

## Ep #3: Overdesire and Urges



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With Your Host

**Shannan Christiansen**

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## Ep #3: Overdesire and Urges

You are listening to the *Weight Loss for Successful Women* podcast with Shannan Christiansen, episode number three.

Welcome to Weight Loss for Successful Women, a podcast for women who are ready to break the diet cycle and end their struggle with weight for good. Here's your host, Fortune 100 executive and Certified Life Coach, Shannan Christiansen.

Hello, loves. I can't believe this is episode number three. It is just so exciting to spend this time with you. It means more to me than you know that you're listening to this show.

So today, we're going to dive into over-desire and urges. And then I'm going to teach you a brain hack that changed everything for me. But first, I want to talk about my G-babies. I'm a little crazy about them.

My husband's birthday was this weekend and we had a family party to celebrate. I love having family over. It's one of my favorite things to do and it just brings me so much joy. I love spending time with them.

My G-babies are seriously the cutest and I just love watching them. My youngest granddaughter, Jackson, she is so funny and sweet. She is always so happy and she just beams love. But she used to be really scared of dogs. No, like seriously scared.

She would shake and cry at any sighting of a dog. We would have to put our dogs up when she was over. Her father, my son, has wanted to get a puppy. I mean, he loves dogs. He has been talking to his wife about this for years. And we always had them when he was growing up.

So my daughter-in-law got a puppy for my son last month for his birthday. Now, I was super nervous because I knew how fearful Jackson was around

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dogs. But the craziest thing happened. Last night, she comes into our house. We actually had not put our dogs up yet and she started chasing our dog Cookie around, and just loving on her.

It was so crazy to see how, a month ago, she was terrified. And now she was not. You know, I just love watching my grandkids. They are open to everything. They can change how they think about something.

I mean, she had this fear a month ago and now it's gone. She changed her thought from, "Dogs are scary," to, "They're cute." And when she says cute, I can't even say it, it's so cute. So kids can teach us so many lessons when we pay attention to them. I honestly learn so many things from them.

So I was thinking about fear and how it used to show up for me. When I used to diet, I was fearful of family parties because of the food. My mom was an amazing cook and she made lots of great stuff. I mean, lots of great stuff. And I used to be scared that I could not resist the temptation, and that if I ate something like a piece of cake, or maybe two, that it would turn into days or months of being off, quote en quote, "Off my diet."

But, loves, it's so freeing now. I don't have that fear anymore. I don't fear food because I've learned to change my desire for food and I don't over-desire it. I can eat a piece of cake and it does not turn into a week-long binge. It's been one of the most powerful changes for me to get off this diet rollercoaster.

And I see this with my clients all the time. One of the reasons we carry extra weight is because we over-desire food. And when we have an urge, AKA desire for food, most of the time, we answer the urge, meaning we eat it, or we resist the urge, and that feels like deprivation. It feels like we're white-knuckling it.

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We've been taught that it's normal to over-desire food. It is more normal to overeat than to not. Have you ever passed on a donut and the person offering it looks at you like you're crazy? They question, how could you pass up the donut? Or your mom makes macaroni and cheese just for you at a family dinner, and how could you pass that up? And then you get the question, "Are you on another diet, Shannan?"

This might have happened to me more than once. And let's not forget the food industry. It's counting on it. They have supersized and Frankensteined our food to make it more desirable. They have perfected the ingredients to make them as desirable as possible.

So what are we to do, loves? In my quest to learn how to get off the diet rollercoaster, I started doing a lot of research on how our brain works. I have done a lot of research on our primitive brain. I like to call it the lizard brain. You will hear me talk of this often. I love talking about the lizard brain.

This part of our brain is responsible for our survival instinct. It wants to keep us safe from danger. It's responsible for our impulses. It likes reward. It honestly wants us to stay in bed and watch Netflix because it's safe. It does not like change.

But it can have a good purpose. It does have a good purpose. If someone pulls in front of you while you're driving, it immediately goes into action, hitting the break. So it does have its purpose. But understanding how your brain is wired is important because we often think that something is wrong with us.

I used to think this when I was overweight and struggling diet after diet. But to get off the diet rollercoaster, I had to learn how my brain was wired, and then learn what I like to call brain hacks so that I could use my brain for good instead of it working against me.

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One of the areas I learned how the brain worked was in relation to over-desire of food. We can learn to desire food less. I know, you did hear me right. We can learn to desire food less. We can learn to not fear food.

When we overeat, it is a false pleasure. Our brain is wired to love to overeat. It gets a dopamine hit right before we take a bite. So then we keep overeating because we want the dopamine hits. And then, what happens is it increases the need for false pleasure, AKA the dopamine hits.

We need to eat more just to get the same jolt. It's honestly a vicious cycle. It's part of the reason it can feel hard to get off the diet rollercoaster. False pleasures trick our brain and hormones into thinking we are experiencing joy, but it's not joy. The long-term effects of overeating is an unhealthy heavy body and countless hours of beating ourselves up and obsession.

The impulse of temporary fix of a false pleasure is never worth it. In order to get off the diet rollercoaster, we need to stop thinking about the temporary joy it brings because the long-term misery it brings far outweighs the temporary joy. But you can learn how to desire food less, especially non-fuel foods or foods that you don't want to eat.

I have cookies, believe this or not, in my pantry right now and I don't even want them. They've been in there for weeks. I have chocolate in there and I don't even think about it. I actually forget that they're in there.

I remember my teacher asking this question; how would it be to have Oreos in your pantry and not want them? Now, loves, I'm with you. When I first heard this, I had the same thought that you are probably having right now, like, no way, that will never happen for me. But, love, it happened. I learned to desire food less. I've rewired my brain. So just stay with me, love, I know it's hard to believe.

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In my early 20s, I loved soda. Like, that is all I drank; full sugar Coke. That is what I liked. I did not like diet, I did not like water, but I did love some chocolate milk and orange juice; all the drinks with lots and lots of sugar.

I decided that I was not going to drink it because I didn't want the calories. I was on some diet in my 20s and I did not like how it made me feel. So I just stopped drinking anything with sugar in it. That was over 20 years ago.

I don't have the desire for it now. I rewired my brain that the consequences of drinking sugary drinks far outweighed my desire for them. Now, how could I go from thinking that I would literally die if I didn't have a soda to never drinking one again? I changed my desire for it.

There are lots of things that other people desire that I have no desire for like cigarettes or heroin. I mean, if you asked me to go shoot up, I would not have any desire for it. I would never do it.

Now, I know that that seems like a very extreme example, but I want you to really think about things in your life that you have no desire for. Now, for heroin, the consequences far outweigh the reward for me. There is a reward, a huge dopamine hit, but I made the decision that the consequences would not be worth it.

Now again, loves, I know it's an extreme example, but I want you to look at your own life and are there things that you have no desire for that others would give their whole lives up for? And ask yourself why. And if that is true, could you change your desire for food? Loves, I know it is possible.

So I want to talk about urges. They are just thoughts that create desire and we can allow the thought without acting on it. Example, my admin asked me on many Friday mornings if I want a donut. I have the thought; the donut looks good. I allow that thought and I tell her no thank you.

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Allowing an urge does not cause a feeling. When I allow the thought and then I just move on to another thought like, my admin is so sweet for always taking care of me, it doesn't cause an emotion. There's no resistance. When we're restricting, we are resisting urges. When we are buffering, we are answering the urge.

So I want to first talk about answering the urge. So, same situation – my admin comes by. I have the thought; the donut looks good. And before I know it, it's in my hand and I'm eating it, and it's happened. I just answered the urge. And by answering, we have created a neural pathway. And a neural pathway is just a superhighway in our brain. And neural pathways are responsible for things like habits.

And it keeps us wanting the dopamine hit, so it wants the pleasure. And so another way we can react is to resist, white-knuckle. So, same situation, my admin asks me if I want the donut. I say, no thank you, but I am resisting.

I have another thought right after that one; why can't I be normal? Why can't I just eat the donut? Why can't I be like the skinny girl in the next cubicle who can eat everything that she wants? And it creates a feeling of deprivation.

And when I feel deprived, eventually I get right back on the diet rollercoaster. But if we can allow the urge and not resist it or answer it, we can retrain our brains. We can create a new neural pathway; one that allows urges, one that desires food less. We can actually desire food less by creating these new neural pathways.

Now, I'm going to share a brain hack with you. This is one I use to help me allow urges and change my desire to overeat. So, here's how you do it. You have the thought, I want the donut, I deserve it, I can only eat one. I mean, so many times, love, I've done this.

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But this is what you do because a lot of times I would eat it and answer it. But in this hack, what you're going to do is you're going to have the thought, you're going to realize you're having the thought and then you're just going to stop just for a moment and you're going to begin to count backwards for 30 seconds.

This disrupts the urge and allows it. In my example I shared with you earlier, I changed my thought to, my admin is so sweet. But this was hard for me at the beginning. So counting backwards helped me disrupt the thought and allow the urge.

Then, after you count back 30 seconds, you write down the thought that you had and you will be amazed, the urge is gone. And then, do this 100 times. Yes, I said 100 times. I am so serious about how this works. It is such a brain hack.

I remember when my teacher first taught this concept to me. I didn't want to do it. I didn't want to write down the urge. I just didn't want to do it. And when I was struggling and I still had this over-desire for food, I decided, okay, I'm going to try it. And once I did, I mean, it was so amazing.

So, you know, it's freeing when you can have the thought, I want a donut, allow the thought, and then not act. It doesn't create this feeling of deprivation. You actually just move on. It's the best feeling ever.

To have cookies and chocolate in my pantry right now and forget that they are in there, I mean, it is so freeing. I used to think it would never happen for me. And, loves, you can do this. I know this for sure. Learning to desire food less is key to losing and keeping weight off.

So, I like to end each episode with a couple of transformational questions. So today's are, number one, what is something that you used to desire that

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you no longer desire? And this could be an old boyfriend, loves. It's anything that, at one time, you had this extreme desire for that you just don't even think about anymore.

And, number two, when you don't eat something that you have an urge for, what thoughts come up for you? What thoughts do you have? And then, love, complete the brain hack. You will be amazed.

So much fun, loves, spending some time with you. And to celebrate the launch of the show, I'm going to be giving away a \$50 Amazon gift card to 12 lucky listeners who subscribe, rate, and review the show on iTunes.

It doesn't have to be a five-star review, although I sure hope you love the show. I want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome show that provides a ton of value for you.

Visit [bflycoaching.com/podcastlaunch](http://bflycoaching.com/podcastlaunch) to learn more about the contest and how to enter it. I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode.

So much love to all of you and I just can't wait to spend more time with you on next week's episode.

Thank you for listening to this episode of Weight Loss for Successful Women. If you love what you heard today and want to learn more, come over to [bflycoaching.com](http://bflycoaching.com). That's B - F - L - Y coaching dot com. See you next week!