

Episode 77: Good Food and Bad Food



Episode Transcript

With your Hosts
Mary Preston & Keysa Amaro

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 women to help them get control of their food cravings without deprivation or complicated meal plans.

And I'm Mary Preston, a licensed marriage and family therapist, life coach and the founder of the Goodbye Burnout for Healthcare Professionals Program.

If you're a healthcare professional experiencing stress, come join me in the Saying Goodbye to Burnout Facebook Group. The link is in the show notes or just do a search on FB for the info.

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 or find us on social media, I'm always active on Facebook

If you struggle with overwhelming cravings that you just can't seem to get control of, then I invite you to come join me in my Lose Your Cravings Community where I am planning some

The Real Life Wellness Podcast, Episode 77: Good Food & Bad Food

amazing trainings and free coaching opportunities this year. It's going to be amazing! Just head on over to Facebook and search Lose Your Cravings and join!

Alright, on to our topic of the day, which is Good Food and Bad Food

In this episode, we will talk about

- Why we think of food as good and bad and
- If there really is good and bad food.
- How this thought pattern is affecting how you eat

So, I posed this question in my Lose Your Cravings Facebook group a couple of weeks back: True or False, there are good and bad foods.

And I was a bit surprised by the responses from some of the members.

Truthfully, I was expecting members to answer True, that didn't surprise me, because I had had this belief that there were good and bad foods when I was younger in that there were foods that would make you fat (bad foods) and foods that helped you lose weight (good foods).

But what surprised me was the reason some gave for their "true" answer. And it had to do with the health risks of food. I had some explain that foods with high amounts of cholesterol and fat were bad because they caused heart disease and other chronic conditions.

So, when Mary and I were brainstorming topics for this episode, I thought that the idea of good food and bad food would be a great topic to discuss.

We often have the idea or belief that there are good foods and bad foods...But what makes a food good or bad?

Food is just food. It doesn't wake up one morning thinking "I'm going to make someone eat me and I am going to give them heart disease". Food is not created with the intent to give people diabetes or to cause people to gain weight. Food is just food. That's it. It has no control over what it is made of, how it affects people's dopamine levels, cravings, or habitual responses.

We can take the example of shrimp. I love shrimp. I think they are delicious! I love shrimp tacos, shrimp alfredo, and shrimp gumbo.

But take someone who is allergic to shrimp. They are NOT going to want to eat shrimp, in fact, they are going to want to be very careful not to eat it.

Now, is shrimp good or bad? Well, I would have to say that it is neither. It is a food that I like and it is a food that someone else is allergic to. That doesn't make it good or bad. It's just food.

So, why do we believe that specific foods are good or bad?

The Real Life Wellness Podcast, Episode 77: Good Food & Bad Food

If food is just food, then why do we have this belief that food is good or bad?

Simply put, media. I will use media as all encompassing for advertisement, news articles, magazine articles, social media posts, songs, commercials, ads. Anything you can think of that you consume visually or auditorily is media.

If you have ever been on a diet, you know what I mean. You go on the low fat diet and fat is “bad”. It will make you fat and you want to stay as far away as possible from it. The opposite is true for carbs. Carbs are good for you and you can eat those. If you are on a low-carb diet then carbs are “bad” and you want to stay as far away as you can from carbs. Foods with fat and protein are, therefore “good” foods. Diets are famous for polarizing macronutrients.

Even if we take clean eating. When you are eating clean, fresh, whole, unprocessed foods are “good” and processed, packaged foods are “bad”.

The truth about food: is it good or bad?

Are there foods that are going to be more advantageous to eat than others? Yes. If you’ve seen Supersize me then you know what happens when someone who doesn’t eat much fast food eats fast food for every meal for an entire month.

But I want to argue that the food itself is not inherently “bad”. Fast food is just food. We know what it does to our bodies if we eat too much for a long period of time and we can make our own decision as to how much fast food we want to incorporate into our diet.

If we eat fast food are we bad? No, food does not make you a good or bad person. Food is just food. What you put in your body does not determine your worth or your value. What you eat does not make you a good person or a bad person. Food is neutral.

I guess what I am saying is that food does affect our body in one way or another. There are chemical processes that go on when we eat food. Different hormones are released when we eat different foods. But that does not mean that the food is good or bad.

If you are struggling with the idea that there are good foods and bad foods and that you shouldn’t eat bad foods, I encourage you to explore the separation of food and a feeling of good or bad. Food is just food, yes it has a chemical reaction in your body but that doesn’t make it good or bad.

Now, you may be asking; why do we want to get away from the idea of good or bad food?

When we have the idea of food being good or bad, then when we eat those foods, they make us “good” or “bad”.

The Real Life Wellness Podcast, Episode 77: Good Food & Bad Food

When I was in my low-fat eating period, I saw high-fat foods like ice cream, cookies, pies, pastries, and cake as “bad”.

I shouldn't eat them because they will make me fat. I stayed away from them and believed that I shouldn't be eating them. But of course, after restricting these foods for so long and thinking about how badly I wanted them and how good they tasted, I would eventually give in to my cravings and eat the “bad” food.

When this happened, I believed that I was a bad person. I ate food that I wasn't supposed to, that was bad and therefore I was a bad person. I attached my worth and value to what I ate. And the same went for “good” food. When I ate low-fat food like Nutragrain bars and fat-free yogurt I was “good”. I was eating what I was supposed to and therefore I was a good person.

And I can say this for every diet that I was on. There were certain foods that were good and bad and if I ate the bad foods then I was a bad person, I was a failure, I wasn't good enough, and if I ate good foods, I was a good person, I was doing what I was supposed to, I was valued.

I want you to take a look at how you view food. Do you have foods that are good or bad? What are they and why are they in those categories? Are they there because of a specific diet you are on? Are they there because your doctor said they were not healthy? Are they there because of a commercial you saw or what the packaging said?

I really want you to get curious about what foods you think are good and bad and why you think or believe that.

How does this affect the way you view food? How do you think and view food when you have foods that are good and bad? Are there foods on your bad list that you secretly want to eat? And what happens when you do eat those foods? How do you feel about yourself?

I always like to think about the Bad boy analogy. As a heterosexual female, I always had a thing for “bad boys”. There's just something about them. They are taboo, they are rebellious, they are dangerous. And I secretly wanted to be with a bad boy. But truthfully, it was the idea of the boy being bad, it wasn't the boy itself. And the same goes for food.

If there is a food that is bad, that we aren't supposed to have, then deep down, there is a desire for that food. When we think a food is bad, we automatically want it a little.

And this is true for food like ice cream for me that was “bad” for so many years for me. I believed that it was bad, but I still craved it because I couldn't have it. And when I did eat it I was a “bad” person.

Now, I believe that ice cream is just ice cream. I eat it when I want it, and truthfully it's not that often anymore because it's not on my “bad” list and it's not restricted from me. And I don't go for the “healthier” option when I have ice cream. I get the Ben and Jerry's half baked or cinnamon

The Real Life Wellness Podcast, Episode 77: Good Food & Bad Food

bun! But what is amazing is that I can eat a serving and be at peace with myself. I can be satisfied and not feel guilt or shame for eating ice cream.

When we move away from this idea of good and bad food, we move towards food neutrality and really tuning into our body and learning how it feels in our body, not someone else's. We can see what amount of ice cream feels good in our body and how much it takes to satisfy.

When we really have food neutrality and listen to our body to tell us how much and what we should eat, then amazing things start to happen.

We eat a well-balanced diet that includes your favorite foods. You can eat bread or ice cream or cookies and your body knows how much to eat and you don't feel guilt or shame or like you are a bad person if you eat it.

5 Tips

5 tips for moving toward food neutrality

1. Food is just food: It has no agenda. It has no intention of harming you or making you a good person. It is just food.
2. Observe your thoughts: What foods do you classify as good and bad. Write them down.
3. Question: Why are the foods good or bad to you? What has led you to believe that a certain food is good or bad?
4. Your Worth: When you eat good or bad food, how does it affect how you feel about yourself?
5. How could you create food neutrality towards these foods? Maybe it is letting go of the idea of good and bad food. Maybe it is creating new thoughts about these foods. Maybe it is revamping your perspective on food and realizing that food is just food. It isn't out to make you fat or sick or a bad person. You have the power to change your thoughts around food.

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

Tune in to our next episode where we talk about... the circle of life, not the song from the Lion King, but how we look at wellness as a whole.

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 should also check out Keysa at her website at www.keysaamaro.com!

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.

The Real Life Wellness Podcast, Episode 77: Good Food & Bad Food

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!