

## Food Freedom 6: Sugar Rehab – Insatiable Season 10, Episode 7

[INTRO]

### **Welcome to Insatiable Season 10: Research-Based Weight Loss: Rebuild Your Biology + Psychology Feedback Loop**

Have you ever read about the past and thought, I can't believe people actually believed that? In the 19th century, doctors thought that "bloodletting" could cure illnesses and Dr. Joseph Lister was shunned for his thesis and early research proving that bacteria caused disease. While Dr. Lister was being denigrated, Charles Darwin was being celebrated, falsely claiming that women were less intelligent than men. In Darwin's time women rarely went to advanced schooling, they needed to preserve their limited energy for baby-making. The 20th century wasn't immune from junk science and outrageous claims, Domino's sugar advertised a sugar diet as a way to lose weight touting that it had less calories per gram than fat. Cigarettes were also marketed as healthy.

It sounds laughable to most of us now. But only because brave, curious thinkers were willing to question, test, and disprove the status quo and limited thinking.

In Season 10 of Insatiable, Research-Based Weight Loss: Rebuild Your Biology and Psychology Feedback Loop, we'll explore emerging research and viewpoints, now on the periphery, that will make the current mainstream thinking of weight loss as willpower and calorie-cutting look just as misguided as soothing babies and colds with morphine syrup (which was a medically endorsed thing in the Victorian era).

We will explore how taking the steps towards weight loss individually and societally can be a form of resistance against the toxicity and industrialization of our food supply. We'll question



the convenience of telling women that weight loss is giving into the patriarchy and male gaze—and how this silences deeper questioning about why we all have gained so much weight and what other consequences come with this physically and mentally.

We will do this by taking an integrated and holistic look at the biological and psychological feedback loop that goes into maintaining a natural weight and how our industrialized society has disrupted it.

We'll discuss how what you eat informs how you feel and your habits which in turn influence what you eat as a constantly self-reinforcing infinity loop.

We'll examine how our culture and thus education and medical systems are not holistic, and results in a siloed view of human biology and health which allows the public and experts to continue to frame weight loss as about willpower and only about food.... and how very convenient this is for those who set and profit from our industrialized agriculture policy.

We laugh about Domino's sugar diet, but the same reasoning still informs our modern dietary guidelines. Even the mainstream is noting that "The Sugar Research Foundation" with the help of three handsomely compensated Harvard scientists in 1967 handpicked studies placing the blame on fat rather than sugar for heart disease. In 1977 one of these researchers would become the Head of Nutrition for the USDA and outline nutrition guidelines, enabling the low-fat weight-loss craze to become a thing, and we'd all get fatter, sicker, and more depressed in the years to come.

If in your gut, you feel there are more important (and potentially revolutionary) root causes to your weight battle or if you want to learn the viewpoint that people will likely have 50 years now—that willpower and a simple view of calorie counting as the key to weight loss makes about as much sense as giving morphine to babies—this season is for you.



[EPISODE]

Okey-doke, here we are...our last episode of Season 10. Wow! I have loved putting this season together, I love the feedback that I've received from those of you I've talked to on Instagram and by email. It was quite a ride getting this together six weeks after Eça was born. Especially because I got push back - it was polite yet still, I felt misunderstood - for including the concept of weight loss, I was told I was promoting obesity panic, part of diet culture and uninvited from a podcast because of the trailer to this season.

I'll be sharing more about the behind the scenes once I process and formulate how to respond and synthesize what I've learned. Because weight loss is as polarized as everything else, I might do a mini-episode on my thoughts on weight loss alone, including how our need for belonging in anti-diet and IE camps, especially when we have been marginalized for being in bigger bodies, can sometimes keep us away from the very information that might help us.

I feel my thoughts are very clear about the kind of weight loss that is untangled from diet culture. Still, I think nuance takes more explaining as it seems people want to automatically put you in the camp of either anti-diet or pro-diet culture when there is so much in between! And the irony is that black and white thinking is part of diet culture and that any mention of weight loss is part of diet culture! So more to come on that front.

But today we are going to talk about sugar, referred to as the sugar dragon, sugar siren, sugar addiction. There is so much to say...so much that Season 11, which will air in the Spring - May 3, will be solely dedicated to Sugar Rehab. So stay tuned for that.

Today, I want to focus on the physical and emotional root causes and solutions to how to reduce sugar in your life. Unlike Overeaters Anonymous, I don't think you have to cut it out of your diet, especially if you do the emotional work around sugar. The more we try to resist something, the more it persists. And sugar on occasion isn't going to influence your health or



weight that much. What “on occasion” means depends on your autonomic nervous system balance (which I discussed in Episode 2) and your current health condition. We always have to look at nature and nurture. Many people are pre-diabetic and so that will make them more sensitive to sugar for example.

So today, we will discuss:

- Why sugar is so dangerous and yet it comforts us
- 5 easy food swaps and additions to your diet to naturally prevent cravings
- The four emotional triggers that cause sugar cravings and how to work through triggers without sugar

There is starting to be more in the news asking is sugar an addiction? And of course I’ve mentioned in this season that often we might not think it is so dangerous simply because it is legal, put into everything and we are relentlessly marketed to use it.

But I don’t want you to let the government and mainstream media decide how you decide, especially when the FDA and EPA are revolving doors with executives from Food and Chemical companies and media companies don’t use any sort of moral compass to vet advertising.

I find there’s a huge disconnect between people understanding on some level how our government is a Corporate oligarchy and influences medical research and yet, if we don’t know enough about what works for our bodies and the systems we live in, I still see people default to doctor’s outdated nutrition information when they get back blood work that shows high cholesterol or high blood pressure for example. And I get it: when we feel vulnerable because of our health and then we get scary news...we look to an authority who ideally does know how to support us. The key is to know which authority to pick!

Part of the adult development work we do in Truce with Food is to learn how to move from the socialized mind to self-authoring mind. The socialized mind is what we call the “Good Girl” in



my work. The good girl bases her metrics and ideas of “Good” and “Bad” from what we’ve learned from diet culture, Western medicine, intuitive eating, body positivity AND also in our families, schools and religions. The self-authoring or Boss mindset is where we can be our own discerning authority about what to take from these places, what to add, what to leave and metabolize all of this for what we want to choose for our bodies.

In the case of sugar, my hope is it won’t take the FDA coming out to say “sugar is bad” for you to understand its effect on your body, your kids bodies and our environment and to take it seriously to reduce it in your life. I’ll show you briefly today why that’s not going to happen.

The main focus of today’s episode is to give you easy food and emotional shifts to start to reduce sugar in your diet, because this episode is called Sugar Rehab.

Before we get to the lay of the land and then how to get out of the matrix, I want to define what I mean by sugar here: First, I’m talking about what we think of as junk food, but also processed carbs or sugar added to healthy foods.

Peanut M&Ms. YES? YES. Gummies. YES. Gummy vitamins. YES.

Processed carbs are whole grain carbohydrates like rice or whole wheat that have most of their fiber removed to increase shelf life. They are your pasta’s, most breads, including lots of gluten-free breads, pretzels, corn chips, french fries which I love at times. All processed mainly from having the nutrients, especially fiber removed, to increase shelf life.

Packaged food and their profits rest on long shelf life. Because the shorter the shelf life, the more chance of spoiling, the more chance of less profit.



Also healthy foods that have sugar added to them. Like Dressings. Dried fruit (WF adds sugar to their dried cranberries). Ketchup (not necessarily a health food but 4 tsp = 1 packet visual...basically 1 T of sugar is one packet). Sauces are laced with sugar.

Also, with carbs, because of diet culture, people often want to lump whole foods like white potatoes or sweet potatoes. Or even corn or higher carbohydrate vegetables into the sugar category. I am not including those because they are real, whole foods.

Obviously the sugar products I'm talking about all have differing amounts of sugar. But when you start realizing sugar is a major ingredient in almost every food, you have to realize processed carbs aren't only in bread and candy.

And if you want to get really discouraged, the climate crisis is even making our vegetables have more carbohydrates in them! Mother Jones did this piece on how the climate crisis is killing our low-carb diets. They shared how when the air that surrounds plants is richer in CO<sub>2</sub>, they use it to synthesize more carbohydrates, including starches and sugars, which are then stored in plant cells. Essentially, more carbon in the air means more carbs in plants, and these carbs then dilute the other beneficial molecules, including protein and some vitamins and minerals, taken up and/or synthesized by the plants.

But despite all this, we can have a healthy relationship with sweet and salty carbs, especially if we do the emotional work in how we relate to food.

Part of having a healthy relationship with sugar is understanding the lay of the land of what you are up against. **Part of why I bring social structures into my work is because once you can see why something like dramatically reducing sugar in your diet is so hard because of our culture, you can have more self-compassion and a deep understanding that you aren't broken, weak or somehow, addicted to food, sugar especially.**



In fact, after seeing the landscape, you might be surprised that you aren't eating even more sugar! Seeing how much our culture sets you up for nutritional failure is part of the healing! And once we can see how we are influenced by these bigger forces, we can then see we have a choice and choose to work to get untangled from the insanity!

Ok, for starters, even if you think you eat relatively healthy, now the big food companies own most of the natural food companies. Like Annie's is owned by General Mills, Honest Tea is owned by Coca-Cola, Naked Juice is owned by Pepsi.

And being acquired isn't inherently bad. However, you have to understand these companies are going to try and put their same business model onto these brands. The food business has very small margins and from what I've seen with some of these brands, companies start taking short-cuts on quality to improve the profits. This isn't always the case but it's something to be aware of. Most big food companies are like viruses...they know how to evolve and evade and get more sophisticated as consumers become more aware! And, lots of these more natural and organic brands weren't that healthy to begin with. They can be great as a transition to more whole foods but they're still packaged.

So most food brands are all owned by a few big companies. And they have MASSIVE advertising budgets. And they need them to help us feel like we can trust these brands.

I shared in my Well-Rounded newsletter, an article the Atlantic did on how much companies spend advertising sugar to us. This is just a sample, but In 2014:

Kellogg's spent \$32 million in advertising Pop Tarts alone.

Coca-Cola spent \$269 million advertising its flagship product (Coca-Cola).

Pepsi spent \$150 million just to advertise the brightly colored sugar-water that is Gatorade.



And they do this because of sugar, which interferes with our physiological and psychological feedback loop, makes you hungrier, which turns what was once inelastic demand - meaning in economic terms you can't increase demand that much - or so they thought. But once they started adding sugar and other tricks like smells, etc...they could get people to eat more.

Food industry went from 1% gross profit margin to 5% gross profit margin in the span of three decades. That's a 500% increase!

These companies spend so much money on branding because it works: mainly, they spend it so we will start to feel safe with these products, starting with serving it to children.

Because when we have it as kids, it can serve as a tool of comfort and control when we don't have much other control in our lives. Kraft hired a psychologist to help them develop their Lunchables product, which is also laced with sugar. What the psychologists taught Kraft was that kids have very little control in their lives so if they could create a product that gave kids control, that would be part of the appeal. And that was part of the design of Lunchables. Kids could choose what they wanted and what they could trade. It gives children choices when so much of their life they can't choose.

Think of your own memories of sugar...and the foods you turn to now aren't only about the sweet flavor. It's about the emotional connection of comfort or reward. Soda is that way. Christmas cookies. Pizza...as a family, we used to go out to eat every other week when it was payday for my parents. Go to Pizza Hut. Book It for reading.

Even with my clients who grew up in highly dysfunctional families, food was often what they turned too or going out to eat with their family was the time when their families weren't fighting. So even if home wasn't safe, food became a way to numb out or avoid the dysfunction.





Food companies fight for shelf space at children's eye level and have a term called "the nag factor", which they hope kids will wear their parents down nagging them for the foods they've been advertised to with their favorite cartoon characters. I am dreading when the day comes of how I am going to navigate advocating for Eca's health in daycare and with kids friends at birthday parties without wanting to be a food cop.

You can feel like the little kid in the Emperor who Has No Clothes fable when you see kids being given copious amounts of sugar that will deregulate their little bodies, as it did to ours. But they bombard kids with advertisements because of the sense of "home" or comfort we will associate with these foods.

And kids become adults like us with buying power that will return to those foods and hopefully, then give them to their kids, nieces, nephews, grandchildren, etc.

So copious amounts of advertising are coming at us. And then, the sugar industry gets as much as 4 billion dollars of subsidies every year, which makes it cheaper for consumers while profitable and allowing for a higher value of sales for companies. Lettuce isn't naturally more expensive than Peanut M&Ms. Many of us rely on processed carbs also because they are fast and with many of us working so much, they become a solution to a resource crunch of both time and money. So when we measure value in terms of dollars only, healthy food is much more of an immediate investment.

As a result of sugar being so cheap to buy for food companies and then easy to sell us more of, 50% of our farming land becomes dedicated to growing corn and soy, to feed to animals and refine into sugar. This is farmland that isn't growing real food, full of nutrition.

And then we are living in very stressful, uncertain times and so sugar becomes a solution, not the problem, when we are feeling stressed. I'll get more into breaking that down in the second half of this episode.



But in summary, we are advertised processed carbs constantly from birth, they become an emotional sense of refuge, they are then cheaper and so they become easily accessible and consuming processed carbs in copious amounts becomes normalized.

Throughout this season, I've been talking a lot about how processed foods, mainly processed carbs, effect us, particularly around blood sugar and how blood sugar presents emotionally. If you want to understand more of the physiology, please listen to those previous episodes. Also, I did an entire episode that became one of the most downloaded and discussed Episode 34, originally aired on 8/1/16 called Anatomy of a Sugar Craving. Check that out too if you want to delve deeper into what's physically happening.

What I want to do today from a physiological and food standpoint is look at the top 5 food tips to naturally reduce your sweet tooth.

Also, it's important to recognize that you must know as a baseline, what foods work best for your body as discussed in Episode 2 of this season. But knowing where you fall on the continuum between vegetarian, Mediterranean or Paleo is going to be foundational to rehabbing from sugar and in Episode 6, I gave you a rule of thumb of how to balance yourself if you aren't rock solid in what foods work for you.

So these five tips are building upon being in the ballpark of what macronutrient ratios of foods work best for you...that will eliminate at least half of your cravings once you start eating the right foods for your body.

**1. Become aware of how much sugar you are eating, including in your salty foods.**



Observe how much sugar is in what you are eating. I can give you these big macro numbers about advertising or subsidies and they will come to life when you look at your individual life. 4 tsp = 1 sugar packet.

Whenever I do classes on sugar, I always start with this. Including things like your Naked Green Smoothie. 58 g of sugar...more than a pumpkin spice latte or 15 g of sugar! Becoming aware is always our first step to change. And starting to understand that the more sugar you eat, the hungrier you are is also critical. I looked at our own condiments while writing this episode and saw the Annie's Organic honey mustard we bought didn't have any honey, used cane sugar and for 1 tsp, had 2 g of sugar...that's half a packet of sugar in 1 tsp of mustard! I will be using dijon mustard from now on. I'm not sure if we even bought that as we've had a lot of family here helping us with Eca and someone probably brought that in. Either way: a learning moment for me!

And if you're looking at something like pretzels or bread, look at total carbohydrates and look at how much fiber goes along with that. You ideally want at least 3-4g of fiber per serving. But you will start to see how many empty carbohydrates are in our food when you see like 35g of carbohydrates per serving with zero fiber. For example, many pastas will have 43 g of carbs with 1 g of fiber. Whereas an apple has 25 g of carbs but 5 g of fiber...

Because we've been told in diet culture that a calorie is a calorie. So you think well if I have x amount of calories, I'll feel full. But with sugar, you will see how the more you eat, the more you want. I often use a roller coaster for a blood sugar analogy. And what sugar does is it adds not only more peaks and valleys, but more tracks to the ride. And the more tracks, the more hungry you get.

**2. Replace high sugar products with more real food equivalent.** This will naturally reduce your sugar content and up your fat and fiber, which will decrease your sweet cravings and desire for the sweet flavor.



Replace Ketchup --- salsa

Replace Honey mustard --- mustard or mustard made with honey

If you are eating breads --- aim for 4g of fiber or no sugar added (Ezekiel bread)

Replace Frozen yogurt --- Ice cream

Replace Juices --- Fruit and vegetables or convert to smoothies (get fiber)

Replace Cereal --- Steel Cut Oats

Replace Yogurt with Syrupy Fruit --- plain unsweetened Yogurt with fruit

Replace Dressings --- Lower sugar dressings or simply olive oil, vinegar or lemon and natural sea salt

Replace Milk chocolate --- dark chocolate with a high cacao count and lower grams of sugar from natural sources.

Replace skim milk --- full fat dairy

**3. MORE HEALTHY FATS.** I always have to include this because as much as people know this, many people still aren't getting enough. I was talking with a family member who asked for some advice because her blood work came back with high cholesterol and I told her to add back in the egg yolks. So I think many people still think cholesterol is something to be feared. Super high cholesterol, we are talking high 200s, yes. And, root cause of high cholesterol is sugar and dehydration. Dr. Oz sugar analogy. Also, Sweden doesn't even test for it, client's UK doctor, Socialized mind. Here are some suggestions to incorporate more healthy fats

- a. Eggs with yolks
- b. Skin on chicken (amino acids that help with anxiety....Ali Miller, holistic nutritionist)
- c. Slivered almonds on your steel cut oats
- d. More than a few fork dips of dressing
- e. Butter or ghee on your sweet potato
- f. Dark almond bark
- g. Sweets after a meal with good fats
- h. Dates stuffed with peanut butter



**4. More Bitter Flavor:** our taste buds change...the more processed sugar we eat, the more we crave its flavor. And we can reverse this. Cited research in Well-Rounded that showed how our taste buds can change in the reverse direction. Chinese medicine, bitter flavor helps to prevent sweet cravings. In Western diets, we tend to see-saw between salty and sweet. Coca-Cola knows this and adds salt to coke so we want more sweets! . Adding in more bitter flavor helps to reduce sweet flavor cravings so you may want to try to eat more.

- i. Dark leafy greens like kale, collards, brussel sprouts, cabbage, coffee without sugar, green tea, unsweetened cocoa, chai tea (decaf after lunch)

**5. More real, in-season fruits and veggies:** Need healthy carbohydrates. Many people eliminate them and then binge to balance out in a way. In-season is so important because of heightened flavor and smell. What food companies are tinkering with more than anything is smell which influences flavor and our total experience...this is even different than taste alone. If you get my WR newsletter, you might have clicked on the article that I included where they explained all of this. The take-away is the more fresh, local food you eat, the more you will crave real flavors, not the manufactured ones.

You'll notice these tips are mostly about what to add more into your diet. You can decrease sugar cravings by crowding them out with mostly real food, which naturally contains more fat and more flavor variety! Pretty neat right? I'm all about less rules and boiling things down to their essence. The more you remove what isn't working, the less there is to do!

So understand what you are up against and then devote yourself to a healthy rebellion! The more we get back to food in its natural state, including how it's grown, the less correction or rules we need.

This also includes getting our emotional state back to a more natural, heart-opened state rather than chronically defensive. When we are in our story, sugar is often the solution, not the problem. Let me explain:



As I said above, food companies spend BILLIONS of dollars for us to connect sugar = refuge...to comfort, to home. It's subliminal yet over the years, it solidifies as sugar really does become part of our memories.

I've worked with so many clients over the years who can remember their soda habit started when their Mom and them would stop at 7-11 and get big slurpees. Or I remember after swimming lessons, we would stop at Dunkin Donuts. Or, often going out to ice-cream was one of the few happy memories clients would have with their families. Or they were rewarded with food and so food was a recognition of their efforts.

And again, using sugar to celebrate or connect us with traditions isn't a bad thing or something we have to eliminate completely.

It's when turning to sugar actually makes our bodies and psyches feel more unsafe that is the problem. When we turn to sugar to ground us, we lose the ability to develop the inner safety and resilience we need to ground us long-term, not just while we are eating. And turning to sugar makes it even harder when you consider the research I shared in the last episode of how hyperglycemia, which is when large amounts of glucose are in the body (which is how the body breaks down processed carbs), it increases feelings of anxiety and sadness. Sugar also leads to inflammation which leads to depression. So this isn't about all or nothing, it's about the chronic use of sugar as a 1-2 punch on our emotional resilience and sense of power.

When it comes to our stories, I've found there are four feelings that trigger our stories and make us turn to processed carbs.

I use the acronym TAIL to help my clients in WAJETN remember...what's at the TAIL end of this craving?



T stands for Tired.

A stands for Anxious, which is usually uncertain.

I stands for Inadequacy, terms like Imposter Syndrome tend to be more common

L stands for Lonely

So when I say sugar is the solution, we use it when we are feeling any of these four emotions and we use them for different reasons. Today, give you a few reasons and ideas to experiment with.

And understand being able to identify what feeling is an important part of this. Because so many people think sugar is only about the taste and physiological affects. It is not! We need to get out of the all-or-nothing media messaging too...there is a lot of nuance of why we turn to processed carbs.

The first feeling is TIRED.

**TIRED:** This is probably the most stealth one. We have all normalized a certain level of fatigue. I am still working on this one! Even working on this episode...the last 2 months have been so intense as I've gone back to work with a newborn. I laughed with my Mom who is here watching Eca today that I needed a nap yet had to finish this last episode and what I really wanted was to eat the GF coffee cake she brought last week that was still in the fridge. I had a little piece and then laid down! LOL. I put butter on it and here I am, totally fine. But I've also healed my own blood sugar issues whereas something like that tiny sliver of GF coffee cake would have sent me into a spiral of crashing and cravings 10 years ago.

Anyway, this isn't my food diary! But when I have clients really tune in when they aren't having a physical craving, they are astonished at how often, they want sugar when they are tired.



Our stories have us white-knuckle a lot of things in our life - exercise, pushing through work stuff, or prevent us from finding natural energy solutions like creativity. Instead, we zone out on the couch with take-out and Netflix...which isn't really restorative all the time.

So next time you ask yourself, what's at the TAIL end of this sugar craving and tired is the answer, here are some ideas.

So some ideas when you start to feel your energy wane:

**Get outdoors!** Natural light is so important for energy. And listened to my light episode with Brandon, gives us more of our energy needs than food! Blue blocking glasses are also important. I'll link the podcast in the shown notes. It's Season 6, Episode 5.

**Nap or get more sleep:** seem obvious but irony is processed carbs can make sleep difficult. A lot of times people awake in the middle of the night with mind racing is dropping blood sugar...again it triggers panic. But getting more sleep is essential. Stop caffeine before 12 (also decrease physical carb cravings).

**Move Your Body:** Might seem counterintuitive but many of us are tired from being STAGNANT. And we might be too tired to exercise but you know the old saying an object in motion stays in motion? Light movement...I'm talking walking or a yoga flow or whatever...will remove the stagnation and get us more energized.

Pro-tip: the sooner you check in with yourself, the sooner you will feel slightly tired rather than exhausted. Many of us only feel our feelings when they are acute and often, there is no turning back with food at that point.





**Our next feeling is Anxious, which is often code for uncertainty.** And we all are in uncertain times. It seems like every information revolution does this...printing press, the Internet now. If we don't know how to handle uncertainty, will turn to the refuge of processed carbs.

And what's tricky about battling food and sugar is often, a sense of home is chaos. I have a client who came to me because of her own sugar habit. What she realized was that when her story was active, she felt a spinning. And she realized not having that spinning made her uncomfortable...and so she used sugar to keep the spinning going! In other words for people who had chaotic childhoods or otherwise normalized chaos, any hint of calm can make many people uncertain!

Uncertainty tips are so hard because this is a more long-term feeling we need to learn to master. But here's a couple tips when you are feeling anxious and want to ground yourself with sugar:

- 1. Nothing is Make or Break as a mental reminder.** When we are uncertain, often fall back into black and white thinking: this outcome will lead to success or failure. Adoration or rejection.

When we make a choice, it's always somewhere in the middle. I had a client recently who has to make some big decision about the company she built and what to do next. This felt like a really big uncertain change...and it was. Yet she found it helped some things and didn't make such a difference either way towards success or failure. Most of life is like this. Yet we tend to build up our next choice which exaggerates the degree of uncertainty we are feeling.

- a. Breathwork is a great way to clear this build up and "Right size" reality.** We had Ashley Neese on and I highly recommend her book. I did a lot of her practices during my pregnancy when I got news that my mind wanted to spin



into disaster...and it did. Like when I was measuring big and even though it was probably nothing, my past “it’s probably nothing” cancer trauma made me focus on the worst case scenario. I reminded myself that whatever the news, we could handle it and then I did breathwork. I often cried and felt more grounded and a felt sense that regardless of the news, we as parents were going to have to expand our capacity for uncertainty so this unfolding was one experience of a million where we’d have to practice staying calm and get the information we needed. You also realize when there’s a million choices to make, not one choice can matter that much!

2. **Share with others who will mostly listen and not offer advice.** Ask for this! Often we can ground back into our bodies by taking our energy from up in our head and talking it out to move us down into our bodies, into what is real. We might even cry or laugh. Getting into our bodies gets us rooted in what is real, right now.
3. **Move your body.** There is a very real physical discomfort to uncertainty, especially if you haven’t healed past trauma. As I just said with talking it out with someone who will listen, we need to ground into what is real and present. We have a tendency to retreat into food when we need to practice staying in our bodies because there is so much insight in the information there. And what we embrace dissolves.

I used to binge on sugar before and after my yearly oncology scans. Before what I know now, I felt insane because I knew cancer cells feasted on sugar. But now I understand the uncertainty of what they might find was what was controlling me. I have healed my story so that when these scans come around today, I feel the uncertainty much less and make sure to really do yoga and move a lot in nature when it’s time for those tests. It keeps me grounded in today.

**Inadequate:** this is when we feel too much or not enough in some ways.



1. **Mindset shift:** I haven't figure this out YET...growth mindset tip from Carol Dweck...reminds us we are capable. I love this. Also that nothing is permanent, including that we feel inadequate.
2. **Ask clarifying questions.** We more times than not feel inadequate because of how we are imagining things to be: often clients are in dysfunctional companies or leadership and unknowingly take on the lack of organization thinking "they should just know". Asking questions and saying, "I'm trying to get clear here...why is this or what are your expectations here?" helps the next step in front of them go from "super sized" to "right size."
3. I recommend the same tips as above for Uncertainty in terms of "nothing is make or break".

**Lonely:** Feeling alone and isolated is pretty awful and I find this drives sugar craving so much but people don't often even realize how isolated they are!

During the first six weeks of Eca's life, I was so taken aback by how hard it was and even though people tell you it is, felt like I was somehow not cut out for this. I follow a lot of natural mama social media accounts and often what is shared are these gorgeous photos of parents sharing how it was "love at first sight", etc. I told a friend that I of course love Eca but also felt somewhat ambivalent and felt bad for feeling this way. She told me she after she had her son, told her husband that she'd be more upset if he died than their son at the six week mark. She chalked it up to the hormones. And part of it is she's been in a relationship with her husband for over a decade and she's known her son for six weeks...relationships take time to build.



I also shared with one of my midwives Kara who told me that in nature, Elephants try to stomp their young and the other female elephants protect the new baby. I laughed so hard! I had this one idea of “nature” versus the whole range of nature!

So many of my friends who were Moms checked in. Particularly, sharing the tornado we felt we were living with a few new Moms who were 3-4 months ahead of me got me through.

Feeling alone isn't about the # of people around...it's whether your social needs are met. My friends were amazing at the recommendations I needed for what came up with our challenges and also for listening, checking in.

1. **Learn your social needs.** Often it's the simple yet scary fact that we need to share that we are struggling in some capacity. We all need to be witnessed. Many clients never open up with their friends about their food issues. So private and shameful. But once they do, find some relationships really deepen.
2. **Solitude.** Research shows more solitude is important when we feel alone. Yes, we have to learn to be with ourselves so we can enjoy our own company and understand what our social needs are. Many times we don't even know! But if we give ourselves space and time, our intuition will come through. Journaling on this can also be useful and a way to carve out that solitude. I am an Extrovert and through the years, as I've healed my story, I am so much more of an Introvert than I ever knew. I need alone time because I like being with myself now. It's also not that I didn't like being with myself before, it was just so uncomfortable!
3. **Ask for what you need.** Some client examples of them no longer feeling alone:

**THE NEW MOM:** One client would come home from new Mom meet-ups and eat. We were able to identify she was competing with the other Moms on who already lost their baby weight.



And since her weight wasn't where she wanted to be, she assumed she couldn't really identify with anyone there as she found "proof" in how different they were based on who was a working Mom, a stay-at-home Mom, and other surface level labels.

We had her experiment on connecting with one or two Moms on something other than their weight and discovered both Moms were as overwhelmed as she was and they swapped sleeping and nursing tips. She no longer felt the desire to eat after these meetings (and was thrilled to not have to put energy into the other emotional eating tips she was trying like making this snacking as pleasurable as possible and to call a friend).

**THE LUNCHTIME STRUGGLE:** One client realized her afternoon cravings disappeared and nighttime eating decreased when she made lunch her biggest meal of the day. But she wasn't consistent with this habit. In our work, she discovered she felt really awkward eating more when she was with coworkers and so avoided doing it. We had her experiment with actually sharing why she was doing this with a few coworkers she felt closer with and it started this amazing discussion about European versus American eating habits and a few other coworkers wanting to try it (and one actually following through and now it's a source of connection between them).

**THE OVERWHELMED ENTREPRENEUR:** An entrepreneurial client had her own client who she was working with. Her client started asking about a couple more things to be done on the project. My client was starting to eat and drink at night to unwind from this client. We were able to identify her needs as wanting to do the extra work and that she needed to extend the contract with more time and ask for more money, and not try and squeeze the work in. This would be more beneficial to the client, who would get a better result and her, so she could remain centered, focused and creative with the client.

The client said "that makes sense" and so my client was able to enjoy the work process, provide a great client results, made more money and her eating and drinking was prevented.



So learning to work through these TAIL feelings will really help you not turn to sugar as you develop a sense of safe refuge within yourself. In other words, you know YOU have your back and you develop your resilience that you can handle “real life”.

It’s not enough to feel your feelings to end a sugar habit. You have to hear what the sugar craving is trying to tell you and address the issue.

I also got asked if I think chiro, acupuncture or hypnosis can help with sugar. If it can help you with any of these TAIL emotions, I say try it. I know acupuncture helps me a lot with my energy levels, which is the main reason I eat sugar these past few years...trying to be more productive. It really replenishes my energy. But for me, acupuncture alone isn’t enough. It might be for some people but I’ve found with myself and clients, sugar is so much more emotional in my experience than physical. It’s why clients are shocked at how once we transform their story, sweets and chips don’t call to them.

I had a client yesterday, we are about five months into our work together and she started to go for chips and then was like, I just don’t want these. She didn’t have to white knuckle them and was just like MEH. This had never happened to her before and I said none of us love processed carbs as much as we think we do. And so when we remove the reason you were turning to them, you realize they don’t taste all that good and really aren’t that satisfying! The less refuge we need, the less we turn to sugar.

It can be hard to believe that until you do the emotional work. I know I wouldn’t have believed it but I am living it myself and I see it with my clients too so I know it’s possible no matter how long we’ve struggled with food.

So that’s why I think it gets tricky with hypnosis or Neuro Linguistic Programming NLP for short, which is popular in some coaching circles.: In food this would translate as follows. If someone had a consistent craving for brownies which they identified as beginning their downward spiral,



NLP would guide you to change the feeling around a brownie. If you felt warm, comforting emotions. NLP would have you try change the feeling to repulsion. It can work for some people I'm sure. But if you aren't turning to the brownie because you LOVE brownies but because you are exhausted from work travel or you are procrastinating on a proposal, it might not be addressing the root problem.

So in summary, sugar is the solution when we are feeling TAIL emotions. When we are tired, it gives us energy to keep going. When we are feeling uncertain, it makes us feel grounded. When we are feeling inadequate, it helps us procrastinate on our next steps and when we feel lonely, it becomes a friend. By identifying when we are feeling any of the TAIL emotions, we can work through them to get to what we really need and develop a sense of refuge within ourselves and those who care about us.

## **Conclusion**

The more sugar we eat, the more we hungry we are for it and for its flavor

Companies market heavily to us and get massive subsidies to make it financially cheap, while normalizing unhealthy amounts of sugar consumption

Getting back to real, whole foods, especially adding in fat and the bitter flavor, can change your taste buds so you crave fresh flavor instead of the manufactured sugar flavor in processed foods

We turn to sugar when we are feeling tired, anxious, inadequate or lonely because of the association of refuge that has been built since childhood.



It's not enough to only feel these feelings, we have to hear what the sugar craving is actually asking for and address it to reclaim the power and resilience we forgot we have when in our stories.

That's a wrap on Season 10. If you've enjoyed this, I would so appreciate a review on iTunes. It helps other people find the show. We will return in the Spring with an entire season on Sugar. And, you have plenty of info here in Season 10 to make major headway on sugar now. While it's great to listen, don't forget to pair listening with experimentation!

[END]

