**14th February 2020 Friday 1pm Focus Group #FG301-303**

Moderator: Thank you all for attending. Could you, please start by introducing yourself and, the last time you had a memorable sweet food

FG301: The last time

Moderator: You consumed a memorable sweet food

FG301: A memorable one! Oh okay

Moderator: Sweet tasting

FG301: Um (pause) well I’m [participant name]. I had some-something sweet at lunch time, which would have been (pause) what’s the name I can’t name it now had a very nice pudding yesterday

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Sticky toffee pudding. Ohhhhhh!

(General laughter)

FG302: Um I’m [participant name] um (pause) I do- just because I think right now the last thing I had was, breakfast this morning and had some, y’know fruit and fibre so I know I had some sweet sultanas and some, um sweet dried bana- yeah bananas in it as well

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um, my name is [participant name]? And I had a piece of caramel shortbread about twenty minutes ago

Moderator: ooh

FG303: and it was great!

(General laughter)

Moderator: Okay? So um what comes to your mind immediately when I ask you about sweet foods?

FG301: For me, biscuits, cakes

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG301: Yeah biscuits and cakes only

FG302: Cadbury’s dairy milk? (pause) no other (pause) straight away.

(General laughter)

FG303: Uh yeah! Very similar! Uh cakes, biscuits, um

FG301: Puddings

FG303: But al-also drinks

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um (pause) and and chocolate things like that

Moderator: Mm. um, so you think of actual sweet tasting food. Do they actually, does this actually uh (pause) make you come up with any moods like oh happy thoughts! (pause) or indulgent anything like that?

FG302: Definite, definitely

Moderator: Mm

FG302: yeah as soon as, that taste of Cadbury’s chocolate? Um (pause) it it just relaxing. It feels like a treat. Um (pause) and I’ll have it if I deserve it. So, it-it’s a

Moderator: Mm

FG302: It’s a feel good thing yeah!

Moderator: Mm okay

FG301: Most people who know me (pause) that I go out with a meal, know that I look at the pudding menu before the mains

(General laughter)

Moderator: so is that a staple that you have? Every –

FG301: Not a staple! But I am (pause) um, I su-I suppose I-I (pause) I’d be, want to be certain what I’m having for pud. Before I look at the main.

Moderator: (Laughs)

FG303: It’s (inaudible – this thing?) on me because (pause) when when I go out for a meal (pause) I quite often I’ll have a starter I’ll have a main course and I quite often will not have a pudding

FG301: Mm

FG303: Unless it’s crème brulee

(General laughter)

FG303: For some reason? I always but e-everything else is just like oh I can’t be bothered

Moderator: Mm

FG303: But! I do like, sweet things? Um (pause) and it’s never been a dietary issue for me. Um I think a lot of people (pause) um stay away from it? Cause f-f-for quite obviously things like maybe diabetes? Or weight? I never have that problem (pause) so, to me, eating sweet things, is just, quite normal! Um I-I don’t necessarily look upon it as a treat. It’s like I fancy something sweet, I’m gonna have that

FG301: Mm

FG302: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG303: (Um) and that’s, that’s pretty much how it goes!

Moderator: So you mentioned that, uh you think about drinks? So usually what kind of what’s your favourite drink? Like go-to drink?
FG303: Tea?

Moderator: Do you add sugar?

FG303: Big tea drinker? I always have sugar in tea? Uh I don’t have as much now as I used to? Um but I still do have sugar in it? Um (pause) I love coke? Full fat one hundred percent coke? I probably have a can a year? I rarely drink it, but when I do, I’m reminded what a lovely drink it is!

Moderator Mm

FG303: Um (pause) yes they’re probably the main two, sweet drinks.

Moderator: How bout you [participant name]?

FG302: Um (clears throat) when I was growing up it was always, I’d always always have squash. And either orange ju- orange squash or *Ribena*

Moderator: Mm

FG302; Um, and that would be my (pause) and then obviously orange juice? I suppo- that has natural sugars in that

FG303: Mm

FG302: Um (pause) I’d still nowadays have, orange juice probably every morning? Um, but I very rarely have squash it’s usually now just water. I’ll occasionally have a, a black coffee with no sugar nowadays so. Because I know I get my sugar from other things?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: And I get them in bulk from those other things that I shouldn’t have too much of? I kinda take them out of (pause) th- the healthier options.

Moderator: Mm

FG301: I would, I’ll have, a hot drink coffee

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Never have, sugar in a hot drink. But I’ll have a Ovaltine, but that’s got loads of sugar in it. But I

FG303: Mm

FG301: I wouldn’t drink, fizzy (pause) uh (pause) orange or (pause) coke or anything like that. That’s just a personal choice don’t particularly like them.

Moderator: Mm

FG301: But I don’t think ooh sugar! I think I don’t really like ‘em

Moderator: Mm. (pause) so y- would you choose sugar over sweetener?

FG303: Definitely

FG302: Hundred per- that’s probably most passionate thing when I saw this

Moderator: Uhhuh

FG303: Mm

FG302: The, th-the supermarkets and the (pause) uh (pause) current thing about re-reducing sugar drives me crazy!

FG303: Mm

FG302: Cause I- I want natural products. I go to supermarket I’m lookin’ for (pause) where it says not arti- not artificial. I want to see sugar. I’m fine with sugar

FG303: Mm

FG302: I know what it is? I understand it. (pause) I know there’s

FG301: Mm

FG302: Other natural sweeteners and fine? We just need more well I need more information about them?

FG303: Mmhmm

FG302: Uh but a-anything artificial I avoid but th-. I know some on the back of packets constantly just drives me crazy just trying to find, natural products

Moderator: Mm (pause) is it the same?

FG301: Um (pause) I don’t particularly look at labels. Um (pause) on I-I just recently started to drink smoothies

FG302: Ooh (laughs)

FG301; I’m aware there’s a lot of sugar in those but, but I actually will check that if I’m going to buy, a smoothie, I will just check to see if they’ve added some sugar in, but I think they mostly get their sweetness from the fruits so they don’t need it so

Moderator: Mm

FG302: I think we’re lucky in this country as well cause I’ve travelled a lot and m- orange juice for example over here (pause) if it says natural, pure orange juice it is a hundred percent pure orange juice

FG303: Mm

FG302: in America for example, you try finding orange juice

FG303: Mm

FG302: That doesn’t have added sugar (pause) it used to be very hard they are getting better but they used to be yeah

FG301: Ooh

FG302: Not available!

FG303: Well the key is, is when they follow it with the word drink

FG302: Yeah

FG301: (In overlap) Drink, not (inaudible) not, yeah yeah

FG303: (In overlap) because there’s orange juice (pause) drink

FG302: (In overlap) yeah. (pause) that’s it. Yeah

FG303: (In overlap) then its’ like uh oh

FG302: (In overlap) yeah

FG301: (In overlap) it’s got something else

FG303: But yeah, I’m completely with you on this one. I hate sweeteners. I-I think they, they taste too sweet, they taste like sickly sweet to me. (pause) uh if I’m in a pub and I ask, ask for a drink of either coke or something with coke and over comes diet coke (pause) I just take one mouthful and just hand it straight back. It’s like ugh! That is horrible!

Moderator: So you can taste the difference?

FG303: Oh! Totally! Um, and (pause) and yeah! You look at, um like aspartame? Or however you pronounce it?

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG303: I mean apparently it’s delivered, to refineries in, in tankers with the skull and crossbones, symbol on it

FG302: (sniggers)

FG301: (gasps)

FG303: Because of the chemical contents within it

Moderator: Mm

FG303: So, so that’s not encouraging! (pause) Um, so yeah! I-I-I-I don’t like that aspect of it. Um, and when you start looking in ingredients and picking away what, what they put. It’s a bit like butter, it’s like okay you got butter which is milk, and then you got low fat spreads which is got like twelve or fifteen ingredients in.

FG302: Mm

FG303: Some which have E numbers on it’s just like (pause) is that better?

FG302: Mm

FG301: Mm

FG302: Yup

Antony: And, and and it’s the same with sweeteners

FG302: I remember going back to E numbers it’s probably about the same time we had artificial sweeteners and E numbers, and we were all, suddenly that they suddenly realise that E numbers were causing problems with children going hyperactive. (pause) and it was the same time you see artificial oh okay so it made me think cause uh (inaudible) w-we don’t know enough about this stuff yeah

FG303: Yeah

FG301: Mm

FG302: And and aspartame is they found out now it can cause (pause) other medical concerns which I didn’t know of until a, a couple months ago!

FG303: Mm

FG302: So (pause) yeah. (pause) prefer getting the products we understand I think?

FG301: Mm

FG303: Yeah

Moderator: Mm. But pertaining to sugar, do you have any, concerns about consuming, sugar? Just now someone mentioned about obesity? Or diabetes? Is th-

FG303: Well that was me!

Moderator: Mm!

FG303: But then there’s also the issue that you raised the kind of the hidden sugars?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Mm

FG303: Uh I’m desperately trying to remember it as, it’s something quite recently. (pause) It was like a savoury product I wish I could remember what it was. I was looking at the ingredients and –

Moderator: Ketchup?
FG303: And

FG302: (Laughs)

FG303: no! no, cause th-that has got quite a sweet taste! But (pause) um, an-and yeah I looked at the ingredients and they add sugar in it! I’m just like what! (laughs) why!

FG302: That’s even products with natural sugar in th-that I mean

FG303: Yes

FG302: There was this (pause) they were testing the two chefs on TV program only a few weeks ago and they were saying help! Do you think there’s more in this, than there is in this?

FG301: Oh yeah

FG302: And they got it wrong about half of the time?

FG303: Mm

Moderator: (Laughs)

FG302: Um (pause) and, I think it was things like white rice! For example, how much sugar is in that! um

FG303: Oh I caught a bit of that! yes! Yeah that was interesting

FG302: Mm

FG301: Th-the program awhile back, about one of the (pause) fast food outlet that had some it was not even I don’t even think it was a a a pud. And had something like twenty-eight, teaspoons of sugar in it

FG302: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Mm

FG301: and it was something the kids loved

FG303: Mm

FG302: Mm

FG301: and I think the people agree to take some of the sugar out of it

FG303: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Cause it was, it was uh (pause) sugar mountain! But it wasn’t promoted as, a sweet food!

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Yeah

FG303: Mm. I’m quite conscious I suppose nowadays that we got such, what, it all comes down to money and making things cost effective. But, you’ve got products that, that may, look healthy when you look at the ingredients actually it’s all filler it’s either

FG301: Mm

FG303: Things like flour or sugar or salt and it, they’re

FG301: Mm

FG303: just fill it up with that and a little bit of the good stuff

FG302: Mm

FG303: And then that’s what they put in the front packaging.

FG302: Mmhmm

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Mm

FG303: Mm

FG302: Yeah you have to be quite (pause) careful nowadays if you want to know what you’re eating?
FG303: yes

Moderator: Mm. how about like, issues with tooth decay and loss? Do you associate that with eating too much sugar?

FG301: Yeah (pause) I think –

FG302: I’ve had too much

(General laughter)

FG301: I think that lil that message is less (pause) well I-I think probably den- dental health generally has improved and I think the message is not so (pause) in your face now. (pause) That’s my feeling but

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG301: Yeah

Moderator: So we have diabetes, obesity, hidden hidden sugar? And tooth decay and loss. Will you actually reduce your sugar consumption based on these reasons?

FG303: Well just come back to tooth decay I mean tooth decay for other reasons (pause) gosh I should go and work for the sugar industry actually I’m just thinking that

(General soft laughter, smiles)

FG303: Poor old sugar! um (pause) obviously sugar is a bad one (pause) um but then somebody pointed out recently, you eat a bar of chocolate it melts in your mouth

FG301: Mm

FG303: You eat a bag of crisps and they stay, suck on your teeth.

FG301: Mm
FG303: For the bacteria t- to feast on quite happily. So in some ways, crisps are more of a problem for tooth decay than chocolate! Um (pause) and so yeah if you’re gonna eat a toffee or a boiled sweet, that’s gonna have more of a negative impact on your teeth than maybe just having a cup of tea with sugar in it. (pause) um (pause) but what’s more important is is how you take care of your teeth cause I think (pause) a dentist once told me y-yo-your mouth can sustain five sugar hits. (pause) Um, after you’ve cleaned your teeth. (pause) so if you are regularly cleaning your teeth (pause) um, then it shouldn’t be a problem if you’re moderate in your intake.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: And I’ve never had a filling in my adult life. So

Moderator: Mm

FG301: And I- I think there’s more detail now in um (Pause) or perhaps, perhaps as you get older you pay more attention because (pause) you know that they used to say, i-it was a simple equation between eat sweets, rot your teeth

FG303: Mm

FG301: And others say be careful what you eat (pause) and (pause) it’s okay to have a certain amount. And they’re saying that um (pause) there should be a gap of something like twenty minutes between eating, and cleaning your teeth. Because if you clean the teeth (pause) the acid that’s been naturally produced, you’re actually rubbin’ the acid onto your, enamel. So they say wait.

FG303: Mm!

FG301: And make sure that you drink, uh water after sugary drink or a sugary meal

FG303: Mm

FG301: so that’s lots of detailed information now. Not bu-

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Not just bout sugar, but they’re saying sugar’s, okay

Moderator: Mm

FG301: But just be a bit more careful than, than you might have been

FG303: Mm

FG302: Haven’t heard that bit about the waiting bit

FG301: Yeah

FG303: It’s interesting

FG302: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG301: My sister told me that. yeah it is.

FG303: Mm!

FG301: I think it is documented now. What yo-you probably preachin’ (laughs) preaching (inaudible) (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG303: She knows all of it.

Moderator: So have you, thought about cutting down your sugar consumption like personally?

FG303: Mm, no

Moderator: No?

FG302: Mm, no

FG303: I mean I, like I said earlier on I have in tea! But that, that that is mostly personal taste!

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Uh over the years um (pause) I just realise hmm I think I prefer have a little less sugar right now. I’m not motivated by any health reasons or any any concerns about sugar.

Moderator: Purely by taste

FG303: Mm.

FG302: Suppose I-I have done. (pause) cause my metabolism has unfortunately slowed down I used to be able to eat, loads of it. Um, no problem at all won’t make the slightest difference. Wouldn’t change my mood behaviour or anything. It was just, I loved it, didn’t cause any noticeable difference. But now, if I eat too much yeah (pause) af-after Christmas I-

FG301: Mm

FG302: That’s that’s not reducing suddenly you’ve decided (laughs)

FG303: Mm

FG302: So yes I do uh but also (pause) when I do, I do treat it as like a reward? And I won’t eat too much at a time? But I will also then make sure I’m going cycling or playing tennis for hours and, or I’ve done that first

Moderator: Mm

FG302: So (pause) I, I will make sure I-I (laughs)

Moderator: Work for it.

FG302: Work for it. Exactly

FG303: Mm

FG302: And then I deserve it

Moderator: Mm.

FG301: Yeah I’m I’m thinking about it, at th-the moment for reasons I haven’t established I’m not exercising apart from (pause) playing table tennis which isn’t really hugely demanding. And I’m probably, as big as now as I’ve ever been and I got this little dialogue going in that thinks you can either (pause) eat less and stay, not doing much exercise , or ideally eat a bit less and exercise a bit more. Because I usually do a lot of exercise. But not at the moment. But I know (pause) you can’t sustain that. your weight’s just gonna go like that. Uh plus fo-for me, if you have (pause) um cause we used to think cause um (pause) biscuits and sweets as treats. But now

FG303: Mm

FG301: I, know (pause) probably a lot of people th-they have their daily fix. (pause) but for me if you having something daily, it kinda ceases to be treat then
FG302: Yeah

FG301: So again I’ve got this

FG303: Mm

FG301: Conversation well how? How often (pause) could you or should you have something so that when you actually have, I mean I could have a pudding every day but then reach a point I say oh! Buh! Pudding! I don’t want to do that cause I love my puddings

FG303: (laughs)

FG301: so I think well (pause) two a week or something. But. there’s a lot of messages around and I think now, there’s more of an emphasis on (pause) people (pause) lookin’ at it thinking right what do I do? But th-then some people think that’ll never happen to me. Whoosh! Shall eat what I want. That

FG303: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Different strokes for

FG302: Mm!

FG301: Different folks

FG303: Yeah

Moderator: Mm! (pause) so if you can provide a rough estimate, what do you think is the *Public Health England*’s daily recommended allowance for sugar? (inaudible) sugar?

FG301: Is it in spoons or?

Moderator: It can be in in sugar cubes? Or grams?
FG301: oh cubes! (pause) (in overlap) I don’t –

FG303: (In overlap) I pr- I know it’s, probably about quarter what I actually eat? I never looked at the figure because (pause) when I go and do sport and I feel I actually need more energy?
Moderator: Mm

FG301: Mm

FG302: And I’ll (pause) you take the electrolytes, but you still you still need some sugar to keep you so actually they’re redu- I need more! (laughs) if I’m working for it you know? So I don’t (Pause) I don’t. I know the alcohol one but I don’t look at sugar because I don’t. it’s not something’s worried me.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Four cubes?

Moderator: Mm. so it’s actually, seven cube about seven cubes?

FG301: Mm

Moderator: Which is thirty grams a day. So a can of coke has uh the original one has about thirty five grams? Which is, nine sugar cubes? And then an *Innocent* smoothie which is the normal, three hundred- and sixty-ml bottle has eleven sugar cubes? And the largest size of hot chocolate from *Starbucks* is sixty grams which is fifteen sugar cubes?

FG303: (gasp)
Moderator: And twice the amount of the daily recommended allowance

FG303: Mm

FG301: Has that smoothie got added sugar or it that fruit sugar?

Moderator: No it’s just fruits

FG301: (gasp)

Moderator: But it’s still con- um considered as sugar in your body to be processed

FG302: Ooohh

FG301: Mmmm? Just acquired a new sugar habit! oooohh!

(General laughter)

FG302: Do you know with public health England, do they, is that based on the amount of activity a average person is doing? Or d-

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Does that not affect it?

Moderator: Average

FG302: Okay. So if you are doing more, then y-you. (pause) that could theoretically raise and s- (pause) uh. Similarly if you’re doing less exercise, you should, reduce that

Moderator: Mmmm I think that one is more for like calories? The total calories that

FG302: Okay

Moderator: Of course your calories can come from carbohydrates

FG302: Mm, mm

Moderator: Such as sugar

FG302: Yeah

Moderator: Yeah

FG303: Okay I got this stupid question. Why are they recommending that? Um on th (pause) is is that just purely, to maintain, to try and maintain a healthy weight? Is is that where they’re coming from?
Moderator: That’s like the maximum that you should eat before you start to have health issues. Like diabetes before you start to be, high highly at risk. Of course they will, prefer it if you eat less of it

FG301: So that right, it- all anybody’s gotta do is, have, some coke. (In overlap) And if you have nothing else in the day? You’re still over!

Moderator: (In overlap) And you’re (inaudible) you’ll hit (pause) yeah

FG303: Mm

FG302: Yeah that’s (In overlap) no (pause) so you can’t even have a a meal that a lot of people would consider fine

FG301: (In overlap) that seems a bit of extreme

FG301: Yeah

FG302: Like uh, something with white rice and (pause) um

FG301: Mm!

Moderator: White rice definitely has lesser than a can of coke

FG302: Mm but I mean if you had it on (laughs)

Moderator: Mm, yeah

FG301: Mm (sigh)

Moderator: So, does this information actually surprise you? (pause) Or make you wanna eat, less of, sugar containing food and drinks?

FG303: (sigh) No to both of those!

FG302: Mm

Moderator; Mmhmm

FG303: Um. Just to expand that I mean I’m

Moderator: Mm

FG303: I’m looking at that

Moderator: Mm!

FG303: Seven sugar cubes, a day. Okay, fair enough. Everybody’s different. But, I would reckon I probably consume (pause) five to ten times that amount every day. And probably have done all my life. (pause) I’m fifty-eight. I’m underweight

(General laughter)

FG303: Rarely ill. Um, so, yeah! It’s it’s an interesting one! (pause) um I’m not gonna dismiss it. But it needs, more unpacking. Um and who knows what’s gonna happen tomorrow? Could fall down dead tomorrow who knows but um (pause) and I and I think what you said a-about tying it in with exercise and things like that? That’s also very important (pause) so, I’m not gonna dismiss it but I’m gonna put a question mark all over it

FG302: Mm

FG301: Mm

Moderator: So you mentioned that y-you eat- more like many times more than that. are you talking about total sugar or added sugar? Because (In overlap) this is referring to added sugar

FG303: (In overlap) Well, there you go! I’m talking about added sugar.

Moderator: Okay

FG303: W-what I’m putting in my tea! For example.

FG301: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Or the occasional cake I might have.

Moderator: Mm
FG303: In terms of sugar I’m consuming in, in the foods that I’m eating?

Moderator: Mm

FG303: God! I wouldn’t know!

FG302: Mm

FG303: Um (pause) you mentioned though that programme about bout rice

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Uh we-well bread’s the same!

FG302: Yeah! Yeah

FG303: I don’t eat a lot of bread but I do eat bread

FG301: Mm

FG303: And that generates a lot of sugar. um (pause) so add that in?

FG301: Mm

FG303: Blimey! I woul- wouldn’t! I wouldn’t want to think!

(General laughter)

FG303: Um (pause) and I’m not I’m not dismissing it

Moderator: Mm!

FG303: I am mindful of it and I keep an eye on it, but at the moment the old body is ticking along quite fine? So I’m not gonna get worried about it

Moderator: Mm

FG302: I think (pause) until (pause) there’s some sort of, uh explanation as to why we should reduce sugar, if we are being healthy?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: And you know, doing exercise?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Then I wouldn’t change my approach. And I like know exactly what you said!

FG303: Mm

FG302: Because, it hasn’t explained I mean there’s an obesity problem so I think that’s what started the whole, cut down on sugar thing. But then they’re saying use sweeteners which I think are worse!

FG303: Mm!

FG302: So all these arguments go against what I think naturally and I haven’t got an obesity problem, I’ve been refused to be diagnosed for diabetes cause they say I’m too slim! (laughs) so they wouldn’t even test me which his, which I know is is actually a risk! But (pause) I still I wanna see that (pause) evidence?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: A-and yeah like it’s education isn’t it? But they can’t just put that out there as, we think you should eat less without explaining why and who it affects and what

Moderator: Mm

FG302: If you if you change this factor then you could eat more if you change this you could eat less. Or if you continue on this route, it definitely means this! (pause) but you don’t have those stats I don’t think!

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Correct me, or they can correct me if I’m wrong!

(General laughter)

Moderator; That’s interesting! How bout you? How do you feel about?

FG301: About?

Moderator: This information?
FG301: Um (pause) yeah I- I- I (pause) I kind of knew about these smoothies um (pause) but (pause) I just look at that as sort of, and that’s more likely to make me think, I’ll do more exercise rather than cut down (pause) um and I and I-I-I didn’t know that was the message but I think if (pause) if *Public Health England* is saying that and they’re not (pause) saying anything about exercise as well (pause) it’s it’s a partial message really. (pause) Um and I don’t know if people who sort of (pause) have six cans of coke a day or something will just think ugh! So what?

FG303: Mm

FG302: Mm

Moderator: (laughs) Okay.

FG301: The nanny state it’s the nanny state telling us what to do again! (sigh)

FG302: (In overlap) Mm

FG303: Cause exercise is the key bit because if they’re concerned about sugar with obesity

FG301: (In overlap) Yeah. Yeah

FG303: And sugar is (pause) one hundred percent energy that’s all it is

FG301: Mm

FG303: So if you are not if you are consuming sugar and you’re not doing anything to burn it off, then the body is just gonna, you know you can’t destroy energy, so the body’s gonna store it, for later use! Hence fat! Um (pause), so (pause) it’s like everything if you consume something you gotta do something to, to use that (pause) so people consume sugar then they’ve, (pause) just gotta be, a little busier.

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

FG303: And work it off! (pause) I suppose)

(General agreement of mm yeah; general laughing and nodding)

FG301: Mm, yeah.

Moderator: So um actually a recent report showed that twenty seventeen, was the first time that bottled water, exceeded the sales for Coca-Cola sales.

FG301: Ooh!

Moderator: Why do you think people are switching to a water option?

FG303: (Clicks tongue) (sigh) Because they think it’s better than the water coming out of the tap.

Moderator: (Laughs)

FG302: Oh yes! Yeah I forgot, I was trying to work out the angle would be. I would agree with that

FG303: Mm and that (pause) that has been tested actually um (pause) uh Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall I think it was? Bless him? He-he was handing out bottles of water his own brand of bottled water

FG301: Oh yes

FG303: But it was just tap water!

FG301: Mm

FG303: And people were going like oh yeah! That’s brilliant! Would you would you have tap water? No! it’s the same thing!

FG302: Mm (laughs)

FG301: Yes! yeah

FG303: And people were like OHHH! yeah

Moderator: (laughs)
FG303: Um (pause) so it’s become a bit of a fashion thing

FG301: Yeah

FG303: Um (pause) to be seen with the the bottle of of mineral water but yeah I think I’d rather have something that’s been cleaned and coming out of tap than than something’s been (inaudible – taken out of a hole) out of the ground. Um, personally

FG302: I think it comes from maybe the plastics issues as well. Well not not not to use the plastic bottles cause clearly that’s worse! But, the small um micro plastic, that people feel it’s lessen or, zero in bottled water but that’s not been found to be true either. They’ve they’ve some bottled water they found there was more microplastics in than tap water

FG303: (In overlap) Yes. (pause) Mm.

FG302: So (pause) yeah I’d agree. I-I-I-I can’t imagine that the water population is reducing coke use for water just because it’s healthier

(General laughter)

FG301: I-think that water’s a fad I think it will go out the same it came in actually. But you go to meetings now virtually everybody has the water bottle

FG303: Mm

FG301: And even if you haven’t got one which I- I sometimes take a glass in when I’m thirsty but otherwise I wouldn’t bother. Um, and I think it would just die a death really.

FG303: Mm

FG301 Uh but actually funnily enough I buy and drink bottled water cause my tap water is revolting

Antony: Mm

FG301: Absolutely revolting

FG303: Mm

FG301: And I have a running battle with one of my sisters who comes to stay and she says there’s nothing wrong with your water and she’ll drink it. I’ll drink it and I think it’s horrible. So I need buy it cause i- that’s the only way for me to drink water.

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Mm

FG303: Mm

Moderator: Okay? Um will you personally change to a water option if you were drinking (pause) coke.

FG303: Sorry say it again?
Moderator: Will you change to a water option? From um, like let’s say a full fat original coke

FG303: Mm

Moderator: Will you change to, drinking water instead?

FG303: Not necessarily? But then like I said earlier, I- I rarely drink coke, I like it but I rarely drink it. Um (pause) I think basically cause I find a can too much! The little bottles they used to sell were perfect! Um but a can is just too much! Um (pause) so what I’m (pause) I mean generally speaking I should probably drink more water, than I, than I do? But then, I drink quite a bit of tea? Which is eighty percent water? And of course there’s water in wine!

(General laughter)

FG301: Yeah!

FG303: Um, but yeah I probably should drink more water. (pause) During the day. Mm.

Moderator: W-what do you usually drink will replace it with water?

FG302: (In overlap) I (pause) well I I don’t normally drink, I do normally drink water so.

Moderator: Okay

FG302: So I went straight to it (laughs)

Moderator: Oh okay (laughs)
FG302: Yeah I mean that’s from cycling obviously I’m ha– I’m perspiring I wanted something to refresh me quickly I wa- I don’t want to having burn off sugar from earlier I don’t want to go and now put it back on again straight away that would seem silly. So, I’d always, have water now at least for the last twenty years anyway. Um (pause) occas- I might have a Fanta? Or you know the equivalent of a coke?
Moderator: Mm

FG302: But it’s on- it it would be if I’m, in a restaurant because I- I don’t want to drink alcohol and there’s nothing else in the menu that looks healthy? Cause I wouldn’t pay for water in a restaurant because it they overpriced?
FG303: Mm

FG302: Asking for the tap water they just. Feel a bit awkward? Um (pause) or if I, yeah doing sport and I think oh! I can afford to, have a can of Fanta because

FG303: Mm

Moderator: Mm

FG302: You know? I’ve just done three hours on the court! (laughs)

FG303: (laughs)

FG301: And I- I think your body metabolism if you listen to it will tell you what to drink so I know when I’m really really thirsty, it’s got to be water

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

FG301: and lots of it quickly. And I know people say if you are thirsty, it’s too late. You know you are dehydrated. But (pause) I-I do think you can listen to your body by doing that but if I was really thirsty I’d definitely wouldn’t drink (pause) anything fizzy or sweet because it won’t satisfy that thirst. For me it wouldn’t anyway.

Moderator: Mmhmm

FG303: Yeah that’s an inter- I don’t know uh useful or not but after. I’ve listen to my body so after playing a too much tennis last summer (pause) and I wanted milk! And I’ve never, really drank milk

FG301: Ooh! That’s interesting. Mm

FG303: Mm

FG302: But my body told me go and get and I- and then afterwards I bought a milkshake of course that’s got a bit of sugar in it

FG301: Mm

FG302: but I thought that was really healthy. my body was just like you need that

FG301: Mm

FG302: And now I now I always have a chocolate milkshake (laughs) in the fridge, after playing tennis

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Mm

FG302: Yeah cause it- yeah just listen to the body

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

Moderator: So you actually have a craving and?

FG302: No! It’s not a craving! It just said look I need, there’s something I- you you you’ve used up too much and you need something that water’s not gonna give you! That’s what it was!

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

Moderator: interesting

FG301: Cause they do talk about protein after exercise don’t they?

FG302: Mm and I’ve been taking some electrolytes but they weren’t giving enough
FG301: yeah. Mm (pause) mm

FG302: Um yeah a fizzy drink wouldn’t do it

FG301: Mm. mm

FG302: So (pause) I need something different

FG301: Yeah

FG302: And I and I found it really did help as well!

FG301: Yeah

Moderator: Mm

Alas: And then I looked it up online and actually it did say actually milk is good for you after exercise, so I thought oh! Wow! And it was genuinely that was after after the event

FG301: (In overlap) yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Moderator: So um time check? We are one third done? So if you are okay we will continue?

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

Moderator: Okay do you, want some –

(General agreement of mm; nodding)

FG302: It’s a test! It’s definitely a test!

FG303: No I’m good!

Moderator; No! Okay so are you familiar with the variety of sweeteners, currently available?

FG301: No

FG302: I know there’s a natural one although I can’t remember the name of it cause it –

FG303: (In overlap) Is it Stevia?

FG302: I don’t think so

FG303: Oh okay

FG302: I thought it was as shorter name than that. It was a- they went to, somewhere in Africa and they show this green leaf product that they said was –

Moderator: (In overlap) Stevia

FG302: Oh is it! Oh Stevia! (Inaudible) Yes is that! Yes!

FG303: (In overlap) Right. Right okay

Moderator: It’s the, the green bottle over there

FG302: Oh really!

FG303: Ohhh

Moderator: I wanted to see if you guys will pick, sweeteners or not (laughs)

FG302: I’ve never seen it

Moderator: (laughs)

FG303: I’ve never seen it I’m sure

FG301: Oh is that the green one!

Moderator: Yeah, it’s the it’s the green box.

FG301: Ohhhh! I’ve seen that! Ohh

FG303: Mmm

Moderator: (laughs) Anyway, so um (pause) this is just to, to show you the different types of, um sources of sweetness? So of course you have the naturally occurring ones like honey and sugar? (pause) Um you have the artificially made ones? Which can be made from natural sources and, or synthetic sources which are like what you commonly assume as artificial sweeteners so the chemical white stuff? So um, just now [participant name] mentioned about aspartame? (pause) it’s, artificially made from synthetic sources? And then um, [participant name] you mentioned about Stevia which is artificial but made from natural sources. (pause) so knowing that there are different categories of sweeteners, will you actually, consider differently? (pause) or you still sweep them all under, oh! Artificial (pause) chemicals

FG302: Uh do-does the natural, yes I definitely consider them? Um, it obviously comes down to taste? Um I probably want and, get it and make put it in my own recipes and see how it (pause) changes things from having sugar in them?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Um and I’d want to look at what the (pause) health benefits or cons are with it and if they’re fully known or not.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Well I’m no dietitian. But fructose (pause) allulose which I’ve never heard of, um they all come along I guess with glucose and sucrose, so they’re all sugars, they’re all part of the sugar family. (pause) so I guess there’re the same as table sugar. So then you get things like Stevia which is naturally occurring so (pause) I’m just curious as to what (pause) the benefit, if that’s the word, of a natural sweetener like Stevia is over another natural sweetener which is sugar

FG302: Mm

FG303: Um, so I’ll be interested to, to know what that is. Um, the synthetic sweeteners no I’d I’d never consider them

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um, but the natural sweeteners yeah I suppose I would? But it’s just the like I said earlier, I- I don’t really have a need to!

FG302: Mm

FG303: Which I suppose, I- I’m I’m not being glib. It’ s just like um (pause) I’m okay with sugar? So (pause) uh my partner uses Stevia? Um (pause) and yeah I- I get the high intensity bit because it really is very sweet! Um (pause) but I- I- I don’t yet see a need to sort of go down the route myself!

FG302: Mm

Moderator: Mm (pause) will you opt for

FG302: Yeah, like I said, it’s it-it’s to understand what the health benefits if there are any or there are, and I assume there’ll be a cost impact as well? And then its not like we’re running out of sugar? (laughs) So, it’s not gonna help the planet. So I need to an angle to really think why why would I want to, change and if (pause) if I saw in, products that are on sale? (pause) I would look it up first and think okay, again why? And then I’ll think about it. But the immediate advertising is all about the artificial yeah the artificial sweeteners and at the moment, I avoid them

Moderator: (In overlap) Mm

FG303: (In overlap) Mm

Moderator: Mm but so what is the deciding factor for you to, grab the sweetener instead of the sugar? Is it if it’s lower price? Or (pause) you have a knowledge that it is, lower calories or?

FG302: Yeah! It would it would have to be the health benefit.

Moderator: Health benefit, okay

FG302: Yeah

FG301: I don’t add sugar really to anything. (pause) and um, I, for me personally I wouldn’t ever stop to think about whether a sweetener was good bad or indifferent I just don’t use them so they’re not really on my radar

FG303: Mm

FG302: Mm

FG301: So, just ignorant (laughs)

FG302: Yeah the only reason I have sugar in the house is to make a recipe with. I don’t (pause) hardly ever I can’t think of a time I actually add it to anything if I make a coffee or, drink it never added so the sugar I have is all in products that are already contain it

Moderator: (In overlap) Mm, mm

FG301: And yet as children when we had cereals (pause) when we were you know, school age? Always put sugar on that

FG302: yeah! That’s true

(General agreement of yeah! Mmhmm mmhmm; nodding)

FG301: nobody talked about sugar on cereals!

FG303: yeah forgot about that!

FG301: It was the norm!

FG302: It did!

FG303: Well I still do! My- my- my- my cereal of choice is cornflakes a sprinkle of sugar on it

(General murmurs ooh mm; nodding)

FG301: Yeah!

FG303: Every day!

FG302: (laughs) Obviously if you think about it back to your ABC, you put sugar on your bread don’t you! (laugh)

FG301: Ohhhh yessss! Yeahhhh

(General laughter)

FG301; But it wasn’t, it wasn’t so demonised then!

FG303: No

FG301: That was just the norm!

FG303: Mm

FG301: You had sugar, you had sweets.

Moderator: (In overlap) D’you

FG301: (In overlap) the these these days it seems to be demonised

Moderator: Do you think it’s over demonised? Like it’s unnecessary?

FG302: I think I think (pause) the obesity problem is is real, in this country, it’s it’s (pause) unbelievable. And how fast it’s happened as well! So no, I can see why they’re looking for angles to how they want to help. Because obviously then there’s the impact on the health service. Um, but (pause) just looking at sugar and (pause) um making a blanket (pause) um and (inaudible) everybody unless like I said earlier, unless there is uh you know that everyone should be doing that, seven cubes and because otherwise, everyone’s affected? Then I don’t think it’s the right thing to be doing

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG303: But research changes all the time and and all food stuffs have been through this. Um (pause) eggs? Had it?

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG301: Oh yeah

FG303: Uh (pause) twenty thirty years ago? (pause) um

Moderator: Salt?

FG303: Salt? Um (pause) and (pause) you get caught up in the whole white noise of it and, everybody jumps on the bandwagon and then a, a couple of years later, um (pause) it’s qualified. Um there was this thing about processed meat, a couple of years ago. Don’t eat processed meat, processed meat is bad for like gout cancer and things like that! But nobody comes up and says, how much or how little you should take. So you’re therefore thinking

FG302: Mm

FG303: Well I like the old sausage every now and then. So I gotta stop eating them? And then about eighteen months it was like yes you can have one and half sausages a day?

FG302: (Laughs)

FG303: A day?!

FG301: (Laughs)

Antony: I don’t reckon I have that a week! Oh okay! I can relax now!

(General laughter)

FG303: Um (pause) and so yeah there’s a lot of lot of this th-th-the the news media pack up on the headline and they don’t really fully explain it And everybody just sees the headline and (pause) and and (pause) just changes habits, sometimes unnecessarily. Um (pause) yeah that’s that’s how I see it

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

Moderator: Mmhmm. But let’s say if a restaurant, the they gave you the pudding options? They actually let you choose whether to have sugar or sweetener inside? Which would you pick?

FG301: (Sigh) Hmm (pause) I maybe care about the price!

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Rather than discriminate between sugar and sweetener

FG302: I was thinking that

FG303: If the price was the same though? Hmm?

Moderator: (laughs)

FG301: If the price was the same? Um (pause) I’d probably stick with sugar! cause I have had stuff with sweeteners in and I think it is extremely sweet. So with sugar obviously sugar’s sweet as well but my perception is not knowing sweeteners very much I think they give the food, an even sweeter taste. That’s what. So, probably go stay with the sugar

Moderator: Mm, mm (Pause) do you think there’s enough information on sweeteners now?

FG302: Only if you look for it

FG301: Mm

FG302: Yeah it’s not, out there. It’s not. All we hear is don’t have sugar, not here’s what you could have and here’s your choice and here’s why you should choose those

Moderator: Mm. So are you are you concerned with the long-term consumption of, sweeteners?

FG302: I’m concerned about short term consumption of sweeteners! (laughs)

(General laughter)

FG302: Yeah I- I don’t see any I wouldn’t (pause) I just don’t think anything artificial is good and and if I look at the natural ones, I haven’t seen them mentioned on anything yet but (pause) I suppose cause I only see artificial sweeteners and I I I’m always looking for the natural product

FG303: Mm

FG302: But I’ve not seen Stevia mentioned on anything if out there. If it is, then, they need to start advertising about that (laughs) cause I would I would at least try it.

Moderator: Mm. okay.

FG303: My issue with sweeteners is primarily taste. Um (pause) if I was in a men- in a restaurant and the menu was a pudding containing sugar or a pudding containing sweetener? I wouldn’t even look at the price. I would just go with the one with sugar. Um (pause) I’ve mentioned wine? Uh another favourite is cider?
FG302: Mm

FG303: Um a lot of ci ciders have sweeteners in them!

Moderator: Mm

FG303: So I will I know that one now that doesn’t have it but I would go through them turn on the back look sweeteners put it back yeah sweeteners put it back yeah uh ah! No sweeteners great I’ll have that!

Moderator: (laughs)

FG303: Cause it. Yeah! I just don’t like the taste of them.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um (pause) but for people people who’re on, who’re on diets and who need to be a diets, then um (pause) if they have to go for sweeteners then I- I think there is a concern, a-about the chemical content of them. Um (pause) I’m just (pause) I’m just a bit cynical. I know that they can’t be that good long-term putting things like that, in your system

FG302: Mm

Moderator: So do you think (pause) the government or like health organisations’ recommendations should be about replacing sugars with sweeteners? To to tackle, obesity and diabetes? To lower sugar consumption? Should it be about replacing them with sweeteners?

FG301: So is that for us personally or for the for the

Moderator: No, generally

FG301: (In overlap) To the public.

Moderator: yeah

FG301: Um

FG302: Only if they have fully researched the health benefit, of those products first, and they make those clear.

Moderator: Mm

FG302: But, as you were saying, we don’t necessarily know them yet! To my (inaudible) a few years away!

FG303: (In overlap) Mm

FG303: Mm

FG301: So ho-ho- is there something, In the public domain about sweeteners!
Moderator: Yeah! Actually um

FG301: oh! (laughs) I see! (laughs)

Moderator: There have been uh some encouragement to switch to sweetener usage?
FG301: Really! Where’s where’s it then?

Moderator: mm. *World Health Organisation* for one?

FG301: Okay

Moderator: Yeah. So they’re asking. Um, they would say uh (pause) not too much sweeteners but if you but if you still want to go for sweet food you can replace sugar with sweeteners and they do have approved list of, sweeteners for usage

FG301: how long has that been out?

Moderator: No idea how long it’s been in place, sorry

FG301: Never heard of! Have you heard of that!

FG302: I haven’t

FG301: Have you heard of that?

FG303: No! but to be honest (pause) (sigh) cause I don’t like sweeteners I don’t go looking for it

(General agreement, no mm no!; nodding)

Antony: So but that’s interesting

(General agreement, yeah!; nodding)

FG302: I suppose, yeah if we look for things, we’ll find it. That’s what I was saying though if they they need to present this! If and then if you saying approved, but what was the basis for the approval? Approvals, you know, what do they go through what test do they do how long were those studies done for? Um

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG301: I think my concern would be if people, mis-interpreted the message that said sweeteners are okay, and sugars are less okay

Moderator: Mm

FG301: People might think, well I won’t bother exercising now and they think then if if I just turn to sweeteners

FG302: (In overlap) that’s a very good point

FG301: That’s unsorted really

FG302: That’s a very good point. And yeah that would be a very bad message!

(General agreement, mm mm; nodding)

FG301: But w-where’s you said the *World Health Organisation* uh where, um I mean, you know (pause) presumably the the the broad sheets would have it but where else would you get uh a *World Health Organisation* message?

Moderator: Um (pause) I think (pause) from (pause) uh, like let’s say (pause) for the FDA? For US FDA and for Euro (pause) ESFA? They have a list of sweeteners that they actually pass on to *World Health Organisation* to kind of generally recommend to different countries, to adopt.

FG301: Mm

Moderator: So uh, like uh (pause) normal general public won’t go looking for *World Health Organisation* messages?

FG301: No

Moderator: But at the same time this leads to governments trying to

FG301: Mm

Moderator: Creating different changes like strategies just that, maybe it hasn’t been passed on yet

FG301: Mm

Moderator: But um, in, diabetes patients? The doctors actually tell them to switch to, uh sweeteners instead of sugar

FG301: Do they?

FG302: Mm

Moderator: For for patient, diabetes patients

FG301: Cause then we’ve got the message about drinking and how many units you can have

FG303: Mm

FG301: But I I wasn’t aware of the sugar thing

Moderator: Mm (pause) think it’s in brochures and stuff? By *Public Health England*?

FG302: Mm

Moderator: But yeah, we (in overlap) we recognise that it’s not –

FG301: (In overlap) (inaudible) the right stuff

Moderator: (laughs)

FG303: You see what, what pops out every now and then it doesn’t get enough coverage really is this whole thing about a balanced diet

FG302: Yeah

FG303: And (pause) I probably shouldn’t say this in an academic institute but I do sometimes get a little bit cynical when the scientific community start banging their drum about something. Cause it’s like, uh really? What research grant are you after this time?

(General laughter)

FG303: Um and they like to slam things so you you get one report come out and it’s like well you know one swallow does not make a summer? Let’s read others and get a balanced view. Um (pause) and (pause) the issue of obesity and diabetes is a is a critical one. But it’s not just about cutting down on sugar. it is about, your diet as a whole. And exercise. Um (pause) and I think that’s just an as important message as well

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG302: There’s a huge problem with lack of exercise in this country. Um, just work (inaudible – yeah but yeah working) playing at tennis club the coach there was like trying to get young people (pause) to stay playing once they hit teenage years

FG303: Mm

FG302: Is is an absolute nightmare. He says nowadays they’re all on their pones?
FG301: Mm

 FG302: And to get them off is an absolute (pause) impossibility

FG303: Mm

FG302: His own children, he he takes out on the tennis court first thing in the morning and he, forces them to run around they’re not allowed phones and he says if I’m going to be a pushy parent? Fine I don’t care I know I’m doing the right thing for my kids

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG302: Um but th-there is a, problem in this country about people (pause) staying in sport I mean th- when they’re young kids they’ree fine they run around. But get to teenage years, they’re just then stop.

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG302: And then they’ll only then start doing maybe in their, early thirties? And then they start when it’s actually we need to do it because (laughs)

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG302: The weight’s going on? And they’re watching their friends and the pe-peer group obviously helps. Because everyone then start doing it! But teens and twenties I don’t think! (sigh)

FG303: Mm

FG302: They’re just not doing their sport like they used to

Antony: Mm

Moderator: Mm. So you think exercise recommendations should go hand in hand with (pause) reducing sugar

(General agreement, mm yeah; nodding)

FG302: Definitely yeah

Moderator: Okay

FG302: Well I mean, but then, if the exercise recommendations were followed, I don’t reckon you’d need that, reduction in sugar!

FG301: Right

Moderator: Mm

FG302: That but that’s what I go back to that original thing about, someone like me, I mean I-I’m I am eating way too much sugar. but I’m also doing way more exercise than the average person (pause) I would say average. Um (pause) so is there actually a link? Am I actually safe to eat the amount of sugar I’m eating or is there actually a problem and I shouldn’t be? I don’t know the answer to that but because, I’m not having any problem as you were saying as well

FG303: Mm

FG302: Then you know, th-there’s nothing to spur you to change. (pause) And you feel you being demonised cause actually you deserve that treat cause you’ve worked for it

Moderator: Mm. But do you think others should cut down on their sugar recommend- uh sugar intake?

FG302: (In overlap) I think it’s to do more exercise

(General laughter)

FG303: Yeah, also if th-

FG302: (In overlap) If they can’t of course, if they, you know they got a physical disability and they can’t do it (pause) then (pause) I guess they have to think of other other ways of, staying healthy

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG303: All food is energy. I mean sugar is massively. But all food is energy. Um so if you don’t (pause) do physical activity, it doesn’t need to be, um, structured exercise? Um I’m a bit of a fidget. And always have been. And it’s quite interesting, recently how that’s now been popping out in various sort of healthy guides. There’s nothing wrong with fidgeting! It’s actually quite good exercise!

(General agreement, mm yeah yeah: laughing and nodding)

FG303: and I’m like aha! Interesting. Um so yeah! You just gotta (pause) keep moving and and and just burn off that e-energy that you’re consuming. Otherwise you you can put weight on, it’s pretty straightforward.

Moderator: Interesting. (laughs) Okay, so um if we’re going back to just focusing on sugar recommendations, what do you think is the best strategy to help the general public to cut down on their sugar? If we ignore the exercise part

(General laughter)

Moderator: We focus on the sugar recommendations. Do you think, like just now someone mentioned about (pause) education on the different types of sweeteners

FG303: Mmhmm

Moderator: And how they can be used to replace sugar?

FG302: Yeah

Moderator: Do you think that’s that should start in schools? Or in workplace? Or?

FG301: So w-what I-I’m I’m actually not clear what are the health benefits of sweeteners (pause) like, compared with sugar

FG302: Mm

Moderator: Uh –

FG301: I I don’t know what

Moderator: They (pause) um, the sweeteners they have le- losser lesser calories? Or they have no calories?

FG301: Mm

Moderator: So like let’s say a can of coke

FG301: Mm

Moderator: It uh versus a diet coke. The diet coke has no sugar and no calories cause they use sweeteners.

FG301: Mm

Moderator: So, uh one part of it is the calorie aspect? The other thing is that uh, there’s no long-term, there hasn’t been found any long term

FG301: Mm

Moderator: Um, harmful effects of sweeteners? (pause) So even the r- um so all the sweeteners they kind of have like, a limit to how, how much you can use a day? And this is only, like one percent of (pause) the maximum amount of sweetener you can actually eat to, to have any harmful effects. So they they minimize the effects

FG302: Mm

Moderator: So in a way, you will never go wrong?
FG301: Mm
Moderator: With eating a swee- having a sweetener. Because there hasn’t been found to have any, and for some of the sweeteners they don’t raise your blood glucose as high?
FG301: Oh okay

Moderator As normal sugar. so that’s helpful for the diabetes patients

FG301: Yeah yeah

FG303: Mmhmm

FG302: I thought aspartame they had, found there was found issues? As you were saying as well. I thought, there is a there is a known (in overlap) health risk with aspartame

FG301: (In overlap) Yeah! I seem to remember there’s a scare and and people used to have advertise their things as aspartame-free!

FG303: Mm

FG301: In case you’re worried about it it this doesn’t has got it in it

FG302: Yeah I -I I looked this up a couple of weeks ago, like I said and

Moderator: Mm

FG302: I definitely found something that was saying no there’s there’s health risk but well they’re not very official rather than

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG302: I’m not very sure I wasn’t sure

Moderator: Mm

FG302: But still there’s enough there to go mm, that’s too risky!

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

Moderator: (laughs)
FG302: Until until till someone tells me they are hundred percent fine? (pause) Then (pause) no.

FG303: I think there’s also an issue in in hidden sugars, uh processed foods, and things like that? Uh there needs to be more awareness of that. I think the food industry need to be challenged as to do you really need to put sugar into that?

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

FG303: Um does it make that much difference to the taste? Um and there’s also (pause) it’s been talked about for years and I think some actions has been taken on it (pause) um I think there is now government legislation preventing the advertising of (pause) certain food types on children channels for example

Moderator: Yeah

FG301: Ohh

Moderator: Yes

FG303: So (pause) the the the targeting of some of these products to young children

FG302: Mm

FG303: Uh because (pause) they get way, way more than we what we did! When when we were kids (pause) um like a sugary –

Moderator: (In overlap) Way, way more sugar. or?

FG303: In terms of things that contain sugar. like sugary drinks and things like that. (pause) um (pause) it’s the whole get the master young principle isn’t it?

Moderator: (In overlap) Okay. Mm.

FG302: Mm

FG303: They they’re consuming things, and probably getting hooked onto a taste (pause) without really realising it. Um and then it’s difficult for them to shake that off as they get older. Um (pause) so in the in the sort of the whole process of promoting a balanced diet, then (pause) it’s not necessarily, just about (pause) uh cutting down on sugar cane cutting down on coke because it’s got too much sugar in it. It’s about an awareness sort of. (pause) all the other products that don’t look like sugary products

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um (pause) yeah the processed foods that are um (pause) that do contain a lot of added sugar

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Mm. You asked about where, where it should be advertised or targeted?

Moderator: Mm no. Like just a general what do you think ab- will be a good strategy to help the general public, reduce (pause) so if you mentioned about education you think you are you referring to in a workplace? Or in schools? Or?

FG302: (In overlap) Oh okay

FG301: Schools I’d think. Right (pause) from from early on, when children start being aware that, they have to eat different types of food for different body functions.

Moderator: So education on a balan- balanced diet

FG302: Mm

FG301: Yeah, balanced rather than just the sugar or just the fat but you know

Moderator: Mm

FG301: In order to keep ourselves healthy

Moderator: Mm

FG301: We need to do this. we need to have that. we need to sleep. We- a package rather than (pause) sugar

Moderator: So not telling them oh you can’t this you can’t eat that but what you should –

(General agreement, no no no; shaking their hands)

FG302: That won’t work (laughs)
Moderator: Eat instead

FG301: No

Moderator: Okay

FG303: The thing is with schools though, says somebody who, up until about eighteen months ago was working in a school (pause) um, I don’t think schools are doing too bad.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um, I’m not a big fan of Jamie Oliver but he he did bring in issue uh t-to public attention (pause) and, there are more (pause) uh schools now cooking their food, rather than (pause) having gone through a process of closing down all their (pause) their kitchens and now reopening them again (pause) um, so the actual a-awareness of diets and the provision of of food within schools is improving. But then when you read something like th-the the third most popular uh breakfast cereal for children these days is crisps

FG302: Hmm

FG301: (gasp)

FG302: Seriously? (laughs)

FG303: I heard that about six months ago?

FG301: Ohhh! No!

FG303: It, it’s cereals toast crisps in that order. And it was like, Jesus!

(General laughter)

FG303: Um (pause) so that that’s kind of where the, the message needs to to get through to. Um (pause) so yes schools are all part of the process but I think

Moderator: Family?
FG303: I get the view that battle has been, has been won there?

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Yeah it depends if the kids then go home and go mom dad can I have this for breakfast please? And they say no no you’re gonna have your Frosties!

(General laughter)

FG303: Yes!

FG301: Yeah

FG302: Y-you know so yeah. Is a is a, you’ve gotta have that rounded approach.

FG303: Yeah

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Um, but yeah I think probably the most influential are the kid are the kids if they if they understand

FG301: Mm

FG302: That helps for the future

FG303: Yeah

Moderator: How about um (pause) scare tactics and –

FG303: (laughs)

Moderator: Plain packaging like the ones that they have on cigarettes?
FG302: No no… Oh dear! (laughs)

Moderator: What do you think um do you think they will be effective?

FG302: At first, definitely. (pause) cause you look at it but once you know what it says you won’t look at it again
Moderator: Mm

FG302: You’ll decide whether not that’s okay with you (pause) what I thought.

Moderator: So it will only work the first time?

FG302: Probably. They’d have to change the wrapper every (pause) month? (laughs)

Moderator: (Laughs)

FG303: I guess what you gotta do is you gotta ask a group of smokers!

FG302: Mm

FG303: Um, cause I’ve never smoked (pause) but this is what happen (pause) with with smoking, was this type of packaging emerged. And there’s no doubt about it that there has been thankfully been a steady decline of smoking since probably the eighties? (pause) Um (pause) and it’s whether or not this type of packaging had an impact

FG301: (In overlap) Mm

FG302: Yeah

FG303: Cause it could have been other reasons. (clear throat) But if it, if it did, then I- I wouldn’t have a problem with, with that approach.

Moderator: Mm. Will you still, consume (pause) such snacks and drinks?

FG303: Yeah I probably would because I’m in a luxurious position it doesn’t really have an impact on me.

Moderator: (Laughs)

FG303: At the moment. Hmm um so (pause) yeah. Um (pause) yeah it probably wouldn’t affect my (pause) but then yeah is like, it’s like with alcohol. There there was a period in my life where I probably did consume more than I should have done and I, because of all of discussion about it you are more aware of it. And it’s like mm, maybe I won’t have a drink tonight

FG302: Mm

FG303: Whereas, ten years ago I wouldn’t given it a second thought

FG302: Yes! The awareness.! It does, well I think it does at least, make you question it and you might go (pause) no it’s fine! Or no actually not this time I’m gonna have another one tomorrow so better not. (pause) at least you at least you’re in a position to make a decision

(General agreement, mm mm; nodding)

Moderator: So doe-does this raise awareness?

FG302: Yeah. My, concern with it was is those other hidden sugars in other in other foods and then this wouldn’t go on?

FG303: Yes

FG302: And actually if you’ve had your (pause) one meal of wholemeal pasta with broccoli and no sauce on it whatsoever that’s all you’ve eaten all day? Then, why should I be scared to have a nice Cadbury’s dairy milk at the end of it? (pause) You’d feel like uhh maybe I shouldn’t and then you actually not getting enough sugar (laughs)

FG303: Mm mm

FG302: Um (pause) yeah I mean I- I I don’t know how successful the (pause) uh red orange and green
Moderator: (In overlap) Traffic light system?
FG302: (In overlap) Traffic light system has been for people, it has for me I’ve looked at it?

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Mm

FG302: Um (pause) and it has helped but I always go to the back anyway and I and I I get annoyed when it’s got everything per hundred-gram cause then you can’t calculate they do it all per (sigh) (laughs) but at least when put the red on you can turn over have a look at the hundred gram listing and go okay yeah that that’s that’s ridiculous high there shouldn’t be that much sugar or that much fat in this product I’m not gonna buy it. Um (pause) so for me that was enough. (pause) For others, yeah I think as a as a short term, I think it might work but I if you leave it on there for permanent I don’t think it’s gonna change. And I was thinking my friend who smokes (pause) he’s tried to give up numerous times and I saw him with that same packet on his table the other day and he still took a cigarette and smoked. Cause he’s used to it being there, doesn’t change his opinion.

FG303: (In overlap) Mm mm mm

FG302: He hasn’t, even with willpower he hasn’t, been able to give up

Moderator: Right (sighs)

FG301: Um (pause) to me, that that message about (pause) the high sugar (pause) is, taking the sugar out of the context of (pause) the rest of the dietary components so you could just replace high sugar with high fat. If you have a high fat diet you’re more likely to have a heart attack or a stroke. (pause) Actually, if you are an active person, and you eat sensibly on the whole but have a little bit more fat than is recommended, you’ll probably get away with it. So I and I- I don’t think that if once that message has been put there for a little while, people will cease to see it.

Moderator: Mm

FG301: And I do think by isolating (pause) components of the diet (pause) you demonizing, all the bits of the diet but instead of saying (pause) this is what a sensible diet looks like

FG302: Mm

FG301: Take it and leave it you know cause people say oh the nanny state (pause) but if there is some guidance if they want it and if they don’t they’re not gonna take any notice anyway

FG302: No

FG303: Mm

FG301: I’m alright with my fish and chips so (inaudible – can grossly obese?) but I am fine!

(General agreement, mm; nodding)

Moderator: Mmhmm (pause) Okay? How bout um sorry do you have –

FG301: No no no that’s fine

Moderator: How bout sugar tax?

FG302: Sugar tax?
Moderator: Mm

FG302: Um, yeah I think it’s unfair on those that actually (pause) are (pause) healthy (pause) and using their awareness of what’s out there I don’t. Uh it’s not fair on eve- yeah it’s not fair on everybody why why tax something just (pause) because the only reason for the tax is to stop people eating more of it. It’s not because (pause) the product itself, is causing a problem to those who use it responsibly.

FG301: Mm

FG302: Is not like, uh petrol which is you know, damaging the environment is not like (pause) cigarettes which, even if you have one of them, probably will have a slight, health effect.

FG303: Mm

FG302: Is it’s not the same category. As I understand it but that’s again, goes back to that original thing about, what’s the facts? Why is it seven cubes of sugar, for everybody?

Moderator: Mm

FG301: mm

FG303: Mm (sigh) (pause) I mean in Scotland recently, they uh (pause) they imposed minimum pricing on alcohol (pause) and it did have an impact. Um (Pause) so they are looking to drive down, consumption of sugar then it might be something that works. But but I’m I’m like you, I think it’s (pause) you know alcohol (pause) pretty much is detrimental to everybody. Smoking certainly is? So there is a very good reason to have those um (pause) powers on on those particular products. Sugar less so. Um, because like salt, the body does need it (pause) even in small quantities. So, yeah I need to know a little bit more about (pause) uh sugar tax before I can sort of, really make a clear answer on that

FG302: It’s slightly different because is is is like you can have this much and then it will be a problem
FG301: Mm

FG302: But how can you tax over consumption?

FG301: Mm

FG302: Cause you’ll get people like me that will go out and want to buy in bulk. I have before now bought (pause) well they they were four hundred gram I bought twenty four hundred-gram bars of Cadbury’s chocolate dairy milk

Moderator: (Laughs)
FG302: Because it was on a really good price!

FG301: Mm

FG302: I didn’t eat them all in one day!

FG301: (laughs)
FG302: But if they looked at it oh no you can’t buy that many one day, because it’s (laughs) then that’s not gonna work. You’re then penalised for actually just being cost effective! But it is the sort of thing that if they can find the system where actually (pause) to (pause) stop over consumption (pause) then maybe.

Moderator: Mm

FG302: It will help the majority

FG303: Mm

Moderator: Interesting. Do you think that sugar is addictive?

FG303: Mmmm

Moderator: Yes?

FG302: Yeah. Definitely.

Moderator: Okay

FG302: Definitely. Um (pause) it didn’t it didn’t use to have problem with it at all. (pause) Um (laughs) got anecdote is is about ten years ago I was working here, colleague of mine said she cannot have chocolate in the house because she can’t not have it. Up until that point, I’ve always had chocolate in the house that wasn’t a problem. Ever since, I now if I have it in the house, I have to have it. So I can no longer buy that

Moderator: four hundred grams (laughs)

FG302: twenty packs because actually I would keep eating it

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Cause I- I am now addicted to it. But I but at least I understand so it’s just willpower okay don’t buy it! If I haven’t deserve it haven’t worked for it, don’t buy it at all! Don’t even have it in the house

Moderator: How bout you?
FG303: Well I don’t know! it’s interesting! Again it’s not something I’ve ever really given a lot of thought to cause I’ve never had to! I mean, smoking clearly is and alcohol clearly is? Um (pause) I’m not I don’t know about sugar although I do understand what you said about chocolate. Um, Easter’s always a tricky time in our house

(General laughter)

FG303: because my my b-better half bless her cause out a few weeks before hand and buys all Easter eggs for all the kids. (pause) Then a week later she saying, could you go out and buy them again?

(General laughter)

FG303: Why? I ate them all!

(General laughter)

FG303: Is just like oh! God!

(General laughter)

FG303: Um, whereas I would buy and I just stick ‘em in the corner and they still be there! You know?

FG301: Yeah

FG303: Uh six months later and uh let alone, a week later. Um (pause) so I think (pause) so, chocolate is an interesting one. And I I wonder whether that’s just (in overlap) because of sugar, or something else in chocolate? I don’t know!

FG302: (In overlap) It might be, it might be chocolate. (pause) Yeah, true.

FG301: (In overlap) Mm

FG303: Um, no idea. But, yeah! I I don’t know if sugar is addictive. (pause) I need to see –

Moderator: (In overlap) Do you think –

FG303: More information about that

Moderator: But your guess. Like do you think, it can be? Potentially for some people?
Antony: My inclination is to say no. (pause) but I could be convinced otherwise.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: But I’m not I’m not sure.

Moderator: Mm. and you?

FG301: Mm I think I think it must be. (pause) I think that m-might th-the thing in chocolate. (pause) and yet I’m not fussed about chocolate actually. (pause) but I like, puddings

(General laughter)

FG301: So I don’t know, I don’t know!

Moderator: Mm. Um just like a general question, if you were to cut down sweetness level in your diet (pause) so not just sugar or any, like sweetness so amount of sweet food that you have. Do you think it’s a problem, will you have difficulty in cutting down your (pause) dietary sweetness?

FG301: I would definitely yeah! (Pause) well I-I’ve reasonably (pause) strong will power so I’d do it but it won’t be that easy.

FG303: if I had to I think I could. (pause) Um (pause) Yeah I mean I (pause) I go through periods where I- I hardly ever drink tea. (pause) um (pause) and the benefit of that is I rarely have to get up in the night to go to the loo

FG301: (laughs)

FG303: Instantly is a I mean it’s like that I’m thinking I could do with sleeping through the night and

FG302: (laughs)

FG303: Maybe I won’t have drink too much tea tonight bless. (pause) Um so if I need to stop I will. Um (pause) so if I had to reduce the sugary intake yeah I- I- I think I could do that.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Without too much difficulty

Moderator: Sweetness. (In overlap) Dietary sweetness, not – (pause) yeah.

FG303: (In overlap) sweetness, yes. Yeah.

FG302: Yeah. I think I- I think I could of course the whole piece uh it was just that you know, do I get do I go for that little bit of s- uh, dessert or chocolate at the end of the day is (pause) just a sort of little treat?
Moderator: Mm

FG302: Or do is that actually gonna start me wanting more? (pause) That’s the question I have to ask myself. And because sometimes I go weeks and I’m just having generally healthy food I don’t want any of it, I don’t want any sweetness, but as soon as I got the taste for it (pause) I probably want it for about a week? And then I’ve had now I’m sick of it and I have I have I don’t want it any for a few weeks anyway. Um, but yeah I could, I could reduce (pause) the sweetness across the whole.

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Yeah

Moderator: Okay, interesting. Sorry, let me put this back. Um (pause) okay. So um have you noticed that chocolate bars are actually shrinking in size?

FG301: Yes

FG302: (In overlap) Mmhmm (laughs)
Moderator: (In overlap) Does it (pause)does it affect, your shopping habits like or like eating habits so maybe instead of eating one, because it shrunk you eat two?

FG301: Mm no

FG302: Uh

FG303: See I- I don’t know! And it –

FG302: Do you not? I’ve I’ve noticed cause I know the price per kilogram of Cadbury’s dairy milk and I know exactly how much those bars are and I know what the best what value is (pause) and it drives it drives me crazy and mainly then because it’s

FG301: Mm

FG302: Nothing to do with this topic but plastic packaging

FG301: Yeah

Moderator: Ohhh okay

Antony: Yeah

FG302: So,that’s driving me crazy because we’re not supposed to be, having everything all little wrapped into little parcels?

Antony: Mmhmm

FG302: It’s ridiculous!

FG303: Mm

FG302: Just give me a big block of it and if I can’t cut it out myself that’s my problem (laughs)

Moderator: (laughs)

FG301: It’s a subtle way of putting the price up isn’t it? The price is the same. But the size of the bar is smaller.

FG302: (In overlap) Actu- (pause) yeah

FG303: See I’ve always loved Cadbury’s crème eggs. So this time of the year is just, a-again I’ll probably have two. You know, between Christmas and Easter.

FG302: (laughs)

FG303: But I like them so. But and I look at them now and just thinking (pause) they just look smaller. But are they really? You know? Or or is just I got taller since I’ve (inaudible)

(General laughter)

FG303: Um, I would I would really like to know actually! If somebody measured them and weighed them twenty years ago. (In overlap) What what they would –

FG301: (In overlap) But they are smaller. But they are

FG303: They’re probably. I don’t know! really don’t know!

Moderator: (laughs)

FG303: um (pause) but they (pause) think Mars bars. Th-they still look like the same size now they used to and so I –

Moderator: It- it shrunk.

FG303: Oh have they?

(General agreement yeah yes; laughing and nodding)

FG303: Oh did they! (laughs)

FG302: And the other thing is when they do th the pack of four in the supermarkets to a bar, and they pad it all out to make it look like there’s a little much

FG301: Yes

FG302: Actually those bars are not the standard size bars you get in the (inaudible – used section??)

FG301: No

FG302: They are smaller bars!

FG303: Mm

Moderator: (Gasps)

FG302: So you have to go on the back and there’s four times how much?! Is that all?! (laughs)

FG301: (In overlap) Yeah yeah

FG303: But then that’s not probably not a bad thing is it? That they’re getting smaller?

Moderator: But if if people are (pause) are compensating by eating two instead of one?

FG301: Two. Mm.

FG303: Oh! Oh yeah

FG302: Yeah that’s true

FG303: See that’s another thing. Y-yknow like, Bounty’s. uh you can buy th-th-the two-bar Bounty or you can buy the three-bar Bounty! And it’s like, wh-wh (pause)

Moderator: (laughs)

FG303: Why why three! Just just keep it to two! What’s wrong with that! (pause) um, and you now get these sort of family bags of chocolate

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Come now! which (pause) I- I would imagine not people buy for their family?

(General laughters)

FG303: They buy for themselves! Certainly my son would, given half the chance! Um (pause) so yeah th-the-there could be work done on on that. it’s just like, nothing wrong with (pause) shrinking the the size necessarily

Moderator: Mm. Do do uh words such as lite or zero calories (pause) influence your like your choice? So let’s say cream cheese? It has a lite. Will you pick it?

FG303: I’d go the other way.

Moderator: You’d pick the original one

FG303. Yes

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Because (pause) there is a reason for fat. (pause) It has a purpose. Certainly in spreads. And if you’re removing it, what are you replacing it with? (Pause) Um is is a is a simple fact. And, I’m not necessarily happy with what they’re replacing it with. Now I’ll say again, I’m I am in a luxurious position of being able to, t- to make that choice. Not everybody else is.

Moderator: Mm

FG303: Um, but no I’m not influenced by lite. At all.

FG302: When it comes to fat, I definitely am. (pause) I will look at the back. But I will st- I will have a look and see what it’s replaced with?

FG303: Mm

FG302: Um (pause) but I would choose a reduced-fat product. Definitely.

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Usually because I want to be able to have more of it (laughs)

FG301; Yeah. Yeah that’s about right?

FG302: Um (pause) and I don’t I I want to be able to choose the unhealthy things. So I I don’t have much sugar in my diet? Because I want to be able to have Cadbury’s dairy milk? And have a, a, a sweet smoothies.

FG303: Mm

FG302: That’s why I do it. So if I want to h- I know I get fat from there as well. So I equally then want a low-fat-ish general diet

Moderator: Mm

FG302: So that again I can have the naughty stuff

FG303: Mm

FG302: Um (laughs)

FG301: Mm

FG303: That’s the balanced diet thing isn’t it!

FG302: It’s the balanced diet!

FG301: Yeah yeah

FG303: Exactly!

FG302: Like yours, you say about a little bit of what you fancy the sugar?

FG301: Yes
FG302: And everything in moderation?
FG301: Yeah yeah.

FG302: Um (pause) yeah

Moderator: Mm

FG301: Yeah? Bout the same really. I think it depends on what it was though. I mean I don’t like, high-fat stuff anyway, on the whole.

FG302: Mm

FG301: um (pause) so if you’ve got two side by side that wouldn’t be a difficult choice I’d go for the lower fat but it would it does really depend. And again if you if you eating if the rest of the meal is sensible apart from this one item, then you think well you know, on the whole, I’m okay.
FG302: Mm

FG301: But I think it’s (inaudible) the details really.

Moderator: Okay. So one final question? Is there anything else about sweet food, sugar or sweet, sweeteners that has not been discussed but you feel strongly about?

FG301: I’m not sure how much input if we if we mentioned (pause) um going back to school about education for diet I’ not sure how much uh input there is with, say pregnant women and diets there. (pause) There used to be a time and I- I don’t know how much it happens now. when moms used to put the babies’ dummies in, fruit juice. And that was (pause) bad news (inaudible) really young children with really bad teeth cause it means sucking on these dummies with sweeteners on, so I don’t know how much input there is to sort of y’know they talk about the cradle to the grave. (pause). So if if the first thing that the child is aware of is something bout healthy eating when they’re at school (pause) have you missed the bulk then? But then people say oh it’s this it’s that it’s this we can’t do it. So you can’t win really. But I don’t I don’t know so. That would be my feeling. (pause) and I think um, cause I have worked with pregnant women (pause) um, and I think they are a receptive bunch. And if they think although you get pregnant women who smoke get the baby small but um

FG303: Mm

FG301: On the whole I think that might and I I said don’t know what happens now maybe it’s done already, or maybe there’s scope to do that and so here’s the opportunity you know maybe say to the women when you were young perhaps you didn’t get the message but here’s your chance for your baby

Moderator: Mm

FG301: To make a good healthy choice. A natural choice. Because that’s what they’ve been, you know brought up to. Be aware of.

Moderator: So the education starts from (pause) the pregnant women

FG301: Yeah

Moderator: And as they go into motherhood, so the kid already is born into

FG301: Mm

Moderator: Educational

FG301: Yeah

Moderator: Sur- environment

FG301: Mm

Moderator: Rather than wait for

FG301: Yeah

Moderator: School

FG301: Yeah

FG303: when my son was born (pause) uh I can’t remember there was obviously this sort of (pause) mother and baby circle. And, they went to something (pause) some mother and baby group around about Easter time (pause) my son was born in July so he was less than a year old, and they were handing out Easter eggs. My-my

FG301: (In overlap) (inaudible – was it a trip to camper?) was it?

FG303: No! it was just to. We live in [a town in Southwest England] and it was just in the middle of the town! My my my partner she says oh is the only who just said oh thank you very much and just put it in her handbag and ate it herself, la-later on! So the others were, well giving it to their kids! (inaudible) and it’s like! Ugh!

FG301: Mmmm

FG303: Um (pause) y’know I don’t wish to come across like a dietary Nazi, um

(General laughter)

FG303: which I can do sometimes but it’s just like come on! It’s pretty (pause) you know it’s pretty basic isn’t it? I- I I don’t know. It’s just. yeah it’s like (pause) hang on there’s plenty of time for that.

Moderator: (laughs)

FG303: Really. (pause) but so it is all about, cause again I think you mentioned earlier the nanny state.

FG301: Mm

FG303: You don’t want to come down too hard on people

FG301: Mm
FG303: Because at the end of the day, its’ a free world and and we cou we’re all at liberty to make our own choices. But (pause) the information just needs to be

FG302: Yeah

FG303: A bit clearer.

Moderator: Mm (pause) fair enough

FG303: (laughs)

FG302: I don’t think I’ve got anything else to add. I think yeah. I just just the education and awareness of of the sweeteners and if they can bring health benefit. Um (pause) and get that message out there. (pause) Widely probably y’know across the sector as soon as you said like schools, workplace and then it that’s sort of, not peer pressure but peer knowledge

Moderator: Mm

FG302: Things start to change

Antony: Mm

FG302; But definitely promotion of exercise. That.

FG303: Mm

FG301: Yeah

FG302: It’s got to be the biggest

FG301: Yeah

FG303: Mm

FG302 (laughs)

Moderator; Yeah. Can you share with me why you decided to join this focus group?
FG303: I thought I was gonna get a cake.

(General laughter)

FG301: I I thought we’d get biscuits!

FG303: no! I- I um (pause) y-y-yeah it is a subject that interest me. And (pause) and also I think I’m one of these people I don’t have a problem with sugar. (pause) Um so I thought, I don’t know I- I thought maybe I’d be in the minority. So maybe that will be an interesting voice to be heard.

Moderator: Yes

FG302: Mm. likewise. I thought I’d be in the minority because um I go into supermarket looking for anything other than the artificial sweeteners and it, yeah most of the products are no sugar! And I go right okay well where’s the proper stuff? (laughs)

FG303: Mm

Moderator (laughs)

FG302: So yeah I thought I’d be a lone voice. But yeah (Laughs)

FG301: S-so you you did that anyway!

FG302: I did that! I do

FG301: Before today!

FG302: Oh oh!

FG301: Oh did you do that?

FG303: Um, yeah! Yeah I suppose? Yeah I I do like I said keep away from sweeteners. Cause I just don’t like the taste!

FG302: Yeah this has got nothing to do with today at all! This is this is, my, all my life!

FG301: (In overlap) Ohh god!

Antony: (In overlap) mm mm

FG302: Of you know, always just avoided um artificial products?

FG303: Mm

FG302: I mean I- I joke I was brought up on salad and chocolate because I have you know I just have all the hea-healthy food

FG301: mm

FG302: And then I’ll have the, the treat! And that’s

FG303: Mm

FG301: Mm! I never paid them any attention at all!

Moderator: Just take what you like

FG301: Yup. I’ll go in and (pause) years ago, I d- I don’t the supermarkets do it now but (pause) a few years ago the supermarkets used to um have what was on promotion that week, and they do a leaflet drop around the housing states. So when you went shopping, you might (pause) do your shopping list based on what was on offer.

Moderator: Oh okay

FG303: Mm

FG301: And like is not, it would be, you know the high calorie high sugar items. (pause) And then you go and you think oooh I like that! it’s something I haven’t tried before. It’s on a good price and then you go back, when the price has gone up, so your (pause) unhealthy habit is actually costing a bit more. I don’t think they do that and that these days they promote the (pause) the healthy options that they’ve got. So I guess maybe people do it the other way round. But um, no I never. Never think about sweeteners. Other than the fact, if I‘ve got a choice between a sweetener and a non-sweetener, I think well the non-sweetener will taste (pause) better.

Moderator: Mm (pause) okay. Thank you very much for all your input. That was really very insightful.