

Culinary Nutrition: How to Cook for Health and Taste with Meghan Telpner – Insatiable Season 12, Episode 2

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:09] AS: Went vegetarian, then paleo. You stopped restricting. You're trying to love yourself more, but nothing seems to be working fully, and you might feel hopeless about ever feeling good in your body. And every time you fail, you trust yourself less.

As the larger world feels increasingly in peril, caring about how you feel in your body may feel frivolous and even more hopeless. We are at a time when our individual and collective stories about what to do for our bodies, health, and the world are crumbling. Because these stories we have, they aren't working for how our bodies or our world actually works. And I believe centering our bodies, all bodies, not just thin, white or "good" bodies. And what all of our bodies need to thrive will help orient us in a better direction.

There's no one-size-fits-all diet, exercise or way to bio hack. Good health is much less about willpower or discipline and more a complex interweb of our societal structures, food choices, emotional history, environmental exposures and privilege. There is a great loss of certainty in safety when we initially have to face what is real versus the half-truths we've been fed. But the loss of these stories creates an opening. If this opening is pursued with curiosity and discernment, we can discover our awe-inspiring ability to create and embody a new body story for our physical and political bodies and the earth.

I'm Ali Shapiro, and I host the Insatiable podcast. So we engage in the type of conversations that will lead us to radically new body stories for ourselves, each other, and the earth. To do that, we discuss a more truthful approach to freedom from cravings, emotional eating, bingeing



and being all or nothing. We explore the hidden aspects of fighting our food, our weight, and our bodies and dive deep into nutrition and behavioral change science and true whole health.

But fair warning, this is not your parents' health care or the conspiratorial crazy of the wellness world. This is a big rebel gathering to those who want to hold nuance, context and complexity in order to lead the way to a healthier future for all, because our lust for life is truly insatiable.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:02:48] AS: Hello, insatiable listeners. Welcome to season 12, episode 2. Today we are talking culinary nutrition, how to cook for health and taste with Meghan Telpner. Meghan is a Toronto-based author, speaker, nutritionist and founder of The Academy of Culinary Nutrition. She's written two best-selling books, *UnDiet: Eat Your Way to Vibrant Health* and *The UnDiet Cookbook*. Meghan's success in cultivating a global community of undiet enthusiasts and culinary nutrition experts has garnered her a feature in *Forbes* and ranked her as one of the top 100 female entrepreneurs in Canada.

Meghan, thank you for being here.

[00:03:29] MT: Thank you, Ali. I've already had so much fun before we even started hitting record.

[00:03:34] AS: Yeah, we have so much in common, which um why I was excited. That wasn't the main reason I was excited to have you on, but I wanted to have you on today in part because it's the fall and people are starting to, I think, really feel like they want to cook again and all these things. And I had this moment, I think it was like two months ago and I was with my son. And you're a Canadian. Do you have Costco in Canada?

[00:03:55] MT: We do have a Costco. I've been in it once like 20 years ago. But I'm familiar with the concept.

[00:04:03] AS: Yeah. When I lived on the east coast and had like a little tiny apartment, my parents would like – We joke that they don't go to church, but they go to Costco every Sunday for samples, and there are others. I'm like, "The church of Costco." Instead of body of Christ, it was like Costco samples on Sunday. But we would joke that they would always rave about it.

And then when I moved back here to Pittsburgh and we had more space, and I really found with Covid and so many things being closed, that we started going there more, right? And so a lot of our eating habits got disrupted. And I was sitting there, I took my son who is almost two, and we've done everything we can to feed him really healthy. And that's a huge value of mine. And we're sitting there and I'm picking up like keto cauliflower snacks, which is not the worst thing in the world, but it's also not the best thing. And I'm in this warehouse. And I used to live on the east coast in Philly and I would go to the farmer's markets there. They had two different ones. And I cooked most of my food. And since I had a baby, then the pandemic, and then no child care, all the things. Basically, my cooking habits and my shopping habits got completely out of whack. And I don't want to keep going down that path. And I'm like, "How did I end up here in a warehouse buying my son snacks?" which, again, I'm not the purist. I'm never going to not probably buy some prepackaged stuff. But I was like this is so far from where I was and what I really value. And I can teach him as much as I want about health and nutrition, but he's going to learn what we do, right?

So I had found you from my friend Andrea, who is like the curator of all curators. And I went home, and I went to your site, and I got a bunch of your recipes. And I just love them in the sense that I feel like you bring this balance that we're trying to communicate on this season of – Our first episode, I talked about how often we define [inaudible 00:05:59]. We can't trust it because we're coming from such a deprived place of flavor, texture, all that stuff, right? And so



like, for example, we'll eat no carbs and then we binge on all the carbs because we needed complex carbs, right? I always say moderation is the new radical.

But your recipes, they're simple. They're so full of flavor, and they're not like no sugar. I mean, like the oatmeal raisin, like no bake. I don't know if you remember, the cookies, right? And then like these are not sickening sweet. And I find, because I don't eat a lot of sugar, a lot of things taste sickening sweet, but they have a lot of flavor. So my son loves them, right? Like he calls them cookies. I mean, they are, but there's like not that much in them. Sweet cookie-wise, but they're still flavorful.

And so I feel like you have this really nice balance of not making us feel like, "Oh, we're eating like this stuff that's too sweet," but then there's some stuff that's so bland that you're like, "Oh, eating healthy is about deprivation." So that's the long-winded reason of why I wanted to have you on today is because you got me cooking again. And I just love your approach to keeping it simple too, because I think most of us, that's what we're craving after all the chaos of the past couple of years.

[00:07:14] MT: Yes. Was there a question? I mean, yeah. I mean, part of the simplicity in – I was enjoying your story. Part of the simplicity in why I cook the way I do is because I don't really know how to cook. I am completely self-taught in the kitchen. I learned to cook because I was learning about food for my own health and learning about all these ingredients. And like how do you make kale delicious? How do you make quinoa delicious? I'm not actually sure you can make quinoa delicious, but I'm still trying. So there's like different things.

And so I love like – Before I was into health and nutrition, I studied fashion. Like I love creating with textures visually and using the senses, and that's how I learned to cook, which is making something beautiful, enjoying the process, combining things in creative ways and ultimately letting the food itself do the work, because it should be fresh and delicious, and it will. And so that's my approach to recipe creation and doing it, and because I'm also busy. I'm not

interested in spending two and a half hours to make dinner that I have a four-year-old that is going to be eaten in literally less than five minutes. So how do we make it awesome?

And to your point about the sugar, I actually cut out all sugar two and a half years ago now. It was when my son, I was probably about where you're at. He was two and a half. And I was just feeling so tired. My sleep still hadn't re-regulated. And I was like looking at photos of myself and I'm like that's not the direction I want to go in. It didn't look like me. Like I was a little bit puffy, I looked tired, and just didn't look like how I felt, how I wanted to feel. And so I made a commitment to eliminate all sugar, honey, maple syrup, like everything, alcohol, grains, everything. And I did it for a month. And I felt so much better. I was sleeping again. Because I was sleeping, I had energy to get up and exercise. And then I just didn't go back to the sugar.

And now, like I make the recipes on my website, like my muffins and stuff like that, and I don't add – I mean, some of them, if they have a fruit in them and I can get away with it, I don't add any sweetener. If I can do like add some dates to something instead of adding a honey. And I always told people your taste buds change, and I'd experienced it gradually with a transition to a whole foods diet. But actually getting rid of sugar, like I can't tolerate any of it, and I don't crave it. Like I have no desire for artificially sweet things. For me, like some grapes, whoa, out of sight.

[00:09:55] AS: It's funny you should say, because I am coming off of an insomnia battle of – I mean, I actually hired someone to help me because I've learned, and from a functional perspective, insomnias, they call it metabolic chaos, which I don't know where it came from, because part of my gut is super healthy or whatever. But right now I have to eat a snack right before bed, and I eat grapes and some turkey breast. And I'm like the grapes are so sweet. I totally get that.

[00:10:19] MT: Is that helping you?

[00:10:20] AS: Oh my god! Yeah, I mean, there's other stuff. Like I have been taking this, actually, it's an adrenal cocktail. It's like potassium and sodium. And that has been hugely helpful.

[00:10:32] MT: I think, and I'm not a clinician, I'm not into diagnostics. But after having a baby, we hear about postpartum depression, sometimes even postpartum anxiety. But I think there're waves of it. And I think at the two year, like two to three year mark is when a lot of women like hit a breaking point. But there's no like known support for what's going on. And it's basically like your body is now trying to regroup itself into like a new stage of functioning.

[00:11:05] AS: I bet you're right. I mean, look, women's health is like an afterthought. So I'm sure in like 40 years we'll be like that is what I had. Do you know what I mean?

[00:11:14] MT: Yeah.

[00:11:16] AS: Yeah. I found – I mean, my diet was pretty strong to begin with. So it's actually been kind of the stuff that you're here to do, like go to sleep at the same time. I can't nap past three o'clock. But we are doing some like deeper support of my system, which his is just burnt out from the last two years. So that's helping.

But I want to circle back. One of the things that I think – I mean, you said a lot there. I love that you talked about the process, because I find that when we enjoy the process of cooking, like putting on music, or even where we get our food. Like I enjoy going to the farmers market so much more than even having our groceries delivered from Wholefoods, but now it's Amazon, right? And I think that's something that we – When it comes to cooking. And you saying that you're not formally trained. I think everyone's just going to take a giant exhale, because I'm wondering, like how then did you start to discover this? And what hacks do you have for people who don't want to be a professional? And I know you have courses and all that stuff, but I think that's so reassuring to people that, one, maybe they will never love quinoa, and that's okay.

And then two, this is not about you don't need a degree. You don't need to like read all the cookbooks. And it's actually keeping it simple. So how did you go about that of discovering what really brings in flavors and textures? Because I love that you said that's the same with fashion, but it's the same with food, because satiety is so much about textures and flavors and smells as much as the building blocks you're working with.

[00:12:48] MT: Yeah, it's finding the right balance. Initially, I had read books like – Oh gosh! I can't remember what's called. Annemarie Colbin and looking at a lot of the macrobiotics.

[00:12:58] AS: Healing with wholefoods, yeah.

[00:12:59] MT: Yes, yes. And like I could picture the cover, but like this idea of macrobiotics. So I first went at it from like a very theoretical perspective. Like if I have something salty, I need something sweet. If I have something acidic, I need something astringent. If I have something pungent – So to balance the flavors then looking at what foods are considered sweet. What foods are considered astringent? What is pungency? Like onion and garlic. What's spicy? And making sure that in every meal, not necessarily every dish, but in every meal, it has one of those five or six tastes depending on whether you're looking at macrobiotic or ayurvedic. They all have something in it about touching on these tastes.

And so I started developing things just looking at like am I tapping into each one of these? The challenge we have in the standard diet, like the snack food aisle, is that people say like, “What kind of snacks do you crave? Savory or sweet?” And that's it. So if you're eating a ton of sweet things, you're going to be craving something salty. When you eat like a big bag of chips or popcorn, people want like a soda or something sweet to go with it to like balance out the taste buds.

The problem is that because in processed food, even “healthy organic processed food”, we're still going with sweet or salty and in an extreme way that you would never find in a meal you

would prepare at home from scratch. So straight off the bat, you're throwing your entire taste out of balance. So when I started creating stuff, if I could at least start with trying to tap into and include enough of those tastes, then the first thing that people would say when I was – And I started out teaching cooking classes here in Toronto. They'd eat these meals and say I feel so satiated after. Like that was the feeling. And without needing bread rolls or big amounts of starch like potatoes or rice or like a lot of these things that we often use as fillers with meals, but if you balance those flavors, you're good to go. And then it was just experience. And it was just continuing on, learning about new ingredients, trying to make things delicious that I hated. Like there was the quinoa. There's like spirulina. Like there's certain things that like just don't taste good in my opinion.

I'm getting sea vegetables in, like finding creative ways to incorporate fermented foods like sauerkraut and kimchi, and like having that sour as part of a meal is not something that's part of a standard North American diet in any way. We don't eat anything that tastes sour except like wine, which doesn't need to be part of every meal. So that was really how I learned to cook. And then remembering that my objective, like my mission and what I do is to not be someone that people keep coming to to learn from, that to really empower people to start to get creative themselves in the kitchen. And the only way people are going to feel creative or confident enough to do that is if they have success with what they're making.

And so I wanted the meals. And there's some things that are more involved like beautiful, delicious gluten-free lasagna that has a lot more steps to it than, say, a curry, that you put all these delicious things in a pot and let it simmer. So there're different places we can start from. But ultimately, if you get people cooking and seasoning things with other than just salt or sugar, you make these foods. Like you put a little lemon grass in, or some ginger, or some cumin and you're like, "Wow! This is amazing." And suddenly it's like all your taste buds, and they stimulate the synapses in your brain and like you come alive again by just differentiating and changing up what you're eating.

[00:16:43] AS: I love this. I love this. Yeah, I have talked about even how like adding in bitter flavors helps, in Chinese medicine, prevent sweet cravings. So I think we're all familiar with salty and sweet flavors. Can you give some examples of foods that are pungent, acidic and astringent, or whatever flavor? I know you said different frameworks use different – But what are some of the foods that sour –

[00:17:08] MT: Now I'm hoping I don't get this wrong. But pungent are things like garlic and onions. Those things that are kind of like, "Whoa!" Like it's very strong to eat on its own. So that's why you see like garlic, onion like in so many different recipes. And they're tricky to replace, because there's not a lot that gives those tastes. Like radishes would be a spice. Hot peppers are obviously spicy. Ginger, spicy. So you can get that spice in.

Astringent, the best thing I can think of to explain astringent, there's like pomegranate seeds. But also if you think about like the most astringent thing you can eat is an unripe persimmon where you're like – You know that feeling?

[00:17:47] AS: Oh, when it's like –

[00:17:48] MT: Yeah. That's like the ultimate of astringent. But you can also just go with a little bit of vinegar, which has a sour and a bit of an astringency to it like an apple cider vinegar. And then bitter. You mentioned bitter, which is such an important taste. And even taking digestive bitters before you eat will improve your digestive system or improve the digestive process. So bitter foods are the leafy greens, like the kale, collards, all of that stuff, even the cruciferous vegetables sort of fall into the bitter category. And what's amazing is that when you get any of these super fresh, a lot of them actually, especially fruits and vegetables, but they'll have a little bit of sweetness in them. So if you start adding like red pepper, cucumber, carrots, sweet potato, like those all have some sweetness to them.

So those are some examples. I'm sure I've missed a ton, but it's just when you're – And a way to train your brain is if you – And you can Google this. So you can look it all up and get even a chart. But when you're preparing a meal, you could just mentally say – I mean, I always say like where're my carbs, fat and fiber? Carbs, fat, fiber and protein. But then also if you categorize it by taste, then you start to build out these satiating meals, because in addition to the flavors, you also need that balance. Predominantly, the focus needs to be on protein and fat to make sure you feel satisfied after a meal.

[00:19:14] AS: Yeah, I love that though, start thinking. Now, do you try to get all five flavors in a meal? Or is it more over the course of the day? Because I'm thinking, one way that I get that astringent in it is like I basically learn like to make like a coleslaw or a broccoli salad. You take chopped up broccoli, and I do buy it pre-shredded from Wholefoods right now. Baby steps of getting back to where it was. But it's like, "Okay, I know three tablespoons of olive oil, two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar, and then one tablespoon of honey." Like I'll do the three-two-one.

And so I know that like dressings are a great way to get the astringent in. And then like I was like, "Oh, this could use some like sauteed almond. I don't know. You can start to get intuitive. But are there any other easy ways that you recommend? I know that you said garlic and onion. We're coming up on soup season in the northern hemisphere. So that's like the base of all my soups is like garlic, onion, and then some sort of spice.

[00:20:11] MT: I mean, really, if you just – I mean, if you just start using a variety of vegetables, you kind of have yourself covered.

[00:20:20] AS: That's like the simple way to do it.

[00:20:22] MT: The simplest way. Like I definitely don't prepare a meal. I mean, like, "Check, check, check. I got all my bases covered. Okay, family, you can eat now." It's not going to

happen. But I do know, and I can feel it if I eat dinner, and I often find it personally because of the way I eat and my metabolic needs, that if I don't have grains in my meal, I feel more satiated after I've eaten. I don't go back for like seconds or thirds. I eat my meal and I feel good. And that's great. So everyone will have their own taste and balance. And I would also suggest that as you move away from the packaged stuff, that you allow yourself to salt your food as much as you need. But you use a himalayan salt or a sea salt. You're not using iodized table salts. You're still getting the full spectrum of minerals.

Otherwise, what will happen is that you go. Like people think to eat healthy, they have to have like a salad with lemon juice and a grilled chicken breast, which is like the worst meal ever. Like no one eats that. It's like this is so delicious. Like I feel so satisfied. So you have to allow yourself like salt the food and slowly go off it. Or if you are eating way too much of it, what's really great to do is actually eliminate it completely. So you eat this super bland diet for a week or take away all the sweetness and you eliminate that. And what happens is you re-sensitize your taste buds. So you actually don't – Things taste saltier because you haven't had it. So you actually need less salt to get that benefit. Or you need less sugar for it to taste sweet. The more you have, the more desensitized you are to it and then the more you want to have.

[00:22:10] AS: Well, I was thinking when you were describing your experience with sugar and now going off of it. It's like that was like an easier leap, because you barely ate any to begin with. Because I know the listeners are going to be like, “Ask her about that. How did she get there?”

[00:22:26] MT: Well, no. So where I was at, I was actually – My husband I go – Well, when we could, we'd go to California for six weeks in the winter. And the food you can get from – What you can order through Thrive and like all these things that we can't get access to. And I was just eating like different kind of chocolate treats, and all these organic potato chips, and the sietes and all the stuff that isn't as accessible in Canada. And that's when I was like, “This is too much.” Like I'm eating too much of all of it. So it might not have been that I was having a

lollipop. Like I don't remember the last time I had a hard candy, but it was more than was normal for me, and it was a lot. It was like having something sweet after nearly every meal. Like having a little square of chocolate or whatever, and I just didn't want to be reliant on them.

[00:23:17] AS: Yeah. But that's what I mean. Like you were coming from – Like some people, depending on – Like when I used to really struggle with emotional eating and all that stuff, it was like I was eating so much sweetness, to your point, so I needed more, right? Yeah. And now my diet is relatively what people would say clean. That word, like the undertones is purity, culture and religious. And we think that's a whole lot of podcast, because dirt is also really in these days. So it's like, “The soil. The soil.”

[00:23:45] MT: Dirt don't hurt.

[00:23:48] AS: I know. We're walking over daycare and my son is picking up all these leaves and my husband's just like, “I don't want to know how many dogs peed in those.”

[00:23:55] MT: I know. I know.

[00:23:57] AS: Like microbiome, microbiome. But now, having something that has like maple syrup or honey tastes like super like decadent to me, versus 10 years ago that would have been like, “Is this sugar free?” So that's what I want listeners to pick up on is that like Rome wasn't built in a day. And often if you try to go cold turkey, it's going to – Because if we look at the body physiologically, you're going to need more receptors. You're going to need to grow more receptors. So if you go cold turkey, not only are you withdrawing basically from like feeling carb flu and cravings, but you need your to give your body time to regenerate more receptors that then make things taste more sweet with less.

[00:24:43] MT: Since you brought in the term receptors, we can talk about rewiring of the brain, because that's what you're doing. You've hardwired habits. You've hardwired

expectations from certain things you consume that stimulates the dopamine and the reward centers and all of that is going on. So you do need to rewire the brain away from it. And Rome wasn't built in a day. I'm not where I am today because I decided to be here yesterday. It's been like 16 years of transitions.

That being said, when it comes to sugar, I do think you have to quit it. Like I think that at least for a period, and maybe it's two days or three days, because that discomfort, that withdrawal will basically tell you everything you need to know about the challenges of being hooked to the substance. If I said to you, "Listen, you have to stop eating broccoli." You'd be fine like. That's one food. You wouldn't have withdrawal symptoms. You wouldn't have headaches. You wouldn't be fatigued. You wouldn't be cranky. You wouldn't be all of that stuff, and same with caffeine. So when you're relying on these substances just to feel your baseline function, that's a little bit of a dangerous place to be.

I have a study I referenced in *Undiet*, my first book, about mice who were offered either cocaine or sweetened water, and they were going for the sweetened water, which you could lead to an overly dramatized conclusion that sugar is more addictive than cocaine. And maybe for some people, it is. Maybe not as dangerous for some, but we're not going to assume anything on anybody. But that's why I think it's really difficult to get the chocolate chip off your shoulder if you keep putting it back there all the time.

And so I'm not a fan of like the cheat day approach to eating, because you're basically re-inviting all those synapses to fire again. And then you're dealing with getting off it and looking forward to it. And then you end up with these imbalances. Whereas if you get off it, get used to not having it, and then you can have little bits at a time, it's in a more balanced way. And even if we talk about imbalanced eating, or disordered eating, or whatever title we want to give it, no one feels comfortable when they've overindulged in something that makes them not feel well in their body. And a lot of it is that stimulation that we get. And it's like it's not just sugar. It's

shopping. It's like it's a lot of stuff. It's television. Like it's a lot of stuff, and we're all dealing with a lot of stuff right now and trying to find ways to change how we feel in this moment.

And so sweets and cookies are really easy seemingly harmless way to go about it, but then when one's not enough, we get more and more and more, and then we do develop metabolic challenges, and inflammatory conditions, and dysbiosis in the gut and so it affects our immune system and it affects our nervous system. So it isn't actually harmless. And so that's why – And I might be going against your guidance when I'm like, “Cut it out.” Like when in doubt, cut it out, and see what happens. I actually offer a no sugar challenge. It's like a seven day like easy-peasy thing. And there's meal plans, and guidelines, and it changes people's taste buds.

[00:28:22] AS: Yeah. No. I mean, I totally get what you're saying in terms of – And I think just for everyone listening, what happens is when you get a lot of sugar or anything that you're addicted to, social media, shopping, what Meghan was saying, basically, you become desensitized to dopamine, serotonin all the pleasure chemicals. And I talked about in the first episode how we have a stress pleasure chemical checkbook. It needs to be balanced. Nature likes us to be stressed and then it rewards us for that challenge. Not chronic stress. But the more sugar you eat, the less your body – I think of it as like tentacles. It's like I don't have to work so hard to get this, right? So why am I going to like sprout new receptors? And so that's what we're talking about. I just want to give people kind of the physiological background.

And I think what's important to kind of mention for people, because a lot of people listening to this, they get that intuitive eating is kind of like I need more guidance than that, because the more that I eat, the more that I want. And processed foods, I talked about this last episode, are designed to hijack our satiety and like make us eat more. The challenge is, I think, with disordered eating, if you're restricting when it doesn't feel like you really want to, like it's not really your choice. But what Meghan's saying is tie it not to, “Oh my god! I'm going to cut out sugar and lose all the weight.” It's let me cut this out for three days and see what a withdrawal symptom I feel, or maybe a week. I think you said three or seven, however long. Everyone's

going to be different based on where they're coming into this process. But connect it to, "Oh my god! Look at all of this withdrawal at first that you're going to feel, but then it's kind of like you'll feel better afterwards. And I think that's what – And then paying attention to, "Wow!"

It's kind of like what eventually got me off coffee is like I realized I was so tired from the withdrawal of the caffeine. Not that I was naturally tired. I actually had energy. But the caffeine was making me tired. So I think we share we don't like to be dependent on things, right? So that was my value of like I'm not dependent on anything, caffeine included. So if people can do the sugar elimination. But, again, not from a weight loss framework, but more from a, "Let me see how this goes." And like do I have more energy? Do I have more stable moods, all that kind of stuff? That's the healthy experience.

[00:30:45] MT: Yeah. I mean, I don't – I never mention weight. I never mention weight loss. No. But like I don't do calorie counting, like I don't play those games, because that's how you mess with people's view of food. Because you can look at like a handful of gummy bears or two avocados, they can have the same caloric count potentially, but like you're getting a completely different value of nutrition from those two things, different fuel for your body. And so I always look at how people feel. And I understand and appreciate the concepts of intuitive eating. And when you crave something, have it, or it just becomes this bigger deal in your mind and all of that. And of course, I'm not giving any individual a personalized recommendation right now. I recognize we have to be so mindful of how we speak about things.

What I'm suggesting is what if this little change could actually just make your entire system function better. And then that becomes its own motivation. And then like, sure, if your body is holding on to more weight than your frame is intended to, or you need to put on more weight, or whatever it might be. Usually, when you can regulate and balance yourself metabolically from not like a metabolism perspective, but from an entire systematic function, it all finds the right balance where it's supposed to be at that point in your life, which will change over your life. Younger people have different bodies than older people. That's just the fact of nature.

[00:32:22] AS: We were talking about this on my membership call today of like bodies change. We think that things are stagnant. But it's like bodies change and they cycle even within seasons and all that kind of stuff. But yeah, no, I just wanted to – I mean, a lot of my work, the background that I have in my graduate work is in adult development and how adults change. And to your point, it has to be about adults think that like they will change based on long-term goals. Because we have so many other competing commitments, we actually have to see some sort of immediate improvement in our life. And so I was just like wanting to point out that that's what you were focusing on, right? Is like do you sleep better? Having that contrast can be like, “Whoa! This is something that's worth working towards.”

Or in my case, like you've inspired me to think of like more pungent and sour. And it's like, “Okay, take the time to just figure it out,” because, yeah, it does feel more satisfying and stuff like that. So I just wanted to kind of put that in terms of like that we talk about on the podcast a lot, I guess, of like looking for the actual health benefits that people still use weight and health. You never know when –

[00:33:31] MT: It's an old programming. For many of us, I feel like we're around the same generation. I'm fortunate, my mother never dieted. But most of my friends' moms were like it was always dieting and fat-free foods. And like that was what the women of our generation grew up being programmed to think about constantly. And that's why I say, like the calories and all that stuff was never measure of health. It was never about our health and well-being.

[00:33:58] AS: Oh, no, no. It was keeping inline. So we talked about flavors. The next thing I want to circle back to, you said textures. And I think that's so important, because we need all the texture. So can you share your thoughts on textures? And I know chewing produces serotonin in the body. What are your thoughts on textures and how to add that? And how do you think of that when you go for your own food plan to make your own meal or pick out something if you're out to eat?

[00:34:29] MT: Yeah, it's interesting to think about textures now with a child, because they're way more sensitive to textures of foods too. But like no one wants a meal that's everything's mushy. No one wants a meal that's overly chewy. And if something's too crunchy, like you can't eat a massive pale salad unless you massage your kale. Everyone has to massage kale. Like it's the only way you could intake it.

[00:34:52] AS: With salt. A little bit of salt.

[00:34:54] MT: Salt, a little bit of lemon juice, a little bit of olive oil. It's the best way to have a kale salad. So you need a meal to be edible. And to do that, you're just mixing the different textures of foods. And again, if you have enough variety in your meals, and it doesn't have to be in every meal. You have every possible – You've got a pop, and a snap, and a crackle. But when you just have a smoothie. Yeah, if you have just a smoothie, like I could easily get through life with – Like I have a hot elixir in the morning, a smoothie for lunch, and then dinner. But I'm not going to be getting everything that my body physiologically needs. Like you talk about the chewing and the serotonin, but it's also really important for your jaw structure and jaw development and bone development in your jaw to eat hard things. And we don't so much anymore because we eat mushy oatmeals. We have breads, and baked goods, and rices, and all of that. Whereas like back in the day, they were you know eating tougher meats, and pemmican and these things that we don't eat that much of. So it is important to vary it for all different reasons. But mostly I would just say for the joy of variety, most of all, like just as simple as that goes.

[00:36:12] AS: Yeah. What are your favorite ways to get crunch in aside from crackers?

[00:36:19] MT: Well, we do. Like I do raw vegetables. My son won't eat cooked vegetables. So having some red pepper on the plate or cucumber and salt is delicious. And that's often what we do as an after-school snack, because that's when he's like – With anyone who's dealing with children, like give them what you want them to eat when they're at their hungriest. Because

often my son will eat so much after school. He doesn't really eat dinner. So if I load him up with some crispy vegetables and a homemade hummus or something like that and he loads up on that and then he's kind of good. If he wants a little snack before bed, we can make that happen. So having some raw vegetables is really the easiest way. Like you're not going to eat raw grains. You're not going to eat – I mean, you can add like toasted nuts and seeds to things. That's another way, sprinkling. I often do that. Or even sprouts, add crunch like, mung bean sprouts or broccoli sprouts. So those are different ways. But it's usually going to come in the form of something that's raw.

[00:37:14] AS: Got it. Got it. And what about – You said chewy. How do you make sure things are a good amount of chew?

[00:37:22] MT: I have no idea. You just don't want – You know when you have overly tough or overly cooked meats and that kind of thing, like you don't eat it well. So it's good to chew, but not to the point where you're kind of gagging on whatever you put in your mouth. And so, yeah, like there's a certain pace to eating. And if it becomes too difficult, people will just stop or not be interested, or even if they don't recognize it. So that's one of the challenges of shifting to whole and processed foods, because it does take a little more mechanical work by your face to get the food in versus fast food, or packaged food, or microwavable meals are all pretty much mushy.

[00:38:06] AS: Yeah. Carlos, Carlos is my husband, and we're so short on time, right? We both work a lot. We just got our son into full time daycare because of Covid and everything. But he's like I feel like – We use All-Clad pans. And he's like, “You won't let me microwave anything. We use All-Clad pans.” And I'm like, “Carlos, getting a non-stick pan is not going to solve our time problems.” It takes two extra minutes. But it's like kind of – I was like you can microwave your food. He's like, “But our joint food, you won't put in the microwave.” I'm just like, “I don't know.” It's something I like started years ago, and I just can't. But it just reminds me of like him thinking that's like the issue to our time challenges is like –

[00:38:53] MT: You know, it's funny. I haven't had a microwave in 16 years. And it's interesting, because I obviously used to use one in university and like my younger days. But when you get rid of certain things that are assumed to convenience and you elevate your set point a little bit, you very quickly forget that it was ever an option. And like for something I committed to doing, I think this was a couple years ago. I created this course called Everyday Culinary Nutrition, which is sort of intended to be a gateway in for people who don't want to do the full program but really just need some basics and how to bring more whole foods in. And one of the key principles I had going into creating this program was to inspire people to stop buying things in single-use plastics that you can easily do on your own.

And one of the things I committed to was never buying mixed greens in a clamshell single-use container, because I don't know why. I just find them a little bit gross. There's always like the red lettuce getting moggy at the bottom of this container and then you're always just throwing out a lot of it. And so I did this time thing where I was like, "How long does it actually take to clean a head of lettuce?" Do you know how long?

[00:40:06] AS: Well, does it depend on what kind of equip – Like you mean just like with your hands with baking soda or however you clean it.

[00:40:13] MT: Let's say you have a salad spinner and a head of lettuce.

[00:40:15] AS: Okay.

[00:40:16] MT: How long do you think it takes to clean a head of lettuce bought just as a head of lettuce with the stem?

[00:40:22] AS: Oh my god! I'm going to say like – Now that you're saying. In my head it would have been like, "It's going to be like forever." But I bet in reality it's like a minute and 30 seconds.

[00:40:34] MT: It was like 45 or 55 seconds. So you cut off the end. You put it in the salad spinner. You fill it with water. You submerge it. You lift it out. You spin it and you're done, right? Broccoli, same thing. You cut off the stems, you break it into pieces, you wash it, you put it in a container and you're done. And now what you're getting is that pinterest fridge where all your vegetables are prepped and ready to go and now you've just cut down on your meal time. So it's not even just about the tastes and the flavors. And do I have time for this? Do I not have time with it? But now you're like, "Okay, now it's appealing. Now I want to go and make this stuff. And I've got it all covered. I don't to think about the details of it because I've got all my fresh food in the fridge."

[00:41:18] AS: Well, I love that, because I think part of the satisfaction – I mean, I was listening to this one podcast series about how like it was about like the underground world of mommy bloggers or Instagram influencers. I was like –

[00:41:31] MT: That sounds good.

[00:41:33] AS: One of the things they brought up was like how everyone has like the white kitchen. Like you can't be an Instagram influencer or something. I don't know what it was. But I was laughing because I was like, "Yeah, there's a lot of white kitchens on there." But I think part of the satisfaction is when things do feel organized and they feel that elegance, right? I know I feel – The word that comes to mind, because I use this a lot, my work is safe. But like I feel safer or like more comforted when I know that there's food already made in the fridge and it looks nice and like I'm not lately I've been peeling like what – Oh, just like there was mold on the canned pumpkin that I had. And I was like, "Ugh!" Because I hate wasting food. Like we compost. We try to do all the things, but you're never going to be like – At least we never get all of it. But to have that go in the kitchen and the fridge and know in the back of your mind like everything's prepped and it's that simple of like –I think that contributes to the satisfaction.

Because, again, I think we were talking about this also with my clients today. Like I was saying how sometimes I think like, “Oh, cooking is such a hassle.” But then when I actually do it, like I’m like this is so grounding. There’s something like primal about what is that. Meghan, give me words.

[00:42:46] MT: Yes. Yes. So first, one second, I just moved to my new house, renovated the kitchen immediately. So it's all white. So check on that one.

[00:42:55] AS: Well, you already are an Instagram influencer.

[00:42:59] MT: I’m very not so good on Instagram and regularity and influencing. Well, maybe I’m influencing, but I’m definitely not being paid to do it. But I now have a 14 and a half foot white island. It's the thing influencer kitchen people dreams are made of. It's amazing. But so what you're talking about, that feeling when you're cooking, is, for lack of a better word, it's because it's a sensual experience in the origin of what the word senses mean. Because you're using all of your senses. You're using smell, and taste, and touch, and vision, and you're all in it. And that's why, for many people, cooking is such a meditative experience. Layer on to that that you're creating something with love that is nourishing yourself, and your partner, and your child. So it is one of the – If you decide it to be, it will be one of the most satisfying and joyful moments in your day.

[00:43:57] AS: I love that, because it makes me think about how – I’m not going to sound like Karl Marx right now. But like when we don't have like physical things, we're separated from like the end product. And like so many of us are – I mean, that was a whole like economic thing, but like that's what he was saying is the problem with like capitalism, right? Is like you don't have a physical product to like at the end of the day you're so divorced from the input that you had. And I think about that's the satisfaction of food, is like you have that physical product and the process to like – And that's why, because we need to use all our senses. And how many of us are using all of our senses these days?

[00:44:36] MT: No. We're on computers all day. I love that you dragged Karl Marx into this conversation. Like if we can go from A to Z, we just did. But we're sitting here, you and I, having this wonderful conversation, but we're on our computers.

[00:44:50] AS: Yeah. We can't even co-regulate like in the physical space. I mean, can you tell I'm in like infancy?

[00:44:58] MT: Right. And I'm in coherence mode. So I'm like can our HRVs, like can our heart rate variability sync up with each other while we're having this conversation? So that's I think why too. And I think what we saw with Covid and everything was that – And I hate dragging that word into my conversations. But we were first forced into being at home to cook. And then it was embraced. And we saw that even with the number of people who joined my program last summer. And then there's like this repellent of like, “Ugh! Meal time again for like the 85th time today?”

[00:45:32] AS: That's what I feel. Like I have to eat again?

[00:45:35] MT: Yeah.

[00:45:38] AS: I realize that's also like I have a certain level of privilege to have food access and all that stuff.

[00:45:42] MT: A hundred percent.

[00:45:43] AS: You're just a project manager. Like is the laundry done? Are the dishes done? All the things.

[00:45:51] MT: It's hard, too, if you feel like the project manager, because it means you're managing someone, which is probably your husband. I'm not sure. What's going on here?

[inaudible 00:46:00]. But if you wouldn't mind doing it this way, I'm like, "You know what? You do it next time and then we're good."

[00:46:08] AS: It sounds like you want to take ownership of that. It's yours.

[00:46:11] MT: Or like our favorite nurse, "You know what you're really good at? You're really good at cleaning up the entire kitchen at the end of the day. You're so good at it. I could never do it like that." I don't know what we were talking about. Oh yeah, yes, we definitely have a fridge full of food and the choice to cook. And having that privilege is not something to take lightly or for granted.

That being said, we also do have the privilege to choose what we're going to eat. And most of us are wasting that privilege that not everyone in the world has. And so if we have the luxury of being able to go into the store and choose our food or like click some buttons on our computer while we're sitting cozy at home and have food show up on our doorstep the next day, the least we can do is our very best with those efforts.

[00:47:02] AS: Yeah. Yeah. No. It's true. But I think – Yeah. I wonder though. I'm just thinking as you were talking about the total sensory experience and being in person, like I think that's part of – Some of my clients are single, right? And it's like doing all this for myself. And we're all missing this like community. And I don't know. Just like there's – You can't replace in-person contact and the village that like the nuclear family kind of. It was like, "No. We will all be separated." I mean, we're doing creative things and all that stuff. But I think that's part of what makes food so fun to cook is if you know like, "Hey, these people are coming over." Or like we're all going to sit down together. And so maybe that's part of bringing it back. I'm thinking of like people who do have families or even if you can find neighbors or whatever, like they're on the mode.

[00:47:56] MT: Yeah, for sure. And doing meal share and all of that is really helpful. And what I found in with the Academy of Culinary Nutrition, with my program, is that there's a lot of people who are single and on their own. There's a lot of people who are in families, but no one else wants to eat what they're cooking and making, which is another thing especially if they're just now transitioning to a different way of eating in different food philosophies and values. And then there's people who are all in. But something that seems to be really helpful for everyone is they're just sharing their process. And so maybe that's like a benefit of a social media or something where you get a little bit of social gratification out of being like, "Hey, look what I made," even if it's just you enjoying it on your own or if everyone else is still eating the stuff that you've left behind, whatever it might be. But finding a group of people who want to do this and having that group accountability and wanting to share and get encouragement goes a real long way. It always has, but I think now more than ever.

[00:49:01] AS: Yeah. I'm glad you bring that up. I want you to tell us about that program when we wrap up, because I'm actually really considering taking it, because I feel like if I could learn a couple of basic things, that also takes a lot of the mental load away of cooking. You know what I mean? Because like I realized I like cooking. I hate finding recipes. I hate that. And then being like, "Okay, what's on the grocery list?" Versus if I can just go and feel – Again, intuition takes learning some knowledge. But that's something. So I want you to tell us about that in a short bit.

One more question I have is related to smells. And I'm curious how you consider this or not. Because I remember, one of my friends, we're still friends, I just haven't spoken with her in a while in Philly. She used to work for a food company. And we did a whole crack when there were blogs and people read blogs. I mean, people still read blogs, but it was much more the vlog was the thing. I did a whole Q&A with her. But she worked for a food company and she shared about how like smells are more important to food companies than the taste. And what they do to distort our smell so that like you can make something that is quite chemically smell

appealing, right? And so I'm just curious of like what you could share about smells and the importance of that when it comes to food.

[00:50:21] MT: Well, I don't know what they're doing. Although there are some great books on what they're doing in commercial food production. One of the required readings in my program is Salt Sugar Fat by Michael Moss. It's really interesting. And it's about how food companies are basically testing the thresholds of our taste buds to maximize our consumption like just to get us to the point where we'll eat a ton without feeling sick from it.

I mean, I have undiagnosed multiple chemical sensitivity. Like I am sensitive to everything. And my sense of smell is like off the charts. Like someone could be doing their laundry three blocks away and I will smell their fabric softener. So that's part of my interest in rewiring the brain so that I don't have physical reactions or like repulsions to someone who comes close to me and with perfume.

But as far as food smells go, it's part of the experience. Because before we put something in our mouth, there's something called the cephalic phase where we're sitting at the dinner table optimally. We're not sitting at the dashboard, and we're not sitting at the coffee table in front of the television. But we're sitting at the dining table, whatever that table might be, and we are looking at our food so we're seeing it. We're smelling our food. And so that first thing is what sort of triggers the taste buds, the sensories in your mouth, to start like making their fluids with all the enzymes and all the digestive juices we need to actually break down and digest and assimilate the food we're eating.

So the smell that comes off your food is very important. And we're programmed as humans that if you open like a thing of yogurt or hummus or something and it's gone off, like you will be repelled by it. Like your nose knows. So that sense of smell. And it goes like directly to the brain. We have a really, really closely connected ora factor. I can never say it. But like your sense of smell and your brain and your memory. Like that's what saves – That's how humans

lived, because we knew when to stay away. And we know that there're things that smell bad and things that smell good and there's pheromones, and like we're so entrenched in these senses. But if you are driving while eating your meal that you got at a drive-through window or you're so focused on what's on television that you're mindlessly consuming, you're not taking advantage of that opportunity to create that sensory experience to smell the food, to know that it's good, to start the digestive juices flowing and all of those components that are part of digestion. It's like the digestion that starts before food even enters our mouth.

[00:53:06] AS: Yeah. I'm so glad you brought up the part about emotion too, right? I mean, it was an evolutionarily, like, "Okay, be repulsed. Because if you eat that yogurt, it's gone bad." But I think that's also part of why food companies do it, right? Is like we smell something and it takes us back to when we were with grandma and she took us to do X, Y and Z. And it's like primal like comfort, right? And that's why – Also, as you were talking about it, because I don't use a lot of sense either. But I'm wondering like when people light vanilla candles or pumpkin spice. Does that also –

[00:53:44] MT: Yeah, it smells like chemicals to me.

[00:53:47] AS: Right. But does that stimulate the digestive juices like when you're –

[00:53:51] MT: I don't think so. Maybe I think that you your body inherently knows when something's synthetic. So I don't think you can light an apple pie candle and it will stimulate the same ways as if there's an apple pie in the oven that's like has the real multi compounds. I don't know. I mean, I know there's like crazy. I feel like it's based in New Jersey, like these crazy flavor factories where it's like let me get a drop of popcorn flavor.

[00:54:24] AS: That's where my friend works. I used to work in the corporate world. I lived in the city of Philly, but I commuted to the suburbs for work. And I would drive home every night you could just see and the smell that would come out. It actually smelled like sugar wafers. I

mean, that was like the dominant smell. But I didn't know any of this at the time. Someone was just like, "Oh yeah, that's where like Kraft and all those places are." So you're right, it's New Jersey.

[00:54:50] MT: I mean, maybe –

[00:54:52] AS: Free things legally.

[00:54:54] MT: Do they say that? I don't know. Somewhere there's a picture of me dressed up as Snooki for a friend's – That's my closest connection to New Jersey.

[00:55:06] AS: Yeah, Jersey, there's a lot of jokes. And Philly is so close to Southern Jersey. But yeah, I love that you're in Canada and you know that about New Jersey.

[00:55:16] MT: Very little. So, yeah, I don't know if those candles would stimulate. But you just reminded me of a story that I wish I could forget about early days. I went on a date with someone who we ended up back at their apartment very briefly, very briefly. I'm not divulging too much information. But he lit these Glade watermelon scented candles and I was basically like, "What is this smell?" And I ended up eventually working at that same company as him. And Glade became my client. But um those candle smells, just to me, like if I smelled that, it would take me back to that experience in my life. But I don't think it would make me want to eat a slice of watermelon.

[00:56:01] AS: Right. I was going to say, can you still eat watermelon? Maybe that will help us figure out if it does.

[00:56:04] MT: Yeah. It just doesn't smell the same to me. Like we'll sometimes eat a strawberry and we're like, "Whoa! This is like the full expression of the strawberry flavor." Like if you were to buy a strawberry candy, it would taste like what this real strawberry looks. Like I

can get those connections. But, yeah, I don't know if sprays and perfumes and scented candles do the same. Not my area of expertise.

[00:56:29] AS: Yeah. As you mentioned them, I was like, “That makes me wonder.” So you mentioned that you run – And I love that name, just Culinary Nutrition, because to me it says like I’m going to learn to cook in it for health. I had actually a listener emailed me that she wanted me to do a whole episode on how the food network like normalizes like disordered eating. And I was like, yeah, the food network is for people who love to eat, not people who necessarily love to cook, right? Because all this kind of stuff.

So I’m wondering, you run Culinary Nutrition, and I want you to tell us more about it. What we can find more about you. But it's a process to help people develop this kind of way of how you think about food so that we're feeling satisfied. I always say fat, carbs and protein, but fiber, too, of course. We should mention that. I think that's always to me like, of course, but it's important to mention it. And flavors, and smells, and textures. What do you think are some of the biggest surprises that people walk out of your culinary nutrition philosophy with of like –

[00:57:31] MT: Our graduates, there're a couple things. I think one – And like they start out so simple. Like their first assignment, which I think is due, as we record this, 16 minutes ago, is creating a spice blend from scratch. Like using whole spices, toasting them, grinding them down. So making a blend like that. They do. They make their own barbecue sauce, and they make a honey mustard. So suddenly they're like, “Wait a second. You can do all of this and it's so easy?” And they do an almond milk. Actually, I don't know if that's an assignment or if it's just something they all end up doing, because I demo it and it's so simple. And like there're no fillers or preservatives, or sweeteners, or anything in it. So I think the first thing is they realize like how intensely joyful, satisfying and fulfilling it is to cook from scratch in your own home kitchen. And I think that's like something they pick up on in the first couple weeks if they hadn't already been doing it.

But our flagship program, it's 14 weeks, and it's a certification. And our objective isn't just to share this information. It's not me just teaching to you and you being like, "Okay, that's interesting. Thanks. I'm going to start doing this." But we're also empowering our students to teach it. So they're learning how to take it in. But then also how to find their voice in it, how to distill it, how to share it with other people, whether it'd be inspiring their children to eat better, their spouse, their parents, or in more of a business setting. So how to teach their own cooking classes? How do you write about food? Write about recipes? Write about culinary nutrition, health and food in a very educated and referenced evidence-based way? So we teach all of these skills. And so we have people who come into it with lots of experience. Some people have no experience. Some people have nutrition training, or they're physicians, or they're nurses, or they're dietitians. We have people who are in what they call their twilight career where they've been accountants, and lawyers, and pharmacists. And they're like, "This is what I really want to do. And now my kids are out of the house so I can do this now."

So we have people from such a massive spectrum. We've had students now in over 75 countries. And what they're coming together to learn is to be empowered, to know how to best nourish themselves and their families or with clients if they're going to continue or start a new business. And so they leave the program with a full refreshed feeling around their time in the kitchen that that becomes the best time of their day. And that they're so jazzed about it that they can't help but want to share with other people. And that's ultimately the objective I had in creating the school, was that I can't teach everyone how to do it. If everyone cooked and ate like this, we wouldn't have the health issues we do. There wouldn't degenerative disease in the numbers we have and all these preventable health issues.

So how do we get more people doing it? And the easiest way is not to be like here's your list of supplements, and here's all the things you need to do, and here's the practitioners need to see. But here's what's going to be at the end of your fork. It's going to be easy to make. It's going to be beautiful and it's going to be delicious and you're going to want more of it. It's an easy way in.

[01:00:29] AS: Yeah. Well, it's so exciting to me that I think we – Some people say the pendulum swings back and forth. And I think Covid, especially, has helped people. I love Dave Chappelle. He's like it quarantined us with our issues. So I think there's been like a lot of soul searching that's going on and so many people having this feeling to get back to – I think of it as elegant simplicity, right? Like nature is so elegant. It's like to your point, I don't know, it's like if you get to the root of things, so many things clear up and it can be fun and joyful and life-giving, I guess, is kind of what I think in taking that approach to cooking rather than it's got to be Instagram and Pinterest worthy. Not that it wouldn't be. But it's just like the goal is this or the goal is cut like weight loss or whatever. I think what really resonated with me what you said is just like we get a chance to like engage all of our senses. Like we do that as kids, and that's part of why we're so joyful probably as kids. At least start out that way. And then slowly life becomes more monotonous, homogeneous, and we miss like the joys of being in the body. And so then all we – Yeah, I'm going to go off, because I'm getting all philosophical here and I don't want to bring Karl Marx back into the conversation.

Are there any thing that you think, aside from the joy? I mean, I even thought that's exciting about like making your own spices, because to me, eventually, if you learn some of the foundations, like do you teach the foundations then people can start making their own creations, I guess?

[01:02:10] MT: Yeah. Or just the idea that like, “Wait, I can make my own.” Because I have an allergy to black pepper as an example.

[01:02:16] AS: Oh my god! That's so interesting.

[01:02:17] MT: Right? So curry powders, Chinese five spice blend, or the five spice blend, often pumpkin spice mix, like they have a black pepper in them. So that was originally when I'm like, “Well, what am I going to do?” I'm like, “I'm just going to find a recipe for spices,” which hadn't occurred to me, like garam masala. So all these different traditional blends that come from

different cultures that inspire my cooking. You can make them yourself. And they're going to be so much fresher, and more fragrant, and more delicious, and make your food better.

So I do like different mixes just for like even a dry rub for like a chicken or different seasoning. So I have them in my influencer perfect kitchen glass bottles and nicely organized on a shelf. But I have all that. So the only reason I have it is because it makes cooking easier. In own book, I have a couple different spice blends. One's like a taco spice. So mixing together a bunch of spices. So if we're having tacos or nachos, I add that into the ground meat or beans or whoever I'm making it with and it's done. And it's not with like a little packet that has MSG or yeast extract or these things that I don't want in my food.

[01:03:32] AS: Yeah. I mean, I love that. You're making me think, because we belong to our coop, and it's super close, and they just have like spice. Like you can get your own spice. You don't buy it in a little jar. And now I'm like – And I just found these great corn tortillas there that are like local and all the good things. And I was like, “These are so good.” And so now I'll have to like get your book and make the taco spice and just have like a sensory experience.

[01:04:00] MT: Yeah. Just don't burn them. If you burn this stuff, your house is going to smell like it forever.

[01:04:04] AS: Okay. That's a good morning, because Carlos gets mad because I'll like start one thing and then I'll like move over to something else and then it's like, “What's burning?” And it's like, “Oh! Oops.” I think I'm aging out of multitasking. I'm realizing how like exhausted it makes me. Wonderful. And is there anything that I haven't asked you that you think it's important for people when they're trying to increase their satisfaction from food aside from more, more and more, which I just think firmly is often because we're missing something?

[01:04:38] MT: Yeah. I think the actual act of eating is really important. So there's a chapter in my book called – I don't even remember what's called. It's like this is in a barn like sit at the

table to eat, along those lines. But to sit at a table to eat and take your time to chew and put your fork down between bites and to bring back that meal experience is it's such a critical factor for our health. And research shows too that you know eating with your family has long-term benefit for children. and I used to say like there's a good chance your child's not going to become a professional tap dancer, or baseball player, or a piano player, or tennis star. So can you make that dinner hour sacred at least four nights a week so you're not driving and shuffling between lessons and all this stuff? That as a family you're sitting down. And however your family looks, like family of one, family of ten, it doesn't matter. But as you sit down with the intention of mindfully eating the food that you've prepared, that lends so much value to our personal health, to our psychological health, to our relationships, to our family unit, to all of that. And I think that that is a critical part if we're looking at the holistic balance and satiation of what we're eating. That's a important part of it.

[01:06:02] AS: Oh, it's so true. I talked about in last episode like think about your favorite meal where you were able to moderate and all the stuff. And it's like, "Who was with you?" That has like such a big – And I cited I'm very evidence-based too. Stanford Scientists, I'm forgetting the exact journal right now, but they had found that when we have positive social interactions, we get a flood of oxytocin, and it lights up the reward sensor, right? And it's like, "Okay." I even think about our immune systems. They're more robust when we're around people and we have more exposure to different microbiomes. And there's a huge field of psychoimmunology about the importance of this and how it like protected the tribe. And so you look at that metaphorically and it's like, "Yeah." I mean, emotionally and symbolically. It doesn't have to just be on the physical level. But how much I think just eating with people that we enjoy. And, yeah, I just think that's super important. So I'm glad that you mentioned it.

So tell us a little bit more about Culinary Nutrition School and where people can find you
[inaudible 01:07:07] where you're influencing.

[01:07:10] MT: Where I'm busy influencing. The school is at culinarynutrition.com. And so we have our 14-week certification program. It's only run once a year. So the next run of it will be in September of 2022, which feels so far away, but it's just a year. And then we have a few shorter sort of self-paced instant access courses there. So if someone is really interested in just getting started, the everyday Culinary Nutrition class is a great place to start. And that's at culinarynutrition.com/culinary, easy enough to remember.

And then my work, and I'm doing a lot of work, new work around the mind and heart coherence and really looking at how we thrive beyond just looking at food and nutrition, but how we can thrive by untying the knots of anxiety and settling into who we are and planting both feet on the ground so that we're able to create, and produce, and lead, and do all these things we need to do with love, and kindness, and compassion, and what I'm calling the heart based emotions that are going to lead us into the future. Because this divisiveness is not going to last, it never does.

[01:08:19] AS: I'm glad that you feel that way, because I can feel really dark about that sometimes. Did you see the Social Dilemma on Netflix?

[01:08:26] MT: No. No. No. I would not watch that.

[01:08:27] AS: Okay, because it'll leave you like really depressed.

[01:08:31] MT: No. I know. And I'm doing conscious work right now on the boundaries for my brain and my mind to protect my mental health, because it's been a lot for everyone. And like you, if you're leading a community and leading as a health expert, we also need to take care of ourselves so that we can show up the next day. So that's sort of the work that I'm doing. And everything about me is at meghantelpner.com, Meghan with an H, and I'm at Meghan Telpner on the socials too.

[01:09:01] AS: Awesome. And that's where you can get a lot of great recipes too.

[01:09:03] MT: Yes. There're about 300 recipes, I think, on my website, because I'm hanging on to my blog. It's been going since 2008. I publish once a week, not always recipes, but I'm staying firm that the blog is the best way to connect, long format.

[01:09:18] AS: Yeah, it made me want to reach out to you. I was like, "These recipes are great." And I loved reading your birth story. I don't know. We share a lot of similar philosophies. So yeah, everyone, check out Meghan and the school. And thank you so much for being here.

[01:09:34] MT: Thank you for having me. This was super fun.

[01:09:37] AS: Yeah, I had a great time.

[OUTRO]

[01:09:41] AS: Thank you, health rebels and visionary storytellers for tuning in today. If you know someone who would benefit from this episode, please share it with them. And remember, we have transcripts of our episodes at alishapiro.com/podcast for your non-audio friends and family. And if you can, I'd love it if you can leave a review on Apple Podcasts. It helps more people find the show. And both actions, reviewing and sharing with others helps us change the cultural narrative around food weight and our bodies. Thanks for engaging in a different kind of conversation. And remember, always, your body truths are unique, discoverable, profound and liberating.

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[END OF INTERVIEW]