

Episode 41-Food Planning: Emotional Eating in Disguise



Episode Transcript

With your Hosts
Mary Preston & Keysa Amaro

Keysa: Welcome to The Real Life Wellness Podcast with Mary Preston and Keysa Amaro. Where we talk about different ways to integrate healthier habits into your life.

Welcome back, friends! I'm Keysa Amaro, certified Health Coach and I work with moms to help them get control of their food cravings so they can maintain a healthy weight without deprivation or complicated meal plans.

Mary: And I'm Mary Preston, and I'm a licensed psychotherapist and a life coach and I am the founder of the Goodbye Burnout for Healthcare Professionals Program. I help healthcare professionals reverse their burnout using my 3-phase goodbye burnout process. If that sounds like you, you should jump into the Saying Goodbye to Burnout Free Facebook Group, where we share information, provide each other with support, and work together to heal the healthcare profession.

If you have questions about any of our programs, the podcast, or anything about health and wellness, come join us in The Real Life Wellness Podcast with Mary and Keysa facebook group Alright. On to our topic of the day, which is...using food planning as buffering

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Keysa: In this episode, we will talk about how we use food planning to distract ourselves from our negative emotions... and our lives

Mary: For me, food has always been a comfort. My family grew up eating meals together, cooked by my Mom. Every night we would sit together and talk about our day. I always felt so loved and taken care of at those times.

So, of course, whenever I felt anxious, angry, sad, or bored, I reached for food, as a comfort. Maybe I couldn't have the full experience, with my family surrounding me, but I could have a little reminder of the love and satisfaction that I felt during those meals.

I was never skinny as a child because we ate good, nutritious food. Then, as many of you have experienced, I remember talking about my weight and worrying about how big I was, back when I was in elementary school. I remember trying on my friend's clothes and being so upset that they didn't fit because she was smaller than me.

The good food that I was eating didn't allow me to be what was culturally accepted at that time as beautiful. The models were all extremely thin, bony, and had small busts.

Let me be clear, there's nothing wrong with that if that's what you look like. All the power to you. I, however, did not look like that. My natural body shape is sporty, muscular, soft. I received the message that I was supposed to change what I was eating in order to be thinner.

Have you ever been on a diet? My guess is that most of the folks listening to this podcast have.

Do you ever notice what happens when you take away your comfort food? We've talked about emotional eating before. All of a sudden, you are experiencing your emotions. And your go-to, your snacks and comfort food has been taken away. So now you're super cranky.

I don't know about you, but nobody taught me what to do with those emotions.

I sought out all the advice, which at that time was to distract myself. Find healthy snacks, go for a walk, do some exercise, read a good book.

Again, not terrible ideas on their own, but let's call them what they are, buffers. Anything to fill that void, to stuff down those emotions, to make sure I didn't feel any discomfort.

So let's talk about food planning. Tell me if you've ever done this. You've gone on another diet. You've decided that you no longer eat breakfast, or carbs, or meat or whatever. Your favorite food is off the menu.

Now, you're bored. You don't like your job, it's overwhelming, you're overworked, and you have a mountain of paperwork.

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Normally, you'd reach for a candy bar, a bag of chips, but you're dieting.

Listen, no one had ever taught me how to feel negative emotions.

So what are you supposed to do?

So, you fire up the google. And you start thinking about what you're going to make for dinner.

For years, I focused on the PLANNING of FOOD as a distractor. I researched healthy diets. I researched recipes. I learned about what vitamins are in different foods, I learned about probiotics, about fermenting foods, about gardening. I spent hours and hours and hours learning about food.

Does this resonate with any of you?

Do you spend all of your time thinking about quote, unquote, healthy food?

I had simply swapped emotional eating with emotional food planning.

In those moments, drooling, planning, and researching, I was using food to create the feeling of satisfaction and comfort. I was using the planning as one more way of distracting myself from what was really going on in my life.

And, until I learned how to feel negative emotions, it wouldn't matter what I did.

I could diet, I could binge. I could exercise, I could drink alcohol, I could sleep all day, stay awake into the wee hours.

Until I learned how to feel negative emotions I was always at the mercy of the next thing to make me feel better.

So, I'd like to hear from you. Are you using food planning as a replacement for emotional eating? Jump into the Facebook group and drop us a note.

So, now what?

We're going to give you 5 tips to stop using food planning to buffer your emotions.

5 Tips

1. Pay attention. We always want to jump to the solution. Okay, if I'm using food planning as a buffer, then what do I do to fix it? First? Nothing. Pay attention. Go through your day and notice what behaviors you are using to mask the negative emotions. You can't do anything about it until you recognize it.
2. Plan ahead- This sounds hilarious when the behavior we're talking about is food planning. But, hear me out. If you look ahead in the week and plan out your dinners, you make the decision ahead of time. You put time aside in your week to do the planning. Then, put it on the schedule. Then, there is no reason to spend your free time researching recipes. It's already decided.
3. Pay attention to what comes up. Every time you take away a buffer- food, technology, exercise, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, candy. Instead of moving to the next one, just see what comes up for you. Write it down.
4. Teach yourself how to feel emotions. We will provide the Allowing your Emotions worksheet, and you can listen to episode 14 if you'd like some more guidance on this.
5. Remember your why. For so long I was caught up in dieting, binging, buffering. Looking outside of me to feel better. I used healthy eating, crossfit, and talking about health to distract myself from my life. None of these things are bad. But, I wasn't paying attention. And now I am. It's important to me to be in charge of my own life. Not to let others dictate how to live it, but to be fully present through the whole thing. That's my why, what's yours?

Alrighty friends, that's all we have got for you today. Thanks for being awesome as always and listening in.

Tune into our next episode where we talk about ... standing up for yourself in the workplace

If you'd like to know more about us, and if you have any questions or comments, head on over to our dedicated facebook group! You can also contact Mary at her [website at www.maryalycepreston.com](http://www.maryalycepreston.com) or Keysa at her website at www.keysaamaro.com!

Keysa: If you know someone who you think would benefit from the information shared on our podcast, please share this episode with them! We want to extend our message to, and support as many people as possible, and we need your help to get our message out.

Mary: And if you enjoy the show, we would love it if you would leave us an honest review on iTunes. Simply go to iTunes and search for the podcast page. Hit the tab for ratings and reviews, and click on Write a Review. That's it! Super helpful!