Introduction and mutual admiration

Sean, my friend, it's always such a pleasure seeing you. You such that you so much fun. We've hit you. We've done so many podcasts together that my best when we do it in person, in your studio.

So that's going to happen again soon. And you're got to come to my studio. But I'm so pleased to have you on Doctor's Talks, because every time I talk to you and it's been a couple of years now that we've been doing stuff together, I learned so much.

You have you have such a great story, such a great backstory. You also it's so educated and you approach everything just how I like it from a very scientific angle, but you really put the whole thing of living holistically together into a really neat package to manage your mental fitness.

So I'm thrilled to have you on, have you join us and welcome. Thank you. And I've got to say, as I always do, I'm a huge fan of of you and everything that you do.

My daughter, when she was in high school, her class is reading one of your books, and I love that. You've been in my life for a long time before we even met.

And now that you're in, my life is even better. I remember that first time I met. I actually came to see you. I think the first time into I interviewed you up on my show.

Then I came to your studio and you showed me when you held up the book. And the one interviewer can't remember wind of the book, that was, I think it was 2008 or something.

It was really a long time ago. And your daughter had been doing it at school and she had notes. I mean, that was just so, so special. So thank you for that, Sean.

You have a great you've got quite a quite a pedigree here. So you're the author of the USA today national bestsellers Eat Smarter and The Eat Smarter Family Cookbook, and as well as international bestselling book Sleep Smarter.

You have the model health Show, which is phenomenal. It's really fantastic. One of the top shows in health, millions of downloads. Were you a graduate of the University of Missouri, Saint Louis, and you studied business, biology and nutritional science, and you became a co-founder of the Advanced Integrative Health Alliance.

You've done so much more. Tell us, just in a nutshell, how you how you got to this place. I know your back story, but people are going to love it and then tell us what's been going on in your life.

This last year we were having a little chat with behind the scenes. And you know, you've you've had a lot of challenges this last year and you've really been through this with your mental health and everything. So over to you.

I have a literal back story, you know, so you, my at this kind of like connection. Yeah. When I was 20 years old, you know, I was in college at the time and I was diagnosed with degenerative disc disease at 20.

And so I had severe degeneration of my L4, L5, S1 disc. And that was just finally getting the diagnosis. I was in pain for quite some time. Loss of function and at track practice a couple of years earlier, I actually broke my hip at track practice.

My body was just literally breaking down. I and you know, you hear stuff like this is for people much older, typically,

but I was basically a very old person inside of a young person's kind of biological age.

I mean, I'm sorry, chronological age. And you know, but going through the traditional means of, of treatment, you know, I learned a lot and I often learn what not to do.

Sean's injury backstory and healing breakthrough

Right. So going to that first position when I broke my hip, you know, I asked okay so what happened. How did this happen. What I need to do to get better.

And you just gave me some answers. He said, stay off the leg and you're going to heal. You know, you're young. Whatever. But he didn't ask, how did a 15 year old, 16 year old kid break his hip?

Exactly. I practice, you know, and again, it was just a kind of a string of injuries from there, a lot of pain going to the physician every time I leave with a new drug and a new recommendation for bed rest.

And so not only was my spine and my bones beginning to atrophy, but the rest of me was, you know, and also, of course, like this is going to translate into some severe struggles with my mental health and, you know, really starting to have a lack of, of purpose and meaning and just a lack of desire to get out of bed because I didn't want to face another day of kind of limping through campus and, and dealing with pain.

And, you know, again, to put the story into into a nutshell because we've got so much to share today. Obviously, the story has a happy ending. It does.

It took two years. It was two years of seeing different physicians and getting, you know, different recommendations. But pretty much, again, the same line of thinking.

And I decided after I saw the last physician for this condition who said, you know, I'm sorry, son, there's nothing we could do. We could just help you to treat these symptoms with, you know, some pain meds.

And I decided to get well. I decided to get well. And I cannot stress how good that is, because so often I was going in just to, like, trying to give myself over to them, like, please fix me.

And I wasn't asking what I can do and everything changed. Like in a split second when I was sitting at home by myself and, and my grandmother, actually, I just got off the phone with her.

She kept calling and pestering me for those couple of years, knowing I wasn't okay, but I was just like, grandma, fine. Like, stop worrying about me. But she saw so much greatness in me, you know, she helped to raise me and just saw this potential.

And here I was, just wasting it away by giving my life away to people telling me that I'm. I can't get better, I can't do anything that I want to do. And so I decided to get well.

And also, this isn't just a kind of moment of revelation. Everything instantly changed, but my mindset changed and and we talked about this before, you know, we we have this really powerful faculty of the human mind.

You know, it's kind of like this instant. It's called instinctive elaboration. And so our brains are always our minds are always kind of seeking the answer to things that we posit.

And so we all kind of have a dominant question that we're always asking, kind of guiding our life and our focus. And so for those couple of years, my kind of dominant question was, why me?

Why me? I was constantly asking that subconsciously as well. And so now my question was, what can I do to feel better? What can I do to feel good? And so now I start to see all the solutions that were there this whole time.

They were already there, but I was just getting more attuned to them. And I transformed my, my, my health. As you mentioned, when you're not sleeping well, you're not healing.

My nutrition obviously, really providing my body with the raw materials to regenerate my tissues and movement. You know, the thing that I was told not to do was really, really key, important part of this, healing equation.

And within about six weeks of that moment of revelation, I had lost almost 20 pounds, which is not typical, by the way. I was kind of like the skinny kid in my family, and I gained a lot of weight and. But the pain I was experiencing every single waking moment for the past two, two and a half years was gone.

And, when I got my scan done, completely regenerated those two disc that could see the light shining through them again, and my bone density went to that of somebody that was in my age bracket, fortunately.

And my physician, as you know, it's like, what? What? No, he didn't even ask me. He said, whatever you're doing, keep doing it. Well, because we haven't seen results like this before.

And when I, of course, tried to tell him about what I was doing, he's like, oh, it's just kind of like, oh, that sounds nice. You know? Well, yeah, that's that's true.

And this was how many years ago shown again, this was. This was 23 years ago. 22 years ago. So I want to stress a couple of things. You said you decided to change. You've been to all these medical procedures, some procedures, medications, doctors.

But you decided to heal. And you mentioned three things. Mindset, nutrition and exercise. And you also switch back to university and actually studied in the field.

Yeah. Degrees. And so you went some decided you were going to and then you had some professors. What's the story about those professors that you would challenge.

And I love that story. Tell that story. Well when you you. One of them. Yeah. One of the coolest example was after I transfer transformed my health, people started just coming up to me on the university campus.

And like I was walking out a class one day. It was it was a marketing class. And the professor was like, can I see you after class for a second? And I'm just like, what is going on? What did I do?

You know, and he, you know, everybody left out and he kind of pulled me to the side. He's like, what did you do? And I was like, and I was again, I was like, what did I do?

And he was like, you look so healthy. And I was just like, shocked how much he noticed that, you know, because I didn't I didn't realize because I was living the experience.

I didn't look like a person who lost weight. I looked like a person who was radiantly healthy. Wow. Coming from when I see pictures of myself prior to that, I really look like a ghost.

I just looked so lifeless and he asked me like, can you, can you work with me? Can you, you know, teach me some of the stuff you're doing? And so my professors became some of my first clients, fellow students, faculty at the school.

And I just kind of became the man on campus with fitness and health and, you know, and that led to opening my clinical practice, working as a nutritionist, speaking, writing books, and, you know, eventually doing the show.

And that got me here with, you know, one of my superheroes today. Oh, well, you're going to be superheroes, too. That's it. That's the abridged version.

People can go to my podcast and also go and listen to Shawn's podcast.

Career path and campus transformation

You'll learn so much. And at the end, Shawn, you're going to find we're going to hear how you people can get hold of you and learn from you. But let's dive into some questions.

You know, one of the when I read we interviewed you about your most recent book, which was the Eat Smarter Family Cookbook, which is just fantastic, I love it, it's one of my favorite cookbooks, seriously, if not my favorite.

And one of the things that when you don't want some of these things you said were fascinating and and I and I know a lot about this field, not as much as you and people talk about this all the time, but you have a very unique way of explaining the importance of nutrition.

But you said something that really stood out and that was the importance of eating together as a family. You quoted some studies and we start around there around those studies.

But before we dive in, I just want to quickly trek to the second question I had. I don't want to forget about that. We're going to come back to this about you.

This year has been a little bit of a year for you, and it's been a bit of a mental health challenge. And how have you managed your mental health and. Yeah, I.

Mean, it's probably be a big question, but if you could kind of give you a version and, and help people to just be mindful of being last full of challenges, what do you do?

I've got to share this with everybody, you know, because I was even hesitant to tell you, you know, still. But that's me doing the work and actually opening up because, you know, when people ask you like how you doing?

You know, how's everything been going? You could just be like, I'm good. Yeah. Like, you know what this last year has been, this has been tough. And, you know, right before I was going to start doing, you know, interviews and things like that for the new cookbook that I had worked for two years on for my heart and soul into to really help families, right, to really focus on family wellness and the health of our kids specifically.

Yeah, it's something I'm very passionate about. Right before that happened, my father passed away and, you know, it was just like, what? I couldn't believe the timing of it because so hard.

He was a part of the process of writing a cookbook because he was an executive chef. Right now, I'm not talking about him teaching me how to cook. It was just a part of my environment.

We, we we lived in poverty. But so many times I saw him make something out of nothing. Like we had a couple of random ingredients in the house, and he turned that into a pizza or some kind of experience that we we never forget.

Wow. And he also, you know, this was during the crack epidemic, you know, and so I lost a lot of family members to, you know, passing away severe dysfunction or, you know, ending up in prison.

And he actually was in assisted living for about 12 years because of brain damage from from drugs. And so we knew that it was imminent. You know, at some point it was going to happen.

But the timing when he passed away, it just made it very difficult to go through and do all the media and all the stuff and go on that Good Morning America and all this, because it's just.

Like. On my shoulders, you know, and, you know, fast forward a little bit. I kind of pulled my way through it and got the book out. And it was the number one cookbook released in the United States, which was awesome.

But then, just like my older son moved out, like literally a couple weeks after that, you know, he's 23 and but it's still

a change. Our family dynamic was in the household.

It was my wife, my oldest son, my youngest son, and me and my youngest son. Changing school was going in middle school during this time and like the application process here in Los Los Angeles is ridiculous.

I'm from Saint Louis, I'm from the Midwest, and so I wasn't accustomed to how crazy these processes can be to get little kids in school. And then this was book, you know, again, ups and downs through this year bookended with my wife's father passing away.

Oh my gosh, a year after my my father. And so this year has been challenging to say the least. And what I've really learned is and for myself, being one of those people who have that tendency to like, I got this, I'm the person who you can count on.

Yeah. For me to start counting on other people and for me to start sharing and talking about these things.

Mental health challenges and grief this year

And I've I've cried a lot just talking about them, you know, because but I don't usually talk about them, you know, because I'm, I'm so busy making sure everybody else is.

Good and you always do you together. You the guy with the smile on your face who has everything together. And you, you know, you just you always know what to do.

And that's how you get these things. So you had to sort of because we can hide behind that persona because I'm also kind of similar to that. And and yet these things knocked you in.

You had to face them and now you're talking about them. So thank you for sharing and thank you for your vulnerability. So can you talk a little bit about what's what got you.

Like you made the decision to get your health under control. This has been a year from literally a year from hell. I mean, it's been a up and down year for you, some great stuff and some really, really sad and hard stuff and challenges and changes.

How did you manage that. Is such a great question. And it really, you know, even when life presents us with some of the most challenging times to be able to have a foundation of health, a foundation of wellness and some of these tools, I cannot I don't even know where or what I would be without these things.

And it's really just helped to keep me grounded. And even when I mentioned crying a lot, a lot of these tears have been just from from absolute joy and gratitude for, you know, I lost my father, but I just I had a mental framework to take the beautiful things that I picked up from him and to discard the other things, you know, because they weren't serving me.

And, you know, being able to to be able to process and think some of these things out. And I'll tell you what, you know, one of the most remarkable things and I actually, you know, a mutual friend, Daniel Aymond, shared this with me about how important it is in the grieving process because he lost his father a couple years ago to make sure that you sleeping.

He was like, because that's one of the things that tends to get omitted, especially when you're dealing with all this stuff and just really prioritizing my, my, my time to rest and also for my family and to have some more downtime than usual.

And we'll talk a little bit about, matter of fact, we could just dive in and talk. It's dive in. Let's let's dive in. What did you do? Because you've got you you were going to talk about three sons per capita to protect your mental health.

So let's dive in. What did you do? Because it's great. You've given us context. And these are things that people can

apply. And this is what you teach in all your books.

Awesome laughs I'll share one quick study with everybody. So there was an awesome analysis that was published in the International Journal of Molecular Science, and the title of the study was Depression and Sleep.

And I'm going to read a direct quote from you, from this study for you guys. And the study stated, essentially, impaired sleep is both a risk factor for depression and a symptom of depression.

But interestingly, the researchers noted that poor REM sleep quality and this is important for REM sleep quality and depression go hand in hand. Yet they state, and this is the direct quote, most anti-depressants suppress REM sleep, both in healthy volunteers and depressed patients, unquote.

So again, we might be treating a symptom that might be exacerbating something. Exactly on the back side because we're not addressing the root issue, which in this case, big percentage of our, you know, kind of struggles with mental health, mental fortitude is a lack of sleep.

We are the most sleep deprived culture in the history of humanity, of course, and the biggest impact is happening to our kids. And we're seeing like a kind of dose response relationship with the less sleep that we're getting, the more anxious and depressed we're getting.

And so what do we do to address this? You know, as you mentioned, my book came out almost ten years ago, almost at the ten year anniversary. And this was and this is true story.

I don't usually talk about this, literary agents, you know, I was in different discussions about this, and they were like, oh, no, you should do a book on fitness or nutrition like sleep.

Books don't sell well. And I was like, no, no, no, this is an important part of the health conversation that's not being talked about because ten years ago it wasn't no, a grand way.

Right. It's like it's difficult to not hear about this, but I was able to I ended up getting 11 offers for this book because I self-published it first and then including the Big five.

And so it became like a bidding war because the book people really wanted this book. And since then, of course, other great books have come out since.

But we really changed. It was the first one, this book, to become an international bestseller. And I'm saying all that to say what I put in there, 21 clinically proven strategies.

They're all very simple and simple things. We don't have to turn our life upside down. And I'll share a couple with everybody, which unfortunately some people get this head.

I've gotten this since the book is come out. Some people are still struggling with this, which is the biggest deterrent of our sleep quality is our devices.

It's the biggest hurdle today, you know, and what we've got some research from some researchers at Harvard who found that being on your device before bed, that that spectrum of light that we did not evolve, having this exposure is throwing off our circadian rhythm, suppressing melatonin production, an increase in cortisol in the evening.

And it's really kind of creating this phenomenon where you might pass out from exhaustion, but you're not going through your sleep cycle effectively. In particular, I just mentioned REM sleep being so important in helping us to defend our, our bodies and our our our spirits against depression.

And so we're just feeding the problem being on our devices, especially in the evening.

Sleep, devices, and creating a sleep sanctuary

Now, I watch a show here or there in the evening, of course, but I give myself a screen curfew and especially for my kids. Right. Just having some time to wind down to allow melatonin production to normalize to, to, to increase and also to lower cortisol.

Because I was one of the first people out here promoting blue light blocking glasses at my clinical practice, you know, 12 years ago I had a blue light blocking thing on my computer.

That's great. That's a step. But it's still stimulation like so much. If you're on your phone, you're you're watching a show. House of Dragons is fantastic.

All right. So it's just give yourself a little bit of downtime. And now here's the thing with any addiction and we've got to be honest, we're addicted. Yeah.

All right. This is an intervention too. All right. We are addicted. And you've got to acknowledge that you are. And we cannot just come in and put like, I'm not going to get on my device and just sit there and twiddle your thumbs.

We need to replace it with something of equal or greater value. That's really helpful. And so finding what those things are for you in the evening. So what does your evening downtime look like?

Right. Is this a time where you go and take a nice bubble bath? Is this a time where you listen to, you know, an audiobook or podcast that you love because you don't get to stare at a screen to listen to a podcast?

Is is the time that you spend with your kids and, you know, kind of decompressing from the day or your, your significant other or, you know, just getting on a call, you know, you don't have to stare at a screen to be on a phone call or reading a book.

People love books. Still, there's a couple of great books out there, and you've written many of them. You know, just being able to unwind. What is your evening unwind time look like and give yourself permission to do something you enjoy.

It feels good. Maybe journaling, whatever the case might be. But again, journaling might not be as sexy as House of Dragons for most people. So you got to find out what that looks like for you.

So that's number one. Give yourself a screen curfew. And number two would be to it's really about the environment. And you know so much of our lives are influenced by our environment.

We are in fact products of our environment. We are, but we're also creators of our environment. We can create an environment that automatically affects us in a positive way.

So making sure that your sleep, I call it a sleep sanctuary. You know, you get it set up in a way that really supports great sleep, and that's going to be a room that is ideally very dark.

All right. So now if you live out in the woods or something like that, we don't have a lot of what we call light pollution from, you know, street light lamps and your neighbor's porch light and stuff pouring in through your, through your windows. That's not a problem.

Moonlight, starlight, all that stuff we evolved with the Lux is very different. But if not, you probably want to get yourself some blackout curtains because some researchers at Cornell actually took a test subject, put them into an otherwise dark room, but put a light the size of a quarter behind their knee, and that was enough to disrupt their sleep cycle just a wow ago.

Our skin picks up light, has photoreceptors that in all, what's happening every cell in your body is trying to say, what time is it? What time is it? Let's figure this out. Let's get on one accord.

And so a cool environment as well. We got tons of studies on this. Now when we're hot, sleep can suck. All right.

So getting yourself a cooler environment.

And also you know ideally you want to have your your bedroom set up being away if possible. I've been a student before where it wasn't possible. My bedroom was my desk was my everything.

Right. But if you can create an environment where there's a neuro association for your bedroom and sleep versus I go into my bedroom to work on my laptop, or lay in bed and type away, or be on my phone or watch television.

All right. If at all possible, it would be very advantageous to your sleep. And so the last thing I'll share is you can do all these things I just mentioned, these kind of mechanical, outside world things.

If you don't provide your body with the raw materials to build your sleep related hormones and neurotransmitters. So I'm talking about very key, what I call good sleep nutrients.

You can do all that fancy stuff, but your body's still not going to be able to build these things efficiently and your sleep is going to suffer. And so what are those things?

I'll give you a couple again. There's there's many that I've articulated a bunch of my books, even in the cookbook I talk about. This is so important.

And so one of them being we'll start with tryptophan. Right. So a lot of people have heard about this amino acid in the context of probably like turkey and like getting sleepy and all this stuff.

But tryptophan is a precursor for making serotonin, which is a precursor for making melatonin, right? And tryptophan is pretty abundant in a bunch of different foods, not just turkey.

But turkey, chicken, lobster, those kind of things. But you can find in different plant foods as well, you know, pumpkin seeds and things like that. But tryptophan is very important for helping to regulate your sleep.

Another good sleep nutrient is vitamin C. Now, vitamin C is kind of like the Swiss Army knife when it comes to health. Like we generally attach it to immune system support.

We got so many studies now on it helping to defend our body from stress and our stress response. Right. So like they gave some folks that were about to do a public speech, which for many people is the biggest fear.

They fear that more than death. And so just seeing that their cortisol levels stay lower when they had adequate amounts of vitamin C in their system. But when we're under stress, our adrenals basically just dump out a lot of vitamin C to help to modulate that, because also it's a threat.

So we might get injured by it because that's how we evolved. When we have this sense of threat, something bad might happen. So we need to ramp up that immune system function and our stress.

And so but when it comes to sleep specifically some research and this was published in PLoS one. And they found that individuals were deficient in vitamin C had more interrupted sleep.

So they woke up more often during the night. Right. And so making sure that we're optimizing our vitamin C levels, this is a this is the benefit of being able to hear from me versus just hearing this kind of surface level information about this.

When we think about this, a lot of us might turn to, let's just take a vitamin C supplement. I've been screaming this out from the rooftops for about the last two years now.

And now I see a bunch of other, you know, people out there in the internet talking about this. About 99% of the vitamin C supplements that you find, like at the checkout counter, these little emergency packets, they're made from genetically modified corn sirup and corn starch.

All right. They're trash when it comes to actually like the sourcing and also in in clinical studies. And so putting that up against and there was a study was published in the Journal of Cardiology looking at smokers, which is a very kind of oxidative kind of damaging habit.

And they had them to take a kind of a typical vitamin C synthetic supplement versus a whole food concentrate, a vitamin C, which in this case it was a camel, camel berry, which is a very dense source of vitamin C.

There were no changes in the vitamin C response in the body and oxidative stress, their kind of inflammatory response in the people taking the synthetic vitamin C.

And there was significant improvement by taking camel camel berry. So like a whole food based concentrate. That's it. So get your vitamin C from food or a whole food base concentrates.

Whole foods, vitamin C, and omega-3s for mental health

So Sean, you were saying about how the before we had a little technical hitch and we had to make a make a plan. So for those of you the studio looks slightly different.

Just bear with us. We had a major technical crash and I wanted to finish this interview with Sean. So we are going to carry on. And Sean, you were busy with telling us about how the, the the vitamin C, we were having a discussion about vitamin C and you were both we were talking around the fact that it needs to be in Whole Foods.

We don't want people just going and grabbing, oh, I need vitamin C, Sean says. I need vitamin C to sleep. And then I go and grab packets of vitamin C or bottles of vitamin C.

There's been studies are showing that that's not the safest thing to do. So you very much a proponent of whole food eating and mental health. So if you could talk for a few minutes about that and then I'd love to transition over to the family, the importance of eating as a family and community and that and that, and then also a bit about mindset, a little bit more about mindset.

But let's go to the vitamin C, the Whole Foods concept first. Awesome. Yeah. So you know we've kind of shifted over and become and by the way you handled this like a pro just so people know you figure this thing out.

You're amazing. So just so people know you again, we evolved eating food and today we are faced with an entire really different food terrain, which is one of the, if not the biggest culprit behind our our epidemics of mental health issues.

And this isn't just me saying this. Now we've got really sound, robust sets of data that are affirming this. And one of them is an analysis that included 70,000 people.

But this is a big data set. And this was published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. They found that high glycemic, ultra processed foods.

All right. So these are like the foods that are fast foods. And you know, the stuff that we buy at the grocery store have a direct impact on the incidence of depression in the scientists found that there was a dose response relationship, meaning that the more ultra processed foods that a person ate, the more likely they were to experience depression.

And this is just one of many studies that are now affirming this. And why is that the case in this? What it's about? Because not just like, oh, you know, Twinkies are bad for you.

They make you sad. Whatever. No, I mean, like some of these things create great food experiences and a lot of pleasure in the moment. But we've got to ask the question, what is this food doing to my chemistry?

And in particular, understanding that every single cell in our body is made from the food that we eat, including our

brain. So we are providing our brain with the materials to make itself and to rebuild itself.

And if we're not providing our body specifically with the nutrients needed to keep our brain cells healthy, our neurons healthy like signal transduction to literally create structural fats in the brain and to enable plastic for our brain to change and to get better, we're going to suffer.

And so a big part of this has to do with the impact that it's having on our gut. And I'll share one more study with everybody. This was a fascinating study, by the way.

This is published in the journal Trends in Microbiology just last year. And the researchers stated microbes within the gut can produce, degrade, and modify hormones in quantities that are biologically significant and affect host physiology.

Our microbes, we're feeding them the Twinkies and the potato chips and, you know, all the other ultra processed foods. And it's really creating this massive disruption in the chemistry that they're making.

And we know today, you know, the microbiome is having a big moment. So it's like what we're creating our tissues out of. And also what we are doing to our microbiome in the third part is the chemistry itself.

Because food isn't just used to make our tissues, it's used to make our neurotransmitters and our hormones and the energy that allows ourselves to communicate is all built on food.

It's built on food. And so again, I ask you if you're giving yourself high quality fuel for your system to run on versus really low quality, degraded, newly invented stuff that we're seeing the ramifications on.

And so I could share a couple of the most important nutrients that we found. Again, tons of data on this to support our mental health if you want. Absolutely.

Did spend just a minute on that, because I'd love to get over to the the couple of other things. All right. So the big one, the big one when I talked about the brain in particular and this enables this.

So this is a structural fat or the human brain. This enables signal transduction. This is a huge role in memory and cognition. People have heard about this before.

But I'm hoping that this hits in a different way. Omega three fatty acids in particular DHEA in EPA are they have express pass ticket to get into the brain through the blood brain barrier.

Your brain, your body's always seeking out these fats to support your cognitive function. There was a meta analysis. So this is a study of multiple studies published in the journal Translational Psychiatry, and found that omega threes have a beneficial effect on individuals with major depressive disorders.

So not even just mild to moderate forms. But major depressive disorders have improvement with omega three included in the diet. Now why is this. Well, some researchers and this was published in the journal neurology looked at a bunch of human brains.

And they found that people who consumed the least amount of DHEA, in particular DHEA and EPA, but DHEA in particular had the highest rate of brain shrinkage.

All right. So their brains were literally losing volume, losing our our mad our our brain matter when we're not getting these omega threes in is a big deal.

All right. So please everybody today if there is one nutrient to go after. And also in the journal neurology they found that people who eat at least one seafood meal per week do in fact perform better on cognitive skills tests.

So there's something special about seafood. All the blue zones they've known about this for a long time, you know,

so we're talking about fatty fish in particular, but also protein dense, more protein dense fish, you know.

So things like cod as well have got some really remarkable studies showing his benefit because protein is that other nutrient that I want everybody to think about.

But just to finish this off really, really quickly with the omega threes. So we've got fatty fish. We've got obviously fish oil is a huge supplement industry.

We got krill oil which is a microscopic shrimp is rich in acids. And then which protects us omega threes. And if you're doing a vegan or vegetarian protocol then you want to look for an algae oil.

Now we know that the DHEA and EPA are there, but we don't have a lot of randomized controlled trials to see their efficacy in humans. All right. So just keep that in mind.

I'm not talking about the omega threes and chia seeds and flaxseeds as Ala we need for an EPA for your brain literally. All right. So keep that in mind.

And also you could find it in egg yolks and you know grass fed beef and other things like that as well. I want you to say your big thing with your new your recipe book.

Is that all the recipes in that recipe book, all our holistic ways of getting all these essential nutrients in for good mental fitness. And, you know, it's a nice way to think about it, just in terms of kind of summarizing it all, is our mind is separate from the brain in the body, but the mind runs the brain and the body parts of the brain in the body are not functioning in a healthy way.

The mind has to work through the tangled web. And that just then feeds back and increases all mental challenges and makes managing our mind so, so difficult.

So that way we can't just be had to work on everything. It's we've got to work on being body, but you've got to use your mind to listen to what you're saying, Sean.

We've got to use our mind to process what you're saying. You've got to use our mind to do what you did in the beginning, which is you chose to hear to to make yourself better.

You made the decision. You can come alongside you clients, so can I. And you can tell all these people, all these great things and what they should do about the mind, how to eat and so on.

Family meals, connection, and where to find Sean's work

But until a person makes a choice in the decision, your mental and physical health is not going to improve. It's really up to us to make the decision to use online, which is so important.

Now. A big part of that is eating together as families. Okay, I'll talk a little bit about that research as our final question. And then I want to just let people know how they can get help from you.

Awesome. Yeah. So a couple of studies I'll throw off for everybody. One of them was conducted and published in the the journal Pediatrics. Looking at children's health and the act of eating together with their caregivers or parents.

And so what they found was that children who eat with their parents or caregivers, three meals a week was the minimum effective dose had dramatically lowered incidence of disordered eating.

So this is really tied to mental health as well, and significantly lowered incidence of developing obesity as well. There's something protective about eating with people that care about them.

And this holds true for parents as well. So now this study was conducted by conducted on, people working in tech, which, you know, can be very hectic and stressful.

So these were people who were working at IBM, and they found that when employees were able to consistently make it home and eat dinner with their families, they were able to metabolize stress, their work, morale, productivity.

All these things stayed high. But as soon as work obligations cut into their ability to eat with their family on a consistent basis, their productivity, work, morale, you know, unhappiness, excess stress went up.

All these things started to really have this really terrible side effect. And again, why is that? When we're together with people that we care about and you've talked a lot about this, our chemistry changes, you know, oxytocin, we're very good humans.

You know, this kind of cuddle hormone or love hormone. We produce more of it when we're around people that we love about love. But in particular, like the dinner table is a unifier.

Right? So but the research indicates it doesn't matter if it's dinner any meal. Right. So getting together proactively with our friends, family, you know, having time to go for coffee or, you know, getting lunch together, sitting down to having brunch.

But I'm going to implore everybody three meals a week again, appears to be that minimum effective dose in multiple studies. And, you know, just keep this in mind.

It's it's this experience. Yes, we're changing our chemistry, but also the act of talking like we you and I were talking before we even got started. It is super helpful to be able to share and to talk and to feel seen and how important that is for our kids.

And they go through different stages as well. But we know our kids, if we're paying attention and being able to have like great questions and conversation and, you know, ways for them to share what's going on in their life.

And also, this is a very important way for us to catch things. Right. Get I'm to I'm sorry guys. Kill the monster. What's little you know before can become something big right?

You can actually just pay attention, hear what's going on and talk about things. And just being able to talk and to feel seen is a really important psychological need for all of us as human beings.

And we can do that while enjoying delicious food together. I love that I mean three meals. How hard is it? It's it. The research is showing just have three meals together as a family.

And you already. What was the statistic? Three meals together and what was the rest of the statistic shown with the three meals together? The week? Yep. Three three. It could be any meal.

So this could be breakfast, lunch or dinner. What a day. And the impact of that, the impact. That we had so dramatically lowered incidence of disordered eating, of obesity, of nutrient deficiencies that lead to chronic diseases, that comes from research from Harvard.

So we're talking about depression, anxiety. We're talking about heart disease, all these things. We have a significant decrease in pretty much all manner of chronic illnesses.

When we eat together again, a minimum of three meals a week with our family. It's a really special veggie. Now we double that to six a week, which is not even difficult.

I mean, you think of it. So in in a nutshell, Sean, you telling us that, you know, you're telling us eat together, eat whole food, make sure that you work in a plan, that you get your sleep organized.

And they can get all of this in detail guidelines in your book. So how do people get help from you? Awesome. Yeah. So of course, the East More to Family Cookbook is available at stores nationwide.

And of course your favorite online retailers. It is is such a special book. And we recently I did a talk at my son's school and we brought books for all the kids third through eighth grade.

And, you know, the weeks after that, leading up to the summer break, he was like, dad, almost every day a kid comes up to me and says, like, oh, we just made your dad's, you know, frozen cherry frozen yogurt pops like last night.

And they were delicious or whatever. He's just like dad. Like, I know these kids. He always talks like he's older. He's like, I know these kids. I knew they would be happy to get a book, but I did not think these kids would make the food and have so much enjoyment in making it.

Like, he's like, I can't believe it. He knows what it's like living with us, but he knows that kids are different, you know, and their family cultures are different.

But it's getting kids together with their parents. Like these kids are wanting to be in the kitchen and to make food. And also the food is delicious. We're big fans of deliciousness.

I'm I'm a big foodie. And so we can marry all that together. But I can't wait for you. And I'd be promising to do a meal together at some point, so that's still going to happen.

We're going to come and have a nice family fun time at your place with your wife and kids, or my place with with Mac and and family, and we're going to cook those meals.

Sean, thank you so much. Thank you for working through the take issue with me. Thank goodness it was just at the end. This was a dynamic and greatly informed wonderful interview.

Thanks so much. It's always such a pleasure talking to you and thanks for doing this. For doctors. Two doctors. Thank you. It's my honor. Thank you.