesting point because I think a lot of us are so used to being stimulated.

[0:50:01.0] JB: Now all my clients listening are like, "Oh that's why you were in the bathroom that long." I'm sitting there meditating on the toilet.

[0:50:12.6] AS: Well you have like pounding music going on.

[0:50:16.2] JB: That's the thing, I'm in an extraordinary situation of stimulation, like it's like out of this world.

[0:50:24.8] AS: yeah, I think a lot of people are stimulated constantly during the day, whether it's through emails or they're running late, or it's just like multitasking and I think then if you're not stimulated, it feels like something's wrong. So I think that's important to recognize, nothing's wrong.

[0:50:43.3] JB: You're just not used to it, that's all it is. If you can just say, "Oh, it's just on unfamiliar territory for me that doesn't mean that anything's wrong." Just sit with it for a little while and just notice what happens.

[0:50:55.9] AS: Yeah, and again, I think though, you bring up an important point in what I work on with my clients is we don't even — we look at the evenings because that can be a really challenging time for people but we really start, like the evening if you, and I forget what episode we talked about this? But if you enter the evening with a certain level of depletion, you just aren't going to make the healthy choice.

Everyone has a different threshold. I use the battery metaphor. Some people need to be charged 60% for them to have a healthy evening. Other people might only need 20, it's different for everyone. But I think working on this restoration and calmness or whatever you're craving or rewarding, it has to be throughout the day, it can't be the extreme of depriving myself a reward

or meaning and then the evening. It's really hard not to crack I think. You have to look at the system that work through my lens, I look at the stories that make the day feel like you're so deprived or so stressful or whatever feeling.

Again, often times, we're contributing to this and so I think it's really important that part of getting over sugar is actually understanding how much agents see here. Agency is different than control, realizing life isn't just happening to you. You have choice, doesn't mean you can control everything. Yes, we all need health insurance, we all need to pay our bills, right? Unless you hit the lottery, or have a trust fund but everyone's life isn't just happening to you. My clients have found that the most profound changes are in the subtlest ways.

[0:52:31.9] JB: You have the option to not look at social media while you're lying in bed, to not look at your news app when you get home from work on the couch, you have these options.

[0:52:44.5] AS: Yeah, even things that — the subtle is profound, I think we are looking for this big sweeping changes but one of the things that restores my client so much is, in Truce With Food, we really get into self-compassion. How do you not beat yourself up for not being perfect with food, you're not being perfect in life, and often we're the ones draining. It's like the internal experience is draining us more than what's happening, it's our reaction to it. I also just want to offer to people that being softening into your life and how you treat yourself can unleash a lot of energy that you then don't feel so deprived and depleted and like life is a drag and just happening to you. It's not always something external happening either.

[0:53:30.0] JB: Yeah, it's interesting you say that Ali because one of the really profound things that worked for me and shifted my dessert ritual at night was when I finally said to myself, "Okay, I'm just going to accept that this is what I need every night, and I'm not going to fight it anymore and I'm going to adjust, enjoy it and accept." It's like how many years have you been doing it so you might as well just give in, you know? Just ease into it.

It was a beautiful thing but once I accepted that, there wasn't really the chance for me to go get seconds, it wasn't a frenetic feeling anymore and then I would have nights where I was like, "You know what? I actually don't want that." I could have it though if I wanted it.

[0:54:20.1] AS: Yeah, the energy around it drives seconds.

[0:54:22.3] JB: The energy, it's the energy, yes.

[0:54:24.5] AS: Yeah, what you're basically described is paradox, which is the central fundamental truth of change. What we resist persists and what we embrace dissolves. We just have to hit like look straight in to whatever we're challenged with, we can't run away from it, we can't judge it and the funny thing is that paradox came out of yin and yang. That how we know, and that's such a truth, right?

We talked about yin and yang, energetics of food but it's also the energetics of life. It's just how change happens and I'm glad that you shared that because that's perfect. I know yeah, one thing that's helped me as I do only — I struggle with sugar when I'm tired. I never would have thought that, but it really is when I have certain energy level that's depleted. But any more — that was kind of the last hurdle for me.

But any more, the only time I have it is at night after dinner and when I focus more though on, not as, am I having it, am I not? Because I do sleep better, I wake up more energized, it really helps my energy and I feel like my energy is something I complain about, I'm challenged by it a lot. People are like, "I'd never have guessed that from you," but I don't have the energy to take on, like get out in the world as much as I would like I guess you could say.

I just started looking more on a continuum. Am I decreasing how often I'm having it at night? That's also worked rather than being like, "Every night has to be, get rid of your little piece of dark chocolate," which some people maybe like, "Oh please, give me a break." But it interferes with my sleep.

[0:55:54.1] JB: Everybody's situation is different.

[0:55:56.6] AS: Yeah, and I worked really damn hard to get here too. It's not like, "Oh, you know." Not that matters but looking at it on a continuum and it's really worked. I think Carlos and I went off sugar like in February. He stuck with it for the most part, he has it here and there but

I'm probably having it now like three times a week, which is much better than I was when we first went off of it.

Yeah, I was having it none at all but I used to have it every night after dinner. I've gone through times before where I never had it and I've been off of it but now I'm just like, "All right, I'm at about three days a week and I'm not even going to measure it but this is where I'm at and yay," you know? So also, looking at things not so much as like an everyday thing but over time where they're getting better I think is an important thing.

So let's wrap this up. I think for people, hopefully you better understand that sugar, which also includes processed carbs is so much more of a solution than a problem. There's the physical component of it, there's also the emotional component. First, do a sugar audit. Look for the amount of grams of sugar, four grams of sugar equals a packet. Just in what you eat, and the dressings that you use, everything, and just observe for a couple of days including the weekends because Juliet's point, a lot of people go crazy on the weekend, and just become aware. Juliet, what was the amount you said again that you recommend for your clients?

[0:57:19.6] JB: If it's a salad dressing or tomato sauce or anything like that, a condiment, less than 5 grams per serving and then if it's something like crackers or cereal, something like a boxed item, less than 10 grams of sugar per serving, that also includes yogurt and all of that.

[0:57:38.0] AS: Yeah. So as you start to upgrade there, actually a study came out this week that people who focus on adding in healthier foods rather than cutting out their favorite foods do much better. So crowd out, crowd out, and your taste buds will change. Do a sugar audit and then start to upgrade to things that have maple syrup and honey and use your own. Make your own kind of stuff, and coconut sugar.

Then really ask yourself, "What do I love about indulging in carbs when ____?" Right? Maybe it's in private, maybe it's at night, maybe it's at social events, what do I love about this rather than trying to think, "Why do I do this?" There is a reason for it. Start to unpack that and have self-compassion as you start to, because there will be multiple layers, it's never one thing, that's it, that's a hot tip, hot coaching tip. I hope that doesn't overwhelm people. All right, anything else Juliet?

[0:58:40.4] JB: No, this was very informative.

[0:58:43.1] AS: Yeah. All right.

[END OF DISCUSSION]

[00:58:44.8] 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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