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Setting Yourself Up for Success and My Sweet Little Secret

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I say it all the time: ***Set yourself up for success.*** Being well prepared doesn't always mean we will follow through, but at least we've set ourselves up for making the healthy choices we want to make in the thick of a busy week.

Speaking of the choices we *'want to make'*, I will be the first to admit I'm taunted in the evenings with indulging past what pleases my more typical healthy side! The girls go to bed, the house gets quiet and I listen the lonely silence of single parenting. I feel the lost love and lack of companionship….yes, still. And, if it's God's will, maybe I always will.

But, somehow my funny little mind translates that into my sweet little secret! It's in those quiet moments when sweets call my name, *'Katie….come get us….we'll sooth your senses while we satisfy your sweet tooth!'*

As if Scripture or something more soul satisfying wouldn't be a better fit for my mind's wandering and

my body's weariness. Instead, though, I succumb to my sweet tooth at that late, vulnerable time of day. Like I always say, this morning girl turns into a pumpkin at about eight o'clock....and pumpkins don't make great decisions when sweet and spice tempt their flesh!

Anyway, now that I've revealed my seriously sweet eating weakness, I want you to know how *setting myself up for success* has somewhat patched this pumpkin-head's cracks. Rather than restrict myself completely, I've decided to indulge myself a little by keeping sensible sweets on hand that I don't mind relishing in during evening hours. Sometimes it's a dash of dark chocolate melted into natural peanut butter (yeah, friends, slow and straight off a spoon is the right way to eat it!). Other times I enjoy a whole grain English muffin or a premade baked good from my freezer with a thin layer of real butter adorned with a touch of cinnamon. My sorta non-sweet craving is pan-popped popcorn in coconut oil, which you might think isn't so bad until you see how much I can polish off all alone on the couch! The sweet's added in when I sprinkle a few dark chocolate chips in the bowl to do the sweet--salty trick.

The point is, instead of fretting and overflowing with frustration over my desires to indulge, ***I've started setting myself up for success through making something more sensible accessible and, more importantly, permissible***. I'm reconciling with my sweet tooth in a way that doesn't compromise my health. At least most the time!

I've written before about how I arrived at a healthier mindset about sweet moderation here [1], but this post is about sweet success through proper preparation. And that's just what I want you to consider: **Prepare so your plans to make good choices are possible.** And sometimes that means properly planning to indulge a little. We only live once, afterall!

Since preparation in the kitchen works so well for me, I started doing it with my girls too. It's been an incredibly helpful habit! We have healthy foods on hand and even in a pinch, we can eat well. Now, as the school year approaches, we've been making lists and stocking the freezer with foods to snack on that *seem like* mainstream 'kid-food' but instead are my version of real foods. Just like I crave a treat in the evening, I completely understand why my girls want foods that please their palates and also don't seem so strange to their school friends.

By pre-making muffins [2], granola bars [3], waffles [4], breakfast bars [5] and even crackers [6], we're getting ready for packing school lunches and snacks-on-the-go for trips to ballet or errands after school. And because the girls have a hand [7] in the pouring, mixing and rolling dough, they are even more likely to enjoy the rewards of their hard work.

It's a win-win! We have fun as a family prepping in the kitchen, they learn how to eat well and we're all set up for success! Here's a post on just that. [7]

The delicious pictured cookies, these gluten free granola bars [3] and some easy, cheesy grain-free crackers [8] (Member recipe post) [8] were our most recent school year preparations....and both serious successes! I even had to tear myself away from the baked batch and put them in the basement freezer so I'd stop munching!

Be sure to check out all the links in this post for recipes we make and freeze. With a little extra effort the girls will be lunching and snacking much better than the processed foods from a box this year!

By the way, I often double or triple recipes for freezing. As long as I have the ingredients out, why not?

I'd love to hear how you prep in the kitchen to set yourself up for success....



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