The Secret to Breaking Sugar Cravings (It’s Not Willpower)

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Welcome back to *The Mindset* **by Super Age.**

Let's talk about sugar—the sweet frenemy in your diet that may be doing more harm than good. Sugar messes with me badly, but for years, I could not understand why or what to do about it. I foolishly assumed all calories were the same. Granola bar vs. scrambled eggs—same calories, same result? Wrong. I am now very careful to look out for sweeteners, especially on an empty stomach, because I know how horrible I will feel soon afterward. If sugar is a tough one for you, understand that it is a formidable foe.

Sugar sneaks into your morning latte, your yogurt, and even your healthy salad dressing, leaving a trail of metabolic chaos in its wake. Studies link high sugar consumption to inflammation, accelerated aging, and chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. But here's the truth: **it's not your fault if sugar has a hold on you—our brains are hardwired to crave it.**

The good news? You can take back control. Today, we're diving into the science of sugar addiction and offering practical, compassionate steps to reset your palate. It's not about cutting joy from your life (because who doesn't love dessert?)—it's about learning to savor the sweetness that truly matters. I still love pie, but only after a nice dinner and just one small slice, followed by a walk. Let's make small, intentional changes to thrive longer and stronger.

Onwards and upward!

David Stewart
Founder

?BODY WISDOM

How Sugar Sabotages Longevity

Sugar may taste sweet, but it’s no friend to your healthspan. **Consuming excess sugar contributes to chronic inflammation**, a key driver of aging and diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and even certain cancers. Research shows that sugar spikes insulin levels, accelerating cellular aging by **shortening telomeres**, the protective caps on your DNA.

What’s worse? Sugar lights up the brain’s reward center, creating a cycle of cravings that’s tough to break. But here’s the empowering part: **reducing sugar isn’t about deprivation—it’s about retraining your taste buds**. Within weeks of lowering your sugar intake, your palate becomes more sensitive to natural sweetness, making whole, nutrient-dense foods taste better than ever.

Pro Tip: Start by swapping sugary drinks for sparkling water with a squeeze of citrus. Or trade tea with honey for tea with lemon juice. Small shifts lead to big changes.

EAT WELL

Brain Fog? It Could Be The Sugar

Here’s a wild fact: Sugar can damage the region of the brain crucial for memory formation and learning. Research shows that **high sugar intake can impair neurogenesis**—the creation of new neurons—in the hippocampus, leading to cognitive deficits. But cutting back has immediate benefits. Reducing sugar can improve focus, mood, and energy levels—no afternoon crash required. First, you need to know where sugar is hiding.

There are at least 61 different names for sugar

Sugar is everywhere—often hiding under aliases like dextrose, maltose, or rice syrup. **American adults consume an average of 77 grams of sugar per day**, equating to

about 19 teaspoons.

Not all sugars are created equal. While natural sugars from whole fruits come packed with fiber and nutrients that slow absorption, added sugars like honey and agave, though often marketed as “natural,” still cause insulin spikes.

Reducing sugar doesn’t mean giving up flavor. Here are some smart swaps to reset your taste buds

- **Breakfast:** Trade sugary pastries for steel-cut oats topped with fresh berries and a sprinkle of cinnamon.
- **Snacks:** Swap granola bars for raw nuts, seeds, or an apple with almond butter.
- **Desserts:** Craving something sweet? Try roasted pears or a square of 70% dark chocolate for a satisfying, low-sugar treat.

How much sugar should you have? Read labels carefully— Aim to keep added sugars below **24g per day for women and 36g per day for men**. Pair sugar with fiber to help slow the absorption, mitigating its impact on your body. Soluble fibers slow digestion and prevent rapid blood sugar spikes.

DID YOU KNOW?

Is It the Carbs? Or Is It Caffeine? What Glucose Monitors Reveal

In March of last year, the FDA approved an over-the-counter (OTC) Continuous Glucose Monitor (CGM)—making real-time blood sugar tracking more accessible than ever. Originally designed for people with diabetes, CGMs are now gaining popularity among health-conscious individuals looking to optimize energy, metabolism, and longevity. Unlike traditional finger-prick tests, CGMs provide

continuous insights into how food, exercise, and stress impact blood sugar levels—without requiring a prescription.

What Can Impact Your Glucose Levels?

Food is a major factor, but it's not the only one. According to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**, these lifestyle factors also play a role:

- **Lack of Sleep** – Poor sleep reduces insulin sensitivity, making it harder for your body to regulate blood sugar.
- **Caffeine Sensitivity** – Some coffee drinkers experience blood sugar spikes in response to caffeine.
- **Dehydration** – Less water in your system means higher glucose concentration.
- **Exercise Type** – Some cardio workouts, like endurance running or HIIT**,** can initially spike blood sugar due to cortisol and glycogen release, while low-intensity movement like walking tends to lower glucose. Strength training may cause a short-term increase but improves glucose metabolism over time because **muscle is a glucose sink**.
- **Skipping Breakfast** – Frequently skipping breakfast can cause larger blood sugar spikes later in the day.
- **Stress** – Emotional and physical stress trigger cortisol, which raises blood sugar levels.

One of the biggest CGM insights? **Glucose responses vary widely between individuals**—even to the same meal. What sends one person's glucose soaring may be perfectly stable for another. **What to Know Before Trying One**

- **It's a Tool, Not a Solution** – A CGM can provide useful insights, but sustainable metabolic health still comes down to whole-food nutrition, movement, and lifestyle habits.

- **Food Responses Are Highly Individual** – A CGM helps identify personal triggers—what works for one person may not work for another.
- **The Data Can Be Overwhelming** – Some users report becoming overly cautious or anxious about food choices. Tracking should be a guide, not a source of stress.

The Bottom Line

?If you're curious about how your body responds to food, exercise, and stress, a CGM could be a valuable tool. But **trends and patterns matter more than momentary spikes**—sustainable habits like eating fiber-rich meals, managing stress, and strength training will always be the foundation of long-term health.

STAY AMAZED

How to Re-Train Your Palate

Did you know you can train your taste buds to crave less sugar? Research published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* shows that **reducing sugar intake heightens your sensitivity to sweetness**, making naturally sweet foods like fruits more flavorful. Cutting back on sugar essentially resets your palate, allowing you to appreciate the subtleties of whole foods better while making overly sugary items taste cloying.

Here's where it gets fascinating: your brain is adaptable. Studies reveal that when you consistently eat less sugar, you **retrain your neural pathways**, fostering healthier preferences over time. What once tasted bitter—like dark chocolate or leafy greens—may begin to taste sweeter and more enjoyable.

Try This: A Mindful Savoring Meditation

To amplify your appreciation of natural flavors, try the **classic raisin meditation.** (**A note:** While this practice uses raisins, remember that dried fruit has a high glycemic load because the dehydration process concentrates its natural sugars, causing a quicker spike in blood sugar compared to fresh fruit.)

1. **Hold a Raisin:** Observe its texture, shape, and color. Notice the folds and ridges.
2. **Smell:** Bring the raisin to your nose and inhale deeply. What do you notice?
3. **Taste:** Place it in your mouth without chewing. Feel its texture against your tongue.
4. **Chew Slowly:** Take small bites, savoring the release of sweetness. Pay attention to how the flavors unfold.

This practice, which can be done with any food, helps you slow down and truly enjoy each bite, supporting both palate resetting and mindful eating. Resetting your taste buds isn't just about health—it's about rediscovering the joy of simple, natural flavors.

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