

## The Fasting Method #169 - Member Transformation: Brigitte Brooks

**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 Coach Terri, and I am super excited about this episode because I get to bring in someone who I've known for a while with TFM and have had nothing but positive experiences with, and so can't wait to get to have her share her story and her transformation with you. So, today, I have with me Brigitte Brooks. Some of you who are in the Community are probably familiar with Brigitte, but, Brigitte, how are you doing today?

**Brigitte** [00:01:52] I'm well. How are you?

**Terri** [00:01:54] I'm good. I'm-- like I said, I'm kind of giddy. I'm so excited to have this-- to do this episode right now. So, as we talked right before we got started, I really just wanted to give you an opportunity to start by sharing your story, whatever it is that you kind of want to share about what brought you to today. And then I'll go back in and ask some follow-ups, and I have a feeling you and I are just going to dive into some fun topics. So I'll turn it over to you to start sharing your story.

**Brigitte** [00:02:24] Okay, well, I was born hungry. I'm child four out of five and I was the only baby that my mother had that was born hungry. Breast milk didn't satisfy me, and she struggled, struggled, struggled with that. I was obese since early childhood. You can look at my baby pictures and see that I was obese. You see a lot of chubby babies, but mine continued. When I was eight, she took me to an endocrinologist; they did a full workup thinking I was diabetic. I wasn't. So what they gave me was my first diet. At age eight, I carried my high-protein, low-fat, tuna (dry tuna because we had to squeeze everything out of the tuna), dry cottage cheese, and melba toast to school in my Twiggy lunchbox. And if you don't know who Twiggy is, she was a very, very thin model from the 60s, and this would be in the mid 60s.

**Terri** [00:03:26] As the name suggests. [laughter]

**Brigitte** [00:03:28] S the name suggests, she was twiggy. And so, you know, I longed to look like Twiggy, and I was working on it in third grade. It didn't last long. I don't even know if I made any kind of so-called progress, but, anyway, it goes back a very long way. So throughout my life I've done so many different things. When I was 15, my mother-- she

was very well-intentioned and she found out, through someone at work, about a woman PA or medical assistant who would write prescriptions for diet pills. So I got my first authorized diet pills at 15. Very successful for a short period and also I was wired all the time. You know, it's not a good thing. But anyway, it really worked for a while and I lost a lot of weight. I felt good about myself. I became a little more popular. I had been not popular at all, and, you know, anybody who remembers back in high school, you know, that how you look matters. So it felt great for a while. It didn't last long.

[00:04:33] Then, since then, I've done quick weight-loss programs through doctors. They were called a 'medically-supervised, weight-loss program' and, typically, they were protein shakes, maybe vitamin B12 shots. I've done different versions of hypnotherapy. I've done all kind of diet pills. I used to go to Mexico to get diet pills. I've just done every kind of diet, I think, out there, or at least some version of it. My highest recorded weight was 315 pounds. I'm a little more than five foot four. I had difficulty getting around, sitting in seats, I overlapped in airplane seats. I either I had to buy two seats or have someone tiny sit next to me. I had to ask for the extension on the lap belt. I was just extremely uncomfortable in my body and with myself, and I was tired of trying everything because everything I tried worked for a little while and then stopped working.

[00:05:30] So I had joined a group of online-- well, I bought this book (I guess I can say it), Body for Life, and it's an exercise diet plan. You exercise a \*lot\* and you eat six times a day. And I met this group of people through it. I just loved everybody. I really made a lot of progress. And then, at some point, it stopped working, and one of the friends I'd met in that group came on to one of our chats one day and said, Dr. Jason Fung is brilliant, everybody needs to read this book. So this was in 2016 when The Obesity Code was released. So I bought it on Kindle and I skimmed it and I was like, "Yeah, I know, that's kind of interesting stuff," and I didn't really change anything.

[00:06:21] So, Thanksgiving of that same year, I went to do a job, and this client had cooked this huge Thanksgiving meal. She left for two weeks and she'd left all this food and said, "Please eat it." Well, I did. I ate and I ate and I ate all the special Thanksgiving treats, which were really just starchy carbs, and then went to sleep. And the next morning, when I got up, I was in deep physical pain, very deep physical pain. And, when I tried to get out of bed, it was difficult to stand up and it was difficult to walk. And this, even though I was really big for years, this had never happened. I had had, you know, shortness of breath when trying to walk up an incline or something like that, but I had never had anything like this. And I started thinking back, "What have I done? You know, did I do anything to strain myself yesterday?" which I hadn't done anything destroying myself. And I was just puzzled. And then I thought, "Huh, I wonder if it could have been related to all that food." And that's when my daughter told me about the Whole30. So I read about it, finished eating the rest of the delicious Thanksgiving treats, and then I started the Whole30. I started that on December the 1st. It was remarkable. Within, I guess, a week, I had no body pain at all. So I thought, "Oh, I'm allergic to dairy, I'm allergic to grains," or whate-- you know, all the things you eliminate. I thought, "Oh, it was an allergy," because I just did the Whole30. I didn't read the book, I just read about it and read what to do. So I thought, "Okay, well, I'm just-- I just have food allergies. I just need to change the way I eat." So I did, and after, I guess it was, seven weeks, I'd lost 9 pounds, which, you know, in my prior life of dieting, that's not that much, but I felt amazing. I just couldn't believe how good I felt. And so I just wanted more, but I didn't know what more I wanted.

[00:08:30] Then I ran across a woman, who I had met years ago, who had lost a tremendous amount of weight, and she started talking about Dr. Fung. And I said, "Oh

yeah, yeah, I'm familiar." And she said, "Immerse yourself in this." And she told me about the 2 Keto Dudes. She sent me this list of things to listen to. So I started listening, and I think it was-- it was in that, actually, in one of the-- it was through the 2 Keto Dudes, but I was already familiar with Dr. Fung, but they mentioned Dr. Fung. So I started looking into that more and that's when I found that there was actually a program called Intensive Dietary Management. So I logged on to that and joined the Community and started just immersing myself in all of that information. It was mind boggling how much there was to learn and how opposite it was from what I had kind of grown up with, as far as, you know, restricting the amount of food. It was a different approach, and he kept saying, "It's not your fault, it's not your fault, it's not your fault," but I still didn't believe it because I still felt like it was my fault because I'd wanted more food since early childhood.

[00:09:44] I decided to invest in coaching with IDM and my first coach was Nadia. I started learning about fasting in the way that IDM did it, and it was different than the kind of fasting I had done before (I had done some Master Cleanse fasting, which includes maple syrup, so it's-- kind of raises your insulin), but it was really, really informative. And during that time there was a podcast called The Obesity Code podcast, and it was the 2 Keto Dudes with Dr. Fung and his teachings. And in one of those episodes, Carl Franklin is interviewing Dr. Fung, and Dr. Fung said, "When women are pregnant and eat a lot of sugar, the sugar molecules go through to the baby. The women are producing a lot of insulin, but the insulin does not go through to the baby because the molecule's too big, so the baby's pancreas learned to make a lot of insulin, in fact, an adult amount of insulin to manage the glucose." And so when this happens, his words were, "The mother's basically marinating the baby in insulin. And then you give birth to a baby who's insulin resistant and who will struggle with childhood and adult obesity." And that was the biggest message, the most important message I could have received. It was profound for me because then, finally, I realized, oh, it's really not my fault.

**Terri** [00:11:26] Yeah.

**Brigette** [00:11:27] I had heard these stories since I was a little girl from my mother. It was always told in a joking way, which-- you know, my obesity was always kind of a joke to everybody, but they talked about how hungry I was. First of all, when my mother got pregnant with me, she was very skinny. So her doctor's advice-- she got pregnant in 1959. Her doctor's advice was to eat double milkshakes every day and drink more beer. So my mother was very compliant [laughter] and she did a very good job of that, and she gained plenty of weight. And I was born very hungry. She didn't know what to do with me because her breast milk had been enough for the older three, but it wasn't for me. I was still hungry, still hungry, still hungry. So she took me to a pediatrician who told her to supplement my breast milk with jello bottles. So they would mix powdered jello (which is gelatin, food coloring, and sugar) in warm water and give me that. And so I drank that for years as a supplement. I know the taste now and I probably haven't had it in 60 years. So that further helped my insulin resistance develop.

**Terri** [00:12:44] It also set up your palate, you know, from infancy, knowing this sweet delight that you were drinking.

**Brigette** [00:12:53] Oh, yeah. So hearing that from someone who knew what they were talking about, from a doctor I trusted, from some of the other things I had learned from him, it was profound. And, at that point, I decided, I'm really going to read the book this time. [laughter] So I got my Kindle out and I bought it on Audible. I started listening and reading, and that's about the time I met you. You came into one of my coaching sessions with

Nadia (you were in training) and I just loved your mindset. I knew that you were right in line with my beliefs of mindset is the biggest part, you know, we have the ability to create our own reality through the way we talk, the way we think, the way we act. And so as soon as I was done with Nadia, I signed back up with you for my next coaching, and it was excellent.

[00:13:50] Then we had the Covid lockdown. At first, I remember I was delaying my appointments with you. I would reschedule, reschedule, reschedule. And then you said, "When people keep rescheduling, that means they're not doing very well. When they keep coming, they're doing well because they want to report it." And was like, "Oh boy, how can you see me from that far?" So I finally, at the end of my package, I was just like, "You know what? I don't even feel like doing this anymore because I can't leave the house anyway, so I might as well eat those things, you know, because I'm never leaving the house, apparently." So, you know, I just dropped out for a while. And, as it goes with people with a history of disordered eating or disordered metabolism, I gained weight, felt bad, felt bad about myself, the whole thing.

[00:14:43] And so, it was November of 2021, I was invited to a wedding and they wanted everybody to wear black. So I was like, "Oh, thank God, that is great. I can wear black. I've got so many black dresses." Well, I had so many black dresses, but not even one of them fit. So I had to order a new black dress in a very big size, and I was just heartbroken because I had these beautiful clothes I bought when I had been, you know, doing what I thought was best and, you know, losing body fat. And so it was that night, you know, getting ready for that wedding, that I thought, "You know, I've gotta get back into-- (which was now The Fasting Method) I've gotta get back in there and just remind myself of what I know, but I just need to be reminded and review."

[00:15:34] So, at that point, I think they had already created the podcast, because it was November of 2021 was that wedding, and I think it was very soon after that. Maybe I logged on and then I found that they had this new podcast. So I went and started listening and I just listened all the time. At first, it was Nadia and Megan. And when I heard Nadia's voice, it was just like, "Oh, I need to do what she says," because she had taught me everything I initially learned from IDM. And it was very interesting. It must be-- I mean, I'm sure you know all about the way the brain works, but there's something there that hearing the voice of someone who taught you something just brings back so much. For me, it brought back the knowledge that I could do these things to make these changes, and that I knew what I needed also to support me. And the biggest thing I needed to support me was the community that The Fasting Method had created. There are these weekly groups where, you know, something like 20 to 200 people are on the screen with a coach, and each one is about a different topic, but all within kind of The Fasting Method teachings. And even though, I mean, I felt like I could lead any of those groups, I know all this stuff, it's the being with the others and having the support of-- there's a knowledgeable coach who knows everything that Dr. Fung and Megan have created and knows how to convey that information, but there's also 20 to 200 people who have experienced every range of some type of a disordered relationship with food or with something that has brought them there. So you're going to connect with somebody, or maybe a whole bunch of people, whose story just resonates. And there's something about that that is hugely powerful. I'm not against 12-Step programs, but there's a part of the saying you're powerless over food or you're powerless, and there's something about that that bothers me. I feel like I am powerful, so I disconnect somewhere in those kind of groups. And there's also a lot of talk-- it seems like, from my-- this is from my own experience about managing all of that instead of The Fasting Method's version of managing the emotions, the eating, the different aspects of this lifestyle. And it is a lifestyle.

[00:18:21] And so I fully immersed myself. I got one more big coaching package and I was like, "This is going to finish me out," [laughter] and I was present for it. I really was present. I didn't keep rescheduling everything. [laughter] You know, I changed the way I ate, I started fasting, and, over that-- from November of 2021 to now, actually to last May, a year ago, I lost 95 pounds. And then since last May, I've been maintaining that. And I don't want to say effortlessly because it's not, but yet it feels effortless compared to the things I did before. It's the knowledge of how to fast, when to fast, when not to fast, what to eat when not fasting, and the Community, and the knowledge of all the coaches. I don't attend a whole lot of groups every week, but, when I need to, I sign up for every single one. I might go to six on Sundays because I need to just be focused on that.

[00:19:36] And then I was invited by some other Fasting Method people, group-- I don't even know what to call it-- members, to be a part of a smaller group where we just chat, we just have an ongoing chat. We have one that's food, so, if you're eating, you can look at the food one because we'll put pictures of food. And then the other one, we don't talk about food, just sort of like the groups, where there's groups you talk about food and groups you don't. And so that has been so helpful. There's like 12 of us; everybody's a Fasting Method member and we just support each other. And sometimes, if one of us misses a group or misses something, if it's something that's recorded, they'll come on and say, "You'd better go watch that Town Hall from last night, that, you know, whoever it is was so great," and, "Oh, Heather's going to be a coach now," you know, and you're like, "Oh my God, that's so great." And so it's such a community and such a support that was missing in every other program that I've ever done.

[00:20:41] And also the way I feel and the way my body responds to the way I do eat and I know when not to eat. I had a session with Megan and we went over all my bloodwork and my DEXA scans, and-- because I thought I couldn't-- I thought this last, which is probably maybe 20 pounds, it's a-- I need 4% body fat to get down to what's considered optimal. And I just thought I couldn't get there. I thought, you know, my body's too messed up, I can't do that. And she looked over everything and she said, "You can. You can. You know, you're just gonna-- it's going to take longer. It's not like at the initial part. You're going to have to, you know, really hunker down." She gave me some suggestions and she also reminded me of the blood tests that are recommended by The Fasting Method, and she went over them. And, you know, then I went on to the website (they're listed in the Quick Guides or in something like that) and I went and had all those run, and then I've had something like ten DEXA scans. So I've got all my Dexa scans, all my blood markers, and everything has normalized for me. I still consider myself not-optimal weight or body fat. And I go by body fat. I try to ignore the scale, but I want to be under 30% body fat. But I'm not insulin resistant, I don't have a glucose problem, my ApoB, my lipoprotein, all of these things that she recommended, everything, homocysteine, everything is in optimal range, optimal range, optimal range. And that, to me, that's just remarkable.

**Terri** [00:22:21] I think especially, Brigitte, as you have now kind of shared this story, coming from an infant who was already struggling with insulin resistance, basically, to have all of these health markers in optimal range.

**Brigitte** [00:22:38] Yeah, I'm about to turn 65 and I'm healthier now than I've ever been.

**Terri** [00:22:44] Absolutely.

**Brigitte** [00:22:46] So that's my long story. [laughs]

**Terri** [00:22:48] I feel like there are probably 400 places to hop into that story and highlight amazing things. One of the things I was just thinking, kind of looking back as you were talking about what was different this time, what has been different this time for you, the support, the type of support, but, also, so much, I think, the way you have approached it, lots of the early efforts that you talked about were short-term projects - "I'm going to eat tuna fish and bananas for three weeks, and I'm going to lose 20 pounds, and then I'm going to eat everything in sight and I'm going to gain 28." You know, and I'm sure you went through periods of time where you lost significant amounts of weight, like you said, where it was really exciting, and then just kind of the blow. Ugh, it's kind of demoralizing when you go back to normal life and it all comes back, plus more. And I think that's where, you know, so many of us lose hope. And one of the things that I really heard you highlight, when you came back, was you sparked up your hope again. You've reignited it. Rather than, "Well, I guess I'm stuck here because of Covid and I might as well just hunker down and be comfortable," you reignited your hope that, "I can optimize my body. I can be at that body weight that feels good. I can have no joint pain. I can have those biomarkers that are right where I want them to be." You got that going again and I think, it sounds like, that made all of the difference in the world.

**Brigette** [00:24:35] It really did. I just have a different thought process now. And what used to feel like a treat, as far as food goes, is more like a self-punishment, almost, now. I can feel it pretty quickly. But I do still go off plan, like, I don't always eat, you know, low-carb, or fast. Sometimes, I go out for a meal with family or friends and I have what I want, but the big difference is I get back into fat fasting that next day and then fasting whenever I'm ready, which might be the following day, or, you know, a week later. I also noticed that-- well, a couple of things. One thing is I don't need to fast all the time anymore to maintain where I am. If I really want to hunker down and get that last 4% of body fat off, I will need to do some therapeutic fasting for a while, but I'm very comfortable at this size and this shape. I just-- I feel okay right now. And so I can do all the things I want to do. I can hike. I hiked the Continental Divide last year, the Continental Divide Trail, felt great.

[00:25:52] I can do all the things that I want to do, and this last part is more of a desire for like a final accomplishment or something, more than anything else. But also, I know I can do it, and I know how to do it, and I no longer have a fear of going back to where I was. I don't believe that that's something I'll ever do. I have the tools, I have the Community. During that long holiday where there were no meetings for five days or something, whatever, July the 4th, I went back and watched all the webinars that were about to expire off the website and went back through some of the other guides and programs on the TFM website. I don't care how many times you've read that stuff, something else comes out when you reread it or rewatch it or relisten.

[00:26:53] One of my friends recently recommended some of the masterclasses that I had not purchased. I just thought, "I don't need that," you know, "I know all this stuff." And she said, "Yeah, but you own it for life. It's in your library for life, and then, when you need it, it's there. It's like an immersion in that subject." So that's my next project. I'm going to buy a masterclass every month or so and just watch it and listen and let myself, you know, be immersed in that learning. Just because you learn something once doesn't mean it's part of who you are or what you do. Hearing it repeatedly makes a difference, I think.

**Terri** [00:27:39] Yeah, I truly believe that. And I don't have a statistic about this, but very rarely do most of us have one-shot learning, where we find out the content, we figure out and understand the content, and now we just make it part of our lives. Integrating that

knowledge is a whole process, and, for most of us, it does take hearing it, reading it, seeing it, trying it a number of times until it becomes fully integrated into our lifestyle. And I think, again, this is the biggest-- I say this, but I mean, there are so many big things that you've captured here today, but this is one of the biggest parts of this journey for most of us, is that this has to become a lifestyle and a lifelong journey. It's not a six-month program. It's not a, "I'm going to do this thing until I get to this goal, and then I'm going to walk away," because we all know how that ends. We've all been there and done that. And I think, for so many of us (and you and I were talking about this earlier before we started recording, Brigette), that I often hear people say, "I know, but I just don't even know that this is sustainable. I don't know that I can do this long term. I mean, this is work and this is hard," or, you know, "These are complicated things I have to navigate sometimes." And when I hear that, and I think of my own personal journey, I feel like it's almost the opposite. I don't have an option because what I was doing before was not sustainable. It was easier, on the surface. I could eat crap food all the time whenever I wanted, I never had to make difficult choices. But how I felt, how I felt in my body, how my health was going, that was not sustainable.

**Brigette** [00:29:31] I love how this is sustainable and it's-- it goes with you wherever you go. I'm a house and pet sitter now. It's one of my many jobs. And wherever I go, I can take fasting with me. It's so great.

**Terri** [00:29:45] Yeah.

**Brigette** [00:29:45] And portable. Very handy.

**Terri** [00:29:49] And I feel like, right now, you are like a walking billboard for one of those little sound bites that I try to put out there whenever I can about making this your identity. Because it's your identity, you take it with you wherever you go.

**Brigette** [00:30:04] Well, and I've changed the way I approach relationships and getting together with friends. Just in this last year, it took me a long time. I joined, IDM-- six years? Six years ago. But just this last year, I started actually having kind of, whatever, the nerve, or whatever, to say, when people would say, "Do you want to go to dinner on Thursday?" Instead of making up an excuse, which is what I used to do, I'd say, "Oh no, I'm fasting on Thursday. Are you available for a walk that day or whatever?" To where, now, my friends, and even some of my clients, will say, "Is this an eating day or a fasting day?" They won't even mention what they're thinking until I tell them, and then they'll say, "Okay, okay." And then if it's a eating day, they're like, "Oh, there's this place I want us to try," and I'll say, "Okay, let's do it." But my friends who were very skeptical (and I do have some friends who were skeptical) are no longer, because I'm not-- it's not a fad. I've been doing it a long time. I'm clearly healthy. I'm healthier than I have been ever, certainly since they've known me, and the way they treat me now that they're accepting it and realizing, "Oh, maybe it's not so dangerous," it's nice. You know, it's nice to be taken seriously in that way and not, you know, not have such great concern. And they probably had great concern when I was 165 pounds heavier, but they didn't say anything. So that's a nice thing to be able to just be more honest with people instead of kind of hiding behind, "Oh no, I don't think I can go," or, "I don't feel like going," because a lot of times I wanted to see these people, but I did not want to be around food. It makes it easier.

**Terri** [00:31:54] One of the things that really struck me about what you just described is, in the past, when you might have been doing one of those kind of short-term, quick-fix kind of things, and had great success, probably, everyone kind of celebrated that. Like, "Oh my

gosh, Brigitte, you look great, you must feel great." And they were wanting to go shopping with you while you bought new clothes and it was this celebratory thing, but no one probably ever checked in - "How is your blood sugar?" "How is your insulin level?" "How was your homocysteine level?" You know, no one, I don't think, most of us, have ever really experienced people celebrating it because it was healthy for us. They were celebrating because it was fitting some criteria of what was a good weight for us.

**Brigitte** [00:32:45] Sure.

**Terri** [00:32:45] And now your friends not only see you at a very different weight and very different body composition, but all of these optimal range numbers that you're talking about health wise. So they are seeing you physically in your body in a way that feels good to you, but also so much healthier. And I think that, like you said, that's probably helped quiet their concerns, or their eye-rolls, or whatever that may have happened along the way. But it does fascinate me that all the times in the past when I lost a lot of weight or other people I knew lost a lot of weight, no one ever checked in about their health markers.

**Brigitte** [00:33:27] No, no, no. Just pant size. [laughter]

**Terri** [00:33:32] That's right, yeah. Oh, this is so exciting. So I do have a couple of specific things that I think listeners will wish they had an opportunity to ask you, so I'll ask. People are always curious when someone shares feeling good and feeling successful in their journey. Questions always come out. What was your protocol? What did you do? What do you eat? And I know, from experience working with you, that it's not one answer. But I'm curious, maybe, because it's not just one answer, how would you encourage people who are either getting started or maybe struggling to think about, "How do I know what protocol to use?" or, "How do I know what to eat?" What have you used to help guide you?

**Brigitte** [00:34:21] Well, what I tell people, now, because a lot of my friends are now approaching me asking for help. The first two things I recommend is getting rid of sweeteners and grains, for at least a little while. Sweeteners forever, grains at least for a while, and see how they feel. And a lot of my friends will just say, "Oh, you know, I've got to lose-- like, I'm just-- oh, this-- you know, whatever. I've got to do whatever." And I'll say, "Well, if you stop eating sweeteners and grains, you'll lose 10 pounds in two weeks and then we'll talk again." And then they say, "What?" And then I say, "Just do it, and then we'll talk in two weeks." And, sure enough, "I'm down 7 pounds in four days!" I'm like, "That's that's called inflammation." [laughter] So that's my first recommendation.

[00:35:07] And then stop eating at night, stop snacking, and get yourself to eat only meals, sitting down, on a plate, without a device, without a television, either talking to somebody or alone, and just see what it feels like. And eat as much as you want at that meal, but make it a meal. And when the meal is over, the meal is over. And that is probably the most difficult thing a lot of people have had trouble with, that are-- you know, have been asking me for help. And it's my way of kind of easing them into time-restricted eating without saying time-restricted eating, because that freaks people out. Like, "Oh, I can't fast." It's like, I'm not asking you to fast. I'm asking you to not eat all the time. I'm asking you to not eat six times, not eat eight times. Because a lot of people don't realize that they're eating all day. They just don't think about it. They pass by, you know, something, and they just grab a bite of it, and it doesn't-- I worked at a restaurant once, and I used to eat French fries every time I walk by the French fryer. That was right when I was, you know, getting up to my highest weight. And I think-- I wonder-- I just wonder now, like, how many times a day I ate. I probably ate 65 times a day because it was every time I passed by.



[00:36:23] So I don't go into detail at first. I will offer them either The Obesity Code or the TFM site if they're interested. A lot of times, you know, they're like, "Oh, I don't I don't want all that. I just want you to tell me what to do." It's like, "Okay, do these two things." And then, if they want more after that, I'll talk to them about extending their not eating. Just, you know, don't eat in the morning. Just wait until as long as you can and see what time you want that first meal, and then call me and we'll talk from there. And almost everybody can go 16 hours. And their brain, you know, they it seems outrageous, but really, if you ate at 6 p.m., it's not that hard to wait that next day, especially if you have tea or coffee in the morning or something like that to sustain you. It feels like a meal and you're getting something in your stomach.

[00:37:15] And so that's kind of the way I approach it, and I approach that for myself, too. If I'm getting-- my significant other just had open-heart surgery in May, and it was a huge emotional time. I went completely off my eating plan for a couple weeks and, you know, I just used food as comfort, and then-- I knew I was doing it, I was very aware. But then, when I knew he was going to live, I was like, "Okay, he's going to live. Now it's time for me to get back to living." And I did exactly what I [unintelligible]. I stopped all of those things and started reducing the number of times that I was eating. Then I'll do some fasting now and then. And you probably remember, I like longer fasts. It's just easier for me. That first 24 hours-- or at the 22 to 24-hour mark is what's so hard for me. And then after 72 hours, I feel great. So my favorite fasting is about a 72-hour fast. I don't do a lot of those anymore. I haven't needed to this last year to maintain this body fat. When I am ready, which I feel ready now, pretty soon, to hunker down and get that last 4% of the body fat off, I will go back to therapeutic fasting. And my plan is to switch it up. In the Maintenance Masterclass, Megan laid out an eight-week plan and it's just switching it up every week. It looks very doable to me. And it also looks like, you know, when I'm looking at it on paper, like, oh, that'll do it. I mean, if I can complete these eight weeks, which I can, that will get me to where I want to be, and then I will find my maintenance from there. I'm not sure what maintenance, true maintenance, will be at that lower body fat. I kind of think it'll be like it's been this last year, where I eat the foods that serve my body well, that don't create pain or inflammation, which is pretty low carb, but I eat plenty of vegetables and I even eat fruit if it's in season, especially if I can buy it locally at a farmer's market. I don't eat it naked, I always eat it with some protein, but I think I can go back to one or two 24-hour fasts a week, with maybe a 72 once a month or something. That's kind of what I've been doing this last year without any-- it doesn't feel like a lot of effort at this point because I've done it so long, I guess, and my body's used to it. I know I'll get to eat again. It's not like I'm punishing myself or anything, and it feels good to not eat all the time. My body really likes that. And now when I eat, like, I only eat the best of everything. I am not going to waste my eating time on anything that's not high qual-- I will never eat a store-bought tomato again in my life, but farmer's market or grown in my own garden, bring 'em on. I was at a house last summer and I was picking something like 20 to 30 tomatoes a day that were coming out of that garden. And I was coaching with John at that time, and I told him, "I can't help it. I am eating all these tomatoes. I'm eating like ten tomatoes a day. I know they're high sugar." And he said, "Well, it's real food. Don't worry about it. Let's just see what happens." Well, I was there for 15 days. I probably ate 150 tomatoes that time I was there and I lost four pounds while I was there. I did not fast at all, but I ate real food the whole time, and I ate it at meals, on a plate, without a television on. And all that matters.

**Terri** [00:40:50] I was going to say really focusing on those fundamental, foundational things. And what I really liked about your answer to that, it wasn't one protocol that was the secret sauce or the magic pill. It was, you've done lots of different things with fasting, but,

when you encourage people to really change the lifestyle, you're focusing on your relationship with food ultimately. What foods work for your body, what foods don't work for your body, and the frequency that works for your body. It's not a particular protocol. It's how does your body do and why are you using food? And I think that's an upcoming episode that I want to do, just talking about our relationship with food. Because what I hear you describe, Brigette, going back from that infant who was always hungry, is you're not always hungry. And you've learned to use food for what its purpose is. It's to sustain you and to give your body all of the building blocks it needs. And it should taste good. And so you only eat things that you enjoy eating, that are good quality things, and that serve you well. So I think if everyone takes nothing else away from this episode, I hope they take that away because I think that is priceless advice.

[00:42:12] All right. Well, this is probably one of the longest episodes I've recorded in a while. I feel like you and I could sit and talk for a couple more hours. I'll have to have you come back next time around and see kind of where you are in your journey then. But, Brigette, I just wanted to thank you so much. It was so good for me to get to hear your story again because, like I said, obviously, we got-- I got to work with you earlier on, but I've been watching more from the fringe, kind of seeing you in groups and things. So it's so great to get to hear your transformation and how you've navigated this. And so I just really appreciate you taking the time today to share this with all of us.

**Brigette** [00:42:52] Well, thanks for having me on, and thanks for being such a big part of this community. It's such a loving and nurturing community. I know the podcast is open to the public and so not everybody is a member, but I hope everybody will at least experiment with that month where you get a discount, and just see what it's like to have that kind of support. It's life changing. It really is. You know?

**Terri** [00:43:17] It is. All right, well, until we come back for another episode, I, again, appreciate you being here, and I wanted just to kind of remind everyone out there, if listening to this episode today was helpful for you and you think someone else in your life might benefit from hearing this, please share the episode with them. It helps our message to get out there when you share it or give us feedback, give us a rating on whatever podcast-casting system (I can't think of the right word) that you use that helps our message to get out there. And so if this is valuable to you, please don't hesitate to share and add value for other people.

[00:43:57] All right, everybody, happy fasting and we will see you again soon.