

Stressed, Overwhelmed, Burned Out?

5 Science-Backed Strategies to Relieve Stress & Calm Anxiety

With Liana Werner-Gray

Hey guys, it's James here from Food Matters, and we are back today with an awesome masterclass interview for you with a dear friend of mine, Liana Werner-Gray. She's an expert in the topic of using food to heal your body. She's written many books on this topic. One of the books and the topics that we're going to be talking about today is *Anxiety-Free With Food*. She's also written *Cancer-Free with Food*, and she's the author of *The Earth Diet*. You can follow her on Instagram or Facebook or check out her website. She has very, very, very practical tips for helping you to deal with these conditions. And today we're going to be talking about five nutrients that can really support anxiety in the most powerful way.

I know that this is a huge issue. The WHO has warned us that mental health conditions like anxiety, depression are going to be the biggest challenges we face in the future. So understanding what Liana has to share in this interview with you can be such a breakthrough. So get your notebook or the workbook out. Take lots of notes and I can't wait to see you at the end. Peace.

So how did you end up getting involved in anxiety and stress in this particular line of study from where you came from into this new sort of direction?

Yeah, so, this was at a time when I had healed so much. I had healed the 3.7 centimeter tumor. I had healed chronic fatigue. And I thought, okay, my nutrition is set, you know, I created *The Earth Diet*, I was eating natural from earth. I cut out all the suspects like gluten and refined sugar, and I was experiencing anxiety. And I was wondering why. And I thought, okay, is this anxiety coming from mental, emotional, spiritual, or is it purely physical?

And I started speaking to a functional doctor, Dr. Cohen, that I was working with at the time, and she's like, I think we should do a, some blood tests on you because she said, I think it could just be completely physical, it could be completely just your chemistry. And I thought that was interesting because I'd always connected anxiety to just having stress or being, you know, emotional or hormones or something like that. So we did the blood test and sure enough, I was deficient in something that if we're deficient in, one of the symptoms is anxiety.

So I was deficient in omega-3 fatty acids and I couldn't believe it because, you know, I was eating lots of hemp seeds and chia seeds. I was mostly plant-based. I was eating lots of avocado,

walnuts, but still I was deficient. And something I wasn't eating a lot of was wild fish and a lot of animal products.

So she said, start incorporating some, some fish oil supplements. And at the time I really didn't want to be having fish every single day, but I thought, you know, anything is better than this anxiety that I'm experiencing. And it just felt like in my nervous system, in my body, it just felt like jittery. It just felt, it didn't feel good. I mean, a lot of people know what anxiety feels like, so I thought, okay, I'll try it. And within three days of me just taking fish oil supplements, the anxiety had reduced immensely, almost gone.

And my brain just felt more whole, more stable, more focused. I couldn't believe it that a small deficiency created such a big issue in my body. And so it clicked for me. I thought, wow, there's a lot of other people out there thinking what's wrong with me? I have anxiety when it could purely just be a physical deficiency. And so I started going down the rabbit hole of research and I found out that there's actually five deficiencies total that if someone is deficient in they will be experiencing anxiety.

And so I wanted to share this with everyone and tell the world like, hey, before you go on anxiety meds, check your blood to see if you're deficient in anything. It can be a quick fix with some foods and some supplements. And so the other deficiencies are, so the first one is omega-3 fatty acids, the other deficiency is magnesium and then B vitamins, amino acids as well. If we're deficient in amino acids, we can have anxiety. And iron deficiency. So yeah, I just said all five there. So those are the deficiencies we want to look out for.

So what's really interesting I find about this discovery of yours is that while making *Food Matters*, I was interviewing a lot of these integrative medical doctors and orthomolecular practitioners and they were talking about the same idea that a lot of mental health conditions, depression, anxiety, et cetera, can result, can be the result of deficiencies in the body, which I think is fascinating because it fits this sort of modern medical paradigm that something's broken, there's a pathway or something that's not working, and we can take something to fix it.

And I think that's a beautiful idea that we like. Obviously drugs are a short term fix and potentially dangerous and like Charlotte Gerson says, always toxic to the liver, but nutrients on the other hand are like the currency of the body. So it works with us.

So let's talk about omega-3s first. I know that Udo Erasmus, one of the teachers in the Certification Program that we have, is a huge proponent of omega-3s. He's popularized them as a nutrient globally and almost everybody knows about their importance from an anti-inflammatory perspective. But let's talk specifically about their importance for mental health and anxiety.

Yeah, there's been a ton of studies and research on omega-3 fatty acids for depression, anxiety, PTSD. Any mental health type of situation. So omega-3 fatty acids help to stabilize the brain, and the brain is fat predominantly. So the brain needs really healthy fats to feel stable. And if we're not, it's kind of like that feeling when we eat refined sugar and our brain just feels all fluttery, kind of like a butterfly just fluttering all over the place. The fats, when we get enough healthy fats, it helps to stabilize and create this really calm brain that can, that can be fired up and have the energy that it needs to focus and have clarity and then that helps to stabilize the nervous system as well. So healthy fats are the number one thing that, that I talk about and a lot of other people talk about in regards to anxiety. And if, you know, if you're wanting to help your anxiety is to get some healthy omega fats into you and you do it with wild salmon, wild salmon is awesome.

And then also there's a lot of plant-based sources as well, and the supplement is a great help as well. I just, I still take the supplement every day, even though I'm eating more wild salmon and wild fish. I just want to make sure I'm ticking that mark, ticking that box of like, yep, okay, done. I've taken my omega-3 fatty acids for the day. My brain is, is going to be taken care of. My nervous system's going to be nourished. So super good.

Cool. Tell me, what are some of the top sort of plant-based sources of omega-3s that you, you typically turn to in your, in your day-to-day diet?

I would say spirulina.

Spirulina is incredible and I love adding spirulina to smoothies and also taking spirulina supplements as well. I don't mind the taste, but a lot of people don't like the taste. So spirulina supplements are great. And then in terms of foods, so hemp seeds. I love adding hemp seeds to my breakfast to a smoothie or to an acai bowl. Hemp seeds are great on soups and salads.

Basically you can put almost hemp seeds onto every single meal. Yeah. And then chia seeds as well. I love adding those. And of course avocado. Having some avocado toast on some, some really hardy gluten-free bread. And I'm not gluten-free specifically, but we can talk about that a bit later as well.

But gluten does play a role in anxiety, so that's an interesting topic there as well. But avocado toast with some hemp seeds and chia seeds as well for some fatty acids and walnuts as well. Walnuts are excellent. And you know, *The Doctrine of Signatures*, talk about *Food Matters*, is that the walnuts look like brains. And so if you've heard my other interviews with James on Food Matters, I talk about growing up with the aboriginal people in Alice Springs. I went to an aboriginal school and so we were taught that before science and before technology. They would go out to nature and say, okay, I need to fix or help my brain or my gut, what looks like that organ in nature and walnuts actually look like little brains. So for anything brain related, which is anxiety, then eat lots of walnuts.

I love that. It's so, such a cool science, isn't it? This *Doctrine of Signatures*. Let's, let's talk about gluten a little bit because I, when I was studying like nutrition and natural medicine and in particular my nutrition studies online, we, we looked at the brain and the brain is like you said, a fatty organ, you know, it's mostly fat, then some water, and it sits up here and it controls a lot of our perception of reality. And we are living in a very technologically advanced age, and yet we're sort of, a very ancient body, right? In a modern world. So there's a lot of stress from an anxiety perspective and anxiety inducing perspective, in the modern world.

And so this brain, if, you know, one of these gentlemen, Andrew Saul I think was the editor and editor in chief of the *Orthomolecular Medicine News Service*. He said, if I want to make you depressed, I can do it. All I have to do is extract fresh fruits and vegetables from your diet. And then I can put in things into your system, into your gut, in particular, potentially gluten or things that you're allergic to.

So it might not be gluten, you might be allergic to other things like yeast or eggs or corn or soy. So these common allergens or excess sugar or alcohol, if I take out fresh nutrients and I put in these things that can aggravate your gut, which is connected to your brain, we know this about the gut-brain axis. And then I restrict also water and hydration from your diet, I can make you depressed. **So then doesn't it make sense that we can correct it with nutrients? But let's talk about the aggravation. You said that gluten potentially can play a role in anxiety and let's say mental afflictions. What was that research or experience that you came across there?**

Yeah, fascinating. So gluten is not proven to be, or not on the anxiogenic list, like some foods are on the anxiogenic list, meaning that they actually produce anxiety and scientists have put certain foods on that list. Gluten is on my controversial list, which is my bio-individual list, which means that for some people it can cause extreme anxiety and depression, but for others it's okay. But in general, you know, and I'm a certified nutritionist, when I'm working with my clients I say, treat gluten as a special occasion because gluten has changed a lot in the last 50, 60 years thanks to GMO farming. You know, it's toxic. It's not how it used to be, but there are some excellent brands that are making some really good wheat, rye, barley, you know, really good quality. It's sprouted grain, that's a whole different story.

So when we want to have gluten, I always say have it, but it has to be a special occasion and you know, go to Europe and eat it (it's not genetically modified), or just make sure it's a really good quality non GMO sprouted gluten that your body can tolerate. That it's not going to cause all this inflammation and it's not going to be instant anxiogenic, and refined carbs are proven to be anxiogenic.

So if it is gluten that is in a really refined carb, which could be a white wonder bread or it could be a cake, cookie, muffin, then that type of gluten is anxiogenic. But a high-quality, sprouted gluten is

not proven to be anxiogenic. And so I've found this to work for all my clients in the last 14 years of doing this work is that, to have gluten once or twice a month, you know, that's all we really need. Unless someone has an amazing digestive system and they can handle it and they, they're an athlete, I've found that they're able to have gluten a lot more, but if not, there's so many great gluten-free breads these days that are made with flax seed, chia seed, hemp seed, almond flour, just really great nutrients, but not having to add that gluten.

Totally, totally agree with your response there. And it depends on the state of your digestive fire, how good is your digestion, can you handle it? And most people do not have a strong digestion. And then I like your approach to, I call it Gluten Day. It's like once a month, it's Gluten Day and it's that, and I don't feel great after it, which reminds me again, why I exclude it for the other 29 or 30 days of the month, but it also allows me to be a little, a little flexible. So let's go to point number two. And that is, oh sorry, nutrient number two, I think it was magnesium.

Let's talk about magnesium and its role in anxiety and how it can, how it can help and different sources.

Yeah, so magnesium is such an incredible nutrient, oh my gosh. It helps to relax the body immediately. And my two favorite foods that have a lot of magnesium are dark leafy greens and cacao. So real chocolate, dark chocolate. And those instantly can relax us and just take our anxiety from a 10 down to a one, or even a zero just with having a green juice or even just having a bit of really good quality chocolate.

I love to make my own chocolate at home with cacao powder, cacao butter, some almond milk, you know, homemade chocolate or make some chocolate sunbutter cups. And it's, it's just fascinating how it just goes from 10 to zero. And also, people who are deficient in magnesium have been shown to have anxiety. So that's one of the symptoms. And a lot of people are deficient and in anxiety. There was a study that came out years ago that was saying over 70% of Americans are deficient in magnesium and they're, they don't realize.

And if you're deficient in magnesium, then your body is more tense, your nervous system's reacting in anxiety, you're not sleeping as well. And so it's a nutrient that you can get if you do eat a lot of plant-based foods. And a lot of nuts as well, dark leafy greens. That's why my philosophy have one green drink every single day takes care of that magnesium. And that green drink can be chlorophyll water, which is really high in magnesium or it can be a green powder mixed in water, or it can be a green smoothie or a green juice. So there's four different ways that you can get a green drink in every single day.

And for me, I made a fresh juice a few days ago with my cold pressed juicer, so I'm drinking a fresh juice for the next few days and then I take a break and I just do my green powder mixed in

water, which has broccoli sprouts in it, has spirulina, kale, spinach. And so I mix it up. But taking care of your magnesium levels, you'll feel so much different. Big, big difference for sure.

Love that. So good. And one of the, one of the things I love to do is take a bath with epsom salts, which are really high in magnesium and that's a great way to get magnesium transdermally through the skin and just really, really, really relax the body.

I think it's hard to be anxious after a nice hot bath, with magnesium salt. So let, let's put that one on the list too. And there's no rule there. If you feel like having a bath in the morning because you're anxious, go for it.

Okay, what's number, what's number three on the list? Remind me, what was that?

So B vitamins. So B vitamins are... mostly come from animal products. So a lot of vegans, vegetarians struggle with this. And actually, you know, the studies when I was researching for this said that vegan, vegetarians actually struggle with anxiety and depression more than people who eat meat.

But there are also studies that said people who eat too much meat, too much protein, they also get anxiety and depression. So it's finding that balance, finding that midway. And if there are any vegan, vegetarians listening, you know, you can be vegan, vegetarian, fine, but you just have to really be vigilant about making sure you're getting your B vitamins. And for all my vegan, vegetarian clients, I say do a blood test every 12 months. It's a must because if you're deficient in these vitamins, your whole body and brain, everything's going to be out of whack. And so it mostly does come from animal products, eggs, and fish. And, this is why I take the omega-3s as well. But yeah, incorporating some animal products here and there, and this comes back to what I learned from the aboriginal people is that they, you know, they didn't eat kangaroo breakfast, lunch, and dinner. They didn't overeat on kangaroo. What they would do is they would go out hunting in a very ethical way and they would give back to the land and give back to the kangaroo by thanking it and being really grateful for it. And then they would take it back to the community and they would enjoy this kangaroo and they would let this protein seep into their body over the next three days and really feel the power and the strength of it.

Then they would go out hunting again. They weren't overdoing it or factory farming kangaroos, you know, it's very different to the meat industry of today. And so I always tell my clients, you know, whenever you're craving some animal, some animal protein, B vitamins, you could be just craving B vitamins. So go ahead and that's the time to have it. You know, you don't have to be eating animals every single day if you don't want to, but you can also just take B vitamins as well, which I would highly recommend. B6 and B12.

Yeah, definitely B6 and B12 and I know as well that, Andrew Saul, Patrick Holford, Jerome Burne, many others have done some research on using B3, niacin as a short term fix for anxiety and panic attacks. And, and this is the type of, this is the supplement that can give you the flush that, that feeling of the redness in your face. Because it's a vasodilator. And, and often when people first take niacin or B3, or nicotinic acid, they, they have this like heat that comes up in their face.

They think something's wrong, but it's a totally normal side, side effect of B3 and it can be very effective as well. So definitely, a huge fan of the B vitamins there, Liana. And I know that my father, when he was recovering from anxiety and depression, he was taking, a B multi, like two or three a day high doses and he was also taking, B3 separately as well. And, he had great results being able to get off his medications and, never ever have to go back. So that's a win.

That's awesome.

Okay, so let's move on to the next one now. I believe it was iron, or is iron the last one?

Yes, iron deficiency. So believe it or not, iron deficiency can lead to anxiety. So there's that also that connection. And again, taking iron supplements, even if someone also is eating animal products, you can still take B vitamins and iron supplements just to make sure you're getting that extra. And it also could be the way that your body's assimilating it or absorbing the nutrients from the food. And so that goes into, you know, healing the gut, making sure the gut is actually absorbing all the nutrients that when we're eating the foods as well. So iron is a big one, and you can, you know, I recommend all my clients anyway, even if they're healthy, I do blood work every 12 months just to make sure everything's really good. And if something's getting low, like, oh, my iron is in range, but it's on the low side, I'm like, okay, I'm just going to focus on eating some more iron or taking some supplements for a month or two.

Got it. Perfect. **So let's do a little recap here and we'll get to the last one. We're... omega-3s is up top and then we have magnesium after that. And then we have B vitamins and then we have iron and lucky last Liana, talk me through it.**

Lucky last is amino acids. So amino acids are also found in a lot of animal products as well. There's a common thread here, and we need nine amino acids to really thrive and have our brain chemistry be really on point. And so if we, we can also get that checked in a, in blood test as well. But amino acids can also be found in vegetable products like non-GMO soy as well is an excellent way to get some, some good aminos. Also eggs, turkey, chicken, wild fish, fish eggs are excellent for amino acids. And you see a lot of people these days also taking supplements for amino acids as well. It's like a brain boost. And so you can see a common thread here, we're taking care of the brain when we take care of the brain, we're taking care of the nervous system because they work in such synergy together.

Yeah, absolutely. And I think, you know, for people that, like you said, are vegan, vegetarian listening to this, it can be a little challenging to hear some of this, but then we need to be listening to our bodies, right? If we are suffering from anxiety and depression, we need to go, okay, am I deficient in something? Like you said, once we do that work, if we are deficient, can I correct that with a vegan or vegetarian source and get myself back to homeostasis if I can, great. If I can't, then what supplements or what other natural foods could I potentially be including to help balance that out?

And this was a, you know, Laurentine and I had spent about six or seven years on sort of a vegan, vegetarian type diet. And it was when we were moving into conception of our firstborn, Hugo, that we started to shift our diet a little bit more because we found that we were deficient in certain nutrients. And so we, we had to go and, and we had a preference to want to eat our nutrients as opposed to supplement them. And what that meant was one of the first foods that we introduced was liver, which is this highly concentrated, nutrient package from animal source and, and it's the most prized by, by hunters when they, when they hunt an animal. And it was a really big challenge for us, but we noticed an immediate boost in our health and our capability to conceive and to balance hormones correctly for the two of us. And it was, really powerful experience. So I just wanted to share that with people.

Let's talk a little bit now about, sort of, you know, prescription medication for anxiety. What, what are some of the more common sort of prescriptions that people are on? And, you know, we've spoken about the alternatives, but if you've worked with clients, what's your experience been in helping people come off these medications? Is there side effects to come off them immediately, or is there other sort of bridging supplements, or things that people can do in the meantime? So yeah, talk me through it.

Yeah, so the studies are fascinating on anxiety meds and versus natural foods. And I've never seen this in any, in this health industry at all against a pharmaceutical drug except for in the category of anxiety.

There are actually studies out there that say that foods and natural remedies and herbs are more effective for anxiety than anxiety drugs. And we will not read that anywhere online that says that about cancer or depression or PTSD or any other health issue or thyroid or anything other than anxiety. This is the only place that I've found research that says, yes, foods are more effective. And it's so cool, it's so cool that science is finally backing this up. And I don't want to butcher it, so I'm going to read one of the studies, but, so based on the available evidence, it appears that nutritional and herbal supplementation is an incredibly effective method for treating anxiety and anxiety related conditions, usually without the risk of serious side effects.

So that's one of the main issues with anxiety meds is it does come with serious side effects, and one of them is anxiety and depression. You know, go figure it, that's one of the side effects. In

fact, many supplements have been proven even more effective, even more effective than some conventional medications. And this was in the nutrition journal, and you can find this, these studies on *PubMed*. So yeah, the anxiety meds are just, I mean, they're horrific because they're giving people more anxiety and more depression.

And so my experience working with clients is I never want to force people off medication. You know, I do believe in a functional approach and people should use their intuition. So sometimes they'll come to me and say, I just can't do meds, don't even try and get me on them. I just want to go natural. So I'll set them up with a protocol of supplements and foods, you know, I have my book *Anxiety-Free with Food*. It has a whole diet plan in there.

And for others they say, I want to wean off my medication. And so they get the same protocol and diet, and then when they feel like, oh, I'm feeling so much better, then they wean off their medication until they don't need it anymore. And in this area I've got more people off for medication than any other area because it's the easiest one to do. It's such a, such a good fix when with anxiety, there are, with anxiety, some of course emotional and some mental things and maybe some childhood stuff as well, but people just feel like they can handle that kind of anxiety and that kind of stress when they're nourished properly with food and supplements, so they don't even feel like they need to be on their medication. And if you're taking things like ashwagandha or St. John's Wort, lemon balm. I mean, if you're taking certain things, that stuff is way stronger than medication. And you're going to feel it, you can, and you can feel it immediately.

This is the coolest thing with these foods is that you can feel relief immediately. You're not having to wait days and days. It does get better as you go, like days and days and days, but that instant relief is amazing. And I think that's what people are looking for with anxiety too, because they're under this chronic stress and they just want to break from that. So you can get that from some foods. And food, it really is medicine.

Yeah, I love that so much. And, I probably need some of these herbs right now because I'm suffering a little stress because they started a jackhammer next to the apartment that I'm in right now. But, so I'm going to ask, I'm going to ask one or two more questions and then mute my microphone and you can take the lead here. You just, you opened something really interesting there. **You spoke about ashwagandha. Now this is a very, very, very popular, herb because of its adaptogenic qualities and people are taking it more and more now because of stress and anxiety. Talk to me about this particular herb and why you love it and whether people can be taking that as well as making these dietary recommendations of yours at the same time.**

Yes, absolutely. And I was hoping you were going to ask me, what is my favorite herb for anxiety? And I would say it's ashwagandha and oh, ashwagandha, where do I start?

It's amazing. Out of all my research, whenever I'm starting a new book, I really want to know what are the top 10 foods or superfoods and supplements that really help this issue. And doing all my research, I found that ashwagandha took the top, the number one supplement, dark leafy greens took the place for food, but for supplements, it's ashwagandha and apparently it's been used in Ayurveda and Chinese medicine for 5,000 years, and it is a root. And so it has a very calming effect. It's the same as if we eat a root vegetable like ginger, like garlic. It's a root. And so it's grounded in the earth. And so it makes us feel really grounded as well and really calm and very stabilized. And it nourishes our brain, our nervous system, our gut. It reduces inflammation and boosts the immune system. It sold out during Covid because everyone found out it was really good for strengthening the immune system.

And what's really cool about ashwagandha is you can feel it immediately as some people are so sensitive, they can feel it that same day that they're taking ashwagandha, but it really takes a good six to eight weeks. The studies have shown for it to build up in your system. So if you can be consistent with ashwagandha, it's going to build up in your system and create a new nervous system. And you will really notice after six to eight weeks, like, wow, usually when someone says that to me or when that stress hits me or that's happening, usually I'm responding like, like this, like, ah, but with ashwagandha you're like, wow, okay, I'm starting to respond a lot differently. You feel more stable and that you can handle stress and you can handle these challenges that are coming your way. So just think of it like ashwagandha's filling up your nervous system tank, but you really, it's something you have to be consistent at, but it's worth it. So I take ashwagandha every single day now without a doubt. And then a couple years ago during Covid, I wanted to come out with a product and I wanted to come out with a chocolate bar I was thinking, and then I was like, you know, what's something I'm really going to eat every day? It's either a chocolate bar or anxiety like ashwagandha. So I came out with a supplement and it has 10 organic ingredients, and the main ingredient is ashwagandha. And it's really popular.

It's called *Anxiety Free or Ashwagandha Advantage* on Amazon. And it's really popular in the United States because people are feeling the effects immediately and then they're working towards that six to eight weeks to build it up in their system.

I love that. And with this noise next to me now, I think I need it like intravenously into my body. Let's close out this interview here with a section on recipes. Like, I'd love to get practical here.

We've spoken a lot about these sort of top five nutrients and then we've spoken about ashwagandha from an adaptogenic perspective, how do you sort of put this into practice? Maybe take me through a breakfast recipe or a snack or a dessert or a dinner, just utilizing some of these foods so that people can get a sense in their mind about how to have an anti-anxiety diet. And I'm going to go make some after this, after this call.

Yeah. Awesome. So let me run you through a day of what a day looks like of what I eat or what I would give for an anxiety protocol. So first thing, when you wake up in the morning, you're

breaking the fast, you know, it's why it's called breakfast. And so your cells are open and hungry. The most open and hungry they're going to be all day is whenever you wake up. And so the very first thing you put into your body is the most important. So you want to make sure it's something that's really nourishing your brain and your nervous system. So in this case, I always tell my clients, and this is what I do for myself, is I have the green drink first up because that way you're getting the chlorophyll and you're getting the magnesium straight into your cells at a cellular level. It's almost like at that point getting it like an IV injection.

It's instant, it's cellular energy, you can feel it immediately. So start the day with the green drink first thing, and then all you're going to feel better just from that already. And you may not have any more anxiety for the rest of the day. Just from that one thing alone. Do not underestimate the power of a green drink first thing in the morning, so powerful. And then next I'll have a breakfast. Sometimes I'm fasting, most times I'm not having a breakfast.

And so I'll do a big protein smoothie that's packed with, has a protein powder, like a vegan protein powder, has some almond milk, it has chia seeds, hemp seeds, some maca powder, some spinach. So it has all of those nutrients that we're looking for for the brain. It has magnesium and then maybe some MCT oil as well for the omega-3 fatty acids. So that, or a smoothie bowl with some toppings. And then sometimes I'll have some gluten-free toast with avocado on top of it with some hemp seeds and chia. And then if I'm craving animal protein in the morning, some organic eggs with some turkey bacon.

So there's a lot of different really great options for an anxiety-free breakfast right there. That's going to set you up for the day. All very high protein as well. And then for snacks, have lots of fruits and vegetables. You could have a can of tuna with some cucumber, you could have some sun butter with a piece of dark chocolate. You could also do some cucumber or celery with some sun butter. I love roasted sunflower seed butter as a snack. It's excellent. Also, fruits like you can have a cup of berries, a cup of blueberries as a serving or a cup of raspberries or blackberries. So great for the brain and all those antioxidants. And don't deprive yourself of fruits as well, because that does help to relieve anxiety as having those really good healthy wholesome sugars.

And then for a lunch and dinner, I always say a protein and a huge pile of plants. So vegetables or you could do a salad with a protein and if you're vegan you can do a protein, like a bean burger, chickpea burger. Or if you're not vegan, then have some wild fish, some wild salmon. You could have some grass fed beef, some chicken, some turkey. And that is the foundation of a really healthy, solid diet that's going to help with your brain and nervous system and gut health because it's all connected. So that will help to reduce anxiety and keep anxiety away. And you're getting so many antioxidants, you're getting all those nutrients that we spoke about in the beginning and you surely will not be deficient if you are eating this way every single day.

I love that Liana. That's so cool. What a great, great summary and I totally agree with you.

And I think having that flexibility to include or exclude animal products can be really powerful and, and a great sort of vegan, vegetarian protein source in my opinion would be like organic tempeh as well, which is like a fermented soy. And then like you said, hemp seeds go on everything. It's insane how efficient they are.

So thank you so much for, you know, sharing some of your insights with me today and helping the Food Matters community understand more about the connection between nutrient deficiencies and anxiety and hopefully we can help to share this information with more and more people. They can find out more about your book *Anxiety-Free with Food*. Thank you so much. And you've also authored many other books too, so please check out Liana's website and follow her on social media.

And do you have any sort of closing messages for people around this topic of anxiety or stress or just some, a bit of a pep talk of how people can sort of be prepared and cope for the challenges of living in the modern world?

Yeah, I would say just to start with one thing, which would be either a supplement or the green drink every day just to get the momentum going just so that you feel you can start to feel better. Because I know with anxiety people can be feeling overwhelmed and this lifestyle is meant to do the opposite. So just start with one of those things and you'll feel so much more confident and as you start to feel better, you can implement more and more things. And then I did just, I have to mention ice cream, I have to because I feel like people out there with anxiety crave, you know, quick comfort foods and that's a natural reaction if you're having anxiety. And so for example, one of the recipes that I have in my books and it's on Instagram, are cashew ice cream bites with chocolate sauce, and you just whip up some cashews in a blender with five ingredients, it's got coconut oil, maple syrup and cashews, a bit of lemon, vanilla extract, and you can put a bit of sea salt in there.

It whips up these cashews to be so puffy, like little ice cream bon bons and you just scoop it onto a baking tray and then make a chocolate sauce with just three ingredients, cacao powder, maple syrup, coconut oil. Put the chocolate sauce on top and in an hour you have these most delicious, creamy, cashew ice cream bites with chocolate sauce that are just so nourishing.

And cashews act as anxiolytic food. So they act as a food that helps to reduce anxiety. So there are so many great little hacks like that that you can do. You're never stuck. And also you don't have to suffer with anxiety every single day. And I'm looking forward to hearing from you guys, you know, being able to break through and to heal it like I did and to realize like life is just too short to have anxiety when it can be fixed with food.

Liana, I love it. It's so cool. And it reminds me, Andy Saul said two handfuls of cashews provide the therapeutic equivalent of a prescription dose of Prozac in terms of steroids because it's a precursor. Tryptophan is a precursor to serotonin in the brain and the serotonin reuptake inhibitor drugs basically keep the serotonin in circulation. So they've done this research. Love cashews. Great last suggestion there on the recipe.

Thank you, thank you, thank you so much for your suggestions and advice. Have a great day, evening and thank you everybody for tuning in. It's been great to have you here. Ciao ciao.

Ciao! Thanks for having me.

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