

The Fasting Method #160 - Meet the New TFM Coaches: Dr. Amy Wiesner

Megan [00:00:06] Before we get started with today's episode, I would like to quickly read you our podcast disclaimer.

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[00:01:13] All right. And now we'll get started with today's episode.

Terri [00:01:19] Welcome back to the Fasting Method podcast. This is your host today, Dr. Terri Lance, Coach Terri. I'm very excited about this episode and I have a number of episodes coming out, hopefully kind of rapid fire here, because we have some exciting things happening at TFM, and I get to share one of them with you today. So you may have already heard, if you are in the Community, that we have brought in some new coaches. We are adding to our coaching staff and we're very excited about this. So today I get to introduce you to one of them, here in our listening audience, not just in our community.

[00:01:59] So today I have with me, Dr. Amy Wiesner, and I'm very excited for you to get to learn about her and all that she brings with her to TFM because you're going to be hearing more from her in some podcast episodes. If you're in the Community, you're obviously going to get to see her in meetings and webinars and things. And then also, if you decide to do some coaching, Amy is available for coaching, and so we want you to get to know her. So with no further ado (I like saying that phrase), Amy, welcome to the podcast, welcome to TFM, and I can't wait to get to introduce you and get to learn more about you here. How are you doing today?

Amy [00:02:44] I'm so well, thank you, Terri. And I'm so excited to be here and to be doing this podcast with you.

Terri [00:02:50] Awesome. Very good. I feel like I should kind of warn listeners, and maybe warn Daisy as she is going to edit this, that we have some sound issues today just because of some technology. We're recording in a way that might sound a little different, so just to let people know that. We're doing our best with that. And then also, unfortunately, today, the power washers are here because my house is going to get painted, and I did not get to choose when that got scheduled. So if that is too distracting, I will try to do something about that. But I just want people to know there may be a little background sound as we get going.

[00:03:30] All right, back to you now, Amy. So I had told you, as we were kind of getting ready for this, one of the first and most important things, I think, is for everyone to get to know a little bit about you, to know your background. You know, your personal journey in

the health and wellness area, and then also your professional journey. So I'm going to let you kind of take that away as however you want to share that with us.

Amy [00:03:57] OK, thank you. Ever since I was pretty young, I just wanted to make the world a better place. And then, when I had to choose a career, I decided I wanted to do that by helping people. So I became a licensed, naturopathic physician and acupuncturist, and I've been practicing for over 20 years in Connecticut, and sometimes in New York as well. To me, health has always been more than just treating the physical. It's also been a mental, emotional journey because the mind and body are inseparable. So that's been a really important aspect of treating my patients. And lifestyle medicine has been my M.O. throughout my whole career, helping people to be healthy in the long run rather than just treating symptoms and diseases. So I have four pillars of health that I try to impart to my patients so that they can incorporate them into their lives: exercise, food, mental and emotional, wellness and sleep. Life is hard, emotionally and physically, so, for me, doing everything that you can to foster health is its own kind of insurance. So I've been doing that for over 20 years and it's been a very enjoyable and rewarding practice for me.

[00:05:21] As for my own personal journey, I've always been a very emotionally-sensitive human being, and I have used food at different times in my life to help to soothe me. I also became a vegetarian when I was 12 and leaned heavily on processed carbs, diet soda, and low-fat foods, which, unfortunately, were considered healthy at that time. So I've struggled with my weight on and off throughout the years. In 2014, I started practicing Zen Buddhism and was able to bring a lot of patience and peace and resilience into my own life, which also positively affected my physical health.

[00:06:05] And then a couple of years later, I read Dr. Fung's book, *The Obesity Code*, and I had like an aha moment. I had learned about fasting in medical school as a therapeutic tool, but it was in an abstract way. I never actually learned how to use it with patients in the clinical practice. After reading his book, I was like, 'Oh my God, this is like the answer I've been looking for,' not just for my practice but for me too, because it can treat everything from type two diabetes to cardiovascular disease, PCOS, and then work with longevity. And on top of that, it's free [laughs] and you save money because you don't buy as much food. So I was like, "This is the overwhelming thing that I want to focus on." So I started experimenting with fasting in my own life, and I did really well. And then I started using it with my patients as well.

[00:07:01] And then, unfortunately, a few years ago, I had to live through the most stressful period of my life. Every day for about a year and a half, I was just unbelievably stressed out. And this led to me having multiple physical issues, which also included weight gain, and I was heavier than I had ever been in my life. And this, in turn, made me even more stressed out. I felt terrible, emotionally and physically. I tried to get back into fasting on my own, but I continued to struggle. So, in September of last year, I decided to start with TFM to do personalized coaching. It took me a while for my mind and body to let go of the old patterns that I was holding on to, but, finally, after probably like two months of TRE and working really hard on my mental aspect, I started having really good success with fasting again, and everything was going really fast, and I was feeling so great emotionally, physically. And I still feel great emotionally, physically. I'm really happy with the success I've achieved and how I feel. And I'm so grateful that everyone at TFM, and the Community, and all the coaches for helping me and contributing to the best I've felt probably since I was a kid, to be honest. I've loved participating in the Community meetings and connecting with the other members, listening to all the coaches and everything that they learn and that they then impart to everyone else to help me to

optimize my fasting lifestyle. Because this is the way that I live now, and I am so happy doing it. And I'm really happy that I get to be part of the Community as well.

Terri [00:09:03] That'll set us up well for a part that I'm going to ask you about in a little while, but I just wanted to reflect some and check back with you about some of the things that you've shared. I love that it sounds like, in a way, coming to this stage in your life, at this point, in transitioning and doing this work, it's like fulfilling a long-term goal of yours, of improving the world, helping people, and really making a difference. One of the things I love about TFM is you get to make a difference, one person at a time, but also lots of people at a time, both in this process. So I'm excited for you that this is another piece of that fulfilling that goal for you.

Amy [00:09:48] Thank you. Absolutely. Yeah, I really have loved working with people individually, but obviously doing podcasts and being able to do Zooms, you know, it's not just one-on-one, in person, which is what I have to do most of the time. Having a greater reach and being able to affect change on a bigger level has always been, you know, a dream, albeit, you know, I thought one that was unachievable. [laughs]

Terri [00:10:16] And then enters TFM. [laughter]

Amy [00:10:19] Yeah.

Terri [00:10:21] Very good. One of the other things I was thinking, as you were sharing, is just the power of even though health and wellness (emotionally, mentally, physically) has been such a driving force for you, complications in life interfere with that and make that more complicated. And I think it's really important, and hearing you talk about it, I hope that people are reminded that they're not broken or flawed or weak when they struggle or run into times that really kind of take them off course. And what I really appreciated about hearing the next part of this for you is that it brought you to a point of recognizing, "I need support in this." But you recognized, at that point, that you had lots of knowledge, you had lots of skills, you had done fasting, and you incorporated it, you were doing well with it, but, at some point, it was bigger than just you. And that you trusted and took that risk to let people into that journey, to get support, you know, to learn more, to gain extra guidance, and connect with other people who were doing it. I think that's so powerful, and I think that sometimes our listeners aren't sure where to go. They listen to the podcast or they've read the book, which is great, and sometimes don't even know what's available coming to the Community. So my hope is, also, in talking with you and talking with the other new coaches that we also get to highlight, again, what people can do by coming and being a part of our community, because it sounds like it was really powerful for you to allow yourself to have that additional support.

Amy [00:12:12] Yes, absolutely. Being a healthcare practitioner also makes me very conscious of we're supposed to have like separation of patient and practitioner. So, for me, a lot of times, it's very hard to let that go and just be a human being instead of being a doctor, you know? It was hard for me to just be a person struggling when I joined the TFM Community, but it also was what I really needed because just doing it myself wasn't enough when I was under such extreme levels of stress. Even after the stress was over, I was still in such an unhealthy pattern that I really needed guidance. You know, that's what I also tell a lot of my patients. You know, you can do all the research, you can know all the information, but sometimes, because life happens and we can't block out everything around us, you need extra guidance and help to help to keep you on the track that you decide to go. Because stress is very debilitating for a lot of people, and, you know, having

support is really important. There's a lot of research on spontaneous remission of disease, and one of the things that they found is really crucial to health and longevity is having a support system. You know, whether it's going to an exercise class, going to synagogue or church, going to TFM, all these things are really important for our mental and emotional well-being, which then can help us with our physical well-being.

Terri [00:13:51] I think that's so powerful, Amy, and I'm so glad that you brought that up, because I think sometimes people think, "I should be able to do this on my own. I'm knowledgeable, I'm smart, I'm resourceful." So I think that point of recognizing when we need support and that we can't do it on our own. It reminds me a little bit. I always use analogies. Many people in our community know I recently learned to ski. I love watching skiing videos. I watch instructors, I watch people skiing, and I look, "Oh, look how they move their legs there. Look how they move their chest." But there's nothing like having someone on the slope with me saying, "Hey, nice job. Now, your chest was a little bit this way, let's this time see if you can do it this way." I need that guidance. And I think of people who learn to play tennis or learn to play the piano or guitar. Are there tutorials and books and things that can tell you how to do it? Yes, but without that feedback and support, it's a very different learning process. Why do Olympic athletes, since the Olympics are this summer-- why do Olympic athletes still have a coach? I mean, they're really good at their sport. Clearly, they should be able to do this on their own, right? No, they need someone helping point out where things are going in a certain direction or something. So I'm really impressed that you gave yourself that, and very excited that you now will get to provide that here.

Amy [00:15:22] And also, I just want to add, if you don't mind, that neuroscience shows that our brains go down the same pathways all the time. So this is my analogy. [laughs] It's like going down the same, rutted tire tracks all the time. You know, like if you keep going down, "Oh, this will make me feel better," or, "Oh, this won't work for me." You have to take the time to create new pathways in your brain so that you can not go down the same ones. So having a coach who can see something differently than your point of view, and doing meditation, and doing other work with your mind really helps to get you out of your old patterns that you had for however many years.

Terri [00:16:13] I love that, and some of our listeners have maybe heard me talk at some point about Carolyn Leaf or Caroline. I'm not sure how she pronounces it. [Caroline] She talks about that. Not continuing to go down the same is like pruning those branches in your brain, you know, those neural pathways, in that you want to weaken the old ones that aren't working for you and build those new ones. And I love how you pointed out that joining a community, listening to others, learning from other people's experiences, help us create those new neural pathways. That's a great way to explain this for folks. I love that.

[00:16:51] So based on what we've talked about so far, Amy, this question might just sound really obvious and people might think, "Terri, I think she already said that," but I wanted to give you a chance to really kind of hone in on what drew you to wanting to be a coach here at TFM. You've had good experiences with us, but, you know, you've got your practice, you've got what you do. Why would you want to join us here?

Amy [00:17:16] Because of my professional background and interests, my success with using the fasting lifestyle, and then my work with TFM, all those combined to make me have this desire to be with you other very inspirational and life changing coaches, and to really focus on using fasting for health. And, what I consider divine timing, I emailed [laughs] about becoming a coach and seeing if you needed coaches. And I'm very excited

to be where I am right now, and part of helping people all over the world to create better mental and physical well-being. Because in the way the world is right now, for multiple reasons, it's very hard to achieve that. So I would love to be able to help more people to do that. And doing it with TFM, who I admire and respect so much, makes me very happy.

Terri [00:18:22] Yeah, I think I share some sentiments with you of-- I remember when Megan first reached out to me and suggested that I might-- that we might want to work together. I thought, "Are you kidding me? Of course I want to work with you. [laughs] You know, I've been fangirling you for years. Of course!" So I definitely can relate to that. And I love that you see the potential that maybe even TFM kind of rounds out how you get to have your impact in the world, in helping people a little differently than you do in your other practice. So I think that's very exciting. And I think it was whatever, divine timing, the universe putting something in our lap at just the right time, but we were in a process of looking for coaches. I was poring over resumes and things (lots of great applicants) and then got your email, and it was just like all things aligned just right about your background, what we are looking for, and what we need to help round out who we are. And you had some previous experience with us, so you knew both sides of the coin, so to speak. So, yes, it was the perfect timing on our part as well. So thank you universe! [laughs]

[00:19:43] This next thing I want to ask, too, might seem a little bit obvious based on a lot of what you've said, but I don't think we can belabor this point. I think it's just so important that people hear it. So, in the bigger picture, when you imagine your work a year from now, two years from now, what is it that you hope that you bring to clients and our community and our listeners, not only as part of, "Well, I teach the things TFM teaches," but you bring other things as well. What do you hope people experience in their connections with you being a part of this?

Amy [00:20:21] I feel like my strength is that I work both addressing the physical and the mental, emotional level. As I said before, they're intertwined, they're inseparable, so, to me, ignoring one is not a prescription for health. So I work with that, helping my patients to figure out ways to bring in self-care, stress relief, maybe meditation, whatever it is that that person needs. You know, looking from the outside, it's easier for me to see what someone might need. So I think that's a really important part of what I do. I also think that I'm a good detective and I'm able to look at many different ways. Because of my training, I look at so many different aspects of what's going on in people's lives, and I'm able to help guide them by figuring out what's going on with them because I'm always trying to grow and do research and learn and find out the best ways to help people.

[00:21:34] And then, the other thing is, I'm just a very loving, supportive person. I'm good at listening, and I just think that my personality is good for this type of work, the type of work that I've been doing for over 20 years. And the last thing is that I also hope my personal story can inspire people to believe that it's possible for them. Because, when you get into a place where nothing seems like it's going to work, it's very hard to get out of there on your own. So I'm hoping that my story, as a human being but also one who has worked in health care for so long and knows everything-- well, not everything-- knows a lot of things, you know, still needed help. So I hope that that can inspire people to believe it's possible for them.

Terri [00:22:29] So, Amy, I'm so glad to get to hear all of that. It makes me even happier that we got to hire you than I even knew I was, because all of those things are so important. I always look at things like this, like, it's not just the science, it's not just the knowledge. And many people know I'm very biased about that. You can know a lot about

fasting, you can know a lot about troubleshooting fasting, and you can know a lot about nutrition, but, if you're not also working on the mindset, the behavioral pieces, the emotional balancing of things, all of that knowledge just doesn't really cut it.

[00:23:07] And the other part that you highlighted that I think is so important, obviously, is, again, not just the science of it, but the art of it, being able to be a good listener, for people to feel heard by you and feel seen. Many people come to us feeling like something's wrong with them because they're struggling, they don't feel well, they can't lose weight, whatever it is, and no one really buys it. You know, they go to a practitioner who says, "No, your labs are fine. I don't know-- they don't say it like this, but it's almost like saying, "I don't know why you're complaining. You're fine." And I love that you really approach this from a very different perspective. I love that idea of, you know, being a really good detective. It's like, "Well, I believe you, that you don't feel well. Let's pull away the layers to try to see why that is. Let's look at causes versus (like you said earlier) just treating symptoms."

[00:24:04] I've felt like so many times today, as you were talking, I'm like, "Oh my gosh, yes, you speak our language. You speak my language." I was very excited. And I too have experienced you as very kind and loving and pleasant, so, very fun to get to talk to. So I think people are in for a real treat as they get to know you in our community, and have the opportunities to work with you.

[00:24:31] The other thought I had about it, I'm like, "Oh man, I'm going to have to up my game here because Amy not only can help people with the wellness and have that medical understanding of what's going on and help people figure things out, but she's going to help them a lot with this social, emotional part, too. I'm going to have to up my game a little bit here. They're all going to want to work with Amy now."

Amy [00:24:57] You're amazing just as you are.

Terri [00:25:00] Well, hopefully (I always believe this), there is a niche for all of us and there are people who need each of us. There are people who need you more than they need me at a given time, or vice versa. But I was just thinking, "Wow, this is great that they are not just going to get that medical or facing knowledge, that they're really going to get this whole-person perspective in working with you." So that's very exciting.

[00:25:30] All right. So, just to share a little bit about-- for listeners to know a little bit what's happening and Community members to know a little bit more detail, Amy will start to be available for coaching around the end of July, early August. So you're going to see her more and more in the Community. You're going to see her more active in meetings and things as we're getting the coaches up to speed with how we do things, kind of onboarding. But then we're going to put her and the other new coaches on the website, and you can start signing up to work with them if you're interested in doing a single session, or if you want to do one-on-one coaching, or if you want to do small-group coaching. So that is coming soon. And I don't know exactly what date this podcast episode will come out, but I wanted to give you a time frame that you will start seeing Amy on the website, and you can start signing up with her. Like I said, end of July, early August is the time frame on that.

[00:26:32] Amy, anything else that you wanted to share today or talk about before we go?

Amy [00:26:37] Yeah. Being a part of the TFM Community has changed my life for the better, and I'm really excited about either encouraging or inspiring others to do the same. And I'm very grateful to be a part of this community. Thank you.

Terri [00:26:57] Yeah, very grateful to have you here, and definitely looking forward to a lot of great experiences to come. Even just in the past few weeks or months, having new people coming in, I think it just wakes everyone up a little bit and gets everyone energized and excited. So, already, you've been adding to our team, as far as the energy and in what we're all doing. So very excited to have you here.

[00:27:26] And those of you who are listening, please, if you liked this episode, please give us some feedback that helps us to know and it also helps other people get to hear us. So when you give us a rating or you give us some feedback, it helps other people find us, too. So, please don't hesitate to give us some support in that way. I look forward to bringing you the full picture of all of the coaches, soon, and look forward to all of you getting to know Amy, as well as the others. So, until then, take good care, everybody, happy fasting, and we will talk to you soon.

Amy [00:28:06] Bye. Thank you.

Terri [00:28:08] Thank you, Amy.