

John Macgowan: Hi and welcome to ICI/PRO Podcast #188 this is actually kind of a milestone when I started the Indoor cycle Instructor Podcast you know, my real goal was to trade of way to give voice to you know the fitness professionals in our industry and most specifically national instructors and my interview that is to follow will be the 20th different master instructor who is been on the show over the last three-and-a-half years and to me very exciting. My guest this time is Dr. Joan Kent and Joan is a master instructor with the indoor cycling group of North America supportive live strong fitness and to go along with that she the doctor part, she has her doctorate in psychoactive nutrition and I'm going to let her explain what that means in the interview that follows.



She also has a Masters degree in Exercise Physiology very credentialed very intelligent and I had a lot of fun talking with her. We started off with the idea of talking periodized nutrition as it would apply to a periodized training program, but we got a little side wrecked and what came out of it was some real actionable advice that I think you will be able to carry to your class and potentially help some of your students with a problem that I have. Joan Kent, welcome to the Indoor Cycle Instructor Podcast.

Dr. Joan Kent: Good morning John, thank you very much for having me.

John Macgowan: I'm just excited to have you, anytime I get to have someone who is a doctor. I'm very easily impressed by titles you know, as we talked before offline and where your area of study is really in so much more than just calories in, calories out, can you explain it to everybody you know, what you do.

Dr. Joan Kent: Well, psychoactive nutrition is a study of how foods effect brain chemistry what's true as you just said is that, food is not about calories we tend to look at foods as a collection of nutrients you know, the vitamins and the minerals, fidonutrients for people who pay attention to that sort of thing, but there is a lot more to it, foods are actually psychoactive agents they effect the brain, they can effect mental alertness, clarity or moods or behavior, including eating behaviors and appetite even motivation things like that.

So, some people have cravings you can change that by modifying brain chemistry, people can become addicted to certain foods and all of that is neurochemical or brain chemistry oriented so you can make all of these changes just by adjusting the diet.

John Macgowan: Okay, so I'm sitting here nodding as you are speaking, I have two daughters one of which when she was young, she is in college now, but one of which were you could hand her an ice cream cone so you are stopwatch to 30 seconds and then like a light switch this child would activate. And yet I had people telling me all the time, oh, sugar and that has no effect on children, but the reality is that the things like that really do don't they?

Dr. Joan Kent: Well, they do and some people are more susceptible to the effect, I think when people talk about the effective sugar on kids they usually talking about a hyperactivity

period that occurs after the kid eat sugar and that will happen more so and some children then it will in others, in adults things like that can happen that's not so much of hyperactivity, but there are changes in the brain that occur that make people want to eat those things more.

John Macgowan: I know all about that.

Dr. Joan Kent: Oh, I do too.

John Macgowan: I think we all understand that, but just like they say in AA you know the first step in solving your problem is in maybe you have one, is that makes sense?

Dr. Joan Kent: Yes.

John Macgowan: And in your area of study is that important the people recognize that the food they eat can affect their behavior and how they behave?

Dr. Joan Kent: Yes, that's a really good point I think that a lot of people eat casually in the sense that they think it doesn't make a difference what they have and they do think in terms of the calories in, calories out as long as they are staying within calorie limit, it makes no difference what they are consuming and I happen to disagree. I would actually say that in some respects what they are eating is more important in calories in, calories out.

John Macgowan: Interesting, because calories are the one thing that we can quantify.

Dr. Joan Kent: Yes. But --

John Macgowan: Interesting, okay.

Dr. Joan Kent: Did you want me to say more?

John Macgowan: No, keep going.

Dr. Joan Kent: Okay.

John Macgowan: Yeah, no, I need – everybody needs to know that it's 3:30 in the morning where you are and it is 5 where I am. And I have had probably more coffee than I need this morning already, so don't let me talk over you, please go on.

Dr. Joan Kent: Okay. So, what you say is true calories can be quantified and yet a lot of times how the food effects the brain is more important for people who are trying to control their weight, because if they are eating things that are triggering their appetite more, then they will find themselves over consuming and it has more to do with the brain chemicals that they are triggering then it does with just not knowing how to control, you know, or not knowing how many calories to eat, let me put it that way with not knowing how many calories to eat.

John Macgowan: Do people eat reactively?

Dr. Joan Kent: Some people eat emotionally and some people are more susceptible to doing that than other people, a lot of people will respond to stress by not eating but others will respond to stress by eating, but there also when you talk about eating reactively I think that there can be a reactive response if someone is eating, let's say something that they are addicted to and I'm not talking about "addicted."

I'm talking about in actual physiological, neurochemical addiction and if they consume that it can affect them and make them want to eat more, because of the response called priming and priming has to do with a very specific chemical in the brain called dopamine and there are four dopamine receptors in the brain and the D1 receptor is the one that's responsible for priming what priming is just a little bit makes us want more.

So, let me give you an example, one person might have half a glass of wine shrug their shoulders and they don't care if they have anymore and somebody else might have half a glass of wine and then just keep on going through Christmas and that result – that's the results of priming.

I was never that way with alcohol, but I was definitely that way with sugar, so I could have had like one piece of chocolate and then simply eat my way across America looking for all the chalk that I could find.

John Macgowan: Interesting we're similar. I have a problem at night, I can choose to eat. I mean, I have complete control over my diet until after dinner and then I collapse.

Dr. Joan Kent: We could fix that, well yes, many people do experience that, but yes we can probably fix that.

John Macgowan: Well, I know how we could keep Amy, everybody knows Amy, but I need to keep her from bring home brownie mixes, because after dinner she says John, you know I'm always looking for something sweet so we're always out of chocolate chips, because I have eaten most of them, better I'm downstairs in the cupboards trying to find the new brownie mix that I can probably eat half the dough before I cook it as well, so –

Joan so then, if I'm an instructor and I'm talking about my own personal experience to my class which always seems to work well for me, explain I have this problem needing sugar, won't needing, but wanting sugar right after dinner you know, how do I solve that and then communicate it to my class?

Dr. Joan Kent: There are couple of ways, one, if you are having cravings this is an amazing very simple thing that you can do and it has been around for a long time it came from alcoholism research liquid B Complex and there is a specific brand I don't if you are allowed, you tell me if it's legal to say.

John Macgowan: Go right ahead, we need to know.

Dr. Joan Kent: Okay, Twinlab T-W-I-N-L-A-B, Twinlab SuperB Complex which you can get on Amazon you can get in the whole foods places like that, one spoonful of that can kill a craving and it doesn't do it in a weird way it does it simply by giving the brain the B vitamins that serve as catalysts in the formation of neurochemicals that will stop the cravings when they are proper balance, isn't that cool?

John Macgowan: As soon as I'm done here I'm going to order so, want to try it, because it's you know it totally undermines any of my weight management goals and it's frustrating to me.

Dr. Joan Kent: Right and you are not the only one, so.

John Macgowan: Oh, I know I'm not the only one, I know, so that's the whole point, as I explained to you off air, the purpose of these podcast is to provide something to our listeners that they intern could carry to their classes and affect some positive change. Okay, so that's the answer, the only thing I need to do is get this Super B Complex and life will be good.

Dr. Joan Kent: Well, it would also depend on whether you are eating healthfully the rest of the day, if you are eating junk the rest of the day the liquid B Complex might not work, but I have a feeling, because of who you are and what you do that you are probably eating a good diet most of the time.

John Macgowan: I am, actually I am, right. My wife will kid everybody, John he is Mr. Oatmeal and cottage cheese.

Dr. Joan Kent: There you go.

John Macgowan: Yeah, I know it's really strange because other listeners may recognize this is well, during the day I have almost zero craving for anything you know I eat just to eat, you know what I mean, because I know if I don't I will be hungry you know, or my blood sugar get low, but after dinner then I have cravings.

All right, so let's circle back around with this Joan I started off talking about how you know, we're trying to encourage studios, club, instructors for that matter to get our participants thinking in a multi week program rather than just single random classes. And so, how do we apply or how do we communicate the need to coordinate nutrition along with a multi week program?

Dr. Joan Kent: Well, everybody knows that foods are fuel, they will affect athletic performance and I believe that there are good foods to eat and bad foods to eat if you are planning to perform athletically they certainly will affect our physical energy and for people who are trying to lose weight they can affect body weight and body composition meaning percent of fat, so all of those things are important and I would actually start by telling instructors that it's important to find out who doesn't eat in the class especially if you are teaching early morning class many people will come to the training without having consumed anything you know, they just coming in on empty stomach, because --

John Macgowan: Coffee.

Dr. Joan Kent: Or something like that, exactly, just coffee. And so, that's not really fueling properly before training it would be better if they had some actual food, I'm not saying should never have coffee, I'm just saying that they should probably have some good solid food to come in there and your breakfast of oatmeal and cottage cheese might actually work very well.

John Macgowan: Right if I actually consumed it before the class.

Dr. Joan Kent: Oh, oh.

John Macgowan: Yeah, so I am as guilty as the next, well you know, again since I have no cravings for food especially in the morning I have no desire, I know if I'm going to life after my class, I'll force myself to non or half a power bar on the way to the club or something to that affect.

Dr. Joan Kent: Right.

John Macgowan: What would you recommend, if I was going to be the instructor say, please eat this or if I was going to provide it as the instructor for my class when they got there as an example you know, what would you recommend?

Dr. Joan Kent: I don't know about providing it, but I think I'm not kidding when I say that a breakfast that includes oatmeal you could open up the refrigerator and take out some chicken from last night's dinner if that sounds too weird for some people early in the morning they could add a little bit of protein powder to the oatmeal and then you want to add maybe a little bit of unsaturated fat say some almond butter, put some walnuts in the oatmeal or maybe put a little bit of almond butter on top of the oatmeal and some people go eww, but what's the difference between doing that when you think about it and putting some almond butter on top of – piece of bread.

Now speaking of that that could be an alternative if somebody doesn't want to cook oatmeal they could have a good slice of wholegrain bread and put some – in that case I would probably put something like peanut butter, natural peanut butter. None of these things is absolutely perfect, but I would say these are quick and easy and oat meal is something that you can cook in the microwave in literally two minutes you know, so it's very simple.

John Macgowan: In a way everything gets niche down, you know there is a product for every little tiny category, but as far as I know, and here is a product idea if you are in the business, there is no first meal little power bar that would be exactly what you should eat on the way to the club, just specifically for that purpose or maybe there is and I'm missing it.

Dr. Joan Kent: I haven't come across one, I find that a lot of them no matter what the ratios are really have a bad assortment of nutrients in it and I do understand the convenience you know the whole idea of the grab and go and I do, I get that I really get that that's what people want to do, because it's easy.

But I think part of the problem is timing that people will get up they don't want to get up any earlier then they are already getting up and they get up and start doing things maybe they are walking the dog or putting their gym bag together or checking to Facebook page or whatever it's going on they don't necessarily think about food until the last minute.

And then, they are stuck with this grab and go and of course then they are thinking in terms the convenience you know the problem with bars is that most of the carbohydrates come from sugar that's not necessarily a good carbohydrate. The protein comes from if it does come from let's say something like soya, it's soya that has been exposed to such radically

high temperatures and in some cases several times over so that the protein is really of almost no benefit anymore.

So, this is not really the best way to go you know, what I would suggest is something that I heard when I was doing some continuing education you know, I have to take all those stuff as well and a guy whose PhD was in sport nutrition actually said get up and you know use the bathroom as usual and then immediately go into the kitchen and eat and that's not the direction that most people go, but if you do it that way suddenly you find more options than if you have to just run out the door and eat something that's convenient that way.

John Macgowan: So, your recommendation is never anything readymade.

Dr. Joan Kent: I haven't found anything yet if you can come up with something that you think is great then let me know, because people are always asking for that but I haven't found anything yet, so that's why the oatmeal breakfast or even the whole grain with some peanut butter on it would be a better option.

John Macgowan: Or we start a business maybe.

Dr. Joan Kent: That's right.

John Macgowan: There is probably a reason that such a thing doesn't exist because it would be so perishable or --

Dr. Joan Kent: Yes, I think --

John Macgowan: Expensive and make nobody would buy it.

Dr. Joan Kent: Yeah, I think the perishable aspect of it is really true, yeah.

John Macgowan: Joan, I'm sitting in front of my class and I'm trying to encourage them, is there -- you know, to eat in the morning before they come and I'll look you know, these are typically people who are 40, 50 years old at least or I eat or I teach when yet I don't know that that's not common for just about everybody, they have very ingrained habits, is there anything that we can do or say to help them kind of unlearn those things?

Dr. Joan Kent: You have to acknowledge that it is difficult to change food habits, because many of them are lifelong and if you have I think the older people get the more ingrained habits are, but if you point out they will be able to train harder especially thinking about weight loss maybe they came in with no food just because they didn't want to eat you know, because they thought it would help them lose weight, but if you point out that it revs up the metabolism to lose weight.

And then, they will also be able to train harder when they are fueled properly and that will enable them to burn more calories still, maybe that would entice them if they think in terms of not using the bodies reserves and breaking down their muscle protein which is always going to slowdown metabolism knowing that they will perform better and keep everything working it optimal levels if they don't starve themselves and have to work on reserve energy only that might help them, it's difficult to find the thing for each person.

Sometimes you need to talk to people individually and of course that's not going to be possible when you are sitting on a bike in front of the class, so you need to do just make some general state and maybe make a couple of different ones hoping that you will tap into the need of somebody there and then the other statement you might well, tap into somebody else's need and trigger them to eat basically you could say just give me something to work with.

John Macgowan: If we could setup a texting service that would text people at exact right time --

Dr. Joan Kent: Eat now.

John Macgowan: Eat now, -- I'm not kidding.

Dr. Joan Kent: You know, so this is what Oprah has you know, she is got people running after her ripping the chocolate chip cookies out of her mouth telling her to do sit ups and then saying you have to eat right and this is what you should eat, because I made it for you, if we have that we would be all perfect and you know everything would be great.

John Macgowan: Our own littler personal, forgive me for saying it, mother to --

Dr. Joan Kent: Right.

John Macgowan: Stand over us, yes, well, Joan this is been interesting and my fault that it was somewhat rambling, but at the same time I think people are going to be able to pull some out of this and my promise is that the next time have you on and you are scheduled to be on here in the near future we will talk about things that are much more specific to and actionable by our instructors, so Joan Kent -- Dr. Joan Kent, thank you for joining us today.

Dr. Joan Kent: John, thank you very much, I had a lot of fun.