Salt Is NOT Flavor, and It’s Destroying Your Health | Chef. Marcus Moore | Ep. 121 Transcript

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Introduction to Chef Marcus Moore

You said you don't cook by recipe, you cook my color. What does cook-by-color mean? Recipes are bullshit. Even the ones that I create. Take it in this sense.

Dress your food the same way that you dress yourself. And if you play that throughout the course of the season, they're good to go 100%. So if I'm wearing this today, what am I putting on the food?

You can do… We have Chef Marcus Moore. Hey, all right. On this episode, we're joined by Chef Marcus Moore, culinary creator and founder of Cook by Color.

He's known for making flavors simple, healthy, and unforgettable. Our people, blacks and Latinos, dying at a crazy rate. Health issues. Hypertension, diabetes, obesity.

Anything that I did or brought to market helped them eat clean and eat healthier. My brand is the cleanest label on the market. It has no GMO, no MSG, I've seen a lot of your videos and your pictures of you putting things together and cooking.

It's not just cooking, you're dressing this food. What does that do when it comes to the relationship of eating? What is that due specifically? It is based on your mood and how you feel.

So you say like when you dress up that food and make it look sexy, it's putting you in a different type of mindset? The idea of… Welcome to another episode of a Healthy Point of View podcast.

I'm your host, Sam Tahata. And as usual, we're bringing experts from all over the world to talk about health, wellness, beauty, and mindset. Today, our guest comes all the way from Dallas, Texas.

So we always talk about all the food that we eat, but what about what we flavor our food with? What are we doing? what are putting on our foods? Does it make sense?

does it enhance our taste buds? Is it healthy? Today we have Chef Marcus Moore.

Early Cooking Influences and Family Roots

Brother, welcome to Healthy Point of View podcast. Thank you, brother. I appreciate it. Absolutely, man. Man. This is the first time I ever have a chef on the podcast.

I got everybody always, I cook healthy, but we got a Chef. And you got your brand here with your products, your seasonings and everything else. But before we talk about any of that, the listeners of yours want to know who Marcus Moore is.

So we're going to go way back, wayy back. to when you were around five years old, what was your upbringing? Wow, so born out of Chicago, born and raised there.

Midwest, Chi-town. Chi town, Windy City. I'm from Milwaukee, we're neighbors. Being kicked out of the kitchen, for one, it's interesting, man. It's like the things that draw your attention to certain things kind of lead your path, and you don't know that you're actually on that particular path.

You're just doing the thing that's you care for and like, right? So watching my mother cook in the kitchens, watching

grandmother cook, I noticed that there wasn't any men in the kitchen.

Some of my T. O.' 's cook barbecue from a grilling perspective, quote unquote, the manly thing to do, but there wasn't any certified cooks in kitchen doing it.

It was always the women in a kitchen So I kind of took notes from them and inspired me, but also got kicked out of the kitchen because I was in the way, as they called it.

So, I paid attention from afar. So yeah, man, I get that and I understand that, being Dominican, right? Where back then, a lot of the Dominican men were just, you weren't in the kitchen.

My father, remember, one time my mom went away, she went to Dominican Republic for some kind of family function. And my father was stuck watching all four of us.

I'm the youngest out of four. Oh man. He attempted. I don't know if he attempted murder or attempted to feed us, but what he cooked, he even talks about it till today.

He was like, man, I didn't understand why you guys weren't eating what I cooked until I tried it afterwards. And he said it was horrible. So, you know, one of the things that I learned from that, and I told myself, well I want to learn how to cook myself.

And, you know, I'd go in the kitchen, kind of same thing how you said, and you always kind get kicked out. And eventually my mom started showing me a few things, but it wasn't until I worked at the fire department where I learned how to cook, because the guys at The Firehouse.

Okay, cooking for the guy's, yeah. We cook atThe Fire House. Man, we cook. OK. we smoke food, We do everything you can think of. So I can resonate with the message.

At what point in time did you decide to actually become a chef, right? Because you come from a creative background and marketing. You really kind of took that and applied it into what you're doing today, so I want to get into that.

Yeah, that's a tear-jerker, if you will. That's the deep one. So I have three daughters, and I was going through a divorce around that time. And you know, When you're when you are in the house and you have your routine you and your the you know the quote-unquote husband You have you duties with you.

Know that you do as a routine Coming, going through the divorce, you don't have that same system that you did. My system was I went to work. So my work at that particular time, and even to today, I'm an executive creative director for ad agencies.

And I would go do that and then come home, cook, prepare food for the girls and my wife and help out with homework and get them prepared for bedtime, read them bedtime stories after that.

And then from there it was wife duty, spend time with her, check in with with make sure her day was cool. She goes to bed and I kick back into gear following up with work, following with emails and back to the grind early in the morning.

when that was like taken away from me and I no longer had that and now I'm in you know an apartment that I am not familiar with I don't have that routine I do not know kind of what to do with myself.

Finding His Path Through Fatherhood and Work

I've always had a passion for cooking always loved that journey, but I didn't create anything. My trajectory wasn't about cooking at that point. It was family home stability and making sure that the paycheck was constantly coming in.

So I started playing around more inside the kitchen because I had more time when I did not have more girls with me. All right. And so I was trying to find clever or unique ways to actually have things still in the house that I can still be in.

The house and the girls can kind of still have my presence there. So I came up with, you know, cook by color. But at the time it was just seasonings that.

I wanted them to have in their house, but then also. Teach them how to cook by color because that's the way that I cook literally by Color I don't cook my recipe the color Dictates the next color so the first color that i put down will dictate the Next color and I wanted to teach them that particular flow But I wasn't there on a day-to-day basis for them to learn that.

So I started playing around in the kitchen more and started reaching for the typical things that you would find in your cupboards, the lorry seasoning salts and the McCormick's, this or that, But all of them were a mixture of ingredients.

So you get lemon, pepper, you would get garlic and herb. You get all these mismatched colors that don't necessarily go together. And because my creativity from a color palette perspective and understanding what colors do, I wanted to grab single colors, almost like grabbing crayons out of a crayon box.

I want it to select the color so I can put down because the first color would dictate the second color. And with lemon pepper, you can't do that. The colors are already combined.

So I'm stuck with only that flavor profile. and not being able to be creative with inside of the kitchen. So I started creating my own seasoning and keeping them all within side of one color family.

And because I'm a dad and trying to make sure that the girls continue to eat healthy, I wanted to have fruits and vegetables mixed in with the herbs and spices.

didn't know that that was a thing to do or thing not to. It was just a think that I wanted to for the girls. Again, this was never supposed to be a product to sold or anything like this.

This was me messing around in the kitchen. And from there, it created a system for me. Then one of my guys was like, listen, you always coming up with good ideas.

You can't keep this one to yourself. get out there and share it. Because this was something that you just had internally, you were just doing it for yourself.

Yeah, I was just doin' it myself and I doing for my daughters and you know, later started to learn that there's not a product out that has herbs and spices combined with fruits and vegetables kept with inside a single color family and by doing that the profile, the flavors, absolutely incredible.

Wow. So it's like you you fall upon different things and discover things, you know throughout your journey and kind of you, know You're you're on a particular path that you don't know that.

You are on but I feel like, You know higher beings god energy, whatever you believe in kind, of, put you on that particular I'm dope as an individual.

I know the things that I create are phenomenal. Like I speak to the culture, I know the cultural, know how to communicate to culture especially with inside of that advertising, marketing craft.

But then being able to continue that with the inside a place that I didn't go to culinary school. So all of my cooking techniques and knowledge comes from me being able to travel the world, me, being, you know, taught in front of like iron chefs and being taught different things and different techniques on how to actually do certain things.

You kind of find your own path in your way. Cooking school couldn't have taught me the way that I think about cooking and the health benefits behind it.

So I cook with purpose. versus cooking based off of a system that is engineered to to mimic, you know every day every every chef that goes out there that that Goes to culinary school is taught the same exact way There's a different way to explore food.

It's the feeling is an energy And I could only imagine going to other countries where the way they cook is completely different. So through advertising I moved to Qatar and I was there to help Qatar figure out their marketing efforts for the World Cup.

Being out there, Iron Chef Morimoto has a restaurant there. He and I met up, started talking. I'm having Chef Morimoto show me how to actually cook sushi or make sushi and prepare it, cure it.

Do all sorts of different things. And having him using my seasonings to brighten the food or to color the foods. Just being in his kitchen, being around his staff day in and day out.

It's absolutely phenomenal. You grow up watching these guys perform on shows and TV networks, and now you're in front of them. Now you are part of that world.

How was that experience? It was unbelievable. I'm sitting there in awe. It is like you can have different chefs and different people prepare your food and prepare things and teach you.

But to have idols that you actually look up to that are, they become a little bigger than life a lot. Right, right, that's pretty cool. So it was phenomenal.

I'm going to go rewind a bit to something you said earlier. You said you don't cook by recipe, you cook color. And that kind of stuck. That's why we're going back to it.

What does cook-by-color mean? All right. Recipes are bullshit. Even the ones that I create, right? So take it in this sense. You're fit, love what you got on, you've got your white sneakers, blue jeans, a blue shirt to match, the accents of the logo kind of playing in and out of your shirt, matches with your beard, it matches where you're bling the whole night.

I like that outfit. I would not go, because this is your recipe, but I wouldn't go and copy this identically. I'll put my swag to it. That's what cooking is.

Looking at a recipe as a guide, because you would never know how that chef actually prepared it and what it tastes like for his taste buds. Everyone has their own spin.

What you just said kind of reminds me of a when you look at the tabloids and they had a section, who wore it the best?

Creating Cook by Color

Yeah, absolutely. And they have a little bit of different accessories and this. Everybody's fresh is different, but you wouldn't go and mimic that same style and put it on.

You would go make it your own. Recipes are the same way. They're just a guide for you to actually do your thing. Take this out, move that, have this, replace this but cooking by color plays into complimentary colors equals complimentary taste.

And so like, you complimented your top with your blue jeans. Then you accented it with the accessories of your shoes. Cooking is the same way. So like if you took your traditional recipe that has a litany of different ingredients in it, all of those are different colors.

you wouldn't dare wear that entire ingredient list. So why cook with it? You know, you can start to curate the actual ingredients based off of color. Like, okay, I have my greens here.

What can complement my green? Okay, let's rock with some yellow or let rock some white or whatever it may be. And then you start curating those particular ingredients.

Now, your color-consistent and those flavors will actually match your taste buds way better than trying to follow the actual ingredient list from somebody else.

You know, you got my head spinning right now, but I'm telling you, not too long ago, and it's happened quite frequently recently, where I go to a restaurant and I am eating something new, right?

And I just wanna eat it. It's just like, there's too much going on here. You know, it tastes a little bit with an aroma, but then it's smoky and then its got this, and it just, like it too.

This is not enjoyable right now. And it is exactly what you're talking. Its almost like they're just throwing the whole kitchen sink at it Yeah, and it's like you like that same that line of taste profile and thinking follows if you find someone that is, you know, walking down a street in Miami or New York or LA or Chicago that the outfit is just out of this world and there's just so much going on.

It's like, dog, what the hell are you doing? It was like white. You knew what you put on but chose not to look in the mirror. But everybody that's looking at you is like the second guess is it's what is actually happening is way too much that is happening.

And it becomes too loud and it actually becomes a distraction, a disturbance, and its not tasteful. No, not at all. The cool thing about comparing fashion and the culinary space is because they work hand in hand.

What do you mean by that? Like, no one talks about this, and I don't know if they don' think about it this way, but I just happen to do so. My brain is wired different, what have you.

But the colors that are in season or from a fashion perspective are the same colors are that in-season from culinary perspectives. So your springs, your summers, you winters, or falls, all of those fashion colors and when you're supposed to wear those particular colors are the same thing that you are supposed eat during that season.

That makes sense. I mean, fall time you got all the browns and the orange and deeper colors. And that's the trees look like that. What you eating pumpkin, pumpkin pie, that stuff has those type of colors So you're supposed to eat in season, and you are supposed dress in-season.

You're not going to wear something that you were wearing in the spring or the summer, during the fall and the winter. Right. Because it just won't match up that way.

One, you need more covering. It needs something a little deeper. Needs something just going cover you and make you warm. Same thing in winter, the soups, different dishes.

The thicker, they're more heartier. And plays directly into that same space. They run parallel. So the idea of saying, like the way that I kind of teach from a philosophy perspective is dress your food the same way you dress yourself.

And if you play that throughout the course of the season, you're good. You're going to go 100%. So if I'm wearing this today, what am I putting on the food?

Blueberries? So you can go with blueberries for sure. and you can actually stay away from the green. You can use different salad pieces and leaks to, you know, to hint towards more of the white pieces of color.

There's there's a bunch of different things that you could do with just literally playing off the accent. And you make an incredible blueberry cocktail from it with a foam egg white top to it.

Like literally you can match this entire thing to us like if we that's why it's like we were doing the cooking segment I Wanted to like literally mess around with what you were wearing actually prepare something.

Well, we're gonna get that done one day Especially now that I'm hearing it So, you know, obviously I started going, I got one of those minds where I start going and I'm thinking about my outfit.

And I think I said, okay, blueberries. What else got a little bit of that blue tint? You know the purple, blueish potatoes. Yeah, absolutely. Things of the nature.

So that's very interesting. It'd be interesting to know especially if you're mixing multiple of what kind of flavor profiles are hitting those taste buds, right?

It's interesting man because it's like most people really can can see color and they can dress themselves that way but feel they don't feel as confident stepping into the kitchen.

and hopefully by them hearing this they can start to feel more confident in the kitchen by looking at the ingredient list and thinking about the color profile versus the actual taste profile.

As most chefs jump into the kitchens, especially the experienced ones, they'll start throwing things together and they're looking for a particular outcome.

They know what the thing is that's missing. Most people don't know that. And so they feel, you know, kind of inferior to that particular approach. But hopefully there's, my system is something that they can follow as a healthier system.

You don't have as many ingredients in there. you keep everything simplistic and color coordinated. I'm telling you, complimentary colors equals complimentary taste.

Explain to me the color harmony, how that truly unlocks the true taste out of it. What are my taste buds doing when you go ahead and bring that color harmony together?

So let's take just a pure difference of spicy things and things that bring heat. Spicy things are like your jalapenos, your serranos, that sort of thing.

Heat is more of a chipotle, it's more a albineto, those sort of peppers are different. So one is gonna burn your tongue, the other one's just gonna heat your body up to where you start sweating, right?

Completely different, But if you add a level of fruit that has a little bit of sweetness to it, like an orange, if we kept the abaneros and oranges together, that abonero, it won't peak.

It won' t destroy your palate. it just evens out because the sugar with inside of the sweetness comes in and plays a role to keep it down. And balances it out.

That's where people kind of go with the sweet and spicy type of deal. Yeah, it plays with that. It plays the salt and sweetness as well when you get into different dessert sort of things or even a play in savory.

But yeah, absolutely. That's interesting. So now I've seen a lot of your videos and your pictures of you putting things together and cooking. And it's not just cooking, right?

You're dressing this food. Yeah, absolutely. You know? And we were talking about dressing ourselves, but you're dressin' this, you giving a certain look, a sort of presentation.

So when we talk about dress in the food, what does that do when it comes to the, What is the relationship of eating, what does that do specifically? It's based on your mood and how you feel.

So you're saying like when you dress up that food and make it look sexy, it's putting you in a different type of mindset? No, so in the idea of If your mood is a particular way, maybe you feel happy, you're gonna grab a color and you gonna cook with that sort of glee.

And so your food and the experience comes out that way. So I start looking at it like if I'm preparing a meal, I start looking at what do I want the actual person to feel when I'm cooking?

Cooking by Color vs. Recipes

Because I know that colors will dictate a particular or trigger a particularly emotion So what's the emotion that I? Want them to actually have and I'll start building the color profile based off of that so that they can have that experience that i'm actually curating or dictating for them now give me an example of all right, so Let's see.

If you, from a human behavior perspective, if you're angry and you go sit inside of a blue room or a yellow room, there is no way in hell that you can stay angry.

It's impossible. The color triggers your mind to start to be calm. Start to relax. Like, okay, start taking some deep breaths. The colors in our system and our society are societal colors, meaning that we know that, you know, red means stop, or red mean love, Red means anger.

Red can't mean all of these, all these things all at the same time, but in social society, they do, right? From a neural perspective, red does not mean that.

Orange is red, orange, deep yellows are completely different. They actually insinuate or spike your appetite. Right, I've heard that. I heard like restaurants actually before they paint the inside of the restaurant.

They start figuring out the color. Think about Wendy's, McDonald's Burger King, they all have the same color palette. Right. Because they are spiking.

they know that emotional connection to colors is directed to your neural system and how it starts to trigger your appetite in that particular manner. So I think I have an advantage because I know these particular things.

So like if you're in the kitchen and you are feeling a particular way, you feeling happy, it plays into the cook by color system because i've kind of named them in that particular.

Like I've a black one. It's called Sassy Me. And it has black sesame seeds and a truffle, black truffles in it. It's a beautiful, aromatic combination that makes you feel a particular way.

Now whatever your sexy is, whatever you're fresh is. That's your sassiness in the kitchen. There's another one called Me Myself in Lime. And it's lime, basil, cilantro, green chilies, and kiwi mixed in.

And it's like, it just makes you smile. It makes feel a particular way. And so when you're grabbing colors it definitely has an emotional pull in connection to how you want to feel, how currently feel and how want people to experience that feeling.

Now, that's not something that happens overnight, what you've developed. I mean, you had to do some research, some education. You know what I'm saying?

Because I am not just going and say, ah, I was just gonna grab everything that is green in the grocery store and put it together. Yeah, most people don't know what the balance profile would be to be able to do that.

That's why I feel like I've given people a cheat code in the kitchen. So instead of buying the cilantro, the green chilies, a kiwi, basil, all of those things and understanding the math and the percentage of how much to use to have the flavor come out right, because if you just throw all of it in there equally, you're not gonna have a balanced meal.

Something that's gonna overpower, something's going to undertake. You need to know that, and most people don't. And I did all the research, I went through the levels of tasting, brought this up, this peak too high, or this made it bitter, add this.

I've done all of that work so people can just flavor comfortably and have confidence with just sprinkling it on top. You can flavor your food with it, you can marinate your own food, garnish your And even if you have food that you order, like some takeout, whatever the take out is, Chinese, pizza, or whatever, you can still add flavor on top of it to get exactly what you want.

So you've taken a step with this word. you've made sure to put all natural ingredients, right? You've put no anti-caking type of chemicals in it. So my question to you is, was there any kind of health scare or something that happened to your personally that told you, you know what, I need to make this healthy?

Yeah, you know, I mean, one, naturally I wanted to make it healthy because I'm a healthy individual from the start. I've been this way ever since I was a teenager.

And the second part of that is Our people, blacks and Latinos, are dying at a crazy rate from health issues. Hypertension, diabetes, obesity, you name it.

Either it is hereditary or it's caused through poor eating habits or not having the knowledge to actually eat. But all through that you have to kind of figure out a way to start eating clean because now your health definitely depends on it.

It depended on before but now you know that it depends because it now is life or death. family members, you know, today, a few of my tios, they all have diabetes.

Which is crazy. My grandfather passed away because of complications with diabetes, my grandmother has heart issues and high blood pressure and it's like, All of it kind of pushed me into that realm of making sure that anything that I did or brought to market was going to help them eat clean and eat healthier.

And most of the seasonings that exist out there, literally, like my brand is the cleanest label on the market. It has no GMO, no MSG, and no additives and preservatives.

and it still keeps the life shelf past a year. Most seasonings end up caking up because they're poorly made and they do have all of those things in it.

And then also, they are normally kept near the stove or kept in the kitchen to where… So many people do that. Right, and it's hot in kitchen. The seasonings will start to cake up and start get rock hard because you didn't keep it in the refrigerator.

My seasoninings are fresh, they're healthy. Keep them in a refrigerator for longevity and you'll be good to go. Yeah, so the refrigeration part of it, I wanna talk about that because I'll tell you, a lot of the dry seasonings that are next to the stove in the oven, right?

They tend to lose their taste. Absolutely. And really the only taste you're getting out of is the heavy amount of sodium that they put into it. So what made you make that decision where you said, you know what, we're gonna remove it from the traditional, put it in next of oven next in a stove.

Forget about the pantry where it's also getting some heat. Let's go ahead and put it inside of the refrigerator. I think the decision came with really me trying to figure out how to preserve my own products.

And then through the refrigeration, learn that they kept their purity, they keep their flavor, They didn't cake up. It was a way to also teach people how actually utilize seasonings because Seasonings and raw spices are completely different.

They're not the same thing. Seasoning are a combination of spices combined into one bottle. Spices and herbs are just, you know, solo by themselves. So you have your cinnamon, your garlic by itself and stuff like that.

Those are one-offs. You don't need any preservatives. Most companies end up putting them in there because it's cheaper. They can make the product cheaper and go off and sell it and put it into the market that way.

It doesn't mean that it is healthy for you. Do you feel like fatherhood really also triggered something for making this stuff very healthy? Yeah, yeah, because I put my daughters first in what I wanted them to have versus coming into the space trying to make money for it because it was never meant to be on the market in that particular way.

Fashion, Seasons, and Flavor Harmony

It found its way through that avenue or that street and it was already thought of and once I thought about my daughter, I've thought our people and the issues and because I come from a marketing and advertising background, and I start looking at the demographics, start look at where the problems are, started looking how my product can kind of fit with inside of the market.

from a health perspective and help our people, you know, eat better and eat clean. It's like I had a boy, best friend, name is Kenyanna Gee from New York, from Brooklyn.

And he passed away from cancer. But while he was going through his battle and going to chemo, he kind of lost his taste through the chemore because it was killing his tastes buds.

So he couldn't taste food the same way. and the things that he was adding on to even eat clean, the flavors wasn't, it was like it just bland for him.

And so when he telling me about this, I started tweaking the ingredient profile so that it helped cancer patients and people that were going through dietary restrictions that they can actually have flavorful food and stop mistaking salt as flavor.

Because salt is not flavor, salt it's not a spice, it really doesn't belong in the kitchen, is a chemical compound. that brightens your food because it's chemically induced.

It's not food, and our bodies can only handle a certain amount of sodium throughout the day in the first place. But most of our foods have sodium in it, so we over-index on pretty much everything that we eat.

Heavily, heavily. And so then when we come home and we start cooking, we're adding more to it. The one thing that's always perplexed me about sodium and salt is how much people add to meat.

Meat already has sodium in it. Fish comes from salt water. It was born with it, So why are you adding so much more to it? You're killing the actual natural flavors of it.

And instead of, you know, there's a reason why it's, a pinch of salt, because literally you just need a little to brighten the flavor base that you already have to bring it out.

That is all salt is for. But most people end up cooking with it, start abusing it they keep it on the table, salt table and kind of confuse the the flavour for it And not only that, man, but when you start looking at the different profile of salts that are out there, right?

It's a huge market for it. That typical table salt, I mean, a lot of that stuff is toxic, it's poison. You know, its not the Himalayan sea salt. It is not desert sea-salt.

No, that's mass produced. Its mass-produced and it is produced as a chemical. Yeah. That's very interesting though about the salt, how it's not supposed to be the thing that's actually giving the food flavor, but it supposed it enhance the flavor.

It's just supposed enhance, it can't give it flavor because it doesn't have any flavor if you just cooked with salt. It will have zero flavor, it will literally taste like salt.

It would be too overpowering, right? So you don't need a lot, literally it's a chemical compound to actually brighten the food, and you just need little bit of it.

So we talked about the minority community and some of the issues that we're seeing, the high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, diabetes. Obesity.

And we talk about, you know, kids. So I want to go to that demographic, to kids in the minorities communities, because I'll tell you, growing up in an inner city, I used to remember being out on the bus stop in the morning and kids and I was guilty of it too as a kid.

We'd go to the corner store, grab a bag of hot Cheetos and a Fanta and that was breakfast. Or a honey bun. The little Debbie's and all of that stuff. Yeah, so back then they were nice and cheap.

You get them for 10 cents, 15 cents. 25 cents or whatever it is. So I want you to kind of, as a chef with natural products who has a passion behind people eating healthy, I wanted you comment on what the actual true problem is within our communities and really what would be the correct solution for that.

You know, I think it's lack of information. I Think our demo lacks a lot of Information from health to finances. And we're starting to get better at it, but we are still at a greater deficit than other races in that same bracket.

It's like you can go from an economic bracket and look at everybody across the board. Latinos and blacks are still at a lower rate than everybody else.

And we have a higher index from a chronic disease perspective that hits on the same things that we spoke about. So we think what will help is, one, more conversations like this.

and getting the word out about different ways to actually explore eating and having a joy behind it. It's like, and taking away that stigma that that you need salt at the table to prepare your meals or to add, you know, when the meal is there.

and understanding exactly what it does to your body and how much you're supposed to intake. Literally, so if you took a teaspoon and you broke a tea spoon into thirds is one third of a teaspoon of salt.

That's all your body needs for the entire day. But it's inside of our sodas, it is inside our juices, its inside out orange juices and teas and all these other things.

It's everywhere. Too much. So you're you have to be extremely aware of how much is actually in everything so that you can stay away from as much as you.

Can to balance out your body and making sure that your drink a ton of water, making. Sure that. You are flavoring your food with healthy items and eating healthy fried food.

Stay away. From those particular things. I think is I. Think it's just a level of of education and knowledge. Yeah. I agree with that. So, you know, when it comes to the different flavors and the difference seasonings that you have.

I remember growing up, I'm Dominican, so you can just imagine how mom would cook and grandma how they would, it's just full of flavor. And then in the neighborhood, you had African-American, which would cook a certain way as well, too.

But then you also had some of my white American friends that if we'd go over to the house, we would always be like, oh, why is this? Where's the flavor at?

And so where I'm going with this is, How does your product become all-inclusive for everybody, for the white American who is used to eating bland food?

How is this hitting different taste buds in the different ethnicities and different cultures that are out there, how does that fit in? I think it fits in from a universal thought of just eating healthier, right?

So even though those white families lacked flavor from table sitting or eating perspective, or we had way too much going on, so we understood flavor in a different way.

I think that, you know, universally health in itself and understanding that you can eat healthy and have flavor at the same time. You don't have to substitute one for the other.

But I'm thinking our culture plays a little more heavy into that idea of I don' want anything bland and don''t substitute my flavors. But the only substitution is not knowing what to substitute it with to have a better flavor profile.

So they'll use barbecue sauces that have high sugars and high sodium and all these things in it because for them it tastes good because it has a lot of flavor to it.

I'll sacrifice my health for the actual flavor. My product, expressly the barbecue sauce, It is literally the lowest calorie intake on any barbecue sauce out there in the world.

Not just here in The States, but across the globe. Wow, man, I'm gonna have to have some of that. Bro, it is 23 calories per serving in a bottle itself.

But it's just raw flavor. And there's four different colors. It's like, now you can explore and have fun. I think the task of the mom cooking in the kitchen, even nowadays the father cooking, they run into this idea of things feeling mundane and repetitive.

Mood, Presentation, and Emotional Eating

The same thing from a health perspective, when you start meal prepping throughout the course of a week, by Wednesday, you get tired of eating what you actually made, because it's just repetition of the same thing and the thing.

You want something to be able to play back and forth, right? So I think that Cook by Color helps with moms and dads just trying to make something healthy at home, but then have different varieties of flavor to have their kids eat with.

Because kids will tell you instantly, We're having this again? We just had this last week. It's like, but mama's running out of options. Dad is running outta options, same thing from a, you know, a meal prepping perspective.

I meal prep on Sundays, But I mill prep naked. And so there's a difference between dressing your food and having it naked, naked is just literally cooking your meats, cooking the vegetables to perfection.

and adding the flavor profile after. What do you mean, like usually like a dipping sauce instead or? No, no, so like I can take ginger teas and say I had salmon and I cooked the salmon with some oil, put it inside the oven, baked it or put on the skillet, what have you, right?

But I didn't cook it with any seasoning. I didn't cook it with anything but it's natural. I want the cook on it to be absolutely perfect. When I take it out and I start breaking it down, I have my Monday through Sunday, all seven trays out.

And I put salmon in each one. Ginger teas, put that on there. Put me, myself, and lime on the second one, I can put Sassy Me on the third one. I could have Me Time on a fourth one, I put Abla Abanero on fifth one like you have an array of different ways to meal prep to keep things enjoyable each and every time that you cook.

You don't have to cook it the same way. It gives you the space to be able to do that. The other brands that are out there don' t give you that space because they are already locked in to their particular profile.

And so that's why I said I love the idea of being able to go inside the cabinet or the refrigerator and grab a color that I feel inspired by by that particular time of day.

And most seasonings don't allow you to actually use it as a garnish. You have to cook with it, it has to soak into it. Because there's no additives, preservatives, GMO, or MSG in them, you get to taste the actual flavor that was intended for it versus it being masked.

Well, I like that because that is one of the issues with like meal prepping is that you kind of get sick and tired of The same thing absolutely and when you could have it's like you have a different meal every single time even though the base is the same You're changing the flavor with the product easily.

Yeah. Easily. So let's talk about You know, obviously being Latino Let's about adobo Because adobo, everybody uses adubo. To be honest with you, I think everybody has adabo at their house, regardless if they're Latino or not.

Or Tain. Right. So for me, you look at the ingredients in adabo, like the one from Goya, and there's nothing but a lot of toxic chemicals in there. Now there are a few companies that make some natural adobo, but talk to me about what's happening in adubo and how can we enhance this thing.

They're throwing a bunch of stuff in there. Now it tastes good, at least I was born into that, so I think it taste good. So what do you think, what is your input on adabo?

I think they run the same gamut of trying to create a product that the people can purchase at a discount. And when you start looking at doing it for those particular reasons, there's a lot of corners that get cut.

and you start adding in different things that shouldn't be there, but it pushes the price point, it allows for people to actually purchase it, and it kind of falls into more of a business decision versus a decision on trying to be healthy for the demographic or for other people.

You know what I find interesting about something like Alobo, is, and I don't have the answer to this, I dunno if you have an answer, but how some of these seasonings that are out there, they've been able to really create it and make it part of a culture, right?

When you got jerk seasoning, everybody knows what jerk season is. I love that you're getting ready to ask this question. The Jamaicans, the local, you've got Montreal seasoning.

Everybody knows Montreal season. You have, what's the other one, Old Bay seasoning? Old bay, yeah. So my question to you is, with Cook by Color, How do we make it the next Montreal?

The next Old Bay seasoning? What's your plan to get there? First of all, which camera can I look at real quick? I'm about to fuck everybody up with this.

There is no such thing as taco seasoning. There's no pasta seasoning, Italian seasoning or anything across the board. That is like the biggest myth in the world in this seasoning category.

There is no such thing. You can flavor your pasta however you want to. Flavor your tacos however where you to, your burritos, whatever it may be that you are flavoring, you can flavour it any way.

Nothing has a set taste and you cant bottle it. Because cooking, then where's the joy? Where's fun in it? where is the exploratory aspect of being able to literally have fun and do your thing in the kitchen and not someone else's thing?

Because whoever created those particular seasoning packs, they did it for two reasons. One, unfortunately, the

world is lazy as hell. and they need convenience, they want something quick.

They don't wanna think. So they have these pre-packaged things so that they can move through life easier. Like, oh, this is Italian seasoning, or this beef stroganoff seasoning or sloppy joe seasoning.

Or whatever it may be. those things don't exist. And so people get into the habit of being lazy and not having enough time to do the things that you may.

But also, again, a lack of knowledge of understanding that It's going to take you the same amount of time to be creative in the kitchen and start thinking versus thinking that you don't have enough time because you're coming in from the job.

You're running into the store. into the kitchen and start cooking for your family so the family can go to bed and do your thing. It's like everything is pressure time, but it takes the same amount of time to actually prepare the healthy meal that it does to make an unhealthy meal.

It's almost like we've fallen to become part of that system. Absolutely. That food system, the food systems that's killing a lot of us to be honest. You know what man, it's like, I may be shot at for this, but I firmly feel like there's a system that's trying to kill us.

I'm gonna go on record and say that I feel America is trying kill this. There's this system of keeping us sick. there is a money grab of keepin' our people sick, Oh yeah, 100%. The products that are sold here can't get sold in London or in Europe.

Right. Let's just take ketchup. Ketchup has, if you look at your normal ketchup bottle, it has about half the bottle is sugar. They can sell that in another country.

They have to actually reduce it to meet the country's guidelines on healthy eating and living. We don't have any guidelines. Everything here is pay to play.

You pay somebody off, you can put your product out there. That's the truth. Now Marcus, there is a big movement going on right now called Make America Healthy Again that's actually exposing a lot of these food companies.

There's a lady, Vani Harris, she, she actually led the whole petition, the big petition against Kellogg's because of all the coloring and the food dyes that they're putting in the cereals and stuff.

So, you know, RFK Jr. is the head of HSS and is leading the way when it comes to HHS, sorry, HSS is the hospital that I'm working to deal with.

Health, Clean Labels, and Community Impact

I always get them mixed up because of their initials. But what he's doing is holding these people accountable because the corruption. So I want to ask you, what are your thoughts about the MAHA movement, Make America Healthy Again, and what they're doing to improve our food system and everything else?

Yeah, one man I think is needed. it's absolutely needed. There's not a governing force to mandate healthier items or healthier options, even all the way down to the fact that you don't have to put which chicken is cloned or not inside of the grocery stores.

It's like if the person doesn't know have knowledge into what they're actually eating, then what choices do we actually have? One, we're being lied to or we don't know exactly what to look for.

Most of the information is so high up, it doesn't trickle down to the homes that actually need it, that are looking to actually feed their families and they don' know what look to for it.

So having a governing force to help do these things and actually help push out healthier products into those particular realms and those fields, I think is brilliant.

It's something that's absolutely needed. And our communities need it, tremendously. Yeah, 100%. I just think across the board, take politics out of it.

We need clarity, we need transparency, and as long as we can do that, Any way that I can help or get behind it and, you know, push towards that transparency and also have healthy options for people to have, man.

I'm all in. Yeah. So, you know, everything that you're doing and creating is not something that could just go based off of creativity, right? There's a component of education and trying to figure things out.

So how do you keep yourself responsible on making sure that continue to produce a high quality product and stick with what your mission is, is making that it's natural and it hitting all of the Points that you know, like how do I hold myself accountable to those things?

I think it's I've gotten to the point to where it doesn't matter the dollar amount, that it takes me to make it. I deal with my co-packer all the time, and we're constantly negotiating prices and looking at different price lists, or the turmeric is coming in at this price, the truffles are coming at that price.

What do you want to do? And my answer to him is always, it has to be all natural and it's has be healthy. I don't want anything in it. I don't care about the price of it.

I'll eat the prize and keep the place where it is. It's from a profit margin perspective because I'm not in it to, and I know a bunch of entrepreneurs and business people will be like, that's the wrong idea, but I am not it for profit gains in that particular matter.

Yes, I want the company to do well. the one thing, it doesn't necessarily have to be my hustle, right? But at the same time, I care enough about who is actually going to, to actually consume it.

So I don't wanna be part of the problem that exists out there from a profit perspective. I'll get the profit down or get pricing right when I can start buying in bulk.

And I'm okay with that. I am okay the high price that it cost me today because I know that tomorrow I will be able to lower the price and get it down because i'm buying it in Bulk.

Right now I mean what most entrepreneurs when they are starting off and getting their thing off they're looking at different costs. You can't do everything in bulk.

The bottles, the cold packing, that actual seasoning, it's like all of those things has a price point to it. So I think for me, man, I care about my people.

And you know what, that's a powerful thing to say about keeping the integrity of the product intact because a lot of people read, search to play a role and all of a sudden they're cutting corners and now you don't have the quality product that you had.

So keep on doing that and even when you get some of the bigger players wanting to tap into your company, one of things that's important is to make sure that you hold them accountable to keep them.

I'll say this last thing. For me, myself and Lime, the green coloring is all natural. When you start looking at other products that have basil, that has cilantro, is brown when you get it at the store.

That's a process that's cheaper because it dries out the actual ingredient. My ingredients are freeze dried, which is a different process. It's more expensive process, but you keep the nutrients and the color together versus losing it when your going the cheaper route.

I love that. You know, just a couple of days ago, I was at Rohan Marley's house down in Miami, Bob Marleys son, who took over a lot of the empire that they have.

And he was talking about their Marlee coffee that he had. He was telling me the whole story behind it of for him, it's important to make sure that there's no pesticides in the farms or any of that in what a of these corporate people came in, you know.

Trying to be part of They start to tell him, oh, no, you gotta do this. If not, the crops won't grow. And he says, absolutely not. He's gonna keep the integrity of the high quality coffee beans.

So that's something that important. Very important, especially in today's world. When someone taps into your product, what is it that you want them to leave off with after they try your products?

pure delight. I want people to understand that one, cooking is fun and everybody can flavor their food to their taste buds specifically versus going after and trying to Taste or have it taste like something that someone else's tongue is everybody's taste buds is unique You'll never write you'll ever know that so be exploratory have fun in the kitchen and And play with colors.

It's like yeah, you know Cooking is is joyful. And it's a especially for me as a stress reliever at the same time and I get lost in the kitchen. I'd get happy when people experience my food or they experience the product and they send me a comment that says how they've done it, because the way I cook by color is gonna be different than the that you cook my color.

And it's like if we can share this universe of different ways to actually cook like color and have some fun in a kitchen and eat healthier, that's the win for me.

That's powerful, brother. So let's talk about the product. What do we got here? All right. So we have this is Berry Good For Me Agave and Berry good for me has acai berry, raspberry, elderberry and butterfly pea mixed in with organic agave.

Sounds really good. Then we have seasoning. We have ginger teas here. It has ginger, turmeric, sweet carrot, and lemon placed in. Then, we one that's called me time.

it has thyme in it, hatch. Hatch is a pepper. So it has a little kick to it, a bit of heat. And then coconut H3O. What is that? So fruit water or water that comes from fruit is H2O, it's not H20.

So it's coconut water that's been mixed in. And again, we're able to freeze dry the coconut and break it down into a powder and then add it into the actual product.

Then it also has a little bit of mint added to it. We have habanero agave, which has habonero, bell peppers, oranges, and carrot mixed. And again, organic avocado, and then we have habanero, hablo habonero barbecue sauce, again has habanaero peppers, bell pepper, oranges and carrot.

And just to, it has, let's see. Has 15 calories per serving.

Seasonings, Salt, and Food Industry Critique

That's nothing. The flavor is crazy. Wow. So just think about, you know, a change up on your buffalo wings or a changing up a dipping sauce that you may want to dip anything into.

It's like it runs the gamut. We also have organic avocado, oil, which is flavored. Five of those. Like the entire product line is about 23 skews. Oh, nice.

Yeah, it's about 12 colors. So let me ask you which one is it? I know they're all it, but which for you, that you're most proud about, yeah. My go-to is probably ablabanero, seasoning, me myself in lime, sassy me, and probably

the new one, which is called a salt and buttery.

Salt-and-buttery, yeah salt and buttery has Celtic salt is the only one that has salt in it. Okay as Celtics saw Which has a lot of health proper kind of Health properties Has marigold flowers mango mixed in and grass-fed butter Wow Again being able to take the butter freeze dry it and break it into a powder and add it to it.

It has the the most delicious buttery popcorn scent and flavor profile to Man, so, you know, one thing that I really like to do is like when I have chicken wings, grilled chicken wing.

I like it just like that. Is that supposed to be fake chicken? Grilled chicken instead of the fried ones. The KFC ones that got like 30 arms coming out of the chicken.

So when I have chicken wings, I like to put just a dry seasoning on them. I'm that kind of guy who just like a nice dry rub. What would you recommend for chicken wing out the ones you have?

Oh, geez. See, here's the other thing. I'll answer the question, but there's a backup to it. So I would say just dry seasoning, I'd go with a sassy me mixed with ginger teas.

In trying the products and developing them, you start putting them to the test as to what goes good on this or what it can't do. I have not found anything that ginger teas cannot do, I've placed it inside of milk.

It makes an incredible golden milk, oh my gosh. Mix it with, mix your milk with ginger tea and a little bit of ginger tease agave. will blow your mind.

Add a little bit of Sinfully, which is our cinnamon base. absolutely crazy taste profile. But yeah, from a chicken wing perspective, dry raw perspective I'll definitely do the sassy meat mixed in with ginger tea.

So if I wanted a little bit of heat, I will add some albunero seasoning to it. Again, if you look at the profile, yellow and orange melds together perfectly.

The accent is black. So you add in, you know, the black respectively to complement the yellow and orange play. Nice. Yeah. Now, what I was going to say about what you were asking about, which one goes on what, I think that is part of a systematic issue with thinking that a particular seasoning or flavor or whatever you're doing has to go on something that's specific.

Like, again, like your tacos. It should be personalized. You just try it out. The tacos can have whatever, you want it to be. They're your taco, they're not anybody else's.

So flavor, based off of how you feel. I've never had like, Alfredo tacos, but I might try it one day. And things like that. You go to restaurants where all of a sudden, I'm the kind of guy who goes to a restaurant where they have something kind unique that's out of the norm, and I want to try.

Yeah, absolutely. In about nine out 10 times, it's pretty darn good. They put it on the menu for a reason. Absolutely. No, I appreciate that. So if people want to find the product, where can they find a product?

So right now we are in two places. One, cookbycolor.com. 100%. Everything is there. Also the TikTok shop. We have items there, and then last but not least, actually three, last one at least is the Amazon store.

Amazon Store. Yeah. Awesome. I love it. Marcus, we're going to have a little fun here real quick. Okay. One of my favorite podcasters, the podcaster's called The Diary of a CEO.

He came out with these conversation cards. So you're gonna open this up, grab a card from the middle of it, you'll read it and answer it. You're picking it not me.

All right, let's see what we got. Can you describe what winning means to you? Oh, wow. Oh wow! What winning

looks like, or what wining means. I think what it means, to me, is winning in this space is is freedom.

What do you mean by freedom? So like the big boys run it. The McCormick's of the world run this space. and being able to compete with them, having a facility set up to where we have R&D, we can bring the costs down, everything is manufactured in-house, the cold packers, all the systems are in house.

to circumvent the high cost and high rate of going third party and stuff like that. To be able to have the world experience a new cooking method that is conducive to the way that they cook, that's a huge win.

It brings tears to my eyes because it's it is something that they can't take from us. It's like, you know, this little boy from Chicago created something that the world can actually experience in a healthier and different way.

And we're not locked into the BS. We're locked in to a system to where we have to do things based off of our pocketbooks. I want Cook by Color to be in every kitchen so that everybody eats healthier.

And that's something that is neat. So let me ask you something.

Products, Mission, and Closing Thoughts

I hate this card. You know what man, I'll be honest with you. Them cards have brought a lot of tears to many different people. God damn it. Come up with my own set of cards and call them the tear cards.

Jesus. Would you ever see yourself collaborating with a company like McCormick, if they come knocking on the door and says, hey, we love your product, how can we help you?

There would be a lot of things that they would have to okay for me to be okay with that. Because I mean, getting it to the masses where they've grown to, they spent years and generations doing so.

Creating generational wealth and all of those beautiful things. They're not my enemy. Not the enemy either. Just part of the system. And so if someone would come like them, it would have to make sure that everything stayed intact.

Yeah. Price point would definitely go down. I mean, the bottles are not inexpensive, you know. And so it will definitely help from that standpoint, but it was they would.

Definitely have. To keep everything intact and I would love to stay on and to. Make sure. That everything. Stayed intact, and then be able to flavor the world because the beautiful thing about the system itself is not just.

these individual bottles. I can flavor popcorn, any particular snack, Any particular beverage with these healthy ingredients, because they don't have any of the BS that's in most things.

So if a company is out there and they have a healthy product, or they're trying to make a health product and need some help creating the flavor profile, we have the flavors.

We can easily flavor it. Because when I was when we were first starting and I wasn't doing like the farmers market like we flavored Gourmet popcorn and it was phenomenal couldn't keep it in the booth People were just buying it all day.

And that's why I mentioned the The the the beverage for you earlier and we was selling out. It's like if we can flavor everything inside the kitchen for home cooks, but then also your healthy snack eaters and your college students that They only have access to ramen, but it's filled with sodium and very little flavor.

What if we flipped that? We partnered with Top Ramen and had our seasonings flavor it to where it was all natural and healthy for students. Then the diabetes and the high blood pressure and obesity rate or that idea of the college tin wouldn't exist or can come down.

I like that, I liked that. Marcus, if someone who's listening or viewing this podcast resonates with today's message, what is one thing that you can leave them off with?

Cook by color. Like legit. It plays a beautiful way with inside of the branding, but literally explore food and colors differently. Use complimentary colors so that you can gain complimentary taste.

Dress your food like you dress yourself. All of those particular elements, regardless of if you're using my products or not, will help you gain better taste profiles that is more engineered to your body, your style, you flair, or your swag, whatever that may be, but is conducive to you versus anybody else.

We are all individuals and we should not be anything but ourselves. I love that. And as we wrap up here, if people want to find you, where can they find?

You, they can find me. Um, one cookbar color.com two from a social media perspective on IG it's I cook by color on Tik TOK. It is cook bar color, um, yeah.

Amazing brother amazing well listen man. This was a powerful message and this was one that I was waiting for So I appreciate you sharing this information to the masses and thank you for being on a healthy point of view Thank you, man, I appreciated it.

I can't believe you got me to fucking cry All right guys, you heard Marcus, cook by color. We can get those taste buds jumping and dancing the way they should.

Make sure you cook the when you dress yourself. And if you dressed tacky, we got something for you. Cook by Color. Guys, eating healthy is extremely important.

This is something that you should definitely share with your friends, your family. Everyone has to eat. Everybody loves good food. everybody loves having great flavor.

So make sure you share, comment, do all that fun stuff and we'll see you for the next one.