

124 - Glenn Livingston 2nd

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SPEAKERS

Dr. Glenn Livingston, David Sandstrom

David Sandstrom 00:00

In this episode, I'm talking with my guest, Dr. Glen Livingston. He's a PhD psychologist and he has a new book out. It's called Defeat Your Cravings. He's an expert in binge eating and food cravings. And if you've ever struggled with food cravings yourself, or you wondered why you have trouble making lasting changes to the way you eat, stick around this episode is for you. Welcome to the Natural Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential, so that you can look and feel your best at any age. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, naturopathic doctor and biblical health coach, and this is episode number 123. Today we have back on the show Dr. Glen Livingston. Dr. Glenn is a veteran psychologist and longtime CEO of a multimillion dollar consulting firm, which has serviced several Fortune 500 clients in the food industry. Dr. Glenn's work has been published in major periodicals like the New York Times The Los Angeles Times and the Chicago Sun Times and more disillusioned by what traditional psychology had to offer overweight and or food obsessed individuals. Dr. Livingston spent several decades researching the nature of bingeing and overeating. Most important, whoever it was his own personal journey out of obesity and food prison to a normal healthy weight and a much more lighthearted relationship with food. His most recent book is Defeat Your Cravings, the Back Door to Weight Loss, and I can't wait to hear about it. Dr. Glenn, welcome back to Natural Health Matters. Thank you. I'm so happy to be here. Yeah, it's a pleasure to see you again. Yeah, yeah, I really got to really look forward to this conversation. You are only the second guest I've had on the show as a repeat. So one that says something about the quality of your interview.

Dr. Glenn Livingston 01:42

Thank you. I'll try to live up to that.

David Sandstrom 01:44

Well, I want to ask you a question real quick. I usually start off a little differently. But your your the title of your book is so intriguing to me Defeat Your Cravings. There's got to be somebody

saying, well, our cravings natural can they really ever be completely defeated? What would you say to that?

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 02:03

They are natural. And, you know, in primitive times, we had to be really good at finding food sources. And so people that had stronger cravings would have the motivation to associate, you know, food signals with a source of nutrition and calories. And sorry, we say that the stronger your cravings are, the healthier your brain is functioning. It's not really, it's not a sign of a sick mind, or mysterious disease. Food cravings are a sign of a healthy brain for the most part, it's just that in our current environment they are. They're attached to the wrong thing we live in. We live in a world of hyper palatable, bags and boxes and containers that hit the bliss point and a reptilian brain without giving us nutrition to feel satisfied. So the the short answer to your question would be that they can be labeled dormant. Yeah, they never really go away, but they can be labeled dormant. So if you stop for pizza, every time that you pass a pizza place on your way home, what's happened is that the pizza place is serving as a food signal that stimulates the craving and motivates you to go in and get the pizza food, right? If you decide you're overdoing it, and you decide you're not going to stop. And I know that's easier said than done. So that we'll talk about a number of ways you can do that. Over the course of you know, 25 to 35 passes going past the assignment not doing that, your brain starts to say, well, I guess that that pizza pizza place and the sign and the smell, used to serve as an effective signal for the availability of pizza, but it doesn't really work anymore. I don't seem to get those calories and nutrition when I passed that sign. Therefore, I don't want to keep wasting energy. on pursuing that piece of place. I'm going to label that craving as dormant. And so over the course of let's say, a month, a month and a half, if you don't stop at that pizza place, it eventually won't bother you, your your reptilian brain, your inner, your inner food, demon, whatever you want to call it. I know that I called it my pig in my earlier incarnations.

D David Sandstrom 04:22

I like that term. I think it actually communicates the point very well.

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 04:26

Thank you. Thank you. Well, your your pig will tell you that you're going to be tortured by pizza cravings forever. But that's not true. If you decouple the reward from the craving, at some point, the craving doesn't bother you anymore. Now you could reactivate it in an instant that that's that's the thing that really trips people up. They don't really understand the process and so they think there is something wrong and that they must have you know they must not be doing it right but no your brain is doing it right right your your brain has spent a lifetime learning and where to acquire calories. And so if you reignite that as a successful routes to acquiring pizza, then you're gonna get cravings when you're past the pizza place again. But yeah, you can you can label them dormant, you can't really defeat you can't really eradicate them.

D David Sandstrom 05:18

If I'm hearing you, right, it sounds to me like your methods. And what you teach people to do is a puts them back in the driver's seat, instead of being in the backseat and having the the driver up front, the inner pig or wherever you want to call it. In Charge, you're the one in charge. Exactly. And you can get out of the front seat guy, the driver's seat and hand it back to him if you want to. But that wouldn't be productive. So yeah, I get that makes good sense to me.

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 05:44

Yeah, but with a with an understanding of the way that cravings are formed. And eventually, the extinguished are labeled Dermott. With an understanding of what's going on in the culture, and what type of defense you need to redirect in order to navigate it. With some dedication to caring for yourself in the right way, when you've decided to go through the extinction process and with some very strategic forethought, with regards to what particular cravings you want to distinguish, and how to avoid forming new ones that you don't want, then you can have a radically different relationship with food in 30 to 60 days if you if you want to.

D David Sandstrom 06:30

That's fantastic. So yeah, I think I'd like to talk a little bit about the culture and what's going on in our culture and in the food industry. Because you're an expert, you've been you've been on the inside, you know what's going on?

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 06:42

I don't do that anymore, by the way. Yeah,

D David Sandstrom 06:45

I should have said, I said that wrong, actually. But you do have experience in there. So you have an insider's perspective. And so what's going on there that that really causes us to get a little lopsided in our in our relationship with food. So what's going on there with the food industry culture that's causing this so lopsided relationship with food for so many people?

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 07:07

You know, I went through the community and Louis black, said that he knew that we were reaching the end of our world when he walked out of a Starbucks. And across the street was another Starbucks. I think you could say that equally for McDonald's, or Burger King, or a variety of other fast food establishments. We evolved in an environment where food was relatively scarce, we had to be very good at locating it. And that's what cravings are all about. It's identifying signals that can lead us to food sources. And our brains were not prepared for the incredible stimulation that we experienced in today's environment. So we're stimulated by the concoctions that big food is engineering, these hyper palatable concentrations of starch and sugar and excitotoxins and salt, that really hit those evolutionary buttons that say, you know, this is a prime directive, this is necessary for our survival. And here's the availability of

calories and micronutrients that you're not going to find elsewhere, you have to make this a priority. So there are more calories in a smaller space for less effort than there ever were, in the history of our human species on the planet share. Yeah. There is also more stimulation of the signals of those calories. So for example, we it would be rare in nature, that we would come across a multicolored, vibrant patch of vegetables and berries and fruit, right, would usually come across one or maybe two at a time, maybe you'd find some bananas and blueberries if you were lucky. But to be able to eat the rainbow, we're programmed to want to eat the rainbow because the rainbow is indicative of a diversity of micronutrients that are available. That's where we want to have the rainbow every time we have a big salad. Right? Right. And you can speak to that more than I can, I'm sure. Yet the packaging industry can present those signals to us as if they were available all the time. So when you look at the packaging on most candy bars, you will see a variety of bright mixed colors that you might not see in nature. It's supposed to signal the availability of nutrients, those nutrients are not in the bar, or you're going to get or the calories. And so your brain says Whoa, this is effed up right? Excuse me. language. This is messed up, I was expecting to find all these micronutrients I was expecting to find, you know, guar, and pectin, and all of the natural fibers you might find in fruit and vegetables. But all I got was calories, what's going on? I really want it because I want the calories. And so that gets us and then the advertising industry knows how to kind of get in underneath your self defenses. Everybody thinks that it doesn't affect them. But it actually affects you more when you think that because you lower your sales resistance. And then we live in an overstimulated world where we're required to make many more important decisions over the course of the day than we would have had to make when we were hunting and gathering. So the reason that's important is that willpower, is the ability to make good decisions. And there are only so many good ones you can make each day. It's kind of like, you got a Tankful in the morning, and there were down as you go through the day making decisions, not just food decisions, decisions about who takes Jenny to soccer practice and which car we're going to drive?. And what suit should I wear, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Yeah, so So we live in this overstimulated world where there are way too many decisions to make. We don't get enough rest, then we're undernourished because our current resources have shifted from what nature has to offer to what these bags and boxes and containers have to offer. And it's, it's really, we don't, we don't get enough sleep, we don't get enough water, we we don't get enough exercise, it's just it's a, it's a perfect storm, that leads the brain into a kind of panic state. And when the brain is panic, that it doesn't have what it's neat what it means. It wants to force you to be less discriminating about food, if you don't really believe, like, not just cognitively, but on a gut level in the body, if you don't really know that you have what you need right now, then your brain is like, you know, we got to binge and we're gonna, we're not going to survive, we got to get calories, getting the calories, getting the calories, getting the calories, right. And your training goes out the window.

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David Sandstrom 12:19

It's like a pre panic state, kind of, and yeah, and you lose a judgment. You know, I just want to back up just a minute. And you said something earlier is really interesting about decision making. So we'll make a lot of decisions throughout the day. And you said in the last interview, we had that it's easier to make good food choices in the morning than it is in the late afternoon or evening, because we've been worn out making decisions all day long. So you know, one of the things I'm thinking about there is, when you go to buy a car, you, you know, you you make an offer, and then the sales guy, so I have to bounce that off my manager. So it goes in the back, and you see them having a cup of coffee joking around, they're not working on your case, they are just dragging the process out to wear you down. And after you've been there for a

couple of hours, and now they're just at work, but you want it you want to get this car deal done, they wear you out, and you're much more likely to do whatever they say, because you're just so worn out with the process. And that's part of their part of their technique. So I think that kind of relates here, we kind of we kind of get worn out with all these decisions. We got to make it all we're trying to make good choices. We want to make good choices. But our physiology says No,

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Dr. Glenn Livingston 13:28

exactly. Yeah. So I'm saying I'm one little tip in those regards, by the way, is that if you're struggling with overeating at night, if you make your food decisions in the morning, and put out your dinner, a little Tupperware and all you need to do is stick it in the microwave when you get home, then you're most likely much more likely to do better at night than if you wait until you're really exhausted to figure out what you're going to have for dinner. Yeah, yeah, planning. We just think we just think better about those kinds of things.

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David Sandstrom 13:57

Yes, yeah, it makes you make it easier. When you haven't done any planning and your stomach starts to talk to you. Oh, you're reaching for anything you can write because you just want to satisfy that urge. Exactly. Yeah, exactly. So little planning to a long way.

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Dr. Glenn Livingston 14:10

So that's actually kind of goes to how the new book developed. Because originally, I recovered by kind of thinking myself, then I would identify the irrational thoughts that suggest that I should break these rules that I may like, only ever have chocolate on the weekend. I would identify those thoughts. It will be just as easy to start tomorrow. You worked on harder enough, whatever. And I would argue with them and I'd say, you know the principle of neuroplasticity says that if you think I'll just start tomorrow, and then you reward it with some chocolate, for example, that you're going to be more likely to think I'll just start tomorrow. tomorrow, so you can really only ever use the present moment to be healthy. And those types of arguments would disempower those thoughts, it kind of took away the justification. And it would make me like, psychologically uncomfortable, more psychologically uncomfortable to indulge that I had been. And that's largely how I recovered on my own before I work with 2000 clients and had a million readers. That's largely what I did, I would argue with all of these crazy thoughts that would convince me to break my own rules. And slowly but surely, I identified rules are easier to follow. And, you know, over time, that cravings extinction process to cold and I'm no longer really bothered by chocolate cravings or any other major cravings.

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David Sandstrom 15:48

That's, that's fantastic. Praise God for that. But But I gotta believe that someone listening right now someone imagination is saying, okay, so it took this guy years to figure it out. I don't want to take yours. How can how can this guy put me on the fast track? What are your recommendations?

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Dr. Glenn Livingston 16:02

Well, I mean, we we can and 89% reduction in overeating in the first month. With that when we measure our I'd call that I call that the fast track? Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah. So So I mean, we've worked really hard on a variety of methods to figure this out. So I mean, the first thing is to understand the understand the technique for thinking for kind of correcting your thinking, which is just to make a rule, I'll only ever have chocolate on the weekend, what, whatever rule you want to make, but it's got to be clear. And then define all of your constructive thoughts as those thoughts that encourage you to keep to the plan, and your destructive thoughts encourage you to break it. I call the the thoughts that encouraged me to break it my inner pig or mean or food demon. And that way, you wake up more easily and can argue with those thoughts, and you put it in writing. We've learned a wide variety of things over the last eight years working with about 2000 clients that make the process faster and easier. And it mostly has to do with attacking the screw it just do it response. Because what I found was that the the limits of refutation, the limits of logical argument, were that when the brain perceives there to be some type of emergency or a panic state, that logical thinking went out the window. So it didn't matter how. And that's what stretched out the timeline. And so when you attended to things like breathing, if you breathe in, for a count of seven, and out for a count of 11, when you first experience the urge, you're going to find yourself calmer, and we're more able to use your rational thinking, see, if you breathe out for longer than you breathe in, you're signaling your brain, there's no emergency. If you were running from a hungry bear, you'd be so taking the time to breathe out for longer is one way of getting out of that emergency response system, the sympathetic nervous system and into the part of the nervous system that says it's okay to digest and rest, and strategize and plan.

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David Sandstrom 18:22

Wow, that's really interesting. I have never heard anyone say that before. Because there's a lot of talk about, you know, a parasympathetic sympathetic nervous system, we want to eat in the rest and digest side. That's what we do our restoration or healing and repair. But by breathing longer, exhaling longer than you inhale, you're telling your body, it's okay, we're safe. We were not running from the line at this moment. I like that. That's, that's really great insight.

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Dr. Glenn Livingston 18:50

It's really powerful. Yeah, it's really powerful. The other thing would be right up your alley, which is Nutrition. If you're regularly and reliably nutrify and yourself, your brain is less likely to perceive an urgent need for a rich source of calories. And so, you know, I know that intermittent fasting is all the rage, and I'm not really disputing the medical benefits of it. Although I think for some people who might, but I don't. But I tell people that it actually does when you're trying to extinguish difficult cravings. That's actually an obstacle. What you want to do is have regular reliable meals throughout the day, so that your hunger is never really too strong, at least for like four to six months. What once you're really through the worst of your cravings, then you can start to reintroduce intermittent fasting or fasting into the process, but my success rate is about half for people that really want to intermittent fast right out of the gate. So I'm not I'm not against it. I work with people with it, but it makes it hard are,

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David Sandstrom 20:00

You know, that makes sense to me to Glenn and I mentioned this on the last conversation we had is that if you do an extended fast, non intimate, but you know, extended 24 or 48, even 72 hour fast, your body starts to crave good nutrition, you know, you you will, you will, you won't be seeking out the bag of potato chips, you'll be seeking out a sirloin steak, or something more substantial, that's going to pack be packed full of nutrients. But I hear you, and I completely agree with you. And that is when somebody's first starting out, you got to walk before you can run, and throwing what could be a very challenging lifestyle choice, intermittent fasting into the mix with all these other recommendations, people can get overwhelmed. And if you get overwhelmed, you're gonna just you're gonna throw up your hands and say, this is impossible i is i can't do it, and you're gonna, you're gonna have the relapse, right, and you're gonna go back into the old habit patterns that are comfortable. So when you're trying to learn something new, a step at a time is absolutely the way to go baby steps, in fact,

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Dr. Glenn Livingston 21:05

Yeah, then you can kind of run the gamut of all the other things that we can do to take care of ourselves. Like no attendings, and drinking enough water, and getting enough sleep, and having enough social connection, we're social animals, and there tends to be a sense of panic when were too isolated. Interestingly, working on your finances can make a difference. A lot of people like to ignore their finances. And there's an underlying sense of panic that built in, especially in the economy, with the level of inflation and everything that we're experiencing. And, you know, finding someone and actually working with your finances, so that you're calm, and you feel like you have a plan. It's under control, the refuse bills mounting, or if they are that you have a plan, and they're organized and you have, you know, a way to address them, that makes a difference. Also, you know, like, anything that you can do yoga, getting more time outside, getting a little bit of sunshine, meditation, it's some a lot of things that sound kind of hackneyed, and I, I wouldn't focus on these things exclusively, I think that there are systems of overcoming overeating, which say that, you need to focus on taking care of yourself exclusively, and then eating will get to get back, that's not going to happen, you need like a very practical set of rules so that you know exactly where the bull's eye is, you need a way to know when you've missed the ball. So you need to build what to do. When you have missed, you can learn as much of it as you can. And there's some very, like crisp science back things that you need to do in order to make that happen. But in order to implement that knowledge, it's it's really all about taking care of yourself and calming the calming the reptilian brain to say, there's no emergency, I can actually sit and think right now and make a better decision.

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David Sandstrom 23:11

Yeah, that sounds good. So what what I hear you saying here is a paraphrase correct me if I'm wrong, but you want to stack the deck in your favor. There are a few key things that you're really going to have to implement. But the more lifestyle factors that you can implement that come alongside and and cooperate with your your desire to get get in control of your eating and eat better, the better the more you can support that overall goal with with all these small choices here and there. The better. Is that right? Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Okay, very good. So what else about the book? Would you like to share? I know you have four categories of rules for eating?

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Dr. Glenn Livingston 23:57

Oh, yes, that's from the original system. And so when when we tell people that they should consider making a set of rules for themselves, first of all, I say, to start with one simple rule, because you got to go to kindergarten before you go to college. And most people are strangers to making very specific rules, because our culture says that you shouldn't do that. They think is going to stimulate your inner rebel and we can get into why I'm not worried about that. But you, you want to start with something really simple, so that you can make a difference and learn how to play the game without necessarily losing a million pounds immediately. So, you know, always put my fork down between bites or I won't go back for seconds or, you know, I'll only have pretzels at a major league baseball park, something like that. And then, but once you have that, there's more you need to understand about how the extinction curve works because most people think let's go back to the example of passing a pizza place on the way home and getting this horrible craving for pizza and developing an overeating pizza habit. Most people think that if you stop eating pizza, you're going to be bothered by cravings tomorrow, and then a little less than next day and a little less than next day and a little next next day. And it's going to be like walking down the side of the mountain. But that's not really how it works. Because the rain doesn't want to give up that easily. What'll happen is there'll be a sharp dip the first or second day. And you'll say, I've got this, this is I got this covered. And then all of a sudden, the brain throws a tantrum, and it's worse than it's ever been, or at least as bad as it's ever been. And if you think about it, it makes sense. Because in primitive times when food was scarce, if we had this routine that reliably lead to calories and nutrition, the brain would not want to give up on that. So it's testing the waters. Maybe that pizza place used to be available all the time. And maybe it's only available once in a while now. That's what the brain is thinking. And so I have to test that once in a while to see if I can still get that before I give up on this because it might be a lot more work to go and figure out another source of calories and nutrition. In the modern environment. It's not a lot more work, but that's what it was like back then. So there's this temper tantrum, we'll call it's called an extinction burst in the behavioral literature. And then it starts to go down slowly. But then the brain tries again, just a little less hard than it did the first time. And somewhere around 25 to 30 exposures, that's when you're really not bothered with cravings anymore. So the implication of that is you need to prepare for it. You can't think that there's something wrong with you or that it's not working. When you get the temper tantrum, you get the cravings temper tantrum, you just have to say, I can expect this. It's part of the extinction curve. I've decided to extinguish this piece of place as a signal for pizza. Therefore, I'm going to go through this, I'm not going to think I'm home free until I get those last couple of bumps somewhere around the you know, three to four week mark. And then I know it's going to go steadily down from there. So that that's the first thing. That's the first thing. Okay. The second is remembering that the gravy can only be labeled dormant, it can't be eliminated. So I say if you've broken out of prison, don't climb back over the wall to visit your friends just run in the other direction as far as you can. Yeah. So what once you've extinguished a craving, leave, leave it alone. The third thing is to understand just how quickly these cravings associations can form. Because food was so scarce when you found a particularly rich source of calories and nutrition. The brain learns exceptionally quickly. I had a friend about 30 years ago, when I was in Overeaters Anonymous, maybe 25. And I can't give you his name, because then it wouldn't be anonymous, right? I don't, I don't use that program anymore. But, but I was having lunch with him. And he got a sandwich. It was on his plan, whatever. He got a sandwich, and he had a bite of it. And they said, Oh, Glen, I can't eat this. It's too good. And if it's too good, it's no good. And he put it down and ordered something else. And as I was studying cravings, extinction in the last few years, I thought about that

repeatedly, what was he doing? What did he figure out? He figured out that the moment that he has this orgasmic food experience, he has to ask himself, do I want that craving? Do I want that association? Or is this going to be dogging me and it's something I want to nip in the bud right now. And he decided to nip things in the bud because he knew how obsessed he was going to get about that sandwich if he kept eating it. So if it's too good, it's no good. So that's one implication about the way that cravings work is that you can form them really easily. So be on the alert. And don't let it form. If you don't want the craving. You can however use that to your advantage. Because see, the brain releases a lot of dopamine when there's an unexpected, an unexpectedly good experience with with food. So it's not just a rich source of food and calories but an unexpected or surprising source of food and calories because that's when the brain says there's this new opportunity here that I didn't know about. You can use that to your advantage if you whatever dietary plan you you're following, and I personally do plant based my clients do all sorts of things. If you learn how to make a bed As in recipes and really rotate them, so you're not getting used to anyone that then you pretty regularly have that surprising experience. And you're gonna get more pleasure out of each particular meal, because your brain wasn't expecting it and getting used to it. So it tells you that you it's worth putting in the effort to research surprisingly good things that will fit on your plan. I can make a flower, this lasagna that would knock your socks off, and that, yeah, I got about a dozen things that I can do to rip that out. So

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David Sandstrom 30:34

Well, you know, get back to your your buddy that said, this is too good to eat. There's a lot there, really. And he knew his limits. Right. So he was honoring that, and Hats off to him for that, you know, I respect that. But it also brings up the idea this, this notion of counting calories, and I haven't heard you mentioned that. And personally, from my nutrition background, my training and my experience with clients, and my personal experience, says that kind of calories for the most part is a waste of time, if you're if you're focusing on good nutrient dense foods, they will satiate. And we're satiated, you don't have a problem with cravings. So therefore I'm the body I think we you know, the medical community takes a reductionist view to a human being, because they spent a lot of time in medical school studying cadavers, but not a whole lot of time studying actual human beings. And that is our bodies are a lot smarter than we give them credit for. Our bodies will if there's this a craving, there's something going on, there's probably some kind of nutrient deficiency that your body is trying to meet. And you touched on that a moment ago about the packaging and whatnot that the food industry plays with, they understand this. And they're trying to maximize their profits, at our expense to hell with our health. Right, right. So you know, I need to say this as well. And that is, you know, if you're new to the show, I want to help you maximize your health potential so that you can look and feel your best at any age. And that's why I have experts like Glenn on that can really help us with that. But I believe strongly that we maximize our health potential when we align our lives more fully, with God's natural design for spirit, mind and body. And there's a verse that I'd like to share here, it's first Corinthians chapter six verses 12 and 13. It says food for the stomach and stomach for food. I have the right to do anything you say, but not everything is beneficial. I have the right to do anything, but I will not be mastered by anything. So we have some good advice here from our Creator, the one who designed our bodies, and he says, Hey, don't let food master you. And I think that's really what what you're talking about it you probably could have called your book food mastery.



D Dr. Glenn Livingston 32:45

I think it was the master knees that said, the brave man is he who not only masters, his enemies, but not only Congress, his enemies, but his pleasures. What what I wanted to say in response to what you were saying is that, you know, if you have 1000 calories of pretzels, your body's still going to be hungry for nutrition. That's right, you're gonna want 1000 calories in nutrition anyway. And so I think what you're saying is that when we eat what God has to offer, or what nature has to offer us, that the body has a wisdom that it really knows what to do with it. That's why I always tell people, I don't think there was such a thing as an eating disorder. 100,000 years ago, I don't I don't think fag was sitting around telling Marta, boy eat too much mammoth or too many blueberries. I just don't think it happened. I think it's an artifact

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 33:44

A modern modern invention. Yeah.

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 33:48

Tell me if I'm wrong about this. I think I read somewhere that a calorie is not a calorie is not a calorie. So if you have 1000 calories of pasta, versus 1000 calories of fruit and vegetables, that the 1000 calories of fruits and vegetables are more likely to be burned as heat, whereas the 1000 calories of pasta is more likely to be stored. More available to be stored as fat?

D David Sandstrom 34:15

Yes, I would agree with that. Although, you know, the formula is much more complex than that. The important point to remember is, it's not a simple way control is not a simple linear equation. It's not a straight line is a calories in versus calories out. You know, if you're overweight, you got to eat less and exercise more. Most people know by now that that advice is failed us. It's filled a lot of people. And you know a calorie is a measure of how much energy is burned from that food. But again, our bodies are not test tubes. That you know, they're burning food in a Bunsen burner and they're measuring how much heat it takes to burn that particular food. And it's absolutely correct to say a calorie from a pretzel is different from a calorie from an Apple is different from a calorie from broccoli is different from a calorie of grass fed burger. They're different, they react differently in the bodies. And it's an over an extreme oversimplification of what our bodies do to take up nutrients, use them and eliminate waste. To just call it a straight linear line, calories in calories out is all we have to worry about. It's just a drastic and tragic oversimplification, that doesn't work ultimately. Because if you're gonna, if you're gonna starve yourself, eventually hunger will win the day, we could talk about techniques all day long, but your body will start screaming loud enough to where you won't be able to willpower white knuckle your way through a healthy eating plan, you have to implement lifestyle choices that that you can do for a lifetime. Not temporarily.

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 35:52

What I find is that, first of all, I mean, there's a lot of arguments about what the right way to eat is, I kind of wish that people would stop arguing about whether it's, you know, keto or carnivore or, or you know, vegetarian or vegan, or plant based, and I wish they would just focusing on

or, or, you know, vegetarian or vegan, or plant based, and I wish they would just focusing on eating more whole natural foods. Amen. Yeah. And I find that as people that I work with getting better, they evolve towards that. Sometimes calorie counting is a mechanism that helps them feel in control. As they're coming to these conclusions. What you have to watch out for with calorie counting, in particular, is that your pig wants to save calories for later. So it's, they'll say, Well, you know, if I, if I don't eat until two o'clock, then I'm going to have 2000 calories left for the rest of the day, I could have 1000 calories a chunk, and then maybe I'll have a real dinner. So I find that the more that people focus on calories, the more likely they are to include processed, you know, unnatural white flour, or sugar, salt, and those kind of things into our system. And that as they, as they use the techniques that we teach them to either moderate or get a lot of the junk out of your system, then they find that they don't need the calorie counting in the way that they thought that they did. So. Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

D

David Sandstrom 37:18

Yeah, that's a good word. Yeah, it's worth talking about, because any discussion of weight loss is going to be people that have, we've just heard this as dogma for so long that this is the secret to weight loss calories in versus calories out. And it just doesn't work. In fact, it sets you up for failure. Because if you if you lose weight, you're going to be losing muscle mass long with that, that fat body weight. And when you gain it back, you're going to gain more fat than you will muscle. So you go through several cycles, now you've set yourself up because muscle burns calories in a static state much more efficiently than fat does. So you're just weakening your your metabolic setpoint. You're lowering it, you're making it harder and harder to maintain a healthy weight. So anyway, that's actually I think, a topic for another podcast, really, but but I, you know, I think it's worth touching on that. Because there's a lot of confusion out there. And again, if you're embracing a healthy lifestyle, eating food as close to its God given natural form as possible, getting away from the processed food, if it comes in a box, a package or a window, you know, or through a window, is it suspect, you know, don't bother bringing your phone with you and googling what the the ingredients if you can't pronounce it, you probably want to just put it back on the shelf. Yeah, eat natural food, eat real food.

D

Dr. Glenn Livingston 38:36

Exactly. Yep, exactly. Yeah. This is why they these are often insights, that it's hard to give people they kind of have to experience for themselves. And also, because the way that the brain works is that the more concentrated sources of calories and flavor and excitotoxins that you have, the less the pleasure system responds to natural foods, right. And so people feel like when you tell them, we'll just stop counting calories and eat whole foods. Like you've got to be crazy, I hate fruits and vegetables. But you won't keep fruits and vegetables down the road as you as you go through these techniques. As you go through this process. As you take better care of yourself. Your Pleasure systems are going to upregulate and respond to the you know, the natural sugars in an apple or a salad or you're going to get as much or more pleasure and one of the ways that we know that is because if you there are studies where if you ask people what diet they recommend, it's whatever when they're out if they're on any particular diet for two or three years. Then they say that it tastes wonderful. They don't feel deprived so that the system was malleable, it can adapt to a low carb diet. You can adapt to a high carb diet. Your Pleasure system is malleable.

That's a really that's a really good word, we can wrap up on that. But I do want to want to give you the opportunity to I know you have a generous gift for the audience. And I want to I want you to share, you know what you're doing online and the group coaching that you do and all that kind of thing. So just let let the audience know.

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 44:08

Okay, well, the book is called The Future cravings, you can find that at DefeatYourCravings.com. And when you get there, if you click the big blue button says free reader bonuses and sign up to get those you will get a set of food plan starter templates. So regardless of your dietary philosophy, whether it's, you know, Whole Foods or or plant based or ketogenic or point counting or calorie counting, God forbid, some people are not gonna let go of that some people won't let go. A lot of people don't have to begin. We have sample plans for all of those. I call them starter templates, because I you know, I'm not a medical doctor or dietitian. So your food plan is really up to you. But we've got a comprehensive set of food plan templates. I've got a bunch of audio recordings you can carry around with you to listen to if you happen Don't make a mistake or feel like you're going to. I have a set of full length recorded coaching sessions. So you can see how this process works in practice, rather than just me talking about it in the abstract, because you must be thinking, why does David have a doctor with a pig inside of him, I'm a call. It's actually a very compassionate process, which takes people from feeling hopeless and despairing about food to feeling confident, enthusiastic, and it just one session, and a whole bunch more, it's all at DefeatYourCravings.com To get a big blue button.

D David Sandstrom 45:37

And if someone wants to get ahold of you directly, what's the best way to do that?

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 45:41

Oh, go through the site and use the contact form. Okay. There's a phone number there, too.

D David Sandstrom 45:45

All right. Very good. Dr. Glenn. It's always a pleasure. Thank you for sharing your wisdom today.

D Dr. Glenn Livingston 45:50

Thank you. Nice to be here.

D David Sandstrom 45:52

For more, go to the show notes page at davidsandstrom.com forward slash 123. There you can find an audio as well as a video version of the podcast. And I always put some type of a content upgrade on there. This episode, I think I'm going to put my ABCDE method for identifying and

upgrade on there. This episode, I think I'm going to put my ABCDE method for identifying and correcting unhealthy thinking patterns. It's a PDF download will help you with the thought process we've been discussing in this episode. If you're finding value here, I share what I appreciate you telling a friend about it. The number one way someone finds out about a podcast is a friend tells them so I sure would appreciate you letting them know about the show and sharing with them. I'll bet they'll appreciate it. Thank you for listening, and I'll talk with you next time. Be blessed.