

## Biohacking For Women

### Improving Your Health Without Sacrificing Joy & Happiness

With Aggie Lal

**James:** With biohacking, it seems that it's a little bit of an exclusive club for tech entrepreneurs that are men that have lots of excess money to spend, you know, and I feel like you are making biohacking more accessible for women. **What are the key differences that some of the more, let's say, current mainstream biohacking themes are, compared to how you approach it from a more women-centric perspective?**

**Aggie:** First of all, I'm glad that you say that, because every time I speak to women, they feel like biohacking is like golf, you know, full of rich white men, and they're amazing. And I love every single male biohacker. They're conscious. They're actually really inclusive, which I don't think golf, my experience from golf clubs, isn't exactly exclusive inclusive, but biohacking is just really good people. Because I feel like once you get to a certain level, financially, you'll realize, Well, it's not about money. It's about how I feel in my body. So, that's for sure.

And I realized that when I got into biohacking, it was quite lonely. And I was like, where are all the women? What's going on? And when I asked the women, they're like, Oh, it just feels super intimidating. So I was, Okay, how can we bridge those both worlds? Because I feel like between men and women, I believe that us women are naturally better biohackers. We're just naturally in tune with our cycle and kind of biohack whether we want or not, because we're just constantly trying to figure out like, what day of the cycle is it?

How am I feeling? How are my hormones? And we're bombarded with, 168 chemicals a day, and women are way more exposed to chemicals as men because of makeup, because of skincare products and hair products. And so I feel like we are way more likely to develop autoimmune issues, way more likely to have hormonal issues. So we need biohacking even more than men. And I think we're naturally better at this. So I was like, Wait, this is weird. We should own this space. Where is everybody? So I'm like, Okay, girls, let's do it.

And so I was on a mission to realize that, you know, they say, a confused customer doesn't buy. And I believe that an overwhelmed diploma doesn't buy a biohacker. It feels like a lot of times when you follow these biohackers that I do, they have all these fancy machines that are amazing. But you have to remember, these machines are just trying to mimic nature. So you're in Boulder, sure, you can do sauna and cold plunge or whatever, but you can just spend time in the sun, that has been, has got a really bad marketing team recently, so..

**James:** That's true. The sun's not got a good wrap at the moment.

**Aggie:** Yeah. We need to upgrade its PR because it's been pretty bad. And so people will come up with these really expensive alternatives for things that are ultimately in nature. If you think of every single biohack, it's like nurture, nutrition and nature. And we're just trying to boost what's available for us given how exactly the big food industry isn't, looking at for us.

**James:** Yeah. Well, I think that's a really mature idea, and I believe that, generally speaking, women are a lot more in touch with their intuition or more feminine energy, people. And that parlays into nutrition as well. I think that's a common thing that people feel. And I guess, something that we've always believed very strongly in, with the Food Matters sort of journey is this idea of biochemical individuality, right? So we're all separate, we're all diverse, we're all different. We all have unique genealogical histories. And then we're living in different places of the world interacting with different local foods. So there's so much nuance when it comes to individualism with women. There's also that added journey of the cycle, which you mentioned, right?

**And how is it that women should think about biohacking themselves for improved energy, wellness, immunity, et cetera, throughout the cycle?**

**Aggie:** I think first and foremost, realizing that we need to undo years of damage where we were brought up, or we grew up with this idea that cycle is a super annoying thing that's kind of gross. And it's kind of, for us to figure out and be almost ashamed of. And growing up, we don't have enough education for both men and women. So we're scared of the cycle and we think it's just like, if I can get rid of it, I'll do it.

So we go on birth control that numbs not only our intuition and our hormones and our biology, but ultimately connection to source. And, you know, our third eye and how we actually-- our superpower. It literally is our superpower. Being connected to yourself. To consciousness. And so when you think about it, you are like, Wow, take away the most valuable asset that a woman has, which is believing that who she is and what she can tap into is like a curse. It almost feels like a really, like a superhero villain story. Like spider, what is it? Superman with kryptonite. And it's like, Well, this is your superpower. It's not something that you should be embarrassed.

So I think just changing narrative where we educate women, it's like, Hey, your cycle changes and okay, you get PMS only because you're not supporting your hormones. You're not meant to get a PMS. This is not normal, but we made it so common and we have branded women as crazy b\*\*\*\*\*s that, for a week before their period are weird and aggressive and unpredictable. But we're only all of those things because our hormones are so out of whack that we feel like our body's doing its own thing.

And I think I would love to encourage women to just see that each part of the cycle has its own benefits. There's obviously the beginning of the cycle, the first 14 days where you feel like maybe perhaps you tend to do more and be better at it. And around ovulation you get that extra glow and you're stronger and it's easier for you to lose weight. But the remaining 14 days, sure. Maybe you do less, but, why is doing less a bad thing? Well, because we live in a really, I'm trying to be careful with my words because I'm well, five minutes in it, I'm already going after everybody.

But we just, it's a very interesting environment where we're so obsessed with doing. And, glorify doing and glorify getting things done and achieving that. For you to say, to slow down and this is like the two days for you to just sit down, take a breath, and focus on your intuition to think big because you can't make money off it. You can't quantify it. We're just going to tell women that this is really bad because they can't do as much. So they're kind of broken. So we get them on a pill so they can do more like, become those working machines.

In reality, our superpower is, yeah, I'm going to slow down for a week every month, not because, even if you don't feel like you need it, because like a freaking, even an iPhone needs a recharge. But it's more so that this is where you get the deepest downloads. I don't know about you, but I make sure now that my Sundays are quite quiet, like Jewish people do Shabbat, which is where you just realize, Oh okay.

The hassle can only get you that far and that extra 5% if you want to build generational wealth, if you want to come live in a place of joy and unity. And harmony is not going to come from doing more work or getting more things done, it's going to come from slowing down and removing the distraction. So you can be like, Ahh, and we get that naturally. Our hormones naturally, they get us into that state. We just have to celebrate and appreciate it.

**James:** I think what's beautiful about that is this idea that I think we all know individually at some level, especially those that are into meditation or manifestation or visualization, that there is a component of doing, and there's a component of being and there's a component of receiving. And it's often the being and receiving that's a little bit lower down the list. So..

**Aggie:** Because it's such a tricky one. I love that in my book I mentioned that there's fight or flight and rest and digest. But I really like calling it rest and receive. Because it's like, receiving is a skill. We get resentful. So we glorify women that are selfless, that are constantly giving and then they get resentful. And then you tend to see those women that get really, really... They accumulate all of these diseases and get resentful and get angry because they don't prioritize themselves. And it's like, we need to stop glorifying this idea that women should be selfless.

And they should really practice the skill of receiving and asking for help. And today was one of those days. I had for whatever reason, something energetically, I was like, Okay, it's a really tough

day. And I had to cry and I came to my husband and I was like, I need your help because I need to do X, Y, and Z. And I just don't want to push myself to that limit and it's okay to ask for help.

**James:** Yeah. In terms of your experience working with women and or men as well, just your experience in your research and the book that you've written and this sort of journey of your sort of personal biohacking journey... **What do you feel are the most common struggles that people are facing? Is it, you mentioned stress already, there's issues around the cycle, but what do you think are the biggest challenges that are most common that you're seeing?**

**Aggie:** I'd say lack of action and overwhelm with misinformation. So a lot of times because we have been outsourcing our power and our intuition to the government or you know, to doctors or whatever, we feel very confused as women because all of a sudden the very diet that we were recommended to do is not working for us. And so we're stuck in this limbo because we're like, Well, my doctor's telling me this. Instagram's telling me this, the book is telling me this. And at the end of the day, it all comes back to, Well, you're an individual. So what's going to work for me or for you James, it's not going to work for whoever's listening to this right now.

So I can tell you, I used to be vegan for eight years. I got really sick. Now I'm no longer vegan. I feel like now that I eat a steak, I feel like my brain just comes to power. But, that might not be the case for a lot of people. I know people that are happy juicing. I'm actually impressed and I'm like, I want to be that. Because it just sounds way cooler than smashing a ribeye, like I did for breakfast. But, I just know that it cannot go back to that. I just know that for my body, I need to incorporate meat. And I think that's really hard that we're really stuck about, am I following biohacking or am I following keto or Paleo or whatever it is. But, you see how these things make you feel. Because what's going to work for you, it's not going to work for me. And I was...

**James:** I totally agree. David Wolfe, sorry to interrupt you there, but David Wolfe said this thing, and I think it's so powerful, it was, when I interviewed him a number of years ago for one of the documentaries, he said, the best doctor, the best nutritionist in the world is you. And that you have everything within you to be able to determine what's right and what's wrong. But you need to get back into that state of cleanliness and connectedness. In order to be able to tap into that intuitive feel.

**Aggie:** A hundred percent. And I think at the end of the day, there isn't, I keep saying, I think fries are great, I think cakes are great. I think everything is great. It's what we did to those things that if you have a beautiful potato from your garden and put it on tallow or butter, I don't believe that, don't have starches, don't have this.

I'm like, I don't think that we were born to eliminate foods personally. I just think what we did to those foods and the vegetables that have no nutrients and the access to the vegetables, the

quality of the potatoes I can get from Costco is not exactly the same. So obviously that just is a spiral effect.

And we're, you know, I think the reason why I think the US is sicker than any other countries because, in Europe, you know, European. So when we go back back to Europe, it's like people care about quality more so they would walk or wait and shop once a week over to a farmer's market because, you know, or my mom drives for 45 minutes because there's this one lady that brings her own chickens and da da da da. And I'm like, Mom, this is crazy. It takes you an hour and a half to pick up one chicken. And meanwhile, we have Instacart and Uber Eats and it's just convenience. And so, that's like, the more convenient, the better. And that really is the nemesis of wellness. Totally.

Because we're overworked. We're overworked and because we're just basically doing things that drain our cell and we have fatigue and it's kind of like a catch-22. So of course you're fatigued if your mitochondria and your thyroid is completely exhausted because you're poisoning yourself with toxins 24/7 and use chemicals in the house for whatever they use. Every time you're in an Uber and they have those air fresheners.

**James:** Oh, I can't stand that. Oh, I'm like, the window straight down, head out.

**Aggie:** Yeah. I'm like, my dog outside. I'm like, (sniff) Huuh-huuh.

**James:** And can you imagine? Can you imagine spending, and this is no disrespect to anybody that does this, but I wouldn't, I couldn't imagine myself spending 24 hours in a car like that, or 12 hours a day driving.

**Aggie:** But you know what, so that's a great point because it's like, Why does an Uber driver do that? Because when you expose yourself to toxins over a period of time, you don't notice them anymore. Your body magically adapts.

But because I don't do, I haven't used perfume and I told my husband, I'm like, Babe, please no perfume at home. No fake deodorant, no fake, you know, we use some very good laundry detergents and artificial fragrances and what-not. So we would go to an environment that's full of it. I'm like, ahhh, but for some people they love it. They're like, Oh my God, it smells so good. And I'm like, Mmm yeah, no. I'm like..

**James:** Well those bathrooms you go into in the US and you walk along and they go, pchit-pchit, and they spray at you like on a timer, you're like, Whoa, what is this?

**Aggie:** And it's only the air. I think it's, that's the hardest thing.

**James:** So there's two things you mentioned that I want to sort of double click on a bit here. First is this idea of quality. I have lived in many different countries as well, including Europe, and they're much more focused on quality. And I find that if people sort of divorce themselves from dietary dogma in a way and subscribed to this, a phrase I heard somewhere, I forget where exactly, but this idea of being a qualitarian then..

**Aggie:** Yeah, I actually mentioned that in the book. I think it was Mark Hyman. Because I actually looked up who created the dogma.

**James:** But he was like, I thought he was the paleo vegan. What's this one?

**Aggie:** Yeah. But he did use the, I think when I was researching it for the book, it came up as him creating the words. So I might be wrong, but..

**James:** Great. Well, Mark's a dear friend. Love, love his work. And, yeah. So, to me that's the biggest thing. I think if people stop focusing on what to eat and more just on what are the things I love that are really great quality, like one ingredient, natural foods that they love and, or simple meals. I think it's such a shortcut to love that idea.

**But then you said nothing is inherently bad and I agree with you, but what we've done to it is bad. So like fries and cakes or burgers or whatever it might be. If you look at the modern interpretation, the real difference is the quality of the ingredient, first of all, like you said, but also the chemicals. So, and I'm finding out further along, that the main issue I feel is chemicals. Do you think this is the main root, root, root, root, root issue of the problem people have, with interacting with food?**

**Aggie:** I think when people say like, Oh my God, how do you start fixing your hormones? And they're like, What's the supplement? And I'm like, instead of adding things, I would just remove things. Because your body is just so tired from constantly trying to protect you from everything you're bombarding yourself with. And so I 100% agree. I think that would be something that is just so easy to replace.

And I always say like, What are your staples? If it's coffee? If it's you say, I can't imagine my life without coffee or avocado toast. Make sure that those things are just good quality. Just the very things. Because if you have something every now and then, not a big deal. It's the compound effect of like, Okay, I have a moldy coffee first thing in the morning with a skim milk that's super cheap. Because I go to Starbucks, with vanilla syrup served in a plastic cup. Probably not ideal.

Can you replace that one thing that you really love with something that's really good quality, and just do that? Because I think it's really overwhelming for people to think that they need to start doing X, Y, and Z. But, just one staple that you have every day. I love my bread and butter. I have

a good rice flour bread that I buy from my local bakery. I have it every day. And I make my own butter because I was like, I have so much of it, I want to make my own butter. I got a little butter machine and I hand churn it.

And it's so fun. And I'm like, Okay, these are the two things I invested in because it is just something I want to have every day. And not feeling like cheating or not cheating. And, I always call myself a bio slacker because I'm a foodie. I love to eat. I don't believe in restrictions in that way of, when I see people, I have four things all the time and I'm fine. I'm like, Oh, that's such a sad life. I don't want to live that life.

**James:** I know I'm such a, I've figured out in my maturing years that I'm actually so much into great food exploration. So have the freedom to explore a lot of different beautiful types of foods at different times of year, but focusing on quality, there's no restriction there. I love that.

**Aggie:** Yeah. So one thing I also like, just from actionable steps, the biggest source of seed oils, which is obviously, these are very inflammatory. So despite what the mainstream's telling you, you want to avoid them. Like soybean oil, canola oil, number one source in your kitchen would be all the condiments. So, whether it's mayo or ketchup or salad dressing. I often get people really upset when I say, the chances are that you think you're doing the right thing by having lettuce with dressing.

Those salad bought at stores at Starbucks and having an oat milk latte because dairy is bad. But instead you're just giving yourself a massive glucose spike. The lettuce, or the spinach is full of glyphosate and then you smother it with soybean oil and then you're surprised why you're puffy, and you're still hungry. That's the ironic thing. So, my recommendation always is, I have these jars, I got them from Amazon, they're super cheap, and once a week I make dressings for the week. So I've looked up four of my favorite dressings. One is the Caesars, one is Tahini, mustard, balsamic vinegar, and mayo, making your own mayo. So easy and cheap. And you literally just need eggs.

And that's pretty much it, like mustard. So I make them, and those jars, like a little handheld thing, and make it convenient for yourself, obviously. You can't, you're not going to be making a dressing from scratch every single day. But if you batch make them in jars like this, and we have them for a whole week for a family. And that would be a good first step. Like, avoiding seed oils, and just no seed oils in your kitchen.

**James:** Yeah. It seems like, I remember early on some of my most impactful early research was John Robbins' *Diet for A New America*. It was a classic book back in the day. And it was very much about plant-based eating. And it was showing that increased meat and dairy consumption was resulting in increased disease. But there was two other things happening at the same time.

One was we were increasing vegetable oil consumption and fried foods and putting it in everything.

The second was we were doing more genetically modified corn and corn syrups. And the third thing, it was actually more than that, was that we were increasing our consumption of animal products that were eating really bad quality foods. So the animals were sick. And then, when you start to look back at it, you're like, Well, what if all those animals got a natural diet, lived a natural life? What if we didn't do the vegetable oils? And what if we didn't add all these GMOs and chemicals? Maybe we would've been okay. So this, I don't know, it gets my wheels turning.

**Aggie:** Do you know, Weston Price?

**James:** Of course.

**Aggie:** So I mean, that's the reason that I stopped being vegan. Because when you read his book and he says, in every culture when women wanted to be fertile, they would need to eat organ meat. And fat, fat from animal fat, basically. Whether it was lard, whether they would have the juiciest, because we're naturally wired for fat. Like, the ribeye is the best part. And then we all of a sudden, on top of everything you're saying, we started eating super lean meat.

So, we would never historically have a super dried chicken, like chicken breast 24/7. Because it's not what we were originally eating as a species. It would be, you would have hearts and you would have liver like beef, liver and butter. And I think the diet has changed dramatically. And I think, not to say that lean meats are bad for you, but I'm just saying that it's like, we have been so afraid of animal fat, on top of that. So we're eating more meat, but we're afraid of the organ meat, which is the best part, that if you see the decline of eating organ meat, it's kind of incredible.

**James:** We've gone from being hunter-gatherer gardeners as Daniel Vitalis talks about, to just being homonous-like domestication version species. And, this is away where we package everything and we strip out all the original organic components of it. It's such an obscure idea. And so it's a big experiment like modern civilization. But, I feel like it's giving us a lot of feedback. One of the points of feedback, I think is most relevant for a lot of people, is their relationship to their gut and their digestion.

And I feel like, one of the most common complaints people have is around gut health, and indigestion, and bloating, and gas. And then they also potentially have autoimmune conditions, which could be a result of the leaky gut, and the body sort of attacking itself. So, from a sort of biohacking perspective, **how do you approach the gut and what are the sort of do's and don'ts when you think about that?**



**Aggie:** I think we're still just at understanding the tip of an iceberg of what gut is. Because even if you, I also got to speak to a lot of doctors that realize, I'm like, well, there's so many, we don't even know what a good or perfect gut is meant to look like because you're so diverse when you go to Africa, to Asia. It's so innate to the environment that we live in that it might feel like there's the fecal matter transplant where you just transplant someone else's gut bacteria. And so..

**James:** But wait, this PS, have you done that or not?

**Aggie:** I would love to, but where?

**James:** I don't know. I heard they were doing it somewhere in Africa, but I don't know.

**Aggie:** I'm always super down, honestly. I feel like it's such a, I mean..

**James:** I remember when I first read that research, I'm like, Damn, that is something that's not your average sort of probiotic. That's really something altogether different.

**Aggie:** But it works, right?

**James:** It does work. I mean, there's results.

**Aggie:** And so when you realize that, I'm like, Okay, cool. You can take all the probiotics all you want. You know, growing up in Poland we always had to have sauerkraut and pickles and that was a very big part of our diet. Because you ate very seasonally growing up, so you were dying the entire winter. Because it was like, Oh my God, these vegetables are so boring. I want to live in America where you can have everything 24/7.

I think even that alone, eating seasonally, we know for a fact that fruit and vegetable that has been grown in a short distance from where you are and it's seasonal, has much more higher nutrients. They're nutrient dense. So that means that, you don't have to have as much of it. They say you need to have four carrots to have the same amount of nutrients as a carrot a hundred years ago. Is it the reason we overeat, is it because all those cereals and homogenized dairy creates inflammation in the gut, and there's so many question marks around all of this. But I think again, we never, I don't know, I didn't grow up being educated about my gut and how I can support it.

**James:** And I think that more and more of us are disconnected from seasonality, like you said, that's for sure true. I do love that about Europe. When you're there, you go to the markets to get your food, or the supermarket's practically only stock in-season produce, for the most part. It's more common. Whereas, true in the US, it's very diverse.

**Aggie:** Very. When I go to Poland, I go in June, everyone's eating asparagus. And a month later I'm like, can I have some asparagus? They're like, Oh, it's not available. I'm like, No, but what do you mean? I'm happy to pay more. And they're like, No matter how much you want to, you can't get it.

**James:** Yeah, you can't get it. Exactly. That's it. It's so true. I have a lot of family in Holland as well, it's the same, you have asparagus soup. Asparagus soup is everywhere and then, a month or two later, it disappears. No more.

**Aggie:** Yeah. That's it.

**James:** Unlike here, there's this fascination here in the US and I would say, developed west in general, there's this fascination with everything, everywhere. All at once. Availability. And avocados year round, citrus year round, asparagus as long as you as you want. It's wild, really. And it's a huge experiment.

**Aggie:** Yeah, and a lot of times, we don't even know. We don't even know. If you ask a person, I'm kind of tempted to do this experiment. Go to a local Costco and say, Hey, do you know it's August, September, which one, which vegetables do you think are in season now?

**James:** In season. Yeah.

**Aggie:** And I feel like most people would be really confused right now. Especially in a place like California. I'm like, Well, I don't know. I feel that would be like a big, shock for them to realize. I'm like, Oh, well this isn't all year round. And, we are just so disconnected and so distracted by other things that we don't even, you're not even curious, which I think in just a beautiful invitation. Because I don't want to talk badly about US, but, just to give you guys, for all the Americans listening to this, in Europe, they are like an investigator, "Where's this from", right? Like, because it can very much, where things are coming from and the quality of them, matter. People just, it's part of the culture.

**James:** Sure. And can I sort of revisit something you mentioned a few comments ago, and it was around your experience with Weston Price. And, I've been familiar with his work for a number of years and early on when I first came into nutrition, it was like peak raw food days. Everyone was vegan raw food, you probably remember this era? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Blasted very much. It was great. It gave us a lot of awareness, a lot more connection to food that we didn't have before.

It helped us understand how to focus on cleansing. But then, I love Daniel Vitalis. He says, if you keep cleansing, it's like taking the furniture out of your house. You got nowhere to live. So it's this idea that you do need to rebuild as well. And, I've had the fortune of spending quite a bit of time

in the last seven years on this Pacific Island in sort of the South Pacific region called Vanuatu, near Fiji. And they are living in a traditional way. And some of the outer islands that I had the opportunity to visit, they hadn't seen a white person in like three and a half, four years.

And many of the children had never seen somebody. And you spend time with them and how they eat and there's very little distractions with the outside world. And they eat in a very intuitive way. They eat sometimes a lot, sometimes very little. They are sort of opportunistic and seasonal in terms of is it a piece of a fruit or not, or a seed or a berry, or is it a bird or is it an animal, or is it a fish or a lobster, or is it a tuber, is it a root? But one of the things that I find interesting is that, often they are just naturally fasting.

Occasionally, whether it's in the mornings or sometimes a whole, most of the day or sometimes, they have more access to food. So it's very natural for us to just not overeat. And then, fasting's obviously taken a huge turn and everyone's into it at the minute, but then there's a nuance I think, that needs to happen between people and how they fast. **How do you sort of think about fasting in terms of biohacking, in particular for men and women and then hormones, and how do you feel about it all?**

**Aggie:** Oh, it just requires so much context that I feel like we often think of something that's good and then we adopt it and think that more of it is better. That's, I think like the western attitude, and I think fasting every now and then, I think it's super beneficial. I still fast. I think it makes me feel incredible, especially these longer fast. I do think that if you combine that with an endless information that women are bombarded with in terms of what they're supposed to be eating, from my experience working with women, they tend to turn fasting into a starvation or overeating the moment they get access to food.

And I think there's a psychological level that it's really hard to explain for someone who's never been in the head of a woman who's trying to just, from as long as she remembers, is she's meant to be skinny. And I think it's like, I have so much empathy. I don't think I have a girlfriend who hasn't had a form of eating disorder, whether it's anorexia or bulimia or orthorexia. So even within my community, I feel like 80% of women that I'm close with have either had anorexia or bulimia.

So, how do you navigate that and just tell them like, Hey, do you know that eating every now and then is actually good for you, when they tend to over, under eat protein and already are obsessing. So I think it's starting with having a healthier relationship with food, would be a great good start. Because I feel, if you come from a place of already unhealthy relationship with food, that cannot be super beneficial. And you might be losing muscle. And I'm big on protein, and big on muscle and I think it's just, we want to make sure that you still hit your calories.

And I think sometimes, it's really good for weight loss, fasting, and autophagy and what-not. But I feel, that tends for people not to, they tend to under-eat protein, or they tend to obsess over food

or overeat after. And that's because it's just like, the access to food that we have makes it really hard for us to fast. All these chemicals are making us really hungry and then when we do eat, we tend to overeat. And so I just want to, whoever has someone listening to this that have tried fasting and failed or felt like it was too hard or they ended up being way more after, I just want you to tap into the empathy and grace for yourself because the environment that you live in and the constant brainwash that's telling women or men that, losing weight just becomes, it makes it a way more complicated in conversation than just, it's good or bad. If that makes sense.

**James:** Yeah, absolutely. And I think there's so much nuance when it comes to healing. And I think this is why, in the matured story of the Food Matters research and all the experts that we've spoken with over the years for our films and different projects, this idea that we're all different, and it's about learning how you are and then from that place, finding what works for you at different times.

**Aggie:** And I feel in an ideal environment, when I speak to a lot of people, those who work with patients on a daily basis have a very different perception of fasting than those who just fast for themselves. Because 100%, if you have a super healthy relationship with food, 100% please fast. It's amazing. You really, I have early dinner so I don't skip breakfast because I work out in the morning, so I would have dinner around 4:35. That's just my way of helping me sleep better. But I feel like, if you are still struggling with a healthy relationship with food, I think there are other ways that you can incorporate it, 12 hours is a minimum, but I feel we can focus on other things to then progress to fasting.

**James:** So, question with regards to these sort of women that you have experience with, or if you worked with people professionally that have a connection to potential eating disorders and they can be as extreme, like you said as anorexia, but I think there's many subtle variations of an eating disorder that maybe more people experience than less.

**And so what do you think sits underneath that? Do you have any sort of theories about what creates more of this? Is it the constant pressure of a culture that expects so much from people, or is it more trauma informed that something happened to these women or men in their past? Or, is it an environment thing just where we live, just the access, like you said at the start, you can press a button on your phone and have anything delivered to your house in 30 minutes. What's contributing, do you think?**

**Aggie:** I think ultimately for us women, as early. I grew up in Poland and I don't know what it's like exactly to grow up in the US, but even in Poland, I remember being called chubby. Looking back at these photos when I was 3, 4, 5, I didn't think I was chubby. I just maybe was a bigger, bigger child. Definitely not a chubby one. But my parents called me teddy bear or a little pasta because they were like, Oh my God, you're so fat. As if it was meant to be cute.

So you are often, especially as women. And then you're like, Oh my god, time to lose some weight. And all of these comments that you grew up with that you ultimately see, Okay, my self worth or how I'm being perceived on this planet is linked to how skinny and how hot I am. That's just the society. Okay, like the younger you are, the skinnier the better, almost. And so we have this, it creates a really unhealthy relationship with food where most women don't really eat.

So we start to have smoothies and coffees and try to, we're really afraid of eating real food because I know that for me, for about up until my thirties, I was scared of having a proper meal because I was worried that that's going to make me fat. And that was the biggest fear for me as a woman. Because I didn't want to be fat. And then you talk about, like we constantly we're mean to bigger people. We think they're lazy or they're not disciplined, they're just not true. So we basically compartmentalize those people as not as successful or whatever it might be.

And that's just not the case. And so I think that that just right off the bat, especially for us women, and I think a lot of women listening to this can relate that, it creates a really odd relationship with food because it just creates something that we should be counting calories and our macros and this and that. And even it takes you five minutes on Instagram to look at nutritional advice. That's definitely my algorithm of women that are clearly underweight and they don't really ever mention that, Hey, I haven't had a period in five years, but I have a six pack. So that's all good. And only then, you realize that most of these women just don't have a period because fertility isn't something that is celebrated.

**James:** Yeah. And if you think about fertility, I heard about this recently, even having some larger availability in your hips area, let's say, that's probably the most politically correct way to say it, is that that's extra DHA stores, essential fatty acids that are used during the whole process of holding a baby and giving birth and it's such a miracle. And yeah, then we have these really obscure ideas of beauty, and then the fashion industry seems to perpetuate it further.

With the extremely skinny women walking these catwalks. And then this becomes the view of beauty. And I think we've prioritized these externalities so much in our lives. And like you said, at the top of this call, when you lose your health and then you start to realize how valuable feeling is. It doesn't matter about things. It's, how do I feel? Am I strong? Am I powerful? Do I feel like I have just dominion over my body?

**Aggie:** But imagine if we told women that they're fine as they are, and they just remove the processed food so they don't feel like..

**James:** Yeah, that's the second bit, though. You got that. You got to get that bit right too, because it's a double-edged sword. Sorry. It's like, if they're worried about this and then they're trying to eat well, but they're still eating processed foods, it just makes the whole situation worse.

**Aggie:** Yeah. And I think it's just for every single woman listening to this, if you feel like losing weight is difficult, it's because, you live in a society that's built to make you fat and sick. So, if you feel like you're overweight and sick, well great. You live in a society that's designed that way. So, have some empathy for yourself and realize, Okay, this isn't an ideal situation, but there's a way out just simplifying things and just removing things and just eating normal food really makes it quite challenging to overeat over time. And then build this beautiful relationship with food and nutrition. And you'll realize you eat for nutrients so you can have energy so you can change the world and not be put in a box by patriarchal system that is telling you that you're just as valuable as hot you are, because you're not.

**James:** There you go sister, she just said it, laid it down. Can I get an amen and a who or whatever it is. Okay. Super. Yeah. So that's amazing. And I think your idea of simplification is super powerful. And I've referenced him a few times already, because I still have this somewhat reverence for David Wolfe and his whole journey of life. But he said one thing to me once, and he said it multiple times since, but it was this idea that really, the greatest thing about nutrition is, there is a very simple biochem.

So it's very, very simple mechanical thing happening. You're choosing this food or that food. It's quite unique in that perspective. Many other practices around the mind is like, you can't choose one thought or the other. There's a million versions of grey in between, and you're in this, you know, it's very difficult. But in nutrition there is really. He said do you eat goji berries or you eat deep fried chips, or you eat like. And so how is it that people, **can you talk about this idea of developing a better relationship with food? And if one of the issues is these afflictions around diet choices, how do you start with building a relationship with food better?**

**Aggie:** By pausing, right? And just like stepping out of fight or flight. That's number one. And I think, like I said, when there's some staple that you really like, how can I replace it with something slightly less processed? And just pausing, and I'm like taking a deep breath. I'm like, Okay, where am I rushing? What is it all for? Like, the urgency or the illusion of urgency of feeling like life is just so fast. I can definitely relate, but also sometimes when you just pause and like, Okay, what am I doing this for?

What's my goal? How long do I want to live? What kind of life do I want to live? What's the legacy I want to leave behind? Is legacy going to be a healthy family or maybe all of these things might be too overwhelming to think because I just want to feel good in my body or not feel s\*\*t. I feel like a lot of people have this wake up call where they're not feeling really well and that that's where you basically was like, I just don't want to feel s\*\*t. Which is how I got into wellness, which is a good enough reason to get into wellness, and starting to connect with yourself and saying like, Okay, cool. What can I do to just, yeah, feel better. Not even good, just better.

**James:** Great title for a book. *How Not to Feel S\*\*t*. Yeah,

**Aggie:** Yeah. It really is.

**James:** People would be like, I'll buy that. I don't want to feel like s\*\*t. Yeah. So you spoke previously about stress and you said something about rest and digest. And I've heard, Dr. Libby Weaver, who I love, she's an amazing sort of hormone stress nutrition expert, out of Australia and New Zealand. And she talks about this idea of rest, digest, repair. So when you're in this parasympathetic state, you're able to be in that process. What's taking us out of that state in the modern world? And you've told women just then or people in general to pause, which is beautiful. **But, what else can we do to get out of that state?**

**Aggie:** Yeah, I mean, number one, it's just like the human pacifier or adult pacifier. It's constantly, I feel like you can't spend five minutes with yourself, because you need to be distracted because we don't know what it's like to be bored anymore. I used to get bored, pre-iPhone. You probably remember those times as well where you just stood in line for 40 minutes or you waited for a train or you rode on a train and it was just what you did without staring at the phone.

And now you don't create any space, any pause for inspiration to come to you. Yeah. So I'm not surprised that you don't know what to do with your life, or that you're confused, or that you're tired because it's constantly consuming. It's like, when you stop consuming your coffee, then you're consuming your Instagram and then you're consuming TikTok and then Netflix and then you're consuming your dinner. It's like, there's no space or room if you're constantly pouring and it's pouring things into a vessel that you're not creating a space for the vessel to just expand and make room for your greatness. In a way,

**James:** it's beautiful, I agree. And I think that word, that term you used human pacifier, that hits a little different when you said that. I've never heard anybody say that. And certainly, not one children that have wanted to be separated from their pacifier.

**Aggie:** But we do the same. You know, it was just like, no one would feel slightly uncomfortable. I'm bored, I'm tired, I don't know what to do. Like immediately have the phone.

**James:** Yeah. And then that phone is like the entire world in your pocket. And this is one of the biggest issues I have with the modern story of humanity. I had a spiritual awakening, it was while, then I started getting into nutrition and making films. And our first project went on to Netflix. It was called Food Matters. And then there was multiple films after that and then a TV channel. And I started to realize, that modern mainstream media is essentially like death, pain, fire, destruction and distraction.

And when you put them all together, it's like a mind virus in a way. I've heard Elon just recently talk about this idea of woke mind virus and I'm just using that term differently. Like it's a type of

mind virus. This type of negative news cycle, in a way, or destructive news cycle. And it's become so pervasive that I think it's like, toxins were this horrible thing to food right now. It's going to be distractions, this horrible thing for humanity. But it's this incredible, like bicycle for the mind. **How do we approach integrating this tech in a more harmonious way? How do you approach it? I mean, you're obviously...**

**Aggie:** I just got to flip a phone.

**James:** Get a flip, but you're like, Oh, you're famous on Instagram, Aggie. **How do you do it? Do you get someone else to do all your posting for you?**

**Aggie:** No, actually I don't. And I edit every single thing myself as well. So I'd never outsource that, which I think I should at this point. But I just, that's the one thing I really enjoy. I love editing videos. Because the biggest challenge is that, the most valuable information requires context and time. And people don't have time. And I'm like, How can I pack the gist of hormones or biohacking in 10 or 15 seconds? It's a big challenge. And everyone I hired so far, are just failing. And I think they're amazing experts and doctors out there that take their time and deliver context, but they're not hitting the younger audience.

And so my biggest goal is like, How can I take all of that seminar that I listened to for five hours and just condense it for someone, to 10 seconds or 15 seconds, to just kind of understand. So it has to be catchy, because we're competing with marketing experts that are just bombarding you with like, get the Cheetos. Like, this is Snickers. So, this is our competition. And I feel like, how can you reach the masses? It's so easy when you're in a bubble, in a big city to feel like this is common knowledge, but the real work is in people that don't really have nutritional interest and you have to introduce them to a couple super simple ideas without feeling like using the word mitochondria because that's, they're gone, that's it.

**James:** Yeah. That's true.

**Aggie:** So that's the biggest challenge.

**James:** I can appreciate that. And I feel that one of the things that we really have encouraged a lot of the Food Matters community to do more recently is to take time to study nutrition and give context to the situation so you can really see things in a much more holistic fashion. And then when you're out in the world interacting with advice from governments or anywhere, you're like, Okay, I can integrate what I feel is right. So I think it's powerful. And probably the other side to my sort of comment before was that, media also has this incredible power for good. And this is like, having access to our phone and we can get this information that would've been held from us previously.



So the idea of the internet is the democratization of information, it is amazing. But, how do people filter that and develop a wisdom so that they can contextually take in what's right and leave what's not. And just like, that's a future that I'd like to see more of. And that's why I'm so involved in my conscious media. It's my set of mission now on earth it's like, how do we awaken more people to the power of their own individual potential through reprogramming, what goes in here?

**Aggie:** And I think, to challenge even that, I would just say, I think we are innately already have that within us. It's just we've been told otherwise. So the whole school system is, you do this because they tell you, not what feels right and then you have to undo. Gaea would have to undo 20, 30 years when when you're young, you're in like theta brainwaves, super like suggestible. So it's really hard to undo all the subconscious beliefs that you were bombarded with Disney and what-not. That kind of ultimately tells you that you're not wise enough and you don't know what's best for you. Ask the doctor, ask the teacher.

**James:** It's true. And imagine if we had more programming about ancient wisdom keeper traditions around the world that were disseminating, like updated, sort of contextualized ideas on the Vedas or these, incredible.

**Aggie:** And I mean, so just like a little bit more reverence about Chinese medicine or,

**James:** Absolutely.

**Aggie:** also rite of passage. We all just got rid of that and all of a sudden we're just these adults and kids in an adult body that can't take ownership and responsibility. So they're going to blame the government. Oh, but the government. And then we're like, that's your freaking responsibility to find out what's best for you.

So stop blaming people and step out of victim mentality, which is what you do when you become an adult. Take responsibility for yourself and stop expecting other people to do it for you. However, what do we do? We ultimately don't have the right of passage. We don't have this idea how to step into our ownership and take responsibility for ourselves because we don't have that ritual anymore. And so we're still quite easy to blame and easy to be just quite big children about a lot of things.

**James:** Well then the pacifier thing fits that, doesn't it? We're adult children with our little pacifier on, watching what's happening in the world. Yeah, I think it's very true that these rites of passage are so important. You know, I want to riff on that a little bit now, if you don't mind. So, I have an adopted son who's part from a Polynesian, remote island in the Pacific. An incredible boy, so grateful to be his father and he's now graduating high school.

**Aggie:** Which island?

**James:** So from Solomon Islands, which is near Vanuatu. And he has a family there. And he and I went on a voyage before he turned 18 to sort of, we went to Bali together and I'd spent a lot of time there during Covid. I was mostly there. And then there was this incredible sort of tour we went on where we did diving in the middle of the ocean. He had to learn how to give a foot massage from my favorite, one of my favorite practitioners there.

We got tattoos together, but like hand poke, traditional way. And then he went and sat in a men's circle with some friends of mine there and went into these meditation practices. And then we went and surfed these huge waves on this remote island. And I don't know, it was just, it was a modern interpretation of something. And obviously, just.

**Aggie:** Beautiful.

**James:** Yeah. Grateful to be there.

**Aggie:** You don't have to like, you know, it's ultimately after what you want to do with it, but I think it's just super beautiful that no one's going to do it for you. And just giving him that opportunity to see that like, Okay, this is it. You're an adult now.

**James:** Yeah, let's go. This is it. So my question then, on the back of that share was really about how can we sort of maybe take ourself through a rite of passage no matter what our age and what does that look like in the modern world if you're a woman in your forties or in your thirties or twenties, or if you're a man in your fifties? **Is there a modern, older age version of a rite of passage we could go through?**

**Aggie:** I think so. 100%. And I think it's like to or to, or the original point of what does it even mean to us? For me, my rite of passage I sailed across the Pacific. So I spent a whole year sailing and connecting with nature and doing something. I highly recommend something that's connected to nature because it just humbles the hell out of you. Because we're quite arrogant when we live in a city. We feel like we're the dropped up. And then you spend actual time in nature and you're like, Okay, respect. I will 100% bow to the power of it. But again, it doesn't take that long.

Like with chatGPT, you can literally go, give me a 20 histories behind rite of passage across whether it's, you know, I'm heading to Africa. There's beautiful rite of passage there with the Messiah people. Like, someone suggested the 12-hour walk. To go on a 12-hour walk without a phone because there's this idea that like, Oh my God, if I leave the house for 12 hours with a phone, like, it's scary. And so I wouldn't, I would just encourage you to just simple research.

You don't have to read multiple books, see what's been done, ask yourself what's the metaphorical tiger that you want to kill because it's the scariest thing you can possibly do, whether it's spending time alone, whether it's going to a meditation retreat, whether it's ending up

a situationship and taking more ownership, or starting a business or taking ownership of your health.

**James:** And I think that life often gives us these rites of passage, too. Often it's through an illness or some sort of change of life status. Where there..

**Aggie:** Oh, 100%.

**James:** And so these things change and then you're forced into this moment of reckoning and, yeah. So that's really powerful. **What would you like to leave our audience with today, Aggie?**

**Aggie:** Well there's so many good ones. I'd say, they'll listen to anything we just said. This is just two people having a deep conversation and ultimately questioning everything that we know about the life. So I would just say for the next week, put a question mark behind every single thought you think you have about nutrition. Bread is good, is it? Is bread good? I don't know. Just leave it open. There's no right or wrong answer. Ultimately, it's just like that curiosity, that open, that questioning everything that just really opens. I feel like a new part of your brain that ultimately helps you reconnect with your intuition because you just start asking questions and wait for answers.

**James:** I love it. Aggie, thanks so much for your time and thank you for the resonant frequency that you give to the food, health, and transformation space. It's a breath of fresh air and love all that you share. So make sure everyone listening, go follow, listen along. You're a force for good. Thank you. And yeah, looking forward to potential deeper conversations as you discover more.

**Aggie:** Yeah, thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate it. And you're such a great human. I'm so excited to connect deeper and just, like a little onion that keeps unraveling. That's super cool that we have that South Pacific connection there.

**James:** Yeah. Peace. Thank you.

**Aggie:** Thank you, thank you, thank you.

[illegible]

[illegible]



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