Counting Calories Kill Your Health Goals | Harvard Expert Reveals The Truth | Sam Cutler | Ep. 47 Transcript

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Introduction to Sam Cutler

If you're feeling like crap and you have no idea how to find a strong foundation for your nutrition, the best thing you can do is remove a lot of those things that are causing stress, suffering from anxiety and depression.

And a of this was tied to the way I was eating and my lifestyle factors. Meet Sam Cutler, Harvard certified nutrition expert and founder of Mindful, featured in Forbes USA Today and many more.

Sam is here to share insights on achieving food freedom and living a healthier life. How important is alcohol for your health? Like removing it? Don't remove it.

I'm honestly 80-20 with everything and I think women's health has been predominantly ruled by diet culture and still is in so many ways. What's diet-culture?

Talking about we all want the same thing. We all wanna feel good. we wanna to feel confident, we want to be energized, We wanna enjoy our life. The most powerful thing you can do for yourself is just stop blaming yourself for the way that you feel and start taking action by looking at what's going on.

How healthy is it to eat today versus 20 years ago? It is hard. Like truly it is difficult because Welcome to another episode of a Healthy Point of View podcast.

I'm your host, Sam Tahata. And like always, we're always bringing experts from around the world to talk about health, wellness, beauty, nutrition, all of this stuff to get your body where it needs to be.

Today we have someone, someone special, right? They're local here in South Florida. This is someone who's been featured in Forbes, Women's World, Sports Illustrated, USA Today, This is a Harvard-trained nutrition health coach.

Today we have Sam Cutler. Sam, welcome on the podcast. Thank you so much for having me. Absolutely. I love talking to another Sam. Nothing's better than that.

Sometimes it gets a little confusing. You know, I went many years in the business, and I'm like, we're gonna hire hundreds of people, but no Sams. Because it get's so complicated, And I did that once.

And man, that Sam was getting a lot of emails they weren't supposed to get. Yeah, that gets confusing with the emails. Every Uber driver thinks I'm a guy when they pick me up, because I go by Sam, so I get roped into that.

I guess that's probably not a bad thing with an Uber, right? True. That is a good one. Yeah. So Sam. Harvard trained nutrition health coach. I want to hear your story.

Obviously, I've researched everyone before they come on the podcast, and you have an amazing story that started your journey. Just like most of us in the health and wellness field, we all have our own story, that really made us who we are, right?

So let's talk about your stories and how you even got where you're at today. The coolest part about my story that I find is I'm not very different than most people.

I don't think there's some unique experience that went through, I think that a lot of people feel like crap. Right. But I just did something about it.

And I went though years and years of feeling like crab. For a mix of things because of being overworked, because being in a toxic environment, but also because growing up in diet culture.

and women's health has been predominantly ruled by diet culture and still is in so many ways. What's diet-culture? Yeah, oh my gosh. Diet culture is the culture of really talking about dieting as our health and looking at always going from one diet to the next.

If someone listening grew up in the 90s, they totally know from every single billboard, every magazine where you're checking out at the grocery store, product labeling, lose 10 pounds in five days.

We all know that's not possible, right? And it's the cabbage soup diet to the whatever diet, these restrictive and really guilt tripping experiences. And I know it goes across men's and women's health, but in particular with women health and it has been all about body image.

It's been about the number on the scale and these metrics of health that really aren't really determining our long-term health and our longevity. Instead, they're just metrics that we can look to and we've been told to look too.

And so a big part of my journey has been stepping off the scale and encouraging other women to do that and look at how they actually feel. How their skin is, how their energy is how, their bowel movements are.

These real metrics, that actually play a role in our, longevity and how long the quality years of our lives will be.

Diet Culture and Body Image

We can tune into this now and start to make tweaks and feel better. That's amazing, and you know, the culture diet, it's actually the first time I hear it, I like that.

Because people get so fixed into all these different fads, right? And how you said, people growing up in the 90s, you heard of the paleo diet? The keto diet.

The Jenny Craig diet and it just like, which one? Right? In most of them, do you lose a few pounds off the scale? You do, but is it really correcting the issues that you're having internally?

And is that scale giving you the results that you're really looking for, right? When you losing pounds on a scale, are you loosing pounds of muscle? Are you losin' pounds a fat?

Sometimes we don't know, and people get into these crazy diets, the HCG diet and this diet, they're actually losing muscle, which goes totally against what you said, longevity.

So when we talk about these different type of diets I would assume what your really focused on is lifestyle. Lifestyle hundred percent and what you said exactly hits the nail on the head because you're talking as well about body composition And most people are not actually looking to change their body Composition it may be a positive thing to lower fat if you if need that for your health or To change your body or just aesthetics like how I go to the gym every day.

We all want to look good We want, to feel good whatever your personal sort of you know motivator is But reality is that people want To feel, good right they, want.

To, feel a certain way they Want to, look in the mirror and feel hey i feel Good i look, god i speak to myself i have I don't have mental fog anymore.

I'm present with my kids. All of these things are what we search for, and they're more emotional ties. And we look for these metrics to solve those, which in reality is not the link.

Like you said, lifestyle factors are really what come down to how we make those changes. That's what I am trained

in is lifestyle medicine and how all of the pillars of lifestyle come together to prolong the quality years of our life and lower our chances and reverse our exposure and our growth of chronic diseases.

And it truly, truly has the impact to make, but we look for these quick fixes all the time. So if we spend our lives focusing on the scale or our weight or dieting or what's gonna bring this quick fix, we don't build sustainable lifestyle habits that actually change the way that we age.

The way our body is Able to to age and live longer and that's what we all really want. We want to feel good We wanna be here with the people we love as long as we possibly can and it's really just innately human Yeah, so sam, you know Obviously you had your own experiences and you have some issues that you were dealing with and I can only imagine that You went through that roller coaster ride trying to figure things out, you know getting stuck into some of these culture diets, right?

Let's talk about that. What what what issues were you having that? You were trying solve and try to get past whatever was going on and Yeah, for me personally, I can name all the things I suffered from.

Chronic adult acne, chronic inflammation, which a lot of people suffer from and don't realize a lotta that time is processed foods, stress also impacts that, just dysbiosis in my gut.

I had so many different issues and mental health issues is a big thing that links back to our gut. I was suffering from anxiety and depression. And a lot of this was tied to the way I eating and my lifestyle factors.

So we really have to pair the two and it wasn't until I bridged the 2 together that there was really a shift. But for me, I just kept thinking I need to lose weight.

There was no focus on I needed to build muscle. There was no focus on what am I actually eating, right? This says it's a diet product, this says its low calorie or low sugar.

What are in the ingredients? And we've seen a global shift to this. And I'm very happy we're seeing such a large change towards this type of focus Absolutely.

But that's, a lot of us are, we have it ingrained in ourselves that we look still for the calories, the low sugar, at the, you know, low fat, all of these different pieces.

Low carb, carbs are so great for us, right? And so we this just programmed in our brain to try to limit, to restrict, and we feel guilty all the time about our choices.

And so I went through my own journey of truly feeling like crap, like I said, and looking at how I can solve that, but it really wasn't until I hit rock bottom and truly burnt out that I was able to say, okay, I need to actually peel this back and figure out what's going on here because I've now spent, this is probably early mid-20s, a greater portion of my life dieting, right?

As women, we probably start- What kind of diets were you doing? You know, anything, like anything. And it's dieting in the sense of restricting calories, going on calorie tracking apps and putting in every little thing from a banana to an apple, trying to understand, well, why don't I feel great?

going to whatever restaurant and looking for whatever was, you know, the least calories or whatever it was. Low sugar, and they have all the, which was really, I'm Canadian originally, so we had no labeling in the same way they had here.

When I moved to New York, that was huge. huge experience for me to go through and see like okay this is low sugar, this low fat, low calories and it was just like chronic dieting and I think that's what a lot of women can understand and really relate to.

Sure I've tried like I don't know why cabbage soup diet keeps popping up, by the way. Cabbage soup is pretty

good. But if that's all you're eating, you hate it.

I've never had cabbage, but I think I'm going to want to try it at this point. Like I am a big fan of cabbage. It's a great thing. There was this trend and it was, eating cabbage soap all the time and then you have to eat bananas as like your carb to bind it, it's crazy.

In women's health, There's this focus on, OK, it's not a forever thing. I'm just going to do this for three days because I have a party coming up this weekend and I'll feel better and look better.

But the reality is that actually makes zero impact on your health. What if you could find a way that you can eat every single day where you feel good every day and not stress and feel guilty and keep going back to calories and a scale?

And that's really where building mindful came in, because after I went through that process of healing and recognizing, hold on, I can actually look at the foods that I'm eating, and I could eat in a way where I am lowering inflammatory ingredients, whether that is whole foods are inflammatory or whether it is just looking at processed ingredients that we are eating.

I do lifestyle factors that also complement improving gut health, so managing stress, sleep, all of these different pieces. And I can just eat the things that I love and I could just live a life that feels good every single day and wake up not feeling lethargic.

Wow. And so that was truly my mission to say How can we change this conversation around health, empower women with the tools to make these shifts themselves, and give them as much information as we possibly can?

Because education and information is where we start taking back the power around our nutrition and our lifestyle. Yeah, that's key. And Sam, for the listeners, when you said I can eat the food that I want and have the energy, have good gut health and everything else, Who out there doesn't want to feel that way?

That's the way you want it to be. So if you have the ability to take control of your health in that manner, this is it. When you hit rock bottom, what was rock-bottom for you?

I was working a corporate job at the time, so I This is the marketing job that you're doing? Yeah, I was working in marketing. I'm working corporate fashion.

And I worked in Canada. Worked in New York.

Personal Health Struggles and Burnout

You know, as I, was hustling, but I really putting everything else to the side. So I wasn't getting much sleep. It was drinking sugary lattes all day until it was time to drink sugaring cocktails.

Gambling with your health a little bit? Gabbling with my health. A lot of people say, oh, you are young. That's when you can. Now there's a big shift in that conversation, right?

We see a lot of these diseases starting in our 20s, not in 60s like we believe. It's not when it shows up, it's when is starts growing in the body much younger than we previously thought.

And so I was, as you said, gambling with my health and putting myself into an unhealthy place, but also with lifestyle habits. So, it wasn't just nutrition, but it was truly the full picture of not getting sleep, I'm burnt out, and stressed, eating a bunch of crap, really chronically inflamed, my skin is terrible, trying to figure out how to feel good, well, going to go on a diet, lose weight, do excessive cardio, not focus on building muscle, try to reach for whatever I can, so it's the combination, this perfect shit storm, This is perfect storm of Unhealthy lifestyle habits paired with unhealthy nutrition and for me that ended up looking like a stomach ulcer I was extremely ill and sick I Was you know just truly I felt like I?

Was rotting from the inside out if that's a you Know I don't you go into any like traditional doctors to try to figure out what's going on and I did, I remember going to a couple doctors, doing some blood work, having most stuff in the regular ranges and them saying, you're fine.

You're 25 or whatever, your tired, or maybe stressed, everything looks fine, not a single person asked me about my nutrition. Not a simple person. Some people asked me about my stress, which was probably a little advanced at the time, but nobody asked about what I was eating.

And what are the famous words of Hippocrates? Food is medicine. Food and medicine is food. So that's very interesting. Listening to your story and where it's leading you specifically, where's it not just healing you eventually, it now you're able to actually help so many other people with their health.

So, okay, so you go through your own journey, right? You hit that rock bottom. What makes you just decide, you know what, I'm gonna focus on my nutrition?

I don't think it was that easy. No, it wasn't that easier. It was absolutely not that that and I think that it's important for everybody to know. With anything, we always hear with career, takes 10 years to be an overnight success.

I really think we need to understand that with our physical health as well. Takes time, every single little thing takes time. Building muscle, healing your gut health.

And so for me, I was just frustrated that nobody had answers that every doctor Wasn't telling me anything that was solving and you're almost waiting for them to tell you something's wrong Like please diagnose me with something so you can give me yeah And you almost want somebody to you some things going on so You have you know a path forward and it's harder not to have a pattern I think that's where a lot of people feel today is that they?

They don't have something seriously wrong with them, but what's my path? And so I was frustrated. I had tried, like I said, so many diets thinking that weight was the answer because tabloids, because everything I saw on blogs and online, that's what it said.

And I eventually… looked into becoming a health coach because I thought, okay, hang on, if I can learn a little bit more about these lifestyle factors, which is a lot of health coaching, I could understand more what's going on for myself.

And I was always very interested in health which was why I went on these diets because they told me they were healthy. They told they'd help me be healthier.

So I became a Health Coach and I remember the first thing that we dove into was stress. Understanding how stress plays such a crucial role in our gut health and then how gut plays such a crucial role in every other area of our life.

Our gut is our operating system for everything. I was dealing with inflammation, I dealing skin issues, mental health issues. All things that start in our gut.

So then I started to understand a little bit more of the pieces, not necessarily heal, but understand more to use myself as a guinea pig. Actually didn't become a health coach at any point to to coach other people.

I was thinking, I don't know if I'm gonna ever coach anyone, but I wanna know what's going on and I gonna talk about it. Become your own teacher. Yeah, and become my own teach.

And I already was actually a creator at the time, a lifestyle creator. Okay. So I thought, okay, so I am gonna go through this and share a little bit of my journey and talk a bit about what I going through, kinda like anything else.

You know, this is a long time ago. And so that's kind of where the journey started. A lot of people didn't want to follow anymore because they didn' see cupcakes and cocktails anymore as it changed.

But that was the early evolution of when I said, okay, let's dive into this. Let's understand. I also left my job. You know, I did a lot of things to shake up my lifestyle and invest fully.

So you left your job for this, for the whole health and wellness? I left my job to heal and I leave my to build a health an wellness, as a Health and Wellness creator.

Okay. Mindful came years, years later. After. But to say, you know I was already doing some work as creator and thought okay. Can I do enough? Have I saved enough, can I leave my job to the point that I can heal?

And I was young also, like I had a 500 square foot condo with very little payments to make, right? So I wasn't in a position to do that. I didn't have a child or other dependents.

And so that was kind of my path through. and I would say it probably took six years to get to a point where people started saying, hang on, I want to be like you.

You've done this, you've healed, you know, in a place that I aspire to be. And I didn't even realize that, I had really gotten there, if that makes sense.

I was still just busy telling my healing story and what I dealing with and I realized I'm intolerant to gluten and like, let's go on this journey with me and continuing to build and build, and then it just became people asking me, Can you coach me?

Can your build meal plans for me, can you tell me exactly what you're doing outside of, you know, what I was already posting? Absolutely. Which, the one thing is like, when you are documenting your journey, and not only documenting you journey but people actually see the end result, people who know you, at that point they say, well, hold on one second, why is she walking around with that beautiful smile on her face, nonstop, where's my beautiful smiling?

Why don't I feel that way? So that gets people to start questioning like, hey, teach me the tricks. It's worked for you. So you were talking about earlier about stress and how stress is kind of like one of the main things you're dealing with initially.

How did you manage that stress? Stress is really interesting because there's good stress, and there is bad stress. But does your body really know the difference between the two stress Not necessarily, but we do need good stress to do certain things, right?

And to get ourselves out of situations, to work a little bit harder, we need that. And so if we're not reactive to it to a degree, you know, You know, really somebody I look up to, Dr.

Sharon Berkowitz, is known as the good stress doctor, and she talks so much about the power of good stressed and how we do need it, it shouldn't always be get away from everything that's hard.

I think we see a lot of that on social media. You don't like it? Get out of it. It's challenging. And I agree with you, you have to learn how to actually deal with some of these things and figure out the best methods for your lifestyle to handle good or bad stress, right?

I always talk with our community members about a stress audit. And so I say, look at your life and can you do a stressful audit? Let's put three buckets.

One is things that need to be removed from your lives that you can remove from life, right? So for me at the time of healing, that was my job. I didn't need stay there.

It was a good time for to leave. Something I could remove and it was probably one of the bigger things that was causing a lot of stress in my process of healing.

So looking at your life, OK, there's these pieces I can remove. Then you're going to have, you know, the things you can't change, but you have to figure out how to better support them.

Whether that's your nutrition, lifestyle habit, they really can be changed and controlled by you. Maybe that is the fact that your kids have a bunch of different activities and you are taking them to school.

Those are not things in control of, you're there to support them as their mother, and that's part of your role, or whatever that looks like. And then the third piece is things that you can set boundaries on.

So maybe they're still going to be a little stressful, but you could set more boundaries. I think a better example for most people is probably work there, because you are not all leaving your job or maybe doing a career change like I did.

But can you say, okay, I'm not grabbing my phone after a certain hour?

Stress, Boundaries, and Lifestyle Medicine

Or social media, right? I am setting boundaries around social and the hours that I spend on it. Don't let the algorithm suck you in, right? Right, yes.

And so it's all about those three kind of pieces. So if you were to brain dump, if anyone's listening and wants to try and do this, brain dumping everything in their life that they feel stressed about.

Okay. Again, not just bad stress, but good stress. Maybe it, I feel stress because I have a puppy and I've to take the puppy out every single morning and have to wake up really early, whatever that is.

Just writing every, single thing down. Then can you start to, take out a highlighter, three different colors, and categorize them into those three buckets.

So what are the things that could have better boundaries or more boundaries? What are things you can't control? And then what other things can you truly remove, maybe just for this point in your life?

So maybe it's not forever, but maybe its right now. to get you to a more stable place where you feel a little bit more on your feet. I like that. Actually, I think I'm gonna give that a try.

Yeah. Haven't done that in a while. Everybody should do it every so often. Right. Because new stressors come about. You're growing your business or whatever it is.

And I am just thinking here as we're having this conversation, you know what? I got a few good stressor that might have to go on a certain bucket. You know, so that's interesting.

That's a good thing to do. So, OK, you manage your stress. You create these three buckets. Is your goal to remove that one bucket where you can like really remove it out of your life personally?

Or would I suggest that to somebody? Would you suggest it to someone? I think the bucket that you can take out, I thing that if that's what you need in that moment and you're very overwhelmed, there's a lot of things we take on that we don't actually need to.

So there a lotta stuff that can go in the that bucket or in boundaries bucket. That's probably gonna be most people's biggest bucket is gonna where they can put more boundaries.

Maybe with friends, family member, again social media, work. A lot stuff falls under that boundaries and it's going to feel like you've already removed so many stressors from your life.

I think that nutrition is one of the pieces that can fall under the boundaries and also positive stress in a way, but

also negative stress. So I, think the piece around the negative, stress for nutrition we can remove by, But it takes time also.

And that's one those pieces. That's like a learning piece by stepping away from obsessively counting calories and macros and trying a new diet and forcing ourselves into a bucket, getting on the scale, all these pieces, I think if at a later point, and we talked about body composition earlier, you're in a healthier place and you really wanna focus on building muscle and lowering fat and wanna get back on a specific body compositions scale, bring that back in at that stage in your life.

But right now, if you are feeling like crap and have no idea how to find a strong foundation for your nutrition, the best thing you can do is remove a lot of those things that are causing stress.

And for a lot of us, that does take work and it takes training ourselves and changing our mindset to stop counting the calories, to start feeling guilty when we eat pasta or carbs or whatever it is.

But the work that goes into that and moving that into a different bucket is so powerful. Yeah, I would say when you stress yourself out doing something healthy, right?

At least you think it's healthy. Counting the calories or taking a bite out of that cake when go out to dinner and now you're stressing out about it. I feel like that stress that you've created is actually counterproductive, and it feeding certain hormones and stuff throughout your body that affects it, where you actually going in the opposite direction than what you should.

And I can tell you from my own experiences, right? You see those trophies over there? I did bodybuilding back in the day in my 20s. And you know, I used to have to count the calories.

Can I transform my body counting calories? It could, but it was way too stressful. I actually told myself after I got nationally qualified, this is, This is no way to live.

It's extremely stressful. I'm counting, you know, trying to figure out what fits in my palm of my hand if I am not at home and I can't weigh the food.

And I tell myself, this is not a way of living. freely and just make healthy choices, you know? And honestly, when I made that shift many, many years ago, this was probably like 12, 15 years, ago.

I've made the shift, things have been completely different. Now Sam, let me ask you this, because we're on that topic of nutrition, right? We're talking about stress, and we talk about nutrition.

And I know a lot of people, especially a lotta people who come into our wellness centers, Likovita, The part that they don't wanna hear are two things, nutrition and exercise.

They hate it, right? But when it comes down to nutrition versus how things were back, let's say 20 years ago, how healthy is it to eat today versus 20 year ago?

It's hard. It is hard, because everywhere we look, everything is labeled as healthy and is a packaged product with a bunch of crap in it. Like truly it is difficult and I think that's where we have to just give ourselves a little bit of grace because we're in an environment now where there's so many mixed signals and it's really hard to differentiate and that where I sort of figured out and have really encouraged my community and we coach our community within Mindful to start with just whole foods.

Thinking about whole foods, not only whole food, but thinking about focusing on that, we always say 80-20, so 80% whole-foods. A lot of people talk about 80 20 and they talk 80%, you know, the healthy good for you foods and 20%, the not healthy, and not great for your.

I think that is so confusing for most people so we make it so much simpler and we say, 80 percent wholefood.

Whole foods meaning they're one ingredient and come from the earth, right?

So that could be animal, that could be plant-based, that it could whatever it is, but it's one ingredient. When you're saying chicken, it a piece of chicken.

It's not searching on the label and chicken and a bunch of preservatives and breading and all the different pieces. That's a not a whole food. And many of us don't know that.

Unfortunately, And so a big part of what my mission is, is really the education piece to understand there's a difference between those two. And we're in this space, so we know that.

But a lot of people don't have the resources to support them in understanding, in knowing the difference. So that starts systemically in a much larger conversation.

Hopefully we can do a bit of our piece with mindful. Absolutely. So whole foods, right? Well, for the people that are on the go, we have a lot of doctors that listen into the podcasts that aren't in the wellness space and they're nonstop.

And sometimes it's not easy to prepare your own food at home and you're on-the-go. What's your recommendation for people who are that on go when it comes to this 80-20?

Love that, I have so many recommendations. I think one of the best things, obviously the first thing you wanna do is eat at home if you can, right? If you cant, are there ways that you prepare yourself at at for when you're traveling on the go or have very limited time.

The meal prep. Meal prep we love but what I love even more than meal prep is ingredient prep because a lot of people get bored with meal Prep that it's like already they know what they're eating.

It's in the fridge Maybe that's not what i want or they just don't have the time to sit and make five meals on sunday night right but ingredient Prep is really cool because what you do is you take the Time out of the heavy lifting ingredients like rice that is going to take you 40 minutes if you're having whole grain rice on the stove and If you make that once, you've now saved the 40 minutes of five different meals throughout your week.

Right. And opens up the door for so much more. Of course, we're a women's community, so we have so many moms on the community. One of the things that's so beautiful is they say, I can now cook with my kids.

Their attention span is five, 10 minutes, but it only takes five to 10 to make this bowl because I don't have a boiling pot for 40 minutes that I'm trying to watch and manage, you know, supporting my kids and cooking with them.

Instead, it's really taking five minutes because I am throwing a piece of chicken in the air fryer or maybe I did it when I ingredient prepped. I have the rice already done.

I have a sauce that's maybe my 20% because maybe you're buying that sauce from somewhere that like, you know, a healthier version. And now you have the whole bowl and a meal.

Yeah. I love that. It's crazy you bring that up because I recently did that, not even a year ago. So I told myself I don't want to like do the meal prep and I started thinking to myself, I was like man, do you think about some of these companies out there like Bolle and some other ones.

Both of us can go in there and we're gonna get two whole different things that are gonna taste completely different. But all of those ingredients are already there prepped.

So I actually kind of started doing that. I started off first with the different sauces, making my own natural sauces. These I could actually create. the same bowl and just add a different sauce and it's a completely different meal.

And you don't get bored from it. It's crazy. So we have over 500 recipes on mindful today and we're only been around for like a year and a half. We're pumping out content like you guys.

Every time we put out a new recipe, it is delicious, completely, different. But we are not reinventing the wheel, right? We are using similar Whole foods to make something maybe we're changing we do a lot of sauces as well things that we we Have recipes for but it's easy.

We're not you know, I'm not trying to create some crazy Souffle like I don't even know what I would think of it because I just eat so simply I mean, it does look really nice.

I follow you on social media Well, we try we make it simple, but we may get pretty like that romanticizes the eating experience You're sitting down with your family.

My husband's the first to be like, wow. Oh my god. This is amazing I'm like come on babe. You saw me this took five minutes. He's my biggest cheerleader but you know, you can impress people have people over and it's really It's really not, it doesn't need to be so complicated.

It is hard because we have to unlearn a lot of things that we know, but it does not have be as complicated as we think.

Whole Foods, Meal Prep, and Mindful Eating

Actually, we overcomplicate it. Absolutely, I can see that being the case. So you talk about the mindful app, right? And you're really big into community.

I hear you utilizing that terminology quite a bit, and even in your content. How important is community when you try to achieve success with your health?

I think it's everything, to be honest. I thing that if you feel isolated in any type of healing journey, it is such a larger hill to climb up. And you fell alone, and I went through it.

So isolated, I felt like I had nowhere to turn, didn't have friends that were experiencing the same things that I was going through. Didn't people around me that the intolerance is or the conditions.

That is where social media truly saved me. And like I said, showing up, talking about my own healing process was really where I found community. Now I was fortunate enough because I had built that community and I continued to lean on it.

Most people don't have that and you shouldn't feel like you need to post your most vulnerable moments publicly across social medias just to find somebody.

And what we did with mindful was really build a safe space into the app. So community is there for women to share their vulnerable stories, share, their wins, talk about their experiences, or just say, Hey, I got diagnosed with celiac.

Anyone else in here? Cause I have no idea how to eat gluten-free, right? Or my daughter did, Or, my mother did or my family member was diagnosed cancer.

I need to bring healthy meals to the hospital. Where the hell do I start and so that's those are the beautiful stories where we say It's not just about you and it's just not about aesthetics or healing acne or inflammation No, that is not comfortable and no that doesn't create you know a space where you feel very confident But at the end of the day it becomes so much larger of a movement when you recognize I'm not alone and I am not doing this for me And we don't know where to find those people and we have created a safe space to do that I love that.

And these community groups are so important because it gives you the opportunity to find someone else who's kind of struggling with the same issue, or a family member who is struggling the the issue.

I know your community, it's very diverse. You have over 70 different countries you guys have tapped into, right? Yeah, we can see on our app from our members and we have women in over 70 different countries around the world.

It's so cool. I mean, you got people dealing with a tremendous amount of different issues, right? Because nutrition in every country is completely different.

Some countries are eating a lot of fried food, other countries don't eat certain type of meats and proteins, so it's a whole different animal when you're talking about different country.

But it's the same premise. The same, we all want the thing. I said this earlier, We all wanna feel good. We wanna to feel confident, and we wanna enjoy our life.

And so yes, culturally, nutrition and the way that we eat and we come together at the table may look different, but there are so many similarities when we talk about what are the ingredients that have us feeling good that help us live longer and that helps us feel our best.

And I don't know if you've seen the studies from Blue Zones with Dan Buettner, he's really understood the commonalities, and this is cultures that has centurions, or centurioms, I think I'm saying it wrong.

where there's a high amount of people that live past 100. And so they're considered blue zones. He's really studied what are their lifestyle habits and their similarities across all of them, across the world.

One of the biggest ones, as we talked about, is community. Is connection it is. Yeah That's actually um, I think they call that live to 100 right on Netflix.

It's what the whole blue zone Yeah, yeah, it's like I really suggest everyone to watch in his book and It's an amazing concept. So I watched mine when I was going through my MRI scan with Pranuva.

Perfect thing to watch. I fell asleep and the guy started yelling at me through the earphones, the headphones that I wore. But yeah, community is very important.

That's one thing that gathered from it. And even in some of the European countries, that community of how they all engage together. One of big things too is their level of stress.

Going back to the whole stress thing, it's like their levels of very reduced versus other communities that are out there that have not in the blue zone.

Yeah, and physical activity, right? And functional physical activities, which I thought was very cool, is actually moving your body in a way that you're using it every single day.

So they're maybe not at the gym, but they are gardening and they lifting heavy hay barrels or whatever it is. It's a lot of being outside and using physical to support yourself in that.

And also one of the things that stood out a not treating elders like elders and really like living your life fully at every single age. So still doing a lot of the physical activities, everybody coming together as community and not isolating people based off of their age and I think that allows our minds and our bodies to all come together on a common ground and You know, you're you can't lift that anymore.

You have to retire. Or you have do this. Like, why do we tell people that their minds and their bodies need to stop doing what they want to do? So I think it's all about where we.

can support themselves. I agree with that. So we talked about nutrition. One of the things that you brought up right now was about exercise. And earlier I mentioned people hate hearing diet and exercise, so we talk about the nutritional part of how you can make this fun, you could make it easy, where you don't have to count all these crazy

calories and everything else.

Now with the exercise part, one of the things I would always tell our clients is get rid of exercise for now. Let's talk about constant movement. With the Mindful app, what do you guys do when it comes down to exercise and movement?

How do coach people through that? Yeah, so the foundation of mindful is nutrition. It's really at the base of everything we do. So everything within the app is video based and a lot of that is all like meal plans and recipes.

But then on the other side, we have health coaching. And so those videos dive into every single area of lifestyle medicine and exercise being one of them and movement being a core piece of.

So we really talk about how to find movement that you enjoy, you know, the value of movement and then connect it back to nutrition and a lot of what we do.

So talking about protein, talking, about, uh, fiber, carbohydrates, why these things are important, and the science behind the ingredients that we're eating so that remove the guilt and we kind of come into, oh, this is exciting.

I want to get stronger. Now I understand I need to increase my protein and I have Complex carbohydrates, like tie this all in together instead of feeling guilty about it.

So that's really where we tie in movement. We do a lot of community challenges as well. Another piece of that is walking. I'm a big fan of walking, you've probably seen on my page.

And we try in different challenges where if it's like a 28 day, we have a self-love ingredient. Program right now. We do a 28 day Walk challenge throughout twice a year that pops up and so it's just getting people moving, right?

We're not really we don't do workout videos and such on the platform because everybody kind of like you said find what you enjoy just move in some way and if that's walking if That's going to the gym if you know, what you do at your work is very physical, but just move your body.

And so we really just encourage people to do that. Again, I'm also big from stepping away from those numbers, so not looking at you steps, instead saying, can I get out for like a 30 minute podcast and just make it through the whole time and keep moving actively.

Now you mentioned that with movement, right? What is your favorite movement? Oh my goodness. Well, right now, definitely strength training. I've gotten into this, I would say, but I'm trying to be a little bit harder on my body.

That's where the good stress comes in. So really push myself to lift heavier, to challenge myself. You see the most benefits when you can really put your muscles to exhaustion if you're looking for you know, really toning and muscle development.

Are you doing any kind of like classes or training for that? I do it all at the gym. Oh, you do? Yeah. Yeah, so I go to the Gym. I truly love the Jim that I got to and it feels like I'm going to a class.

That's what I would suggest to anybody is Find a gym. I said this this morning on my Instagram story, but find a Jim that feels like home and it'll never feel like you're pushing yourself to the gym because you want to go you get there and the trainers that work out there the people that you see we always have like, you know, the 7am crew.

Everybody's there. and it feels like you're just arriving with your friends. It's this fun experience, but it's not a class. I do love classes, I love Pilates, and I loved incorporating different workouts like that throughout, in yoga, hot yoga.

When I can't do those things on my own, my foundation is really… push myself at the gym and I like to zone out for my 30 minutes and just get it. With music or without?

With Music, always. Oh my gosh, with music. Gotta have the jams. Yeah, Kendrick Lamar lives rent free in my head right now. I don't think anybody on this planet can disagree with that right.

Community, Gut Health, and Supplements

So, alright, when we start going back to the mindful app, some of the things, I'm thinking about some the roadblocks that people start creating in their own head.

There's people that have a lot of dietary restrictions. What do you guys do for people to have these different restrictions when it comes to food? Totally.

So the entire app is gluten and dairy free because I think it's harder to make a recipe gluten-and-dairy free than it is for it to not be, so we always provide the alternatives.

I'm gluten, and I also think lowering gluten in our diet is important to lower inflammation. If someone says, I don't want to be gluten free, we're like, great.

eat the regular pasta. This recipe calls for gluten free pasta, that's an easier swap, but it's a lot harder if you've been diagnosed with something where like celiac or if your just trying to lower your gluten or you have an autoimmune disease, etc.

So you different recommendations to manage things like that. That's our kind of first foundation. Everything else, we love swaps. We're going to give you the recipe.

If it says tofu and you want salmon, add salmon. It says salmon and Switch it for chicken. I'll take the chicken exactly so but the recipe is not gonna change that much, right?

You're building a bowl. You are building wrap You know, even if it's your main protein and the whole thing is like we have this turmeric ginger chicken, which is amazing But you could make that with tofu if you're vegan It's really really easy and we actually have a lot of vegan members even though our recipes are not vegan Because it is so easy to swap it when you are talking whole ingredients just change it same thing people always say Oh, you know, I'm allergic to nuts or I don't eat avocado because it upsets my stomach.

Great. We can help you swap that. And if it's in particular recipes that creates like the consistency like a sauce or a smoothie or soup, we actually have a guide for swaps where things will be similar consistency.

So like swapping a banana for an avocado in your smoothie, that kind of thing. OK. And most of these recipes, when people engage and become part of the app, the focus is to start helping the gut first, right?

Totally. We have a number of different programs, and when we onboard you, we can help you understand where to star based off of how you're feeling and your needs.

But we have our Gut Health Reset is one of our main programs and people absolutely love it. I think it's a great place to A foundation for health and you feel like you're kind of hitting all those different areas like I mentioned you are stressed you may be burnt out you feeling lethargic you know you having any type of skin issues.

A lot of this is happening in our gut or stemming from issues in your gut but what happens is that we've oftentimes deteriorated our guy and our got lining so drastically.

from processed foods, from stress, lifestyle factors, so many things, that even when we eat something that's healthy, our body's still reacting by bloating, by feeling upset, and by having some type of negative reaction, even though there's nothing wrong with that thing that you ate.

So that why it's really important to get our gut health in a really superb place to support our digestion overall, So you actually can compare Really how different food is reacting for you because you can't say, you know My body's

reacting terribly when I'm eating this with everything is causing bloating and that's where we see a lot of people today because of their exposure to a Lot of chemicals and processed food in their diet.

Absolutely and when it comes to gut health Are you guys just focused with whole foods or you also have sort of supplements that you recommend? I We talk about supplements, but I do keep supplements very basic.

I think that there's a lot of different supplements and people need to try them for themselves and see how they feel. Something that I would say everybody can benefit from is like a probiotic, right?

Or adding probiotics and prebiotic foods. And so it's the combination of both. Can we also add kimchi and take a probiotics supplement? Can we understand the difference between different probiotics?

Are they spore-based, are they reaching your gut alive, or are the dying through the digestive tract? Do they need to be refrigerated? And there's a lot of natural probiotic that you get from foods, like sauerkraut.

Totally, totally, and that should be our focus first and foremost. And then supplementing with that. I mean, I also supplement with protein powder every single day.

It's like a huge staple of my life, but I'm also looking at what's in that protein power, what are ingredients. You know, I think having the combination of both is really great, but you can't create a healthy body by having supplements if what you're eating is not healthy.

Yeah, if the foundation of it is. Especially when you talk about inflammation, right? One of the big things in the functional medicine space is infant aging.

where it's like you're aging quickly because all the inflammation in your body. And even a lot of the listeners out here, if they think they don't have inflammation, most people do in the world that we live in.

It's not just the foods that were eating, but it even the environment, the toxic environment of all these different toxins coming into your bodies, causing oxidative stress, creating all this inflammation.

Nutrition can really help reduce that inflammation tremendously, right? So the gut health protocols that you have, that's the start, in my opinion. Yeah, and there's so many foods that just help lower our inflammation, like you said, turmeric.

And that kind of where supplements get confusing, because I think it's great to take a turmeric supplement, but also you can just put it in your smoothie, or you could add it into your meal, et cetera.

So there are so different ways we get it, you're so spot on with, can we address this with nutrition first and foremost? to lower inflammation, lower inflammatory ingredients.

And again, a lot of people have this conversation around dairy or gluten or, you know, processed foods. Put that in your 20. You don't need to remove everything, if you make the choice to and you realize, hey, I really feel like crap or I'm going to the bathroom or whatever every time I am eating dairy and that's not worth it for you.

then there you go, you have your answer. But if it's something that you really wanna enjoy, but you know it inflammatory or it causes some type of digestive issue, put that in your 20 and no.

This is what I say, when you got to eat and something doesn't feel good, have the knowledge that maybe you're not gonna feel great. What are you gonna do before that's differently to support you?

You're gonna have a big protein smoothie or some kind of whole nourishing meal before you can go and eat something, that may be more processed or heavier, it doesn' feel gray.

What are you going to do the next day as well to support yourself? And it's not about deprivation or punishing or

feeling guilty. It's actually about powering your body, right?

You go and drink. We all know when we drink, it is not great for us. So many people still do it. And what do we do? We feel hungover if we drank too much.

But we learn that really quickly. For some reason with food, we continue to over and over to the point that our Actual state is just so in our gut becomes so deteriorated that we feel lethargic We feel you know consistently drained after eating these meals, but we think that that's our norm It's as if you're constantly hungover Yeah, and so we see the difference because we're not drinking all day every day most of us hopefully and So we notice the different And we do things differently.

OK, I'm going to take glutathione. I do love that supplement. And I take that before I drink. Right? I mean, a drink a lot of water. Take electrolytes.

We've educated ourselves on what we. So if you're going do that with food and eat something that's not the best option for you, doesn't feel the. That's OK.

But just be equipped with the information to support yourself in both the pre and the post recovery of whatever you are doing to cause that inflammation in your body and how do you support.

So you brought up alcohol. How important is alcohol for your health? Removing it? Don't remove it. I'm honestly 80-20 with everything and I think it comes down to is it worth it for you.

Like I said with all those other ingredients, I don't have any dairy, any gluten. It's not worth for me. But will I have a glass of wine? Sure. Will I be hyper focused on where it's produced and where I'm getting it from, yeah.

There's a company that I get wine from called Dry Farm Wines, I am obsessed with it. And they source low ABV, so you're drinking like phenomenal wines that are 11% or 10% at some points, alcohol, no sugar, and then they also care about the environment.

So I think there's just like what How do you incorporate different things into your life? There's so many studies around alcohol being so bad for us, going through our blood brain barrier.

A lot of that's done with alcohol over wine. We see even in blue zones, a lot people do drink wine, again, it's the quality of the wine or how's it being processed, how is it you know, fermented in barrels.

I'm not a winemaker. Actually, my mom is not winemakers. She's a Psalm three. Shout out to my Mom because she's really cool. But she knows a lot about the wine making process.

And it just comes down to how it's done. It's like food in a I think with anything that we're adding in, it's where is it worth it to you? There are so many people I know within my network and my community, they're just, It's not worth that.

I don't feel good, there's amazing mocktails, There's so other alternatives, I dont need it, and that's no part of my life. And I that that up to everyone to kind of make the choice, but put it in your 20, so it not leading your life, And understanding exactly what it is that you're ingesting, right?

Yes, like what's the quality? If it process, if not, what the equality? Which leads me to the next thing here. Today RFK junior got confirmed right as the head of HHS in There's a whole movement called make America healthy again And a lot of this stuff that you're talking about with all the processed foods and stuff.

Alcohol, Food Education, and Final Advice

It's all of the things that he talks about Yeah, what what's your thought process on this make American healthy? Again? I think that as a Canadian, I will not make any political, you know, commentary per se.

But what I'll say is I that this country, this world needs to wake up to what's going on with food. I thing that our country needs truly pay attention to everything I've said on this podcast when it comes down to educating the people on what they're getting.

And unfortunately, a lot of the times we don't have a say in that. So the best thing we can do is advocate for ourselves. What I mean by not having a saying that is what's going into the cereals we're having, what going in to the juices we are giving our kids.

We need to advocate ourselves I think that it would, it's amazing if we can have an administration that will also stand up and advocate for us, but we cannot be the ones that expect somebody else to do anything for.

I agree with that 100%. And it some, you know, like the movement's great, make America healthy again. But at the end of the day, If you look at what I'm eating, I've already been doing it, right?

But I do think that people have to be educated, they have understand it. People have join an app like Mindful, follow the podcast, listen to the podcasts so you can get this information and implement these things in your own personal life.

And we need to get to schools. We need get get food deserts. You know, underserved communities. That's where we go with the education piece with whole nourishing foods like with frozen foods and canned foods, and things that are more accessible and supportive towards the whole foods.

A lot of people may listen to this and say, easy for you to say you can go and get whole-foods down the street. And if you're saying eat 80% whole food, I don't have access to that.

Well, that comes down to where we can make changes in a much larger administrative level, I think. I agree with that. And obviously, myself growing up in the inner city, even the foods that people can buy with food stamps and whatnot are not foods really are going to contribute anything positive to their health.

So I think that's where that education does play a huge part. And even when I worked in the fire department, where I was stationed, was in a very low income area.

You saw the difference when it came to education. One of the reasons I decided to launch this podcast is when got into the whole alternative medicine space, it was really just for the rich and famous.

I told myself, what about the people that look like me? Right. You know, I have two doctors that are my partners. They're both African American. And our goal was like, let's try to get the information at minimum out to everybody.

That's where the podcast came into light, you know. So people can tune in and listen to a lot of experts like yourself and be able to take care of their health.

So that's amazing. All right. As we wrap up here, Sam, if there's one person that is out there listening right now and they just like they've been touched by your words and are ready to make that commitment, what's that one thing that you can leave that person off with?

I think the most powerful thing you could do for yourself is just stop blaming yourself for the way that you feel and start taking action by looking at what's going on.

Stop blaming and guilting, stop making yourself feel like, you know, I did this and I'm a terrible person and made these choices to get to this place because I know that conversation.

I've had that conversations in my head so many times in the past. it's my fault, I did this, throw it all out. The most important thing that you can do is take a look at your fridge, take look a your pantry, and take what's going on in your home and what you have control over and can take action because the second you feel empowered, you now can choose the way that live your life.

You now have whatever information you've had here, jump on mindful, also on our socials and on my social, there's so much free information that we put out Try to absorb as much as you can But really just get to know what's going on in your life because we hear so much of what we should do And where we you know where?

We should go next, but we actually don't know we're starting from right and once you understand What's in? Your fridge? What? In your pantry in regards to nutrition what your lifestyle habits are how much sleep you're actually getting what does that look like maybe track it for a week and Get really clear on what's going on and start taking accountability Instead of really guilting yourself, and I think you know give yourself a hug give herself that moment to say This this you, know I hear myself I feel like crap this this doesn't feel good anymore.

I want to make a change Let me get really clear on where i'm at and I think that's really where we can start Knowing where to go because we have to know where We're starting from right get to Know yourself.

I mean sam you said it said It really well get To know yourself and then from there you can Start making those adjustments, you know educate yourself sam if people want to find you where can they find?

You? Yeah. So personally, you can find me at The Fit Fatale. Like I said, I'm Canadian, so it's French. It's a play on The Femme Fatal. Oh, there you go.

And if you want to find Mindful, we are mindful.so on Instagram. Our website is also mindful.so. and it is mindful with two L's filling up your stomach, cup, and soul.

Ooh, I love it, awesome. All right, thank you. This was great, really good information, so I appreciate it. Guys, thanks for tuning in to another podcast over here with a Healthy Point of View podcast.

Sam does have a nice little surprise for you guys to get this discount on her year subscription for the Mindful app. It's $50 off. You're gonna use the promo code healthypov, right, point of view podcast, healthy point-of-view podcast.

So healthy POV. Make sure you redeem your $ 50 off and get the information. Get yourself to feel right. get your energy back and understand what you need to put inside of your body.

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