Real Food Recovery: Overcoming Ultra-Processed Food Addiction Transcript

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Opening on processed food addiction

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This is saving us maybe even a little bit of money. It's helping us have, you know, our, our cake and eat it too, so to speak. Right. But it was the massive shortcut that all of us fell for.

All of us. Welcome to Take Back My Brain with Lori Hammer, where real healing starts in the brain. I'm Lori, a functional nutritionist and mom who's walked the path from anxiety and burnout to clarity and calm.

Each week, we're going to dive into brain-based tools like amino acid therapy, gut health, fasting and faith to help you reclaim your energy, emotions and sense of self.

Podcast intro and guest welcome

Hello, everyone. Welcome back to Take Back My Brain. I'm your host, Lori Hammer. And today, I'm really excited because these are ladies after my own hearts.

I not only have one guest, but I have two guests today. These are the crazy ladies, Jamie Morgan and Paige Alexander from Real Food Recovery For You. They are on a mission.

to educate the world about ultra-processed food addiction. And they have written an amazing book, which all of you should get, and it'll be in the show notes, the link for that.

And the book is Real Food Recovery. If food isn't the answer, what's the question? So ladies, welcome to the podcast. Hello. Nice to be here. Awesome.

Awesome. I would love to know, I know both of you kind of are in the health and wellness industry. Paige, you're a nurse. Jamie, you're kind of in the midst of all the hospital stuff.

And yet you're still on this wellness journey, even with the medical backgrounds and stuff. So how did you get here? Well, Jamie, you kind of have a bigger, more spectacular story.

Would you like to start out and tell that one? I came into this world of recovery through a journey of health and wellbeing of my own. Many years ago, I really started the whole process of regaining my health and learning how to reclaim my health.

I grew up in a morbidly obese. most of my life really.

Jamieu2019s recovery journey

And by the time I was in my mid thirties, I knew it was time to, to really take ownership of my health. And I had had

a lot of trauma in my life and loss in my life.

And when I started to Reclaim my health and wellbeing. I really assembled a team, right? I assembled a team of a dietitian and a counselor and, and other folks to sort of eventually a personal trainer and, and gym, a gym network.

And it helped me kind of understand all of the facets, the facets of, of wellbeing. And since then I've, you know, really kind of evolved my weight, what I thought was a weight loss journey into a recovery journey.

and that has ebbed and flowed over the since 2008 now so it is something that I'm very passionate in talking about because my relationship with food has changed and evolved throughout the last, gosh, you know, 17, 18 years.

And I think that it's something that people need to understand that, you know, from where I sit today, I have learned for me, it's not about the food, it's where my mindset spiritual life, mental well-being, all of that sits before I ever interact with food.

So it's been a very, I would say bumpy journey, especially the last few years, but it's something that I've really come to learn a lot about myself during.

In the healthcare world, I get to, I'm an executive coach and I do leadership development training and I help people sort of become better versions of themselves on the HR side of healthcare.

And so I've been coaching for, it'll be 13 years now, I've been coaching leaders, teams, individuals on their own journey. And I've learned a lot from the clients I have, but I've also learned a lot from just my own journey.

Right, right. How about you Paige? Well, I have had a lifelong love affair with Sugar and really it wasn't, I'm 62 now, it wasn't until maybe five years ago.

I was always trying to figure out how to get off of it, but keep it in my life at the same time. It's a real trick. It is a trick, isn't it? You're like, how can I navigate this?

I think it'll work, and it never does. Literally, I was trying to negotiate my way out of it and into it all at the same time. And by the way, PS, spoiler alert, it does not ever work that way.

So my weight was always pretty well within the normal range, but I just had this demon, this monkey on my back all the time where I was white knuckling it between sugar benches a couple times a month.

And I hated that feeling when it flooded over me. It was like an aura coming over me and I could feel it coming on. And I felt completely out of control, like in a free fall.

just spiraling down like literally I was floating above myself on the ceiling watching this hand to mouth where I was obviously had already had enough but I mean I just could not stop the sugar until it was gone or I was too sick to carry on and usually since I'm no quitter I did try to finish everything that I could get my hands right on and it was only when menopause really started kicking in that my weight started changing I could no longer out X my I'd exercise my calories and vanity played such a big role that I'm like, okay, I'm gonna, I have no choice.

Paigeu2019s sugar addiction and recovery

I'm gonna have to do something. That's just the real honest truth. It doesn't make me look that great. I wish I could have a nobler reason, but it just, my body shape was changing and I didn't like it.

And I finally stumbled onto this idea of recovery. And I'm like, what is that? Because they kept saying, this is not a weight loss. program, but if you ever want to lose weight, you've got to go through recovery first.

It has to be about recovery and healing yourself. And I started to understand the science behind what was driving these binges and cravings and the blood flow shift between the center brain where the addictive centers are and

the frontal lobe and how that blood flow just feeds the center brain, the addicted part of your brain whenever these cravings come on.

And in recovery, you learn how to bring that blood flow back to the frontal lobe where you have rational thought, a braking system, long-term consequences.

Because when you're in the middle of a binge, once that train has left the station, it's real hard to think straight. And it's because the brain does not have adequate blood flow to make those type of decisions.

And so I was flooded with relief once I understood the science behind what was going on. It wasn't a willpower problem. I wasn't this girl who just literally couldn't stop myself and had no control and I wasn't broken in some way.

I was actually normal and reacting in a normal way. To something that I had been fed from my earliest memories and loved it from my very first bite I mean from I don't ever remember not loving sugar and quite frankly I still love sugar, but if I want to live a big beautiful life I just can't have it in my life and I can't control it once I can't I personally have no control over it and once I have one bite it's It's gone for me Yeah, I know when I was deep in my eating disorder, I was bulimic.

And so the sugar controlled everything that I did as well, right? Totally. So the gluten and the dairy and the sugar combined, it's like this whole big morphine effect that goes on in our brain.

And so then you crave it again and you crave it again because it gives you a high and it increases those endorphins, the dopamine. It just like boosts all your neurotransmitters at one time.

So I get what you're saying. And it's hard. It's hard. And it is a recovery process. Some people think, well, just stop doing it. Well, yeah, I tried to.

I tried to stop white knuckling. But you get to the point where all of a sudden you just eat a little bit and then you're on this whole crazy train after that.

And the problem is we are in a society where it's literally everywhere. So we've got society working against us. And once you have this addiction, your addiction is always work in the room.

It's always scanning the room, seeing what's available, starting the negotiation process. It's just very active. It's a very active addiction and scientists will say it's the hardest one to break because you've got to eat.

Because you have to eat. You can't not eat. I mean, you can fast for a day or a few, but you can't never not eat again. So that's addiction. And our food system, well, not the real food system, but the processed food system is created to make us addicted.

And I don't believe people don't completely understand that. Would you two elaborate on that for me? Can I say something, Jamie? And then I'll turn it over to you.

Interestingly, I, we were just talking to a new member that came on today and she said, well, what's your food plan? I said, well, we don't, we don't have a food plan.

It's just single ingredient foods. Well, yeah, I know, but like, do you have a list? of what you can and can't eat. Well, no, it's just it's just single ingredient foods.

We just don't eat processed food. Well, yeah, yeah, yeah, I know. But, you know, like I need to see what we can and can't eat. And I said, we might have vegans, we might have carnivores and everywhere in between.

And the only thing that Jamie and I ever tell anybody is just to avoid the processed foods and just stick to single ingredient foods. And finally, she said, I don't really know what single ingredient foods are.

Oh, yeah. And shame on me. I'm just speaking because I've just said this term a thousand times. And so we really had to break down. Literally, we had a five-minute conversation about what a single ingredient food is.

I said an orange. You can see with your eyeballs what an orange is. There's no label. Did it have a growing cycle? Did it need sunlight? Did it need water?

Has nature been involved? Those are the foods that we're eating, you know, fruits, vegetables, meats, grains, dairy, if they're from, you know, good sources, those types of things that have not been created in a factory.

That's a single ingredient. you explain how they create those to be addicting. Because everybody's like, well, nobody was addicted to food before. We didn't have an obesity issue.

And then we had the industrial revolution and all of a sudden everything exploded. So I think the biggest thing that people need to understand and helped me understand it was that when big tobacco in the 30s, 40s, 50s was ramping up and getting all of their folks hooked on cigarettes, They were met with a lot of pushback and by the time the late 70s came around in 1970s, there were many, many organizations and a huge movement against the marketing of cigarettes across the board, especially the children.

How processed foods became addictive

And this was something that I think big tobacco was very, certainly they were losing huge market share. They were losing tons of income and tons of revenue because people were waking up to the effects of of cigarettes on their health.

And especially, you know, they had to draw the line with the whole idea that the tobacco companies are marketing to children. So when that happened, you saw a lot of right turns of the tobacco companies going to food.

And R. J. Reynolds became R. J. Nabisco, for instance. And they took that marketing model and that whole approach that they had to hooking people on products and they moved it over to food.

And they said, you know what, single ingredient food is not addictive enough. It's not going to get them. Nobody's going back to the store again and again for heads of broccoli or for the breasts of chicken.

They realized that they had to do something to up the ante of the food to make it more hyperpalatable, not even more palatable, hyperpalatable. So they actually took, you know, they hijacked our brains and hijacked our neurochemistry and our hormonal responses in our bodies.

And they were able to dial that in with the foods the way that they engineered them chemically, as well as the actual engineering of the shape, size and quantities of the food.

So when early 80s came in, we were now shifting away from single ingredient foods and more into the convenience foods, into the processed foods, into the fast foods, into the TV dinners and the convenience stores and the convenience meals.

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All of us. I mean, the whole country and eventually rolled, rolling out to other countries beyond the U S we all fell for it. And pretty soon we were.

hooked into those hyper palatable, highly available, easy to eat, easy to source, processed foods. And not only did it become a sort of a symbol of status, right?

Because, you know, I remember growing up If your parents took you to McDonald's, you were having a good day. That was pretty darn exciting. Yes. Or if you had friends who had a birthday party at a processed food restaurant or something or a candy factory, it was like a thing.

It was a big deal. Nobody wanted to be at home while grandma cooked a lasagna for your birthday. You wanted to go out and have an experience. So a lot of times people, I think, are equating sort of having a status with eating these foods.

And the marketers in the big food industry know that. So they've created that and capitalized on it. And now there are no moral or ethical objections to children eating their food.

So they went right after them and all the way to newborns, right? With the infant formulas and everything else. So it's been such a massive shift. So you're right, people before the seventies mostly were not obese.

And there was a reason for that because the food supply was cannibalized in the seventies and eighties. Yeah, it is ridiculous. You know, you look back and you can just really see the progression because all of us are old enough to have seen this progression.

Yeah. Where our kids are like, they never knew it when people didn't have, you know, weren't obese and they weren't, you know, 75% of the country wasn't diabetic or pre-diabetic, right?

Right. It was just kind of what it is right now. But three of us can go back and go, oh yeah, you know, all my aunts and uncles might have been a little bit pudgy at the end of their life, but none of them had any of these issues.

Right. that we're going on right now. I grew up with a garden and my dad raised pigs and we had our own chickens and my grandparents had chickens and eggs, right?

And so we had a lot of the real food, the single ingredient food, but we also ate a lot of macaroni and cheese and pot pies and Captain Crunch and bologna and Velveeta.

Fried, fried bologna sandwiches. I remember that coming with a slice of American cheese. I mean, it was a heart attack in the package that stuff was. Oh, so, so bad.

Yeah. Now that we have such an epidemic, you know, we'll call that the pandemic, going on in our country right now, in our world, really, I was just in Pakistan, and they all have diabetes.

They all have high blood pressure, and you know, they're dying at 65. Interesting. Right? Because their healthcare system is awful, but now I'm seeing all the same medications over there as we have here, and there's obesity, there's all sorts of things going on that they didn't have before, you know?

So it is filtering into those other countries at well, you know, with the bad seed oils and all those kind of things. So it's just rampant everywhere.

Rampant everywhere. So the question is, how do we get out of it? And you guys have written a book on it, which is amazing.

Single-ingredient foods and food history

So I'd love for you guys to share some insights you have in your book. And then you've created a community. So dive into how you ladies are helping people get out of this ultra-processed food world that we live in.

Your brain runs the show, so don't let toxins run it ragged. God designed our bodies to heal when we remove the

interference, and ZeoCharge from Zeolite Labs helps me do just that.

This detox magnet targets heavy metals, mold, and other toxins while sparing your essential minerals. It is clean, third-party tested, and so easy to use.

So I want you to take back your brain today with ZeoCharge. Get it now at zeolitelabs.com. That is z-e-o-l-i-t-e labs.com. Do you want me to go first, Jamie?

Okay. So one of the things that we feel like we have created, which we've never seen done before, is we have this unique tree of life recovery system where our four main branches are food, the single ingredient food, like we talked about, movement.

Spirituality, we're not telling people to go to church, whatever that looks like for you, but you do need to have a place to turn to when life kicks you in the teeth.

And then, did I say movement yet? Oh, sleep. Movement and sleep. So those are the four main branches, the cornerstones, if you will, to build your foundation.

And then we've got another dozen branches that we build on top of that. And let's just start with the four main branches. Those things, if you have those foundational principles in tact and check in your life, then you've got a solid foundation to build the rest of your life on because it's pretty difficult to have this big beautiful life if you're not sleeping, if all you're eating is junk food, if you have no spiritual connection within your own soul.

and you don't have any movement going on. All of those things are endorphin producing, dopamine producing, but in a gentle, lovely way, not this harsh spikes that you get from ultra processed food.

When you bite into that ultra processed food and it goes straight up to your brain, It's registered in the brain, not in the gut, and it cuts off the communication between the gut and the brain.

That's a good measuring tool for if that is something that's going to take you out of life. And then the more you get addicted and in that pleasure pain balance, you lose your ability to govern with reason.

Because like I said before, your addiction is always work in the room and you're just working on how can I get my next fix or how can I white knuckle and stay off of it until my next fix.

So anyway, we have created these core foundational principles and then we add on top of that, what are you doing in your life for self-management, for purpose, for values, for education, for service to others, inner family work.

So we've got like a dozen other things that we encourage people to exercise those branches so that you are so fulfilled with purpose and this lovely dopamine drip going on all the time.

that it satisfies the brain's need to get high or numb yourself when you're bored, you're anxious, you're lonely. any of those things because ultimately when you're using, in air quotes, the ultra processed food, you're using it for a reason.

It's to usually numb some type of emotion, but whenever you have these other areas that are so well groomed in your life, it really reduces that need to turn to food for comfort.

Jamie, I don't know if you want to add to that. I love it. And so you've written on all of that in your book, I'm assuming. Yeah, we have chapters on each one of those and how it looks to Jamie talks about how that looks to her.

And I talk about, let's say stress management that she'll talk about what that is to her. And I'll talk about what that is to me. And we give a lot of life stories, try to add a little humor in there.

And then we and each chapter were kind of how-tos and takeaways that people can easily implement into their lives. I love that. As you have created this community, are there any other like three different things that really stand out to you that people consistently struggle with the most in, you know, like your main areas or even maybe even a sub area that kind of prevents them from overcoming this food addiction?

Yeah, I would say for sure the big three that I see consistently are shame. We see a lot of that coming in old beliefs that are sabotaging them, beliefs about themselves, beliefs about their ability, beliefs about the food system, the foods that are foods that are optimal for their bodies and not.

Building the Real Food Recovery system

Just like in big tobacco and all of the pork cases in the 70s, big food now is being assaulted, right? And they're starting to sell confusion. They're not marketing food anymore, they're marketing confusion.

What do you feel like those beliefs are, Jamie? What are the things that are most confusing? Oh, you know, Paige and I just talked about this yesterday in an episode we recorded, you know, the extreme diets, the extreme food plans.

And I fell hook, line, and sinker for one of those extremes for four years. And then, you know, there are other confusions. Is fat good? Is fat bad? Is sugar good?

Is sugar bad? You know, I don't think anyone can contest that sugar is not good. Right. Right. Right. But no, there's there's all you know, is sugar from fruit?

Okay, you know, should we eat it properly? It doesn't work. They have a lot of carbs, like carbs versus no carbs, carbs or fats, you know, fasting or not fasting, all of it, all of it.

So those are there's a lot of beliefs that need to be maybe inspected and looked at, then you, you think about, you know, for, for a lot of the members that we have and the, even Paige and myself talk about as we change in age, especially as women and going through perimenopause and menopause, your bodies change.

And of course shift and everything that worked for you before. may stop working. So those old mindsets that you picked up as an adult, in my case, I was well in recovery and I was an adult and I thought, I'm good.

I'm going to eat this way the rest of my life. And then boom, menopause comes and jokes on me. No, you're not. So I had to right turn and I had to look at some of those old beliefs that worked for me until they didn't.

So again, it's not about like this, you know, let's unpack your childhood and, you know, talk about your mother kind of thing, but it's more like, what do we need to do to understand, you know, if they're not serving, if those old beliefs are not serving us?

Right. One of those old beliefs that we hear is, well, you know, the commercial said it was okay. The box said it was organic. You know, the bag said that, you know, it was no trans fats and why, you know, why am I feeling like crap eating this?

Or, you know, why is my scale moving indirectly on it too? Or, you know, whatever. But, so there's lots of those. And then we also see the more, I would say, tactical side of things.

We see lack of planning. And, you know, a page is huge on food prep. And that's something that, you know, I've done as well for years. And I think that that can ebb and flow for people.

I think sometimes people will see these, I think social media is such a scourge in many ways. And they will see this like person with like, you know, 28 little plastic containers, you know, putting their chicken and broccoli and sweet potatoes in there.

Well, I've got to go zero to zero to that. Like I, I'm eating McDonald's four times a day, but I've got to do this now. So I'm just going to go ahead and throw myself into that.

And they're missing 13,000 other options in between McDonald's four times a day and eating like a bodybuilder, right? There's many ways to, you know, to approach the approach of food prep in a way that gets you the planning, gets you the forethought, gets you the kind of regulating yourself in a intentional way.

days before you ever need to eat the food right because you know that those decisions for food prep start at the shopping trip or the shopping list creation even so again it's it's understanding that these are all investments you're putting into yourself and when you start to see how all of this you know time and energy and effort brings you this feeling this you know, maybe physique or whatever your goal is that you're wanting, then that's the reward.

But so many people think, well, if I'm not, you know, looking like a bodybuilder, I don't have any reward. The reward is in the process. Right. Yeah, and none of it is.

It's key, teaching people the process. And I've been watching a lot of your videos, Paige, and I love how you're teaching the process. So if you want to share some of that with us, that would be great.

Oh, yeah. One of the big things that I think we do really well is help people with reframing thoughts. Because we have a natural negative bias to us. And so it's easy to get there.

It's a little more difficult to spin things around so that we're not in a negative head space. And so I really appreciate that we work, do a lot of work on helping people reframe thoughts to where it becomes more of a habit.

And so it's not our first instinct to go straight to the negative, but to spin things to the positive.

Common barriers: shame, confusion, and planning

And then we talk about habits. Then we start building habits and then we start building identity shift work that happens and our belief system changes.

And then that anchors us to this new person who we are. And then we want to stay in that lane instead of going back to that dark place. Because one of the things that we do know about addiction is it's very isolating.

So connection is the opposite of addiction. So that's why in our community it's so built on connection. You really have got to have some type of connection to pull yourself out of this because this is something that's very difficult if ever to do on your own.

So being in a community with people who are highly trained in those that suffer from the ultra-processed food use disorder is I think paramount to walking out of the depths of hell, quite frankly.

Yeah, because it can feel like hell. Let's just be honest. Totally. It's a small life. And Jamie has said this before, once you're deep into the food, it takes you out of life.

And people have a misconception about those that have addiction because they just think, oh, they're out there trying to get high. Well, as you repeat these addictive processes, It wears down that reward pathway.

So people, let's say, you know, I'm at even, people are just so low down, they're just trying to get back up to equilibrium. It's hard to get high. Once you have abused those reward pathways, they're worn out.

And so you're just trying to get back up to even and it just takes more and more. You just want to function. That's right. And this disease is progressive.

So it will always take you more and more to have the same, you're not going to have that same effect as when you first tried sugar or whatever your drug of choice is.

When I was deep into my, you know, the bulimia and stuff, I mean, and I would go to the grocery store and I hate to even say this now, but I mean, this can be vulnerable.

I would steal food and I would walk around and I would eat it while I shopped for more food to go binge on later. Yeah. Or I'd eat my roommate's food and then I have to go to the store and replace it before she came home.

All of a sudden you're doing things that you never thought that you would do. That's exactly right. I like to say you wouldn't normally eat a donut out of the trash, but somebody who is desperate, that's rookie stuff.

disagree with that perception of desperation and and you know where you're sort of controlled like I was I was certainly controlled by all of those habits all of those addictive ingredients and the addictive process and all of it and what I've come to again understanding what's helped me Not only understand that Paige said it so well a few minutes ago, our bodies and brains are reacting exactly as they are supposed to act around hyperpalatable, ultra-processed, chemically laden foods.

Right. Full stop. There's no denying that. But my work in recovery in the last few years, especially, has been And it's certainly not linear. It's sometimes two steps forward, three steps back.

But my work now is to understand why am I looking to an outside substance like food or people or shopping or gambling or whatever. Why am I looking to an outside substance for easing comfort?

What's going on inside of me that needs easing comfort? what's going on in here, what's happening in my heart, what's happening in my body, what's happening in my head, what emotions need to be felt or processed, talked about, Paige just mentioned connection, but what needs to be addressed so that I'm not seeking something outside of me to do a job that only I can do.

There's nothing outside of me that can do for me what I'm looking for the food to do. It's an inside job. It is an inside job. I talk a lot about amino acid therapy and stuff and balancing the brain and nourishing the brain and then those thought processes, all of a sudden, some of them disappear.

You don't have to think about it anymore. The craving is gone, right? The craving is gone and then you bring in those good foods and it just makes it easier.

Or it helps you to, what's left over? What emotions are still there? And then you can recognize them a lot easier. So when we're balancing the brain, and we're nourishing that brain, then a lot of these other things just become easier to deal with too.

So there's so many components to all of this. Go ahead, Paige. And if you think about it, think about your mitochondria, those little bitty factories inside the cells.

If they are getting all those little macro and micronutrients that they need to have little smiley faces on each cell, they're not going to be still craving and looking for other things.

Reframing habits and identity

So if you're eating in a way that nature that you were created to eat, Jamie has a famous saying, you're not going to see any fat deer in the wild because they're eating like they were designed to eat.

If you eat like your body was designed to eat, you're going to have little smiley faces inside every one of your cells because they're going to be getting the things they need, not searching, searching, searching for more So there's just so much science behind this.

But going back to one of your original questions, I think that our recovery program is so unique because it just is such a holistic look at everything.

We're not here to give someone a food plan. So if someone's looking for a food plan, this is the wrong place to look because that's got to come from within you.

And we want you to look from within you. We never want to tell people what to do. That's part of the journey for you is to figure out what my body does and doesn't react to.

And isn't that a beautiful thing? And doesn't that make you feel good about yourself? And you only find that out through the editing process. We like to say recovery is just a series of edits.

But yes, we look at this at the whole person. It's not just about any food plan. You'll never see a list. at real food recovery. No, but I just want to add something to that really quick, Paige.

I love what you said about the deer in the wild, right? And, you know, eating what we're engineered, what our bodies are engineered, have evolved to eat.

But I think if there were trees of Oreos and bushes made of Cheetos, we would see a lot of obese deer, right? So the same reactions would happen for them as are happening for us.

Yeah, absolutely, because they're going to become all of a sudden dependent on those chemicals. Think about your house pets. Think about your dogs. I mean, how many fat house dogs do you see?

Not Jamie's, but a lot. Not mine either, but a lot. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I remember, you know, like red dye and stuff. We had this dog and every time he would get red dye and we didn't realize he would get it, he would just get aggressive and mean and like, you know, all these things.

And then here we are, we're feeding our kids red dye. Like we figured it out with our dog, but then all of a sudden we have all these kids with ADD, ADHD, these aggressive behaviors and stuff.

What are they eating? We know what they're eating. Right? We know exactly what they're eating. If we remove those things from their diet, those behaviors start to go away and their body and their brain can actually heal.

Yeah. Yeah. And so I love your guys' mission. I love the message you have. I love the community that you have created. I am huge fans. So because this needs to get into the more hands of more people.

Right? People are dying without this information. Totally. And if they're not dying from the complications of obesity or the complications of processed food overuse and abuse, they're dying from the emotional effects of the shame that they're carrying or they're dying from all of the eating disorders that come with, right?

In addition, the big three that we always hear about, then there's tons of other non-specified food So that I am constantly like, well, the more I read about the way that people manipulate, you know, things like insulin or other, you know, drugs and substances help regulate appetite, satiety, quantity of food.

Yeah, the whole GLP-1 phase right now. So all of that is, you know, there's so much that's affecting people that are driving them to just throw up their hands and say, forget it, I'm just going to shoot myself up in the stomach and drink a milkshake twice a day and hope for the best, right?

Like, yeah, you got to die at something, Jamie. That's what they're doing. That's what they're doing. So it's crazy to think about, you know, getting back to what our bodies know, the food our bodies know what to do with.

And I always tell myself that when I'm thinking about making a choice, like, you know, I don't cut food groups out of my life at this stage. And I did for many years.

With this stage, I don't. And I may again in the future. But right now, that's not where I am. And I ask myself if there's two different things I'm thinking of and one of them is something with sugar in it, like a homemade whatever with sugar in it that I saw at a farmer's market.

Or, you know, a couple of cuties from the fridge, right? What are my options? Well, how do I want to feel after I eat that?

Future-self mindset and neuroplasticity

I'm going to feel, I'm going to feel achy. I'm going to feel probably a little tired, or I'm going to feel like I just ate a couple of cuties and life goes on.

Okay. Yeah. Does my body know what to do with this, this baked good from the farmer's market? It doesn't. It really doesn't. I mean, it has these ingredients that are maybe whole, but my body really doesn't.

It's, it's, it's hypercaloric. A body doesn't really know what to do with it efficiently unless I'm going to go out and, you know, have a walk or hop on a bike after I eat that.

And usually the answer is I'm not. So my body knows what to do with these two cuties. So I'm just going to eat those. Yeah. So yeah, those are kind of decision points and choice points.

And I'll also say one last thing, Paige and I talk a lot about habits and Paige, and I'm sure Laura, you've heard about habit stacking. It's a thing, right?

You know, habit stacking, we talk about with our, with our community all the time about the importance of stacking habits and the importance of when you're listening to a podcast or, or watching your favorite show on Netflix over the weekend, do a little cooking with it, you know, that kind of stuff.

So we get them in the mood of, in the mode of, of. preparation. But more importantly, we have to remember that they say, oh, don't start a habit, you can't stop, or don't start a habit, you'll have to stop.

Habit replacement is actually the name of the game. So for us, it's looking at, okay, if that habit works for you, what can you replace within that habit?

Because you're already doing it. So if you swap out the food, and keep the habit. Instead of trying to get them to change a habit, that can be like rolling a rock uphill.

Right. I love that. That's really good. What did you have to say, Paige? Well, when she was talking, it made me think what she was explaining. And what we talk a lot about is staying in that future self mindset.

So instead of thinking right here in front of your nose, And being myopic, let's think about a mile down the road. So sticking in that future self mindset.

And Jamie did the exact thing that we talk about a lot using the pause button, you know, the big red pause button that I think have a commercial about that.

But anyway, that's. That's where you have an opportunity before the train does leave the station is exercising that pause button and it helps you stay in that future mindset.

And it just takes practice. It goes back to what Jamie was saying about habit. If you practice habitually using the pause button pretty soon, that's going to be your natural factory setting.

That's going to be the original factory settings. And so we love to talk about neuroplasticity and how the brain is malleable and we can change these neural grooves in our brain to think differently, to act differently, to feel differently.

Jamie is talking a lot about looking at the why, examining our thoughts. All those things can be rewired in the brain to work to our good. Recovery is possible.

It takes work. And I think the biggest problem is people get discouraged on day one and a half, and I'm not all better. So if you're willing to stick with it, it took years to get here.

It's going to take a while to rewire all those neural pathways and embed new ones in. So you've got to be willing to do the journey and do the work.

Practical recovery, food prep, and encouragement

And that just comes with repetitive practice. Right. And it's so worth it, right? Your life is so worth it. Totally. Oh my gosh. Running after your grandkids and your kids and whatever it is that is presented to you in life.

It's allowing your brain to be a little more quiet. That you, like I said earlier, the addiction for me, it was always scanning the room, figuring out my next big move and all that negotiation.

I don't have to negotiate every single move all day long because I am a big food prepper. So I know before I go to bed at night, what the next day, I always say the day starts the night before.

So I always know what my day is going to look like. I've got a pretty good idea of what I'm going to eat when. Have it prepped, ready to go. All that work, I don't have to think about a thing.

I don't have decision fatigue by the end of the day where you're more vulnerable. Things at the end of the day, whenever those food demons are most prominent, I don't have to fight with anybody about that.

So it just, it's exhausting to be in the middle of a brain that's trapped in that cycle of addiction. It's painful, so painful. Yeah, it is very, very painful.

Is there anything you want to leave the audience with? One last thing. I'll let Jamie finish up. There's nothing wrong with you. I promise. Not the way you eat, not the way you look, not the way you think.

They're just tapes and behaviors and beliefs that need to be examined and replaced with new updated versions and maybe the food will revert back to a couple of centuries ago.

And that's pretty much it. Yeah, that's it. And it's possible. Freedom is possible if you're willing to stick in there for the journey. And it's a beautiful messy journey.

It's okay. You don't have to be perfect at that either. And you don't have to change everything all at once. In fact, we don't ever tell people to do that.

Yeah. And I like to say, if you ain't having fun, you're doing something wrong because it's fun. It can be a lot of fun. And when your taste buds change, you're gonna enjoy all these natural foods so much more and everything gets sweeter, vegetables get sweeter.

I mean, it's just beautiful fruit is totally sweet enough. And it's so nice when your brain isn't jonesing all the time for a birthday cake or cookies or things like that.

It opens up doors for you to evolve in a way you never thought possible. and to tap into that beautiful, authentic self that you were meant to be. Awesome.

Well, thank you ladies so, so much. I appreciate both of you. I love your mission. I will shout it to the rooftops. I will recommend you to so many people.

So I know my audience is going to love it. So all of you who are listening, I know that I know that you know somebody who needs to hear this message. Right.

So please make sure that you are sharing this podcast with everyone that you know, go follow Jamie and Paige, go

get their book. Thanks for listening to Take Back My Brain.

If today's episode helped you connect with hope or direction, I want you to follow the show, leave us a review, and share it with someone who needs it.

And if you're ready to start your own healing journey, explore our courses and our coaching programs at lorihammer.com backslash store. So until next time, remember you cannot medicate away a nutrient deficiency and healing your brain isn't just possible, it's Powerful.