

Ep #98: You Don't have a Sweet Tooth, You have Overdesire



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DR. PRIYANKA VENUGOPAL

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Priyanka Venugopal

Ep #98: You Don't have a Sweet Tooth, You have Overdesire

Hey, this is Dr. Priyanka Venugopal and you're listening to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast. You don't have a sweet tooth. You just have overdesire. I was recently talking with one of my good friends from when I was growing up and she was sharing with me Pri, I make such amazing food decisions throughout the day that I actually really feel great about. But at night after dinner, I just am craving something sweet. I just have a sweet tooth. I wanted to share with you what I told her. I told her you don't have a sweet tooth. You just have overdesire. And that has created a habit pattern in her brain to crave something sweet after dinner, I wanted to dedicate this whole entire podcast episode to the concept of overdesire, because it is so incredibly disempowering to think that you just have a sweet tooth. It implies that's just how you are as though you have no control. And that is such a lie. A few months ago, I did a masterclass on overdesire, and I really think about this one concept as the secret and hidden reason that you haven't lost the weight that you have wanted to lose. It simply is because you have a mismatch. You have a desire or really overdesire to eat more food than the size of body that you want to be living in. And to give this topic, the attention it deserves, I decided to turn that masterclass into today's podcast episode, just for you, this masterclass podcast is going to bust the myth that you just have a sweet tooth with science.

I'm going to be showing you exactly where your "sweet tooth" is actually coming from. It's not just inherent to you. I'm going to share with you why it is so incredibly normal for you to have those cravings and how repeatedly taking action, like eating sweets after dinner will create strong, habitual patterns that will feel really hard to break. But the best news is on this masterclass podcast, I'm going to be sharing with you my simple three step process to reversing this mismatch to create what I like to call realignment. This podcast is going to be amazing for you just to listen when you are driving around or on a walk. But also it is even better with the visuals that I used during my original masterclass. If you want to watch this podcast as a video podcast, I highly encourage that you do so, so you can enjoy the visuals that I created. And you can enjoy that over at theunstoppablemombrain.com/98, let's jump right into this masterclass podcast episode on over desire. If you want to reach your ideal weight and create lightness for your body, you need to have simplicity, joy, and strategic decisions infused into your life. I'm a physician turned life and weight loss coach for ambitious working moms. I've lost over 60 pounds without counting points, calories, or crazy exercise plans. Most importantly, I feel calm and light on the scale and in my life. There's some delicious magic when you learn this work and the skills I'm going to be teaching you. Ready? Let's get to it.

Hey, my Unstoppable friend. Welcome to this advanced masterclass. I'm Dr. Priyanka Venugopal. I'm going to be guiding you through in this short advanced training on exactly why you are not yet at your dream, ideal weight, and exactly how to solve this problem at the root. Why is it that smart, high achieving women who are hitting goals in so many areas of their life still struggle with their personal body goals? We are going to get to answering that question together on this masterclass. And then once we really understand what the real problem has been, I went to walk you through step by step on exactly how to solve it. If you're anything like me, you want to be done with the constant fresh start, the Monday mornings and the every new year's and the every birthday brand new plans, and instead you want to overcome your obstacle at the real root. If this sounds like you, if you identify as a busy high achiever and as a working mom, you are in the right place. Now, what makes me an expert to guide you into these masterclass? Let me introduce myself before we get started. I'm Dr. Priyanka Venugopal. I'm a board certified OBGYN physician turned mind and body health coach for high achieving working moms. I'm the founder of the Unstoppable Mom Brain and the creator of the *Unstoppable* group, which is a intimate six month small group coaching program for working moms who want to feel better in their bodies, in their lives. And they want to do it while living their real working mom lives. Through my

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experience as a physician and a coach, I have talked with thousands of high achievers. And if there's one thing they know, it is the woman's brain really, really well. In addition to being a board certified physician where I bring science back strategies to our weight loss process, I have been right where you are.

A couple of years ago, I used to weigh a little over 200 pounds. I identified as that busy working mom who had tried it all points and calories and exercise plan after exercise plan. I have failed more times than I can count, but along the way. I picked up on some very common themes and what I now know, and what I'm going to be teaching you in this masterclass is that every single failure that I have ever had centered around this one theme. And because of my work, because of trying and failing countless times before I finally figured out the real problem. In a nutshell, diets don't work. When you don't solve the problem at the root, when you don't understand the reason that you're at the weight you were at, you will temporarily end up in a smaller body. But without solving the root problem, without personal growth, your brain is going to keep desiring food when you're not actually hungry. Ask me how I know, because this used to be me. Most working moms are very focused, if not completely focused, on only their behaviors and their habits. You will find yourself opening up that planner Monday morning or on New Year's Day thinking, I just need to be more disciplined to lose the weight that I want to lose. You're going to find yourself either excessively planning, creating plan after plan, or when you get really tired of it, not planning at all. Here is the real solution. The real solution is first understanding why it is that you do what you do. Where did your behaviors and a habit of overeating actually come from? When you understand why it is that you ever overeat, you will be able to more powerfully solve the problem because you're going to be hitting it at the root. And when you understand the real problem and how to solve it at the root, you can make a proper plan once. And then when you start implementing and executing that plan, you're going to see real forward traction. I'm taking into account the way that you think, and we're going to be solving the root problem together. The real issue is that there is a big mismatch. Your body's desire to eat when you're not actually hungry is outpacing your body's actual desire for food. Over time, as we eat, when we're not actually hungry, our body and the size of body that we're living in starts to match our overdesire, which is why we're living in bodies that feel bigger than where we want to be. Here is the kicker that desire that you have to eat when you aren't hungry is coming from your brain. Our brain has two parts to it. It has our most primitive brain, which is rooted in our immediate survival. We have a lot of fight and flight responses, and also it is centered around immediate reward. The other part of our brain is our more evolved brain. This is the part of us that's thinking about the future and absolutely thinks about future reward. So let's dive into where desire comes from. Where does this desire to eat when we aren't hungry actually come from? It comes from the most primitive parts of your brain, which is driven by the motivational triad.

The motivational triad is a really reflexive, very old part of us that drives us to avoid pain, seek pleasure. And we want the least amount of energy expended to get it. This is the part of us that drives us to have a lot of food driving thoughts. Thoughts like, ooh, I want it, or it's going to be so good, or I just deserve a break, or how about just a couple of bites, or it's just a little bit. These thoughts about food are what I call food driving thoughts, and they're what's actually creating your overdesire. And every time you have a thought about food, like, ooh, it's going to be so good, or yum, I can't wait, or it's just a couple of bites, your body at a chemical level creates an experience of overdesire. What's so amazing and I hope is such a light bulb moment for you to see is that your favorite foods, that favorite food that you just love is not really what is creating your desire. It's your habitual thoughts about the food that is. It is happening literally at a chemical level in your brain. Every time that you even think about food, forget eating it, your brain is going to release a chemical called dopamine. Dopamine is a feel good learning chemical that is basically telling your brain, this feels really good. Let's do it again. And the more that you repeat these actions, the more that you eat, when you're not hungry, your brain starts to learn certain habits and behaviors. Every time your brain releases dopamine and you go to eat or grab

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a glass of wine or over scroll, your brain learns this is a quick fix for us to distract from our stress, overwhelm, boredom, and it will create momentary relaxation and pleasure. This is where your learned behavior is going to come from. It's where all of our habits to overeat, over drink, over scroll actually come from. So if you have ever wondered, why is there this big mismatch? Why is it that I have this desire? This urge is craving to eat when my body is not actually hungry. Now, you know why it's a primitive part of your brain that is driving you to have quick hits of dopamine. So you can feel better in the moment. Let's just talk for a minute about what we have done in the past to try to solve this problem. How have we ever tried to break some of these habits and change our behavior?

What most of us have typically done when we have undesirable results on the scale, you're feeling heavier in your body and you want to lose weight is most of us really focus on the behavior. We try to out plan our behavior by making more strict plans, cutting out food groups, counting points, and getting more strict with macros and calorie counting. And we do this at the detriment of not really understanding what motivated our behavior to begin with. It makes a lot of sense that we have done this for decades because it's been what's fed to us by the diet industry. The trouble with this is it doesn't solve the real problem, which is your overdesire, which is what's actually driving you to eat when you're not hungry. So what is the real solution? How do we go from having this big mismatch where we have a lot of overdesire for the size of body we want to be living in to creating what I like to call realignment. Realignment is all about getting in control of your desire. So it matches the size of body that you want to be living in. The way that we do this is first and foremost, we stop trying to outplan habitual behaviors. And instead we learn how to outsmart over desire. If you're wondering Priyanka. Exactly how do we outsmart our overdesire? We're about to get into that in just a second. We get out of our most primitive thinking and we start accessing our most evolved prefrontal cortex.

The part of you that is thinking about the future and that's thinking about your desired goal. The trouble with weight loss though, for the high achiever is that we have been on autopilot, which is why we don't have the results that we want. Let's talk about how you can start accessing your more evolved brain on purpose. The best news in the solution that I'm about to walk you through is that your desire doesn't need to go away. It's so normal to love food. I know I call myself a foodie all the time. It's normal to have your primitive brain say, Ooh, that would be so good. It's normal for your primitive brain to want to give you a break from your stress or to solve your boredom. But instead of reacting to your desire and then creating overdesire, and then overeating and then creating results that you don't want, I want to talk you through how to respond to your desire. Instead, the way that you start to realign your desire to the size of body that you want to be living in is with three steps, recognizing it, describing it, and then breathing and taking new action. Recognizing your desire in the moment is simply making you conscious. I cannot tell you for how many years and decades really that I was experiencing urges and cravings and desire to eat when I wasn't hungry and I was operating an autopilot. I would only realize after the fact, after I was like, Oh, I ate too much food or Oh, like I'm not loving the results on the scale that I was making unconscious decisions simply because I was unaware that I was actually experiencing desire in the moment.

So step one is really about making your unconscious emotion, the unconscious feeling of an urge, a craving, or that over desire, and making you feel really conscious around it. Step two is about really describing it. I want you to take 60 seconds and drop into your body. Start to scientifically describe what does this desire, what does this urge actually feel like? This might feel like a very new or even awkward practice, but I want you to trust me as you describe the feeling of an urge in your body, the feeling of that overdesire in your body, you are actually getting out of your most primitive thinking and you're starting to activate your more evolved prefrontal cortex, the way that you might describe an urge or overdesire to a small child, who's like, I don't

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even know what that is. You might describe it as a buzzing sensation or a fluttering sensation. Maybe you feel it in your chest or in your gut. Maybe it has a color or a temperature. The more scientific that you can get in the 60 second pause is more of an opportunity for your prefrontal cortex to get activated.

Just these first two steps of recognizing it and describing it is going to create a pause where your consciousness can start to make a new decision rather than habitually kind of mindlessly or unconsciously walking into the pantry or just grabbing the bag of chips and starting to eat through them. You can breathe and take new action. And every time you do this, every time you become conscious, you start describing the emotion of desire in your body and you start really breathing and taking new action, you will start retraining your brain with new habits. It is fascinating to see how quick you will notice the difference and your desire can start to match the size of body that you want to be living in, which will create so much more calm, peace, and food freedom in any scenario.

Let me just tell you why this one specific concept is so amazing. When you start to obliterate overdesire at the root, when you start to create consciousness and awareness around your urges, you will be able to lose weight with so much more calm and simplicity rather than wasting time making a brand new plan or having a fresh start every Monday morning or new years, you will start to feel more in control in any food scenario, because you will be able to get to the root of the problem, you'll be able to not just lose the weight you want to lose, but you'll be able to maintain it forever. Even if life throws you a challenging obstacle, even if you feel stressed at work or worried about your kid, even if you don't have a lot of time, why? Because this tool does not take you more time. It doesn't require more planning. It simply requires that you start activating your consciousness and you start pausing in the moment. This is seriously one of the main pieces that is going to really help elevate and skyrocket your results on the scale. Now, you might be wondering, like, I've tried so many things in the past. I've tried all kinds of plans and it didn't work in the past. How is this different? How is this one tool different than the things you have tried in the past? Most strategies in the past, and trust me, I have tried them all, focused on logging points, calories, and macros, they had this whole philosophy of eat less and move more. They centered around cutting out whole food groups, maybe cutting out all the carbs, low carb, Keto, Whole 30. Or they involved a lot of exercise, having strict regimented meal plans and meal prep services, and a lot of time clocked at the gym. The trouble with these past strategies, while they sound good on paper and even created temporary results, is they did not recalibrate your fat burning hormones to make you a fat burner. They definitely did not address your overdesire to eat when you weren't hungry. No diet strategy is doing that. Most likely your previous strategies did not actually walk you through and teach you how to stop emotionally eating. When you have that life curve ball that comes your way, when you experience life stresses, work overwhelm, or worry around your kid, or even just boredom on the weekend. Most strategies don't employ specific tools to teach you how to stop emotionally eating. If you're anything like me, I would say that all the strategies that I tried before the strategy that we are talking about today basically kept some form of the diet status quo, which just wasn't sustainable in the long run. We need to have a strategy that's going to address the permanent long term solution. And I would say that this is a really unique angle that we talk about in *Unstoppable* and in the *Unstoppable* group. Most strategies did not have a routine evaluation process, right? You're so focused on the plan or maybe not having a plan at all. I'm just trying to wing it. You didn't likely have an auditing process in place. You didn't know how to look at your results, how to look at those imperfect moments and how to handle them powerfully. I teach my clients how to focus on small nutritional tweaks that will help teach your body to burn fat that is stored on your body. And to really get coached on your real working mom life, really think about why is it that we ever eat when we're not hungry? I shared in today's masterclass that the reason that you're ever eating is because you have overdesire, right? Your brain has a lot of food driving thoughts like I deserve a break. I'm working so hard. It looks so good. I just want a few bites. But why do we have those

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thoughts to begin with? I would say for most working moms, it is because we're overworking. In our working mom life, we end up coming home at the end of the day, really just wanting a break from that part of our life. And so coaching on your working mom struggles with things that are happening at work, around deadlines, with your boss, with your kids at home, with your family and your relationships, all of a sudden starts to cool those over desire food driving thoughts. And of course, one of the most important things that we do in *Unstoppable* is you learn how to handle mistakes and imperfect moments powerfully.

My intention for working moms and for high achievers is to know that it is possible, and dare I say necessary, for you to know how to feel fabulous. To have fun and to lose weight. It is such a gift to teach yourself that there is a better way than all of those other things that you have tried in the past. The reason that you're not at your goal weight right now is simply because you did not get in control of your overdesire. You thought you just love food too much, or you just don't have willpower. And if this has been you, you're not alone. This is just what the diet industry has been peddling to us. When you don't have a strategy you love, when you don't have a fat burning action plan, when you don't solve over desire at the root, when you don't know how to handle imperfect moments, powerfully, it makes a lot of sense. That weight loss feels hard. Ask me how I know, because I experienced it for decades.

I am here through the lens of having solved this problem as a busy working mom, myself, and as a physician to bring science back strategies for the working mom to solve this problem. I really hope that this podcast episode was helpful for you to see that you don't just have a sweet tooth. You simply have overdesire because of a lot of food driving thoughts that your primitive brain is designed to create for you. Nothing has gone wrong, you simply weren't aware of this. And it's created a lot of habits and patterns that, to be honest, are going to take some intention and effort to change. You cannot just squash over desire with Another meal plan. You have to have the mindset skills to match. You'll hear me say this time and time again, but truly, I think that this work is hard to do on your own, especially as a high achieving professional mom, who is really busy working in your field of work, taking care of the kids and handling so many tasks and activities in your life.

It is incredibly hard to see your own blind spots, to see the thoughts and the mindset that you have that might be getting in the way of you making a lot more forward progress on scale. If you want help with this, if you want someone to show you your blind spots, to teach you the mindset skills, to match your fat burning action plan, that I highly encourage that you check out the *Unstoppable* group. This is my intimate six months, small group coaching program, specifically designed for professional working moms who want to lose weight with more ease, with simplicity, with science backed strategies, while learning mindset skills that will apply to your working mom life. The April cohort is going to be opening for enrollment really soon, and I want you to get a headstart head over to theunstoppablemombrain.com/group to get all of the details, the nuts, bolts, bells, and whistles. I cannot wait to see you there. Bye.

Thanks for listening to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast. It's been an honor spending this time with you and your brilliant brain. If you want more resources or information from the show, head on over to theunstoppablemombrain.com.