**7th February 2020 Friday 9am Focus Group #FG101-104**

Moderator: Okay? So um, can everyone introduce yourself with your name? And your favourite dessert.

FG101: I’m [participant name]? (pause) not really think I have a favourite dessert? Maybe Christmas pudding.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG102: I’m [participant name] um, similar, similar to you I don’t know if I have favourite. (pause) I- probably is it called affagato? Affogato? You know the Italian (pause) bit of ice-cream, um

Moderator: On coffee?

FG102: On coffee, amaretto as well, yeah. So that’s probably (pause) my favourite?

FG103: Um I’m [participant name]? And again, I don’t have a favourite dessert

(General laughter)

FG103: And, I would say that it depends on the day? Sometimes I just (pause) I’d like to have something and (pause) on the other day, something completely different? But if I had to choose, uh, one single thing, I think that chocolate ice-cream or something like that?

Moderator: Mm

FG104: Um I’m [participant name] and I have a few

(General laughter)

FG104: Um, I really love banoffee pie?

Moderator: Mm  
FG104: Um, Eton Mess? Um, and really like um raspberry desserts? Yeah fruit, fruit, um fruit type of desserts (laughs)

Moderator: What’s Eton Mess?

FG104: Eton Mess it’s like um, is it meringue?

FG102: Mm

FG104: It’s cold?

Moderator: Okay

FG104: Um, but if, um, (pause) (clicks tongue) how do I describe it? Um, it’s like a (pause) not like a sorbet but like a (pause) what’s the texture? It’s difficult to exp-

Moderator Two: It’s like a pavlova but it’s all crushed, all crushed up, yeah (laughs) cream and meringue and fruit and yeah.

(General murmurs mm yeah, okay right, that’s the one; nodding)

Moderator: So um, can you remember a most recent time that you have a memorable dessert? (pause) tha- it had- doesn’t have to be a favourite, but memorable one.

FG103: What do you mean by memorable? Like?

Moderator: You think of immediately when I asked you the question

FG103: Okay

Moderator: Like uh, a time when I ate (pause) raspberry pie, in a certain situation?

FG103: Okay?

FG101: Well I remember, just because I made it and it was quite nice. (pause) Um Plum Duff! I made Plum Duff, a steamed pudding last year for Christmas. And uh, (pause) that was quite nice! And that’s why I remember it particularly cause I made it and then it takes a couple of hours to make it. (pause) Um, yeah, there you are.

FG104: I don’t bake at all? Um, lime cheesecake? That I bought. Yeah the last thing I- I bought in the shop? It’s tasty

(General laughter)

FG103: Right, so for me it was (pause) Christmas? Uh, my friend actually, (pause) has her own company and she bakes birthday cakes and stuff like that. And she prepared a cake for me? Uh (pause) and it was memorable because it kind of took me back to my childhood? Because, when I was, younger, my grandma always baked birthday cakes uh for us, so it was kind of, uh, a reminder of um, nice parts. (laughs)

FG102: Mine is probably, having, cake and cream and ice-cream altogether at um, my nan’s at Sunday dinner. I don’t normally, I don’t normally like to have a dessert? Th-that everyone else is having? Um, (pause) cause, she does things that are, you know, not particularly my favourite but she makes really good coconut cake? And so when I go home and (pause) back to m-my nan’s, if there’s coconut cake I’ll say yeah I’ll have some of that for dessert instead. So that’s meant to be for later on in the evening but I’ll have it for dessert (pause) with cream and ice-cream it’s quite good?

(General laughter)

FG102: Calorific?

(General laughter)

FG101: So now I-I remember, it was a Christmas pudding I made as oppose to steamed (pause) pudding. It was a few year-years ago. And I (pause) well yeah you make it in a ball shape usually. And I didn’t tie the (pause) the string tight enough? And then you leave it to steam on for a while and when I came back, it (laughs) it was completely flat! But it was still just was tasty and lovely! But it was just (laughs) pancake shaped puddin- pudding

(General laughter)

Moderator: (In overlap) A different kind of pudding

FG102: (In overlap) A memorable dessert   
FG101: Sorry?

FG102: A memorable dessert!

FG101: it was yeah, no (laughs) That was fifteen years ago that (inaudible) I remember all that

(General laughter)

Moderator: So what comes to your mind immediately when I ask you about sweet food or dessert? Do you think of home, or? What comes to your mind immediately?

FG104: Marks and Spencer’s

(General laughter)

FG101: Marks and Spencer’s

FG104: Yup! (laughs) Beautiful desserts (laughs)

Moderator: Anything else comes to mind?

FG101: Hmm (long pause) I don’t really I mean I do eat (pause) sweet food but I don’t I don’t think I eat (pause) loads.

Moderator: Mm

FG101: And so if somebody was to say what comes to your mind as you just did (pause) n-nothing really comes, comes to my mind (pause) cause I’m not always thinking when’s my next, cake coming or something (pause) so it’s not, really I don’t really have a (pause) it doesn’t mean I don’t enjoy it sometimes when I have it but.

FG102: Unnecessary calories

FG104: (Laughs)

FG103: And I would say special occasion?

Elliot: Mm!

FG103: Cause I- I do eat sweets like cookies and stuff but I don’t treat as dessert? Rather like a snack or something like that? You know, something (pause) to have. (pause) But, but, a dessert it-it-it’s like for me it’s like something special? Something (pause) you know you need to make some more effort –

FG102: (In overlap) Mm

FG103: To make it, really? So it’s like birthday party or y’know some family re-reunion whatever (laughs) so-some kind of special that –

FG101: (in overlap) Yeah maybe it sounds a bit more, you don’t buy a dessert and it-it’s sounds as if you it’s a more formal setting, where you’ll be having your courses and then followed by a dessert. So (pause) if you have a couple of biscuits after you’ve (pause) is that really dessert? It’s just what you do! It’s a quick snack but it doesn’t really sound like a sort of meaning a dessert I suppose yeah

(FG103 and FG102 agreeing with mm mm yeah mm; nodding)

FG102: Yeah, some people go to (pause) you got quite a lot of these restaurants now is it Creams?

FG101: Where? Oh okay.

FG102: Where it’s just the whole restaurant of desserts. (pause) and waffles and, ad that type of thing that it’s. (pause) I would never go to a restaurant (pause) purely to get dessert. I would always have savoury stuff and then (pause) if I wanted something sweet, like you say, more an a (pause) sort of a, formal settin’ then, then I’ll have dessert on particular occasion, as oppose to, to just

(FG103 murmurs mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: Every day

FG102: Yeah, yeah

FG104: Or like cake, people usually go for cake and coffee don’t they? Coffee and cake, really. (pause) Yeah, mm.

(FG102 murmurs mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: So um, if you have to choose, a favourite type of drink, what would it be and why?

FG102: Alcoholic? Or?

(General laughter)

FG104: Yeah, loads of calories in that! (laugh)

Moderator: You can choose that? Yeah. Things like juice (pause) or

FG104: (In overlap) Oooh! (laughs) No

FG101: Tea

Moderator: Diet drinks or anything. Alcohol is fine

FG102: (laughs) You made me sound like

(General laughter)

FG102: I’m trying to think!

FG101: Cup of tea. (pause) Nothing else meets up to a cup of tea. I like beer, I like juice, and all about that. If it was on a desert island and th-that was a sort of, you know, the only drink

FG104: You just have one, yeah

FG101: If you have one, it would be a cup of tea! Without sugar by the way

(General murmurs of mm)

Moderator: Ohh (laughs)

FG104: For me it would be coconut milk latte? No sugar. (pause) Yeah gotta have that every day, first thing when I get up

FG102: Mm

Moderator: Oh

FG103: For me, I guess it would be (pause) tea? (pause) Cause I drink tea (pause) all the time (laughs) I wouldn’t say it is my favourite, it’s just something that I drink (pause) throughout the day. Uh (pause) in terms of (pause) taste or, being favourite, maybe orange juice? Something like that?

Moderator: Mm

FG101: How many cups of tea, do you (pause) or is that? Uh

FG103: (sigh) Uh

FG102: (In overlap) Personal question?

FG103: (In overlap) Six, seven?

(General laughter)

FG103: Like six or seven a day? I think?But I-I drink, green tea. Uh, and without sugar (laughs)

FG102: Oh, um (pause) I quite like, elderflower, is it Pressé? Prosse?

FG104: Mm

FG102: Yeah? I find it (pause) if I’m really thirsty and, don’t want water?  
Moderator: Mm

FG103: Mm

FG102: I think that’s quite refreshing and, yeah nice to drink not too (pause) sweet dare I say it!

(General laughter)

FG102: Um, yeah that’s (pause) what I like

FG103: Yeah and I-I-I also drink like cold infusions? Uh, so I (pause) first time I-I drank i-it was like a year ago? Cause I-I have never, uh before I-I had never uh  
Moderator: Used it?

FG103: Used that. Uh but I do drink cold infusions when I’m in, my volleyball training or something? Cause this is better that water?

FG104: What is it?  
FG103: Uh cold infusion?

FG104: Wh-what is it?  
FG103: Uh, it’s like, like tea? But you don’t need to (pause) have

Moderator: Hot water

FG103: Have hot water, is just with cold water (In overlap) and it’s usually like fruity (pause) uh, some herbs maybe, but maybe fruity

FG104: (In overlap) Okay

Moderator: Mm

FG104: Like ice tea but with herbs instead. Type of thing, (In overlap) and fruit.

FG103: (In overlap) I think it’s m-mainly based on hibiscus?

FG104: Oh, okay, hibiscus tea, yeah

FG103: A-and then some (pause) fruits uh  
FG102: Do you know what I thought you meant when you said that! (pause) You know those things when you get when you have a cold! The blackcurrant thing

Moderator Two: (laughs)

FG102: With para- paracetamol (laughs)

FG104: oh Lemsip… Lemsip!

FG102: (laughs) Cold, cold infusions!

FG103: oh no no no no no no no

(General laughter)

FG102: Yeah! (laughs)

FG103: oh (pause) no no no no no. it wasn’t wh-what I meant

FG102: So it’s an actual drink (in overlap) yeah (laughs)

FG103: (In overlap) Yes, it’s just like, y-you got like tea bags. You just use cold water to, to make them, rather than hot water

FG102: Mm (pause) right, right. So (in overlap) it’s cold, the temperature (laughs)

FG103: (In overlap) so it’s not like, no-not yeah, not the illness, yeah. Just

(General laughter)

FG104: Do they have to be a special tea bags that you can use with cold water or could you use any tea bags with cold water?

FG103: I guess you could any!

FG104: Okay

FG103: I-I-I guess if you, if you have like black tea or green tea, you could do it with cold water as well? Is just kind of, you know, marketing stuff (laughs) Um, but if-if you go to, to a shop, y-you can see cold infusion stuff

Danilea: Oh okay, cool

FG103: Uh (pause) and the only difference I can, I can tell is that, they have more fruits. Like they’re more fruity (pause) uh yeah

Moderator: (In overlap) I actually have it here, it’s like a tea bag

FG104: Oh okay!

FG103: So th-that it-it loos exactly like, usual teabag

FG104: it’s just like a flavouring for the, for the water I suppose? Yeah

(FG103 and Moderator agreeing with yeah yeah yeah; nodding)

FG103: And it’s not too sweet, it’s, it’s quite refreshing so

FG102: It sounds quite nice!

(General mumuring of mm yeah; nodding)

Moderator: So it-it appears that you don’t, uh you don’t drink with su- added sugar?

FG103: Mm

Moderator: So but if you have to choose, between sugar and sweetene, do you usually consume (pause) either? Or? Which would you pick?

FG101: Well I don’t pick either!

FG104: Mm  
FG103: Yeah. I don’t use, (in overlap) sugar neither sweetener

FG104: (In overlap) If I had to, I’d use brown sugar. I don’t like sweeteners and, diet- wh-what they put in diet drinks either. I think it’s a bit of chemicals? That they put in there? So I’m not a fan? I go with natural, most natural thing?

FG103: Yeah and, th-the only, the only time I actually use sugar in drinks is like, if I have an, an espresso? And then I use like, brown sugar or something like that. But, you know, not sweeteners definitely not

FG104: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG102: Do you mean for hot drinks?

Moderator: For any food or drinks

FG102: So if you say (pause) oh cause I-I thought you meant, as well, say diet drinks and, so (pause) can they be sweeteners?

Moderator: Yup

Elliot: So (pause) will I go (pause) normal coke or diet coke?  
Moderator: Yeah

FG102: Yeah, um (pause) think it depends on my mood? And, what the drink is? I don’t know.

Moderator: So your mood will help you to decide whether you choose the sugar option or the (in overlap) sweetener option?  
FG102: (In overlap) yeah um, maybe what I’ve read recently.

FG103: (laughs)

FG102: And the, other things that (pause) I guess yeah

Moderator: So what factors will drive you to choose one over another? (pause) Just now you mentioned about chemicals?

FG104: Yup

Moderator: So, are you concerned about the safety? Or the (in overlap) health factors?

FG104: (In overlap) Just, not really good for your body. I think we intake so many chemicals you know, everywhere. Processed foods, all sorts of things, so (pause) I guess just bein’ aware of that, that just because it says there’s no sugar, there’s something else in there instead. (laughs) Um so I think yeah it’s being aware of what’s actually in our food, and in our drinks? really? Um (pause) yeah so, but I would go with diet coke if I’m drinking alcohol.

Moderator: Mm

FG104: Uh but you know, like a mixer. Because otherwise, yeah. (pause) Can have few of those and then (laughs) yeah it’s dangerous game cause is the calories again. (In overlap) Um

FG102: (In overlap) Yeah it’s just, having more excessive amounts may- (in overlap) maybe

FG104: (In overlap) that’s that’s it (laughs) yeah yeah yeah no, by all means

Moderator Two: (laughs)

FG102: (laughs)

FG104: (laughs) Yeah. But if I was just to, I don’t drink soft drinks anyway, cause they full of sugar. Uh but if I was to, have one, uh bit of full fat coke or lemonade or something

Moderator: Mm

FG102: (In overlap) I mean—

FG104: (In overlap) Same with yogurts. Sorry?

FG102: Yeah no I was, I was gonna say (pause) Similarly, if I want uh with I think we had this conversation before if-if I really want it, If I don’t, I mostly drink water anyway. So if I was gonna have a fizzy drink, it would probably be (pause) the actual thing?

FG103: Mm

FG102: Um, but maybe, on an occasion where, I don’t know, two weeks before I was goin’ on a holiday, I might choose the, I probably would choose the diet version

(General laughter)

FG102: I saw a- I-, do you know, do you know why! I saw video, on I think it was Facebook (pause) that showed someone, fryin’ off uh, or boiling out coke, diet coke and coke zero? Has anyone seen it?   
FG104: Nope

(General shaking of heads)

FG101: (In overlap) The coin dropped into it or something?  
FG102: (In overlap) You know – (pause) No! No! They-they just, they get a fryin’ pan, and they just (pause) boil it for ages (pause) and (pause) the, the normal coke, just turns to, pure syrup (pause) yeah and then, the diet coke and the coke zero (pause) just goes to nothing. Um, I don’t know, how, real it was? But (pause) Yeah. I-I saw this (inaudible)

FG104: Mm (pause) The same with the other stuff they do have loads of options like for yogurts, zero fat or fat-free same like um

(FG103 agreeing with yeah yeah throughout; nodding)

FG102: And then they put loads of sugar in it

(FG103 agreeing with yeah yeah throughout; nodding)

FG104: Yeah. (pause) Um, what like potato salads or coleslaw or you know you have options now of many, many things (pause) to have fat-free. Yeah even, like ready meals and stuff

Moderator: Mm, so do you think there’s any advantages or disadvantages to consuming (pause) using sugar in your food and drinks?

FG104: I think anything in moderation (pause) is, is fine

FG101: As far as I (pause) understand it uh (pause) don’t think there’s any much benefit in taking much I mean (pause) that’s not my area of expertise but what I’ve read is sort of uh (pause) yes so yo-you can get sugar you get like let’s say you need uh, a a boost for, the energy boost you can get but you can get it in other ways but (pause) uh sort of nutritionally as far as I understand there’s not much benefit to (pause) unlike sh- salt, where people need, a little bit of salt in their diet

(FG103 agreeing with mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG101: I’m not sure that you actually need (pause) any sugar at all. And I-I and I might be wrong but I, that’s, I think that’s, possibly the difference between those two. Th-the classic salt and sugar type thing. Um (pause) so.

Moderator: Mm

FG101: Possibly not?  
FG102: Don’t- (pause) carbs, or any, sort of carbs, um, like brown rice, potato, sweet potato, it still get broken down in the same way as (pause) as, a- and essentially end up, um, turning to sugar anyway it’s just more, sugar is fast (pause) um (pause) and works straight away is-is that, is that right you’re more the expert? (In overlap) In, y’know, um

FG104: (In overlap) I think there’s a lot of natural sugar in, in our diet anyway like uh, in fruit, loads of natural sugar, already. And like you say other foods as well

(FG103 and FG102 agreeing with yeah yeah mm mm throughout; nodding)

FG102: Th-the point that I was more leading to was (pause) say for me (pause) say sometimes before I go to the gym I want, sort of a quick source of energy (pause) don’t know might have a banana or some-sometimes I’ll even keep a carton of, of fresh orange juice in the, in the fridge and I have that sometimes just cause it’s, quick easy to drink and I know it might give me a bit of a boost cause I prefer not to have, y-you can get these pre-workouts and stuff but it’s, got loads of chemicals in

FG103: Mm!

FG102: Um, but yeah I don’t really like, like going for that so I’ll singly for something like orange juice and, and (pause) one of those strange fluorescent artificial

FG104: (laughs)

Moderator Two: (laughs)

FG101: Sunset (pause) sunset orange

FG104: (laughs)

FG103: (laughs)  
FG102: Well, uh yeah (laughs) Not, not quite that, but but yeah. Yeah, fresh orange juice, as opposed to, to

FG104: Mm

FG101: Sunny delight

FG102: Well, yeah (laughs)

Moderator: Ha-have you guys thought of reducing your sugar intake?

FG103: Mm (pause) I-I used to, eat a lot of sweets. Like, I-I think when I was like fifteen or maybe seventeen (pause) I (pause) (sigh) there were days that I, would choose a chocolate bar over a dinner. (Pause) But then (pause) well I thought a lot about, my diet and, and stuff, um, (pause) I’d say, at that time I-I (sigh) I was (pause) not overweight but just kind of, you know, plump. So I thought about uh, but at the same time, I-I was doing a lot of sports? Uh so I (pause) try to kind of keep it balanced? But as I said the word there is that, I-I ate like, the whole chocolate bar. Uh, instead of something pretty, proper, food. Uh

FG102: I’m glad you’re one of those people (laughs)

FG103: (laughs) A-a-at some point, just, I would say that my taste changed? And I just don’t need sweets. Not not so many. Uh not not not not as much, (pause) uh sugar, sweet things, uh as I used to? So now I prefer (pause) I don’t know the English word but th-, but not not not sweet foods

(General laughter)

FG101: Savoury

FG103: Savoury, okay. (pause) Yup, so it’s just taste preferences that, changed. (laughs)

FG102: Um, I’m the same, I, have um (pause) but the point I was making I’ll, only have an entire, huge bar of (in overlap) of chocolate if I was gonna have chocolate I can never have just, you know

FG103: (In overlap) Yeah (pause) just two (laughs)

FG102: Yeah and then put it back in the fridge or wherever. Um, if I’ve got something sweet in the house (pause) I’ll eat it and that’s possibly why I don’t buy, that sort of thing from (pause) from the supermar- if I want something sweet, I’ll get it. So I never really (pause) m-my mom’s always been sort of health, conscious so we (pause) it’s probably bad on a Sunday night we used stop off at this local shop, and just get so much

(FG103 agreeing with mm mm throughout; nodding)

FG103: (laughs)

FG102: So many sweets and (pause) and, bad things but

Moderator Two: (Laughs)

FG102: Yeah and just our day to, to have that and that was after we’d, been on, been round to my grandparent’s for Sunday dinner so it was, sort of like our, cheat day y’know?

(General murmurs of mm)

FG102: But (pause) yeah I don’t do that, too often

FG101: You can be too (pause) (inaudible – far in it?) well I think you can be too worried about these things as well

FG103: Mm!

FG101: Like I don’t think it’s necessary in this case but I mean, personally, yeah I-I’d I have some biscuits, I’d chocolate here and there, and (pause) um but there are things so (pause) there are- so what I find myself, doing (pause) is, a chocolate bar is a chocolate bar and, you can get one without sugar if you want, but I don’t go around looking for that particularly. (pause) Uh so when I have one I have one. So there are things that generally contain (pause) that or biscuits y-you know that expect it to contain a certain amount of sugar or you as I said, you could get ones without the sugar. Um (pause) so when I have those, I’m not think- particularly thinking (pause) how much sugar is in it. But there are other things, so for example, I won’t (pause) I won’t uh (pause) add sugar to stuff so I don’t add sugar to stuff I don’t add sugar in teas and I do bake (pause) fairly frequently. And I, or make stuff. And I never add sugar to it, ever. And I’d look at the recipes, and I, and I find it really (pause) sort of bizarre, you look at a recipe for something like those ones I talked about earlier the steamed puddings or something (pause) and it, and just a normal recipe that I make it, and it says put this amount of sugar in it. (pause) And, there’s there’s, something like this steamed pudding is full of fruit anyway cause you putting loads of like, raisins and sultans in it. And then they’re telling you to put, half a ton of sugar in it as well and I, just don’t bother any sugar in it, at all! I don’t put any sugar in it. (pause) Cause it’s got loads of fruit, bits in it, and it comes out really nice! So (pause) and, if I buy something like a tin of baked beans or whatever, or stuff (pause) if-if it’s fresh produce then that’s a different matter, but if you buying some, tins of stuff, then (pause) I will have a look and just see, you know what’s the sort of (pause) you know, content (pause) and I will pro-probably buy one that’s got less (pause) in it. So I won’t (pause) I’ll have a chocolate bar here and there (pause) but at the same time, I-I’ll so I’m not that worried about other, at all, so I do make those sort of differences. (inaudible) yeah

Moderator: How bout you?

FG104: Um I’m kind of similar to [participant name] uh when I was younger in my teenage years um (pause) I would get money for lunches and I would (laughs) keep the money and um, not go for lunch? (laughs) And have um something sweet instead like a chocolate bar whatever it was. Um, so I think also (pause) embeddin’ and implementin’ education that type of education into schools would be really, helpful cause, back then, there was nothing, nothing like that, say you don’t even think about the implication of it actually w-what you doin’, to your body? Um, but (pause) you know, as I got older, my you know, my -my taste changed and I don’t crave sweets as much.

(FG103 agreeing murmurs mm yeah throughout; nodding)

FG104: Um and I-I guess a bit more aware but I-I never really oh I’m not going to have that because that’s going to affect my weight. If I, want it, I will have it. (pause) Yeah. (pause) So I don’t um, sometimes when I, perhaps um will think oh no that’s too much cause that’s um going overboard but I will have a little bit. I think with moderation, um it’s it’s fine. (pause) Yeah. Um but there is a lot of temptation around us all the time everywhere um and I guess, it’s um it’s just making small adjustments and, and maybe different choices rather have a piece of fruit, um instead of a biscuit or, something like that

(Moderator murmurs mm mm mm mm throughout; nodding)

FG102: (In overlap) I –

Moderator: (In overlap) So are you – sorry

FG102: I was, I was just gonna say, I-I mean (pause) to me (pause) I put, the likes of, tomato ketchup, barbecue sauce, um, excessive amounts of, tomato puree and, that type of thing in I don’t know bolognese or, or whatever I kind of (pause) put it all under the same umbrella? So (pause) when I’m, being mindful of, sugar, I’m also being mindful of, things like tomato, sauce, and any (pause) other type of sort of processed foods, that might contain, extra sort of (pause) um (pause) enhanced sweetness if you I don’t know if that’s the correct term. Um, sugar as opposed to sort of like natural, sweetness. Um (pause) I think that’s something, something I- I’m sometimes careful of as well. Well I don’t know if that, that was necessarily relevant to that.

(FG104 and Moderator agreeing and murmurs mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: yeah, it is

(General laughter)

Moderator: Are you aware of the health reasons to cut down on sugar?

FG101: Well uh, a number of them I suppose, there’s a number of them, I’ll imagine.

FG104: (In overlap) Yes? (laughs)

Moderator: Such as?

FG103: (laughs)

FG101: Gout? You could, people still get – (in overlap) (inaudible) there you are! It’s not just a eighteen century issue

FG102: (In overlap) My grandma has got gout (pause) yeah

FG104: (In overlap) What is that?

FG103: (In overlap) It’s like a

Moderator Two: (laughs) Yeah

FG104: What is gout?

FG101: Is (pause) crystals form in uh in the blood vessels uh, extremely painful

FG104: Okay so it’s diff- (in overlap) different to cholesterol

FG101: (In overlap) Partly related to diet. Uh, yeah I’m –

FG104: Or is it same kind of

FG101: Um, I’m not a medical man but it is related to crystals forming (in overlap) A-and at the end, at the extremities

FG104: (In overlap) Oh okay

FG103: Mm

FG104: Mm yeah

FG101: Um, it was for I mean, people get it and I know I said that and as a bit of a, but people get it now, as you said, but it-it’s classically sort of when people think of e-eighteen century because loads of people were suffering and you see pictures of people sitting up in chairs and uh (pause) and uh bad feet uh bound or whatever, but it’s very painful probably your grandma will know all that (in overlap) and those other things

FG102: (In overlap) Mm I think it’s got, it’s got these foot (inaudible) y’know

(General agreement and murmurs of mm yeah yeah; nodding)

FG101: And uh diabetes as well I guess

FG104: Yeah, weight gain (pause) which leads to all sorts of other things (pause) health problems

Moderator: Mm. (pause) Tooth decay and loss?

(General agreement with oh yeah yeah; nodding)

FG102: Spikes insulin levels?

Moderator: Sorry?

FG102: Spikes insulin levels?

FG103: Yeah

Moderator: Mm, will you cut down on sugar consumption based on these health reasons?

FG103: I don’t

FG102: Based on the?  
Moderator: The health reasons that we listed, which –

FG103: (In overlap) Did we or would we?

FG102: (In overlap) Oh the –

Moderator: Will you- would you?

FG103: Oh. No. (pause) Well I think (pause) to some extent, I-I try to, when I have this, sugar problem let’s say. Uh, cause I knew it-it was not healthy. So (pause) I thought (pause) that it would be better to (pause) get less sugar (pause) or, I-I would choose (pause) like less sugary yogurts or something like that uh, because (pause) well I think mainly, because of the, the, weight issues? Um (pause) and nowadays (pause) well I am aware of (pause) like sugar-related issues health issues. Um but I don’t think I eat so much sugar that I should (pause) cut it down? Uh I would say that nowadays, my (sigh) food, um (pause) i-if I was to change, anything, it would be (pause) related to fat rather than sugar? (pause) I think?

FG101: Well I think I, (pause) well I gave a few examples earlier but I mean other it’s, like say for example mues, I-I usually eat muesli or porridge. Now and it-it’s always, non-sugar muesli or that’s what I buy.

FG103: Mm

FG101: Non sugar and I don’t add sugar into those things and (pause) apart from the occasional havin’ a biscuit here and there and a chocolat- the other things I’m doing is already

Moderator: Mm

FG101: So, I don’t think (pause) I would think oh I really got to cut down or not, not really. Because I can have, pretty much, you know  
Moderator: Already

FG101: Well- yeah, I eat I eat a lot of fruit. Because fruit contains sugar in that, as well if you drink fruit juice then you got potential with uh, tooth decay and things as well. So it’s not just a, an issue of processed sugar or whatever. You (pause) um but um (pause) but overall, I don’t think I-I, I would feel a need to, think oh I really need to cut down on it

FG103: Yeah

FG102: That’s it I think that’s when it starts become, becoming sort of problematic when you start restricting yourself and things. I think that’s often when (pause) sort of binge eatin’ and (pause) um (pause) don’t know, kind of (pause) eating disorders can, can start, when (pause) you know, being a bit too restrictive? I think it’s good to, kind of, satisfy cravings when, when needed and not make, too sort of, severe adaptions to, s-sor- sort of reasonable?

(FG104 and FG103 murmurs mm mm; nodding)

FG102: Yeah w-well I suppose that’s driven by um (pause) what was it? (pause) Health recommendations and, wh- or not recommended. No, that’s definitely not what I mean. Um, knowledge, um (pause) on, the problems associated with (pause) um excessive sugar consumption.

Moderator: Mm. (pause) So if you were to provide a rough estimate, do you know what’s the *Public Health England*’s recommended daily allowance? For sugar?

FG102: Thirty grams?

Moderator: Okay?

FG104: No idea actually, no

FG102: It’s thirty or forty I think

Moderator: Mm, okay?

FG101: Two teaspoon?

(General laughter)

Moderator: So (pause) okay you are right, so it’s thirty grams, which is about seven sugar cubes? So if you –

Moderator Two: Which is about two teasp-two teaspoons?

FG101: Is it? (laughs)

Moderator Two: (laughs)

Moderator: So um a can of coke typically contains thirty-five grams? Which is around nine sugar cubes? And a regular bottle which is three hundred and sixty ml of Innocent smoothie, is about forty-three point two grams? Eleven sugar cubes

FG101: Mm. Well of course that’s all natural fruit sugars. Cause they won’t be adding, so that’s natural fruit sugars in that-.

FG102: And it’s Innocent isn’t it?

(General laughter)

FG101: (inaudible) you couldn’t possibly (inaudible - see everything here though could you?)

Moderator: Um a Starbucks uh venti size which is the largest hot chocolate is sixty grams, which is twice the recommended daily allowance. So, how do you feel when you, uh see th-the sugar content?

FG104: What’s the last one the last one?

Moderator: Hot chocolate from Starbucks, the largest size.

FG102: It doesn’t count! Cause it’s a drink!

(General laughter)

FG102: It’s in the morning! (laughs)

FG104: I think more of, th-the leaflets visual leaflets like that you know, if if they were put around schools or organisations you know to actually have a visual because, you don’t really think about that? When you havin’ the drink while you don’t realise that necessarily? (pause) um, so it-it makes you realise? It-it’s there in your face?

(General agreement and murmurs of mm mm; nodding)

FG102: So many people aren’t aren’t aware of- of this stuff. So many people. I-I think, I think s- when people think sugar (pause) th- (sigh) dare I say it (pause) the people that, a-are probably most at risk, um (pause) often is at lack of, understandin’ of, of that sort of thing and t-that (pause) it’s the, excessive (pause) consumption of those sort of, sweet drinks?

(General agreement and murmurs of mm yeah yeah; nodding)

FG102: As oppose to having, um (pause) don’t know, a dessert? Every now and then? (In overlap) Um sorry if that was really offensive (laughs)

FG101: (In overlap) I was – (pause) but is that (pause) uh like I said before. the Innocent drink (pause) w-what is the actual (pause) health implications, what are the differences between what they are I mean (pause) Innocent is, well you assume, from what you read on it, it won’t have anything else other than its fresh fruit or vegetable or whatever they do. So (pause) is it essentially, if it that’s the case it has that amount of sugar in it (pause) iis it though more beneficial because it has natural fruit sugars that are in it? Than, say, Coca-Cola uh (in overlap) (inaudible)

FG102: (In overlap) assuming they are all natural

FG101: well in the – in- in that. I mean. Well that’s how they sell them so (pause) I’m not

FG102: (In overlap) Yeah. Well they are, I don’t know I don’t know (pause) yeah yes

FG101: I don’t work for them so I’m not trying to

(General laughter)

FG101: But that’s how they sell themselves and you look at the ingredients, and that’s I think, they don’t. Um

FG104: So is that the added sugar? On top of what?

FG103: (In overlap) No I think it’s just the (inaudible)

FG102: (In overlap) It’d probably be the overall (pause) yeah what’s the –

FG101: (In overlap) That’s the natural fruit sugars that are in it

FG103: (In overlap) Yeah it’s just the, the amount of sugar you’ve you’ve got, because there are fruit in that, drink.

(General murmurs of yeah yeah)

FG101: So what’s the implications of, that amount of sugar but is fruit sugar (in overlap) as oppose to the amount of sugar which is added, not non- right, not natural

FG103: (In overlap) I mean for different. Yeah from (pause) from what I know, is just with fruit (pause) um (pause) because (pause) the fruit contain (pause) a lot of like simple sugar is it simple sugar? W-with

FG104: I think it breaks down differently in your body

FG103: Y-yeah it’s not like uh (pause) Um sorry that’s my English (laughs) Uh, so if you have like (pause) whole (pause) meal food, it contains different types of sugar different types of carbs, (pause) as compared to fruits. Cause th-the fruit (pause) um (pause) they contain a lot of glucose and fructose which are like, simple sugars? However you call that in English

FG102: Slower breakdown

FG103: no-no-not for fruits I mean, i-in fruit you-you’ve got th-th-the type of sugar that you actually use quite quickly?

FG104: Yeah that’s fruit sugar yeah

FG102: Yeah

FG103: So uh (pause) as compared to, let’s say, whole-grain, um (pause) pasta or whatever, which also contains a lot of (pause) carb, (in overlap) that’s that is a different type

FG102: (In overlap) Yeah that’s that’s what I meant it (pause) it’s like a slower breakdown in your body. So I avoid that.

FG103: (In overlap) Mm yeah yeah! So f-for (pause) uh (pause) from what I know, it’s for your health, it’s better to eat vegetables, rather than fruits? Or grains? If you if you need carbs. If you need this type of uh (pause) thing. It’s better to eat grains or y’know cereals, without, added sugar. Uh, rather than fruit? (pause) does it make any sense? (laughs)

FG104: Yeah yeah yeah!

FG102: Yeah no that really, I think it makes complete sense yeah! Yeah.

Moderator: Okay so um a recent report showed that twenty seventeen which is three years ago, was the first time that water sales bottled water sales actually exceeded Coca-Cola sales. So why do you think people switching to a water option?

FG103: I think they are becoming more and more aware, of health issues. Uh (pause) I think, I don’t know about the UK, but in my country, there were a lot of, like campaigns um (pause) social, um kind of awareness raising, uh campaigns bout food a-and you know (pause) soft drinks and and stuff like that. So I think people are getting, more aware. And they, kind of (sigh) try to maintain healthier lifestyle? (laughs) Not, not all of them but (pause) I guess there are (pause) more and more people who would like to, be more healthy whatever it means (laughs)

FG102: Was was that for the first time?

Moderator: Mm

FG102: First time ever? That, bottled –

Moderator: Mm, bottled sales

FG101: in the UK?

FG103: in the UK or in the world?

Moderator: I’m not sure what was it truthfully

FG103: (laughs)

FG102: Uh

FG104: It’s social media as well, exploding (pause) um the knowledge and and awareness is a, is a platform to (pause) to share news I suppose and and facts and and things that people probably would not have access to before as, as easily? (pause) And yeah like you said the campaigns and it’s a lot more awareness um, in schools and organisations

FG103: Yeah

FG102: Was it a particular brand of water? Or just water sales, overall?

Moderator: Bottled water

FG102: Mm. (In overlap) I’d be interested –

FG101: (In overlap) Somebody’s making a big profit out of it now. Because one, we’ve got tap water. So, you know, I mean, maybe people are moving from uh, fizzy drinks like Coca-Cola to bottled water, but I mean getting a bottle of water when you can get tap water for no point not one pence you fill up your cup and you’re buying a bottle for a pound, (in overlap) think that’s just another uh (pause) profit-making (inaudible)

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm mm; nodding)

FG102: (In overlap) I’d I’d be interested to read that, that study yeah

Moderator: Will you switch to a water option? (pause) Will you choose water over let’s say diet coke?

FG103: Yes (laughs)  
FG104: (In overlap) Definitely (laughs)

FG101: (In overlap) Well yeah I never drink diet coke and I never (inaudible?)

FG102: I’d probably wouldn’t buy water

Moderator: (In overlap) But you would –

FG104: (In overlap) I would. I drink sparkling water. I don’t like still water so

Moderator: Will you choose it over let’s say diet coke?

FG104: Definitely. Yeah. Yeah I don’t drink sugary drinks (pause) yeah I think it’s the bad reputation as well that they have, is just full of sugar! And it makes you thirsty afterwards anyway, even more so. So (pause) yeah.

Moderator: Mm

FG101: I-I mean I occasionally buy bottled water I’m not saying I never buy

(General laughter)

FG101: Cause I mean if I’m out in the middle of nowhere and there’s a shop and you want something to drink

(General agreement and murmurs of mm yeah; nodding)

FG101: But, but generally speaking, I don’t. (pause) Uh, so I wouldn’t and I don’t drink loads of, well I just hav- when I was a kid I drank Seven-Up quite a bit uh and I have

FG104: (laughs)

FG101: I can’t remember I drank a f-fizzy drink. Buying a can. I think I had one in a pub like a lemonade, a year ago or something. Um, so I don’t, buy it and I don’t really buy bottled water other than as of what I just said. So I wouldn’t really be swapping from one to another cause I don’t really do.  
Moderator: Mm, mm

FG102: Think it needs must start purchase water if I didn’t already have it on me but most of the time I. just fill up a bottle or (pause) or whatever. And (pause) have, have that if I was going to spend money on a drink I’d probably want to. Don’t know. Something, somethin’ not nice about going to a, WH Smith’s at a train station or whatever and payin’, two pound twenty nine for a, a bottle of water I don’t know it’s something (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG102: I’d rather a coke and all that (laughs) the sugar (laughs)

FG104: I would drink um sugary drinks with alcohol. (pause) Yeah. Cause it just, it goes with the drink I suppose, and cocktails yeah, full of sugar

FG102: If you gonna have a treat and enjoy yourself, you might as well have it to

(General laughter)

FG102: Water and vodka

FG103: Yuck

FG102: (laughs)

FG104: Yeah (laughs) flavour wise, it might not be as

Moderator: (laughs) Okay so just to, a short time check, we have completed um a section and we still have about two sections to go, so are you all okay with continuing?

(General agreement of yeah yeah; nodding)

FG101: Yup I’m just gonna go to toilet.

Moderator: Okay

FG101: All these talks about drinks and (inaudible)

(General laughter)

FG102: Water

FG103: And I’ve been thinking, I don’t know how to put it really. But um (pause) well in my case, I-I again I used to drink (pause) some (pause) fizzy drinks like Coca-Cola or something like that, but it was kind of (sigh) again a special occasion? Something like you know it-it wasn’t (pause) back in the nineties (pause) in my country it was, kind of you know it was either expensive or not that uh (pause) uh it-it wasn’t (pause) like really available to people? So it was something (clicks tongue) like a reward or you know, y-you’d go

FG104: Yeah

FG103: Yeah. So, I think that maybe (pause) in some countries I don’t know as a as a, again, I- I’m talking about my my own country, uh I don’t know whether it would be applicable to the UK. But I think that, at some point, when we, had access to all that stuff, people kind of (pause) y’know th-they were so (pause) overwhelmed with that. Th-they wanted to get it. Because they didn’t have it before? So

FG104: It was a novelty. Yeah.

FG103: Yeah, kind-kinda novelty, and and also because it used to be like a very special thing and then, you (pause) you could just go to the shop and get it, and it was like okay,. so I will have like twenty cans

FG104: (laughs) Yeah

FG103: Or I don’t know. (pause) Um and then they kind of gradually get used to it, and now it’s not that (pause) rewarding it’s not that um (pause) don’t know, that nice to have it really. So, maybe they (pause) they just, eat or drink less, because it’s not that (pause) great fun (laughs)

FG104: Yeah (pause) and it was so cool as well you know those coke adverts oh my god you wanted to be cool! You know all of –

FG103: Yes!

FG101: (Sings) I like to teach, the world to sing, in perfect harmony

(General laughter)

FG101: It was a whole, o yeah, nauseating. But anyway

(General laughter)

FG104: It really is that is really catchy. But yeah! Um (pause) it’s like cigarettes now, you can’t advertise them because they so bad but before oh my god and how cool it was when you smoked! (pause) Yes

FG101: Do they, I-I (pause) um sorry what was the particular question or point of?

Moderator: Oh no we were still going on with the –

FG101: Oh right

Moderator Two: (laughs)

FG104: Yeah about it being novelty? When coke you know and all those, sugary drinks. Yeah. When they became novelty and everybody wanted, to have it type of thing and, it wasn’t so readily available before so everybody jumped on the bandwagon really. (pause) And now people realise the effects of it. It’s always afterwards isn’t it it’s like with cigarettes, with alcohol they used to drink so much in the sixties didn’t they? Or is it sixty seventies fifities? Yeah

FG101: Yeah are there adverts on th-? (pause) I don’t think there are I mean I-I think I vaguely remember that they weren’t supposed to have their adverts like uh uh uh school time on tele, for soft drinks but are there adverts on tele for soft drinks?

(General agreement of mm mm yeah throughout; nodding)

FG104: There are still for coke, you know Christmas all those like, trucks, coming down with (sings) Christmas holidays are coming (laughs)

(General agreement of mm mm yeah throughout; nodding)

FG102: But now it’s it’s only advert for the diet coke because I think they have to pay more, if they are putting adverts for, for (pause) for like the full sugar (pause) type

FG101: I seem to vaguely remember yea-years back (pause) more (pause) Appletiser but then Appletiser doesn’t have suga- I mean, I think Appletiser actually (pause) is just apple juice with um fizzy water put into it as- so it’s got the fruit juice in it from the apple juice but it doesn’t have, I think, uh, but the other ones like Vimtos?

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm mm yeah; nodding)

FG104: But even the fruit juices you know when it’s like from concentrates? There’s loads of sugar in it

FG101: Oh yeah! (In overlap) Yeah yes there’s loads of sugar in it, yeah I’m not saying there isn’t, um

FG104: (In overlap) So there is a difference again (pause) Yeah yeah yeah. But some of them, they are not from concentrate just pure squeezed orange juice

FG101: But they still have the fruit sugar in it as well! They all yeah (inaudible)

FG103: Yeah

FG104: Fruit one yeah but I think the ones with concentrate are from concentrate they have added sugars? In them? On top of the fruit ones?  
FG102: Just just for the record, I know that th-the um orange juices is really high in sugar. Well th-the only reason I go for orange juice cause of vitamin C

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm yeah; laughing and nodding)

FG101: (In overlap) O yeah yeah, they’ve got loads of sugar in yeah

FG104: (In overlap) Yeah I would not touch the one from concentrate, I would not drink it.

FG101: Yeah I suppose to put on the ingre- are you saying that this is something that should be on the (pause) what’s because the ingredients for concentrate (pause) they don’t say plus added sugar

FG104: (In overlap) They say fruit concentrate are not from (pause) yeah

FG101: (In overlap) You got fruit drink and fruit juice, which is (pause) two different things

FG104: They do say on the bottle from concentrate or not from concentrate. Yeah

FG101: Yeah. Um (pause) but, the difference between cause you you can have the (pause) not concentrate

FG104: Mmhmm

FG101: And concentrate (pause) but they would both come under fruit juice

FG104: Yeah

FG101: And then you have fruit drink, which is where you’ve got some fruit juice added with sugar into it. So I think, there’s a

(General agreement of mm mm yeah yeah; nodding)

FG104: It’s all about labelling marketing and I guess people being aware (pause) of what’s what really. What they buying

Moderator: Mm. Are you familiar with the variety of sweeteners currently available? (pause) So, the difference between artificial natural synthetic?

FG101: (In overlap) What’s the difference between synthetic and artificial?  
FG103: (In overlap What – yeah

Moderator: Okay so, um, this is not supposed to be an information session? But I’ I’ll just

(General laughter)

Moderator: Sorry (pause) um (pause) So um, actually, the naturally occurring sweetness are sugars such as sugar that the added sugar that we can use or honey? There are also ones the ones that are artificially made? But artificially can be made from natural sources such as plant extract? Or the can be made from chemicals? Such as like um aspartame and (pause) different chemicals so they are really made from pure chemicals, they are called synthetically made artificial sweeteners? And they are the ones made from plant extract that are also called artificial sweeteners but they are made from natural sources

(General murmurs of mm mm; nodding)

Moderator: So actually just now I placed on the table they are the two packs of sweeteners one is from the natural artificial sweetener and one is a chemical synthetic sweetener

(General murmurs of mm mm; laughing)

Moderator: So um (pause) will you, choose, ever choose um sweeteners over sugar? And what would actually, you know, push you to try sweetener over sugar?

FG102: If I was on strict diet

FG103: Mm

Moderator: Mm

Elliot: But (pause) only if it was (pause) like I said, if I was goin’ on holiday in a couple of weeks or something?

Moderator: Mm

FG103: Mm yeah

FG102: But otherwise I wouldn’t, use it.

Moderator: Mm

FG101: Well I wouldn’t be (pause) (inaudible: dare?) I don’t use them. I mean (pause) since I don’t add stuff anyway, I’m not um, don’t add sugar or artificial sweetener , in tea or (pause) so I suppose yeah in place I might be if I was lookin’ say (pause) a tin of baked beans or something which they all (pause) well I suppose you can find tin baked beans that doesn’t have any sugar in it. But often you see low reduced sugar, it-it it (pause) either it’s reduced sugar (pause) and they haven’t added (pause) an artificial sweetener or they might have added a sweetener, to replace, they’ve outed sugar so they’ve taken out of it. (pause) um, I don’t (pause) know what I would can’t remember or think what I actually do (laughs) in that situation cause I’m generally looking for things that are lower in sugar (pause) but I’d rather that they either didn’t have it (pause) other than that as I said a biscuit cause I just as I said earlier, I mean yeah a biscuit’s got some sugar. But then when I’m looking for things like muesli or other, process foods I generally, don’t want loads of it in it. But I don’t really (pause) I can’t really say whether I’d choose (pause) aspartame over (pause) yeahhh th-th natural I c- I don’t know. Not sure  
(General murmurs of mm mm)

FG102: There’s one isn’t it there’s m- sorry

FG104: No no that’s fine

FG102: There’s one that’s meant to have the same some of the same effects? Isn’t there? Is (pause) is, is that the one?

Moderator: What do you mean by same effects?  
FG102: Well your body responds to it, in a, similar way that it would do to (pause) to, um (pause) actual sugar. Are they the same, same sort of spike insulin spike? I don’t know it’s just things I’ve heard on the internet (laughs)

FG104: (laughs) I wouldn’t use sweeteners. I’ve never really taken to them (pause) um

Moderator: What are your concerns towards sweeteners?

FG104: I-I don’t’ know. They just, just lookin’ at them they come in a lil plastic box

Moderator Two: (laughs)

FG104: Just don’t like the look of it I just don’t like the idea of it? Um (pause) yeah I don’t use sugars, um in my coffee anyway I and I don’t cook so (pause) um (pause) yeah I don’t really have a sugar in my in my house. But um, if I had to, I’d go for sugar not a sweetener I just don’t like the look of them I don’t know. Just look like little pills (laughs) something puts me off

Moderator: Do you consider the long-term, issues of, as in long-term consumption? (pause) Potential issues to have for long term

FG104: Yeah I think there’s chemicals in them um (pause) same what they put in diet, um things so I just stay away from it, d- yeah it puts me off

FG102: I th-I think it depends on, on the individual! Because I do think they-they have theor (pause) advantages if, if you take someone that is (pause) morbidly obese (pause) would you be more concerned about the chemicals that you’re puttin’ in their body? Or if the sole aim for them would the most important thing factor was them to lose weight, (pause) then perhaps uh (pause) a sugar alternative might be the, the best solution in that (pause) in that case? If they were tryin’ to lose weight, because they were at risk of, some kind of serious heart disease or something?  
Moderator: So you would say that an an an advantage of sweeteners would be, the weight loss.

FG102: Y-yeah (in overlap) potentially because, the reduced amount of of calories

FG103: (In overlap) potentially (pause) calories? Yeah I mean –

Eilliott: In severe cases

FG103: I don’t use sugar in my drinks but my partner do (pause) uh and he chooses sweeteners rather than, sugar (pause) uh cause he he just can’t drink (pause) non sweetened (pause) drink. Uh and the same for my mom? Uh a-and she uses, Stevia? Is that um, so that’s something that she actually learnt (pause) in (pause) kind of weight management course. Something uh and she she actually (pause) well sh-she use sugar before? Uh and then sh-she changed to uh Stevia. (pause) Because, she wanted to uh (pause) w- lose some weight. And it’s like that sh-sh-she using she’s using it still. Um (pause) because she cannot drink like non sweetened, tea or coffee, so sh-she has to use something. Uh (pause) for me it’s it’s kind of irrelevant because if I if I need something sweet with my drink, I would rather (pause) like for my coffee I I would use milk to to make it sweeter but not sugar or, sweetener but some people, seem, not to be able to (laughs) (In overlap) drink something that is not sweet and

FG104: (In overlap) yeah they have to

(Moderator murmurs mm mm throughout; nodding)

FG103: Uh and then I think the (pause) you know, Stevia or some kind of natural um sweeteners are better option, than sugar or (pause) I guess (pause) I’m not sure about that but, uh, I heard that honey would be better (pause) than (pause) uh white sugar. So

Moderator: Mm (pause) (in overlap) so yo-

FG103: (In overlap) You’ve got several options to, to choose from

Moderator: Based on the categories of sweeteners you would, prefer, a natural, artificial sweetener. Compared to sugar?

FG103: If I had –

Moderator: (In overlap) if you have to choose

FG103: To (pause) I mean (pause) as I said because I don’t use sugar but um I guess if I was to (sigh) I don’t know, bake a cake, I would use sugar rather than sweeteners, or I would use honey. Uh, rather than sugar. Yeah. If that was possible. Cause I usually follow the, recipe (laughs) but if, if it was possible to use honey instead of white sugar I would do that probably? Uh, but I don’t think I would add sweeteners (pause) to my cake or something like that

Moderator: Mm, but why is that so?  
FG103: Um, I don’t like the taste? Really? And I don’t uh, fo-for the cake, I just don’t know whether it would, work, or not. But with the drinks, uh (pause) I just don’t like, the taste of sweeteners (pause) So

(Moderator murmurs mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: Do you st-, uh do you still consider sweeteners as a whole? Or now that you know the different distinctions, do you consider artificial or natural or synthetic differently, or do you still consider them as?

FG104: I still don’t like them. But if I had to choose, obviously I’d go for the natural one. Yeah. But I, yeah I just I never I never really use them I’ve never taken to them I just there’s something I don’t like about them (laughs)

FG102: Even, even the naturally occurring ones?   
FG104: Mm

FG102: Like honey?

FG104: No I just

FG102: Yeah

FG104: Yeah I’d rather have a brown sugar (pause) I think I- I like to keep it simple, yeah with my with my choices. All these, new things that they come up with. Um I don’t always trust them what they come up uh with yeah. Cause it-it is it’s all about labelling it’s all about marketing, um you know they often lie? Of what it’s in there. Or they (pause) don’t, um (pause) really (pause) you know like sometimes like honey manuka honey, oh because there is like zero point zero, one percent? They can now call it manuka honey. Um, it’s all about labelling it’s all about –

FG102: and special offer at Aldi in there (laughs)

FG104: There you go! Really (laughs) so

FG102: Five ninety-five (laughs)

FG104: Yeah un-unless you read the small print really, how much percentage of each thing is in there (pause) um, yeah it’s it’s all about um, often it’s a money making business (pause) and it’s what consumers um, (pause) you know how they can fool them and and that type of thing so I- I prefer natural (pause) old fashion stuff (laughs)

FG103: But –

FG104: Conspiracy!

FG103: I do agree with you. I-I would just say that (pause) honey, is more like natural stuff? like (pause) traditionally?

FG104: Mm, absolutely yeah

FG103: But I don’t mean like manuka honey or anything like that. I-I when I buy honey, uh I always buy it from like, reliable sources like you know from the bees farm or whatever. Um so

(FG104 agreeing mm yes mm; nodding)

FG104: Yes like directly like um other food produce as well like directly from the farmers, or, you know the organic stuff, but is it really organic? What makes them put the label on it?

FG102: (laughs)

FG103: I don’t need it. I’m not bothered with organic food it’s not organic at all! I mean

FG104: There you go! That’s free ranged eggs! Oh they still in um, in the kind of cages, just bigger cages and they can move around because they not in individual cages I guess it’s now free range. Yeah it’s it’s that type of thing. (laughs)

Moderator: (In overlap) How bout the con—

FG101: (In overlap) I don’t think that it’s necessarily is uh (pause) I don’t think it’s necessarily the case that because something we can label it and call it uh because it is and we call it artificial or synthetic, it is necessa- that necessarily means, that it is (pause) less uh or, it’s not as good or it is worse than something natural I mean I-I- think that’s a bit of a (pause) th- I-I think it’s something complex debate about, just because something technically could be called natural whether or not that it is it’s actually is more beneficial (pause) than something that was (pause) i-in effect (pause) cooked up in a lab, that doesn’t necessary follow that that’s better than that, simply. Bu-but it’s quite a complex matter

(FG103 agreeing and murmurs with mm yeah throughout)

Moderator: Mm. So will you be more, motivated to consume over another?

FG101: N-not really as I’ve said before I-I-I don’t really I’m not looking to consume either of them or whatever they are. Um just th-that (pause) the (pause) I wouldn’t (pause) automatically say that because that says it’s natural that that means that (In overlap) that is better than that says f-f you know.

FG104: (In overlap) Yeah it’s better

Moderator: Mm

FG101: um, but uh (pause) thing is of course then you if you really want to look at it, it’s a, very interesting really because then (pause) how do we get our information and how much time do we spend and where do we get reliable sources about you know just, you have somebody on the internet who’s an influencer or whatever and it has in the background a bottle of something uh and you know and there’s people looking at that how do we choose our reliable sources to find out about these things so, it takes a lot of time and uh you’ll have to look at these things and spend time, really trying to understand. Um (pause) we don’t all have that time (inaudible)

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm mm, that’s true yeah throughout)

FG104: (laughs)

FG102: Do (pause) th-th-these big companies really want us to be well informed? On these?

(FG103 and FG104 murmurs mm mm; half-hearted laugh)

Moderator: So given that both sugar and sweeteners they have, they seem to have their own set of issues, do you think that people in general, should reduce their sugar consumption? Or just sweetness consumption as a whole regardless of the source of sweetness? So eat less sweet food.

FG104: Yeah that’s a hard one

FG103: I’d say, people should be more active.

Moderator Two: (laughs)

FG103: They don’t necessarily need to, reduce anything in the-their diet. Well there are cases that they have to. (pause) But, in general, if they were more physically active, they wouldn’t need to be (pause) you know th-they they wouldn’t need to think about okay I ate that cookie or whatever. Uh (pause) because I -I I‘ve used up calories th-the the calories in that cookie or whatever. Uh, sugar. (pause) Th-that’s kind of my idea (laughs)

FG101: Well I mean, (inaudible) it’s a question of morals and ethics here because (pause) I mean (pause) what other people should do with their (pause) you know, I might be talking about myself and what I’m th- should I really be sort of (pause) I mean you can say that the national health services has the responsibility for producing information that will help (pause) make people make a better decision about how they keep themselves healthy, or the govern- department of health and responsibility perhaps. But (pause) um (pause) what are we asking for, if we say, we’re asking for people to reduce their uh what is the purpose of (pause) uh of getting people to potentially to reduce their amount of sugar intake? Is it because (pause) uh (pause) well, does the state feels that it needs to (pause) make people healthier? Or is that behind that they want to reduce the cost implications for the NHS budget or uh and so there’s a lot of (pause) questions about (pause) uh how far (pause) the difference between providing information about what people might want to do and actually trying to get them to do something else (pause) now I find that it’s actually intervening in their, in their own private life, for example.

Moderator: Mmhmm. But let’s say if you were to, um maybe talk to a friend about, um health health issues related to, sweetness and sugar and sweeteners. Will you advise or encourage someone to reduce, sugar consumption or sweetness consumption? What do you think is (In overlap) (inaudible) it doesn’t mean that

FG102: (In overlap) It depends on the person!

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm yeah; nodding)

FG102: It depends who you’re (pause) well to me, it depends who you’re talking to. (pause) Um, the point I said earlier, if someone was, severely overweight and, and yeah. I think one of, if if he looked at breakdown of of their actual not self-recorded um (pause) diet, (pause) and saw wha-what they were eatin’ then yeah, there’re probably some (pause) unnecessary calories. Probably excessive amounts of (pause) fizzy drinks such as, Coca-Cola um (pause) I don’t know, (pause) puddin’ (pause) I-I I live with someone in in second year of university who, h-he had (pause) four (pause) table not tea, tablespoons of brown sugar, in his cup of tea every day and he didn’t use normal wh- he always had some full fat milk in the fridge. But, he used (pause) I don’t even know what it’s called. Someone probably knows you know the milk that comes in a (in overlap) a can or a

FG101: (In overlap) A tin?

FG103: Yeah

FG104: Yeah

FG102: Yeah I think it was a (laughs) a tin

Moderator Two: That’s really sweet!

FG104: Oh gosh

FG102: And I also went to his house –

FG101: The teaspoon must have stood up alone, just straight up!

(General laughter)

FG102: Yeah! He used to (pause) to mix it with that and four tablespoons of brown sugar! And then his cousin told him that he should switch to honey! (laughs) and I’ve been telling him that for a long time but his cousin told him and he, and he believed it. But yeah! Say someone he-he was (pause) one of (pause) ‘xcuse me, swallowed the wrong way. He was one of these, people um, that was just naturally really really lean. And say, he didn’t necessarily think it was, was much of an issue but (pause) yeah well

FG101: (Inaudible)

FG103: Hmm

FG104: (Laughs)

FG102: (Laughs) But yeah! If you took someone that was severely overweight and they were doing that for example then yeah maybe you should get them to (pause) reduce their sugar consumption thei- it depe- it depends on individual!

FG101: But then should- should but that’s going back to (pause) should you try and get them? I mean, if they’re not asking you to do that

FG102: no but what’s, what’s th, but (pause) the question was

FG101: (In overlap) (inaudible) there are

FG104: (In overlap) It’s just a, it’s I think it’s just a hypothetical example

FG102: (In overlap) Yeah yeah

FG101: Well I know!

FG102: Yeah no no! I agree

FG104: The question –

FG102: I agree is none of is none of my business to be

FG101: Well I don’t know! I’m just puttin’ it there, that, is it?

FG102: Yeah, yeah I know

FG103: I guess it is!

FG101: If the other person doesn’t ask you (pause) and they seem to be fine.

FG102: (In overlap) Yeah –

FG101: and we might think that they’re not (pause) should we (in overlap) be saying like oh you should cut that back

FG102: (In overlap) Yeah but if say if they are asking for advice

FG101: Yeah I’m not asking bout that, (in overlap) I’m not asking about the

FG102: (In overlap) If, yeah. Yeah

FG104: (In overlap) But (pause) yeah I think the question is, if you did, which one would it be? Would it be to tell them to reduce the sugar, or reduce um (in overlap) the sweeteners as well? Than should you tell them?

FG101: (In overlap) No! yeah, I got that question but then I’m taking another way

FG104: D’you, do you know what I mean? But if you were to tell them which one would it be? Is that right? Yeah

FG103: But also if if we think about like overweight people, um (pause) cause (pause) my impression is that people w-when people talk think about sugar, they think about like adding sugar to tea, or you know, coffee and stuff like that maybe, some cookies, cakes, sweet things. And they don’t realise how much sugar is in (in overlap) other type of food? So they they, they (pause) you know they- they they eat so much (pause) like, processed food –

FG102: (In overlap) Oh the thing tomato ketchup and ready meals. Mm

FG101: Yeah bread has sugar in it (in overlap) yeah

FG103: Uh yeah! I mean, everything has it. I mean, sugar or carbs in general it’s it’s a natural (pause) part of everything

FG101: yeah! It’s a natural (in overlap) (inaudible)

FG102: (In overlap) I’m going on a diet and eat some salad and also put on there breaded croutons (laughs)  
FG103: (laughs) yeah for exam- so so people people just don’t realise it’s not only about like, sugar cubes or something like that it’s just uh, because they it-it was quite (pause) surprising and even I would say horrifying for me when I came to the UK and I saw so many people, like, hugely overweight! And then, I had a look at you know uh (pause) in supermarket or some uh at their baskets and they have a lot of those you know, French fries, uh, canned food uh

FG102: (Laughs) diet coke

FG103: Ready m- uh

FG104: Meals

FG103: Meals and stuff like that I was c’mon! I-I know that people don’t have time, that some of this stuff is just cheaper than, normal food. They don’t have time to cook and so on and so on but come on! How can you do that, to yourself!

FG104: Some people just don’t care!

FG103: I think (in overlap) they are, they are not aware! They don’t (pause) they they don’t see it as an issue! Rather than th-they

FG102: (In overlap) People just don’t see it as an issue and

FG104: Yeah, mm

FG102: I’m fine

FG103: Yeah

FG104: For me personally I think it would be to (pause) both. Tell them to cut out both.

Moderator: Mm  
FG104: I suppose and it depends on the sweeteners, if they were (pause) um like a low calorie sweeteners then, probably would be the sugar.

Moderator: Mm

FG104: Yeah

FG102: Th-that’s. Again. I th- I think it depends on the individual. Wh-what what is that, the sort of (pause) the main factor that’s causin’ them to (pause)

FG103: My. Okay.

FG104: But if you have sugar and you have low calorie sweetener, which one is more fattenin’? (In overlap) it would be sugar

FG102: Yeah, but yeah. (pause) The question yeah. Yeah true

Moderator: So if we go into reducing sugar in our diet, what do you think is the best, recommendation or strategy that, that can be used? So just now, you know you brought up uh product labelling and y-you are more sceptical about product labelling. How bout things like traffic light systems (in overlap) or education? Wh-

FG102: (In overlap) Seems (pause) (laughs) I was

Moderator: Um what’s the best recommendation for reducing sugar intake? So um, do you trust labels, or like traffic light system? Or do you think it should be education in the workplace, in schools, what are the –

FG104: It’s a combination of all of them yeah

FG102: Education in schools! I think

FG104: Yeah educating doing that as well

FG102: And (pause) but people are heavily influenced by their parents so maybe also (pause) gettin’, well yeah. Just you tackle it at every angle I guess. Schools, parents, workplace

FG104: Mm

Moderator: Mm. How bout um, regulations similar to those placed on cigarettes and alcohol for example um, scare tactics and plain packaging? So, for example

FG104: Oh yes! Good idea (laughs)

Moderator Two: (laughs)

Moderator: So I’ve made up an example, um this is just examples of what is

(General laughter)

Moderator: Uh so this is what is happening to cigarette packs for example, there’s like standard um (pause) packaging standard fonts and things like that. Do you think this all these will help to reduce, will be good recommendations or strategies?

FG103: Does this help with the reducing like cigarettes (pause) um (pause) uh people do do people buy less cigarettes because of this?

Moderator: I don’t know?

FG104: But I think, does it have to be approved by government that you can do that? Cause I don’t – yeah, not sure be because obviously the um

Moderator: (In overlap) Yeah. (pause) So, this will be like a –

FG104: Suppliers wouldn’t want to do that um so would have to be

Moderator: It will have to be from a government

FG104: Absolutely

Moderator; Yeah. Do you think it will work? Will you support such a

FG104: I think it depends on which ones it is. Um you know like sugary drinks and stuff. Um (pause) yeah it would, would depends which ones are the to identify which ones are the worst ones  
Moderator: Mmhmm

FG104; Um cause I can’t imagine you, you’d be able to put that on all of them

Moderator: Mm

FG104: Um (pause) cause automatically that doesn’t seem that appealing that you want to grab it, do you and and and have a munch (laughs)

FG103: (Laughs)

FG101: Mm I-I mean, I can see an argument sort of for it but at the same time I feel (sigh) I mean, once (pause) I-I think, o well (pause) let’s say (pause) young people’s exposure to (pause) sugars well like (pause) parents, schools, we have a responsibility (pause) we do have a direct responsibility for the (pause) the health of younger people, because they are in, our care. Up to a certain age so let’s just say for the sake of argument up to eighteen, in our care whether it’s the schools it’s the, uh, parents. (pause) So there, there’s a direct responsibility to (pause) that I would say, to help bring up the healthiest child possible. But once you get to an age where a person is supposed to be you know and it’s a bit arbitrary so it eighteen let’s just say for the sake of argument, eighteen, adult, (pause) then (pause) continuing the line of (pause) o-of the lines of (sigh) you know I don’t smoke or any I’m very happy that uh, you know there’s been bans brought in in pubs and stuff and (pause) and I can see the point of the cigarettes being put behind the counters in the way in that type of packaging (pause) but then I can also see that if you do this, then you have to potentially do it for salt uh potentially cause loads of foods processed foods has high levels of salts and then you could stick that, and then (pause) then you could find other things that I imagine you could possibly say well that nee- and then (pause) I don’t know I feel it-it’s (pause) conflicted. I can see an argument possibly in favour of something like that, but at the same time, is it going too far along the line of (pause) really directing what an adult (pause) should or should not do

(FG103 agreeing with mm mm mm mm throughout; nodding)

FG101: Cause somebody else decides that (pause) will decide for you in a sense. I mean why don’t they just ban it then! That’s the other question then, why don’t you just ban sugar? Instead of having those, that thing around, you’re trying to reduce it, just say, no sugar is allowed at all! In any, products. No! (In overlap) And then you end up –

FG103: (In overlap) Then you won’t have anything to eat (laughs)

FG104: (laughs)

Elliot: Yeah!

FG101: W-well I have steamed pudding! Cause I don’t add it, it’s got (in overlap) fruits in it!

FG103: (In overlap) But, but but there’s sugar in your fruit!

FG102: (In overlap) No but I think that –

FG101: (In overlap) (inaudible – I don’t have any?) of the added sugar

FG103: (In overlap) (inaudible)

FG102: (In overlap) But if you have – enough, yeah. If you have enough of it),um (pause) yeah uh sort of, nicotine and sugar’s bit different. Really, I think it has different, um (pause) effects, on, on your body (in overlap) and like yeah. I-I mean (pause) nicotine has actually been, show to be addictive like (pause) heroine’s addictive for example

FG104: (In overlap) (inaudible) yeah

FG103: (In overlap) Sugar

FG101: (In overlap) Sugar’s a highly addictive substance

FG102: But I – I don’t think it is! I don’t’ think it is! I think people like (pause) the th-the taste of sugar, but I don’t think it’s addictive. I don’t I-I think people like it, but I don’t think (pause) I- I mean I’m not too familiar on the science? But (pause) to my understandin’ (pause) it doesn’t have the same (pause) effect people have it because they like it. (pause) I think there’s been rat studies done (pause) that have, that’ve looked at (pause) similar things. But yeah, I don’t know. I- (pause) I think people do have do have sugar just because they like it but if they didn’t have to have it, they wouldn’t, have sort of withdrawal symptoms and, and what not, from, from not having sugar.

FG104: I think it’s also looking at the statistics, um (pause) you know any implication on the health and on the NHS and on all the money that is spent you know like the the people that, smoke or used to smoke you know all the smoking cessations, um trial that they um, have to spend money on? Um the government does? So it depends what the implication is on the health (pause) of people that um, do eat lot of sugar. Um I suppose, but you know back then, when they brought all those images on the cigarette packages, um cigarette package- packets, um I’m sure it was shocking as well to see first of all people like (gasp) oh no! they never be able to do that and stuff like that. But I think it’s’ the same with this? When you first see it you like (gasp) oh is that a a step too far, but then I don’t know if you slowly introduce it (pause) (in overlap) don’t know yeah it’s it’s a tricky one

FG103: (In overlap) W-with (pause) with cigarettes I think, many people just choose to ignore? Th-the pictures and you know the, this kind of information? Uh (pause) and I know it I mean I don’t smoke but my father does and and he just (pause) doesn’t look at (in overlap) the packet

FG104: (In overlap) Yeah. That yeah. If you, yeah (laughs)

FG103: He he just, take the cigarette (laughs) and smokes it. Uh, but he-he just doesn’t care about I mean he’s aware of all those (pause) you know health issues. Um (pause) but I don’t think that th-the the change in the pack uh on the in terms of the packages uh it has changed anything

FG104: But has it, has it maybe altered perception of some people? Do you see cause you’ll have a spectrum of people –

FG103: (In overlap) Yeah!

FG104: the ones who absolutely do not care and you can put whatever you want on the packet. Some that are oh I should but I really shouldn’t? Should I? Or you know I really shouldn’t. And then (pause) is is where y’know I guess those in the middle? I-I don’t know

FG102: You (pause) you’ve got to consider the market!

FG103: Mm

FG104: yeah

FG102: That you’re gonna towards, just think (pause) I (pause) probably was, when I was young? I don’t know? When I was

FG101: Still are sir!

(General laughter)

FG102: Well y-y-yeah! (pause) Um, when I was, don’t know, nine, ten? Younger?

FG104: We all are (laughs)

Moderator Two: (laughs)

Elliot: Um (pause) I (pause) I see, I don’t know, breakfast cereal that looked really appealing because I looked at the box. I don’t necessarily know if I’d look at the same way if it had a picture of (pause) don’t know a (pause) ugly heart on the front. I don’t know wh-what were the

(FG103 agreeing with mm mm mm; nodding)

FG104: (inaudible) (in overlap) but then I think you could

FG102: (Inverlap) It’s just to – yeah

FG104: But then you could easily the difference between the ones that are bad for you and the ones that are not! That are natural! Do you see, is one way?

FG102: But back then I didn’t care, I just saw the box and that was a sort of those ones the one I want my mom didn’t really let me but

FG104: Yeah, mm, but we did (pause) (laughs)

Elliot: I know, I know some families that probably is the the case when the child would would point out, a cereal based on on the box or the the toy that it came with for example or um I don’t know if they do that anymore, but yeah used to. I used to get the –

FG101: The toys in the

FG104: Mm yeah

FG102: Yeah

FG101: Covered in chocolate or don’t know

FG104: But yeah. But because it’s so hard to identify these days what is really, bad for you what is not so bad because you have to go and read it all. You know um whether that would be a easier way to do it maybe that, would it be a step too far, could we do something in in between? But I think it would be beneficial to help consumers identify more easily (pause) what what’s in food and (pause) what’s bad for you

FG103: Then th-the the question is, what type of food wouldn’t have this kind of um (In overlap) stuff, which is what

FG104: (In overlap) Not true

FG101: (In overlap) Yeah but now fruit, you’d’ have to put. You’ve to put a big ol’ label on a piece of fruit!

FG103: (In overlap) No (inaudible) that’s what I –

FG104: (In overlap) It’s it’s a natural fruit. It’s a natural sugar!

FG101: (In overlap) But that doesn’t but it’s still sugar!

FG102: (In overlap) I think that –

FG104: (In overlap) It’s natural sugar I think it’s different sugar

FG101: Yeah well, you might disagree with that (in overlap) uh I think uh

FG104: (In overlap) Yeah that’s, yeah. Fine!

FG101: Well, if you drink loads of fruit juice, that’s gonna damage your teeth! So that’s for certain. So yeah

FG103: Yeah

FG104: But peo-people in the country, in the let’s say third world country that only have fruit and stuff, (pause) th-they seem to be doing fine? And they, don’t have access to um, su- you know, chocolate and stuff like that and they they eat lot of lot of fruit? (pause) Their teeth are fine?

FG101: Are they?

FG104: Yeah?

FG103: Yeah I don’t think so

FG104: No?

FG101: Well uh, have they done a study, don’t know, how would you know? Would you know?

FG104: South pacific (pause) do you they have um, access to dentist? I don’t think so and on you know remote islands and stuff (in overlap) they have they eat fruits?

FG101: (In overlap) I think it’s uh well I don’t know about those

FG104: Yeah yeah yeah! I’m just, (in overlap) yeah, being devil’s advocate

FG101: (In overlap) I think it’s a known fact that, fruit sugar (pause) you drink loads of fruit sugar, that is just as deleterious to your teeth to your dental, uh (pause) situation as having other sugar

FG103: Mm

FG102: I think I think the big problem is (pause) th-the way (pause) um (pause) label is sort of manipulated? Um (pause) you look at cereals and it will say per serving (pause) you read, th-the quantity of that serving and it’s, something like thirty grams for, for a bowl of cereal. If you actually weigh out on a scale, cause I do it (laughs) thirty grams of cereal, it’s –

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm mm yeah yeah; nodding)

FG103: (In overlap) Two spoonfuls

Elliot: (In overlap) Well children would be havin’ (pause) four times as much as that. Um, in in many cases. So (pause) I think you have to be s-sort of consciously aware of the quantities and the (pause) macronutrients that’s (pause) in a product. Um (pause) when you’re readin’ reading those labels and and trying to make a sort of, an informed decision on on what you then buy I think that I think that’s one of the real issues? Because so many things, is (pause) y-you probably seen it I don’t know Sainsbury’s is it Be Good To Yourself? Sainsbury’s Be Good To Yourself? They do, this stuff and and and you look at it and it and it says, per (pause) one serving or or per quarter packet and you think I’m not gonna have half the packet? I’m gonna have the whole thing! Um

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing with mm mm yeah yeah; nodding)

FG102: Most people will but then they think it’s, cause it says Be Good To Yourself. So are they already kind of doing that in a way with those, products? And it is working? And is it (pause) I don’t know. Have I kinda gone off on a, tangent there?

Moderator: No!

(General laughter)

FG101: We like tangents

FG104: (Laughs)

FG102: Well that’s (in overlap) focus groups

FG101: (In overlap) Sweetener or artificial tangents

(General laughter)

FG102: Artificial tangents! (laughs)

Moderator: So um, one thing that we haven’t mention was the sugar tax? (pause) So uh before the sugar tax was implemented, the a report actually showed that a twenty percent tax on sugary drinks, will prevent um (pause) three point seven million people in the UK from becoming obese over the next decade. What do you think of sugar tax? (pause) Do you think it has any effects on, the consumption of sugary drinks or (pause) su-

FG102: I didn’t notice it

FG104: Yeah

FG101: So is it in now, because I-I- is it?

Moderator: Yes! Yeah. Sugar is, has been implemented

FG101: Right. Yeah but there was a period of time when they were saying oh we’re gonna implement it and then they withdrew uh uh and then, so it’s now, come in.

Moderator: (In overlap) Mm mm mm yeah mm

FG101: Uh and wasn’t there also a case in Scotland when the Scotland government wanted to introduce something and uh it was just discussions going on with whether or not they were allowed to because the British government so

FG102: One deep fried mars bar (laugh) per customer

(General laughter)

FG101: Yeah because the Scottish (inaudible) they go on about with the Scottish government has only certain powers that uh that uh (inaudible) tax raising and stuff and that was an issue

Moderator: Mm

FG101: Uh so, uh sugar tax. Hmm. Um.

FG103: Hmm

FG104: I’ve not seen a difference? So (in overlap) It has minimal effect if any

FG101: (In overlap) I don’t know it-it, but what it’s on? Is it only on fizzy drinks?

Moderator: Yeah it’s on soft drinks? So um

FG101: So it’s not on fruit juice for example

Moderator: No, just on sugar yeah

FG104: Okay

FG102: Do you know where I think it

FG101: Will they (in overlap) buy those drinks I don’t know

FG102: (In overlap) does potentially work? (pause) Fast food restaurants? Because (pause) often when you go to I don’t know (pause) McDonald’s not that I go there loads but they’ll (pause) I think some places they (pause) cause it’s less (pause) you sort of automatically get th-the diet? Because it’s cheaper? As opposed to getting I think if you asked for, a coke they almost I-I don’t know how true this is.

FG104: (laughs)

FG102: But, I think they kinda tell you it will cost more? (pause) Um (pause) or it’s not the kind of the default (pause) getting full fat I don’t know how true that is. But but yeah I think I don’t know I think in fast food places that, people would maybe a bit more aware of it there? That’s’ the only place I, learn about, bout the sugar tax was from going to, to those type place. Cause it, in say Tesco’s things can be on special offer anyway so you might not be

(General agreement and murmurs of mm mm yeah yeah)

FG101: They might have had absorbed the cost down there

(General agreement of yeah yeah)

FG103: (In overlap) (inaudible) Aactually change the price and the product

FG101: (inaudible)

FG102: But in a place like a fast food outlet, you are gonna see (pause) the difference and (pause) some of the time that will be a fact that people (pause) are gonna consider when going to cause if you say oh it’s the same you think, do I want to be healthy? Or do I not? But I, don’t know what that is, thirty pence cheaper?

FG102: (In overlap) Maybe (pause) people might.

Moderator: Um

FG104: But I think that’s good they’ve that because I think the sugary drinks are the worst. (pause) Personally (laughs)

Moderator: Did you also notice that chocolate bars are shrinking in size?

FG101: Shrinkflation

FG104: (Ooohhh) shrinkflation (laughs)

Moderator: (In overlap) Does it –

FG102: the Yorkie bars!

FG101: (In overlap) Chocolate bar

FG102: (In overlap) it used to be (pause) huge didn’t they!

Moderator: Have you noticed these changes when you’re shopping and does it influence your shopping or eating behaviour?

FG102: Just buy a bigger chocolate bar (laughs)

FG104: Yeah buy two! (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG101: Can’t say I’ve actually I know it’s happening but I can’t say I actually n-noticed it particularly, because that’s, well they don’t want you to notice it? So it’s not like (pause) a packet of digestive was that big and now it’s that big and i-it’s like it was that big and now (pause) it’s like that

(FG103 and FG104 agreeing and murmurs mm yeah mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: Mm

FG101: And you just (in overlap) (inaudible)

FG102: (In overlap) I think you would notice it with chocolate bars. I-I have.

FG101: Really? You actually? and you’re saying Yorkies?

FG102: I’ve actually noticed it (pause) yeah Yorkie. If you try (pause) I don’t know how many of you have Yorkie that much but they used to be, even in my lifetime um

(General laughter)

FG102: they used to be a lot bigger? And they can now they’re more (pause) getting towards a sort of a, a dairy milk size bar but maybe cause I’ve grown and

(General laughter)

FG101: (inaudible) new

FG102: (In overlap) They never no I did – I- I’m pretty certain it has got smaller.

FG101: But that’s be- but that’s not (pause) uh th-the suggestion isn’t that that’s bec- that’s done in a way to red- get us to reduce

Moderator: N-no

FG101: That’s ju- that is because they’re trying to save cost

(General agreement of mm mm yeah maybe; nodding)

FG101: Not because they’re trying to (pause) uh you know (in overlap) (inaudible) become healthy

FG102: (In overlap) that was my assumption (laughs)

Moderator: No, was just uh thinking whether it will influence, for example you mentioned about you buy two packets instead?

FG103: Mm

Moderator: So how does it change your (pause) behaviour? Or um do words such as zero calories or diet make you want to , buy that product? Or do these words, like (in overlap) lite, cream cheese or – do you think it has effects on you?

FG101: (In overlap) nope

(General murmurs of mm mm)

FG103: I’d rather (pause) I would buy, the normal one? But just eat less? Probably? So if if I if I (pause) did buy, a lite version of something I would probably (pause) be thinking that okay I can eat more because it’s lite? (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG102: That’s it! Isn’t it! (pause) Sometimes you need more, as well! Some of these things you actually need more, of the lite one because it’s just not as, dense and providing with you, providing the same (pause) um sort of   
(FG103 and FG104 agreeing yeah yeah!)

FG101: Oomph

(General laughter)

FG102: Yeah! Sensory

FG103: (In overlap) (inaudible) mm

FG101: (In overlap) I mean I might – yeah uh something like maybe a che- occasionally I mean I would buy cheese that’s just (pause) whatever cheese? Uh (pause) and I won’t (pause) say I won’t have that because it’s full fat cheese. I won’t eat full fat cheese all the time. I’d just occasionally take that because, I-I’ll I’ll try that one today. But sometimes I will have uh (pause) w-well a lower, fat one (pause) that time and oh I’ll take that one today. So sometimes and uh but saying it’s got zero calories or whatever uh like on drinks but I don’t buy these things anyway so I’m not thinking about that

(FG103 agreeing mm mm throughout)

FG102: That’s a prime example of cheese and that’s actually something (pause) this week (pause) that I’ve experienced! (pause) For some reason, I don’t know why I-I think it was on I think it was the cheapest one that was on special or somethin’, and I got (pause) fifty percent reduced (pause) fat cheese? And I just used fifty percent more? (laugh) cause I needed fifty percent more? To provide the same level of cheesiness?

(General laughter)

FG101: That’s fifty percent less taste! That’s what!

FG102: Yeah! Exactly I think that (in overlap) that’s what you compromise (pause) mm

FG104: (In overlap) Yeah, for me it’s, it depends on what it is because it doesn’t taste the same? Like mayonnaise? Like lite mayonnaise? I c- I can’t stand it? Mm just doesn’t taste like mayonnaise! (laughs)

FG101: I-I was I was in a Costa, couple weeks ago. (pause) And (pause) I don’t us- I don’t usually have anything to eat. (pause) Sometimes I’ll have a gingerbread man or something but they had like a, I don’t usually eat cakes. Very seldom do I like buy cakes. (pause) And they had this coffee cake or whatever (pause) on fifty percent off. So I thought I’ll have that. And uh

FG102: Fifty percent of price or (In overlap) fifty percent of? Yeah yeah

FG101: (In overlap) Yeah of price. Price. And it was a pretty big slab.

FG104: (laughs)  
FG101: And afterwards, I thought well I shouldn’t really have that. Cause I just have, y-yknow and the size, was bloody massive anyway and it was half price cause it was the end of the day or whatever it was. And I hardly ever, buy them but I just decided that time. (pause) and I bloody hell was that sweet! Oh and uh, eah. Maybe I should have just had half of it but I finished the whole thing after (inaudible)

FG102: I think third year university when I was really poor (pause) what was I knew that if I went to Tesco at half eight, everything (laughs) would go

(General laughter)

FG102: Everything would go on reduced? So, my (pause) dietary choices were influenced by what was on the reduced that day in the in the supermarket (pause) terrible thing to do but yeah

(General agreement mm mm; nodding)

FG101: Understandable

FG103: Yeah for-for many people it’s only choice! Really

FG102: Mm! yeah! And I know, that that’s my point! And yeah! (In overlap) And loads of people then –

FG104: (In overlap) A preferred choice, why would you pay full price when you can have it for half?

FG103: Yeah and al-also they they choose like, cheaper (pause0 stuff. Even though, they know they don’t know about that but even though the cheaper stuff is actually (pause) less healthy?

FG104: Yeah (in overlap) price is a big factor (pause) Yup

FG103: (In overlap) Because it’s pre-processed or whatever. So I think for many people this is a real issue.

FG104: Mmhmm yeah

(FG102 agreeing yeah! Mm! throughout)  
Elliot: In som- (pause) that’s the thing! You’ve got to have sympathy for some people because (pause) people say oh no no it’s really cheap to to eat healthy look I come to this farmer’s market every weekend and and get

FG104: (In overlap) It’s not! It’s more expensive!

FG103: (In overlap) it is!

FG102: But if you want (pause) a (pause) proper I’m not just talking eatin’ I don’t know lentils every meal I’m talkin of full, substantial diet with all the essential macro and micronutrients. You need (pause)you need to, to get sort of, food that that cost, cost quite a bit more! Especially, things like protein, protein sauces. (pause) Um, (pause) it’s so much easier to buy big ninety-five pence bag of chips will last (pause) last awhile and especially if you’ve when this fam- like large families that are trying to to feed, children and (pause) give them (pause) sort of a substantial meal. Um, it mu- it must be difficult to, to provide them with all the, the nutrients that they need. Um, at sort of a low, a low cost.

(FG103 agreeing with mm mm mm throughout; nodding)

Moderator: (In overlap) So –

FG102: (In overlap) Anyone disagree?  
FG104: No?

FG102: No?

FG101: No! I- and I think and I think yeah. And I think you can, say for example you can buy a bag of carrots, fairly cheaply. And you can find them. But it cost you, you have to them do something with them so there’s also time as well as (in overlap) (inaudible) if you’re gonna cook something with carrot. You have to do that as well

FG102: (In overlap) Um, yeah yeah!

FG103: But the thing is, I guess (pause) if you buy, a bag of carrots and you got (pause) family to feed, you won’t feed them with carrots only you have to have something else to as as you said to to give them a substantial meal. You need m- like more stuff. And if you don’t have money (pause) you would you would go for like, cheaper, less healthy uh I don’t know like like (pause) meat of lower quality or something like that. (pause) uh so it’s just (pause) the only choice that you have. Cause you you can’t eat only carrots

FG101: No I didn’t say only carrots. I mean (in overlap) (inaudible) you can find

FG103: (In overlap) Yeah I mean I mean as an example but uh –

FG102: I think, I think a child in a chocolate factory they have cabbage soup for every day for dinner that they grow and uh and uh cabbages (inaudible)

(General laughter)

Moderator: So um of all the things that we discussed today such as like price health taste and accessibility, what is the most important factor to you, in deciding to choose sugar over sweeteners? We’re going back to, the original sugar versus sweetener. What will actually drive you to choose one over another? (pause) Is it health? Price? Accessibility? Understanding? Or?

FG104: Health for me I suppose?

Moderator: Mm

FG103: I would say taste? (laughs)

Moderator: Mm

FG102; I would say taste

FG101: I- yeah I just (inaudible) I just don’t find myself really doing it.

FG102: (In overlap) sweetness over

FG103: (In overlap) sugar and sweetener

FG101: I’m not really looking to compare between (in overlap) sweeteners and yeah

Moderator: (In overlap) the sources of sweetness. If it’s health aspect which part which aspect of it is it more of the, uh tooth, uh dental hygiene? Or is it, diabetes or?

FG104: Um, probably weight.

Moderator: Mm

FG104: Um, teeth, definitely teeth very important, and diabetes comes with weight so, it’s comes hand in hand. So, yeah.

Moderator: Mm

FG104: And then, yeah because weight has impact on mobility, all sorts of other issues so (pause) yeah

Moderator: Okay? Is there anything else that uh, you feel that should be brought up regarding sweetness, sugar or sweeteners that we have not touched on?

(General long pause)

FG104: Hmm (laughs) (in overlap) I thought you gonna say something

FG102: (In overlap) mo-mo-more way (pause), in, um yeah

FG101: (In overlap) (inaudible) whether there are (inaudible)

(General long pause)

FG104: Do they I don’t know how popular sweeteners are but do they have have them in coffee shops?

FG103: yeah   
FG104: They do? Okay so they ask you whether you want a sugar or sweetener

FG101: Mm, yeah was gonna ask that

FG103: You can you can choose like if you go to Costa or somewhere that

FG104: Oh okay

FG103: You you choose sugar or sweetener like when you when you get the coffee you can

FG104: Oh okay

FG103: choose the packet

FG104: and do they have a range of sweeteners? Or just one?  
FG103: Oh I don’t know. mm (inaudible)

Moderator: Usually just one type of sweetener

FG104: Ah

FG103: I don’t use them or (inaudible) but I know that people have

FG104: Yeah cause I don’t do sugar in my coffee so

Moderator: Mm

FG103: but I guess even if if you go to like McDonald’s or something th-th-they will ask you or you will be able to choose from like sugar or sweetener

FG104: Okay yeah

FG103: (In overlap) Maybe brown sugar (pause) Yeah

FG104: (In overlap) They probably just have one, so they make that choice for you really, in terms of sweeteners

FG103: Yup

FG102: I know my grandparents got told by the doctor to have (pause) um (pause) sweeteners instead of sugar

FG104: Over sugar? really?

FG102: Mm

FG104: So it’s better for, your weight I suppose then?

FG102: According to them

FG104: Exactly (laughs) yeah

FG103: (Laughs)

Moderator: Okay, um lastly can you share with me why you decided to participate in this focus group? Just out of interest.

FG104: I find it really interesting topic and hearing other people’s opinions is it’s it’s really valuable.

Moderator: Mm

FG103: Well pretty the same? Uh and I always like to you know take part in different studies to see what other people do and think? (laughs) so

Moderator: Mm

FG102: Um what the other guys said really, I enjoy participating in studies and it’s something that I’m quite interested in anyway so

FG104: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG101: Well I don’t see why I can’t help you out! You put your leaflet down in the coffee shop? Where I had that, that was by the way it was where I had that cake!

(General laughter)

FG104: Funny

FG101: Thought may as well as help you out!

FG102: Do you think the cake influenced

FG104: Mm decisions (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG101: (Inaudible) participate in a focus group. Yeah don’t know!

FG104: Yeah and it’s for research. You can um (pause) you know, address challenges um that people have, and move forward, look for innovative ways of doing things? See how to change (inaudible)

Moderator: Oh okay  
FG102: Yeah. (pause) It’ll be nice to (pause) to think that potentially our (pause) discussion

FG104: (Laughs)

Elliot: Would, inform

FG104: Mm yeah

FG103: But to be honest I don’t think that we are the best people to ask? (pause) Like you know (pause) I guess we don’t have like m- financial problems we can afford proper food and stuff so it would be good to talk to people who actually cannot?

FG102: Yeah it would be good to

FG103: So you know, to get, the information from them, uh like, if we want to address, w-w-we (pause) I mean, from our discussion it seems like we don’t have much problems with sugar or sweeteners or you know

Daniella: But we still make choices, do you see?

FG103: Well yeah that, obviously um

FG102: And we’re a percentage of the population (In overlap) I think if you look at th-

FG104: (In overlap) Yeah perhaps they actually can’t make the choice because they’ve got the money constraints

FG103: Yes

FG104: Whereas we, we can a choice? And what choice do we make when we have all the options?  
FG103: Mm, sure, sure

FG104: Yeah it’s lookin’ at it from all sorts of angles do you see

FG103: Mm, mm

FG102: And Daniel trump still eats KFC doesn’t he?

(General laughter)

FG103: That’s why he looks like this

FG104: That’s (pause) for another time!

(General laughter)

FG103: Don’t get political!

(General laughter)

Moderator: Thank you very much for all your input? I’ll stop the recording.