

EPISODE 11

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:01] AS: You know battling food and your body doesn't work. You want to love and accept yourself. And because you're insatiable, you want results too. And wouldn't you know, you bring the same intensity to your life, wanting to maximize your time, potential, and experiences you have here on this beautiful and wondrous planet Earth.

Fair warning, it will be a rollercoaster. But for those insatiable, that's your prime time to thrive. We're here to say "YES!" to the hunger of wanting it all. I'm your co-host, Ali Shapiro, a health coach who helps people end the losing battle of dieting and find a truce with food.

[0:00:44] JB: And I'm Juliet Burgh, nutritionist, fitness expert, and a co-owner of Unite Fitness Studio Franchise.

[EPISODE]

[0:00:53] AS: Welcome to episode 11 of Insatiable, why the gut biome negates calories. Big topic here today Juliet.

[0:01:02] JB: I know, this is a good one.

[0:01:04] AS: Yeah and just so all of you know, it's kind of some foreshadowing. We're doing this primer today because next week, we're going to have Dr. Kelly Brogan on who is a holistic psychiatrist and a lot of what we're going to talk about will build upon what we talk about today which is the gut biome and I am personally really excited to talk about this and these little bacteria because my own personal experience, this is what really started my own transformation with food.

Juliet knows this but for listeners, it was about 13 years ago or something but I had struggled with asthma as a kid and I thought asthma was just something you had, something you lived with although my parents didn't know this when they took me off milk in kindergarten, my

breathing got a lot better but then I really struggled with acne. I had tried antibiotics several times. I even tried Accutane in college which is now, there's a class action law suit against.

[0:02:00] JB: My God.

[0:02:01] AS: I know and I thought I was the natural person, this is hysterical to me and then I also really struggle with depression. I tried about four different antidepressants and none of them really worked long term and then I also got increasingly bad allergies when I was in the corporate world. I used to have Claritin D in my little office drawer and then when I was 22 and in my first job, I was diagnosed with Irritable Bowel Syndrome and I had my first colonoscopy at 22 and they found nothing.

I basically have this realization that, "Oh my God, I don't have cancer but I'm not healthy," and I couldn't get any relief from western medicine I had tried and this is when I learned about the gut biome and how all of what's in our gut is really influencing our health on a lot of levels and including really informing how well we absorb nutrition which is part of the reason that it really negates the focus on calories. So I'm excited for people to start to hopefully see why food is medicine in a deeper way today.

[0:03:09] JB: Yes, definitely. I can't believe that you had all of those symptoms for so long and were living with that. It makes me sad.

[0:03:16] AS: Well after we listened to Amy's story in episode 10 that was like, "Oh my God." I mean she had a different intensity but I was struggling for a good 20 years from the time I was five and using inhalers and I even remember going through chemo and I had gone through six months of chemo and had a month break off of December and I went to my cousin's house and they had a cat over Christmas.

It triggered a reaction because I used to be really allergic to cats and dogs before I healed my gut and it was so bad that I had to be rushed to the hospital and I remember, what it turned out was the chemo had dried out my lungs. I remember with my parents racing down 279, which was we lived in the suburbs, to get to the hospital and being like, "Oh my God, I just survived six months of chemo and this is how I'm going to die."

[0:04:05] JB: Oh man.

[0:04:06] AS: I could not breathe, it was off. I went to the emergency room, they gave me some injections and everything was okay but yeah, it was a lot. I think what's so sad is that I grew up in a time where that was normalized.

[0:04:18] JB: It's still normal for most people to have just everyday symptoms of allergies or the excuse is just, "The season, I just have allergies." It's just in with every commercial that comes on every other commercial as either a medication for an allergy medicine or a medication for an antidepressant.

[0:04:40] AS: You're so right. Oh my god. Can you believe that it used to be illegal to advertise pharmaceutical drugs directly to patients and now, the pharmaceutical companies have their way because they know, the last statistic I read, 40% of patients will come in and tell their doctor what drug they want.

[0:04:54] JB: That's wild.

[0:04:55] AS: It is, it is. It's so wild but yeah, it creates this collective mentality that there's a pill or there's one solution and I think what's so fascinating about the gut biome and what we've learned about it and I want to give everyone a primer first just so that people understand. I want to give you this percentage not because it's humbling. It's definitely humbling to the ego but we are 99% bacteria and we are about 1% of who we — who are we? But that's another episode.

[0:05:30] JB: Yeah.

[0:05:31] AS: But just because a large part of these bacteria are invisible and we can't see them doesn't mean that they're not affecting us and in your gut biome, you have anywhere from, you know, everyone's biome is different but anywhere between 0.7 to 3.5 pounds of gut bacteria and those gut bacteria help you fend off bacteria, viruses. They determine how well you absorb nutrition. They also create an ecosystem in your gut. So I always tell my clients to think of their favorite tropical location, what would yours be Juliet? Not too hot, not too cold.

[0:06:10] JB: Favorite tropical location, not too hot, not too cold. Well not tropical necessarily but I mean California is definitely — yeah.

[0:06:21] AS: It doesn't have to be tropical but something that's temperate.

[0:06:23] JB: Yes, temperate.

[0:06:25] AS: But that's the condition that you want your gut biome to be in. Some nice breeze, cool but then what happens is and I'll use my own story as an example when you start taking antibiotics and — oh, let me back up. 70% of your immune system is also in your gut. So the asthmatic problems I was having, asthma is actually an auto immune issue.

Allergies, because of the chemo that I went through, my gut biome was compromised so I wasn't able to work with pollen as much. All that stuff that we should be able to defend ourselves against, I was defenceless against. And then things like acne, that is completely a reflection of what you're small intestines looks like which is part of this bigger ecosystem.

So you have 70% of your immune system there. You make 90% of your serotonin there. So it's no wonder I was on all these antidepressants and there's mood disorders in my family. I know that you have them in...

[0:07:24] JB: Yeah.

[0:07:25] AS: ...the family as well so it's like, "Oh yeah, I'll just take this." But what I say to clients is, "You know as you start taking," and look, there's a place for antibiotics. I'm not that person who's going to try to heal themselves with tea tree oil or whatever people are doing when you need an antibiotic but when I was taking them for things like acne or taking my inhaler which is steroid medication, I was really wiping out that gut biome.

What it does is it goes from taking this temperate climate, let's take California for example, and I tell clients especially since they're mostly Philly based, it's like being in Philadelphia in August

standing over a sewer in the summer and you're just like, "Oh what was that smell?" You know what I'm talking about right?

[0:08:06] JB: Oh yeah.

[0:08:09] AS: I love Philly.

[0:08:11] JB: I just came back from San Francisco and coming back here, well I mean coming back to the freezing cold. It's supposed to be three degrees tomorrow and then in the summer time here, it's just 90's and humid. We rarely have a good weather. Philly's bacteria's all fucked up.

[0:08:34] AS: Yeah, well that's what happens, right? It can go in extremes, but we want to keep that cool climate and if we can nurture our gut biome, I always say to clients, "You aren't what you eat, you are what you absorb," and so if we have that healthy gut biome, we feel more satisfied from food. We process food better and also, which you're very familiar with, when you have it, you have about 80% good bacteria, 20% "bad bacteria". It's not bad in the sense that it's actually bad. You only want to have 20% there.

But when your good bacteria gets wiped out from stress, from processed foods, from antibiotics, from antidepressants change the gut biome and all of these stuff that bad bacteria proliferates and it causes really intense sugar cravings and so when people are just focusing on calories, they're not thinking about what's actually going to feed my gut biome so I want to make the healthy choice. So that the bacteria, which are really, I would say 50% of your hunger if we're going to divide percentages, what do they need to eat so then I can crave the healthy stuff?

[0:09:41] JB: It's like you're feeding a little army in there.

[0:09:43] AS: Yeah.

[0:09:45] JB: But you do have to step outside of yourself and think of that. When I talk to my clients, I just say, "You know, your body is this beautiful vessel that you get to live in and you have to support it because you are not your body." Your question of like, "Who am I then?" The

body is just one — yeah, I know. But the body is this outside of ourselves thing that you do, you have to feed it. Like how we feed our pets, you have to feed your body.

[0:10:20] AS: Yeah, exactly and people often say, “Well my mind says this,” but no one has been able to locate the mind. This may seem like a semantic issue but it’s really important. The mind is actually an invisible projection of your body and your thoughts and your consciousness together. It’s this enigma. No one really knows where it is and so when you are talking about feeding your body, yeah those bacteria, because they regulate neurotransmitters and serotonin. We know there’s more than just serotonin that influences moods but to really create that paradigm shift of like, “Wow my body has certain requirements.”

[0:10:59] JB: Yeah.

[0:11:00] AS: And people can make protein powders and they can do cleanses and all these stuff but at the end of the day, nature wins and we have to learn how to work with it because it’s been around. What we have done in the past what? 50, 60 years to our food supply. My dad always says, “Nature gets the last step back.” We’re not going to undo how many years of evolution.

So it’s really important for people to understand and I think in America where we have this narrative of “independence” and “I’m in control”, we like to think that we can power over that and I think it’s really bringing some compassion to ourselves to say, “Whoa, there might be,” — I had to have so much compassion for myself to be like, “Whoa, I was trying all these things and what was I thinking?”

Once I knew that none of those things were helping but I just didn’t know and it doesn’t mean I can ignore that stuff and say, “Oh,” and go back to my old ways but having some compassion for not understanding that the body works this way.

[0:11:56] JB: Yeah and even if you’re eating “clean” or you’re eating whole foods diet and healthy, it doesn’t mean that you’re not compromising your gut health in other ways. Like for myself for example, I didn’t have asthma or IBS or any of those symptoms that Ali’s talking

about, but when I was diagnosed with candida a couple of years ago, it was because I was having major brain fog and I was having a lot of anxiety. I was feeling heavy in my head.

Physically, I felt fine but brain fog is like you feel like you have a cloud over your head, almost like your head is in a bag. It's really hard to explain but for those of you that had brain fog, that's why it's called that. It's a fog basically that you're operating in and I wouldn't have thought that that was coming from my gut health at all.

It was a very separate thing to me and I was eating a whole foods diet but I was eating too much sugar. Fruit has sugar in it or dark chocolate has sugar in it. There's all these things that sometimes we don't even realize we're impacting and like Ali was talking about, it's sometimes years in the making. So when I was a child, I had an extremely processed diet.

The brain fog I had actually had on and off my whole life. It came to a head but it was from years of antibiotics probably and eating a really processed diet and it wasn't until a couple of years ago that I actually addressed the source of the problem.

[0:13:33] AS: Yeah. So how did you eventually — so this is really interesting to me. I want to know how did you eventually made that connection? I know that you talked about it a little bit on a previous podcast and then once you made that connection, then the narrative of like, “Oh my God, this is what was happening all those years.” Tell me more about that.

[0:13:53] JB: Well so I have suffered from anxiety for most of my life since I was a very young girl. I had obsessive-compulsive disorder from age three years old on and I was able to through cognitive behavioral therapy, and not drugs actually, when I was younger I conquered that but who knows if there is some chemistry there. My family has a lot of different mental health disorders that runs in our family.

There is definitely a component of stress and nutrition that related to my increased levels of anxiety and one of the ways that my anxiety would show itself and distress would mask itself as would be brain fog where it would almost be I would just shut down and it was just like, “Okay, the dial's turned up too high so we're going to shut down,” and I just would feel like I was walking through a smog.

It would happen on and off and then it came to a head a couple of years ago when I was actually having some major conflicts with my business and I was the most stressed that I probably have ever been and then all of a sudden, the brain fog was happening to an extreme where I was feeling debilitated by it. It wasn't happening for an hour or so, sometimes it was happening for like a day, two days, three days at a time and it was making my anxiety increase.

So I ended up going to see a functional medicine doctor and through all of the symptoms that I was describing, she really wanted to test my gut bacteria and see if there was a link because brain fog, a lot of times for people, there is a big link between your gut health and brain fog and anxiety and depression like you are talking about.

So once I got that tested, well it turns out, I had a lot of excess yeast in my gut and I was put on a protocol to help me with that and I have not had brain fog since I was doing those treatments which took me a few months to get through the treatments but it's amazing actually how much that decreased and also my anxiety levels too.

[0:16:06] AS: Do you think that was the first time in your life? Because part of the challenge is, we live with these symptoms for so long we think that — we normalize them, right? We don't need to normalize and you just don't know what you don't know. Often, until we remove the burden or the heaviness and we're like, "I can't believe I was living with that for so long." Do you feel like now that you don't have it that that was actually something that was more present in your life than you realize?

[0:16:32] JB: Well, I was always aware of it being present and that always just felt like this is what I'm going to have live with and this is something that I'm plagued with because I really attributed it to my family history and my brain chemistry and I was just like, "Well, I just have fucked up brain chemistry so this is just, it is what it is and I just have to roll with it."

It was definitely relieving to find that it wasn't all chemistry, right? Like I am predisposed to having these issues. So I need to make sure that I take care of myself so I don't exacerbate the issues and one of the ways to take care of myself is to make sure that I am not contributing to adding more bad bacteria to my gut because that exacerbates the problem.

It's not what is necessarily causing the problem, it's just making the problem worst. I don't even want to call it a problem but the symptoms that I have, the mental health issues that I have, they're still there but I know how to deal with them in a better way now.

[0:17:30] AS: Yeah.

[0:17:31] JB: Yeah, does that make sense?

[0:17:32] AS: Totally.

[0:17:33] JB: It's not the end all be all cure. It's not like, "Oh I'm cured! I don't have anxiety anymore." It's like, "No, I have anxiety, I just know that I need to watch my stress levels," because there's multiple things here. It's like, "Watch my stress levels, make sure I'm taking care of my body and my digestive health," so it's like all of those components together.

[0:17:50] AS: Yeah, it's like a warning system. I did go through depression in 2012 but that was necessary. I think there are times when depression can oddly be healing.

[0:18:03] JB: It could wake you up, right?

[0:18:04] AS: Yeah, yeah.

[0:18:05] JB: In a good way.

[0:18:07] AS: Yeah, yeah. I mean I had to deal with some grief from having cancer that I never did before but my IBS is gone. I'm not on any medications anymore, knock on wood, things could change tomorrow. But when I'm going through stress especially around launches or when there's a lot of uncertainty in life, I know that I have to be really careful with how well I chew. I can't eat late at night, I have to go back to some of the healing things I was doing when I was still actively waking up in the middle of the night with heartburn and bloat and with all the pain that comes with IBS. But I look at it very differently now because I'm like, "Okay, this is a warning so let's get back to those things that are more acute tools," right?

[0:18:49] JB: Yeah and I don't know about you but I think especially in any sort of health profession or fitness profession, you sort of feel like, not that you're invisible and that you're immune to getting sick or not feeling great. But when you do get sick, when you get a flu, when you get a cold or you get any kind of virus, I know that there are a lot of times where I'd be mad at myself.

Like, "What? I'm doing everything right. I shouldn't be getting sick. I should have a healthy immune system." But Ali and I were talking a little bit before we started recording the podcast that it's actually really important that you do expose yourself to bad bacteria. It's not like you want to stay away from bad bacteria all the time, but you have to create a resiliency in your body.

Actually, my acupuncturist, I was talking to her about it and she was like, "Oh yeah, you have a cold, that's great!" I'm like, "What do you mean that's great?" In her opinion, she's like, "You should get sick at least once a year, a little something because your body has to then build up resiliency and your immune system gets stronger. You shouldn't never be sick."

[0:19:56] AS: I have a little cold now and I'm like, "Okay, I'm working out my immune muscle this year." It's like the once a year — yeah, for sure and I think it points to that 80-20 percentage. You want 80% good bacteria and 20% "bad bacteria". It's the same way if you twist your ankle. You want your ankle to inflame but you don't want chronic inflammation in your body. I think understanding that a little toughness helps us here and there.

So getting back to gut health and so what can people do? I think that in terms of nurturing their own gut bacteria because this is really important and we're going to do other episodes on specific conditions especially around thyroid. I mean thyroid issues, a lot of them are Hashimoto's, which is autoimmune which originate in the gut. Most autoimmune issues, MS, lupus, chronic fatigue, am I missing any of the big? Anything that ends in itis? All of that stuff is gut related.

[0:20:53] JB: Yeah PCOS even.

[0:20:55] AS: Oh yeah, PCOS is totally related to that and if you're constipated or if you have diarrhea that usually means, diarrhea is excess heat it means that there is probably some kind of deregulation going on in your gut if it's frequent. If it's once in a while, no. But if anything happens consistently, constipation especially for women that's a big deal because if you can't get rid of estrogen in the body, that's what happens when you poop. A lot of things happen when you poop but that builds up so that's how it's related.

[0:21:25] JB: We should have a podcast on poop.

[0:21:27] AS: Oh my God, yes. My clients are like, "You know everything about me." I'm like, "I talked about poop to everybody."

[0:21:33] JB: I know it's the best topic and I don't know about you but growing up in a Jewish household it's like, "Did you poop today?" You know what I mean? That's like seriously the topic of conversation I feel like.

[0:21:44] AS: It's so funny because I grew up in such a Catholic area but then when I went to college, all my friends were Jewish and the comfortability with nudity and bodily functions in the Jewish community compared to the Catholics it's like night and day. It's hysterical. Yeah, it's really funny but to kind of kick off, how can you start to evaluate your GI system?

Poop is one of the big things. You want to be going at least once a day. For a lot of people and when I ask my clients whenever I set up a consult, the first thing that it asks about bowel movements. They're like, "Yeah, I'm regular," and I'm like, "How are you defining regular?" because some people they'll go once every...

[0:22:27] JB: What have you heard? What have you heard when people — or how do they define regular for you?

[0:22:31] AS: Yeah, a lot of people do go once a day. So I would say, I don't like to give the gold standard but ideally, you do after every meal. That's what what they say is the gold standard in these countries that are living very close to nature. They get so much roughage. And then I ask them if it's hard to pass or if it's solid.

[0:22:50] **JB:** That's a lot of toilet paper Ali.

[0:22:55] **AS:** I talked to Carlos the other day. I was like, "We need organic toilet paper," and he's like, "What?" And I was like, "Women wipe twice as much as men," and he was like, "We are not becoming those people. We are not."

[0:23:08] **JB:** It's actually funny because Mackie doesn't let me buy it. He only lets me buy organic toilet paper.

[0:23:12] **AS:** They have it?

[0:23:13] **JB:** Or like recycled toilet paper like I don't know but he won't let me buy the plushy stuff. I'm not allowed to buy soft nice toilet paper.

[0:23:22] **AS:** Oh yeah, I get it. We have to use whatever Carlos wants but he's like, "We're going to be those eccentric people. We're already on that path."

[0:23:32] **JB:** The next thing you know you're going to get one of those squat potties where you — those are actually amazing, I've heard.

[0:23:38] **AS:** I know, they were on Shark Tank. What was it? Squatty Potty or something?

[0:23:41] **JB:** Yeah, Squatty Potty, yeah. Squatty Potty, we're going to tweet you.

[0:23:50] **AS:** But actually, I mean we're joking about toilet paper and all that stuff but especially women's endocrine systems are so much more sensitive and BPA, all that kind of stuff, air pollution, all of that stuff affects women a lot more and it does affect your GI track. Believe it or not, I mean these bacteria they're sturdy and fragile at the same time and you have things that are repetitively exposed.

From a lifestyle standpoint, getting filtered water. We just got a water filter, the Berkey, I love it. Using glass instead of plastic, all those things really affect that biome, but back to the poop.

Some of my clients they struggle, they go once every four days or it's inconsistent or they go back and forth when they have their periods. That really changes these things.

[0:24:38] JB: Twice this year, I had two clients tell me or this past year, it hasn't been 2016 that long. Two clients that I had told me that they go once every two weeks.

[0:24:50] AS: Wow. Do they struggle with their moods too?

[0:24:54] JB: Yes and it was interesting, the only time both of them that they would actually have good bowel movements would be during their period or right after their period. It was the only time that they are actually going to the bathroom.

[0:25:08] AS: Interesting. It's like the hormone surge went up and down.

[0:25:12] JB: Yeah, I mean hormones affect constipation and the ease of going a lot for people.

[0:25:18] AS: Yeah, totally.

[0:25:20] JB: Anyway, I just thought I'd just throw it out there. My head kind of spun around like the exorcist for a moment when I heard that. It was like, "Oh my gosh."

[0:25:28] AS: And then if you get stressed about it then it adds a whole other layer of...

[0:25:32] JB: Oh my God, when we were — cause I just got back from vacation, I had one day where I didn't go to the bathroom. It's been so long since that has happened to me. I had a full 24 hours where I didn't go and I was then a hot mess. I was like, "I can't. I can't enjoy today," because all I would do is tell Mackie every hour that I still hadn't gone to the bathroom.

He's like, "Okay, it's okay relax. You're making it worst because you're stressing about it. Just drink some water," and we're travelling. Travelling affects it a lot of people because different water especially. Water is so important and we were drinking different water. I think that had a lot to do with it and you're eating different things than your norm.

[0:26:14] AS: Yeah, ayurvedic medicine they say too when you travel so much of your energy goes upward because you're like, "How do I catch my flight? Where am I going?" There are all these cognitive processes that are normally on automatic pilot. That's one version but yeah, bringing up water that's a good point.

So many people are dehydrated and a lot of people get tired or cravings when they are dehydrated and especially it's winter here on the east coast and I remember being in the corporate world. They would pump up that heat and you get so dehydrated so that's a huge thing that can help with gut health. Another thing is, you brought up not going once a day when you returned.

I had this huge "aha" a couple of years ago where if I was slightly bloated, I would feel more anxious. I knew in theory that you have more neurotransmitters in your gut than your brain. Just so you know, your gut isn't a second brain, it's an equal brain. There's no hierarchy here. But I was like, "Oh my god," when I get bloated for whatever reason because I was eating fast or because I had to eat on the run or whatever it was, I would just feel this agitation.

I notice that with a lot of my clients too and what's tricky about this is a lot of them don't know their bloated. They think they just have a pouch because it's been that long. Now, I'm not saying you're not going to have a six pack once you get your gut biome under control but a lot of people are eating foods that they're sensitive, that are aggravating that gut biome and they're chronically bloated.

[0:27:41] JB: Yeah for sure. So what are some of the things that you can do to create a better ecosystem in your gut?

[0:27:50] AS: Yeah, great question. We want to keep it cool and calm, no extreme heat. So I think the first thing and I can't repeat this enough because this article went out last week and I posted it on my Facebook page and people were sharing it and they were so excited but this doctor who actually struggles with PCOS, she went to Israel where these researchers are doing this information.

We talked about this study on good carbs bad carbs episode number three about how the glycemic index has been negated because different foods work for different people and so that's really important to know your metabolic type and how that influences what to eat for your gut biome and so she was able to test her stools and see that, "Oh this strain is contributing to this and maybe this is why I have PCOS," or whatnot.

A lot of people on my Facebook page were like, "I wish I could get that test now so I know," and I can't say this enough, nothing is a silver bullet. No matter what they come back with, everything that we know that is pioneering and new, reconfirms that we have to work with nature. So sticking with the whole foods diet, you can get tested for candida like Juliet did and please, if you have brain fog do it.

Be an advocate for yourself and don't let your doctors tell you, you don't need it by any means gets tested. However, you are still going to have to be consistent with whole foods and by whole foods, I mean veggies, I mean whole grains, I mean organic pasture raised meats. A big part of antibiotic traces come from the meats that we eat and that's slowly again, not once or twice but years of eating like that.

[0:29:25] JB: Years of having dairy products that aren't organic and years of having chicken and red meat. When you're younger, you're not in control of what you're eating. So for the first probably 18, 20 years of most people's lives, unless your parents are really conscious of that, you were having a ton of hormones and antibiotics in your diet.

[0:29:51] AS: Well and the crazy thing is, my parents were super conscious of this. My mom had natural childbirth. I was breastfed for two years.

[0:29:59] JB: Natural childbirth like no epidural?

[0:30:02] AS: Nothing.

[0:30:03] JB: Damn.

[0:30:04] AS: I know. I was like, "Mom, that's amazing."

[0:30:06] JB: Go mom.

[0:30:07] AS: She goes, “Get the drugs.”

[0:30:09] JB: Of course.

[0:30:11] AS: My mom has a very high threshold of pain but what’s interesting though about that is that I still got sick. So we were eating whole wheat bread. We went to health food stores that smell like Vitamin B, do you remember those?

[0:30:23] JB: Uh huh, I love that smell.

[0:30:24] AS: Yeah, I do now or it’s kind of the weird kids.

[0:30:29] JB: Well, it’s so crazy like I love the smell of like food coop or a health food store and one of the things that attracted me to Mackie is his apartment smelled like that. Isn’t that bizarre? It was like, “This is such a comforting,” not that I grew up really — so strange. I didn’t grow up healthy by any means. I was fed the worst of the worst live TV dinners, McDonald’s, really, really bad processed food but my mom, I think she would go through phases of trying because I think it was her hippiness. She was a hippie in the 60’s, so there was a food coop that she would take us to and I just remembered that smell and it was like...

[0:31:05] AS: You need to create a perfume called Food Coop. Give it to all super evolved men.

[0:31:12] JB: I really think it would sell.

[0:31:13] AS: Give it to the super evolved men and be like, “This is how you get natural chicks.”

[0:31:20] JB: That’s awesome. Pheromones right here on the bottle.

[0:31:22] AS: Better than pheromones but it turns out, I’m gluten intolerant, right? That was a big piece to healing my gut. My sister has Celiac Disease, I’m gluten intolerant, that was a big

piece. So my parents thought they were doing really healthy things and because we didn't understand bio individuality at the time, however I will say because of all of that stuff that my mom did do, I had a very strong foundation and this is not to chastise mothers who did not because I'm not about that at all.

[0:31:52] JB: Yeah and I turned out fine.

[0:31:54] AS: Yeah well and I think it speaks to the resiliency of the body, right?

[0:31:57] JB: Yes, for sure.

[0:31:58] AS: A lot of times if we fight food, we've always battled our body, we're like, "We're broken." And I'm like, the way I look at it is, "Wow, our bodies work incredibly well given the toxic environment and how bad we all treat them." I mean I'm relatively healthy but I still work my body hard. It goes and goes and goes certain things and I'm very much like, I don't eat perfectly all the time. I don't believe in that.

[0:32:24] JB: People are living longer than they ever have, you know what I mean? Thanks for western medicine for a lot of things, but also just thanks to more of the knowledge that we have about how to take better care of the body and I think, I don't know about you, but people are just going to be living longer and longer. It's kind of freaky.

[0:32:39] AS: It is but this brings up the whole how much quality?

[0:32:44] JB: Quality, for sure but I think people aren't going to be living longer with having more quality at an older age than they used to.

[0:32:51] AS: I hope so.

[0:32:53] JB: Because I've seen it already where somebody in their 80's is like living on their own and having good quality life like my grandmother. She's 85 and she lives by herself, she eats really well, it's nuts.

[0:33:08] AS: Yeah, well my grandma lived on her own until she was 95 and she was hysterical in her assisted living. Or it was a retirement community. It wasn't even assisted living. So my grandma was super into nutrition. She met a priest in the 40's who told her about nutrition and Jesus would nurtured the environment and she was catholic at the time and moved her entire family to what was "an organic farm". It wasn't called organic at the time.

So she was doing wheat grass before John Mackey was born of whole foods but the funny thing was is she's 95 years old and I would go and visit her before we move back here and she's like, "Ali, I just think what your doing is so good. Now is the time, young people are into it." She goes, "You know what I have to tell these old people here? I have to say, you can't say organic. You have to say don't buy the pesticide sprayed fruit and vegetables," and she's like, "Then they wake up to..."

[0:34:04] JB: Oh my gosh.

[0:34:05] AS: I know and she was like, "Yeah the old people here," and grandma is 95 but I agree. Although there is this interesting phenomenon. They call it Wellness Widows of people who are in a relationship and when one person takes care of them self and the other person doesn't and how the person who is super who is super healthy, they miss having their partner to do different stuff.

[0:34:26] JB: Yeah, for sure. I can see that.

[0:34:28] AS: Yeah.

[0:34:29] JB: I mean there's lots of — you can die from a broken heart, right? It's not all about being super healthy in your diet and how you take care of yourself. We are all prone to having things happen to us like you said, it's not a silver bullet. You know what I mean? Nobody is immune.

[0:34:46] AS: Yeah and we're not supposed to be. The way that we really feel confident is when we feel resilient so that's important but back to gut biome. So doing the basics, I cannot repeat

that enough. Getting enough sleep. When you do not get sleep, cortisol adrenaline, inflammation happens. Inflammation, think of that as like feeding those bad bacteria.

Not enough water, all that stuff but from a food perspective and then the healthy fats, it's so worth it to invest in organic foods because just like we store toxins in our fat, animals store toxins in their fat. So if animals are given a stress free environment to grow up in, they grow up at eating grass if they're supposed to eat grass or whatever they're supposed to eat, their fat is full of healthy fats.

So I think springing on organic or pasture raised fats, we get the pasture raised eggs and you can see them. They're orange compared to the other eggs or farmer's markets. I mean, great. That is foundational. If you're listening to this, go out and get tested if you need, of course, to see if you want to get tested for candida or some people have small intestinal bacteria overgrowth which is in the upper bowel.

Or if you have IBS and you're like, "I want to do something about it," definitely, you can and often times, I think too looking at a cluster of symptoms. When you were talking about going to a functional medicine doctor, I wanted to bring up the point that so many doctors are specialist now and there is a lot of money in specialty. But when you're really working with your gut health and your overall health, you want a generalist.

You want someone who can connect brain fog and anxiety to your gut biome, right? These specialist are just looking at one part of the body and they're going to target that one part of the body versus getting the root cause. That was a tangent, but those basic things and when that starts to happen, and the big thing is staying away from processed sugar.

It doesn't mean you have to stay there forever and look, I even believe especially if people are slow burners, they can do fruits, they can do your root and vegetables and all that kind of stuff if they're struggling but the processed sugar really feeds that bad bacteria and really agitates the gut. Now that's the hardest thing to do I find and by sugars, I even mean wine, I mean chips, I mean pizza.

[0:37:02] JB: Things that are converting to sugars very easily.

[0:37:05] AS: Yes.

[0:37:06] JB: Not just your traditional sugar packets and candy and the things that you would classify as sugar but there's a lot of things that just turn to sugar as soon as you eat them.

[0:37:16] AS: Yes, exactly. So that is really important. Once you do that, then you can get into specialty foods. That's when you can then do the probiotic foods, right? We hear a lot about probiotics that means for life and that is nurturing, that's recolonizing those 80%. I think of probiotics as the breeze in our ecosystem. You want to keep that breeze going.

You lose probiotics every day when you poop so your probiotic foods, if you can tolerate dairy, sauerkraut. I really like sauerkraut. A lot of my clients do too. I love eating it with a little bit of organic chicken sausage and apple sauce. It's a really quick dinner but make sure on the jar of sauerkraut that it says "live cultures". That's really important and same with your dairy.

[0:38:00] JB: Otherwise you're just getting salty cabbage.

[0:38:03] AS: Yeah.

[0:38:05] JB: If you're going to eat a bunch of salty cabbage, at least make it worth your while.

[0:38:09] AS: And dashed hopes and dreams.

[0:38:11] JB: Yeah.

[0:38:12] AS: Oh that stomach. What are your favorites? Kefir, I can't do dairy. I can do a little bit of dairy but not a lot. So it's not one of the fermented foods. Miso soup, I have a client who is like, I got her on that and she loves it, that's a fermented food.

[0:38:27] JB: One thing about Miso soup that I was actually talking to a friend of mine who is a holistic nutritionist, she was saying that you have to be careful about boiling the miso because you are actually killing the bacteria. And most of us would think, "Okay, you're going to boil

soup.” With miso, you just have to be careful with that because when things are alive, you can kill them.

[0:38:48] AS: Exactly.

[0:38:50] JB: You want to keep it raw.

[0:38:51] AS: Yeah, that’s a big racket in the dairy industry. They’re like, “Probiotics added,” and then they don’t tell you that they pasteurize the crap out of it. Pasteurization just means heating it so you can see how our gut biomes have been compromised over the years because of industrial food. So those are the main sources and I do take a probiotic supplement because again, my GI track is, I don’t want to say an Achilles heel but it’s something that I have to protect. What about you? What are your favorites? Oh and raw apple cider vinegar.

[0:39:20] JB: Yeah, raw apple cider vinegar, I do love sauerkraut but any kind of fermented or pickled vegetables I like. So not just cabbage but you can pickle lots of different vegetables and get probiotics from them. So any pickled vegetable I love.

[0:39:37] AS: That’s true, that’s a great point.

[0:39:38] JB: These are easy things to make at home too, to pickle your own vegetables, it’s not hard.

[0:39:42] AS: Yeah and actually our friend, do you know Amanda Pfeiffer, she just came out with her book?

[0:39:47] JB: I don’t.

[0:39:48] AS: She does all fermentation. We’ll have to have her on this show. Her book is amazing. I’ll get the title for it in a second. So yeah, so probiotic foods, Kombucha, really important but make sure you get the low sugar Kombucha. You don’t want to spend three bucks on a drink that is negating all the healthy bacteria with all the sugar.

[0:40:08] JB: Yeah and Kombucha for a lot of my clients has been such a good way to help with sugar cravings because it is sweet, it's bubbly because it has some effervescence that's natural from the fermentation. So for those clients of mine who maybe love to have diet soda in the middle of the day as a pick me up, having a Kombucha is the replacement for that and they fall in love with it. But again, like Ali was saying, there are some Kombuchas where it's 10 plus grams of sugar per serving. You want to look for the ones that are two or three grams of sugar per serving and typically a bottle has two servings.

[0:40:44] AS: Yeah and a lot of clients who are struggling with diet coke, it's also a great weaning off of diet coke. Because we are talking about what to add in but artificial sweeteners really compromise the gut biome not only do they make you hungrier because your body thinks it's getting food and it doesn't register artificial sweeteners but artificial sweeteners, aside from being carcinogenic, they compromise the gut biome health.

So that's really important and then there's prebiotics. Your probiotics are bacteria, they're alive, they need to eat and they feed off of prebiotics and what's really important is that, a lot of the fibre that we know helps move bowels and we have been told to be is really good. Your bacteria actually can't feed on and so prebiotics actually helps keep those bacteria going and those are your onion, garlic, dandelion root, it's really odd things. Bananas, oats if you can tolerate them. Leeks, I think I am getting the major, I'm sure I'm forgetting some but if you Google prebiotics, those are really important. So they're just...

[0:41:48] JB: For those wondering and myself actually, how often do we need to make sure that we are eating foods that have the prebiotics in them?

[0:41:58] AS: I try to get them in everyday but I would start, I'm always about starting where you are. So throwing onions into your eggs, throwing onions into a salad are often really easy to do but be where you are. If you're eating no prebiotics, this is how when I need to reset my health, if I haven't been paying attention as much, I'm like, "All right this week, I am focusing on this food group and I'm going to get it in three times. The next week, four times."

Then what happens is you start to get, we talked with Brigitte about cooking, having staples. Then you start getting these staples that just naturally are there for you and before you know it, you are getting them in without even having to think about it.

[0:42:36] JB: Yeah for sure.

[0:42:37] AS: Then the other big thing just around food, stress, sleep, all these other stuff is a whole other podcast but chewing your food and you talked about this Juliet before. Chewing your food. If you have what's called leaky gut, which is when you're digestive track is one cell thick deep or it's connected that way. It's fragile but it's resilient.

When your gut biome and all those kind of stuff starts to get compromised, it starts to leak a little bit and this is when we tend to get full blown autoimmune conditions. But what happens is chunks of food get out and bacteria will feed on those chunks of food, bad bacteria. So you really want to make sure you chew well. I mean that will do amazing things.

It's a very advanced technology again, just because you can't see bacteria does not mean they are influencing your life. We have to rethink everything. Just because something has been around forever does not mean it's not an amazing technology.

[0:43:33] JB: Yeah and Ali doesn't mean that you have to sit there and chew 50 times. You don't need to be that person at the restaurant like, "One, two okay," you know? But it really goes back to slowing down while you're eating and most of us just eat extremely fast and it's just because we are doing too many things at once or we're not just savoring our meal and we're trying to fit everything in. So I actually, I like to fit everything into my meals rather than fit my meals into everything else and that's how I am with my exercise too.

[0:44:03] AS: Oh, talk to me about that.

[0:44:04] JB: Everything fits around, maybe it's just my selfishness right here but it's good because it's taking care of yourself. But my life fits around my meals and my exercise routine and the other routines that I have that make me feel healthy and well. So I schedule appointments around my meal times, or not around my meal times.

I give myself enough time for each meal so I could sit and eat and enjoy it and actually savor it because I don't know about you guys but I love food and I love to eat and I think that most of us do and so I want to honor that and enjoy it. It's the same thing with exercise. I love my workouts so much. It's so fun to move my body and it just feels so good. I like moving. So I don't schedule appointments that are going to impact the timing of that for myself.

[0:45:01] AS: Yeah and I think you and I have probably more flexibility than most people but I also think people, especially with lunch which is such an important meal of the day. There is a lot more flexibility and you do have to ask. You have to ask if you can leave or you can maybe stay half an hour later in the evening but you said, "I'm selfish," but actually what's interesting in the Chinese character of selfish actually means self-preservation. And I love that reframe because it's like...

[0:45:29] JB: Me too.

[0:45:30] AS: It totally, I think...

[0:45:30] JB: That's what it is. That is what I'm doing, it's self-preservation for myself. It's giving me the vitality and the energy to keep going to be able to do as much as I do and give to people in the right, appropriate kind of way and not burn out.

[0:45:46] AS: Exactly, there is so much of this idea underlying a lot of why people sabotage themselves is this idea that healthy eating has to be sacrificial or I'm sacrificing when I'm eating healthy or if I'm working out and then I'm exhausted and I hate it, it's working, right? And then it carries on for women, it's like, "Oh if I put myself first, there's that conflict."

The other side of that is like, "If I'm putting myself first, someone else is losing," right? But it's a win-win and you have to find the ways to make it win-win and it involves experimentation and all that kind of stuff but I am like you. Some days, I can't get lunch in as long as I would like because I have clients or whatever but for the most part, I definitely prioritize that too just because this is the paradox.

If I prioritize, well it's not paradoxical, but if I prioritize it as three meals a day then I don't have to think about it the other time and I spent way too many years thinking about food all the time and getting no results. So it's not about not caring at all. It's just saying, "When does it count to prioritize and think about it?" And then the other times I'm free to not to think about it.

[0:46:52] JB: Yes, very wise words for a lot of things in life for sure.

[0:46:57] AS: Or it's just really failing a lot of times.

[0:47:00] JB: That's okay, that's what life is all about, right? It's not perfect.

[0:47:04] AS: I'm the poster child for growth mindset even though I didn't know that was what I was doing. I was just calling it stubbornness.

[0:47:10] JB: I was just watching a movie actually where they referred to growth mindset and I was just like, "Oh, how funny."

[0:47:17] AS: That's awesome, yeah we need to know about that because I think we are a culture that is so focused on black and white and success, failure or this or not. Yeah, so those are the basic things with food that people can start to do to start to nurture that gut biome and really connect. I think it's so important to turn inwards and then after you eat, try these things and does your stomach feel like it works better? Do you notice your bowel movements changing? Those are some good signs.

One thing that my clients notice is their skin just gets more radiant without using any products or anything. It's just, you can spend a ton of money on a dermatologist and all this stuff but if you're not nurturing your gut biome, it's not going to last for very long. Then really understanding that your moods and how you feel on a day to day basis, food isn't just good or bad.

It's medicine and so it's about finding that right fit of medicine for you, right? If anyone who's been on medication knows, often you have to tweak your dosages or you have to find out what brand works for you or what not and which ones do. I tried four different antidepressants. None of them — there was one that helped me make the changes that I needed to make because

there were emotional changes for sure. It wasn't all physical and my gut but really start to think about those bacteria that are living with you whether you acknowledge them or not.

[0:48:39] JB: Yeah and I think one more thing for our listeners that I would like Ali to clarify a little bit more would be the name of this podcast today, "Why the gut biome negates calories." So if you want to talk a little bit just for a couple of minutes Ali as a closer on this. I think that this will tie everything together and when we're saying this, I know for a lot of clients, you're saying, "You're not what you eat. You're what you are absorbing," and I think that I've had clients, you've had clients who their diet, they're eating the right things but they are still not losing weight and sometimes that has to do with the gut biome.

[0:49:19] AS: Yeah.

[0:49:20] JB: And there's a lot of research, a lot of really awesome new research right now that's talking about that and I know that they are transplanting healthy poop into people. You know, good gut bacteria into people who are obese and they're finally able to lose weight. So this is a huge topic.

[0:49:40] AS: It is. It totally is and there's more questions than answers right now but yeah, we know. But again, the gut bacteria changes but those people who start losing weight, they still are going to have to do the basic things that are simple but challenging today. So yeah, so tying it full, this is why — it's not that you want to focus on calories but you have to ask yourself, "Is this helping me to get to my goal?"

I was working with a client the other day and she was like, "Do I really need to be weighing myself?" And I was like, "Does it help you?" And she's like, "No, if I get on the scale, my weight has been staying the same or whatever and it does not help me. It makes me feel like crap." And then I'm like, "You don't have to throw out all measurement but let's focus on using growth mindset" and we had identified what measurements mattered for her.

Like focus on getting stronger this or that and everyone is going to be different based on where they are and what they have to work on but when it comes to calories versus gut biome, your body, right we're talking about your body being fed, if it is starving, you are not going to lose

weight and you are not going to heal and you are not going to get healthy and often, weight loss is a side effect of healing these other systems.

I lost 15 pounds over the course of a couple of years by getting my blood sugar and my gut biome back online and so I think it's so much more important to focus on nutrient dense foods that really feed your gut biome because in the end, that's going to decrease your cravings, that's going to make you feel more satisfied and your body will be satiated.

I think a perfect example of, we're talking about dairy earlier. Someone who is saying, "Well, this is a 150 calories, right? I am staying within my calories." If you are allergic to dairy, not only will those 150 calories that your body didn't absorb and you're almost deficit in but now you're inflamed and inflammation often causes weight gain and it causes you to retain water.

[0:51:29] JB: Well, its swelling, water retention, yeah.

[0:51:33] AS: And then you get frustrated and then you eat, right? That's like the cycle, "Why am I not getting results?" And you think you're doing something healthy for yourself and then you also don't feel well. For a lot of people who are lactose intolerant, when they're bloated they're anxious and they're irritated. So it just decreases your quality of life.

I think, I'm really big on everyone believing what has to work for them and figuring that out with the help of people who can help them figure that out but I just don't think calories really get people where they want to go because it negates, it's a black and white view of things. It's assuming the body is a machine and the body is so much more high tech than a machine, it's a symphony.

By focusing on gut biome and your gut health, it's simplifying that symphony and helping you know what to focus on rather than thinking that just because you had a certain amount of calories or points that you're being good. Food is information and you need to know what information you're sending to your body. Did I clarify that, or?

[0:52:37] JB: Yeah, definitely. I think so. I think what you're saying is it's not as simple as just to count calories and expect that that's going to be the end of it all, be all. You have to really listen

to your body more than that and observe how it's functioning. Is it functioning optimally? Are you having symptoms? Are you feeling like you're at your optimal health? It goes beyond just the scale as well.

[0:53:01] AS: Totally and it sounds like, I think, do you want it to be that way? Because you want to be empowered.

[0:53:08] JB: Well, it would be so much easier, wouldn't it?

[0:53:10] AS: Easy in the short run.

[0:53:12] JB: Yeah, it would but that's what a lot of people say. What we're talking about here does it take work? Yeah, 100%. It takes work, it takes observation to notice things in your body and to become self-aware. It's something that you have to practice. It doesn't come like, "One, two, three all right I'm good. I can evaluate myself." You have to start to — it takes some time like you were saying, it took you years.

[0:53:41] AS: It did.

[0:53:42] JB: And we don't want to discourage everybody.

[0:53:43] AS: Yeah, once I knew what I needed to do but for me, there was no road map at the time or it wasn't as mainstream. It's still not mainstream but I always say there's an honesty and exhaustion. I was just so tired, I was willing to look beyond points and calories that helped but I think it's so important though to realize that counting calories and battling your body is worked too.

When you do work and you get results, you stay inspired but counting calories, it works for the first couple of weeks and it stops because your physiology hasn't changed. Sometimes it gets worse because now your body is...

[0:54:19] JB: Depending on how you're eating those calories, right? Like you were talking about if you're eating them with foods that are inflaming you or that you have sensitivities to, then it's really making things worse.

[0:54:30] AS: Yeah, exactly and so I am all about measurements, I am all about just working smart not hard and yeah, it takes practice upfront but a lot of my clients, they want to lose weight but they also want to stop thinking about food so much, right? And they want to, if someone calls for lunch and says, "Hey, let's meet up afterwards," or, "Let's meet up for dinner," or this or that.

When you learn your body, you have that flexibility. You don't have to stick with a meal plan. You can go to a place, know what kind of place you're looking to go to and then you can create your meal based on what works for you. It really creates this freedom and flexibility that everyone really wants with food and so, you're putting the time in anyways, why don't you put the time in to get the kind of results that you want and just to be a little bit more patient, right?

[0:55:18] JB: Yes.

[0:55:18] AS: That's also part of the work.

[0:55:20] JB: Yeah, no for sure.

[0:55:21] AS: Yeah.

[0:55:22] JB: Yes, so Ali and I will be talking about more of this with our next guest, Dr. Brogan. She's a doctor, right?

[0:55:30] AS: Yes.

[0:55:30] JB: I just want to make sure.

[0:55:31] AS: Yes, she's studied at MIT and Cornell.

[0:55:34] JB: I'm so excited.

[0:55:35] AS: She's smarty pants and she is one of the most lovely people, she's a friend of mine and she's a holistic psychiatrist. Kellybrogan.com, I think is her site, but she has a new book coming out and we're going to interview her next episode for people who want to get off antidepressants, people who want to improve their moods, people who don't want to use antidepressants, she's the gal. I don't feel comfortable tweaking with people's medications but Kelly knows her stuff.

[0:56:02] JB: Oh my gosh, I'm so excited, so excited.

[0:56:05] AS: Yeah me too, me too. And she's a powerhouse. She's so smart but she doesn't come off as this. She doesn't come off, I mean she doesn't come off as like, "Oh I am this or that," she really embraces feminine medicine and that her clients are on par with her and that we aren't on this hierarchy and we're all trying to get better together so it's going to be great.

[0:56:26] JB: I love it.

[0:56:27] AS: And everyone, we want to thank you so much for your reviews. We still need them. So please go to iTunes and leave a review. It would mean so much to us and we will see you next time, right Juliet?

[0:56:36] JB: Yep.

[END OF DISCUSSION]

[0:56:41] JB: Thank you so much for listening to the insatiable podcast, we hope you enjoy today's episode, you can connect with us on social media, follow me on Twitter and Instagram @julietunite and Ali @alimshapiro, M stands for "Marie". Please feel free to also email us any questions, we would love to hear from all our listeners, you can reach us at ali@alishapiro.com and Juliet@unitefitness.com. We'll see you next time.

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