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**Megan** [00:00:06] Hi everyone. It's Megan Ramos here and I'm joined by my lovely co-host, Dr. Nadia Pateguana, for another episode of The Fasting Method podcast. Nadia, how are you doing today?

**Nadia** [00:00:17] Doing good. Excited to talk about one of my favorite topics - getting back on track.

**Megan** [00:00:23] Yeah, we always joked in the clinic, back in the day when we had a clinic in Toronto, that everybody had three New Year's Day opportunities. This is very generic and we understand that people have different events that are representative of New Year and fresh starts over the course of the calendar year. But just looking on a very sort of standard generic North American approach to this, you know, we have New Year's Day. If that doesn't go well, then at the end of January or early February, we have Chinese New Year and we'll joke about the lunar New Year. But then we always have this default, sort of New Year, new start, new beginning, and that always is the Tuesday after Labor Day. Through our experience, people start off June feeling pumped. They're going to be different this summer. In fact, they're going to do a 180 from last summer. They're going to go from 0 to 100 and be the most perfect eaters over the craziest time of the year. And then July happens and they're struggling; the white knuckling starts to happen. And then August - the white flags start happening. It's too busy, they're houseguests, they have houseguests, they're traveling, their kids have them wanting to rip out their hair, they're ready to go under a rock, and all of their eating habits tend to fly out the window. They need to ring that bell, or press that reset button, once everybody's back in school and they're back at work in September.

[00:02:01] Nadia, what are some of the common pitfalls you see people slide into towards the end of the summer that makes them want to slap that reset button in the fall.

**Nadia** [00:02:13] Well, for sure all the things that you just mentioned. You remember during COVID, how people went crazy because they had their kids in their house. [laughter] "Their kids in their house," it's their house too, I realize. It's the kids' house too, I know. But the kids were home the whole time and, you know, you just had... It was just hard. That's what August feels like every single year. It's kids all over the place. Some people are off work. Some people are still working but still managing, you know, mini vacations, mini trips, a lot of house guests at times. You know, there's lots of parties. There's a couple of long weekends in, you know, parts of the world. It just feels like an impossible mission. And I totally agree with you. I think in June, at the beginning of the summer, we have a lot of motivation to look a certain way or to feel a certain way, myself included. And it's one of the best months of the year as far as preparing for the summer. But August honestly feels like you're just hanging on by a thread, if you have kids, most of the time. You know, if you're young and partying and living life, it's not easy either. I know, I get it. You know, and single and fun or retired - we have the most funnest retired people in our Community, by the way, Megan. [laughter] I call them my fun friends because they're always on a boat, they're always partying. And so I get it. It's a hard time. So August feels like that, you know.

[00:03:41] And I think most of us, within our Community, that have all the best intentions... And it isn't everyone. I'm generalizing because, you know, I've heard, even over the summer this year, Megan, in our Community, people have been really focused, you know. And, actually, they mention you, Megan, in what you've said in a couple of our podcasts,

you know, "Diabetes doesn't wait and that we have to be really serious and focused on our healing journey." You know, fasting is not a temporary diet. It's not a fad. Therapeutic fasting is a healing protocol. And so a lot of people are very, very serious about this and take that very, very seriously. So when they're in that healing journey, it doesn't matter what day of the week it is or what month of the year it is, you know? So I do know that many people... And, often, when they're that focused and they've got their mindset focused and, you know, they're so laser-focused, it's hard for them to remember what it was like when they weren't as focused and sometimes can't relate to people that take August off, for example. But it is what it is. I always joke that I haven't yet met any aliens. Only humans in here. So whether you've had a laser-focused August or August has felt like, "Oh, dear God," then we are here to talk about it. Okay?

**Megan** [00:05:02] I think for me, you know, I was diagnosed with diabetes around August, just before my birthday, which is August 11th. So we're going back now... I'm 38, so 11 years. And there's no motivation like that for a 27 year old. Well, I mean, there are a lot worse things I could have been diagnosed with, absolutely, but it definitely made it really easy. But, you know, six months later, I was a healthy person again. 12 months later, I was healthier than I had ever been in my life.

[00:05:34] And we're back in August and, you know, many of us can't imagine going back to old eating habits. Or if we have a meal here or a day there where we're not eating our, quote-unquote, what Terri says are 'our foods' or our new foods or their foods from a past experience. We just so easily get back on track because we want to feel well. But what gets me every August, I don't even have kids yet, is just like the structure that goes out the window. You know, having houseguests and having weddings here that we have to travel for over the course of the weekend. I'm such a creature of structure and that's what I always so look forward to about the fall. Getting out of routine and having more events where you eat a little bit more often, even when they are your foods, the foods that you identify with now. It just doesn't... You don't end the summer feeling super hot. So I love this time of year and I love using it as a chance to go over the basics.

[00:06:40] Now, you've heard us say this a hundred times and you've heard me say this a million times if you've been following me - fasting is like a muscle. If you take some downtime from the gym, you've got to warm it up again. Nadia and I, in this podcast, we're going to give you our top strategies for warming up that fasting muscle again, because we want you to be feeling so good going into the December holidays and the New Year that you're literally dancing your way into it, you're literally ending the year younger than you were when you started the year. So we want to give you all of the tips to get that fasting muscle going.

[00:07:19] Now, let's talk about the gym for a second. So this summer, I had to take two weeks off of going to the gym while I was doing an egg retrieval. And what do you think would have happened after those two weeks of very light walking, not a whole lot of physical activity? Do you think I jumped back into the gym and I started doing that heavy-duty weight lifting that I was doing beforehand - those heavy deadlifts and heavy barbell curls and all that type of stuff? Or do you think I eased my way back into it and by September, by now, I'm starting to get back into my previous routine where I am deadlifting that much weight or squatting that much weight? Now, most of you, you know, if I were to tell you that I took two weeks off and I went back and I decided I was going to start deadlifting exactly where I left off, you'd say, "That's not safe, that's stupid. You're going to hurt yourself. You just gave your body two weeks of rest, you can't jump in and do that."

You've got to start working on mobility, waking those muscles up again. And then, yeah, in September you get back into the groove after a couple of weeks off."

[00:08:37] So that is the proper strategy that so many of us do when it comes to the gym. We understand that we have these physical limitations and that we need to slowly get our body back into the groove again when it comes to physical activity. And so many of you think of fasting as a mental activity and there is a huge mental component to it, but there's also a big physiological component. And this is what we see being the biggest hurdle for people either making it or breaking it in September. They'll come off of vacation, two or three kids at home, having house guests, and they're going to jump into a five-day fast this week. They're in the middle of September, kids are back at school, they're back at work - this is the week they're going to fast. And that is literally like I'm taking a month off at the gym from doing that high-intensity stuff to jumping in and trying to do high-intensity stuff.

[00:09:37] So Nadia and I have our top strategies here for how do you do mobility work? We know at the gym we stretch, we do some light walking, we gradually increase our weights. How do you do that with fasting? The very first thing you do is you cut out snacking and you go back to meals. So Nadia and I and our team, we call this time-restricted eating. You've got to tidy up those eating windows. There's no such thing as snacking in a healthy, metabolically healthy, person's vocabulary. It does not exist. If you're metabolically healthy, if you've crushed it, if you made it to maintenance, if you're three years out in maintenance, you don't snack. It's not something you do. Maybe a day here or a day there, but it is not a habit that you have anymore. You are going to get the most bang for your buck by going back to time-restricted eating. So this is where you literally eat meals and you don't eat in between the meals.

[00:10:37] Now, Nadia is our queen of TRE, so I'm going to throw it over to her to dive into some of her favorite TRE strategies.

**Nadia** [00:10:46] Well, again, one of my very favorite topics. When I created my five pillars that I talk to my coaching clients about in the past and now with our Community and in my health consultations, I (whenever given the opportunity) always like to talk about my five pillars to metabolic health. And my very first pillar is the topic - the critical importance of TRE (time-restricted eating). I joke that it is the Beyoncé of the show. [laughter] It is the main event. It is the epitome of intermittent fasting. But really it is the foundation to your success, OK? And I know that I repeat this quite often, but even today in our Community, I was talking to a few people about this. Whereas a lot of people can white knuckle through that five-day fast, Megan; my husband would be one of those guys, right? He would come back from vacation and he would white knuckle through that five-day fast. But is he going to have great success long-term doing that? We haven't seen that be the case.

[00:11:47] The people that have the most success, long-term, are the people that have a really great intermittent fasting foundation. And the foundation of intermittent fasting is time-restricted eating. It is eating intermittently on your eating days and then, of course, you can throw in whatever fasting schedule you are comfortable with doing later, depending on your goal, depending on the week, etc., etc.. But what we see, more often than not, is even if you are able to do that five-day fast post-vacation, if you haven't first focused on getting yourself to really have full meals, no snacking, no grazing, even after that five-day fast, you're going to go back to snacking and grazing. And that's not what you want. You really need to have that foundation on your eating days. Whether you're eating all the best foods already or you're still eating some of the things you were eating on vacation, you really have to put all your weight and effort into bringing all of those things

into these tight, short, eating windows that are properly spread apart. And Megan calls these 'mini fasts'. So building up that fasting muscle and starting by creating these mini fasts in between meals - that is going to be the strongest foundation.

[00:13:03] I mean, think about, you know, Megan talks about her gym analogy all the time. You know, think about construction. If you're going to build a really strong, solid building, you need to have a really, really strong foundation. It doesn't matter how pretty the building looks, how tall it is, you know, how long you can fast, that's the analogy. If the foundation is not grounded, if it's not solid, that beautiful building is just going to crumble, right?

[00:13:28] So, TRE. What does that stand for? Time-restricted eating. It's the idea that you can work towards full meals and no snacking, no grazing, even before you start to think about doing longer fasts. Whether or not you have the ability to do longer fasts already, that's a whole other topic and we will leave that because lots of people can do long fasts, five-day fasts, but they're still struggling with TRE. And so then, you know, they take one step forward and of course quite a few steps back once they are done with that extended fast. What you want to do is consistently work towards healing and reversing insulin resistance and you will not be able to do that, like Megan said, no matter what you're eating. It could be the healthiest diet, but snacking is never going to be healthy and it's never going to help you work towards your goal.

[00:14:19] So, the first step in your recovery plan is to start with focusing on TRE again. In fact, I like to remind people, even during, you know, next year or the next time that you're on holiday or during a trip or life gets in the way, put all your weight and effort into TRE. That's a whole other topic, I call that a 'holding pattern', but that's a whole other topic for another time. But let's say August didn't go according to plan and you were snacking and grazing and eating all kinds of things you wish you weren't, leave that in the past. We're not going to harp on it, but we are going to focus on full meals in these tight eating windows, short eating windows properly spread apart; these mini fasts, as Megan calls them.

[00:15:04] So, if you're ready to go to two meals a day, that's great. Then you can go back to the famous 16/8 or 18/6, where you fast for 16 to 18 hours overnight and then you have these two meals 6 to 8 hours apart. Okay? And each of your eating windows should be about 30 to 60 minutes. There is a 90-minute strategy that Megan often talks about if you're just restarting to strengthen your TRE muscle, but if you're ready, then please try to keep those windows, those eating windows, those meals, to 30 to 60 minutes, and then keep the gap between the meals about 5 to 7 hours apart. So, in total, your eating window (or your eating time) looks like it's a 6 to 8-hour large eating window, but that's not what you're trying to do. You are trying to fast for 16 to 18 hours, but you do not want to graze or snack for that 6 to 8-hour period. What you want to do is create these two separate windows and that's called TRE. And the gap between these two windows, the time between these two windows, the mini fast, is about 5 to 7 hours if you're doing two eating windows.

[00:16:20] If you're starting out with three eating windows, so three full meals, that is perfectly fine. Keep a gap of about 4 hours between these two. It might take you a few days to get ready to go to two eating windows (so instead of having three TRE, having two TRE windows) and that's perfectly fine. It's better to go from 3 to 2 windows at your pace (like going back to the gym) than to continue on grazing and snacking for the remainder of September and October, and then all of a sudden before you know it, it's the end of the year and the holidays are approaching. Okay?

**Megan** [00:16:57] Thanks, Nadia. People, you know, will share, "I did a 5-day fast." "I did a 10-day fast." That's cool. Don't snack for six weeks and you're a frickin' superhero in my book. I mean, I think that's so much more challenging to do something every day that's moving you forwards to your success and being able to make that a habit - real, long-term behavior change - and be consistent with it. That's really cool. And it's always those individuals that are the ones that do hit that sweet maintenance spot and optimize their health. It's challenging to do TRE. I struggle with snacking myself. I give myself a reset a couple of times a year. It gets harder around the holidays, but it's so, so critical.

[00:17:46] The next strategy we want to talk about is just tidying up your diet. So you've been busy, you've been on the go, you've had kids home, you've been traveling, and life's been kind of nuts. And something that people do, especially women, is get in the habit of having side dishes composed of cheese and nuts - a handful of almonds, a handful of walnuts, or mixed nuts, a brick of whatever cheese that you fancy. And those are your side dishes. What Nadia and I are trying to say is it's not that you can't have those foods, but you should be thinking of them as garnishes. And nine times out of ten, when a woman, in particular, has hit a wall and it's just, you know, ripping their hair out and they don't know, "Do I need to do an extended fast?" Sometimes the answer is, "Yeah," but often it's not.

[00:18:37] And I'll ask them to take some time and record a food diary for a week or two. And I see their frustration. You know, they're thinking, "Megan suspects that I'm eating carbs," or, "I'm hiding things," or, "I don't understand nutrition and I'm eating potatoes and I don't understand that they're super starchy." And that's not the case at all. I suspect you are a very busy person, especially if you've got kids, in that you are having side dishes of nuts and cheese. I get it. I don't have kids. My life is hectic as can be. I don't know what I'm going to do when I've got them. I'm going to have to figure it out. And it's so easy for me to fall into the, "Oh, let's just have two or three handfuls of nuts and call it a meal," because that's our modern-day life. So I can fully sympathize with you, but that's what I expect to see. And nine times out of ten, that's exactly what I do see.

[00:19:34] So get back into some of these good eating strategies that you had before the summertime when things got really busy. Nuts and dairy (in particular cheese) should be garnishes for your meal. Heavy cream is like a garnish for your tea or your coffee, if you're going to have it. It's not a major ingredient. It's not a side dish that you're having. So when it comes to tidying up the diet to get back on track, those are the two foods that are often the most problematic. And it's really about the portion sizes of them. So keep them to a garnish. When you have a salad and want to put nuts on it or cheese, it's a garnish. It is not a main ingredient in that salad. Same thing with your plates of food. So get out of the habit of going for those handfuls or those bricks of cheese. Get out of the habit of topping up your tea with, you know, two or three inches of heavy cream. Make them garnishes in your routine and the weight is going to start to melt off.

**Nadia** [00:20:34] I couldn't agree with this more. I, over the years, ended up creating a food pyramid. And my food pyramid looks exactly like that; it looks like a pyramid. So at the base of the pyramid, I've got, you know, all the low-carb foods that most of us recognize. And then I put nuts and dairy at the very tip of the pyramid, which brings up a lot of questions because people are like, "Cheese has less carbs than..." whatever food you have lower down, you know, like berries or something else, but the problem is that these tend to be foods that we graze a lot on. And so it's a really important reminder that cheese and nuts must be a garnish if you have them at all.

[00:21:13] Now, here's another thought, another idea, for some of you. Speaking of sort of New Year's resolutions and restarts, because September kind of is like New Year, like Megan said at the beginning. It's the new school year for many kids. It's back to work for many people. And so this idea that this might not be a bad time for you to consider doing an elimination type diet. You could follow... You know, there are tons and tons of anti-inflammatory, elimination-type diets out there that you could look into. It's an easy way to clean up your diet because you're given a list of foods to eat and follow. And a lot of people need that type of structure, they need that type of guidance. So, you know, lots and lots of our team members and our Community has done this as a group. They've done the Whole30. I know Coach Lisa has done it with a group of people many times. I know Coach Larry has done it quite a few times. So choosing something like that might not be a bad idea if you feel like you need that type of guidance and you need that kind of structure. Also, when people do these types of elimination diets, they often do them in groups. So whether you're doing it with our Community or you're doing it with somebody at work or with the people in your home, you know, people like challenges. And it's also very motivating to do these types of things because there's usually a time frame to them, like a 30-day thing. So it's an easy way for you to... And usually, people are feeling pretty (how do you say this, Megan?) darn sick and tired of being sick and tired, so it is not a bad idea to consider that if you need it. So whether you're looking at my food pyramid as a guide, or some of our eating resources as a guide, or if you go in search of some real-food options as a guide, it might not be a bad idea.

[00:23:08] I know a lot of people are scared of feeling restricted, but the simpler your diet is, the more repetitive it is, the less restricted you're actually going to feel. And this is a whole other topic. It might be a lot easier than you think. Usually, when we eliminate things like high insulin-producing foods, processed foods, junky foods, carby foods, even dairy, when we eliminate them, we don't crave them anymore. Sweeteners is another great example. So if you've ever gone through this, I agree that there's a little bit of a withdrawal period, but that withdrawal period is usually highly driven by your motivation, by your willpower, to do anything. So it's just a few days and you're usually very, very highly motivated and have very strong willpower at the beginning of any challenge. So it usually goes by pretty well. And then by the time those cravings are gone, or by the time those first few days are gone, your cravings are also gone for those foods. So if you're not eating certain things, you don't crave them. So it's actually a lot easier to do than you may think.

[00:24:15] If you've ever tried an elimination diet, this might not be a bad time for you to consider one, right? And remember that elimination diets are great because they're usually real-food approaches and so nothing wrong with that.

[00:24:29] One of the things that Megan mentioned reminded me of my strategy for how to stop grazing and snacking. Over the course of my journey, I created a mindful eating technique that I call 'plating'. You know, I was such a snack and such a grazer and I was just eating things that I wished I wasn't eating, that I ended up creating this strategy for TRE. So this is very, very helpful for our first suggestion, for TRE, but it's also really helpful for you to be more mindful of what you're eating and how much of it you're eating, even though we're not trying to count calories. But for things that you tend to snack on and graze and you don't even realize how much of it you're eating, it's a really good idea to look at some mindful-eating techniques and strategies. So the one I use and I call 'plating' means that I never eat from a package. I never eat from the fridge, I never eat in front of the TV where I'm, you know, mindlessly eating. I never eat in front of my computer or at my desk. I never eat in my car. Basically, I never eat in a mindless sort of manner. I always eat in a mindful manner. And my technique is that (at the beginning anyway) I would set up a

plate somewhere in an eating place (or a place where I would go to eat) when I was ready to eat and I would sit down and eat all of the foods that I had put around that plate or on that plate. And I would start to eat and I would eat until I felt satiated and satisfied and full, and then I would walk away. And once I walked away from that plate, I was done eating for that particular eating period, for that TRE window.

[00:26:12] And so this is a really good strategy that I've shared with a lot of people and a lot of people have told me that it was helpful to them. So I never eat from a package, I never eat from the fridge, I never eat at my desk, I never eat in my car, I never eat in front of the TV. I always, always eat in an eating place in front of a plate. So, as you're cooking, as you're cleaning up after your kids or your family, you know, there is this tendency to mindlessly eat and not even realize it. So some strategies for that is to put everything on a plate or around a plate and to just wait until you're sitting in that place before you start to eat.

[00:26:53] I know over the last two years, Megan, with COVID, people have come up with some super creative strategies for mindful eating. Have you heard the mask one? How people wear a mask while they're cooking? So many people in our Community have shared this. How they realized that they were mindlessly eating around the house, particularly while they were cooking for themselves or for other people. And so they started to wear a mask when they were cooking. And of course, they would then realize as the food was jammed, jamming into their mask, that they were eating mindlessly. And so that was a strategy that apparently a lot of people used. It's a new one for sure, and it goes with the times, but a lot of people use it and they said that, you know, of course, they only had to do that for a few days and then just realized and broke that mindless habit of eating.

**Megan** [00:27:43] That's a good one. [laughs] I've never put my mask to that use, but it would have been good because my snacking got out of hand during the first few weeks of lockdown back when I was in Toronto. A mask would have really railroaded my attempt at bad behaviors there with that.

[00:28:02] Mindful eating. This is the one thing that I keep bringing up in the Community and I constantly hear from members that when they saw the lesson video of that day or the theme of the week that they just totally rolled their eyes at the app screen or the computer screen like, "Oh, my gosh, no! This is so silly. This is hokey pokey, woo woo stuff that I'm just about to listen to this woman say." And then they give me the benefit of the doubt, they listen to me, they try it, and they all report how transformative it actually is for them.

[00:28:40] So mindful eating, on top of all of Nadia's points and strategies, is so critical for how our body actually processes foods and signals satiation, or doesn't. If you are distracted and even if you're looking at puppies on Instagram [laughs] or YouTube videos of home DIY ideas for your kitchen, if you are distracted while you're trying to eat, your body recognizes that you're in a threatening situation because we are not supposed to be distracted when we eat. We're not designed to be distracted when we eat. So when we have that distraction during this sacred moment of eating, we actually have a sympathetic, flight or fight, nervous system response. And when that happens, when that flight or fight nervous system is activated in the body, digestion gets shut off, nutrients aren't going to be absorbed, there's going to be IBS issues, potentially, or other gastric issues, and your body is much more likely to hoard food, you know, sort of as fat, as storage, because you're in this dangerous situation. Your blood sugar levels go up, your hunger is spiked, so you don't quite feel satiated. All of the things that you don't want to happen are happening when you are eating in a distracted state.

[00:30:08] There is only one scenario where some distraction actually proves to be extremely beneficial to digestion, and that is community engagement. So when you are around a table with friends or family or loved ones (people that are in your protective circle) and you are engaging in conversation and listening to them because they are your protectors, they're your community, they're your team, your body doesn't have that sympathetic response. But watching YouTube, scrolling on Facebook, Instagram, watching the news, reading the newspaper, looking at a magazine - all of these things can be triggering for your sympathetic nervous system.

[00:30:48] The opposite of the sympathetic nervous system is the parasympathetic nervous system. Now it is termed the rest and digest nervous system. So already you can tell that's the polar opposite of the fight or flight. So when you activate this nervous system response, you get great digestion, great absorption of nutrients, very little tummy issues. You don't see blood sugar spikes, you see great satiation signaling happening. You're a lot less likely to gain body fat because your body doesn't think you're in this potentially scarce and life-threatening situation.

[00:31:25] So this is where eating free from that distraction or with communities can be really, really beneficial at helping you start your fast on a better footing. Can you imagine feeling so satiated that you can't even finish what's on your plate and it's effortless to start your fast because you're not hungry 30, 60, 90 minutes later? Like, how cool is that, right? But if you're eating and you're really distracted, you're going to feel hungry 30, 60, 90 minutes later. 4 hours later, 6 hours later, you're going to be so grateful when you can go to sleep and try to sleep through the rest of your fast.

[00:32:03] So mindfulness is so important. And just like with meditation and other mindfulness practices, you know, they tell you to start slow and build up. There are some other strategies. Nadia's mentioned some really great ones, but other ones, mental prompts, that you can do is to really count the number of times you chew a bite of food. Now, the gold standard is like 18 chews per bite. You might be there until the cows come home, literally [laughs] if you're chewing your food that much, but I usually encourage people to start off with half. You know, aim for anywhere between 8 to 10 chews per bite of food. Get in the practice of doing that count as a great way to sort of get your mind connected to your mouth and the action of eating.

[00:32:51] And then once you are thinking about the food that's actually in your mouth, you know, how are those foods tasting in different combinations? How does one side taste with the main? How does one protein taste compared to another protein? What are the different textures, flavors, different combinations, different temperatures? How do they mix on your plate? You know, really thinking about all of that, the food sort of as this art that you're consuming and the different expressions it has in your system can really help guide you to become a lot more present with the food that you are having. So that's really important. You've got to control that nervous system response.

[00:33:32] Now, we've talked about not snacking. We've talked about the biggest dietary vices that screw people up. We've talked about mindful eating and why it's so important for so many different reasons. I think Nadia and I could do a whole episode on it!

[00:33:49] But let's talk about what to eat to get back on track. And this is where fat fasting comes in. Fat fasting is essentially a really monotonous approach to eating, and prioritizing



foods that are high in protein and fat. In two different ways, this approach helps to tame our appetite and curb cravings.

[00:34:11] So a monotonous diet is always going to be an appetite-suppressing diet, regardless of what it is that you're eating. Think back to some food from your former life. Mine was pizza and exam time. I would eat so much pizza throughout exams. It was like the only food that I consumed - I didn't have time to cook, it could get delivered, it was the right price for a college student. But I used to be so happy to go home after exams in the holidays and eat any vegetables, anything green, anything that wasn't pizza, right? A monotonous diet is always going to have an appetite-suppressing effect. Like, it got to the point where I'd almost rather eat the cardboard box that the pizza came in than the pizza itself.

[00:34:58] So with fat fasting, we want a monotonous diet, but we don't want to be eating pizza because that's going to cause hormonal chaos or upheaval and produce tons of insulin and throwing everything else off. So we want to eat foods that are not going to have this large insulin, this hormonally-chaotic, response that's actually going to reduce inflammation and allow for proper satiation signaling to occur, as well as squashing cravings for certain sugars. So these foods are fat and they are protein.

[00:35:30] And there are a couple of different approaches you can take with this monotonous, fatty, dietary strategy. You can pick three or four fatty foods and eat those foods in repetition over and over and over again and make all of your meals constructed out of these foods. So common ones that I would have would be avocados, eggs, bacon, chicken wings. And I would just maybe eat those foods over and over again for dinner. Every night it's chicken wings and avocado. So you just eat the same foods again and again. Or you make eggs. You can make them six or seven different ways, but you're always having eggs at lunchtime, for example, with some bacon.

[00:36:11] Or, if that doesn't work for you, especially if you're more on the plant-based side of things, you could have a couple of meals, one or two meals. And those meals might have several ingredients that prioritize fat and protein in those ingredients, but you're eating the same thing over and over again.

[00:36:27] So I was chatting with a young woman who is plant-based yesterday and she needed to do a fat fast. It was towards the end of her cycle and her hunger was ravenous. We're not concerned about anything else about fertility or hormones or anything at this moment, so we talked about a particular fatty stir fry that she liked, one that we could make fatty with coconut oil and different other fats and adding in a side of avocado with olive oil drizzled on it. Okay, but for every meal, she's going to have that fatty stir fry with the avocado and olive oil on the side to get in the fat. So you can have that same meal, but eating the same thing that prioritizes fat and protein over and over again. And that strategy tends to be a little bit better for those who do really enjoy cooking and variety in their diet or for those who are on the plant-based side of things.

[00:37:20] Now, nobody, I think, runs through fat fasting like Nadia does. So I'm going to throw it over to her to share her top fat-fasting strategies for you guys.

**Nadia** [00:37:32] Well, only because this is my absolute, not just favorite but, necessary recovery plan. I must fat fast. I have learned this over the years, many, many years. You know, after every long weekend, after every trip, after every illness, etc., etc.. No matter how good my intentions are going into a trip, you know, inevitably I come back from a trip,

whether it's from the stress of it or the flying or jet lag or whatever it is and the insulin beast comes back from the trips with me, right? The insulin beast moves into my house. My insulin rises, just like the rest of you, from eating too often, too late, things that I shouldn't eat. Insulin goes up, you know, and I feel like the insulin beast has moved in.

[00:38:16] So I could try [laughs] to white knuckle through an extended fast to lower that insulin, but that is just not something that I am able to do. So instead of trying to starve that beast, that insulin beast, with fasting, I'd rather tame the beast with fat fasting. So by choosing these foods that you mentioned that are much, much lower in insulin production, then over the course of the next couple of days, that insulin goes down tremendously. It goes down a lot. It is actually referred to as a fast-mimicking diet. Fat fasting, a proper fat fast, the traditional fat fast is actually referred to as a fast-mimicking diet because it puts your body, after a few days, in such a lower-insulin state that it is hormonally similar. Of course, we're not talking about autophagy and all the other benefits that come along with fasting, but from simply an insulin perspective, it lowers your insulin to such a degree that it is referred to as a fast-mimicking diet. So it's a great alternative for people who cannot fast longer (if your insulin is very high) to do a fat fast.

[00:39:33] And I'm not saying that it is easy, as Coach Terri would say. As Dr. Terri Lance would say, "We can do hard things." So not everything that we are saying is easy. Getting back on track is never easy, going back to work is never easy, you know, waking up early in the morning is not easy, but these are things that we can and must do. And fat fasting, I often say, I guess my self-coach, my internal conversation is that for me this is like taking an antibiotic if I have an infection. I don't necessarily start a fat fast really wanting to fat fast or really craving, you know, these particular foods. You know, when my insulin is real high, I'm not craving eggs and bacon. I'm craving cabbage, right? I'm craving carbs and processed foods and high-sugar foods. I know that. And I know that most of you are too, right? So coming off of a vacation, you're craving mostly high-insulin-producing foods. So I know you're not craving all these wonderful, healthy, real-food, low-insulin foods that Megan was just talking about.

[00:40:36] But I don't go into it thinking, "I'm only going to eat the stuff that I crave or that I feel like eating." I go into it thinking, "How can I lower my insulin? How can I feel better in a couple of days? How can I go back to fasting? How can I go back to my healing plan?" Right?

[00:40:51] So this is the strategy. So what I do is I, first of all, make the commitment. I already know fat fasting works because I've done it numerous times. So I commit to it and then I organize and I prepare for it. I buy the foods. I do keep it super simple. Like Megan said, the less variety I have, the easier it is to do. As I said, these are not usually foods that I am looking forward to eating. I'm usually craving other things, so I actually find it easier to fat fast if I start it off with a mini fast. Usually, I can't fast for very long on the first day back of getting back on track, so I'll, you know, fast for the morning or maybe into the afternoon. But at some point, I do get hungry. And it's not craving like you're feeling in the morning, it's actual hunger. So when I'm hungry, then I already have some type of fat-fast recipe, very simple recipe, made up. And since I'm actually hungry, I will sit down and I am actually able to eat this food.

[00:41:52] And so whether I have one meal or two meals that first day, all I know is that I wake up... And once you eat these fat-fast foods, you feel satiated. You don't walk away craving more. You don't usually walk away craving other things either. You feel full and

satiated because these are filling, satiating type foods, right? Because they're low-insulin-producing foods, they don't really leave you wanting to graze and craving.

[00:42:17] The next morning after the first day of a fat fast, you feel totally different. I often joke that everything sucks when insulin is high. So when insulin is high and you start to try to fast or you start to try to eat better, that day sucks. You know, your husband sucks, your kids, your work sucks - everything sucks when insulin is high. This is a little bit of a joke with our Community and our clients. But the next day, since your insulin is a little bit lower, things start to look a lot better and you start to feel a lot better. So the second day of fat fasting is usually easier and the third day a lot easier. And by then people are in a really good hormonal state to start thinking about how they want to eat, what they want to eat, and then they start making a plan for the rest of the week and the rest of the month.

[00:43:02] So I think fat fasting is a wonderful strategy. Again, you may not be craving these foods on day one. You may not even feel better on day one. But remember, this is kind of like taking an antibiotic when you have an infection. You take it because you know you're going to feel better in a couple of days. It usually does take about 48 hours for an antibiotic to take effect and for the infection to improve and for you to feel better. That's kind of how I look at a fat fast. And if you think about it that way, then it might be a lot easier for you to actually complete a fat fast. And also, if you've done a fat fast before, then, you know it absolutely works and you'll never need to be convinced of doing it ever again. You'll do it on your own.

**Megan** [00:43:43] Thanks, Nadia. I'll add a couple of common questions that we get.

[00:43:48] "Can you have broth while you're fasting?" Absolutely.

[00:43:53] "Can you have heavy cream in your tea and coffee when you're fasting?" Now, Nadia, myself and our team, we really prefer that you try to eliminate nuts and dairy as part of your fasting routine unless, for some reason, you absolutely need to take them as a protein source. So an example would be maybe you're more on the plant-based side of things - you're vegetarian or vegan - and nuts are part of your protein. So we get that, but you do need to be mindful of them. So those are just some words of wisdom and caution when it comes to executing the fat fasts, but all of the fasting beverages can be had around fat-fasting meals, absolutely.

[00:44:37] With the fat fasting, too, everybody has a different tolerance for being able to take certain fats. I am someone who, even through nutrigenomics testing, I learned that I need to surrender a little bit on the saturated fat. I got to stop trying to force it. I would eat these really dense foods high in saturated fat, thinking that, you know, these are great foods. And, while I'm not scared of them for heart disease or cancer or anything like that, I just never felt great after having them. And then I finally did some nutrigenomics testing and, genetically, I am better suited to consume some saturated fats, but not heaps and heaps and heaps of them like I was trying to force myself to do so.

[00:45:26] An example of something I tried to push when I was fat fasting was pork belly. So back in the day, pork belly was a huge fat-fasting food. I love the smell of it. I love pork. It looks delicious. I so wanted to have it. My husband is a phenomenal cook and he would make excellent pork belly. Everyone would love it. And I would spend 2 hours afterwards in the bathroom throwing up. But I could tolerate bacon. I don't know why. [laughs] I can eat bacon like, it's the, you know, I'm never going to be able to have it again. I love it so much and I have no tummy issues.

[00:46:03] So what we hear sometimes is people, just like me, for certain reasons, some foods don't sit with them while other ones do. I'll often incorporate some leafy greens cooked in avocado, olive oil, coconut oil when I fast because that sits with me really well. So I'll do that when I fast instead of, you know, maybe going a little bit more heavier on some of the animal proteins and fat.

[00:46:27] So you've got to customize this to you. So if you see a list and bacon's on that list but you don't eat bacon, have salmon, have avocado, have olives. You know, have some leafy greens, dark leafy greens, sautéed in coconut oil. You can totally customize this to what \*you\* enjoy and what's going to leave you feeling good. You don't want to be forcing yourself to eat something that doesn't make you feel good because that's going to be counterproductive and inflammatory and all the wrong things that we're trying to achieve with the fat fast.

[00:46:56] But I think we've got everyone some really good tips to get started for getting back on track. Nadia did mention elimination diets and we are actually doing one, a 30-day one, in the Community right now. So you can hop on over to The Fasting Method. We're a couple of weeks in, but you can still join us for the last two weeks. It's part of our September Reset challenge that we're doing in the Community. Coach Larry and Jamie are leading it for us again. It's been popular over the last year, so we thought, "Hey, we'll get that in there this fall." But you can still tag in, join, get caught up on the last couple of weeks and get the last two weeks under your belt.

[00:47:36] We'll see you back here next week for another podcast. Bye for now, everyone.

**Nadia** [00:47:42] Bye, everyone.