Opening and Microdosing Update

Dude, I'll share with you too what I just recently started two months ago. Yeah? And that was microdosing terzepatide, the GRP one. Have you heard of that?

Yeah, I have. Okay. So for chronic inflammation, it's not at the level I'm taking it. I am taking one milligram a week and the starting dose is two and a half milligrams.

And for weight loss, its up at four or five milligrams, so I m taking a tiny, tiny little dose once a weak. That has brought me my other 30 to 40%. Really?

That's amazing. Absolutely changed my life. Now, I still have my triggers. I Still have mast cell activation. For me, it's a genetic predisposition because my mother has it and my aunt has and two of my children have it.

So, i still Have my genetics, right? But I'm off all other medicines at this point. i just eat my vitamins and take a couple supplements. 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.

Podcast Introduction and Guest Background

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.

Hello. Well, today you're in for a treat because there is nothing more frustrating than trying to eat clean and still feeling awful. And my guest today knows firsthand how this happens.

And she's going to tell us her incredible story. But the amazing pieces is that she has found a way out of that madness of eating clean and still feeling awful that didn't involve more fear and more restriction.

And in fact, she is found away to expand what she can eat. She's also created an amazing new food product that we'll talk about later in the podcast. So stay tuned for that.

Tess Helmo, thank you for joining me today. Thank you, for having me, Lori. It's great to be here. It is so exciting to have you here today. I met Tess at the IMMH conference back in September in 2025, and I tried her bars.

And I'm like, you need to be on my podcast. People need know about these bars and your journey and all those things because so many people are suffering.

You had mast cell activation syndrome, I know most people say, huh? I don't know what that is. So I would love for you to go through your journey and just kind of give us an overview of how you got to where you are.

Sure. And thank you for being such a champion of our work. I love your work as well. Thank you. We're so aligned. Brain health and gut health are twins, really.

They are, I mean, they're married together forever and ever. Yes, and I loved that we're in a place in our society where we are starting to learn this, that The new science coming out, the new medicine coming up, and the research that's linking the two.

Because it gives us a path forward. When we're struggling with brain fog and food sensitivities and chronic illness, science really has been my path-forward.

And so leaning into the science and research is just incredibly helpful. It has just been for me. But a little bit about me. I've always had a sensitive system, my husband would say, right?

Like, you know, a-a little sensitive. You're like Mary with a coal mine, Right? Yeah, exactly. But, um, after 2020, I became really reactive to foods that I had never had a problem with before.

One by one, it was a little bit at a time. Suddenly the room would spin and I'd get a vestibular migraine if I ate peanut butter. And I have never a had problem peanut better before, gluten was making me itchy and giving me a bloated gut every day if ate it.

healthy foods, my first step was to try to go to an autoimmune or like an anti-inflammatory protocol.

Mast Cell Activation Syndrome Explained

And part of that included eating a spinach, yogurt, pineapple shake every morning, and I just kept getting sicker and sickier. Now that's a really healthy thing to eat.

But what I learned was that I was actually suffering from mast cell activation syndrome, which is when your white blood cells, specifically your mast cells release too much histamine.

And I learned that histamines is also in all food because it's a natural breakdown of the amino acid histidine. If there is that amino-acid profile in the food where it has high levels of histadine, then as it ages and breaks down, it will produce histamine.

And so it's a neurotransmitter in our body. It's in all foods. My body was producing too much of it post-COVID, and they say one in seven people have mast cell activation syndrome.

So people who are having new food sensitivities, having heart palpitations, rashes, GI issues, might want to consider looking into the science of mast-cell activation, especially if it is kind of post-COVID either virus or vaccine, either way we can be triggered.

And so anyway, when we eat high histamine foods, which spinach, pineapple, yogurt are all really high-histamine food. It was like a histamines cake. Yes, that bucket overflows and we have symptoms.

So the healthier I tried to eat, the sicker I got is how I was feeling. And I didn't understand that at all until I ended up in luckily the right neurologist office who helped me understand what was going on.

and gave me the right diagnosis and I started looking at a low histamine diet to try to just bring the symptoms down. A low-histamine-diet will not cure anyone.

It just makes you less reactive because you're not over-filling that bucket. So that was where I And as I did that, my symptoms decreased, but my world became very small and it just shrunk.

And the more I restricted my diet, the smaller my word became. I became reactive to more foods. moderate histamine foods that I was tolerating suddenly I couldn't tolerate anymore and I Was really dialing in on my nutrition and trying to make sure that i was eating clean foods organic foods Making, my, own food i, was exhausted with it all Became more and more reactive and it really is a feeling of the world just closing in On you And so i stumbled upon the 30 plants a week movement.

And that for me has been my path forward. It's really important to understand it's not a cure. it is not going to cure my mast cell activation, it isn't going cure chronic illness, but what it does is it heals your gut microbiome.

When you have a stable gut micro biome, you will have more stable immune response, neurological response and a stronger foundation on which to heal and grow from there.

Hey friend, just a quick break to remind you if calming your brain is the missing piece in your practice or in you home, my Mind Thrive certification course teaches you exactly how to do that with targeted amino acid therapy.

So it's real science, real results, no band-aids. Enrollment is now open. Link is in the show notes. Back to the Show. Yeah, that's amazing. It can be very scary to be in that world where everything just feels shrinking and you're like, I only have four foods left that I can eat and how am I going to survive on this?

It's hard to function in any social setting or anything like that. Could you define what mast cell activation is for people? We know it's associated with histamine, but what exactly is happening there?

Okay, it's a great question. Thanks for asking. So our mast cells are a type of white blood cell. They are the defenders against any any pathogen that comes into our body.

so they are typically in higher numbers at any part of our bodies that interacts with the outside world. Our entire GI tract from our mouth all the way through to our rectum is heavily loaded with mast cells because that is where we bring in the outside world.

Our lungs are higher in mast cell because we're breathing in air, right? We're breathe in in outside the world, our skin is high in mass cells, because thats where it interacts with the out side world our eyes, ears, in higher number.

And they are the cells that when there is an invader, they release thousands of mediators, thousands, of these chemicals that attack the virus or pathogen, bacteria, whatever it is that has come into our system.

Mass cell activation is when those cells become overreactive and they start releasing their mediators, these chemicals to fight pathogens when there aren't any pathogens.

So they release many chemicals, histamine is just one of them. The reason why we focus on histamines is it's one the ones we can actually see or we could actually treat, I mean, like we have antihistamins which block that histamin response, but it also releases prostaglandins and leukotrienes and other many, many chemicals.

And so what happens is over time, these cells just keep releasing these chemicals and you get a higher, higher level of them in your blood, in you urine.

Is one of the tests they can take is a urine test, although it's imperfect. And it causes symptomology. It causes symptoms across the body. For me in particular, suddenly I had asthma.

I'd never had as asthma in my life. Wow. If I adult onset asthma and wheezing all the time, I have vestibular migraines, horrible constipation. I had my heart, I have what's called bradycardia, which means that your heart actually skips beats and slows down.

My blood pressure tanked. Some people it goes up and they'll have tachycardial where their heart rate will go up, and spike. Mine all shut down, but both are just your organs not working because the chemicals in your body are out of balance because these mass cells are constantly releasing these mediators as if there were a threat in the body.

But instead of being targeted to one thing, it's systemic and and constant. That's mass cell activation syndrome. And they say post-COVID, they actually have changed it recently and say it's one in five.

But it is important to understand that it a spectrum. So some people may just say, yeah, I'm fine, but I can't really tolerate gluten or gluten makes me a little bit bloated.

I mean, that's one end of the spectrum and the other end to the spectra is being bedridden. Like, you know, 20 migraine days a month and you have to quit your job and become disabled and end up down with four foods and highly sensitive to smells.

It's an entire spectrum. Right. So that is mast cell activation syndrome. Does that affect your sleep as well? Absolutely, because your body actually releases histamine at about 3 a.m., so it's part of the immune cleanup cycle that happens every night.

The 30 Plants a Week Approach

And so, yes, if you're waking up every day at 3 am and having other symptoms as well, I mean, a lot of reasons, there are a lotta reasons to wake up at three a So, we can't blame it all on that, but it definitely does play into your sleep.

It's very, very difficult to have good sleep when you have chronic inflammation and your body's on high alert all the time. Right. Well, I'm assuming it affects your cortisol levels and how well your liver dumps and while your brain drains and all of that's happening during the nighttime.

Absolutely. And I think mast cell activation could be a missing piece for a lot of people that they've never thought of. So they're doing all these other things correctly.

you know, why isn't my sleep being fixed yet? So that's, you now, something that even myself as a practitioner would be, I don't think of that all the time because we're always focused on cortisol level and your liver drainage and all those kind of things.

Right. But if it's paired with new sensitivities, You really should look at mast cell activation. If you're having new sensitivity that you never had before, then it is really something to look.

And brain fog too is an important part of mast cell activation because It increases our levels of cytokines, inflammatory chemical, and cytakines are one of the few that cross the blood-brain barrier.

So when I was at my worst, I had to quit a job. I taught high school advanced research and I loved my job, had 20 migraine days a month, halted speech where I couldn't speak a sentence.

So it can be quite disabling and it's discouraging because again, the healthier you try to eat when sometimes you turn to the diets without paying attention to what's happening in your body, it could actually make things worse.

And so it's not that I don't eat healthy. I do, I just avoid high histamine foods. And, so getting 30 plants a week and building your gut microbiome and that strong foundation within the limitations of a low histamines approach is challenging.

It is. And you have to think outside the box. You have look at foods that you aren't normally on the shelf. Right? You can't just walk through the grocery store.

you kind of have sit down and think about different types of grains, different type of beans, and different kinds of vegetables. I'd love to talk about the Siggy list at some point.

Yeah, so let's go ahead and dive into that because people, when you say, you know, 30 plants a week, they're thinking probably a plant based diet. And that's not what you're talking about.

Correct. That's. Not what we're. Talking about the 30 plant a. Week movement is just it's about increasing what. You eat. It's, not about shrinking your world, it.

About growing your. World, It. Is about diversity. So you can still eat meat, You can. Still eat dairy. you. Can still. Eat anything you really want to eat, you're just being asked to increase your plant diversity.

And that includes fruits, grains, vegetables, nuts, seeds, legumes, herbs, and spices count as a plant point. You're trying to get 30 points a week. So just a half teaspoon of herbs and spaces count.

Also 100% maple syrup as the sweetener actually counts as plant points. Let me start. And dark chocolate counts as a plant point. Well, there you go, people listening.

Dark chocolate is a plants in this 30 plants a week. If it's 70% or more, it counts is the plant points. So the best way to approach it is to make a game out of it.

Try to get 30 plant-points a-week. Easily, I'm at the point now where I can get 10 or 11 in one meal without a problem. just choose maybe three meals a week and have those be high plant meals and then just eat healthy outside of that.

So it's not like every single meal I'm having to make from scratch and make really plant dense. It's just in my chicken noodle soup before I only had just peas and carrots or whatever, you know, onion, peas, and carrot.

And now I instead of the noodles, I actually will add in brown rice, white rice does not count as a plant point, but brown Rice does. So I'll add him brown rise and then I will Add in multi color carrots.

When I go to the store, never buy just orange carrots, always get the multicolor carrots and I find the stores in my neighborhood that will sell those to me.

So a purple carrot, a yellow carrot and orange carrot. A white carrot that counts as four plants. It's not just one. Suddenly I have four plans instead of one and then I'll put in, instead putting in a whole onion, I put half a white onion and half yellow onion.

or I'll toss in a shallot, and that will give me another two plants in that same dish. And so it's just kind of thinking differently. Quinoa, instead of buying straight quino, I always buy multi-grain or tri-color quinho.

That's three plants instead one. And then I add in, instead of just adding in garlic, I'll add and, you know, make sure I think, okay, i'm going to toss in a little bit oregano in this one, or today I'm gonna add some cumin or whatever it is, just to bring up that plant point count.

And so it's not hard to get 30 plants a week. What it does, the science behind it, is so interesting, Lori. It's important to understand why you're doing it so that you are willing to do it.

what we feed it, right? And then they turn it into short-chain fatty acids. And those short chain fatty assets give a protective lining to our gut, our intestines, and also act as neurosignaling chemicals in our body.

And so when we struggle, there may be people out here listening saying, I wish I could eat 30 plants a week, but I can't eat a salad without getting bloated.

Or I eat carrot and I'm gassy. That is because the gut microbiome has been so limited, mostly through ultra-processed foods and sugars, that you don't have the microbes that eat those plants.

And that's when your gut reacts poorly to it. So by just starting low and slow and adding a little herbs here, try to add, you know, when you're having potatoes, Try to get like a red potato, a yellow potato or a russet potato.

Mix it up a bit. then you will slowly build and strengthen that gut microbiome by having a diversity of microbes in your gut. And then the more what you feed is what grows.

So if you're eating ultra-processed foods and sugars, you are feeding those bacteria and that's what will be the majority of your microbiomes. When you start eating more diversity plants, it may be hard at first and you just starting with a teaspoon is enough.

That's what's really important to know. A teaspoon counts as a plant point. So if you can't eat a whole lot, just take a bite of carrot and take of tricolored quinoa and just try to slowly increase that diversity.

It took me a year. it took a full year to heal my gut microbiome. And it'll start healing right away, but it take me year by the end of the year of eating 30 plants a week and cutting out ultra processed foods.

and really limiting refined sugars. I allowed myself refined sugar maybe twice a month. Then I was able to start adding foods back in. Suddenly I could eat tomato sauce again, suddenly I can eat raspberries again.

High histamine foods that I couldn't eat before. It hasn't been a cure. I can't eat everything. There are still foods I have to avoid, but my world is so much bigger than it was before I started this program.

I could go out to eat and find anything on any menu. And I'm going to be okay. Like you were saying before, because it limits your world. You can go to your friend's house and eat.

Because you become so reactive to so many things. Yeah, it's so true. I did a podcast with Dr. Shane Morris from Systemic Formulas, and he talks a lot about this as well.

So if any of you listening, go jump on to Dr Shane, he'll talk about all the microbiome stuff and why it is so important to eat. 30 plus plants a week.

And I love the fact that you really broke that down, three different colors of carrots, because the different color have different properties, right? They have a different mineral content, different vitamin profile, all those kinds of things.

So it's really important that we do that. I think we get so stuck in the rut And we're wondering, why can't my gut heal? Why can my got heal. Well, a lot of it has to do because you're just eating like five foods and your microbiome, you know, can survive on that.

And so I know for myself, living in the middle of Iowa, especially this time of year, I go to the grocery store and I don't really like to buy a ton of stuff in a grocery and it is kind of limited.

You're like, that doesn't look very good. but i've been super creative like i order a lot of stuff from a company that has a once a month drop ship called azure azura standard and so you go pick up your produce or i'll travel an hour over an our to go to a nice little health food store that will have three different kinds of potatoes and carrots and you know all those different kind of things you do have to be a lot more intentional, but it is doable.

I would love for you, cause you said, you know, he spent a lotta time cooking prior and now you don't spend as much time, You know you're not all consumed.

So I know people are listening going, that's great, But I cannot cook for three meals a day. And we're asking you to do that. Like, just kinda like that half a teaspoon at a time.

Half a tea spoon at time and so slowly as you are incorporating things. But, I'd love to know what is your week look like for food? I'm so happy to share that.

It's a great question. The reason why I am excited about this question is because that's exactly how I felt at the beginning. 30 plants a week, that is going to be impossible and expensive and I will throw away a ton of produce because if I buy a whole thing of carrots, I won't eat that whole things that week.

I already threw away as much produce as it was. And I thought this would just be exponential. But in fact, that's not the case at all. You have to find the grocery stores that will sell you a single item.

And if they don't, then ask your produce person.

Building a Low-Histamine, High-Fiber Routine

is really simple. If you just ask them, can I please just buy, and I will buy one orange carrot, one purple carrot. And I do have to drive a half hour to get to that store, but I just go once a week and get a red potato, a yellow potato a

russet potato.

I'll get Onions are a great fix because there are lots of different colors of onions and I can put an onion in any meal and then shallots too. And so that sort of thing.

But let me just share my hacks. So my best hack is I make what I call a microbiome granola. And I'll try to remember, I should have had the recipe in front of me, but I will try and remember the ingredients.

And it's all low histamine for our low-histamine friends out there. These are all CIGI List Zero foods, so all Low-Histamine. But I order these grains online in bulk.

They're not expensive when you do it that way. It's way less expensive than any other cereal. and I just make sure I have that three times a week. It's not even every day.

Three times the week I start out with microbiome granola. I can now do yogurt. That's a high histamine food that I couldn't tolerate before. So I'll have a Greek yogurt and then just put, you know, a half a cup of my microbiomes granolas on top and all explain what that is in a minute.

And then I put on some blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and suddenly I've got about 16 plants in breakfast. At half of week goal in one meal. Just in one breakfast.

And then another time during the week, I'll do a vegetable soup and just toss in a lot of things in that soup, and make a good artisan bread with it. I have a great four ingredient artisans bread that's delicious and super easy.

and that's my other half. So it literally is two or three meals a week in order to get your 30 plants a weak. You just have to be intentional, plan it out, and then the rest of the week you're fine.

And actually, you are going to love having the microbiome granola in your pantry. Your family is going love it. Let me tell you how I make that. It's pretty simple.

And I can share my contact information. If anyone wants to reach out to me, I give them the actual recipe. But I make it with oats, teff, millet, amaranth, puffed quinoa, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds hemp seeds.

coconut oil and I'll put in a large flake organic coconut too, just for fun. And then maple syrup is my binder and sweetener. We're at 10 already. Then I put some dried fruits.

They're low histamine if you get them sulfite-free. So I'll get sulfide- free cherries, cranberries, blueberries, and toss those in as well. Raisins if they're sulfate- Free yellow raisins and you could have regular raisin and yellow Raisin.

Suddenly I'm at 15, 16 plants just in that microbiome granola. You just throw in the grains, toss in melted coconut oil that I melt in my microwave and some 100% maple syrup as the sweetener and binder, put it in an oven for 20 minutes and I've got a big container in a pantry for the week.

Like I said, I'll put that over some Greek yogurt, which is so good because it has all the gut properties in the fermented foods, if you can tolerate fermented food, which I couldn't for a long time, but after doing 30 plants a week for year, now I can, I could tolerate that again.

And then put some fresh berries on top and that is just a microbiome powerhouse meal. That sounds really good. I make it once every two weeks, so twice a month I made it.

And then I have it in my pantry and I eat it three times a week. It's absolutely delicious. And that's what's important to remember too, 30 plants a day is not all vegetables.

You know, it's these ancient grains that our gut microbiome thrives on. What's also important is I would be interested to go back and hear, Doctor, who did you say about the gut microbiome?

Dr. Shane Morris. Okay, I want to listen to that because I'm fascinated at the science of the microbiomes. When you create an environment, the same microbes that thrive on these ancient grains and vegetables and fruits and the food that feels so good to eat, those same microbes actually release compounds that are so beneficial for our body.

But when we build a gut microbiome, like the sugar bugs they're called, and it's just basically sugarbugs, they don't release those same chemicals and compounds.

And so we don t get the same benefits to our brain that we get when build that beautiful, strong microbiomes. It's such a foundation for life but also for healing.

If you have chronic illness, anything else you try, your supplements, or your nervous system regulation and all that type of stuff, if you don't have the solid foundation of a healed gut microbiome, it's harder for those other things to take root.

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Yeah, you'll like the interview with Dr. Shane Morris. And he's really big on rotating, even your probiotics. So a lot of people with histamine issues can't tolerate that.

He's also created some amazing pre-probiotics that are just the food. I can say that they taste amazing, right? But they are the foods that actually feeds the bugs.

But Lori, Lori let me say this because this is one of my favorite things I learned in this journey. Do you know what the food that feeds the bugs is? Go ahead.

food. I know, right? It's just food! We don't have to buy prebiotics because we can just eat good food, eat the good foods. That was where I was going with that.

So I love it because one of my questions for you that I had prepared was like, you know why can't people just take, like a greens powder or beets powder?

you know, all those kinds of things and get in their 30 plants. I mean, I suppose you could, but. You could but you miss the fiber. And I would love to talk to you about fiber because people think fiber is just about pooping and it's about so much more than poop.

Fiber is about gut health, immune health brain health. It's those short chain fatty acids. Yes. Just pop in the value of short chain fatty acids to your chat GPT app on your phone when you're sitting in a carpool or the doctor's office the next time and just learn a little bit of the importance of a short-chain fatty acid you cannot get without plant fiber.

So I eat meat and I ate dairy every day. I don't have a problem with that at all, but it's not giving me short chains fatty-acids. it does not give me fiber.

And so you have to have the 30 plants a week, that diversity of fiber in order to really build a foundation for healing and long-term health. It is so important.

And you can't get that in a greens powder. You cannot get out of greens, powder or probiotic powder, or prebiotic powder anything like that. So it's so that we actually eat our nutrition.

That is fun. Yeah. Then if you need a supplement, fine. But I just want people to eat their nutrition and I mean, the way God created us, right? He created to us eat all these beautiful, beautiful foods and we get stuck in, because I think we just go too fast.

And we're looking for the easiest thing. That's where the processed foods come in. We have so many gut issues because of the sugar in the process foods and we don't have the fiber in whole foods anymore.

And it does take a little more work and it takes intention. But if we need to slow down anyway, so we might as well

slowdown and eat well. And I think that'll make a big difference even in your family relationships if you start to bring in those really good foods and then look at the brain.

the blue zones, right? Like it's not just about the whole foods and making foods. It's about community and family and walking and gardening and all of that, getting back to exactly what you said, what God made our bodies to be.

But at the same time, when I was doing all this, I craved a plant forward, grab and go food. Sure. Like you do want convenience. You do need convenience in your life.

Well, you can make every meal from scratch, but it's very hard. And so the best thing about the 30 plants a week for me was, three meals a Also, why we started our company, which we don't have to talk about now, but why started a company was I want, I'm a protein bar girl and there are not any.

I like to have something what I thought was healthy in my purse, grab and go. When I met the airport, especially for me, like airplane food or snacks, they usually don t do well on.

And so to something in the bag then, you know, post-workout something. What I learned is there are zero protein bars for the low histamine community. For those with MCAS or trialing a low-histamine approach for a period of time, you shouldn't be low hystamine for rest of your life.

It's a certain diet that you follow to bring your symptoms down as you heal. But while you're going through that, there were no protein bar. And I also started to notice that protein, well, everyone knows they have a lot of junk ingredients, even the ones like I don't want to call any out, but the ones that are called clean protein bar, literally that's the title of them, you know, they have glycerin and they seed oils.

Creating the Protein Bar Company

And if you're healthy, your body can tolerate those foods in small amounts. But if you're dealing with chronic illness, those details matter. They do.

And so, I wanted so badly to create a low-histamine protein bar that was high in plants and also high-in-fiber, and that didn't exist. I went away with my husband, for our 30th anniversary five years ago.

We just celebrated our 35th. Congratulations. Thank you. And I, five years ago, I was still quite sick. And he took me away to the city and I walked into this beautiful hotel and they had a plate out for us that had chocolates and strawberries and cookies, like these little cookies.

I couldn't eat any of it. He sat there in the little sitting area of this hotel suite and he was eating all this and just started crying. because I couldn't have the chocolate-covered strawberries and I could not have little cookies that they had and the chocolates.

My world felt so small. He jumped up and said, Oh, let me go get you some food you can eat. And he was gone for an hour. And he came back and he said, I read every protein bar ingredient list and there was nothing you could eat at that time and nothing that I could tolerate.

And, he brought back a bag of Lay's potato chips and it made me sad too. Well, that's not what I wanted either. I could tolerate Lays potato chips, but I knew my gut wasn't healthy.

Right. When I got sick, I had lived a life where I was addicted to high fructose corn syrup. Give me a gummy bear all day long. Like I can eat gummy bears and cinnamon bears, and Swedish fish.

And I wasn t a healthy eater before I get sick. But once I got sick, instinctively, I knew my gut was bad. Right away, I was like, oh, my diet has done me in.

I knew it. And I know I had to change. Luckily, the 30 plants a week, and I have no ties to the thirty plants-a-week

movement, it's not a movement that you have to buy into.

It's just something you could look up online and do in your life. it doesn't cost anyone anything to do. Its just science. Actually came from the Stanford gut study, where they, its the largest gut-study to date.

So anyway, I knew my gut was a problem. And so when he brought me Lay's potato chips, i could eat them, but I know it wasn't helping me. Well, that night I actually dreamt this company.

I dreamted the protein bar ingredients and I woke up and told him and he said, quit your job and do it. Teaching is too much for you. Um, I don't know why he thought starting your own company would be less work than teaching.

You know, But, I can sleep in, take a nap, and cut out early when I need to. I do have control over my schedule and that's been really wonderful. Yeah, understanding the importance of fiber in your diet and wanting to grab and go food that wasn't ultra processed, didn't have chemicals or dye ingredients or preservatives, was whole food based and was high plant and low histamine.

That was our goal. So our protein bars have eight to 10 plants. Our blueberry chia has 10 plant ingredients and that's it. It's really amazing, by the way.

I'm so glad you like it! But they're just, you know, it's date-based. It's dates and quinoa and chia seeds and pumpkin seeds, and fiber sources like chicory root and tapioca root, ancient grains, these ancient foods that are so good for us.

Dates give a natural sweetness, but they don't spike your blood sugar. And high in polyphenols, so, you know, great gut food. Anyway, I dreamt it. He said, quit your job.

I couldn't believe he said it, he says quit you job and do it! He's a physician and he had been my partner in this chronic illness at that point for, a couple years.

He's been such a champion of this business. He understands the importance of gut health for immune stability. Gut health is essential for immunity stability, you can't have a proper immune response if you don't a healthy gut microbiome.

Yeah, that it's a thousand percent true. And so great that you have that partner in crime there. It's so good. Yeah. Tell everybody the name of your bar so they can find them.

it is called Consider This Nutrition and we sell on our website direct to consumer and also sell it on Amazon. We're FBA on amazon so you can use your prime.

Our focus is gut health, low histamine, high fiber, a truly clean bar. You know, we go to these conferences to spread the word and support this community that doesn't have a lot of support.

If you have chronic illness and multiple food sensitivities, you don't a have lot nutritional support, so a grab and go bar for those people really does matter.

And we're made in a top nine allergen free dedicated facility. So if you have multiple food allergies or sensitivities, it's a safe bar for you to have.

But we go to these places and inevitably nutritionists and physicians will come up to the table and say, okay, let me see the label. I think I've picked up your bar.

Yeah, that's actually what they say every time. They'll say, oh, it actually doesn't have any lecithins in it or whatever. And again, I don't like to demonize anyone food.

My journey has been expanding my diet, not limiting it. If you're healthy, small amounts of foods are generally okay.

Seed oils are preservatives, lecithins are a preservative that they use to grease the machine, actually, is why they used that.

But in the chronically ill or in long term, if you're looking for clean eating, then you want to avoid those. And so, yeah, they'll come up and read the label and go, oh, You are what you say you are.

Right, right. Yeah, it's amazing. So all of you, I suggest you order some because man, i love those bars. Like I couldn't get enough and you were passing out some more like later on in the day, you know, just giving them away at the conference.

And I'm like, yes, please. I am so glad to hear that. Let me give for anyone listening to if you use the coupon code new friend, all caps. any WFRIEND, no spaces, all caps, that'll give you 20% off as well.

We actually have a really small profit margin because our ingredients are highly specialized and brought in from all over the world because I was explaining to you before about how Our rosemary is set in sea salt and every other rosemary in the world is in seed oil.

It won't say it on the wrapper because it's an excipient ingredient, it is what the rosary is said in so that it distributes throughout the product. Rosemary itself is dry and would stay in one place, like it wouldn't distribute throughout a product, so they always set it in oils.

And it was very hard to, we wanted rosemary cause it gives us another plant. It's actually good for you. And, it's a great preservative to use. This is the only preservatives we could use cause its just a plant, but a lot of people who say they can't tolerate rosemary, there might be some people listening to say, I can tolerate it.

Its actually the seed oils that the rosary is set in, most likely would be my guess. So we have it set and seed salt, only one place in the world makes that, that's Denmark.

And so we have that sourced in from Denmark. That's just one example. Our dates are all sulfite free. Most dates, people will, if you're listening in your high histamine, you'll say dates or high-histamine.

But that's not the case. Dates themselves are low histamines. It's the sulfites that they use to dry them, the chemical agents to try the fruits.

Red Light Therapy, Nicotine Patch, and Microdosing

So learning that, talk about leaning into the science, learning all of a sudden opened up dried fruits for me because they're not high histamine if the fruit itself is low.

So like cherries and blueberries and cranberries, you can eat apricots if they are just sulfite free. And you find those on Amazon. They are not hard to find.

Not hard to find at all. Sorry, I love your bar, so we always have those on hand. I want to finish up with, you've also done a few other things to help with your health.

So I would just kind of quickly go over a view, because I kind binge on your Instagram page for a little bit. You do a lot of red light therapy. That has been helpful for you.

Can you explain why that has be helpful with the mast cell? Yes, redlight therapy, Used my health savings account and bought a medical grade machine. It was the biggest thing I've invested in, but I, four to five days a week, I do full body red light therapy.

I didn't get a bed, not like the tanning bed. Just a full-body panel. And I did that because that actually helps heal your mitochondria. So mass cell activation syndrome is at its root, a cellular disorder.

dysfunction of your cells and so by stabilizing your mitochondria then you have a more stable cell response and it also elevates ATP which is the energy so I had chronic fatigue like terrible chronic fatigue, and I'm much better because of a few things I've done.

Red light therapy is one. I think it's a longevity tool as well, I'll use it for the rest of my life because a lot of end-of-life diseases are actual issues of the cells, right?

So, yes. Anything that helps our mitochondria be healthier, turnover, more effective, and have higher ATP energy levels, that's something that interests me and so that what I do.

But I'll tell you what has been, a couple of things have been most helpful for me. And if you're looking for healing from chronic illness, one was the nicotine patch therapy.

I'm not sure if your heard of that. Amazing. We have a whole podcast on that too. Okay. So go listen to that podcast. I don't have to explain it, but 60 days at seven milligrams on the fatty part of my hip was, I went from, at that point, from being so tired that I was sleeping about 15 hours a day, or at least in bed 15, hours of day unable to function to being back at the gym.

That's the level of energy difference. And when I shared it on my Instagram page, consider that it's just at consider this nutrition. When I share that on the Instagram Page, I had dozens and dozens of people about a month or two later reach out to me and say, thank you for posting that.

It changed my life. Yeah. And it's easy to do. It's not expensive. Is 20 bucks a month. So it makes a huge difference because that nicotine patch, it activates that cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway and helps with your vagal pathway.

It calms down. No, it's not addicting at all because it set that very, very low dose. My cardiologist is the one that recommended it to me. I actually didn't see anything online.

You were doing it before it was cool. Because I had a cardiologists who said, if I can get my patients to take it, I have an 80% improvement rate. Again, It's NOT a cure.

But 80% of his patients who did the full 60 day patch therapy had significant, had marked improvement is what he said. Marked improvement. For me, it brought me back about 60 to 70%. Nice.

Which when you're chronically ill and down in bed is huge. Huge. Yeah. But I'll share with you too what I just recently started two months ago. And that was microdosing terzepatide.

Oh, really? Have you heard of that? Yeah, I have. Okay, so for chronic inflammation, it's not at the level I'm taking it. I am taking one milligram a week and the starting dose is two and a half milligrams and for weight loss it is up at four or five milligrams.

So I taking a tiny, tiny little dose once a weak and that has brought me my other 30 to 40 percent. Really? That's amazing. Absolutely changed my life.

Now, I still have my triggers. I know it's a genetic predisposition because my mother has it and my aunt has and two of my children have it. So I have still my genetics, right?

But I'm off all other medicines at this point. I just eat my vitamins and take a couple supplements. You know, I take my CoQ10 and my zinc and that sort of stuff, my KamuKamu, which is a mast cell friendly vitamin C.

But really I am so much better with those two therapies. Those two therapy have been life changing for me. The nicotine patch, is if you're looking for over-the-counter $20 a month, so worth your time to try.

There's no, I mean, for me, there is no reason not to it. Yeah, absolutely. It's very safe. And the addiction comes

from all the other stuff in the cigarettes.

Well, nicotine at high levels is addictive, but this is the lowest patch, so it goes 21, 14, 7. So by the time you're doing 7, and some people I know cut it in half.

Now you can't cut the squishy patch in-half. The round one from Walgreens that's squishy, you cannot cut that in The flat patch that you get on Amazon, it's like a sticker that's just flat and clear.

That you can cut in half or fours and people can tie a tray up and see what dose will work for them. And then I did 60 days and then people ask me, are you on it the rest of your life?

Often on yes. So when I'm exposed to a virus, not just the COVID virus but when i'm, exposed, to let's say I like have a flu exposure or something like that and I can feel myself not responding well I'll jump on the nicotine patch for another 30 to 60 days it just brings that fight-or-flight response.

It just brings it all down, which then, of course, there's a cascade of lower inflammation and all of that. Helped a lot with my brain fog, too. The nicotine patch, for me, helped with fatigue and brainfog.

Those were the two big helps. Yeah, absolutely. And I would say it's good for when you fly. You know, you don't know what you're exposed to. Interesting.

In the airplane and stuff, in the airport. So that's something I always recommend for just when your fly or even the nicotine gum. That's a great thought.

The nicotin gum, so my cardiologist told me, I asked about the Nicotine Gum and he said, it is not as effective because it a burst of nicotein. Right.

As opposed to the patches of low, slow dose, right? Yes. Yeah, absolutely. But in case of an emergency, you know, if that's rabbit patches, I am I have a friend or she's actually my sister and her husband makes not the nicotine patch, but other patches like that.

And because we were experimenting with, you know, cutting it and stuff like that. And he said, You're not going to get, like you can still cut it in the halves and fourths, but it doesn't mean that it's going be exactly, because that's just not the way the patches are made there.

They're, not that specific or perfect. Yes. Interesting. If you feel different on one little quarter than you do another, that would probably be why. Just because it is not evenly distributed.

Well, and if you can tolerate the seven milligrams, that's the way to go. That's like the sweet spot dose is what I understand. And that was so, so helpful for me.

I love it. But I don't think I would have responded to it as well had I not had a strong foundation. If I still had, if my gut microbiome was out and I was still reactive to everything and you know was, still at the place I, was at, the beginning of my journey, I'm not sure I would have responded to it as well.

So I do think it's a multi-pronged approach when you're dealing with chronic illness and kind of getting back on your feet. You kind, of have to do a lot of it.

you don't have, to, do all of, it that can feel overwhelming, but find your pieces that you can do and do your best. Yeah, absolutely. Because you do have to fix your microbiome.

There really isn't a way around that. Right. If you want optimal health, that has to be happy. Right. It just does. There's the way we were created. And if you want a healthy brain, you have to have a health the gut and vice versa.

So yeah. Wow. Tess, this has been an amazing conversation. I have I've really enjoyed it. it's been fun to walk down that memory lane and remember how far I just to give hope for anyone out there where you are now.

is not where you will be in two years or five years. If you start taking steps now and you're just consistent and try the things that are out there, lean into the science would be my biggest advice.

Lean into this science, but realize that brain health starts below the neck. It does. Yep. Everything is connected. So we want to address all of that.

And I love how you said, you know, two years from now, three years, from five years. But I think people get really frustrated if 90 days, six months, even a year out, they're like, I am still struggling with this.

Yep, yeah, because your body takes a while to heal. It just does. and you just have to stick with it. You're feeling so much better, but you're not exactly where you want to be.

I'm not where I want be, and I've been on this journey for a few decades now. Don't lose heart. Just keep going. We don't want go back to eating garbage food anymore.

we want make this a habit. So we're all about changing habits and mindsets and eating the way God intended us to eat here. Thank you, Tess. I appreciate you so much.

Thanks for having me, Laurie. Yes, thank you for listening. And I know you know somebody who needs this interview, so make sure you're sharing this. I would appreciate that a whole lot and you are going to save somebody's life.

You really, really will. So God bless each and every one of you and I will see you in the next episode. 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.