

Elizabeth: Hello everybody and welcome back to the Primal Potential podcast. I am Elizabeth Benton and I am really excited to go into the new year with you. Only six episodes left this year including this one before we dive into 2017. Hard to believe but I am really excited about a new year with you. Let's make these next six episodes really powerful.

I know the last episode, 271, was one of my longest episodes ever I think. Many of you felt like it was a favorite. If you have some drive time or some fly time this holiday season, definitely check out 271. It's about 90 minutes long. I'm going to balance things out today with a bit of a mini-isode on two strategies to help you tackle temptation.

What I'm going to try and do in the next episodes between now and the new year, because I know your schedules are so crazy I want to go a little bit shorter than normal because I don't want you to drift. It's super normal to check out between now and a few days after the new year and I don't want that. I don't want you to take a break from your goals, from what makes you feel best, from what makes you feel empowered.

Regardless of what choices you find yourself making day to day I still want you to have some anchor to your goals. To what you want. To being in control or feeling in control of your life. If I can make these episodes a little bit shorter to encourage you, like, "Hey at least keep coming back to this," so that you can stay in touch with your why. What you want, what you're after, what makes you feel your best.

Let's make a deal. I will keep them shorter and as helpful as possible, you keep turning in for a few minutes three times each week, Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday. Let's talk about temptation. Trust me, I get temptation. I was at a cookie party last night. I get temptation. I understand how strong that pull can be. How sometimes it feels almost overwhelming, that urge, that desire and how it can sometimes get so uncomfortable and so all consuming in your mind, in your thoughts, that you feel like the only way to relieve that tension, that discomfort, that pressure is to give in.

But that's not the only way. Now, I want to help you turn down temptation but I don't want you feeling miserable or like you're missing out because that's not sustainable. Today I want to talk about two specific strategies that will allow you to be stronger in turning down temptation but in a way that also makes it easier so that you don't feel like it's not fair and you're in some way depriving yourself. A lot of people will argue that if you just give it enough time the urge will subside.

If you just wait it out long enough, the temptation will go away. If you desperately want that pie and you resist it for long enough you won't want it anymore. Yeah, that might be true on occasion but I don't think it's true the majority of the time. When it works that way, awesome, take advantage of it. But I don't think we can

rely on that as a permanent strategy because sometimes the urge, the temptation, the desire gets stronger and bigger and more consuming with time.

Sometimes the more you think about it, the more you see it, the more you look at it, whatever, the more you want it. I want you to have a strategy that works 100% of the time. I don't think that it's primarily a time thing. I think it's primarily an attention thing. There are two factors I'm going to talk about today that I feel are really critical in making it easy to turn down temptation. That if you master these through enough practice, that they'll work 100% of the time.

One of them is your attention or your thought. We keep these temptations alive, we make them grow when we fuel them with our thought, with our attention. We go deeper and deeper and deeper in thought about this thing we want. If you think about whatever it is that is tempting you, think about that temptation as a spot on the ground. You see it and you're like, "Ooh, that. I notice that thing."

And then you attack it. Digging deeper, and deeper, and deeper, and deeper. You're more committed each time you go a little deeper. You're more attached to that temptation with every second of thought, with every ounce of attention you direct at that spot. You see the cookie. "Oh, man, that looks good. I bet it's amazing. I want it, I should have it but I said I wouldn't but it's Christmas. I could just have one. I could let it go. I could be super strict tomorrow. What's it going to hurt? What else could I eat? Maybe I could get pizza on the way home but I really want to fit into my jeans at New Year's Eve."

I'm not at all being condescending. I'm as much describing the way you might think about a temptation and the rabbit hole of thought you go down when you're facing temptation as I am rabbit holes I've dug myself. We go deeper and deeper and that temptation grows because of the attention we pour into it. We keep it alive with our thought and attention and we make it grow with our thought and attention.

Think of it as a spark. If the spot on the ground doesn't resonate think of it as a spark. We're pouring gasoline on that spark until it turns into a burning fire. The gasoline is our attention. The more we think about it, the more we try to justify it, the more we want that thing because we make it grow with our thought and attention.

The other accelerant that we're going to try and tackle today is resistance. Fighting against it. It's another form of attention and it makes the temptation grow. Whether you're getting irritated by the desire or you're upset about it, being dramatic in any way. The issue isn't the cookie that you want. That's not the issue. Yeah, it's a cookie. It looks good and it would probably taste good too. That can be your full stop. "Ooh, cookie. That'd probably be good." The end. Next.

Unless you make it larger than life with this combination of attention and resistance. Resistance is the guilt, the drama, the emotion that we bring to the table that makes the cookie more than a cookie. Combine that with all of the thinking, all of the thought, all of the attention. Now it's larger than life. It's so much more than a cookie. It is a crisis.

What I want you to do to make it easier to turn down the temptation without willpower or super human strength is turn down both. Turn down the attention, turn down the resistance. I would imagine that some of you are thinking, "I can't stop thinking about it. What am I supposed to do? How do you stop thinking about this thing that you want?" I don't think you have to stop thinking about it. I didn't suggest you stop thinking about it.

Start with an improvement. Reduce the attention. You can do that. Turn it down. Dial down the intensity of your thoughts. Have a sense of humor and be like, "This is a cookie, it's not a crisis. I'm cool. I'm cool. It's just a single cookie." Dial down the intensity of your thoughts or the amount of time you spend thinking about it. Like, "I've given way too much thought to this cookie. I'm now going to go enjoy the conversation I've been having instead of having this internal dialogue."

You can reduce the intensity of your thoughts or the amount of time you spend thinking about it. How deep you dig that hole. Also, reduce the resistance. Instead of the dramatics of, "This is so hard. What's wrong with me? I said I wasn't going to do this. I said I wasn't going to have the cookies." Just move on. "Oh yeah, I want that thing. Next. That's cool. Whatever. Let's see how it plays out. No worries."

Strip away the emotion and the drama. Catch yourself in a moment where you find yourself being really dramatic about a temptation and be like, "Oh, whoa, it's just food," or "It's just alcohol." Turn down the emotion. Turn the thought from a fire hose onslaught to just a trickle. The more you try to control something, the more it controls you because you're there. You're in it. You're putting all of this attention and emotion and energy into it. Dial that back. Reduce the attention, reduce the resistance.

I'll give you a couple more examples. I said I was recently at a cookie party. There are some many times in the day, in a situation where you can intervene here. It's not just, "Oh well, if I don't reduce the attention or the resistance before I dive into the cookies then it's over and I fail." No, not at all right? You could find yourself seven cookies into the night and beating yourself up and just say, "No more drama about this. That's it. Okay, let's end it. Let's stop it right here. Let's be objective. No more cookies. Period. The end. No more beating myself up. No

more, it's over. I'm not fueling this anymore with drama, with negativity, with thought, with attention."

In the past, I would torture myself if I was tempted by a cookie after making a decision. Let's say I went into it saying, "No cookies for me." Then if I went in thinking, "Oh man, those look so good, those look so good," I would miss out on the event itself because I'd be so caught up in my head debating should I or shouldn't I. Then if I started beating myself up while also convincing myself to screw it and go all in because I already blew the day, it was exhausting.

But I was making it exhausting because I was the one creating all of the theatrics about. It'd say, "Oh, yeah, everybody else is." Then on the other side I'd be thinking, "Yeah, but my goals." Then on the other side, "Well, what's one day you know?" And then eating one cookie would awaken the urge and I would go all in on the emotion.

At the first sign of temptation you can reduce the attention and resistance by just thinking, "Hey, I'm actually not hungry right now so I'll revisit this when I get hungry. The end." Like, "Yeah, I might have a cookie later but right now I'm not hungry so I don't need to do all of these mental gymnastics about it. The end. Not hungry right now. I'll think about it later."

Or, when I think thinking, "Everybody else is having these cookies. Tomorrow I'll be home so I can go back to my normal schedule." I can just think, "You know what, I don't need to debate this or justify it. What anybody else is doing doesn't have anything to do with me. Next. Next. All right, I solved that one. What's next? Right?" Reminding myself too, this is just food. This is not a crisis. This is not a hostage situation. There's no need for debate or negotiation. Move onto the next thing.

Like I said, be present in the conversation you're having or the people that you're with. If you eat 12 cookies and you start thinking, "What is wrong with me? Why don't I have any self-control? I've totally blown it." No drama, no guilt, it's done. You did it. You chose it. The end. No drama. You can reduce the attention by dialing down the intensity of your thoughts or the frequency of your thoughts or the duration of your thoughts. You can reduce the resistance by letting go of the drama. The negativity. The debate.

Catch yourself in these moments of inner dialogue where you've disconnected from what's going on around you and you're in your head over food and tell yourself, "I'm not going to keep fueling this with thought. I've thought enough about it already. I've already made a decision. Next. I'm not going to be so emotional about food. I'm not going to bring my emotion here to food. I'm going

to be objective. I'm not going to get caught up in the theatrics I create in my mind over food."

Attention and resistance. The next time you find yourself facing temptation ask yourself, "Okay, what can I do to reduce the attention here or the resistance here or both?" Then be grateful for those moments of temptation because the only way to make this easier is to practice. The only way to practice it is to face temptation. You don't have to be perfect but how can you reduce the attention or the resistance?

Really looking forward to spending the next now five episodes of 2016 with you. I promise to make them as powerful as I can and I hope you'll keep coming back. If there's anything I can do to support or encourage you, if there's anything you want to hear on the show, let me know because as I always say, "This is our show. It's your show as much as it's my show and I want to do everything I can to support and encourage you." Have a really great day.