

How To Deal With Cravings

Teleseminar featuring Dr. Sharon Livingston

Chuck Batson: Hello everybody! Thank you for joining us today. This is Chuck from RawFoodDietNow.com, but the real star today is Dr. Sharon Livingston who has graciously agreed to join us today. Hello Sharon, how are you?

Sharon Livingston: Well I'm excited to be here. Thank you so much for inviting me.

Chuck: Oh, you're very welcome. We spoke a bit beforehand regarding what we're going to be talking about and I have to say I'm excited too because I know this is going to be a fascinating conversation. Is there anything you'd like to say, Sharon, to introduce yourself before we begin?

Sharon: God, there's so many things I want to say. I've had issues with diets since I was a really little girl resulting in being a very large 13-year-old. I grew to my full size and then kept growing. When I got brave enough to get on the scale after dieting for a week, I was 13 years old and 172 pounds, an oversized 18, and it was all in my torso. I had skinny legs and skinny arms, and this apple body which doesn't bode for health in any way at all. Over the years I've had to struggle with a combination of physical issues with food and addictions as well as emotional issues. I could go into my whole psychotherapy to tell you about the emotional issues, but that's not necessary because there are a number of different things that we can do to deal with our cravings for food in a way that actually works well for us. That's what I'm hoping we can talk about and share today.

Chuck: Excellent. So you were thinking and concerned about dieting even when you were just 13 years old?

Sharon: Well at 13 you're in junior high, everybody is skinny, you're the one person who looks like a grandma; doesn't quiet work.

Chuck: What is emotional eating and how do you know if you have that emotional eating or not?

Sharon: Different people think of it differently. First of all I think everything we do, we have a head that's attached to our neck, which is attached to our body and there are thoughts and there are feelings that go with every single thing we do. We're not always aware of what that is exactly. For example, unless there's something wrong with it, right now you're probably not aware of the underside of your left knee, but now you are —

Chuck: (Laughs.) Thanks!

Sharon: — because I brought your attention to it. There are a lot of things that are going on that we don't pay attention to every single second, but they're happening and they're there. Just like with every other thing we do, we have emotions involved in every time we eat something. Probably even more so with eating because it is a visceral thing that we're doing. We talk about having gut reactions and we're putting things into our bodies that end up in our gut.

There are emotions involved. There's always emotional eating going on, but the kind of emotional eating people get upset about is when they feel like they are eating to feed a different kind of emptiness than just an empty tummy. Their stomach is empty and they have hunger pangs; that's one kind of eating. But if they're craving something and they're not hungry, then we tend to call that emotional eating.

Chuck: Emotional eating, is that the same thing as food addiction then?

Sharon: I would say it's not, although there's overlap. You know that in addition to knowing an awful lot about food and emotional eating, I'm a researcher. I'm a psychologist who does research. We did so much research on food. I've been doing that for 20 years. I recently completed a huge study among drug addicts. One of the things that really struck me there is that - it might start out as, oh, that sounds like fun, I want to escape, etc., etc. There's an emotional component that starts an addiction going, but then the body kicks in and forces you to take that substance because if you don't, you suffer.

There's a physical addiction that happens, for example, with sugar. People who are particularly excited about sugar, there's an emotional component and there's a physical. The emotional is, we need something sweet in our lives, our lives are so hard, we work so hard. When we're eating sugar or we're eating starch — white starch that converts to sugar — partly it's because of an emotional need for some kind of joy. Or, with the starch, initially it's that feeling of comfort and being full instead of empty. But, in addition, the physical part of that is that eating sugar and starch invites the normal amount of yeast that you have in your body to become an overgrowth, and also bacteria.

When you have an overgrowth of yeast and bacteria, they are smart little organisms, in a certain way. They actually send biochemical signals to your brain that says you want to eat sugar because they don't want to die. You're getting control of signals from these little tiny brains of the yeast and the bacteria. They're actually telling you to eat the sugar and if you don't you're going to feel crummy.

It's just like being a drug addict in that way. The addiction part is the signal that you have to have it or you're going to suffer and if you don't have it, you feel bad.

Chuck: Sounds like a parasitic relationship.

Sharon: Exactly. As a matter of fact, a number of years ago when I gave up sugar, I got really angry. I got angry at the yeast. I thought, "There's yeast in my body and it's taking over my body? No way. I'm not letting that happen!" I got so annoyed, that I had these imaginations of having a war with these little troops that were inside my body and put my hands on my hips and I told them, "Get out!" I was going to go through what I needed to go through to get them out.

I had a few days of detoxing where I was a little unhappy. Some people are even quite unhappy for a few days when they're detoxing from sugar and starch. Some people have digestive distress as they're going to yeast die off and bacterial die off. They can get diarrhea or bloating and tummy aches, and actually that's a good sign.

Chuck: When did you first realize and become aware of really what was going on and what led you to become interested in studying and pursuing emotional eating?

Sharon: When I was a little kid, my parents were caterers. I don't know if you know that or not, but they actually were caterers. They were Hungarian and they were caterers. I don't know if you know anything about Hungarian cooking but, it is sweet and starchy and fatty all combined.

My mother used to make this thing that was like a strudel. Imagine like a strudel rich with apples and the white flour and the oil and you roll out this dough really thin and then you put this layer — a line of apples and sugar and raisins and cinnamon and you roll it up. And then, she wouldn't bake it; she put it in a big pot and coat it with more oil and butter and cinnamon and sugar on top of it and water. So it was this mush, but I would have instant heartburn. I was nine, 10, 11, 12 years old, walking around with heartburn and I wasn't even in puberty yet and I had heartburn. So it tasted good but I would suffer for it.

Chuck: That's interesting because you've got the sugars and the fats and all the things that taste good to your brain, but also you're developing these associations around the food with your family as well.

Sharon: Exactly. The way that you made my mother feel that she was a good mother was going, "Mmm, that's so good mom!" She didn't have a lot of time to play or play dolls or play games or take me for a walk, but she would cook. She would feel really wonderful. As a matter of fact she would talk to me when she cooked. She would tell me stories about the old country. What it was like to grow up in Czechoslovakia and where she lived in Pudecarpa Russe which is like the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains on the Czechoslovakian side, which had just separated from the

Austrian/Hungarian Empire. And I would get to hear all these stories if I stood by her and I helped her make bread.

They introduced Knishes. I don't know if you know what those are, but it's a delicacy. They introduced them to the South Jersey area where I grew up. I would help her actually put egg on these little treats and then they would go in the oven and they would come out all nice and brown on top and they were filled with meat and cheese and like cottage cheese and sugar... It's amazing that I survived my childhood.

Chuck: (Laughs.)

Sharon: And then, at 13 I was this very large child. Right before that I remember standing in the kitchen, my mother was making fried veal cutlets. She'd bread them and fry them. She's talking to me and I'm really happy she's talking to me and I'm eating them, and I literally ate 12 of them.

Chuck: Twelve veal cutlets? Oh, my gosh.

Sharon: I ate 12 veal cutlets and I promptly threw up. To tell you the truth I've never eaten one since that day. But that was sort of a wake up moment, like what the heck was I doing? And, what was my mother doing that she was allowing me to do that to myself? I was doing it right in plain sight. I wasn't hiding them.

I started thinking, there's something wrong here, I shouldn't be doing this, my mother shouldn't be allowing me to do this. So, by 13 I still hadn't gotten hold of it. I had decided I wanted to be a psychiatrist. Because there's something wrong here. I knew there was something wrong. That's when I started my interest in psychology.

I started reading things and talking to kids in school, talking to my older brothers who were, at that point, they were already in medical school and becoming doctors. My oldest brother, when he was 18 and I was just 10, he went from being some enormous weight to a normal size. When he was a kid they used to call him "Phillip the Barrel" because he was huge. He lost his weight and he never gained it back again. He took it all off. He was an inspiration that he lost it and took it off, and was becoming a doctor. I was in my later teens, and I would talk to him and he would start teaching me what he knew. That was part of it.

Then I got into psychotherapy, I did a lot of soul searching, and I was lucky enough to meet a doctor who was also a nutritionist... and, started learning about nutrition and greens and vegetables and what worked and what didn't. Why sugar was such a demon, and how starch turned into sugar.

Basically that's how all that happened. Then I was lucky enough in the research that I ended up doing, research for Weight Watchers and Atkins and

100 calorie stuff, for a whole bunch of weight loss products. Using my psychology to understand what people's wants and needs were, how it got in their way, as well as, on my own alternative path. I've always been an alternative kind of person. That rebel in me has been very helpful. And that's how I got there.

Chuck, while I've got you on the phone — and I don't get to do that very often — how did you come to raw foods yourself? I'm just kind of curious.

Chuck: Since I was a teenager I had been kind of — well I guess we have to go back a little bit before then. I grew up in the Midwest, in Illinois, which is a heavily meat and potatoes kind of country. The meals were always a chunk of meat and a side of potatoes or some kind of vegetable.

It wasn't... In my teens I started just feeling strange about the way I was eating. I didn't know what was causing that. I had heard about being vegetarian, although at the same time, I heard of friends of friends who knew somebody who had tried to be vegetarian and almost died in the process, which is kind of funny. I laugh at it now that I know what I know now, but it wasn't something that people in that area really did.

Later in my life I moved out to California and actually met someone who had been vegetarian for 14 years. I saw that, no, you really didn't, in fact, die when you went vegetarian. So I tried that and just stuck with it. I've kind of also been alternative in that respect for a while. As I've gotten older I've become more and more interested in health topics. I read books all the time. The more I read the more I researched, I heard about the raw food diet and it just *clicked*, it just made sense the moment I heard of it. These are the foods that come from the earth, that's real food. Food doesn't come from a box or a package or the grocery store. I think people have kind of lost sight of what is the real food that our bodies have evolved to be able to process efficiently and give us good health.

Sharon: It kind of mirrors the way that I've thought about it over the years. It's always sort of a process isn't it? Like moving towards healthier choices and dealing with our cravings for different things that we were brought up with. Although I have to say, even though when I talk to you about that strudel funny thing my mother made, it didn't give me a craving for it. Thank God! (Laughter.) I was more reminded of the heartburn, so that part was good, but there are still cravings.

I feel incredibly grateful for stevia because I can take an organic lemon and some alkalized water — we use this Aquarius filter that we have in our kitchen so that we always have alkaline water. It's set at nine-and-a-half. I put my lemons in it and put my stevia in it. It feels like a wonderful treat, and I know it's good for my body. And it deals with my craving for sweet.

Maybe it's my way of dealing with that appley, lemony thing with the cinnamon. I'd actually put cinnamon in my lemonade, too, so maybe that's how I can get the feeling of being around my mom while doing something good for myself. And the reason I bring that up... cravings, I think, are a sign of the life force in us. Food is life. We have to eat to survive and contrary to popular belief in certain people, we can't exist on air like an air plant. There are plants that thrive on air, but humans don't. We actually need to eat.

When we have a craving for food, it's representing our craving for life — and also our craving for love. Because, if you think about it, when we're brought into the world, immediately, even before we've left our mother's bodies, we are being constantly fed. It's a connection to sustenance. It's also a connection to the love from your mother.

And then, when we're born, there's a break, a little bit, in that connection and depending upon what century you're talking in, every ten years or so it might be a little bit different that whether we're fed on a schedule or fed on demand, we end up learning about that connection and how to feed ourselves according to how our mothers took care of us. But it's about life and it's about love because, how does mother express love to a newborn? By feeding it. By holding it and feeding it. Very often cravings are representative of that need to get what we needed both physically and emotionally.

And that's why I think emotional eating is always there, by the way. Because we're always trying to take care of ourselves both on a physical and emotional level. Food represents that more than anything else in the whole world.

Chuck: And on some level it's a way of your body, perhaps, to get you to eat something that it thinks it needs.

Sharon: Exactly. I know you know this, but the cleaner you get in your body by eating more appropriately and detoxing the body, the more that your cravings change, right?

Chuck: Yes. I have experienced that, definitely.

Sharon: If someone had told me, 15 years ago, that I was going to crave spinach — (Laughter.) Like, raw spinach, I'd say, "Oh, come on, that's ridiculous!" Maybe creamed spinach with lots of butter and salt.

I will come downstairs and say to my husband, "Ooh, can we have kale today in the juice? Can we do a vitamix of kale and mango today or kale and banana?" Or, "I really want the spinach! I feel like I need spinach." "Well how do you know?" "I don't know. I just need spinach."

It used to be there were times when I craved salt, right. But that had to do with that addiction. Salt and sugar are two of the things that we can get crazed with. Now I find that I can taste natural salt in things. I just, by myself, started eliminating salt. Decided I didn't want it. And I think if I have 500, 600 milligrams of salt a day it's probably a lot.

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: I've just gravitated to that naturally.

Chuck: It's amazing the flavors you start to notice once you don't put in that salt.

Sharon: Exactly. It's like everything changes.

Chuck: Isn't that kind of a catch 22 though? Like when you start eating the healthy things and your body cleans itself up, your cravings will change. But if you're just getting started, your cravings are already in place. What do you do about that?

Sharon: There are number of things you can do about it. One of the first things is to be really sweet to yourself about having your craving, because it's your body being alive and wanting. You can only get when you want. I think we should applaud ourselves when we experience the wanting.

Then we can ask ourselves, how much is want and how much is need? Is this coming from my stomach? Is my stomach hungry for something or is it my mouth?

My mouth might be saying, I really want something sweet. I've just eaten. I had an orange, I had a big salad with some nuts on it, but I want something sweet. Then I'm pretty sure that it's probably part of the addiction or my mouth hunger. What I do is I do my best to honor it and I would say to myself, "Okay, if I could have the one thing that I really, really, really want, what would it be?"

Like right now I've got lemon and stevia in my mouth, so it's hard to think about it. But it might be, I want chocolate. I try to figure out what's the best possible chocolate I could possibly have? (Laughter.) I'm not going to give in to just any chocolate. If I want chocolate, I'm going to go and have the absolute most incredibly, delicious chocolate I can find. I really want to set that up.

Do I have it in the house? No. Well could I go get it? Hmm. Maybe. Well if I can, let's see what it might be. Is it Godiva or is it Lindt? Or, is it a truffle? Does it have nuts in it? Is it gooey? Is it hard? I can even tell myself, okay, I could go to a whole bunch of different stores to get it.

Oh, and you know what, I just realized, what about that raw cacao? That could even fit into my raw desire! I could do some research on that, too. Then I get on the internet and I start looking around. Well can I wait until — that's going to take two days to get here — Can I wait? No. What can I do in the mean time? Where am I going to get it?

I go through making it the most exciting thing possible to allow myself to have it.

Then I start asking myself what does this remind me of? I think to myself, I remember when I was a little girl and my cousin, Charlotte, was really beautiful. She was a lot older. And her boyfriend came and brought her a big, red heart filled with gooey chocolate. He was looking at her with such admiration. She was very pretty and she was thin and I was still struggling. She was able to open the box and take one chocolate and eat half of it. Which I thought was really insane, like how could anybody in the whole world ever do that? And she kept the box of chocolates. She and her boyfriend went off holding hands. But there was that box of chocolates that represented this connection that she had with this nice boy.

Here she was beautiful — and I probably stole half of her box of chocolates and she was very angry at me afterwards — but I didn't want the chocolate. What I really wanted was that relationship. And since I struggled with my weight my entire life, and every man in my life knew that, so they would never get me chocolate. They wouldn't go and do that because they wanted to encourage my desire to be trim and thin, blah, blah, blah.

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: It hurt. Valentines will come and no one ever got me a box of chocolate. They wouldn't take me out for dessert. It was this feeling of missing some kind of a loving thing going on. Maybe what I really needed was someone gazing into my eyes and adoring me like Charlotte's boyfriend. I told Glenn this story awhile back and two days later a box of chocolates arrived.

Chuck: (Laughs.) Oh, what a sweetheart.

Sharon: It was. It was so sweet and I ate one of them and I threw the rest of them away and I kept the box. It's right there on the shelf. I took our dining room and turned it into my home study where I work when I'm home. I've got a private office outside of here and Glenn's got an office in the house also. This little, nice red box is sitting on my sofa here so I can see it and be reminded that I have a husband who adores me just like Charlotte had a boyfriend who adored her.

Then all of a sudden something weird happens which is... when I go through all of this association to that craving food. You know, maybe I don't really

need that chocolate right now. I might want it tomorrow. Maybe I should go and find that raw cacao that got some really good reviews. I read the reviews. People said it tastes great and it's got health benefits and it is raw and it's made from cacao and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, right? Well, maybe I should have some Godiva in the house just in case. But I don't. As a matter of fact I don't even have the raw. As a matter of fact I don't even have any chocolate. Something happened when I gave myself permission that, I don't know, maybe I'll go have my lemonade.

Chuck: You were talking about giving yourself space and permission to explore the craving and become excited about it. Isn't that kind of positively reinforcing or fuelling your craving by doing that? I mean clearly it's not because you experienced the opposite, but...

Sharon: It's giving yourself permission to have a naughty, forbidden thought. Emotional eating secrets... Secrets are about things that we deny, that we're not supposed to have, things we're sometimes embarrassed about and when you bring it out into the light. Instead of getting overwhelmed, it releases some of that crazy drive because you permitted it. It's no longer forbidden. It's no longer got this negative sanction on it. It changes.

Chuck: As soon as you can't have something that's exactly what you want the most.

Sharon: Exactly, exactly. And you still might want to have some, but maybe only have one piece that you savour instead of 20.

Chuck: What are some common cravings that people have?

Sharon: There are a lot of people who are really carbohydrate crazed where, you know, I need a bagel or I need some pizza or I need pasta because it often goes with the feeling of emptiness. They've had a really, really hard day and they want to be comforted. They've given everything and they want to feel soothed and full rather than abandoned and empty.

Think about how you do that with bread. Bread is great to fill you up and, of course, what it also does is it kind of makes you logey and exhausted. You want to go to sleep. A lot of people will eat a heavy carb meal like that at night and they fall asleep in front of the TV. As they get older, then they have indigestion with it as well, of course.

You're sending your body all kinds of signals when you eat that at night. Your liver starts creating fat. Maybe you only had 1,000 calories but you had them all in bread right before going to sleep. And, they go right to your fat spot wherever that is.

It's different for different people, right? It might be wanting to feel held. There's kind of a heaviness that people get when they're ready to go into

slumber. Some people have a really hard time falling asleep if they're hungry. Maybe they shouldn't, right? There are some people who say go to sleep hungry, but I think that if you do it sets up all kinds of emotional abandonment that's very hard to deal with.

I think that's what that kind of craving is about, wanting to feel fulfilled, complete instead of the emptiness that we feel from the stress of our day sometimes.

If you do that same exercise with whatever that craving is and you also figure out some way of dealing with the emptiness and maybe its food and maybe it's something else. If you're in a relationship where you can cuddle up with somebody... Or, maybe it's reading a really good book. Maybe it's getting into a very cushy bed with — I'm talking about my own needs right now — with soft things. That's a way of loving myself. To be around very soft, not too warm, not too cool, just the right temperature. Maybe having my dog on my lap or on my feet the way he is at the moment, he's sitting on my feet. There's other ways of dealing with that empty feeling that starch is good at filling.

Chuck: I have cravings, too, and my particular weakness at this point in time is chocolate chip cookies. Why is it that you have the cravings even when you know it's not what you want to eat? I know I don't really want the cookie —

Sharon: Sure you do! You definitely want that cookie. And I want to tell you right now, it's okay with me that you want that cookie.

Chuck: (Laughs.) Thank you.

Sharon: Can you tell me a story, a memory about chocolate chip cookies?

Chuck: Like a childhood kind of thing?

Sharon: Sure, why not?

Chuck: My mom was always very industrious in the kitchen especially in baking and making treats. She always made really delicious things. Lemon bars, brownies, fudge, cookies, cakes. She was really good at it and they were all really tasty. I don't have any particular memories pertaining to chocolate chip cookies, though. But I don't know why, if I'd have a hard day at work or am feeling particularly stressed, I feel like I want to eat a cookie and often I do and then I feel guilty afterwards. (Laughs.)

Sharon: You're talking about your mom, but you're not remembering chocolate chip cookie. You're not going to believe this Chuck, but I'm one of the foremost experts on chocolate chip cookies. I did a huge study a number

of years ago, huge study. I can't even tell you how large it was. Understanding what chocolate chip cookies mean in our society.

Chuck: I remember that, yeah.

Sharon: It might not have to do with your mother and it might not be that early, but see if you can think back some times in your life, before the common era, when you had an experience with chocolate chip cookies?

Chuck: The first thing that comes to mind is, it's an image of... You know the ones that where the dough comes made for you in the little plastic tube and all you do is slice it off and put it on a tray and stick it in the oven for a few minutes?

Sharon: Like the Pillsbury.

Chuck: Right. The image I have is a tray of those just coming out of the oven. They've got little wasps of steam rising from them and they're just perfectly golden brown. You break one in half and there's gooey chocolate melting all over the place. That's what comes to mind.

Sharon: How old might you have been then?

Chuck: Oh, gee, I don't know. Maybe 10 I'd say.

Sharon: Who made those quick and easy chocolate chip cookies?

Chuck: It would have been my mom.

Sharon: Where were you, what was happening? Try to texturize the story.

Chuck: I have a vision of the house we lived in at the time and my mom and I are in the kitchen and maybe conversing. I can see her putting on the oven mitts and getting the cookies out of the oven.

Sharon: What time of day might it have been?

Chuck: It was probably about mid afternoon I would say.

Sharon: Was it a weekday or a weekend?

Chuck: Gosh, I don't know. I'll say it was a weekday, maybe like an after-school treat.

Sharon: What did you normally do after school in addition to getting a little treat?

Chuck: Oh, I don't know. Maybe go over to a friend's house and play or I had a computer that I played with at the time quite often. (Laughs.)

Sharon: See if we can figure out what the delight was. You're associating the steam and the melting chocolate with that time and I'm wondering what the secondary aspects were in addition to the yummy chocolate. What was it like being with your mom at that time, what was it like being with the computer, what was it like coming home from school at that time? Let's see if we can tell more of the story.

Chuck: Oh, wow.

Sharon: It's okay if you make it up, because if you're making it up there's something that ties back to real.

Chuck: Okay.

Sharon: Even if you think it's totally made up.

Chuck: Well I guess we could say that school was sometimes a little challenging for me. I was always kind of a nerdy type. The last person to get picked for the sports team in PE class. (Laughs.)

Sharon: I know what that's like.

Chuck: Yeah. I've come to embrace that now, but back then it was pretty challenging. I was always in kind of a special class, which had a tendency to kind of keep me separated from "normal" kids my age. You know, there's a special —

Sharon: It became a stigma?

Chuck: Yeah. You're just disconnected from the other kids. You're different. Because there's a group of us and we'd have our own special little class and we weren't "normal." There's some normal school yard name calling and whatnot. Although I enjoyed school, I enjoyed learning, the social aspects of it were challenging at times. Maybe, being at home in a situation where I felt comfortable and wanted and loved, perhaps.

Sharon: Does some of that get replayed in your everyday life where you're trying to do what you need to do in your home and in your business and your choice of career. Do you sometimes feel like separated and alone? Not like the regular people?

Chuck: I suppose so. I mean I do feel like I shoulder a decent amount of responsibility. I'm kind of the person where a lot of people come to me to

help and I enjoy helping them, but then sometimes it's like well, who helps the helper? (Laughs.)

Sharon: And there is that melting chocolate smelling so good and mom's taking it out of the oven and handing it to you and soothing the senses.

Chuck: That's fascinating. It's great to have you here to draw that out of me, but what if I'm just on my own? How can I do what we just did?

Sharon: For one, now you have this forever and maybe you can figure out some other ways of making that connection to something soothing.

I have to tell you about chocolate chip cookies. One of the things that the research showed is that chocolate chip cookies are like a melting pot for all cultures. They're so American. When people come to the United States, other people often hand them a plate of chocolate chip cookies. When they talked about them, it's like the little pieces of chocolate are all these people and they're getting together in the batch of the batter. They feel connected, it's all like one, it's a way we can be one with everybody. It's like a little chocolate morsel and we're held together in the batter of life.

Who knew I would hear such stories about chocolate chip cookies. But it was all about feeling connected, in part, in a way that was soothing and fun and energizing, at once exciting and relaxing. It's a way of connecting to self and others where you can just kind of melt into something that's happier.

Since your particular craving is chocolate chip cookies, what might give you a similar kind of feeling so that you can have that with you at all times, even when you don't have someone to talk to about it?

Chuck: Gosh, I don't know. I'd have to figure that out because if I knew what that was I could do that instead of eating the chocolate chip cookies, right?

Sharon: I would recommend that if you do have a chocolate chip cookie, you intensify that experience. You get the very best chocolate chip cookie that you can get and you melt that chocolate. You put it in the oven and let it melt a little bit so that if you are going to eat it, you get the full hit of it. And you savor it. You eat it slowly. Put it on a pretty plate, sit with it, and savor every morsel, every bite of it.

Chuck: This is a process and it's something that you have to give yourself space for. If you're in a rush, if you're headed out the door to go to work in the morning or you have a very hectic life, how do you get that?

Sharon: Well one way you could do it is like, giving yourself permission to know, I'm going to have the ultimate chocolate chip cookie experience at a

certain time, and you can rely on yourself to give it to yourself. You make a promise to yourself that you can have it.

Chuck: Okay. Tonight, when I get home, it's going to be my chocolate chip party.

Sharon: Yeah.

Chuck: Okay.

Sharon: Yeah. In the meantime, let's see, what am I really needing? Am I hungry? What else could I have at this moment? I am in a hurry. What could I have that might give me some of that satisfaction. What might it be? If you can't get at the ultimate chocolate chip cookie. At the same time, you want to be good to yourself. What could you possibly substitute in the meantime until you have time to make that wonderful —

Chuck: I also want to explicitly point out that although we're talking about the chocolate chip cookies and my particular craving for them, that the basic principles here apply to —

Sharon: Whatever craving.

Chuck: — Right.

Sharon: Absolutely. I'm going to help our listeners with it a little bit more in a second, but I wanted to make sure we took care of your chocolate chip cookie thing.

Chuck: (Laughs.) Thank you.

Sharon: What else could you do? I'm wanting you to enjoy it rather than shove it in your mouth and not taste it. What could we give you that you could enjoy or what could we give you to take care of hunger in the meantime?

Chuck: You mean another food, or —

Sharon: Perhaps. Or maybe not, I don't know. Maybe you need to shove down that cookie.

Chuck: (Laughs.) I don't know. Nothing's really coming to mind. I mean, sometimes I like a kind of crunchy granola-type of cereal. I don't know if that would substitute for cookies, though. That's a tough one, I don't know.

Sharon: I want to suggest to you that when you're crunching that cookie, you are not getting that gooey, yummy thing coming out of the oven. You're depriving yourself of getting exactly what you want.

Chuck: Ohhh... Holy cow, Sharon, you are so insightful. It's amazing.

Sharon: You're giving me the insight, so you're the insightful one here. Maybe part of the reason that it's still so high is because you haven't given yourself what you really wanted, which is that warm, aromatic, melty, soft thing coming out of the oven. Maybe that's why you can't get over it.

Chuck: That's exactly right because mostly I'm eating these chocolate chip cookies that come in a little pouch from Trader Joe's and I just take them right out of the bag and so they're just normal room temperature, chunky chocolate.

Sharon: They're not really giving you that full experience that that little Chuck inside is craving.

Chuck: I don't know what to say. Thank you. That's going to be fun trying that and seeing what happens!

Sharon: We took a long time going through this. You have to get your [unintelligible] with it, you have to get comfortable with the process.

One is, what is it I really, really, really want? You have to ask yourself a question. Everybody, and me too. What do I really, really want? Is it the crunch, is it the salt, is it the sweet, is it the chewy, is it the creamy? What would be the best articulation of that possible, that I could possibly get? And then, where can I get that? Take yourself through the whole exercise of allowing yourself to think about where you get the best version of that particular thing.

One of my other things — my mother, for a while, for a number of years, she worked in a bagel store and she actually got to be known as “the Bagel Lady of Cherry Hill, New Jersey.” I mean, I would be on planes and some how or other Cherry Hill would come up and be talking to someone and they go, “Oh! Is your mother the Bagel Lady of Cherry Hill?” (Laughter.)

If I wanted a bagel, I would be in search of the ideal bagel and if I gave myself permission to find the best one and go and sample them. Like what if I go and sample every single bagel in the entire world and find the best one? New Hampshire is not known for its bagels. And again, something would happen where I'm associating... Oh, there's something else about being with mom. My stuff always comes back to my mother. A lot of people come back to mother, obviously.

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: But it will be different things at different times. This magical thing happens. Sometimes you'll still want that food, but lots of times when you identify wanting to be with a person or with something else, with some other experience, then just talking it through with yourself frees something up. You can still go and have the food, but lots of times it kind of clears.

We did it once with, the same experience with Glenn and him wanting pizza. He went back to what that meant for him and all of a sudden, he felt like he ate it. What happens is when you go through the exercise, instead of it intensifying the craving, wanting it more, if you really, really experience what you want and how you might possibly get the very best rendition of it, you feel like you ate it. And it goes away.

The other thing, particularly for all of us who are in this format here, who are very interested in getting healthier choices, sometimes you can find something that has the texture, that has the flavor, that's a reasonable facsimile, but healthy. Like Glenn would talk about what he wants from pizza is he wants that starchy carbohydrate, but he wants a healthier version. He wants the taste of the tomato sauce, he wants that cheese kind of flavor. What he figured out for himself was that he could make some brown rice, and put some organic tomato sauce on it, and he found some fantastic soy cheese that he could put on it, and that really satisfies that craving. He won't eat a whole pizza, he won't eat a whole box of brown rice, but it gives him the flavor and then it goes away.

Chuck: A moment ago you were saying, I should envision the best chocolate chip cookie experience I could possibly imagine and then allow myself to have that experience. Did I understand that correctly?

Sharon: I did.

Chuck: If I have a substitute, isn't that still denying myself the true experience?

Sharon: It could be. And sometimes we discover that we want the substitute even more than the other. There are two approaches that I was talking about. One of them is to really go with the thing that you want.

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: And then when you have the imagination of going with it, very often people realize there's something else that they want or that a substitute might be just as good if not better.

Chuck: So it's kind of a process and you'll figure it out as you go along. Maybe you try a substitute and it doesn't work for you. You go back and rethink, next time the craving comes up, about what did you learn from the last time, what additional insights have you come to, why did that not fulfill you versus the real target of your craving? Is that —

Sharon: Mm-hmm. It's a wonderful thing. I wish that it was possible that anybody who wanted to go through that exercise could call me and I could take them through it every time they got a craving so that they could journal about it then and have a whole book of, "Oh! When I want this, here are some options that I have and here is the best version of it." It's very important when you find that thing that's, you know, your ultimate chocolate chip cookie, is to be with it and really experience it. Rather than throwing it in your mouth as you're running out of Trader Joe's, because then you don't get enough of it. You can't possibly have that experience that you had with the melting chocolate. You need to make it sacred and be with that food. Eat it slowly and savor it so you totally experience it in the best possible way.

Chuck: Why is it that people's natural instincts tend to be that... I have to be able to be strong enough to say "no." I should have the willpower and if I give in that means I'm weak or I'm a failure.

Sharon: Willpower is this crazy thing — it almost has religious overtones, doesn't it? You're only a good person if you blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: And very often it's a way of being abusive to ourselves; it's really flagellating yourself. "Oh, God, I'm a bad person, I'm a bad person." Then what happens when we do that, then we want to go in and indulge in something that's bad for us even worse. "So you think I'm a bad person?" The me that's mean to myself. "I'll show you what a bad person is. I'm going to eat this whole bag of chocolate chip cookies!"

Chuck: Oh, that's a binge, yeah.

Sharon: "I'm not going to eat five. I'm going to eat 40 of them. Am I bad enough yet? Oh, you're really bad. Okay. I'll go and eat some more cookies." The whole willpower thing is a way of telling us that we're bad. That's the way I look at it. Other people look at it differently. There's so many factors. If it is an addictive substance, then you've got all those little demon yeast and bacteria telling you to eat it, too, which makes it hard. That's where we want to use our rational mind to try to pick it apart and figure out how much is physically driven and how much is emotionally driven so we can have choices about what we do.

Chuck: So we have to kind of be accepting that we are going to have cravings and that's a natural process. If we give ourselves some space to

explore them a little bit, we can perhaps find out where they're coming from. Once we allow ourselves to really indulge in that, then it just kind of withers away on its own.

Sharon: In terms of the substitute, now that we're more mature than we were as infants and little kids, we get to realize that the benefits of the substitute are more exciting than the original thing that comes to our mind. I'm just curious, if you could really get rid of chocolate chip cookies, would you want to?

Chuck: My conscious brain tells me that they're not the healthiest thing for me and that's really it.

Sharon: I'm hearing that you really don't want to get rid of them and I want to tell you, don't. Don't get rid of them. But, make it the best possible experience. You can savor it. Because if you do that, you're going to find that you're satisfied by a couple rather than chugging down the box because you didn't eat the whole thing, that bag.

What we're going to have for you is a step-by-step set of instructions, by the way, that you can send people to.

Chuck: Oh, excellent.

Sharon: People aren't going to be left in the dark about this. Like, "Oh my God, if I can't get it from listening here, I'm not sure I'm going to be able to do it myself."

Chuck: Okay, perfect.

Sharon: I think that will be helpful.

Chuck: Can you review, then, your four-step process please?

Sharon: Sure. You get hit by a craving and you know it's a craving because you ask yourself am I really hungry or is it that I just really want something, you know, my mouth is calling for this. If it's really from your mouth, it's more of a craving. But it's also like trying to get some emotional need satisfied and that's valid. It's valid to want to have something pleasant in your life.

So then the first question is to honor it and to say, "You can come out of the dark and I'm going to try to fulfill this in the best possible way I can rather than hiding it."

When you talk to women about their snacking needs, they still talk about, I need 10 minutes away from the kids, they're driving me absolutely bananas.

I've got to take care of my husband, I've got to iron his shirt, I've got three kids running around, have to get them off to school... Finally everyone's out of the house and all they can think about is wanting something soothing and delicious and rewarding. They actually have a stash in the laundry room that nobody knows about. They go into the laundry room and they stand there. They've got five minutes, and it's five minutes that nobody else can bother them because they're going to have to go back to their hectic lives in a few minutes. They go in there and they eat as much of that chocolate as they can. They've got a hidden stash of chocolate and that's when they eat it. Did they savor it? No. They got five minutes. They really needed a half an hour.

The hardest thing to do sometimes is to make space, make necessary space. You know the whole thing about when you're in an airplane and for some reason you need oxygen and you're traveling with a child or someone who's not as capable as you, you don't put the oxygen mask on the other person. You first put it on yourself so that you can be strong enough to take care of the other person because if you don't take care of yourself first, you can't take care of anybody else. What very often happens to people, because, to some extent we're all caretakers of others, is that we don't recognize that we need to make sure we have a little time for ourselves —

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: — so that we can be there in our lives in the most present way.

When we take just a few minutes to recognize what this craving is and figure out the best way we could fulfill it. Maybe it'll take 10 minutes to go through the exercise — it could take two — it doesn't take very, very long particularly after you practice it for awhile.

What do I really, really, really want? What are my cravings? How much of it is in my mouth, how much is it my stomach? If it is my stomach and I'm hungry, my physicality is crying out, then it's really, really important to feed it because if you don't, then even more cravings are going to come up. Identify what it is, figure out the best way of getting it, and then as you're planning to go and figure out where you're going to get it, then allow yourself to kind of think back and associate to that particular food craving.

"What is it about chips? What's the emotion I'm feeling right now? Man, I'm telling you I am so annoyed with that person in my office who just talked to the boss and said blah, blah, blah, blah, blah and now I've got even more work! I was trying to leave here at 11:45 because I wanted to pick up the kids and I don't have time for lunch now and I am annoyed. I just want to crunch. I want to bite. I wish I could bite him!" They want something crunchy, so they're going to crunch on potato chips, crunch on pretzels.

Lots of times people who want to crunch, it's oral aggression. "So what would be the absolute best crunch? Maybe his arm? Oh, I can't do that. Maybe I could write about it. Maybe I can get in the car and if George was here right now I'd say, 'George, you son of a gun. I can't believe you went and did that so you could go off and go smoke your cigarette and I'm stuck doing that work,'" whatever.

But if I want that crunch, what would be the best possible way of getting it where I could really crunch it? And then go and get that thing. And, again, lots of times when you get it, give yourself five or ten minutes to get in touch with the craving, to honor it. Tell yourself it's really okay, it's legitimate to have it. It changes. If it doesn't change, go for it and have it and enjoy it and when you stop tasting it — Did you ever notice that by the way? When you're eating those cookies, you taste some of them and then you stop tasting them?

Chuck: Oh, yeah. At the end of it I feel like I've gone through three or four cookies and I'm like, where did they go? (Laughs.)

Sharon: One place to take a look at is, when have I had enough? There's research that suggests that the body's telling you you've had enough when you no longer taste it. When it becomes mechanical, you've had enough. Like the first couple of bites, they're exquisite, right?

Chuck: Right.

Sharon: No matter what it is, then after maybe the fourth or fifth or sixth — because it takes the body 20 minutes, if you're actually hungry it takes your body 20 minutes to know you're full. So you need some other signals and one of them is, am I still tasting it? And if you're not, well that's interesting isn't it?

Chuck: Oh, you really have to pay attention.

Sharon: Yeah. So with all of this, the way to deal with cravings, what we're asking people to do is just to pay attention.

Chuck: You mentioned that there's more information available for people who are interested. So, people should go to HelpMyCravings.com — H-E-L-P-M-Y-C-R-A-V-I-N-G-S.com — if they'd like to get more detailed information about this process. But since you have some time available, Sharon, I wonder if you'd be interested in performing one of these exercises with one of the listeners?

Sharon: Yeah, or maybe just answering some questions that people have. If they want to talk it would be great to talk with them, sure.

Chuck: Okay, perfect. If anyone on the call would like to talk to Sharon either if you have some questions or if you'd like to go through the exercise, just press *6 to unmute yourself and introduce yourself, please. Hopefully someone here will be brave enough to take the first step.

Sharon: To be a guinea pig, right? (Laughter.)

Chuck: Yeah. Hey, I did it. It wasn't so bad. Actually I learned a lot, so this is a fantastic opportunity.

Sharon: I'm wondering, Chuck, while we're waiting to see if anybody wants to ask a question — you don't have to do an exercise, if you just want to ask a question that'd be great — I'm wondering what kind of thoughts have been going through your mind thinking about your chocolate chip cookies?

Chuck: You mean as we've been talking or?

Sharon: Yes. Not in terms of reiterating what we already said, but I'm wondering if you got some ideas about how you might want to deal with your chocolate chip cookies in the future.

Chuck: Well I certainly did get some ideas. It's something I hadn't really spent a conscious effort thinking about before until just when we started talking about it a moment ago. I knew that I was having these cookies and starting to wonder, "Why am I doing this?" when, consciously, I think that I don't really want them. Some of the ideas I've gotten are, for one thing, like you said, put them in the oven then go for the melty chocolate and also just give myself some time, next time I feel the need to eat some chocolate chip cookies, to think about those kinds of images, in the kitchen with my mom and what was going on around me at the time. Those are all things that I had just never even knew about let alone given the time to explore that in much detail.

Sharon: Is your mom still around?

Chuck: Yes, she is.

Sharon: Is your relationship one where you might want to call her and say "hi" or maybe even appreciate her cooking, or not?

Chuck: Oh, sure, yeah. She may even be listening, I'm not sure.

Sharon: So it might be cool just to, every now and then, when you get that say, oh call and say "hi." What the heck.

Chuck: Oh, wow, okay. I'm the kind of person that's I'm more like logical, left brained and my right brain, empathic half of my brain is not as well developed and that's great.

Sharon: Well, you know what, anytime you want to work on that part, call me, because that's something I really love doing. (Laughter.)

Chuck: Well thank you. I appreciate that.

Al-Nisa Berry: Yes. This is Al-Nisa Berry and I been listening the whole time. It's been wonderful.

Chuck: Hi there Al-Nisa.

Sharon: How are you today?

Al-Nisa: How are you? My question is, I try not to eat after 7:00 and I noticed that if — when I do, I will usually like salt pretzels with soy nut butter and I sit there with the whole bag and a whole jar. But then it moves on. Like, once I stop — start, I cannot stop. Then I'll go maybe get a cookie, then I'll go get some nuts, or — it's a constant until it's time to bed. It's like once I open that floodgate of starting, I cannot stop. And I don't know where that comes from. And it's different cravings. It's a sweet, it's a crunchy, it's a — it might be popcorn, it might be potato chips. It just continues to go and I tell myself, "Stop, you don't — stop!! Why are you doing this?" But I can't. Until I go to bed and then I'll start over the next day. But it's usually if I eat anything after dinner, I'm messed up after that. And I don't know where that's coming from.

Sharon: I think that's a really, really, really common thing. Night-time, for so many people is a time you finally have some time to be with yourself. You've probably been busy all day long, you haven't had a chance to kind of sit down and relax. And there you are, you can sit in front of the TV and it's the first time where you can kind of love yourself, hug yourself, feed yourself because the rest of the day was so busy with whatever you were doing. Whether you're taking care of other people, or taking care of work, or rushing around like a nut, which, how many of us do that?

This is what I think and you can tell me if this rings true or not. I think it's like, "Oh man, I disappointed myself, I blew it, I might as well keep blowing it. I can't stop now. I've got to prove to myself that I'm not reliable, I'm not trustworthy, I had my 7 o'clock rule, I blew it, and I just can't stop."

Al-Nisa: Yeah, that could be. I have three sons, and working full time, and a husband, and a dog... Everyone's male, and I'm constantly working. I wake up at 4:30, and I don't end until 10:00, 11:00. It's a constant go, go. So that maybe —having time to sit still doesn't come too often for me.

Sharon: And how well are you able to feed yourself during the day before that 7 o'clock?

Al-Nisa: I eat all raw foods during the day. I eat my salads. I'm really good doing it. I eat only — 8:00 I may have a green smoothie for breakfast, and I'll have my lunch at 12:00 to 1:00, and then I'll have a snack at 4:00 because have to go to work out, and then I'll eat the dinner around 6:00, 6:30, and as long as I can stay focused, I'm okay. But if I get past that 7:00 and I reach for anything, it just continues. Most days I'm good, but there are those stressful days or days that I'm just not able to do it and... I'll tell myself before I eat it, "Okay, I'm just going to have three, just a little spoon — a tablespoon of the soy nut butter and I'm going to be done." And it doesn't stop.

Sharon: I really think it's because you have this 7 o'clock rule. I happen to agree with you. When we are understanding of our bodies is we do better when we don't eat right before going to sleep. A lot of what you're talking about is kind of crunchy, right?

Al-Nisa: Mostly crunchy. Usually it's a potato chip or popcorn or those pretzels, but then I want the smooth. I can't eat the pretzels by themselves. I have to have that soy nut butter. So I'll go through a jar and it's expensive, so my husband gets angry because it's \$5.00 a jar, and it's mainly for my youngest who has wheat allergies and nut allergies, but I'm constantly eating up his — and he gets angry, he's five. "Mommy, you ate all of my soy nut butter! Why are you doing that?" Then I really get angry. "Leave me alone, I bought it!" kind of thing and get defensive and that just makes it worse.

Sharon: What does that crunch and the soy nut butter, remind you of?

Al-Nisa: Well the crunch is — I believe is because I'm frustrated or aggravated with dealing with the boys or from the job. The smooth it just melts on my tongue. It just — it's soothing to me when I add it with the soy nut butter.

Sharon: On the one hand, we've got some, you're annoyed like, "This is a frustrating day." At one point when you say, like, all the guys there and the dog... I was thinking like everyone's barking at you. And you want to get some of that frustration out of you, and at the same time you want to be soothed with that smooth melty feeling. Because what do you do with those feelings? How can you be annoyed at your husband, and your sons, and your dog? All that male energy.

Al-Nisa: Because they don't listen.

Sharon: I'll bet they don't! (Laughter.)

Al-Nisa: I walk in the house and there's a laundry list of things that I have to get done and it's like I have very little help. I'm constantly nurturing. But I do work out. I'll usually — if I can eat the dinner and go to the gym at 7:00... I do spinning or I'm constantly in the gym. I work out five to six days a week. If I can get to the gym, pump some iron, or run, do something... I don't want the food when I get home. I'm okay. It's gone. I don't have that craving to sit down and eat something. If I missed that gym after the dinner, then I'm challenged, because I haven't been able to get rid of that stress.

Sharon: So how else can we help you with that stress? What else might you do? We can work on the ideal crunch, but I'm wondering if there's — what other things we might be able to do to help with the stress if you can't go to the gym?

Al-Nisa: I don't know. (Laughs.) I think that's the — I try, maybe, I may walk the dog.

Sharon: Good, good.

Al-Nisa: I've always just wanted to have time to just sit and read. And I don't. I'm constantly doing something, so it's just — to actually get a good book and sit and read comes not very often. But it's something — it's a constant thing in my mind. I want to read my magazine or I want to just sit with a cup of tea and just read. But it doesn't happen because my time is just nurturing and taking care of the children.

Sharon: So that time that you're eating the pretzels with the nut butter, what else are you doing at that time?

Al-Nisa: Oh, usually sitting watching TV or a movie.

Sharon: Is there a reason why you couldn't be reading a book at that time?

Al-Nisa: I'm too frustrated at the point. I'm not in that mindset.

Sharon: You haven't calmed down enough, like you're too —

Al-Nisa: Exactly, right.

Sharon: And the reason you didn't go to the gym? Like is it too late to go to the gym at that time?

Al-Nisa: Oh, no, it's usually something with the children. They had a school activity. I had to cook the dinner. It's usually something surrounding the schedule. Maybe one has a practice or something like that or they're upset

because I'm not going to be home so I have to — there's a balancing. Mommy can't be home too much, you have to be —

Sharon: Is there anything you like doing with your hands?

Al-Nisa: No, not really. With my hands...

Sharon: Do you draw? Do you like knit? Do you like to crochet? Do you like to embroider? Do you like to — I'm trying to think of other things.

Al-Nisa: No. I don't have — no. Nothing with hands. I work on the computer all day, so I sit and work and test software. I'm constantly finding problems all day with the software. I sit behind a desk in a cube looking at the screen.

Sharon: The reason I'm mentioning that is when I was in college I smoked. I can hardly believe that I did that, but I actually smoked in college. And I finally realized that I was totally out of my mind and I needed to break the smoking habit. And I learned how to crochet, and I crocheted an entire afghan in two weeks!

Al-Nisa: Oh my! (Laughs.)

Sharon: Which would ordinarily takes at least six but, I — that was how I stopped smoking because, for me, well smoking was kind of an angry thing to do also. It's self destructive. But wanting the frustration, I would smoke the frustration — while you're crunching your frustration — and a big part of it had to do with the hand to mouth.

Al-Nisa: Okay.

Sharon: So when I was able to occupy my hands with the crochet hook and the yarn... That was another thing about it. I was afraid if I gave up smoking, I'd gain 20 pounds because I heard everybody did.

Al-Nisa: Yes.

Sharon: I didn't gain an ounce.

Al-Nisa: Oh, my, oh. That's unusual, yeah.

Sharon: I like colors, so I picked really cool colors to put into my afghan. We'd have to think of some other things that you might possibly consider. Playing a keyboard or other things you can do with your hands, because if your hands are occupied, you're less likely to be putting food in your hands.

Al-Nisa: Okay. I can look into — that makes sense because sometimes I will come upstairs and just fold laundry for hours.

Sharon: Oh, there you go.

Al-Nisa: Gets my mind off the food. (Laughs.)

Sharon: What would be the ideal, ideal crunch and smooth you could have beyond those pretzels and the soy nut butter? If you could really have the one you love the absolute most to fulfill that frustration and need for soothing?

Al-Nisa: Well the smooth would probably chocolate. I can't remember the last time I've had chocolate. Something nice and smooth and gooey, pull it apart and there's the caramel. I used to love caramels. And it would just look like cheese. You would just pull it apart and there's this long string of caramel within the chocolate. The crunchy — I always just chomped on potato chips, but I do like granola bars. I wouldn't see those two together though. (Laughs.)

Sharon: Is there something even better — Look at the delight she's got in her voice! (Laughter.) Is there something even more delicious that's got the crunch? Are those pretzels salted or they unsalted?

Al-Nisa: They're salted.

Sharon: What you associated to is something that's basically sweet and crunchy. How important is sweet and crunchy versus salty?

Al-Nisa: It's probably the salt more than the crunchy.

Sharon: Can you think of some intensely exciting salty thing?

Al-Nisa: No. No, I can't. Because I've cut down on the salt similar to you. I mean I just revamped the whole diet. So many things I don't eat anymore, but I can't think of any — Salty, boiled peanuts that you get from the ballpark.

Sharon: Ooh!

Al-Nisa: (Laughs.) The warm peanut. Yeah I used to love those, too.

Sharon: And they need to be warm. They need to be warm... Look at how you both had these warm ideas. (Laughter.) I'm wondering what warm thing you could do for yourself?

Al-Nisa: Oh, I would love to go get a massage with the aromatherapy. Just be pampered. (Laughs.) To have someone pamper me, rather than me always giving.

Sharon: What about — do you have the tub, the bathtub in your house?

Al-Nisa: Yes, but I never use it. Not for myself.

Sharon: I'm wondering, what it might be like for you just to try it as an experiment.

Al-Nisa: Okay.

Sharon: To make yourself a nice warm bath with some aromatherapy stuff in it. Maybe to light a candle in the bathroom and take your book or your magazine.

Al-Nisa: Okay. I just have to find the time for that.

Sharon: It would be the time when you're watching television.

Al-Nisa: Oh, okay. Okay.

Sharon: So instead of watching television, and just do this as an experiment.

Al-Nisa: Okay.

Sharon: Take a bath. Maybe before you get in the bath, stand in your bathroom, close the door, and jump up and down 100 times.

Al-Nisa: Okay.

Sharon: Because you want to get some of that aggression out. You can even do some punching. Boom, boom, boom. Do some *Rocky* stuff.

Al-Nisa: Okay! (Laughs.)

Sharon: Imagine punching some imaginary villain. Jump up and down while the bath is filling up and you're putting the nice aromatherapy stuff in there. Jump up and down like a maniac and if you could do 200, you can do 200. You'll know how many you can do, you'll see. And then have your magazine already, or your book, and get into the tub and see what happens.

Al-Nisa: Okay. I will.

Sharon: I think I'm going to go do that! (Laughter.) And you know what, I would love to hear how that turned out. If you want to —

Al-Nisa: Okay.

Sharon: — if you want to email me about it, I would love to hear how it turned out.

Al-Nisa: I will. That sounds like a really good — I never thought of doing that. It's always just — you don't have time, you don't have time, you don't have time.

Sharon: The thing of it is there usually is some time that we're doing something that we're not so happy about like watching TV but it's not the exact thing that I was but I'm too frustrated so I'm just going to sit here and torture myself.

Al-Nisa: Yes. Thank you so much!

Sharon: You know what, do you have something you could write with?

Al-Nisa: Yes.

Sharon: You can send me an email, well send it to this one. Sharon at T-L-G — which stands for The Livingston Group — tlgonline.com.

Al-Nisa: [Tlgonline.com](http://tlgonline.com). Okay. Then I'll go back to mute and maybe there's someone else who wants to chime in.

Sharon: I think it's probably about time to start to wind down. Chuck, what do you think?

Chuck: Yeah that sounds good. Thank you for taking that step, Al-Nisa. It was great to hear from you.

Al-Nisa: Thank you.

Sharon: That was super.

Chuck: That was such a vivid image of the chocolate with the gooey caramel. I could see that in my mind.

Sharon: You want it in your cookies, I know you!

Chuck: (Laughs.) This has been most excellent. I encourage people to go to HelpMyCravings.com and find out more about what Sharon has to offer.

Sharon, can you say a little bit about what kinds of resources they will find when they go there?

Sharon: We have a whole bunch of free audios and videos. We also have a power pack for a nominal amount of money, \$27.00, where they can go and get a whole bunch of MP3s and transcripts telling them lots of different ways of dealing with the different aspects. We also help people by identifying their personality types because different people respond to different things based on personality so we can help them with that as well. Of course, we do coaching for people who would like to work one-on-one. So there's the different kinds of things they'll find.

Chuck: Excellent. I definitely encourage people to go take a look. There's this whole emotional side. I know I've been ignorant and negligent of it in the past, but it's really a worthwhile investment to stop and take a look at it and pay attention.

Sharon: Thank you so much for inviting me into your world here and thank you for being so incredibly brave, Chuck, in doing that exercise.

Chuck: Oh, well thank you for doing that with me. I will definitely let you know how the chocolate chip cookies go — how they crumble. (Laughs.)

Sharon: I want to know all about when you get to warm one up, what happens.

Chuck: Thank you Sharon. It was very generous of you to spend your time with us today. I hope you have a lovely afternoon.

Sharon: You too. Invite us back again.

Chuck: I will do Sharon. Take care now.

Sharon: You, too. Thanks Chuck.

Chuck: Bye-bye.

Sharon: Bye.

The full audio recording of this teleseminar is available for free at:

<http://RawFoodDietNow.com/raw-food-success/how-to-deal-with-cravings-free-mp3-audio.html>