

Pros and Cons of Keto Diet

with Dr. Will Cole –

Insatiable Season 7, Episode 4

[INTRO]

[0:00:08.9] AS: When you're fed up with fighting food and your body, join us here. I'm Ali Shapiro, creator of the Truce with Food[®] program and your host for Insatiable; where we explore the hidden aspects of fighting our food, our weight and our bodies and dive deep into efficient science and true whole health.

Fair warning, this is not your parents' healthcare. This is a big rebel yell to those who crave meaning, hunger for truth and whose lust for life is truly insatiable. Believe me, freedom awaits.

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:47.4] AS: Welcome everybody to Season 7 of Insatiable. This season, **our theme is hunger** and taking a fresh look at different approaches to satisfying our hunger. To be physically and emotionally hungry is to be vulnerable. As Dr. Brené Brown says, "Vulnerability is uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure." To have physical hunger or to acknowledge our emotional and soul hungers is to choose to be open to the daring risk of being fully satisfied.

We will be exploring various diets and approaches to satisfying our holistic hungers. Before we get to our exciting guest today, during our transition episodes to season 7, I had hinted at something about if you love the conversations we have here and are all

about exploring and experimenting to find the radical truth for every body you have; physical, emotional and soul, I had something exciting to share with you.

Introducing the [Insatiable membership community](#). This community is designed to help you take action around the topics we discuss here and support you to buying your radical truth. I rolled the community out privately last year to clients, new and old, and the results have shown me there is a real need for a community, where we can trust ourselves, learn from each other and as we get healthier, want to take more daring risks to make our life choices potent, healing medicine.

I am now opening it up to our Insatiable listeners. In a nutshell, it's a community where there are no gurus and we can learn from each other. Once a month we have a mastermind topic and help you gain clarity and have a group to support and learn from wherever you are in your path. Once a month, there's also a Q&A call with me where I coach attendees to get inspired, unstuck and clear on your next step. You can find out more at alishapiro.com\ic2019.

Okay, today I am bringing my Pittsburgh neighbor, Dr. Will Cole on the show. Dr. Will Cole is a leading functional medicine expert, consults with people around the world at www.drwillcole.com and locally here in Pittsburgh.

He specializes in clinically investigating underlying factors of chronic disease and customizing health programs for thyroid issues, autoimmune conditions, hormonal dysfunction, digestive disorders and brain problems. Dr. Cole was named one of the top 50 functional medicine and integrative doctors in the nation and as a health expert for [mindbodygreen](#) and [goop](#).

Dr. Cole is the author of the book, [Ketotarian](#), in which he melds the powerful benefits of a ketogenic diet with a plant-based one. Today, we're going to be talking about the

pros and limitations of the keto diet with Dr. Will Cole. Thank you so much for being here.

[0:03:34.7] WC: Thanks so much for having me.

[0:03:35.9] AS: Yeah. It was funny. I've heard your name in the ether and then I was telling my sister who has been doing keto for the last several years, I said, "Julie, I found this guy in Pittsburgh that is this ancient progressive," right? You seem really progressive, but we're getting back to living off the land. I said, "He wrote this book called *Ketotarian*. I think you would really like it." She was like, "Ali, I already have the book. The beet salad is my favorite dish."

Her husband's name is John. She's like, and one of Grom's team members. His son went to Dr. Will Cole and he totally helped him turn around by helping him with the autoimmune protocol. She totally knew who you were and I was like, "Okay, I'm going to go back into my cave."

[0:04:20.8] WC: Cool, that's awesome. I mean, what a blessing I get to be a part of people's journeys and I'd never meet or I have no idea who this friend of a team member that is. That's really cool that what we're doing here – it's hearing stories like that that remind me why we're doing what we're doing here.

[0:04:40.3] AS: Yeah. Yeah. No, it does feel good hearing about that. I want to start, you have this new book out, *Ketotarian*, which I just love, because I felt it was trying to bring the political equivalent of Republicans and Democrats together, right? Finding the commonality where you're trying to find the commonality between paleo and vegan people and saying, "Hey, we have some common ground here," and healthy fats, right? It's about keto.

Before we get started, I just want you to define the keto diet for us, because in your book, I think people are like, “Whoa, I thought you had to be paleo to get into ketosis and keto.” You're really changing that script. I'd love if you could define that, what keto and ketosis is for people.

[0:05:26.7] WC: Sure. That is what I wanted to do in part with *Ketotarian* is bring these two seemingly opposite worlds together and realize it is even a section in *Ketotarian* that I call food peace, which is a play on words. It's a piece of food, but it's also just making peace with food. We have a lot in common actually and we all want the same thing. This idea that on social media, we should be trolling people and sending these horrible, negative tweets and Facebook comments and Instagram comments over food is just – We're missing the point of what we're talking about here.

To answer your question, the ketogenic diet if you break that word down as using fat for fuel and nutritional ketosis is this natural state that all of our bodies have of burning fat for fuel. The alternative metabolically speaking is sugar burning. That's where most people in the west will find themselves, they are burning sugar for energy. What that means is they will have breakfast, lunch and dinner. Typically, when you're in sugar burning mode you need to snack in between meals, the six small meals a day, because that's akin to kindling on a fire. Kindling on the fire creates flame and energy, but it's short-lived to keep putting more kindling on. That's the breakfast, snack, lunch, snack, dinner, snack.

It's because if you miss the kindling and you get hangry and irritable and you are fatigued. This is sugar burning state that America and western civilization finds themselves on. Then it's dirty kindling of the standard American diet, and then there's the cleaner kindling of real foods and healthier options, but things that still break down into sugar, it's still kindling even though it's cleaner kindling.

The alternative is burning fat for fuel and that's what ketosis, or a ketogenic state, or being fat-adapted means. That's akin to having a log on the fire. It's more long-lasting. It'll burn slowly. That is really what ketosis is. It's off of that volatile blood sugar roller coaster. It's something that from an ancestral health standpoint, humans would have had been in times of ketosis for eons and it is in alignment with our DNA in the sense of be creating metabolic flexibility, which is what I try to really convey in *Ketotarian* is yes, you can burn sugar for fuel when you want it, or you always have it as a secondary fuel even when you're in ketosis, but let's give you the option to have metabolic flexibility where you can do a cyclical Ketotarian approach, because you built that metabolic flexibility through eating a healthy, clean ketogenic diet. The way I advocate for in Ketotarian is a mostly plant-based, if not entirely plant-based, but at least a mostly plant-based ketogenic approach.

[0:08:23.7] AS: Yeah. This is what I loved about your book as you were saying, you can cycle in and out. Keto is a way to build resilience. It almost be like, if we're using the metaphor of a cellphone, it's helping your body keep the charge, right? In a way. Once you do that enough, you can go and eat carbs again, or you can be out of a ketosis state, but still be burning fat once you get through the sugar and not be on that roller coaster. Correct.

[0:08:51.7] WC: Exactly. Absolutely. That is food freedom. I think most people find themselves bound to the next meal, on the next Insatiable craving and they will be a slave to food. We should enjoy food. We should love food and – we shouldn't be bound by food, or the cravings and be so insatiable that you can't ever get away from them.

This is something that being fat-adapted, or gaining metabolic flexibility really gives you is that you eat when you're hungry, you eat when you're – until you're satiated or full. It not something that it's this over-consuming mindset that sugar burning will leave people feeling.

[0:09:31.7] Wait, and so can we – because I've been getting a lot of e-mails from people about this word fat-adapted. I think people think that they can only burn fat if they're in ketosis. Whereas, what you're saying and what I explain to people is if you aren't in ketosis, you are going to burn sugar first. However, if you don't have that snack where your blood sugar is balanced enough, you will then dip into your fat reserves. Sugar will still be the first source. Although, sometimes we need that, because in your book I love that you –

I think a lot of doctors and people advocating behavioral change forget to tell people how this shows up in their real life, right? They're like, okay, I may have an A1C that's out of balance, but what's the pain point in my real life? You talk about in the book, like you can go without meals, without snacking, or you have stable moods.

What you were describing there is to me, that sounds like balanced blood sugar. Often, people have such a disbalance blood sugar that maybe they need the keto diet as a healing diet to get back into that state. Would you agree with that, or I mean, what are your thoughts on that?

[0:10:38.1] WC: Yeah. No, I would definitely agree with that. Because the goal is when you're talking about health and wellness in the context of *Ketotarian*, or a real food clean keto diet, it's not just producing more ketones, which is good for the brain, it's an epigenetic modulator, it's good for lowering inflammation. It has a lot of great, cool health applications and health benefits.

It's not just about producing more ketones. It is also normalizing insulin levels and stabilizing blood sugar levels. It's all of that stuff together that really it produces the great feeling, the optimal increased fat loss, increased energy, increased brain function and the curbing of cravings.

[0:11:19.0] AS: Well and that's another I really loved about your book is you were like, look, you may need to keep in some carbs and gradually work up to ketosis. I've never heard anyone say that before. We had Maria Emmerich who is a huge voice in the keto world on a couple years ago. I thought the keto diet was going to come and go honestly, between from — I think we had her on in 2017. She was advocating a 1 cup of vegetables a day, or something super low. Your approach is so much more to me meeting people where they are, in terms of look, this may need to be a gradual process. I really appreciated that. I imagine that's radical for your —

[0:12:00.3] WC: Yeah. For the keto world, I get some blowback I think because I have — I mean, they're afraid of vegetables, let's be honest. There's a lot of people in the ketogenic world that is overly zealous about avoiding vegetables. You have definitely moderates in the keto world. I don't want to over generalize it. There are definitely people that are right on in agreement with me on this topic, but this idea that you should just long-term be avoiding vegetables, and a decent amount of vegetables. I'm not talking about one cup a day, but a lot more than that.

That fiber by its very definition is a carbohydrate, so then they think all carbs are bad and that fiber is being part of that. It should be limited. I don't see that being a problem for most people. Look, I think there's an — I don't want to make over-generalized broad sweeping statements. That's people like Jillian Michaels does that, or maybe other people do that too. They just lump everything into one box and make over-generalized statements.

What I know from a functional medicine standpoint and seeing so many people, thousands of people over the years and we're all nuanced. What works for one person may not be right for you. I have to hang my hat on one statement. I could be proven wrong for that the whole day seeing patients. I mean, I have to adapt these things. Under the umbrella of ketosis and the ketogenic diet, we have to shift it.

I think there's a time and the place for really low carbs. What I wanted to convey in *Ketotarian* is a good way for the average man and woman to really live this way in a vibrant, wellness way. Not super dogmatic and becoming obsessed about macros and restricting your body and punishing your body from these foods. I don't think that's good for long-term sustainable wellness, which is what really the ethos of *Ketotarian* is.

[0:13:51.7] AS: Yeah. No, I love that. I have a client who we were working for a while on the emotional side of things and really cleared that up. Then she was really ready to – I mean, she had started to make certain changes and her natural sugar cravings went away once we worked on the emotional side of things. She started in on keto. She's postmenopausal and she has a lot of autoimmune issues.

We first just started adding in more fat. It was amazing for her once she saw how certain things, like eyesight, all these autoimmune issues went down. It then incentivized her to get to the next step, right? I think that's the important piece of your book is meeting people where they are, so they can gradually feel that real life experience and the intrinsic motivation of, “Oh, I'm doing this to feel better, not to be good or bad and judge myself in this theoretical sense.” I appreciate that.

I look at the nuance even in terms of where are people in their lifestyle and their level of awareness, because I think even though – I think so many people normalize not feeling so great, right? To your point like the average American man or woman, most of us aren't feeling anywhere close to our best. I like that people can have different entry points in your book and not feel they're failing from the start.

[0:15:04.9] WC: Yeah, absolutely. Just a lot of those, keeping it simple options in *Ketotarian* were just born out of me seeing patients and realizing not everybody wants to get into the nitty-gritty of the macros. Not everybody wants to start calculating their macros. That's all completely fine. I don't either actually. I just like to keep it simple and

use food to feel great. I think that is fantastic. Let's start people moving in this direction of just being – focusing on this healthier fats, not having so much carbohydrates, eating lots of fresh real food and get the benefits of ketosis without being overly stressed out about food. I think that's antithetical to wellness is being stressed and obsessed about healthy foods.

I think to a larger point, which I don't think I mentioned this in the book really, but orthorexia I think is a real problem in wellness. I think that that's a real problem in the ketogenic world. They have to reckon that they have to fix this issue within the community, because I see a lot of people that are just so stressed out. I see this on –

I co-host a podcast called Keto Talk and I hear the questions. They're looking at all these nuanced, tiny little things and these long paragraphs and they're completely normal, but it's their stress about all of this, these numbers and ideas and concepts that they are – that it's the stress and anxiety that's the problem, not the actual food meals that they're eating.

[0:16:38.3] AS: Yeah. I always joke that people who don't have religion buy nutrition. It becomes this guiding, like I have to get it right, right? I cannot sin. It forces us – it creates a myopic view of nutrition being the only piece. That was one of the things I wanted to ask you about is I loved in your book that you talked about – you cited so many studies about keto improving Alzheimer's and this – reviving this theory that Alzheimer's – one strain of Alzheimer's is type 3 diabetes and brain injuries and cancer and also autoimmune stuff.

It struck me as these are people who are very acutely sick, right? In a chronic emergency state. I wonder if we – in trying to create awareness about the power of food, have we convinced people that they're sicker than they are? I'm not saying that, because I think of my client that I showed the example of some of her autoimmune symptoms got better, right? They weren't this extreme debilitating pain, right? It was

actually stuff that she wasn't even aware that maybe it was connected to autoimmunity, until it went away, right?

I'm wondering if people sometimes think that they're sicker than they are and go to more extreme as a way of funneling the tension that they already have around food, right? It's just like, "Oh, this gives me an excuse to be so extreme." I don't know. Is that clear what I'm asking?

[0:18:03.4] WC: Yeah. I think that definitely could be the case for a lot of people. I think a lot of that has to do with Dr. Google. It's just like this endless vortex of conflicting health information and you could substantiate your worst fears, or your own agenda with Google. You can print stuff an hour and show it online and be like, "Look. See, it's true. What I was thinking is true." You can find anything you want to prove yourself right on Google. That's a problem.

I think that there are a certain group of people, and it's a lot of the people in this community of wellness and health and self-help people that comes with good intentions, but it ends up feeding this monster of stress and anxiety, which is not good for your health, for the stress, anxiety about food or health or wellness feeds physiological problems, actually creates inflammation and throws off all hormones and all this stuff. I think that what it feed into, even if there was the real physiological health problem, it's amplified and worsened by all the stress and anxiety.

I mean, to your point as well, I think that all of these issues are on a spectrum and there's full-blown health problems and then there is the other side of it where it's just a mild symptoms, but they're still not living a vibrant life. They still intuitively know, "My energy isn't where I want it to be. My sleep, my weight, my digestion, my inflammation levels aren't where I wanted to be." Let's improve them.

I don't think that those other people on the other side of the spectrum should stress out and be overly obsessed about it, but they still should be aware enough to do something about it. I think the word I'm trying to say is balance. We need to have a balance of our approach to health, no matter where we're at on this inflammation spectrum.

[0:19:55.9] AS: I love that. I always joke, moderation is the new radical, right?

[0:19:59.9] WC: Yeah.

[0:20:01.2] AS: Well, that's one thing. I feel like your book, I'm really into – not the aesthetic design. The book is beautiful, but how people, like the actual design of recommendations. I love that your recipes are so simple and then they bring in a lot of spices and things that people naturally have, versus having to over-complicate it. I was like, I cannot wait to – we're in the middle of a move right now, so we've been living – my husband and I, we're living with my parents for a week and we eat really healthy, but I'm like, once we get into our kitchen and everything, I cannot wait to try these and I'm not someone who likes to cook, but you kept the recipes simple enough that I was like, "Oh, this is a new way to eat eggs, or a new way to try fish." So many new ways. I know my clients are always looking for new breakfast ideas and you created so many simple ones that I'm always like, eggs and avocado. Now it's like, new ideas people.

[0:20:51.5] WC: Yeah. This is all stuff you can get at Costco, or Sam's Club, or Aldi, or Walmart, or Target, all basic stuff. This is not super complicated. It's people alienate themselves from this way of eating, because they think it is something that's very only for the Martha Stewart's and the wealthy and super foodies. It's really not. I mean, anybody can be plant-based keto, or eat a Ketotarian way of eating.

[0:21:19.6] AS: Yeah. I always tell my clients sometimes when they're like, "I don't have time to do all these elixirs." I'm like, the people who – those of us who get into wellness, this is our full-time thing, right? You can't expect the standard to be that, because it's just some of us just love exploring with it. If you're a regular person to your point, health should be the vehicle for us. It's not the end destination of perfecting our macros. It's like, no, use this so we can live well and stuff like that. Simplifying to me is actually the goal of nutrition.

One of the things I wanted to touch on is this idea of even plant-based – being Ketarian, or ketosis, or in keto. Can you explain the difference for people between plant-based fats and I mean, our audience is pretty educated in this, but what is the importance of plant-based fats versus eating a lot of saturated fats, especially if you're not staying in ketosis and eating a lot of carbs with them? Can you speak to maybe some examples and then why this plant-based ketosis is so important?

[0:22:24.8] WC: Sure. Ketotarian is my made-up play on words. It's this amalgamation between the best of the being plant-based and the best of being a fat-adapted. When we talked about on the top of this show about ketosis and being a fat burner, most people do their ketogenic diet with lots of meat and dairy, which again, if that works for you that's great. I would find that long-term wellness, not just a short-term thing, they get stuck at plateaus. After that honeymoon period with the conventional ketogenic diet wears off, they aren't able to move past where they're stuck at. Or they have food sensitivities with dairy, or they're having digestive problems with so much meat, etc.

What I wanted to offer the world with Ketotarian is just a twist on the ketogenic diet. You can still get those benefits, but let's do it in a mostly plant-based, or primarily exclusively a plant-based approach. The why I think that this way works for people is because it is – there's so much data showing the healthy monounsaturated fats from things like olive oil and extra virgin olive oil and avocados and nuts and seeds and

plant fats predominantly are so good for health and has a really strong amount of evidence to show that, and healthy omega fats, polyunsaturated omega fats from real foods are also shown have a lot of data to be very healthy for humans.

Even if they're not in ketosis, which we know has so much exciting health benefits, there is a large amount of evidence that majority of human civilization is going to do really well with these healthy fats. That is the base of this Ketotarian triangle, this food pyramid are healthy plant fats. In Ketotarian, we offered vegan keto. Most of the recipes are vegan keto, but there's vegetarian keto options obviously with eggs and ghee brought in and then pescetarian keto options with quality caught fish and fresh seafood and things like this.

Why I feel all of those healthy fats should be the predominance of whether you're doing Ketotarian or the conventional ketogenic diet, I think that those fats should be the predominance, because most people are going to do really well with them that's going to improve people's inflammation levels, it's going to improve people's brain function, it's going to prove people's cardiovascular health, their heart health. There's just so many reasons to do that.

You also can tap into ketosis, which is the fat burning, the anti-inflammatory, because beta hydroxybutyrate, that main ketone that your body produces actually is an anti-inflammatory. Let's leverage the benefits of being plant-based and eating lots of good healthy plant fats, as well as green leafy vegetables and sulfur-rich vegetables to support detoxification pathways and healthy fiber for your gut microbiome. There's so many reasons to eat lots of good plants and plant fats.

Then on the other side, let's tap into these benefits of ketosis, which is exciting. I've seen the benefits from a clinical standpoint. Let's use both worlds together. The problem I find with the conventional ketogenic I am depending too much on saturated fats and too much on dairy and the proteins that casein, protein and lots of meat, it can long-

term for a lot of people drive inflammation levels up, cause food sensitivities, impact the gut microbiome long-term. I'm not a huge fan of it for a lot of people. I think some people can get away with it, some people's genetics they just do really well with it and that's fine.

Even for them long-term, what does their gut microbiome look like? I think there's definitely a large amount of studies to show that long-term, the bacteria in the gut is going to – you're going to be growing some bacteria that you don't want and all the good bacteria is going to be limited long-term with this, because of your avoiding vegetables long-term. You want to make sure they start bringing in some more plant-based ideas into the life long-term. That's part of Ketotarian is meant to be. Even if you don't want to be vegan, vegetarian or pescetarian keto, you can still have some plant-based keto ideas that you can just pepper into your life with your conventional ketogenic diet. That's the real reason why. I just think this is a more sustainable way, a cleaner way to go keto.

[0:26:49.6] AS: Yeah. I love that, because I found that I'm someone who definitely, like I need animal protein at lunch for sure. I'm also someone who needs vegetables. It's so funny. I usually do eggs and kale for breakfast. If we don't have kale and I throw in spinach, for some reason I'm hungrier with the spinach than the kale.

Then at lunch if I don't have three servings of vegetables, no matter what else I eat, I'm still hungry. It's like, "Oh, my God. That doesn't fit into the keto profile," right? I need fats and vegetables. I think what I like about your book is it's look, there's no magic carbs, protein, fat ratio for everyone. You have to experiment. Let's start with this commonality that we all need healthier fats and we all need to balance our blood sugar much more, so then we can start to make different changes as we feel better and better, and raise our awareness I guess, would be the answer.

Yeah, there's so much – I like how what you explained. It's just how everything is interconnected, right? If we're fat-burning then in a fat-burning mode and our blood sugar is balanced and that leads to a better gut microbiome, which then leads to more resilience and it's just this upward spiral, because nature is exponential, right? It's not necessarily a linear process. I'm getting off on a philosophical tangent.

[0:28:05.5] **WC:** No, I love it. It's great.

[0:28:07.3] **AS:** Well, that's one of the things I wanted to ask you. I've gotten really into how light affects us. In our Season 6 Episode 5, we had my friend Brandon Mentore, who's a high-level holistic health expert in Philly. We were talking a lot about mitochondria, which you talk a ton about in your book and how that is so helpful and ketosis is so helpful for the mitochondria.

In that episode, it was called light mitochondria dysfunction and weight gain. He really got into how natural sunlight and part of why keto works is because fats have such a high-light density to them. I'm curious, because you do mention sunlight in there. I'm curious, have you thought of that angle of why fat is so healthy, even beyond ketosis? Because functional medicine is really about how our environment, epigenetics and your genetic – you even say, DNA is not your destiny in the book.

I'm just curious, have you looked at some of that research, or your thoughts on that and the power of sunlight and how Brandon was saying 66% of our energy needs come from the sun, 33% from nutrition. When you get your sunlight right, it magnifies the nutritional effects.

[0:29:16.2] **WC:** Certainly. Yes. I think that it's fascinating. I think light therapy with patients I've seen do dramatic things. With people that eat clean, but are stuck at this plateau, I think it's these modalities and wellness that light therapy of just getting

outside in nature and being in the light, or different light therapy tools as well can really be a catalyst for people's lives.

I am very much an advocate from a functional medicine standpoint for light therapy. It's all these things. We shouldn't be so myopic, can say what's just this, or it's just that. I think all of these amazing things can bring us back to wellness and allow our bodies to heal as much as it's able to. Like you said, maybe an ancient progressive, these are things that humans would have done for a long time.

It's so radical in our – like get outside? What the heck? It's so radical. Eat real food, it's really radical, but it is stuff that is so counter-cultural when it's inside on social media, or my son's playing Fortnite, or he's not even allowed to, but his friends are playing Fortnite. It's this insulated – Have you ever watched the kids movie Wall-E before?

[0:30:32.0] AS: Oh, my God. I didn't think that was a kids movie. I thought that was an adult precautionary movie.

[0:30:37.3] WC: Yes. No, it is literally every adult should watch WallEe if they haven't, because that literally is prophetic through what we are. I think that without a doubt, light therapy is a major part of wellness and people should pay attention to it.

[0:30:55.0] AS: Yeah. After that episode air, just for everyone listening, I'll include it in the show notes of this episode. Outside Magazine had this great article called Is Sunscreen the New Margarine? This reporter did this investigative report on what they basically found out as high vitamin D, adequate vitamin D levels. It's not because of the supplement, it's because of the other benefits of the sun and how the sun lowers blood pressure and when the scientist who were mostly in Europe really follow the data, they saw how important natural sunlight is and it talks about how Coppertone – basically, sunscreen wasn't taking off until Coppertone made it this commercial. It's

really fascinating. I'll include it in the show notes, if anybody is curious of the big picture of how we became so afraid of the sun.

The one researcher was – the reporter was like, “Doesn't it seem so counterintuitive to go outside and not use sunscreen?” The scientist is like, “We've been partnering with the sun for billions of years to get to this point. It seems counterintuitive to be afraid of it.” It just shows you how opposite – I always joke. I don't know if you had in elementary school opposite day, where people are like, “I hate you,” which meant I really like you. I do feel like –

[0:32:06.9] WC: Yeah. That's still a thing, because my kids –

[0:32:09.8] AS: Oh, it is? That survived.

[0:32:12.1] WC: Oh, it still. I'm like, “Well, this literally, these weird things live on and within the school system.” My kids are home-schooled. I don't know how they're even hearing about this stuff. Yeah, opposite day.

[0:32:23.5] AS: When you're out, because you travel a lot and what are some of your favorite I guess hacks, we would use the word, to make sure that you're still getting healthy fats? I mean, I like that you mentioned this in your book, even hoity-toity restaurants are probably using vegetable oils. I found that out like in Philly especially when I would go out to eat, it has a great restaurant scene, lots of farm-to-table. Then you ask people what oils are you using, they're like, “I don't know.” Then they come back and they're like, “Canola or vegetable.” You're like, “Oh. This healthy wild-caught fish is being stir fried in vegetable oil.”

[0:33:00.0] WC: Yeah, it's true. I mean, that's one of the biggest variables I see with patients is the oils that fruits are cooked in, because they can get the food and they can see okay, this is what I'm eating and this is in alignment with what I want. It's the

oils the things are cooked in that it's always the variable that you have to ask for, because you're not seeing it on the menu.

That's why I had the section in *Ketotarian* is how to eat out eating this way, because this is a lot of people's lives. They enjoy eating out, or their job compels them. They have to eat out. Let's make this practical and easy for anybody. I think speaking up when you're eating out is one of the biggest things. For some people, they don't eat out that much, so it's not that big of a deal and it's like, "Okay, well if it's one time with the vegetable oil," unless they may have a digestive problem from that. They may have symptoms from that.

Many people won't. Many people have one time their body is resilient. They're doing so much good stuff that they just let the rest go and they're fine. It depends on how much you eat out, I think. If your job is, "Hey, I have to eat out all these times throughout the week," then you may want to speak up and at least know the restaurant you go to what oil they're using, because it's the predominance of the meals that you're having. I think context of how much you're eating out is important.

I tell patients more or less, if they're not eating out on a regular basis, don't stress about it. Unless they're having some active autoimmune flare we know. Hey, they cannot have cross-contamination, they cannot have the X, Y and Z, that's different. The average person if they have some semblance of health, if they know they're going to have a severe flare-up and they don't eat out a lot, just keep it simple. Look for the bigger things of avoiding certain things. I don't know if everybody needs to ask what oil things are cooked in if they're eating out randomly. I agree, it's so common, it's pervasive. Ask for olive oil if it's available and that's I think their best bet. Very rarely you're going to have an avocado oil option at a restaurant.

[0:35:00.7] AS: That is one of the biggest things that I do for people listening, because I'm usually getting a salad when I'm out, just because it's safe and I can get what I

need from that. I never get the dressing, because I know not only is it a ton of sugar, but it's most likely a soybean. I mean, even the whole foods dressings. Oh, my God, are mostly canola, or soybean, or sunflower, or something, right? To save costs.

Or some of the times what I do, especially if – I don't do dairy, but sometimes I'm like, “Oh, I want something creamy,” I'll just ask for avocado and realize that that gives me that same creamy texture that I'm craving without the dairy hit. That's something I think that people can also think about too is am I sometimes creating texture more than the dairy itself? Also, I don't know about you, but I can do a little bit. Sometimes if I'm craving something like fried – I'll do more like – can I have a baked potato and will you bring butter on it, or olive oil and then put the salt? You're still getting the same profile, but it's not fried in the crappy oils that they use.

[0:36:04.8] **WC:** Yeah, that's a good one. Yeah, definitely.

[0:36:06.6] **AS:** Yeah. I think also asking a lot of times if people have raw nuts, because usually kitchens do have that stuff. Or even if you're in the airport. A lot of my clients travel a lot. Even getting the raw nuts over the mixes that they have.

[0:36:21.3] **WC:** I tell them that they – I normally pack the stuff that I – when I'm traveling and flying, I guess that was your question, but I normally will pack the snacks when I'm flying to at whatever, I will have snacks. Did not even have when I'm traveling, because I typically fast when I'm traveling, but to have in the hotel room when I'm there.

Then when I eat out, I typically will speak up because it's not a big deal to me and it shouldn't be a big deal to anybody, but what oils is cooked in. Just keep it simple. Yeah. I normally do fast when I travel. I think it's an easy way to mitigate traveling in general with not – I stay hydrated. I'm drinking lots of water, but I practice typically an OMAD, or OMAD fast with having all my calories in one meal when I get to the

destination, or I'll have – go to Whole Foods and fill up my mini-fridge when I get there as well.

[0:37:16.6] AS: Yeah. I love that you touch on fasting in the book, because I tried intermittent fasting – I mean, just skipping breakfast and it totally messed with me. I just was lazy and I didn't want to make breakfast. My husband was skipping breakfast, but he does coffee and I can't do coffee. I'm too sensitive to caffeine. I was just skipping breakfast and doing a green tea and it – it messed up my periods and everything. Now I've since been working with a naturopath who is on the north side, I don't know Dr. Joyce Turbo. I don't know you know her in Pittsburgh, but –

[0:37:47.9] WC: I don't know.

[0:37:48.5] AS: – we've been doing some bioenergy medicine. I did a pro and con on functional medicine pod episode before this and I talked about how – if it weren't for functional medicine and reversing my own health issues 15 years ago, I would have never been open to this bio-energetic medicine, because it seems a little woo. She's been helping me see part of my blood sugar issues were probably from mercury from my fillings and vaccines and all this stuff. I had cancer as a teenager and I always thought I just had sluggish lymph. I had Hodgkin's disease. I was exposed to pesticides and I always thought, "Oh, I just have a sluggish lymph." She's like, "I think your sluggish lymph, which is connected to blood sugar is from this stuff."

As I'm feeling better with her and stuff, I may try it again. I found a lot of women, especially in late 30s, 40s and there was perimenopause, approaching menopause can struggle with intermittent fasting. I like that you acknowledge that in the book that it's not a one-size-fits-all.

[0:38:45.4] WC: No. I think the intermittent fasting that you should do is intermittent fasting that you feel great doing. Intermittent fasting is an interesting thing, because it

is the more fat-adapted somebody is, the more they'll randomly intermittent fast, because they're just aren't as hungry. They are more satiated and they will eat when they're hungry. If they do a 12 to 6 eating window, they will just do that randomly, because they're hungry at noon and they are filled up by 6.

That's time restrictive eating. That's intermittent fasting. The more fat-adapted somebody is, I find the intermittent fasting will just be random. Conversely, we know it is also – would also produce more ketosis as well. If someone does want to lean into intermittent fasting, they can amplify the benefits of ketosis. It is a really cool tool to use no matter if they're at the beginning of your fat-adapted Ketotarian journey to a more advanced version of it, you can use these tools to really improve health, lower inflammation levels.

Something that I'm fascinated with is up-regulating autophagy pathway to where these healthy cellular recycling pathways that we can all tap into. Not many people are, but they – hopefully when they listen to conversations like this, they can start bringing these tools into their life.

[0:40:01.5] AS: Yeah. For listeners who might not know those terms, basically what Dr. Cole was saying is that the healthier your diet gets, the more you can detox, your body can open up its natural detox pathways, right? Am I summarizing that correct?

[0:40:16.4] WC: Yeah. It's autophagy breaking that down and self-eating. It's your healthy cells. It's like cannibalism on a cellular level. It's your healthy cells gobbling up the dysfunctional disease cells, so it's a way to make your cells more resilient and it's your own anti-aging, anti-disease pathway that through intermittent fasting – I mean, what are the ways to increase autophagy? It's intermittent fasting, the ketogenic diet and being plant-based. Let's do all three of those with Ketotarian to really enhance these cellular recycling and like you said, detoxification pathways.

[0:40:50.4] AS: Yeah, yeah. One of the things I wanted to talk about and you – I think you touch upon on this in the book. I just am curious of your definitions as a result is how much – and I think this is the limitation of the keto diet in general is we often talk about – for people who haven't struggled with their relationship with food in the past, right? It's interesting, because a lot of people, myself included who get into this field, we had very dysfunctional relationships with food. I didn't know mine. I was binging and emotionally eating, because of unresolved PTSD from cancer, right? I had no idea that that was it.

A lot of my clients, oftentimes they want to go to keto because of how extreme it is and it's restrictive. They may think, "Oh, this is a new plan," but it's a way of really avoiding the emotional work. In your book, you talk about how stress can interfere with our ability to get into ketosis. That's really at the heart of *Truce with Food* when I work with people. We're working on why their life is so stressful, kind of dismantling it, so they don't need to do so many stress management techniques, right?

I mean, it's all great to breathe deeply and be out in nature. Also a lot of people are just putting bandages, Band-Aids on their stress, because they don't know how to actually prevent stress and make life. I say it's not just stress less, it's living more as well.

One of the things that I feel gets talked – the terms get tossed around a lot is this is a lifestyle. What's your definition between diet and something being a lifestyle? Because I think sometimes – I mean, I've researched a lot of you, but I don't think you've had a challenging relationship to food in the past, right? Many people who are in functional medicine haven't. They love medicine. They're fascinated. They see the benefits of it. Or physicians any field.

We often say like, "Oh, food should be about peace and enjoying it." Yet, we aren't aware of what food really means to people, right? When people feel uncomfortable speaking up and about the fats and oils; it's not about the food. It's like, "Oh, my God.

Am I making myself unsafely visible, right? Am I causing conflict? Am I that person? It looks like I'm trying, but there's all these emotional stuff," that I work with on clients. I'm curious how you define a lifestyle versus a diet.

[0:43:11.4] WC: Yeah. I mean, it's so true. I mean, that's why a lot of what I weave through Ketotarian is this mind, body component to it, because you can get your macros in check and eat the best plant-based keto food out there, but if you don't have your head and your heart right, you are sabotaging all the good things you want to do with your meals and food.

As I say in the book, you cannot heal a body you hate. You need to make friends with food and make friends with your body. I know that's not as simple as just saying a few little statement. I know it takes real work and real some inward mind-body-soul checking and healing, from either past traumas, or just an unhealthy relationship with your body and food.

That is cornerstone to sustainable wellness. Because I think if people understand their true worth and understand wow, this is not about shaming my body, about food, or restricting my –punishing my body by withholding food and doing another diet to punish myself. This is really loving your body enough to nourish it with good foods and eating foods to feel great. I think once you start realizing you are a valuable creation, you'll randomly start making better decisions, because you value yourself. You'll randomly start speaking up, because you value yourself. That's not just about food, but it's speaking up in general.

I think that that is without a doubt, a cornerstone. It's really hard when you're talking about plant-based keto to get all of that in, but that's definitely – I hope I made that clear in Ketotarian, because that's without a doubt important.

[0:44:49.5] AS: Well no, and that's why I brought it up. I know that often, it's when you're studying functional medicine, there's so much to study. The stress piece is something. I wasn't saying that is a criticism of the book. I was actually saying you brought that up and I appreciate that. I'm curious, I just wanted you to expand upon it, because the book is focused on the recipes and the science behind it. Again, I think part of why I wanted to have you on is it's such a meet you where you are approach, which I never see in these books. It's like, "Do this plan," right? You give different things.

I just was curious how you see the difference between – because I think the same thing, whether it's Ketotarian or vegetarianism, it could be a diet for some people, but it's a lifestyle for others based on what you're saying if people value themselves. I see it more through once we have a life that we want to be healthy enough for, right? The incentive well is like, "I need the energy for my day to be clear focus. I have Dr. Will Cole I got to talk to," right? I mean, I'm not a drinker anyways, but if I was, "I can't have wine tomorrow night or that night. I need to be sharp."

[0:45:56.4] WC: Yeah, and you're absolutely right. I agree with you. I think that all of this – the difference between diet and lifestyle is owning it as part of in alignment with the life you want to live. Like you said, if you have a life worth living, if you love the things you've been given in life, or you want to work towards having the things that you want in life, then all of those food stuff is in alignment with that, because you have to have the energy and you have to feel great.

Because I see so many people kept back from the things they want to do, or a call to do, because of health problems. When they start realizing, "Well, the foods that I eat majorly impact my energy and me feeling great about myself and all this stuff." Then they start wanting to eat this way. They start wanting to eat more this way, at least, to start improving their health.

[0:46:44.0] **AS:** Yeah. For people listening, I also want to emphasize when I say that, I don't mean that your life is total shit, or it's totally fabulous. I just mean there's enough of the – you're getting a return on your investment, of your efforts, of meaning, of energy. Because I think most people are again, somewhere in between, right? They're not sick. They're not well. I think the same is emotionally as most people are really, they're doing some of the things they like and they have some of the foundations in place, but there's enough holding them back that making that extra effort to free up that energy from stress that you can then put into cooking or whatnot.

I just wanted to also clarify that, because a lot of times when we're stuck fighting food, we have an all-or-nothing mindset. It's part of why I wanted to do this series of saying these are all tools. Nothing is good or bad, it's about discerning. I love that you use the word alignment, because I use that all the time with my clients. It's about alignment, because there's not a value judgment there, right? It's like, "Is this aligned with me?" Because sometimes, eating a gluten-free flourless chocolate cake for my birthday is an alignment for me. Do I do that every night? No. I love the word alignment. We use that all the time on the show here and in my works. I'm so glad you used it.

[0:47:58.1] **WC:** Yeah, definitely. All of this should be using food, or light, or movement, all of this should be in alignment for you to live the life that you want to live, whatever that is. When someone doesn't have their physical health, or any part of their health, or emotional health, or spiritual health, I feel that there's things that really can keep people back.

[0:48:18.9] **AS:** Yeah. This episode was focused on physical hunger. Yet, I think you open it up to – I have found and again, I'm curious what you see with your patients and clients, but granted I'm – I work with a lot of people who struggle with inconsistency. I say that inconsistency – I wrote this for Dr. Kelly Bergen's community, where she's a friend of the pod and a friend of mine, about how inconsistency is an invitation into deeper healing.

I've found that people who when they get back to the natural plant-based, and in your case Ketotarian, or just back to food, it's that natural food is a reconnection to nature, including our own true nature, right? Nature is inherently cooperative and resilient and creative and beautiful. I think that food can be this wonderful doorway into starting to feel better and realizing, "Oh, the power," and I define power as choice is in my hands. It was for me a major catalyst to remembering my true nature and power, both emotionally and on a soul level. I love that you acknowledge that in the book that it's all of these things. We can start with being Ketotarian or more plant-based and with healthier fats. This happens in stages, right? Not overnight.

[0:49:36.3] WC: Definitely. Yeah. It's where you're at now. What can you start leaning into now? It doesn't have to be all or nothing. As long as it's incremental, as long as it's progressing and you're leaning into these things and not staying the same, I think that that works for a lot of people, because they can feel overwhelmed, like where the heck should I start with changing my foods, or changing anything in my life? If you just start with just leaning into the stuff, then you can really start feeling better. When you start feeling better, it motivates you, you want to keep going. That's my goal here.

[0:50:08.4] AS: Yeah. I always tell my clients, because in the work I do with them it's very experimental, it's very incremental. I said, part of getting out of this all or nothing, or extreme, whether it's orthorexia, or the other side of that, which is nothing and jumping from thing to thing is realizing that slow and steady wins the race. Because once you see it safe to do things gradually, then you – when you get the real experience of I'm getting results and it's safe to go at my own pace, then you can settle into that. What's the great – is it the Daoism that says, "To go fast, you go slow." The great paradox.

[0:50:46.3] WC: Yeah. That has also countercultural too. We think more is better and rushing through things – Yeah, we lose a lot of the beauty in life, I think, and doing

things right. Just being steady and methodical and systematic and enjoying the present moment.

[0:51:03.4] AS: Yeah. I love on one of your interviews, someone asked so tell me your typical day and you're like, "I live pretty simply." I'm like, "So do I." The healthier I get, the more I want to get back to simplicity. I always say nature is so elegant, like nothing is wasted or lost and yet, there's so much beauty. I feel there's so much beauty in simplicity. If you're really getting to the root of issues, things get simpler, not more complicated. I just loved your answer, because I was like, "I always feel boring." I joke I'm this 90-year-old woman, but I love it. I love my simple life.

[0:51:38.0] WC: Yeah. No, it's fun. Simple is fun. I know that the Netflix show with Marie Kondo now, I mean, I read her book years ago. I'm like, I think that more and more people are catching on that our excess and more of everything, or that's physical stuff, or just doing more stuff is unsustainable. Simplifying our life from physical things, but also mental, emotional clutter to, I think has to be the new way, because what we're doing now as a society is unsustainable.

[0:52:10.3] AS: Totally. I read her book up several years ago and watched the show and it totally inspired me to be a little bit more – I mean, I'm not a big shopper, but stick with the things that just bring you joy, instead of, "I'll just keep this around." One of the things though that I found at the end of her book was she's like, "You'll have all this space and feel wonderful." I was like, "I think that's the challenge in America though." People don't feel safe with so much space, right? That's why we're always busy. That's why we're always eating. It's just we need to fill things and I think that's a huge safe – I mean, I look at it through emotional safety. I mean, some people would look at it through a worthiness issue, or whatever. I think that's the challenge that she needs to tackle next is why do we not feel safe with simplicity.

[0:52:56.0] WC: Yeah, that's good. I think a follow up to that concept is have you read Eckhart Tolle before?

[0:53:02.1] AS: Yeah, yeah.

[0:53:03.3] WC: Yes. I think he talks about that as well, like this reactive mind and why we would not like that, why we don't like silence and stillness and space, is that the mind chatter is going on and we think we are that reactive mind. That's interesting concept. I wonder what Marie Kondo's opinion would be on that.

[0:53:23.0] AS: Yeah, yeah. I was just having this conversation actually with someone yesterday who was deciding whether or not to do Truce with Food. She was like, "I know what habits I need to change. I know why I'm not doing them." She's like, "I know it comes back to stimulus and reaction." I said yeah. I said, "What we work on Truce with Food is if you have unresolved trauma, the space between stimulus and reaction isn't safe. It's not safe to not have a response."

Even we can look at habits or what's on the surface, but what we have to do is heal that container there, that space. Then you can feel you have space to not respond, or you have space not to react and then you can choose differently in a different way to respond. She was like, "Huh." I was like, "Yeah." I got to flush that out more, because it sounds super heady. I think that's part of the issue is the root cause is we don't feel it's safe not to react right away.

As a side note and my husband might kill me for saying this, but he's an editor and a writer. He read some of the Eckhart Tolle book and the irony is he's like, "This could have been edited to one chapter."

[0:54:28.3] WC: Yeah, he's probably right. We need to hear things more than once, because of how quickly do we forget it? It's how quickly do we forget it?

[0:54:36.0] AS: I know. That's what I said to him. I'm like, "You have to give it at different angles, because these are theoretical things and we need to see practical applications." I thought it was really funny. He's also not into that genre, so it's – Speaking of tidying up, right? Does he need an edit? No. Eckhart Tolle has great stuff. I don't want to say that.

Well, thank you so much for being here Dr. Cole. Is there anything that I haven't asked, or that you think is important for people to know when they're entertaining the Ketotarian way of life? I highly recommend the book for the recipes alone. I'm not a keto person, but I am so excited about all these new recipes that I'm going to try. I'm also going to refocus on I think your book about the fasting of even a 12-hour fast.

My husband and I are pretty lazy when it comes to dinner and it's like, who's going to get hungry first is who's going to cook. We end up not eating until sometimes 8 or 8:30, then I don't get the whole 12 to 14-hour fast overnight. I'm like, "Okay, we got to start planning and now we have some recipes to do that, so that we're done with dinner by 7 and then I can eat at 9, so we get the fasting back in at least overnight."

[0:55:45.3] WC: Yeah. I think, even if someone's not fully keto, then they just start bringing in more plant-based and healthy fats into their life and go eating more Ketotarian in their life, that's how a lot of people are doing it on social media. They're leaning to it that way. I'm excited for everybody to read it and thanks for having me on and I really enjoyed this conversation.

[0:56:05.3] AS: Yeah. Where can people find more of you? We'll have all your links in the show notes, but if people want to find you directly, how can they find you?

[0:56:13.2] WC: Everything's that drwillcole.com. We have a lot of information on the site. We even have a plant-based keto guide, a free e-guide if people just want to get

that. Drwillcole.com. We offer free health evaluations. We see people around the world via webcam consultations if they want a functional medicine perspective on their case. Everything's that at drwillcole.com. That's also my handle @DrWillCole on Instagram and Twitter and Facebook.

[0:56:39.7] AS: Great. Will is W-I-L-L and Cole is C-O-L-E. Thank you so much for your time Dr. Cole.

[0:56:46.7] WC: Anytime. Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:56:51.7] AS: Thank you, health rebels for tuning in today. Have a reaction, question, or want the transcript from today's episode? Find me at alishapiro.com. I'd love if you leave a review on Apple Podcast and tell your friends and family about Insatiable. It helps us grow our community and share a new way of approaching health and our bodies.

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