

## TRANSCRIPTS

### *The Stress-Sugar Connection*©

An exclusive podcast series by Wendy Padob, NBC-HWC and Cathy Ormon

#### *Part 3 – Switch ON Control*



**Cathy Ormon, author-host of The Sugar Switch® Podcast interviews Wendy Padob, National Board-Certified Health & Wellness Coach and Founder of WP Creative Wellness**

Welcome to Part 3 in The Stress-Sugar Connection series! Today, we will focus on how to Switch ON Control – and with control, how to switch on choice. Having the power to make choices is very important! I'm thrilled my Special Guest Wendy Padob is joining me once again in my virtual studio. Wendy has an absolute wealth of knowledge that she shares!

We've designed this series to help you to see a clear connection between stress and sugar. identify your habits and spot your own unique warning signs so you can take action in small, sustainable steps that will lead to powerful changes. The good news is that making a switch or a change in one area, like stress, can make it easier to switch or change the other area, like sugar.

My Special Guest, Wendy Padob, is a national board-certified health and wellness coach and mindful lifestyle educator specializing in stress management. She is CEO and founder of WP Creative Wellness, a private coaching practice in New York City, New York. Before becoming a coach, Wendy was a successful communications executive and writer who experienced first-hand how stress can take its toll. She has been through her own health journey with multiple repetitive strain injuries, which caused such debilitating pain for her, she had to stop working and go on disability leave. Despite being advised by her doctors to give up writing, she made profound changes to her lifestyle habits and emerged healthier, more resilient and able to perform better than before. Wendy is deeply committed to helping others prevent or rebound from chronic stress.

Welcome back, Wendy! Thanks for joining me through this whole series. Your personal experience and expertise in stress and stress management are phenomenal! It is such a pleasure to work with you!

**Wendy:** Thank you Cathy! I am delighted to join you and help listeners understand how they can regain control over their stress-sugar habits - and make healthier lifestyle choices.

**Cathy:** Regaining control is probably easier than most people think. So, let's start with what you see as the first, most logical step to take.

**Wendy:** Well, the first step in taking back control is to identify the stressors in your life. Stressors are everyday situations, events and people we perceive as threats to our wellbeing that cause or trigger negative reactions, moods and cravings. When we talk about stress, we're really talking about stressors. And some common examples of stressors are:

- being confronted by someone aggressive
- hearing a loud, sudden noise
- seeing a car speeding toward you
- losing your keys
- or facing a big change in your life (even if it's positive) like a job promotion, buying a house or getting married

Now, there are also food and mood triggers, like:

- high calorie foods loaded with refined sugar, salt and unhealthy fats
- sodas, chips, cake, cookies and pies that can cause you to overindulge
- any form of added sugar — sweeteners, whether white, brown or cane sugar, corn syrup or even honey. They all give you an addictive jolt to your brain that leaves you wanting more!
- also, feeling *hangry* or in a bad mood because you are hungry, which can cause you to overeat

**Cathy:** So, Wendy, why is it important to notice triggers and stressors?

**Wendy:** Well, the more triggers we encounter, the more physical and emotional stress we feel because these triggers activate our body's stress response, often referred to as the *fight or flight response* which allows us to fight or run from the threat. So, noticing stressors and triggers can help you limit your exposure to them.

Now, although we *can't* control stressors, we *can* control our reactions to them. For example, rather than allow stress to overwhelm us and turn to food for comfort, we can respond in healthier ways than having a meltdown, compulsively consuming sugar or overeating.

**Cathy:** What you are saying is that you can't change the stressors or triggers in your life, but you can change your *reactions* to stress and triggers. Wow! How do you do that?

**Wendy:** Well, it starts with self-awareness. Stressors vary from person to person, so noticing *who* and *what* triggers YOU *negatively* at home, in the office, in social situations, and other

areas of your life, can give you the power to choose *how* you react. Fortunately, there are many mindfulness tools that can help you do that. Keeping a journal or using a phone app to monitor your food and stress habits, as well as writing down your goals and intentions, are all some highly effective ways to become more conscious of what you are doing.

Many people *unconsciously* eat or snack, which often leads to weight gain and unhealthy food choices. So, another great mindfulness tool that can help stop mindless eating is *H.A.L.T.* (that's H-A-L-T) which stands for Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired.

Before biting into a candy bar for example, you can stop yourself by saying the word H.A.L.T. It can help you describe what you may be feeling— which is often hungry, angry, lonely or tired — so you can move past negative feelings and address what you really need.

It may sound simple enough, but when our basic needs are not met, we're more vulnerable to stress or emotional eating, sugar cravings and other unhealthy behaviors that can become habits that are hard to break.

**Cathy:** Holy smokes! H.A.L.T. (H-A-L-T) can be a real game changer. It's such a simple but powerful reminder to STOP yourself *before* reaching for sugar or other comfort food. And once you've stopped yourself, you're in a position to address your real needs and make healthier choices. It means you're back in control!

**Wendy:** Yes, that's why H.A.L.T. works so well and is often used with addicts in recovery who struggle with control. It helps them understand what they feel, so they can deal with their feelings and maintain their sobriety by making healthier choices.

**Cathy:** So, what do you see as healthier lifestyle choices, or healthier habits to form?

**Wendy:** Most people think about improving their physical health — exercising more and eating less — and neglect their mental health and moods. But as a stress relief coach, I view mental, emotional and physical health as intrinsically linked.

And if we want to live with more ease, balance, joy and wellbeing, we can create healthy goals and make them a reality by adopting new habits into our everyday life. I can think of 7 good ones that we can all choose to do every day:

1. *Eating better, not less.* We are what we eat, and diet has a big influence on our wellbeing. And adding more fruits and vegetables to our diet can actually make us feel more optimistic, happy and resilient.
2. *Eating breakfast.* A nutritious breakfast that includes protein and healthy fats, like avocado toast or eggs, has been proven to have major benefits on our mood. In fact, people who eat breakfast in the morning have fewer depressive symptoms.

3. *Making sleep a priority.* Numerous studies have shown that not getting enough sleep is linked to stress, anxiety and depression. So, no matter how busy you are, aim to get 7-8 hrs. each night and make your sleep routine consistent on a weekly basis.
4. *Getting physical.* Besides helping stay fit, exercise can help you stay happy. Physical exercise has been called a ‘magic drug’ for people dealing with symptoms of anxiety and depression and can take as little as 30 minutes of exercise a day to start feeling the benefits.
5. *Unplugging from technology.* We spend so much time staring at TV, computer and phone screens, we barely have a moment to look up and notice the world around us. So, if you feel too attached, step away and take time to appreciate
6. *Have a stress relief plan in place* for when life gets crazy. It should include a relaxation or meditation practice to help you calm down quickly so you can manage stress as it happens - before it takes over or becomes overwhelming. We will get more into Mindfulness/Relaxation in our next series.
7. Another important way to relieve stress and avoid sugar cravings is to *maintain healthy lifestyle habits.*

**Cathy:** Sounds great, but isn't it hard to make changes to our habits?

**Wendy:** Well, for many people, just getting started is the hardest part. There are so many changes that can benefit our health and wellbeing, it can be hard to know where to begin and how to begin. People often try to make too many changes at once, then get frustrated or find it too difficult and give up the effort. And sometimes, stress takes over and can weaken motivation.

**Cathy:** So, how *do* we stay motivated to take action to make healthy lifestyle habit changes?

**Wendy:** Well we've all heard the expression ‘old habits die hard’ – the longer we do something, the more ingrained it becomes and harder to change. But even though changing stress and sugar habits may be challenging, the *benefits* of maintaining a healthy lifestyle are more than worth the effort it may take. Increased health and wellbeing, feeling calmer, more relaxed, confident, mindful and in control are powerful sources of continued motivation.

The first step in breaking old habits is really to recognize them, as we've just discussed. And what's interesting is that when we change one habit, it becomes *easier* to change another. In other words, one healthy habit leads to another, which can be even more motivating! If, for example, you adopt a mindfulness or relaxation practice to lower your stress level and do it consistently over 3 months, you will form a healthy new habit that not only lowers your stress, it will also likely lower your blood pressure – *and* make it easier to change other habits like overeating sugar.

**Cathy:** Is there any way to maintain the changes we make? Is it a matter of having the right mindset?

**Wendy:** Well abruptly stopping a certain behavior or habit – going ‘cold turkey’ – is extremely hard to maintain. The KEY is to wean yourself slowly off the habit or replace it with a more positive one that produces a similar benefit. For instance, if being stressed causes you to want to have a drink to unwind, then finding a more productive habit to *replace* drinking like deep breathing, meditation or yoga will help you alleviate stress.

*The secret* is to adopt new habits into your life gradually – AND have an action plan that maps out your wellness goals with coaching to guide you every step of the way. A personal health coach can help you overcome obstacles, stay accountable, motivated and on track as well as develop a positive mindset and skills that can drive you forward to form new, healthy habits faster – as well as maintain them.

**Cathy:** Thank you Wendy! And thank you, loyal listeners, for tuning in and staying with us through this series. We appreciate you! To say, ‘thank you,’ Wendy and I would like to gift you with a special, complimentary Stress Relief or Sugar Switch Consultation – PLUS 20% off of any of our coaching packages or programs you sign up for.

As Wendy said, ‘old habits die hard’ and can be challenging to change, especially after big celebrations like Christmas or New Year’s. And we’ve made it super easy to get started so you can make this your best AND healthiest year yet!

Remember this is a special, limited time offer for podcast listeners only. So, schedule your Complimentary Stress Relief or Sugar Switch consultation today by going to Wendy’s website [wpcreativewellness.com/appointment-request](http://wpcreativewellness.com/appointment-request) or go to Cathy’s calendar [connectwithcathy.as.me](http://connectwithcathy.as.me). Mention this podcast during your consultation to receive 20% off of any coaching package or program you sign up for.

We look forward to helping you leave your old stress-sugar habits behind and step into a brand-new year – and new *you* – relaxed, mindful and empowered!

If you missed any episodes in our *Stress-Sugar Connection* series, you can always go back and listen. They are available anytime, 24/7 on our websites [wpcreativewellness.com](http://wpcreativewellness.com) and [thesugarswitchpodcast.com](http://thesugarswitchpodcast.com) as well as on SoundCloud, Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Blubrry, TuneIn, Spotify, Google Podcasts and Android.

Thanks again, Wendy - I appreciate you for taking the time to be here today and for sharing this incredibly valuable information with our listeners! We have another series in the works, and I am looking forward to working with you on that one! So – listeners, stay tuned for more details!