Weight Is a Symptom, Not the Problem: Breaking Diet Culture & Emotional Eating with Jennifer Powter Transcript

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Diet Culture, Body Image, and Modern Struggles

We're not talking about food sourcing, organ meats, or ancestral rituals. We are talking something very modern. Diet culture, body image, and the mindset patterns that shape how we eat and feel about ourselves.

Here's the thing. If we truly want to reconnect with our ancestral selves, to be intuitive, grounded, and at peace with bodies, we have to address these modern struggles head on.

We can't live ancestrally while thinking like a dieter or constantly battling our bodies. That's why I invited Jennifer Pouter. She helps people break free from diet culture and build a healthier, more compassionate relationship with food and body.

Because diet-culture isn't disappearing anytime soon. We need the tools to navigate it without losing ourselves. Jennifer, thank you so much for joining me.

Oh my God, James, I'm so happy to be here. And that is just such an awesome intro. I love it because like it speaks to the truth right off the bat, which is we are so focused on food and this relationship to food where I really believe we need to get back in touch with the relationship we have with our own self, our feelings, own state of stress, the operating systems and belief systems we had around food.

That is what diet culture does not dig into. So I am glad we're going to have the chance to do it today. Yeah, me as well. Well, one of the things you say though is that like weight loss is really not about the food, right?

Never. It's the why. Yeah. it's not the about food. Weight loss, well, let's talk, so the problem for so many women and for anybody listening, I've been overweight.

There's a reason why I'm so passionate about being in this industry, which I think the weight-loss industry in itself, it can be a very toxic industry.

And the way is a symptom. if you are carrying excess weight on this, your perfect, beautiful body that functions, when we treat it well, it functions as it should.

But when carry excess, weight, we view weight as the problem. And then we try to treat this as a problem, and for so many of us, It's a symptom of so much else that's going on in our life.

Sometimes it's food misinformation. We've been bombarded with diet culture about how to eat and diet dogma and good, And we've got shame on food and red light, green light orange light.

A lot of times it's around not recognizing our own inherent patterns with food, belief systems around food. The way that we use food to emotionally cope when we're suffering in our lives.

And so it is a much more complex problem than just eat this, do that. Emotional triggers though and this food culture, they're just kind of hijacking our capacity to live in alignment with ancestral rhythms.

How do we, like how, well let's first identify how they are doing that, but then how do break free from that? Okay, I love this. So let's talk about what you and I are probably going to be super in alignment on and agree is food production has changed dramatically since World War II, but really in the 1970s, right?

We know that companies and food companies became very interested in how to get food shelf stable, last longer,

be quick and convenient, convenience foods because women were now going into the workforce.

And we watch this rise of food production while the war on fat began at around the same time, which meant sugar was being madly poured into our food to make it taste good.

Basically, food started to become a chemical composition of stuff that we could buy off a shelf and no longer the way we were meant to eat. Now, at the time we have this emotional dynamic of technology that was supposed to which is the exact opposite, I know your life, i know mine.

We are often now wired in a way that we were never meant to be wired and living in state of chronic stress that many of us were, well most of, us we're never designed to live in.

Why Weight Loss Is About More Than Food

And so life became hard, food became easy, We also have the increase in plate size, bowl size. Portions have increased. And then all of a sudden we all think we have weight problems.

Instead of recognizing the how, the when, and the why, we turn to food. I love this topic because knowing better does not equate to doing better. Every single one of us knows that carrots at 9 p.m.

are a healthier choice than chips. But are you really going to grab the carrots? Even when you know? So how come? Why not? And that's the deeper conversation.

Yeah, it really is. You know, one of the tools I am always recommending to people, and I'm curious which ones you would add to this. So I know myself now at this age.

I have no willpower. If it's in the kitchen, I will create an excuse to eat it. And the excuse doesn't even make sense. It doesn' matter. But I will make an excuse to eat it.

And one of my big ones is, it's gonna go to waste. Because it is gonna feel bad. That's one my of big one. So the tool I'm always imparting to people is like, just don't bring it into your kitchen.

If it not there, you're now making it harder for yourself to get access to these emotionally triggering foods. Or these foods that are triggered by the emotions we have.

You know, however you wanna word that, right? So that's one tool that I always imply to people. What are some other tools people can have to immediately like just not even like take it the option off the table.

So then that way you're kind of forced to just be in the emotion or whatever state you are currently in when you craving those trigger foods. So I love it.

And I'm hoping you're okay if I add in, because one of the things that we teach in the Academy is trying to create or live in a perfectly sterile environment where your trigger foods are not around you still gives your power to the food, not to yourself.

And it means that your success will be conditional. It'll be conditioned upon your environment, it'll conditional upon the friends you're around, and it will conditional on your social situation or if you are traveling or on vacation, which then, if we can't or don't feel like we control that, we lose our ability to stay or remain disciplined, successful, committed.

So I like to take a second part of that. And this goes to my own story of, you know, back when, again, I had master's level, upper level training in nutrition, physiology, etc.

I knew better and did not do better. So, I knew that the chocolate chips and the wine at night were not the best choice, but I wanted them. And I think this is where diet culture is failing people so much, is we just try to give

people this rigid set of structure and rules to live by, which is how diet cultural creates the narrative of deprivation, restriction, can't have, don't get.

And the minute somebody hears that, what do they want? And we want the thing. And so what I often ask in a tool, I would so invite any listener to ask himself is I want to thing the food, but what's the under the and every single time it is for the emotional reward that you are craving, that do not know how to meet or regulate or satisfy or give to yourself in non harmful way.

And that becomes the emotional resilience work that we get to do at this point. You're self-aware, me too. And I still had to skill-build to handle the triggers of my life because life, frankly, it's not getting easier, James.

There's like the, you know, the kids and the pressures and so if I kept using food and outsourcing my feelings to food, to soothe, cope, numb, distract, It's pretty possible for me to be 200 plus pounds and not that there's anything wrong with that if you feel good there.

I just didn't feel Good there Well, you know and and I know this is controversial Given that we're trying, and please no one listening think I'm body shaming, but I actually Don't think you should feel good being 200 pounds overweight, because the reality is, is we treat people how we feel.

And I'm, I've witnessed it in my 20 plus years, you know, in this field of just seeing people not feeling good in your body. So I am not saying that 200 lbs means you're not going to feel, good.

I more just saying, if you don't feel in you body at an underweight, being under weight, or overweight, then that to me is the issue. Like we feel good in our body.

Totally. And that's why I certainly don't prescribe a weight for somebody to be at. I think BMI and all of the stuff that is out there right now can be really harmful for some people.

But at the end of day, we are very clear, I know you have a research background, so do I. There are certain indicators that say when we're X percent over our typical healthy body weight we were going to have comorbidities.

And excess fat mass on a body frame and our body composition matters most. And right now, a lot of us are over fat and under muscled. That is because we're so sedentary.

Then we are tired and then we aren't eating well. We are jacking up on coffee and calming down with wine and we wonder why we don't feel good.

Food Environment, Triggers, and Emotional Eating

If we take a look, and I love this because of the way you talk about ancestral living, the conveniences and comforts of life which have created our misalignment with our health, they didn't exist way back then.

Life was harder. There was more natural hardship. And we adapted to that. Now we have a lower level of emotional resiliency and we've adapted being comfortable.

I love that you're talking about emotional resilience. Because to your point, resilience is, I believe, what we should be putting in front of us. Like we HAVE to be more resilient.

entering the modern, the current modern society we're in, but just entering. The future resilience is key resilience from viruses, resilience, from, you know, anything that comes your way, whether it's a Franken foods or now they're even talking about, putting there's already experiments happening where they are putting vaccines in foods, which is, crazy but then also there on the flip side of that there is you know basically where you can genetically create the child you want which to me that's a that a Pandora's box because it's like well then what does resilience look like when you think you're in control of things because the reality is is what we're talking about is we never really in Instill is it totally a hundred percent?

We're not but we're in control. We were not and I love that this because I'm not in Control of what you do. I've not been told about my children do I cannot micromanage everything out there to make myself comfortable?

Which is why and say it I always tell women I work with predominantly women listen No one's coming to do this for you if it is to be it's up to me my health my life my happiness the quality of my like I get to be the one that creates that.

And if I'm living an outcome right now that I do not like, let's just say I am overweight or I don't have the bank account or the relationship that i desire, the only reason is because of the past and previous decisions.

That's it. And your future is completely unwritten. So being stuck becomes choice, especially if you believe that it's just around, oh, I just need to know more.

Most people could write their own health book or diet blog or something. It's not the knowledge that's the problem. I mean, sometimes it is, it' the application of it and the applications of consistently over time.

Because health does not change in a day. There is no 365 day cleanse. there was no whole 365, right? There are short-term things that allow people to pretend that they can try for a period of time to get them a result and then it gets too hard and they quit.

And so I'm a big fan of bringing stuff in and why I love so much about what you do is you're, you are making it easy so we can add every day, good nutrients, dense nutrients to our everyday foods.

and we're missing the boat on that in big way. Yeah. I, I agree. Um, okay. So for the people, the listeners that, you know, are entrenched in this busy modern life that we're highlighting the high stress, that process foods, digital overload that were highlighting, how do you guide them back to the ancestral principles of nourishment, rest, movement, and recovery?

Like, How do we guide him back? Well, I think that's the perfect word is listen, if you're at a point in life where you are not feeling awesome, you probably do need a guide because you got lost.

Like I love that you use that word. Maybe I might use the word coach. Somebody else might us a different kind of word, but if you are not living the life or you're, if do not have optimal health the way that wish, then you were going to probably need some support in helping you skill-build.

I went to school for a long time to become an expert. So many women believe in or people believe that they can and should be experts in this one particular area of life.

And yet the knowledge hasn't been passed down. Cooking practices, Do you know how many women I work with who don't like to cook, never got taught how to Cook?

Basic skill sets. And so we're expecting that we should be an expert in nutrition, an experts in physiology, and expert fat metabolism, expert hormone regulation, An expert on our own cultivation of emotional resilience.

I worked with a majority of 50s and 60s population who've never been to therapy. We don't sometimes know our own stuff. And so being guided to get tools and not just teach the tool.

I always say it's like my husband's a contractor. You know, I could have a picture on my desk and be like, i really want to Get the picture On the wall and there could be a hammer right beside it and he could Be like oh, we'll just pick up the hammer and put the nail in I can be I don' really feel like I'm good at hammers.

I don't really feel like using a hammer, right? So sometimes the tools are right there and then we get hijacked with our feelings and it's like, who cares if you feel using hammer or not?

Pick it up and put the nail on the wall and hang the picture. Like get over your feelings, and take the action, but you

gotta know the tool exists to even do that.

You're smiling. I love that, the way I bottom line it is, it not about one day, It's about day one. Yeah. Start now, just do it. Oh my God, James, yes, like I just, you know, my mom, 85, completely wheelchair bound.

I've been a caregiver since she was 72. Neuropathy got to her and diabetes and she's a smoker and high cholesterol and blood pressure and all the things, sedentary woman.

And I always say, listen, if you're somebody out there right now who wants to be able to get to a toilet, get off the toilet when you are 85 start now.

start now because we're going to be taking massive deposits out of our health bank account. And most of us aren't putting deposits into it. What we do now at this stage of life, it'll never get easier to change than right now, day one.

So we have to take a look at what blocks us. Yeah. And I want to let, let's talk about some of those blocks. Cause you know, really what we're talking about is probably people have heard a lot in this way, you can either spend the money now on your health, or you could spend it later in hospital bills, right?

That's, that's the kind of phrase people hear a. Yeah, so let identify. What can people do right now that will help them change this mindset, to help change these kind of sedentary patterns?

The answer is we've got to get radically responsible. We really do. We lie to ourselves, let's be honest. we pretend we're going to start tomorrow, we are going start next Monday, We're gonna start January 1st.

And, you know, my second book, I wrote self-sabotage or stop sabotaging because knowing and doing the gap in between is sabotage and until we can recognize our own unique patterns of sabotaged we keep chasing and trying to solve the wrong problem.

Most of us have a sabotag problem And the sabotage, what it looks like for so many of us is self-neglect. You get habituated to neglecting yourself. Often it's, you're busy, your young family, running, careering, parenting, husbanding or wifing.

Your volunteering. And your own self care really slowly falls off the priority list. Self-betrayal. Anybody who said, I'm going to start eating better tomorrow.

I won't drink tonight. The impairment to our health is like death by a thousand cuts or a 1000 white lies made every single day and repeated. So when you start to become radically honest with where you're lying to yourself, why?

Building Resilience and Taking Responsibility

For me, I indulged in over consuming alcohol and chocolate chips because I was in the lie that my marriage was okay and that everything would be fine when the truth was it was falling apart and I as lonely.

But it is easy to make my weight the problem. not the bigger life circumstance that I didn't want to admit to ourselves. And so I think a lot of us stay in denial because it's easier to have a problem that's out there that we think we can solve out their versus as to what's really going on with me right now.

And self-worth is also part of that low self worth that we get our worth out of chasing our productivity and forget that it's, we got to spend our own time, energy, money on ourselves.

It doesn't have to be for the house or the family or vacation. And for so many people, that is where we spend. We spend on what we value. Isn't a lot of this sabotaging really trauma response in a way?

Yeah, it really can be. You know, James, if you had told me 15 years ago when I entered this industry, how many women would share with me stories of trauma?

And I mean, for sure, the big T stuff I wasn't prepared for, early childhood sexual abuse, physical abuse. Incredible emotional abuse and neglect, abandonment.

But what's more interesting, too, is I call it little t, and all of us have it. It's all the little traumas, which really would be all that the needs that you had as a child that did go unmet.

Be seen, not heard. Show up. Conform. Contort yourself. Don't express those negative feelings that aren't acceptable. Just be polite. Pleasant. Kind. Sweet.

Beautiful. Whatever it is the messaging was in a family system. And so, yeah, it really is a huge trauma response. And I definitely had to build my skill set up.

I'm not a therapist, but I would be remiss in my professional duty if I did not have emotional intelligence. Why are we the way that we are if we didn't do that work to support the change?

Yeah. You know, one kind of story I was telling myself, particularly whenever I travel on my own for conferences or whatnot, it would be like, well, this is my little secret, you know, like that.

I'm now traveling, so I am away from the accountability that my wife and I share with each other. Am away form my normal life, my routines, So I can eat whatever I want here and not be mirrored back that I m checking out, or that am not being in integrity with kind of the health promises that make to my audience, but also to myself, right?

And so I would do that and then never tell anyone because of my little secret. And, um, and I was sharing with my wife just about a week ago, cause I just got back from a trip and it was like, something's changed because I'm now traveling.

And I actually don't wanna do that. Like I want to be in integrity with my own health, with own declarations of what I wanna help to me. I'm holding myself accountable now for the outcome, my desired outcome.

and I'm not wavering. And I now see, like something I told a friend of mine who was struggling with stuff is I said, oh, actually, I may have even been my daughter too.

I think I talked to a couple of people, but point is, is you already know what a chocolate chip cookie tastes like. You know, what I mean? Like why check out?

Or something that you think is gonna be so grandiose, But you know how it tastes and you now how feels in your body. So what about your commitment to you?

And I feel that, like I am more committed to myself and thus because I'm more commited to my family, to wife, it extends beyond, but it has to start with me.

I love this so much. Can I give like a funny metaphor that I use in my community? I don't know if it'll be off-putting, but okay. Well, it was just because you use traveling and staying and you shared this.

So again, It comes down to belief systems and it comes to value. And I loved that you used the word integrity. We use that word in integrity in our community all the time.

Are you who you say you want to be when no one's looking, right? And, I joke and I say, women will say well, its just so hard for me to do this when I'm out.

I am like, look, let's just say your married. I love my husband, we have the agreement of commitment to each other. And so it'd be like, oh, it's so easy to be committed and faithful when I'm in my house, but God, when i go to the bar, I just can't help it.

I mean, i'm just out of control with men. i mean i flirt and wheni travel off like but because i have a commitment To

him, somebody else, no, i honor that commitment.

and it is a very unique spin to recognize that i am just as worth it to honor commitments to myself too around my health. And to recognize the absurdity of our thinking sometimes, like, oh, it's easy for me to be in control in my house, but the minute I'm on vacation at a restaurant, out with friends, I have no control.

No, you've got an excuse. Because you're saying something else is more important than the commitment to yourself. Why do you think we do that? Let's be honest, a lot of people do cheat on their commitments to their marriage.

A lot people cheat their commitment on to health, right? So why do we think that we that do? I do think it is a huge part of only allowing ourselves to accept what we believe we're worth and we'll sabotage the good.

We'll, we will sabotaged it. And I don't believe that there's a lot of people out there who are consciously wanting to destroy. I mean, listen, let's just take a look at the definition of sabotages.

To deliberately take actions to make something not work. That's the definitions of a dictionary. Put self in front of it, to deliberately, and I believe it's conscious subconscious, take action to myself my life, not work, which is why we usually have to go back to those belief systems, the identity that you hold and go, where does this need to transform?

What part of this is not working for me anymore? As women, many of us have gone through horrible situations where our personal safety, our emotional safety was violated, and not hold ourselves hostage to the version of when that happened, but to recognize, hey, I'm at a new point.

I personally am 50. And to really get out of being a victim to what happened to us at a point in time and get radically responsible to how we deal and heal with our own traumas, negative thinking, dysfunctional aspects of our personality that we just say, well, that's the way I am.

And we now know you can change. That's a beautiful thing. But we also get really good at what we practice. Many of us will practice breaking our commitments to stay stuck in a loop that keeps our identity intact.

as opposed to getting really uncomfortable and changing. Yeah, it's the being in the discomfort though that is so challenging. And to your point, if you're not training for it, like if your life is always so comfortable, then of course the uncomfortable is going to be even harder, right?

So if not finding resilience in your day-to-day, how does one step out of that cycle?

Trauma, Self-Sabotage, and Identity Shifts

I love that word. This is such a great conversation because notice how it's not about the weight or the food. Like, right, this is the crux of what we're all up against, which is one of the very foundational principles I teach is You know, it's our responsibility to have a vision for our life.

A vision, you can say dreams, goals, ambition. To have vision of where we're going, but most of us are so tired. We're just like getting through day to day and the vision can get muddy.

And then we get lost in just the busyness of life, because let's be honest, that's possible. So if we're not taking time to self-reflect or to contemplate our own lives, who we are, what we want to still see, do, be, experience and create, we can't actually live it because everything's created twice, once up here, next to reality.

We've got to be brave enough to give ourselves the benefit of our time, to ask, What does my best life look like? And to not look to our past, to predicate our future.

Most of us will look to our past. Well, I can't do that because my person, you know, somebody told me in high

school, that I was a horrible writer. Oh, well, wrote two books, but I had to overcome that, because I thought I a was horrible write, even as I'm writing it.

But in 2012, put on a vision board, a little snapshot, cut it out with a printer, and I put my name on the bestseller list. I, had no idea what I might write about, But I knew I wanted to write.

And yet I have to over come the story of someone telling me a harmful story that wasn't really true, it was just her opinion. But somebody's opinion of you does not make it fact, but it can hurt our feelings.

So I think that's what we have to take ourselves on, which is why having a guide, a coach, and mentor, or a therapist helps us expose our own belief systems and stories, otherwise we're just swimming in them all the time.

It's like a fish in water, doesn't know it's in the water. Same with us. There's a couple of questions that are definitely popping to my head around this topic.

But the first one I'd love you to advise us on is we're talking about guides, right? Like of getting support. Not everyone provides the same kind of support, the support that is the most helpful.

There's a lot of people out there with good intentions, but not great execution. So what should people be looking for when they're trying to figure out who to guide them and who outreach to?

Are there qualities, are there words, is there something that people should be specifically looking? think so. I think we don't know to look for it because we hope that the level of affect in our life will come from action.

Okay, and let me explain that. So it's like, we just want to find the person who's going to tell us what to do and give us the perfect plan, the You probably already know that, but we still search for something to attack our problem at the level of action.

And what I believe should be an unnecessary component of any guide is are we looking at level thought feeling? Are we, is there a mindset component to whatever program or book you're reading or, I mean, almost all books will have some sort of mental emotional component too it to help us with processing.

A lot of stuff out there for sure in the weight loss space for me, it's take this pill, take his injection, and take the supplement, get your pre-packaged food, two bars, to shakes, like, How does that help you when you're emotional and a mess at 9 p.m.?

Are you going to go get your bar and your pre-packaged food? Like, no. So I think that, you know, on some level you've got to be looking at yourself and recognizing emotional resilience doesn't come in a product.

That we've gotta find a way, whether it's even a sage friend or an older friend, or a different, somebody more objective to you, because the truth is, our immediate circle, they just want to see us happy and comfortable.

Right. Hey James, have a glass of wine with me. Let's just say, oh, what? Oh, come on, let's have fun or, Oh let us eat ice cream together. That'll be really fun to go and do.

And then we can shake up. They're not like, okay, Let us hold you to a higher level of integrity and honor that commitment you've made for yourself. So a lot of times our.

our family and friends can actually be an external sabotaging force, not intentionally, but they also have a narrative about you. Well, that's what James does, or that what Jen does.

Jen likes wine, let's bring wine. Or Jen like to eat this, I made this for you, how come you're not eating it? And then we get into the implicit nature of exchange through action.

Oh, you made it, so I better eat it to show you I love you as opposed to thank you so much for thinking of me. I

loved the recipe, and I'm full right now.

And keep that boundary for myself and my health. And on the flip side of that, it's also the projection, right? So the person could be actually, It could more about them and they're just trying to get you to be inclusive so that they can justify their desires, Right?

100%. Hey, if I think you're a good person and you do what I wanna do, you are good, so I'm good. Cause you doing the behavior I want to engage in. I've now validated myself.

Yeah, or I wanted to drink. So if get to you drink, then that justifies me drinking during the day or whatever it is, anything. Yeah, it's why you become like the people you hang out with, right?

You and I know this. We put ourselves into communities where we're around people doing incredible things. It's inspiring and shows us what's possible.

If your circle is someone who's, well, just look at your circles, with health outcomes and look our family circle. You know, a lot of times husband's wives will grow their health together or sync their health together because of the family habits and values.

Children, when I was going through my schooling, if you had one obese parent, that child had a 60% more likely chance of being obese. If two parents were obese, the child's risk was 90%. And then they say it's genetic.

No, I'm sorry. It's not. Who controls what comes in the house? Right? So it's multifactorial. It's multi-layered. If it was simple, we'd solve these problems.

And so I think anything too good to be true is. When something makes sense in land, it makes sens ancestral eating, going back to whole foods, not shopping chemical-made, food-stable, shelf- stable products.

You go to Costco, you take a look at the size of a cart and what's in there, and then you can objectively look at the health of the person. There's a connection sometimes.

I just thought of something and I think we should establish it together right now on this podcast, because I'd think this is one of the first times anyone will ever say this, is you know how we normally look at a plate and we say, oh, let's divide that plate into the categories that we want to emphasize.

So we talk about protein should be a certain percentage, we talked about vegetables, fat, you break it down by the plate. Well, what if we did the same thing with a cart?

What should the grocery cart look like? Like what percentage of these- It should look alive. Like it should alive and not full of things that are in jars, bags or boxes.

Like even that, you know, simple things like, uh, God, I mean, listen, and I say this with so much love and compassion because I've done it all. I have been the woman who was 40 pounds overweight, who is an emotional mess, she did not have resilience, had unhealthy patterns from my past.

And so I had been able to go on a journey of discovery and of healing and all the things and it's probably a forever journey, frankly. But I would go to Safeway, be hungry, didn't have much money.

I would immediately go to the chocolate almond section because I've been running all day and I get a little bag of chocolate almonds and be eating them as I was grocery shopping.

I just go up and down. And you know, I had to learn this is ridiculous, Jen.

Choosing the Right Guide and Support System

Perimeter of the grocery store, shop by a list. Do not make, don't put anything in the cart that isn't on the list because if it goes into your cart, like you said, you're making a commitment to eat it.

Anything that you put in, you can pretend it's for somebody else. You can pretent it for when you have a party. But I mean, let's be honest. How many of us have bought chips and said, Oh, that'll be for Saturday and Tuesday night you're in the chips at nine.

Like we're human. And of course the size as well, right? Like what we bought, buying the family size or the, or value pack because well it was cheaper and well you know.

We'll use it during the week. We won't eat it all in one day. And we'll just use throughout the weeks. It's like, no, probably you're gonna eat in a one-day and or you gonna make excuses of why you need to eat every day if it's too big.

Yeah. You know what I find? I just did a presentation and I had a bunch of food. I have gummy bears and licorice and chocolate and wine and chips and smart pop or skinny popcorn.

So we looked at the marketing of it and then we look at serving sizes. Now everything has a food label. Food companies are actually telling you, hey, this is the recommended serving size.

But for most of us, we don't look at that. We eat to the power of completion, which means the bag is done, the jar is, done the box is empty. And often you're eating five, six, seven servings in an evening of this fake food, but you won't eat a sandwich, right?

You're avoiding the real food, so you're giving yourself the treat and have no idea that you've just consumed equivalently a loaf of bread in the form of calories, but not nutrition, right?

So it's like we've also got that misinformation out there where we really just don't know. We don' know how to interpret a label. we don''t know or understand about the impact of sugar.

It's wild, this world. And so when we start to recognize that food can make us sick and healthy or sick in fat and not feel good and have all these biochemical markers of dysfunction, disease.

it can do the opposite. It can make us feel vibrant and healthy and alive and energetic. And it doesn't have to be a pain in the ass. Like, I feel like everybody thinks that taking care of themselves is just such a difficult pain-in-the-butt thing to do, and that would be trauma thing.

Why is looking after ourselves such pain? When we look after the things we love, like our children, we'll go to the ends of the world for them, but not ourself.

Do you think that that's one end towards supporting, you know, confidence and, and accountability is to actually start looking yourself as, maybe putting photos of yourself when you were a baby and just reminding yourself that you are that child, that that you aren't how you feel, but you are a real person who's vulnerable, who is susceptible, whose needs love just as much as you were probably giving out to other people.

Yeah, of course. Of course, I think a lot of times, you know, and I want to listen, my dad's passed and before he'd even had my life for a long time. And, one of the things I crave the most was like the love and approval of my Dad, right?

And I had a therapist who said, you know what, Jen, stop asking the questions and get grateful for the lessons, right? Imagine your dad as a little boy who had his own traumas imparted onto him, who then became a man who married many times, had children, did the best he could with what he had and it wasn't what I needed or wanted.

As long as I was to hold myself to a victim story of, well, I didn't get the love I needed and wanted from my dad or my mom, they didn' show up for me, the whole point is I got to show-up for-me.

and to not make my love or my self-worth or acceptance conditional on somebody else, but to learn how to give it to myself. And yeah, let me just say, it's not like a switch.

You know, all the things that people said would help me like journaling and meditating and processing. I was like, well, that won't work for me. Like I used to really be arrogant, frankly, in what I thought wouldn't work for me until my life got really bad, really hard.

And you know what that did? Made me humble and it made me willing to try. Then that was my entry point into a new, a beginning. Do you think? that life has to get really bad for us to actually see that light.

Cause I do notice that with health or let's say with dietary change, typically in my experience, it comes really in two ways. You get sick or someone you love gets sick, but most people won't leave that comfort zone without either those two things.

Yeah. No, I don't believe it has to get to that. It's not uncommon in my world too. A lot of times it'll be a woman will see the highest number she's ever seen on the scale or all of a sudden she is being told she needs to go on medications and doesn't want to be on medication like a diabetes medication or hypertension or statin.

And they're like, oh, let me just try on my own. What I do see though is we ignore the whispers. we just ignore the whispers along the way. And if you ignore, the whiskers of gut of intuition of somebody even telling you a doctor 10 years ago, you know, your you should probably get a little healthier.

Then the messages get louder and louder until we're hit with that proverbial two by four and we wake up. So for anybody listening who is getting messages, and that message could be like, this is how I view it.

We have a message of, let's just say it's nine o'clock, I'm gonna go for the glass of wine. I might have message that says, oh, you don't really need that right now, go to bed.

And I could hear it, but I'm going to immediately override it with, oh, it's fine. Just go get the glass of wine and enjoy yourself. So it is really to become discerning of the voices you're hearing.

You're going have a gut instinct, and I call it your heart of heart self who's trying to guide you. And you are going an inner critic, nasty little voice that just is seductive and is trying re-enroll you into doing what you've always done and stay comfortable.

And I think, I don't think it has to be bad. I'm for some people, we don' learn, it was told once, people either learn through pleasure or pain. Most of us will learn though pain, uh, i made a radical decision to start to enjoy wanting to learn to pleasure.

i'm in practice, you know, like, this is fun. Let's do more of it as opposed to, huh, This is really hard. It got to fix, and paying attention to the messages.

Do you, do you what I mean on those? I find a lot of times when we're relying on our head space to change that it actually helps. It's even more important to shift your physical space.

So do you have any tips of what someone can do when, when they are kind of playing the angel on the shoulder versus the devil, you know, where they're kind going back and forth mentally, what can they do?

in that moment to break free from that? Like, is it like, leave the environment, go for a walk? What do you recommend? I love this. So we actually teach our, my community, you actually need to pre-decide.

Right now, while you're listening to this episode or watching or however you are consuming it, it's like you gotta know your witching hours. You gotta when you at your weakest because if you trying to make a logical decision in the moment your brain is emotionally hijacked, you won't.

The brain science tells us you're going to go back to what's the fastest pathway is the habit you've got, not the habits you are creating. So we have to look at brain-science and let that inform us and go, okay, I'm going get out sticky notes, and I am going write down five things that when I feel the beginning of that feeling or the seduction of the voice to engage in something that's self-harm, let's say, Go to bed, take a shower, call a friend, get out for a walk, put on music, light a candle.

You need to have your options actually written down ahead of time because we can only be as good as our structures of support. And if we don't have structures support already, it's like our scaffolding.

then we fall. So I want to have scaffolding around me to keep me safe and to support me, but I have to think of it ahead of time.

Practical Habits: Shopping, Portions, and Nourishment

I love that. We're only as good as our structures of support. Most of us don't have good ones, right? And really it ties into the resilience, right? You can't just one day be resilient.

You have to have practice and learnings that come with it. So that way, when you are in that environment of high stress, it's like, well, you've been practicing that meditation and practicing finding calm, no matter what's going on.

It's not just something you just do one-day. Like you're literally structuring your life where every day you're incorporating, you know, micro dosing of whatever that resilience you are building towards.

So if it's meditation, that's one thing. If it is movement, every-day you were doing a little bit, whatever it, is like being stronger to kill, and whatever is, right?

Yeah. You know, I love it because, if you think of yourself like an athlete, like if your somebody who's in training, any high performance team, high-performance player, there's coaches, and they don't just play their playoff.

I mean, look at the Blue Jays right now in Canada, you can tell. But they practice with a level of intensity so they can play like how they practiced.

And so they practice the things they're good at, the thing they are not, so that when it comes to game time, it's almost autonomic for them. And we got to look at ourselves the same way.

We get good what we practice. If I, and this is the other part, is if I've practiced self-sabotage for 40 years, what do you think I'm good? like sabotage, right?

So it's not gonna change in a day just because I have a new thought, which says, I'm gonna get healthier, am gonna eat better, Am gonna to get more committed to my core values around health movement.

No, I'm going to have whole like 80,000 worth of thoughts and operating systems that tell me who I've been in the past. So I got to practice shedding an identity that is no longer working for me.

And let's just say like, if you're here right now, like God, you made it here, Stop punishing yourself for anything you did to get here and recognize you Did what you had to do to survive or make it through and you now have the privilege of new decisions today and the new Decisions today are gonna pave the way not for tomorrow your brand new health but two months three months a year from now and to recognize we're just cellular beings everything's like degenerating and propagating in renewing every single day and and the cellular being you are today in nine months.

We know you're almost a completely new cellular beings. So let's feed those cells today with everything that you wanna create for yourself in the future.

Oh, I love it. What I hear you saying too is like, let us release the shaming and really be present. Just be president.

Feel your butt on that chair if you were sitting or your feet on the floor if your standing.

Fill the clothes on your shoulders if they're wearing clothes and glasses, if you're wearing glasses on, you know, against your nose and just feel the stretch of your face as you smile, whatever it is, but to be, identify the physical so that you can really just be present.

Yeah. And make peace with your past, right? Make peace within it. Whatever happened, it happened. Maybe it wasn't fair. Or maybe it was right. All of those things may be true, But it did.

You've been working with Enough people I think at this point where you would you you might be able to identify like. What are some of the people when they start your program like what are Some of them initial aha moments like is it like self worth around self-worth is food is controlling me?

Like what's the first kind of aha you witnessed in a lot of the people that do your programs? And I know it's different, but I'm sure at this point you sort of, you see like common themes.

I love it. The number one is they can't believe they're losing weight and they are not hungry. That's one of the biggest ones is there's a belief system that to lose weight, I need to starve, be restricted, and be miserable, because that's what they've done in the past.

So as we talk about nourishing our clients, they just can't believe it. And then the second thing that they can believe is how much energy they start to have, like how good they started to feel.

Then the third thing is the cravings have dissipated. like they're just not there as much at night. And we know that that's physiological reasons. We know protein deprivation, we now fiber deprivation and over consumption leads to overconsumption later in the day.

we understand this. But I mean, I do, you do. but for people who are used to not eating all day and then hoping that they are not going to have cravings at nights, the brain is going tell you, hey, eat, don't have the nutrients in your body to heal, repair, grow.

Instead of being like, oh, just I really feel like a chunk of chicken. I'm like I feel chips. So they start to get nourished and then they lose weight, have energy, and there's no more cravings.

And then, they get some confidence back in themselves. Then they grow this area of like, I am going to take time for myself. It is okay. I feel better when I do.

Those boundaries start coming in. Love it. This goes back to what we started out talking about. Surround yourself with people, whether that's the coach you're choosing, the guides you are choosing.

or the literal people around you that are reflecting you back accurately. Because I feel like so many of us are surrounded by people that either just continuing the shaming piece or critical piece, or are projecting their judgments of themselves on us, right?

It's like, but surround yourself with people love you and, and see your, your potential and what you're doing for these changes and are mirroring them back to you of like, don't you feel so good in your body?

Cause you look really good, you know, whatever that may be a hundred percent. But for a lot of us, we can be isolated. I was, or we find it, it takes energy to put yourself into new social situations, to get that kind of, um, community.

And I read something the other day, cause sometimes I talk about how I don' have that many, like in Calgary in-person friends, but I have a lotta friends across country.

And it said that to have a good community means to be inconvenienced, that you're willing to there for somebody

else, go see their kid's soccer game, visit their sick mom in the hospital, help them move something or decorate or clean a closet, because you are building the fabric of connection.

Day One, Greatness, and Where to Find Jennifer

which isn't a one-way street. And so I was like, oh, it was really powerful for me, James, because I'm busy, my time is tight, I run a tight calendar.

I've been unwilling to be inconvenienced sometimes, and now I am opening myself up to what a beautiful thing, to have the privilege of being inconvenienced for the sake of friendship and community.

To give, so that I can get that same feeling of support right back. It changed something for me just about how I want to share myself and my energy and time and to also make it productive.

Whether it's a walk or a coffee chat, I'm not the person who's like, hey, let's go for a glass of wine or let go grab a nappy. I do it differently. Oh, love it.

So enjoying that conversation. And I've really enjoyed getting to know you. I know the last time we saw each other we had a really powerful interactions and and you had me on your podcast but like every time I talk to you I just I feel like I get a better picture of you and You're just such a beautiful person and I'm so grateful for you Jen Thank you.

I felt the same way. We had that chance interaction at an event. And I was like, oh my God, because we have teams and stuff and people that help us coordinate our calendars.

But I'm so excited to meet you and be like you're going to be on my podcast. You've got my support. I love your mission. and what it takes to be healthy and that we get to do it.

So your message is one I always love sharing and yeah, it's been a privilege to get know you too. Thanks for having me on your show. Well, before I let you fully go, I would love to just get your sense of like if someone only remembered one key idea from today's conversation, what would you want that to?

You said it actually, It's let today be day one and go after it, Like nothing comes to us. You know, one of the metaphors I have, and if you're listening, don't do this if your driving, but I always share with my community, you know put your hands in front of your face and pretend you are holding on to a trapeze bar.

I think we've all seen this in a circus, right? And so you hanging on a bar and on the bar it says, life is good, good enough, enough health, everything's good.

But in the foreground you see another bar coming to you and it's a little bit higher and says great, that it is great over here. How do you grab the next trapez bar?

The only way to do it is to let go of good and go and grab great and make that leap. So no matter where you're at, don't settle for good when great is just one small hand grasp away and believe in yourself.

Oh, I'm getting chills. You heard it here, everybody. Let's go for great together. We are in it. we are here with you and we're just so grateful for you participating today, Jen.

Thank you so much for joining me on this call. Um, how can people reach out to you to work with you? How can they just follow you on socials? Follow me on instagram at Jen powder easiest way I have all sorts of free resources free copies of my books You can buy them on amazon or kindle or audible.

I give them away I think it's really important to understand that whatever symptom or problem you've got the real problem underneath it will be sabotage of some nature And when you start to address that, you solve so many things in your life.

So follow me there. I'm learning how to create good content and share. And your website for working with you or participating in the groups is JenniferPowder, right?

Yeah, Jenniferpowder.com. So, jenniferpowter. com. We run all sorts of challenges and fun stuff and things to bring you into the mindset piece of it. Sure, I can talk about food, but I love going into deeper game that we're up against and how to change the rules so we win.

Well, you got my vote. I just. I just love that you're focusing on the how, not just the what, and you are really supporting in what I believe is lasting change.

So thank you so much. You're welcome. Thanks for having me on. Great conversation today. Loved it. Well, thank and thank all for participating. I am just so enjoying being on this journey with you.

watching or listening to this podcast, please leave a comment. Let us know how it's being received. Share it with your friends and family. Just spread the word.

I really think that health is important. It's important to reconnect with these ancestral principles, but make sure that we're also still in our modern selves and connecting those dots so that connected to the people that we love around us and connected most importantly to ourselves and our highest self.

So stay curious and thank you again. Thank you so much for joining me on Everyday Ancestral. If you enjoyed this episode, hit subscribe so you don't miss the next one.

You can find the show notes, links and resources mentioned at eatpluck.com. That's E-A-T-P-L-U-C-K dot com. And hey, if you know someone who'd get something out of this, share it with them too.

Stay curious, live well, and keep it ancestral.