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Megan [00:00:06] Hi, everyone, it's Megan Ramos, and I'm here with my lovely co-host, Dr Nadia Pateguana, and we are wishing everybody a Happy New Year. Nadia, how were your holidays?

Nadia [00:00:18] Sorry, I talked over you - so excited about the New Year! Especially this year, I don't know that I should be that excited. But anyhow, Happy New Year. Sorry Megan, how was your New Year?

Megan [00:00:27] It was crazy. My husband and I just celebrated our sixth wedding anniversary. We've been together for seven years. We got married at Christmas, so we just love doing things at Christmas time. So we got married at Christmas, but Angel, my husband, has moved six times during the holidays. I've moved four, just in the seven years we've been together. Don't ask about the timing logistics. We've had two international moves during this time as well. So it's just, apparently we really just like staying busy over the holidays! So we've moved yet again this Christmas. But we know that next Christmas we will *not* be moving, so really looking forward to next year. But we survived this year, which is important.

Nadia [00:01:14] We were just talking about that and sharing nightmare stories because we have very similar moving stories. Not six. Well maybe six, if I really count and include Mozambique. But anyway, let's talk about the New Year. How did you do Megan? How was--- because I'm going to be very honest today about--- you can see me, right? So because you can see me, you can see my, what do you call these? The stamp--- or my--- what do you say when it's that embarrassing thing, the 'stamp of shame' or whatever it's called? What's it called? [Laughter]

Megan [00:01:45] I don't know, but I wouldn't say that Nadia. You look great.

Nadia [00:01:48] So I've got this huge pimple on my face, which is very--- I think it's an important sort of expression of insulin resistance for women with PCOS, or women on the insulin resistance spectrum. So I haven't had acne or pimples in years. Megan has known me for almost six years and now I've got the 'stamp of shame' on my face. [Laughter] I'm just going to call it that. I've got the stamp of shame on my face, and I'm very happy to be honest and open about it. So, tell us a little bit about your holiday eating, Megan.

Megan [00:02:16] So we actually, we did very well on plan this holiday, but I will say it was just my husband and I, in the San Francisco Bay Area. We don't have family here. A lot of our friends are with their families, actually. And then the one household that we were supposed to pop into at Christmas time came down with COVID. So we didn't end up going there, so we just stayed at home. We're in the middle of moving, so we haven't really purchased a whole bunch of stuff, and we've just been trying to empty out what we have in our refrigerator and our freezer. So we did a turkey dinner, which is kind of funny because I'm from Canada and we would always do turkey for Thanksgiving in October. And then we'd have Christmas, you know, a couple of months later and then we'd do another turkey. But we've also had U.S. Thanksgiving now at the end of November, so it's just been a whole lot of turkey. So next year we're going to have to do a rib roast or something, but we just stuck to our turkey, ate the rest of the Brussels sprouts in the fridge. I do carb cycle

with tubers, so we did have a tiny bit of starch because I didn't have many potatoes left, and that was pretty much it.

[00:03:36] And then Christmas morning was our last home-cooked meal in our house. We had one pack of bacon left and we made some coconut-flour pancakes from Diet Doctor. I love this recipe. It's plant based, but we substituted some of the coconut items for raw heavy cream and some of those things. And we finished off the cream, we finished off our duck eggs. We were just all about kind of emptying what we've got. So I typically don't make low-carb or keto substitutes for food, but there are certain points in the year we will make something. So Christmas morning's always coconut-flour waffles or coconut-flour pancakes. And we'll do that again on my husband's birthday. Not so much mine, you know, I'm just happy with a big pile of bacon. I've never been a sweet tooth person. I got into trouble through salty, savory, starchy treats and processed and refined fats, but not so much sugar. But my husband's got more of a sweet tooth, so we'll do this periodically, but not very often. I actually think it's the second time all year we made something like this.

[00:04:46] So that's what we did. And then we just ended up eating leftover turkey on Christmas Day. We had a big turkey feast on Christmas Eve. And yeah, we've been fortunate, but we haven't been surrounded by family. I know a lot of people are reconnecting with their families at this time of year, especially after taking last year off and there's been a little bit more indulgence, and that kind of sounds like what's happened to you in Toronto. [Laughter].

Nadia [00:05:13] I think--- Well, it's funny because after years of being low carb, lower carb at least, and doing intermittent fasting, I've had both experiences, right? I've had the experience of--- especially during the first few years of my healing journey, it was just so much easier to be on point all the time because I had no desire to eat other things and I was very motivated and it was a challenge, a fun type of challenge. I felt like it. Now it's real life, right? It's been years and years in maintenance mode. I'm not trying to lose weight, I'm not trying to lower blood sugars. And as you said, particularly because last year was such a challenging year, it should have been a challenging week or month, but it ended up being a challenging year. You know, our family members did get very sick. We did have people pass away. It was just--- it was a challenge, from beginning to end. I think from the beginning to the end of the year.

[00:06:00] So that insulin beast just kept getting higher and higher. And I've been very open and honest about this. I've shared, you know, lots of my own personal things with our community. So people that know us know how open I've been. So I think I've gone into this holiday already in a higher insulin state than I was years back. And also, we did go on holiday, right? So now that we live in Portugal and we went to Toronto, even though I was working part of the time, but it was a three-week, quote-unquote, 'holiday', right? Because we're not home or at my mom's home during the holidays. And even though because of all the craziness going on, we are not exposed to other people, we've had to cancel plans and it's been mostly us at home with my mom. You know, this has been an opportunity for her to sort of shower us with our traditional food.

[00:06:45] So let me tell you a little bit about what we eat in our tradition. So we're mixed Portuguese and Mozambican and right. So my husband is fully Mozambican and we (my mother and I) are mixed Portuguese, so we've got both traditions. And Portuguese eat codfish on Christmas Eve, and then they eat a turkey, or some kind of lamb, or something on Christmas Day. So because my husband doesn't like cod (because he's from

Mozambique not Portugal), we did lobster and shrimp. So the food portion is awesome because my mom's a great cook and she believes in real food. She also wasn't raised in North America like I was, so she's not addicted to the junk food. It's the junk food that's my, you know, sort of arch nemesis; mine and unfortunately my kids'.

[00:07:25] So the whole build-up for my kids and I coming back to Toronto (which is home for my kids and I, right?) is, "I'm going to eat this here and I'm going to eat that there." You know, and we talk about this all the time, these comfort foods, they're different for everyone - like my husband's comfort foods are not my comfort foods because I grew up in Canada. So anyway, it's not the food that we ate at my mom's that was the problem, it's that we went to all these different spots. And then these foods create - of course, they're more processed, you're eating out - they create this higher insulin response and then the insulin beast in the house. You crave more. So I went to eating three meals a day when I usually eat one or two. So that's huge. Like that, in and of itself, is a big change. So anyway, enough about that. It's all about recovery, right Megan? So now what?

Megan [00:08:11] Yeah. So let's talk about getting back on track. Now, like Nadia, my whole goal over the years has just been sort of trying to do better than the year before. And I've had some of these 'best of holiday' seasons, even after several really good holiday seasons because, you know, we'll be with my husband's family in Orlando or, you know, there's these things that happen. And so even--- you know, everybody listening, as experts here we have these blips at holiday time where we go off track. Now, typically, I've found that (and even within myself) people try to correct-course; so if they've gone extreme in one direction, they try to correct-course by going extreme in the other direction. So, so many January's people come into a call, into the Community at The Fasting Method and they're saying, you know, "Oh, my goodness. OK, it didn't go as planned, but that's OK, I'm going to jump into a seven-day fast." And it's just kind of, "Hah, don't do that!" you know, it's not the best plan.

[00:09:21] And I always, always liken fasting to the gym, and I like it because we give ourselves so much grace when it comes to the gym. So we talk about when we're brand new to fasting, we have to build up our fasting muscle, right? You don't show up at the gym and expect to do the same training program as someone who's a bodybuilder on day one, your first time walking in there. You know you've got to show up, be consistent and, over time, the weights get easier and you can move up and up and eventually get to where you want to be. It's the same with fasting. But, you know, think about going to the gym after a holiday. If you've taken two weeks off, or a week off, from going to the gym, you don't expect to show up on Monday morning, your first day back home, and go in there and pick up where you left off. Your body has not been doing these movements, it's not been conditioned, you've been more sedentary, things are a little bit more tight and more achy. You know on that first day back at the gym, after a holiday, after a vacation, you know, it's good just to stretch it out. It's good to do some foam rolling. It's good just to get the body moving. Maybe do some yoga or pilates - something a little bit lower impact. And you know it's going to take you a week or two before you can fully get back to where you were before that vacation.

[00:10:41] We show ourselves so much grace when it comes to that. People who go to the gym moderately consistently over the year, we know that. We understand we can't pick up where we left off. So when you sort of have taken this, quote-unquote, vacation from your dietary plan (and it's been a real vacation overall too) and your body has been more sedentary, you haven't been in your regular activities, you haven't been following your

regular routines when it comes to hydrating and whatnot. And then you're trying to go back to, not just your regular fasting plan, but a more intensive fasting plan. So that's like taking two weeks off at the gym and then showing up on Monday morning, saying, "I'm not going to do my regular plan. I'm going to do that professional, bodybuilder plan." You know you're setting yourself up for disaster. You know you're going to sprain something, pull something, hurt something. It just doesn't make sense. You know better when it comes to physical activity.

[00:11:43] So when it comes to fasting, we see people - they've gone through the holidays. OK, maybe they had off-track foods, their insulin's up, like Nadia said, this insulin beast just gets a roaring, you know? So the insulin's up. That means that their body's retaining more water. That means that, when they start fasting, their insulin is going to drop a lot more quickly. When our insulin drops, it sends a note to our kidneys saying, "Hey, kidneys, you've got to excrete this excess water that I've been retaining." And then through that excretion of the water, either through increased urination or loose stools or a combination of both, we lose a lot of electrolytes. So people are just struggling to get through this fast. And then what happens is that they end up crashing and burning from dehydration. They can't keep up. You can't keep up with the sodium, you can't keep up with the bone broth. It doesn't work like that. So they end up sort of crashing and burning.

[00:12:38] And then, of course, there's still plenty of carbage around us early in the New Year. So people tend to feel really awful, just going for something quick and easy. Quick and easy rarely translates to healthy, and so they end up having some of that leftover holiday garbage that's around. And then the cycle just kind of perpetuates, and they start January off feeling really defeated. And I've seen this time and time again. Nadia, what are your thoughts on that trend? Is that what you've typically seen too?

Nadia [00:13:11] Yeah, absolutely. And been there, done that, right? So it's exactly that. And this is--- I'm a big, huge fan of the 'stepping stone' approach, only because I've tried the 'all or nothing' and that doesn't work, you know? But this time of the year, or just before, right? At the end of the year, all I could think about was, "I just want to do a 30-day fast. I just wanna---," you know, and I'm exaggerating. I've never done a 30-day fast. But, you know, you go into this 'guilt and reward' sort of thing because you've overindulged (myself, I did for sure) and now you want to fix it and you want to fix it in a major way. But the best approach for me, because I've tried doing a longer fast after a holiday and it really - I know we're going to talk a little bit about dehydration - that's what happens to me. I just don't feel well. You know, I dehydrate very quickly, especially when I'm coming from a higher insulin state - the drop is much more severe. So I feel nauseous and I feel, you know, in other things.

[00:14:04] So this is the time where you really wanna (like going to the gym), you wanna create a plan, and a 'stepping stone' type of plan is very useful. We'll also talk a little bit about diet; I have some thoughts on that. But from a fasting perspective, for me, this is the time where--- OK, I just shared with you guys that I was doing three meals a day. For the first week, I'm just going to go back to figuring out my TRE (time restricted eating) two meals a day, and then that's going to become, of course, very easy and feel too easy. And for some healing, I'm going to build towards doing some overnight, alternate-day fasts, but I know I won't be feeling great doing that the first week, so I'll build towards that. So maybe the second week I will move on to a two meal, one meal, 24-hour, alternate-day fast, which, after doing two meals a day for the first week again, will feel a lot easier. And then the third week is when I plan on doing overnight fasts - so 42s building towards 48s, which

are my favorite. Because I do need some healing, and this is a good time of the year to do it because you're motivated.

[00:15:08] Just like Megan said, it's not a great idea to go 'all or nothing'. You know, even if you've done five-day fasts before, give yourself that first and second week period to focus on TRE properly before you go into the longer fasts.

[00:15:23] Let's talk a little bit about electrolytes. I just mentioned that I dehydrate a ton. What's some thoughts that you have on that, Megan? And some recommendations for people.

Megan [00:15:32] Yeah, absolutely. So, you know, we're not going to continue to eat the sugar and the carbage into the New Year. So, you know, Nadia just really highlighted the importance of taking things slow with the fasting - get back, cut out the snacks, get back to the good TRE, and build up to those fasts. But we're also going to stop eating the junk. And even just by stopping eating the junk, that insulin is going to crash. Like Nadia said, she knows her insulin's going to come down hard. And insulin causes a lot of water retention. So even in the absence of doing crazy fasts, you are still going to see the insulin drop, and you are going to lose a lot of water weight if you're coming off of a carby holiday, and you're going to lose electrolytes.

[00:16:13] So in order to help curb some of those cravings that might still be lingering, you've gotta hydrate. First of all, you've got to hydrate so you can feel better and recover. There's so much that's important about making sure that you are recovering just to sort of help flush out your system, help for detoxification, but also to make sure that your system is rehydrated after losing that water as well. And it's important to remember that hydration is not just water.

[00:16:44] So a strategy that we really try to emphasize a lot at this particular time of the year is fat fasting. Now fat fasting is where you take either three or four foods, or just a couple of meals, and you eat those in repetition over and over and over again. So when you're fat fasting, you're looking to identify foods that are higher in fat, more moderate in protein, and very, very low in carbohydrates. Or if you're more plant-based, the really fibrous, non-starchy carbohydrates are what you're going to have during this time. So we're really looking to do sort of this temperate, like a real crash-course, low-carb dietary approach that's very monotonous. So to circle back to these three or four fatty foods, or these three or four fatty meals.

[00:17:39] Now, we're all different and our lifestyles are all different. So someone like me who--- I don't have a family to feed, you know, I just have my husband. He can go cook for himself if he wants. At the end of the day, I'm pretty much just thinking about myself when I'm eating. So I don't have obligations to have meals with variety in them. And my days are busy. They're crazy, busy. So I love just taking three or four fatty foods that I can just sort of batch-make. I can combine them and have a meal with them, or I can just eat one of them. So for me, I like bacon. So I will cook up a pound or two pounds of bacon and I'll just leave it in the refrigerator. Eggs - you can hard boil a bunch of eggs, just keep them in the refrigerator. Avocados - you don't even have to cook them, you just have to slice them open. Another fat-fast food that I like is chicken wings because I can do the same thing. I love eating cold poultry for some reason. So I will just cook up a couple of pounds of chicken wings and keep them in the fridge.

[00:18:43] So for me, what I do is I pick about four fatty foods. So my go-tos usually are those foods that I just described, and I will make my meals out of all or some of those foods, you know? So maybe I have a meal where I'm feeling more hungry and I'll have a bit of everything. Or maybe I'm not necessarily too hungry, but I'm really trying to dull a sugar craving or a starchy craving, and maybe I just have a bunch of bacon. But those are the foods that I like, and that works best for me.

[00:19:15] Now there are other people who have families and maybe are not necessarily able to eat as much animal protein as I am, and their meals will be a little bit more complicated. That's fine if you need to have a bit more variety, but just make sure you're eating the same thing over and over again. So say I'm working with an individual who's more on plant-based side of things. You know, if you have that salad and it's got seven ingredients, or if you have that stir fry and it's got seven ingredients, OK. You don't have to limit it to three or four ingredients, but eat the same salad over and over and over again, eat the same stir fry over and over and over again. So we want to really try to have a monotonous diet.

[00:19:57] So with the fat fasting, it works in two ways. Number one: the monotony of the food really suppresses your appetite. Think back to your past lives. You know, I joke about my past life - I was a pizza addict. But there's only so many days in a row I could eat pizza. Thinking about exam times, I would almost survive solely on pizza. And when exams ended, I was so happy to go back home for the holidays and eat anything that wasn't pizza, despite it being my favorite food. So we can only eat the same thing in repetition before we'd rather eat nothing at all, even if it is junk. And this is one of the biggest mistakes people make when they fat fast, is that they have too much variety. And it's really the monotony that's so important with this.

[00:20:42] And then the second reason why it works is because, you know, you're really prioritizing these natural fats and protein. The protein also helps crush sugar cravings. The fat helps express satiation signaling in the body, helps reduce inflammation in the body, which helps even further with the expression of satiation signaling. So you're really able to combat cravings by prioritizing natural fats and proteins. So we really love the fat fasting concept.

[00:21:12] And one of the reasons why I'm bringing up when we're talking about hydration is that a lot of these fat-fasting foods that people have are just these naturally occurring foods that are higher in fat and more moderate in protein and are really rich in electrolytes. Like an avocado is essentially a potassium bomb; you got so much great electrolytes there. So you don't necessarily have to worry so much about taking in water or measuring this amount of salt, all of this kind of jazz. You can really, you know, drink your water and replenish your electrolytes through fat fasting. So it's going to keep you hydrated. It's going to help reduce inflammation, which will drive up satiation signaling. It's going to help boost satiation signaling in general. It's going to help crush sugar cravings. So it's the perfect strategy for getting back on track.

[00:22:04] And you know, I know some people out there can't tolerate fats very well. I'm unfortunately one of them. I cannot eat pork belly to save my life, I get so sick, but I can eat bacon. So you really need to work within your realm of what you can tolerate. And if you're more on the plant-based side of things, you know, go for those non-starchy vegetables, but just cook them in good fats or add good fats to them, like coconut fats are an incredible plant-based fat source. So you've got coconut cream and full-fat coconut milk

and coconut oil that you can use. You can cook with coconut oil and you can make these great fatty meals that are plant-based. You've got avocados and avocado oil, and olives and olive oil. You know, when I was newer to this lifestyle, I just used to bring olive oil with me everywhere to restaurants, to family members' houses because I could make any meal a fattier meal just by drizzling olive oil all over the vegetables and the chicken or the meat that was available and give it some extra fat. So, you know, there's definitely ways for people who are more plant-based to incorporate this.

[00:23:15] But definitely, the biggest mistake people make with fat fasting, especially at this time of the year, is by having too much variety and not fat fasting long enough. So I love hearing people say, "I'm going to fat fast for 24 to 48 hours and then I'm going to jump into a five-day fast," and I'm thinking, "How do you know your body's going to be ready? How do you know your insulin is going to come down enough that you're going to have hydrated it up? How can you prepare for that?" Now, to Nadia's 'stepping stone' analogy - most people can sort of rebalance their systems and prime their systems to start getting into their fasting regime, you know, within four to seven days. So it's not like you need to fat fast forever.

[00:24:02] But before I stop talking [laughter], I do want to share one story with you all. I got married on January 2nd, 2016 in Orlando, Florida. I was from Toronto. My husband was living in San Francisco. We were getting married in Orlando. We had nothing planned there, so it was super stressful. Our families hadn't met. My whole family was coming from Canada. His family was coming from across the US. We were in Orlando for the entire month of December and I started off with the best of intentions. I ordered bone broth to go to my mother-in-law's house. When we arrived there, we went to Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, bought all of the good things, and had the best intentions. But the stress of it all... Getting married. I saw my wedding venue a week before my wedding. Like, it was nutty. So the diet quickly went downhill. It was what it was, and I don't think I've ever eaten so poorly in a one-month span and like my entire life. So at this point, I had reversed diabetes and metabolic issues, lost weight, but pfff, talk about, you know, needing to enter rehab when I got home! So I got home on January 5th, a few days after my wedding. Due to immigration, my husband couldn't come with me; he had to go back to California.

[00:25:19] So I'm back in Toronto, and I was ravenous, like absolutely. Sugar things that I never craved in my life I could have binged on. So I ended up fat fasting for about two weeks before I felt like I could fast. But I want to let everybody know. From my wedding day, I was stupid, I weighed myself on my wedding day, which you shouldn't do, especially after not eating so well. But from my wedding day to the end of March - so we're really talking January 2nd to March 31st - I had actually reached my lowest body fat percentage by the end of March that I'd ever reached in my life. So we're talking - I ate like crap or I ate like garbage, and then I fat fasted for two weeks. This really only left me two and a half months, but that fat fasting for two weeks set me up for such great, consistent fasting and eating habits that I just killed it. Like I had never gotten results like I'd had in that two and a half months.

[00:26:20] So give yourselves permission to stay there because it pays off. Like, it's so important to sit there and let your body be ready for it because you're going to get rewards that are mind blowing. Like, I was totally shocked and I had at this point, I'd helped people reverse their diabetes all over the world. I had seen recovery in myself. But I never see results like that.

Nadia [00:26:43] Megan, your wedding month sounds like my 2021, all of 2021. [laughter] So I am actually taking that as encouragement and motivation. I'm actually very positive about 2022 because I'm not a big believer in New Year's resolutions, but I do like restarts. I like opportunities like this and I'm looking at January as an opportunity for me to heal. And so, because I've had such a terrible year and because I've shared with you how this holiday period sort of just topped it off, I am going to do exactly what you just highlighted. I am going to fat fast. I've done it in the past. I love fat fasting.

[00:27:20] The biggest complaint that I get from people, and I'm glad you addressed it, is, "Well, I don't like all of those fat-fast foods." Well, that's OK, just pick two or three. I cannot overemphasize enough the importance of simplicity and repetition when it comes to fat fasting. You do it as long as you need to. I'll often... It's not a great example, but, hopefully, you'll pick up on what I mean. I often explain that fat fasting is like taking antibiotics. You don't just take antibiotics, you take it because you need it and you take it for the right amount of time. OK? It's a wonderful bridge to get you to where you need to. And by eating these very few foods - three, four foods or two or three recipes - repetitively for a period of time, it's going to be this bridge that you need to get you to a lower-insulin state so that you can make better food choices, you can fast longer with ease. And so that's what I'm looking forward to. I will definitely fat fast the first week back home. It just makes life so much easier as well.

[00:28:19] So Megan talked about, you know, just cooking for herself. I've got a whole family, right? So the simpler it is, the better. The one thing I wanted to share with you guys, regarding family and kids, is that I actually gifted my kids a cookbook by Maria Emmerich and I was so shocked to see... I had warned my oldest. My oldest is eleven. My little one is eight. So I had told my 11-year old that I was going to get this great cookbook because I keep hearing this about if you want your kids to eat better, get them involved in their cooking and, you know, get them involved, get them involved. And I'm like, "OK, so let's try this out." She's got this great kids' book called 'Sugar-Free Kids', so I gifted her this book. She has not let go of this book for the last few days. She goes through the recipes. She reads what it says. She has written out her favorite recipes. And so I'm going to make these for the kids. And again, I'm not going to make a recipe a day, I'm going to make two or three recipes that they choose from this book, with them. They're going to be doing homeschooling for the first couple of weeks in Portugal. I'm sure it's similar in other parts of the world. And so I'm going to get them involved in the kitchen. And I will eat my fat-fast foods, just because it's easier, and I may not even have the same meals that they have. You know, I'll be doing two meals a day for the first week. They usually do three meals a day, but that's OK.

[00:29:34] You can make this work. Just keep it simple. This is what I hear from moms. "I don't like this food," or, "These foods, all of these foods," or, "It's too much preparation." It doesn't have to be. Remember to keep it simple and repetitive.

[00:29:46] The whole point of this fat fasting, or even if you choose an elimination type diet, I know January's a great time of the year to do these types. You know, like choose a challenge that you're comfortable with - a lot of people do the Whole30 - or whatever it is that you do. Challenges are easy to stick to because it's a limited amount of time, you're usually doing it with someone like your family members or your friends, and then you stick to it for that period of time. After a fat fast or elimination diet, your body is in this lower-insulin state where, like Megan said, you're now ready to make much better decisions about fasting, about food choices. And I'm starting 2022 like this with my kids

and I'm really looking forward to it. I'm very positive about it. I know I'm not doing great right now, but I know I will feel much better in a couple of weeks.

Megan [00:30:37] Thanks for sharing that perspective with moms and with kids. And I think parents in general, or people that are caregivers in general, they really struggle with trying to figure out fat fasting with family or people that they're taking care of. And I just love the whole 'keep it simple' approach. I think what I've observed with working with individuals, and even in my own behavior patterns, it's that if you think you're in a complicated situation, you need a complicated solution and then you try to go a little bit sort of extreme in the opposite direction. And that's not really the case.

[00:31:16] You know, everybody who's listening today, take a deep breath. You've only eaten perhaps off-track now for a few weeks, maybe a month. But think about all the other months of the year that you ate on track, right? You know, I heard this great quote several years ago, and you know, it's not really what you eat between Christmas and New Year's that matters. It's what you eat between New Year's and Christmas. So you know, we're really hyper-focused on this one week of the year. And I know for others, the holiday season starts earlier or there's just more celebrations, but it's like a month, you know? Maybe six weeks max, depending on the different types of celebrations that people are participating in. But all of the other months of the year and weeks of the year, you know, we're so on track.

[00:32:06] So it's really not that complicated when you zoom out and look in on it. You know, you've had all these awesome weeks and all of these awesome months. You can't be on your game 100% of the time. Life throws you curveballs. There's situations that come up, there's evolving in terms of your relationship with certain foods, and you've just gotta go through the whole process until they've sort of worked themselves out. And you just need to be patient with yourself. So you know, what has happened in the last week or the last month really isn't that complicated. So a simple solution, and fat fasting is just one of the most simple solutions.

[00:32:45] Now there are some caveats with fat fasting, and we're going to jump into those right now. Questions that were commonly asked.

[00:32:53] So Nadia touched base on, "What if you don't like those foods?" You can really have whatever foods that you like that make your life simple, that just prioritize fat (natural fats) to your tolerance, and protein.

[00:33:05] Now, can you have bone broth when you're fat fasting in between meals, especially if you're trying to do some form of TRE? Absolutely. You can 100% have bone broth, pickle juice (as long as it's sugar-free), all the brine, all those fasting training wheels, fasting aids, you can have.

[00:33:24] But during a fat fast time, if you're an omnivore or a carnivore, we highly recommend that you kick nuts and nut butters and dairy to the curb during this particular time. Now, if you're more plant-based and nuts are a big protein source for you, that's fine. Just try not to make them the main focus of your meal. But if you are an omnivore, if you are a carnivore, if you do have access to animal-based proteins in your diet that are plentiful, then try to stay away from the nuts. Now I know Nadia talks a lot about dairy, a lot about nuts too. We see them coming up day in, day out as a problematic food. Nadia, what are your thoughts about those exclusions for the omnivores and carnivores out there?

Nadia [00:34:19] I uh, I have developed this bad reputation for not liking dairy, and nuts, which is ridiculous because I actually eat nuts and dairy. But my biggest push is to have them within your meal. So I am a big fan of repetition because I think people need to hear the same thing consistently over and over for it to start making sense, especially when you're making changes. So I repeat this over and over again. But somehow to some people, it comes across as I'm trying to categorize nuts and dairy as unhealthy, which I am so not because they are part of my diet. But you do have to be cautious because they are moderate and, in some people, they do produce a moderately high insulin response, especially when you're more insulin resistant. So right now, at this time of year after the holidays, I'm going to react a lot higher to dairy and nuts. I'm going to produce a lot more insulin to dairy and nuts. And so, especially when you're trying to get rid of other foods, or when people are starting a new diet, or restarting like January 2022, you might be reaching for the dairy and nuts a little too much. And so it's just creating some rules around that.

[00:35:21] Number one: these are foods that (the entire year) you want to bring into your meals and not have between meals. They're not fat fasting aids, OK? Dairy and nuts, coconut milk, your cream in your coffee. I'm not saying it's good or bad. I'm just saying these are not great fasting aids because they do have a moderate to sometimes high insulin response, so bring them into your meals. But while you're doing a recovery plan, while you're fat fasting, these are the foods that you want to eliminate. So again, maybe you're choosing to call it an 'elimination diet', whether it's one week or one month. During an elimination diet period, dairy and nuts are foods that most elimination diets remove. Again, not because they're good or bad, but because they will have these higher inflammatory or hormonal responses. And so you want to save that for when you're in a better hormonal state, maybe in February or March. So bring it into your meals for the remainder of the year. But during your fat fast or during your elimination diet, remove them. And again, look at it as an elimination diet and not as a restrictive plan that you have to follow for the rest of your life. Elimination periods, like fat fasting, are extremely healing. It's an opportunity for your body to lower these hormones that you've been fighting with. You know, to tame the insulin beast.

Megan [00:36:38] Thanks, Nadia. And I think it's good that both of us on our record saying this because I know sometimes we say the same thing, but say it a little bit differently and it can leave people, especially in our community, a little bit confused. But I think part of the reason is... Our good friend Mark Sisson, Mark Sisson always says, "It's human nature to have something that we find so comforting and try to push the boundaries of how much we can have but still get our desired results." And when it comes to nuts and things like heavy cream or dairy in general, we see this being people's comfort-blanket food, and they don't necessarily recognize that because, you know, they're, quote-unquote, 'healthy foods', especially if they're organic, and this and that, all of these great labels on them, but they should be fine to have. So they aren't associated with being problematic. They associate problematic foods with things like sugar and potato chips, and processed and refined oils, and all of that kind of junk. But people tend to hold on to dairy and nuts like these blankets, and they're always - Nadia and I see this a thousand times a day - always trying to hold on to it. That is their comfort and they're testing the limits - "How much cream can I have on my fasting days and still get results?", "How many nuts can I have and enjoy and still get results?" So sometimes I think people don't necessarily want to hear us, or they might take a little glimmer of something that one of us says and try to give them that hope to hold on to that security.

[00:38:22] But there's problems with our consumption of these foods. You know, when you're fasting, you wanna be fasting. You don't wanna be fueling for six hours off of heavy cream when you're fasting, and your coffee totally defeats the purpose of the fast. And like Nadia said, some of these foods do have really strong insulin responses, and that's a whole thing that we're trying to avoid on fasting days. And on eating days we're trying to contain it.

[00:38:47] And one of the things that I find when I ask people to record food diaries is I don't expect to see a ton of garbage on the food diary, and I can always tell they're like, "Oh no, Megan's asked me for this food diary. She just thinks we're pounding back the cookies." That's not the case, but I think you're substituting a lot of food for handfuls of nuts and ounces or pounds of cheese in some cases. And without fail, people who have stalled - when I ask them to keep a food diary - I'm not expecting copious quantities of carbs, but I am seeing tons and tons of nuts. And it's like, OK, you're having a steak, but you're also having two handfuls of almonds. Well, two handfuls of almonds is the same as a steak. It's like having two steaks, you know, in terms of protein. Does your body really need that much protein? What's your body doing with that excess protein? So it's important just to keep tabs on that. So really, if you're going to have it, think of it as a garnish. So especially for those plant-based individuals that are fat fasting, really think of it, like Nadia said, as part of your meal, but as a garnish to that fat meal.

[00:39:56] And the same thing with dairy, if you're not going to give it up temporarily till you get into a better place, at least start to think of it as a garnish. And just know that when you are adding it to your beverages, your body is fueling off of that. It might not be solid food, but it's not a free-pass liquid food. You're providing your body with food energy and your body's going to fuel off of that food energy before it fuels off of your body-fat stores. So we know everybody loves a good, Bulletproof coffee. Sure, it's not necessarily going to raise your insulin all that much, depending on what you add to it, but you're providing your body with four to six hours of fuel.

[00:40:34] So if you're doing a 24-hour fast, let's do the math here. If you're doing a 24-hour fast, you know, you're really fueling off of your last meal for a good six hours. And then if you wake up in the morning and have one of these Bulletproof coffees, well, you're fueling your body for another six hours. So that's 12 hours of your 24 hours that you're still fueling off of food energy, not your own fat stores. You gotta look at the math here, what you're fasting. And for many of us, it's a huge change. We've gotta adjust some things socially. We've gotta adjust some things in our home with our relationships. Like, we're making all of these adjustments, you know, to do this therapeutic treatment because we've just seen how powerful that can be. I mean, the results are astounding and they happen quickly, but you've got to understand that there's these certain things that we've got to factor in. So, you know, the dairy might be comforting or the nuts might be comforting, but you know, at the end, is it really worthwhile for it slowing us down?

[00:41:33] So it's just something to think about going into this New Year and evaluate your relationship with these fasting training wheels, especially the dairy ones. And then just, you know, are you having dairy and nuts as a meal or a side dish, or are you having them as a garnish to your meal?

Nadia [00:41:52] I wanted to add one thing. As I said earlier, I'm a big fan of repetition. So you've heard us say this before, but it might be a bit of an eye-opener for some of you if

you haven't heard it and hopefully if you have heard it, it's starting to sink in. So Megan talked a little bit about amounts and using these foods as garnish and the reasons for that. But I want to throw something else in, which makes sense if you're an intermittent faster - if you understand the idea that it's not just how much you eat or what you eat, it's how often you eat because of how often you're raising that insulin.

[00:42:25] Here's a thing about North Americans that's a little bit different than people in other parts of the world. We tend to nurse our coffee. I know I've said this before, but I really want this to sink in. You know, I talk to people and they'll say to me, "Well, I'm only down to a teaspoon of my nut milk, or my cream, and that's what I put in my coffee." And then I ask the difficult question. I just want you guys to think about this for a bit. And then I say, "Yeah, Mary, a teaspoon of nut milk or cream. But how long does it take you to drink that coffee?" Because I know us North Americans, we love to sip and nurse that coffee for hours on end. So remember, Megan just said, if you're having that Bulletproof coffee in the morning, you're fueling on that for hours. But if you're nursing that coffee, just like when we talk about eating and keeping it down to short eating windows, it's the same thing with whatever it is that you put in your coffee, you're basically nursing that insulin response for a long period of time. So again, if you're nursing that coffee, even though it only has a teaspoon of nut milk or cream, for three to four hours, it's going to have a significantly different response than if you're drinking that in 20 or 30 minutes. So just remember that.

Megan [00:43:36] I love that. Yeah, we can snack and graze on these fasting training wheels too. So, it's nice to take some time for yourself, sit down, have your coffee, have your tea, enjoy it free of distraction. I mean, that is so good for your nervous system. That helps further promote satiation signaling in the body because when we actually are present, when we're consuming food and we're not distracted, either by negative things like the news these days, stressful things like work, or even happy things like seeing our friends and family on social media, what we do is when we disengage from those things and we consume, whether it's a fatty coffee or a meal, we're activating our rest-and-digest nervous system, our parasympathetic nervous system. So digestion's going to happen better, satiation signaling's going to happen better. It's just... Stress is going to be reduced.

[00:44:32] But when we are trying to have that really fatty beverage and do a bunch of work, check a bunch of stuff on the news, or we're eating and scrolling through social media, you know, we're engaging the opposite reaction in the body, which we call the sympathetic nervous system, which is our fight-or-flight nervous system. So this is where digestion slows down, stress increases, fat-trapping goes into full effect. Satiation signaling is more or less non-existent during this time. So you're actually, by sitting down and taking that moment outside, or in front of the fireplace, at the dining table where it's just you, or you and a loved one or friend, having that beverage, consuming it like you would in a timely fashion if it was a normal meal, you're going to set yourself up really nicely, especially in the morning. You're going to delay that earlier hunger. You're going to be able to get through the day longer without necessarily needing as much support from electrolytes. You're doing yourself a favor by not grazing on these fatty beverages, and you're going to set yourself up for some great success if you're able to just sort of sit down and be mindful and present when you have them.

Nadia [00:45:42] That's it. That's it for me. I'm ready to start 2022. [Laughter]

Megan [00:45:48] Nadia will keep us posted on her plan and we'll keep sharing what we're learning from our members over at The Fasting Method.

[00:45:56] On that note, I do want to let everyone know that myself and Nadia have joined forces with two of our other Fasting Method coaches. One of them is Dr Terri Lance - she's a clinical psychologist. The other one is Andrea Lombardi - she's a physician assistant on our team and a type 2 diabetes expert. So the four of us have joined forces to create a special Fasting Masterclass for everybody.

[00:46:22] It's a six-week course. Class begins at the end of January, January 31, and goes for six weeks, so it takes people right up to spring break. And there's going to be three video lessons a week, plus two live Q&A sessions a week - and those Q&A sessions are recorded if you can't attend. But what's even better about all of this information and access to us to answer these questions, is that we're going to be having - those who are in the United States and participating - they're going to be able to do some blood tests. And most importantly, these blood tests are going to be checking everyone's fasting insulin levels. So we're really going to get a clear idea of where you're sitting in terms of your metabolic disease. So for people in the United States that participate, we're going to do blood work at home at the beginning of the course and then again at the end of the course so we can see how your blood work has changed since you started implementing these fasting protocols. And those in the United States are also going to get a Biosense ketone device and a special app. Now I said the United States several times. This class is open to people outside of the US but, due to health regulations, we can't do the blood work outside of the US, so the blood work is exclusive to US participants. If you have a Biosense and you live outside of the US, you can absolutely connect it into the app and participate along with that. Or if you are outside of the US, you can purchase your own Biosense device and participate. Now, if you're in the US and you're interested in learning more, head over to our website - thefastingmethod.com/masterclasses. And there's all kinds of information about this masterclass in greater detail, and you can sign up. Or if you have more questions, you can book a complimentary discovery call to ask questions with Andrea Lombardi, so she'll be answering everything about what it is that we're going to be doing.

[00:48:29] If you're outside of the US and you want to purchase the course, email us at support@thefastingmethod.com or you can always reach out to me at megan@thefastingmethod.com. But we're really excited about this. We experimented with different types of masterclasses throughout 2021, and we came together and put together what we think is sort of the ultimate course for intermittent fasting, for weight loss, and type 2 diabetes.

[00:48:56] Now, this course is primarily targeted at individuals who are newer to fasting, but I'm going to say there's a caveat to that. There's many of you who have been trying to piece together what to do about fasting from different articles, different YouTube videos, different Facebook groups, and you're just not getting results. But you're seeing all of these people in the Fasting Community getting great results, and you're not quite sure what it is that's not working for you, or why fasting isn't working for you. So there's a lot of people out there who are doing fasting but haven't necessarily learned how to do it. The Fasting Method way of fasting. So we have our fasting method that we implement, and that's what we use to get success, and that's what we're going to be teaching this course.

[00:49:44] So if you have been fasting out there and you are struggling but are not sure if this course is for you because you do know some of the fasting basics. We're going to teach you a lot of the troubleshooting skills and a lot of the sustainability strategies,

especially from Coach Terri's lessons on really how to make successful habit change and to deal with issues like self-sabotage.

[00:50:09] So head over to thefastingmethod.com to learn more about that. And then of course, you get access to our Community as well and all the great meetings with our coaches - so great, a great resource. We also just relaunched our coaching program too. So we've got maintenance coaching and different styles of group and one-on-one for everybody to check out. So, end of my New Year's spiel there, but thanks everyone for joining us today.

[00:50:36] Happy New Year! Happy fat fasting. [Laughter] And we'll see you on next week's episode, which is a Q&A. Bye for now, everyone.

Nadia [00:50:47] Bye, everyone.