

thefastingmethod_051.mp3

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

[00:00:13] This podcast is for educational purposes only and it is not a substitute for professional care by a doctor or other qualified medical professional. You should always speak with your physician or other health care professionals before doing any fasting, changing your diet in any way, taking or adjusting any medications or supplements, or adopting any treatment plan for a health problem.

[00:00:42] The use of any other products or services purchased by you as a result of this podcast does not create a healthcare-provider-patient relationship between you and any of the experts affiliated with this podcast. Any information and statements regarding dietary supplements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration and are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

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

[00:01:19] Hi, everyone. It's Megan Ramos, and we're back with another episode of The Fasting Method podcast. This is episode 51 and our podcast is nearly one year old. We'd really like to thank everybody for supporting us over this last year. We've so appreciated getting to know you through our podcast community, seeing you in our Fasting Method Community and on our social profiles, asking us questions and giving your great feedback about the podcast.

[00:01:50] So what happens when you hit a milestone anniversary? You reflect. You reflect on all of the great comments and feedback on Apple Podcasts and Spotify, everything that's come in. And there has been something that has been consistent throughout the entire course of this last year - bring Dr. Terri Lance back regularly. So Dr. Terri Lance is the psychologist on our team. She's our behavior change expert, and she's joined Nadia and I now for a handful of podcasts over this last year, and you let us know how much you love and value those episodes.

[00:02:31] Terri is a core member of our team and we couldn't do any of this without her. She helps make our fasting protocols, routines, and lifestyle changes. She helps them solidify. She helps people make sustainable change through her mindset, habits, and emotional work that she does with our Community. So when we were talking about what comes next for The Fasting Method podcast now that we're one year old, Nadia and I thought, "Well, we really can't do this podcast without Terri."

[00:03:02] So we have decided to change things up a little bit. Terri is going to be joining us as a brand new co-host of this podcast, and we're going to be mixing things up a bit. Nadia and I are going to continue with our Q&A episodes once a month, but Nadia is going to be recording an episode with Terri each month, and I'm also going to be recording an episode with Terri each month. During these episodes, we'll talk about hot topics that are relevant to what the fasting communities out there are facing at this moment, and we'll bring on special guests where they fit in. We'll also be recording one episode of the three of us each month, talking about something real challenging, a real hot science topic, a real hot behavioral topic - things that you all are struggling with or are going to be facing.

[00:03:55] And in today's episode, we're going to talk about Halloween. Now, before we get started with the Hot Topic, I'd love to formally welcome our new co-host, Dr. Terri Lance, to the team. Hey, Terri, thank you so much for joining Nadia and I.

Terri [00:04:10] Hey, Megan, thank you so much. I'm so excited about this opportunity. I've always enjoyed the episodes that I've gotten to do with the two of you and really looking forward to getting to talk even more with our community and listeners out there.

[00:04:25] I was thinking this morning as I was walking my dogs, the first time I ever recorded a podcast episode, how nervous I was and how I thought, "Oh no, people are going to hear me," and now how different that feels because it's just talking to my friends and we get to have an impact on so many people. So I'm very excited about this opportunity.

Nadia [00:04:47] Did you see me there? Because you can see me, but other people can't see me. And I know you can't hear, but did you guys see me do my little head happy dance? [laughter] And also I'm making a formal promise here to not use this time as my own personal counseling session. [laughter] I joked about that a few times, but it may happen nonetheless, Terri. I actually mentioned you today, yet again, as usual, in one of my Community meetings (because I do a weekly meeting on the topic of diabetes. And I often say that diabetics, or people with diabetes, which I prefer to call them, rather than diabetics, people with diabetes have been my greatest teachers.), and then today I went, "Wait, I have to add, of course, Terri and Megan to that list." Well, Megan for obvious reasons, but Terri, obviously, to that list because, you know, you talk about a particular topic that I do not consider myself an expert in. So any and every opportunity that I've had for learning from you, I've taken it, whether it be your masterclasses, and now of course here, I feel like I'm going to be the big winner because I'm going to get to hear firsthand on so many topics, right? People's questions and hot topics like today, Halloween. We've talked about Halloween so much, right, Megan? We've talked about this beginning of the holidays every year for the last six or seven years that we've worked together. We've written blog posts about it, but never with, of course, Terri's input, or at least I haven't. So I'm totally looking forward to it.

Megan [00:06:11] It's a holiday that everybody struggles with because it's primarily now about candy and treats and sugar and all kinds of processed junk foods. And it's tough because we've all grown up celebrating (well, many of us have grown up celebrating) Halloween, as children and then with our children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, or just with our communities in general. And it's challenging.

[00:06:36] I remember my very first Halloween on this way of eating and living with fasting and lower-carb nutrition. And at the time I was going through a separation and I was living with my parents, and they very much bought all of the regular Halloween treats and the commercialism that Halloween has now become. And I thought, "Oh, you can do this." You know, "This is fine. You've got resistance to those junk foods." And I did not. You start with the little angel on the little devil on the shoulder who start bickering. The devil says, "Oh, she can just have one bag of a treat." And the angel says, "No," but the devil gets really loud because you're just seeing them. They're there, you know, the boxes are there. They're waiting in the family room to be put out on Halloween. And I ended up just eating all of the things.

[00:07:32] So many of us, what happens is we let ourselves have one and we tell ourselves we're just going to have one, but then one turns into maybe 150 in my case

[laughs] and it actually took me a while to navigate this Halloween for myself. I remember after that I was on my own (I wasn't living at home anymore.) and I just did the default thing - run into the store, buy the treats for Halloween - and thought, "Okay, it's been another year. My willpower, quote-unquote, muscle has got to be stronger, I'll be fine." And it was not fine.

[00:08:10] And you get to the point where, as Terri always says, "These are not your foods," right? You start to recognize them as things that are not your foods, things you don't necessarily want to be putting into your body. And that started me thinking that these are not things that I necessarily ought to be putting in other people's bodies as well. So we started to think outside of the box about what we would give out on Halloween and, you know, COVID the last couple of years kind of put a dent in (zero Halloween plans in our lives), but things are picking up again. I see all of the houses on my street. I was the first house on my street to get things going with Halloween.

[00:08:49] So, you know, not only is this, for many of you, your first Halloween, it's your re-introduction to Halloween after the last couple of years. And there's a whole different set of mindset things that come into play there. "Oh, but it's been two years," you know, or you finally get to celebrate this again. And that opens up a whole other can of worms that we need to have strategies for.

[00:09:13] So I'm going to throw it over to the expert. Terri, what are you seeing with the people that you're working with and interacting with when it comes to Halloween, and what are the biggest challenges?

Terri [00:09:24] I feel like this is an interesting topic from my launch with you as a co-host [laughter] because it is a topic that I suggested. I think it's a fantastic topic and I am probably going to be the buzzkill message today. [laughter] So people will say, "Love the change, but get rid of her. This is not going to work for me." [laughter]

Nadia [00:09:44] I got to say (sorry to interrupt you, Terri) that I'm actually loving this because I'm usually the bad guy, right? [laughter] I'm usually the one because I'm probably looser than you are when it comes to Halloween because I got two kids, right? So I've got my rules, but I'm super interested. Sorry to interrupt, but I'm loving the fact that you're going to be the bad guy today. So go ahead, Terri.

Terri [00:10:02] Sure. So I think for me, in my work with people, I try to bring it back to what is this about for you? You know, what's the celebration about? And really, to start to think about, why is this holiday or occasion special to you? I live in San Diego, California. Halloween is huge here. Every house is totally decked out. Every yard has all the decorations. It's insane. That's exciting. I love seeing all those decorations. So I can focus on Halloween being about people really decking out their homes. I can focus on how I love seeing the costumes and the creativity and the funny things people come up with for costumes. But I, just like Megan said, I've had to start to making it, "This is not about justifying sugar."

[00:10:56] And this is where I think Halloween has served a really detrimental purpose for so many of us. It's become a justification. We can't help it. We have treats in our home. We can't help it. The holiday season is about to happen for some of us, so we can't help it that we get started. Some people might say that's an excuse. I choose not to use that word - excuse - very often because it sounds so pejorative, but we tend to justify our problematic behaviors.

[00:11:29] So I listen to 55 and 65 and 75-year-old clients tell me they can't help it because it's Halloween. And in my head I'm thinking, "Okay, if I were five, Halloween, probably at this stage, would still be at least somewhat related to the candy. I'm 53 now. It's not about the candy anymore. It's about these other things. So I can't use that as a justification anymore."

[00:11:32] And people say, "I know, but, you know, it's just such a tradition. I love eating that on Halloween." Yeah, I used to love to play with Play-Doh, but I'm 53 now. Now I might watch what other people can create with Play-Doh, but I don't engage in it in that way anymore. So finding a way to shift your focus. What is this occasion really about for you?

Nadia [00:12:27] Well, I'll answer that rhetorical question. So, Halloween was exactly about that for me. It was about, or, you know, many of the things that people are probably thinking right now. I remember being in grade 12 and going trick or treating. And because, of course, I could get away with it cause I was a tiny little thing. I still am a tiny little thing, Megan and I, she probably trick or treated until she was in her master's degree. [laughter] But anyway, I could get away with it, but a lot of my friends were tall and, you know, you could just look at us and, of course, know that we were way too old for that (if there's such a thing as being too old to trick or treat), but it was all about the candy, or it very, very shortly became all about the candy.

[00:13:07] It starts with the outfits. So now I'm going through this with my kids, right, because they're nine and 12. It starts with the outfits (That's the excitement, the craze.), but very shortly, it just becomes about the candy, at least once they put that first candy in their mouths. So this is where my rules come in and how that has changed for me. I'm happy to share what I've done with my kids because it makes a big difference. The minute that you put this highly processed candy in your mouth, it stops being about anything but bingeing. So my kid actually was so funny because we're starting to plan, so my 12-year-old found this tiny little basket. And I know you guys can't see me, but these ladies can. So she found this tiny, little, cutest Halloween basket we've ever seen, but it's basically about the size of the palm of my hand. And this is the Halloween basket that she wanted to get for this year. And I said, "Yeah, that's fine, but you won't be able to trick or treat with that." And she goes, "What does it matter? You only let us have (whatever she said) three candies," or whatever the new rule was last year. So anyway, Terri, for me it was about the candy, but now it's changed. Now I've refocused and, hopefully, you're going to give us some more tips on how we can do that.

Megan [00:14:16] My experience with Halloween growing up was very different. I never liked sweet foods. I never wanted a cake on my birthday. I would occasionally like some ice cream here and there in the summertime. So for me, Halloween was really about getting dressed up, going out with my friends, and going down to the fire hall where they did this haunted house. And we were allowed to go once we were done trick or treating; our dads would take us in rotation. We were very routine with it. And then my parents would of course take the candy and inspect it. But growing up in our household, we didn't have any food rules. Like, none. So there were always bowls of candy out and bags of potato chips around growing up. So Halloween, it was no different. It was just more candy for mom's candy bowl. Most of my friends ate it coming over. I could get those chips whenever I wanted. So for me, it was just totally different growing up.

[00:15:13] And then, of course, when you get into adulthood and you start restricting these things in your own lifestyle, then that created temptation. And at that point, you know, for

me, my hormones were just so insane. I had so much insulin resistance and that further perpetuates things physiologically on top of the mindset issues that come along with that.

[00:15:13] But now I'm worried. So I'm, you know, hopefully going to be starting a family in the next year and these children that I'm going to have, their dad's got a big sweet tooth and, you know, he follows this way of living, But what if they don't take after me? And they're certainly not going to be in a household with an abundance of treats all of the time, so they're desensitized to it. So I'm so eager to learn about what Nadia's doing in her household, what Terri's recommending to people out there that are following this. So I can't wait to learn more from you both.

Terri [00:16:09] I think that's a great piece to identify in there, too, Megan, is that, for some people, Halloween became a justification for candy that was even supported in their family. Maybe they didn't have a lot of candy and treats and things throughout, but you certainly were allowed. In my family, we got a huge batch of candy when we went trick or treating. We would spend hours sorting it and trading it and then eating it. So for some of us, we learned that's that special time of year when it's justified, it's okay, you have permission. And so we still give ourselves that permission.

[00:16:47] One of the things I would think about with this, as with most strategies, is maybe thinking of it on levels of good, better, and best. So I can do a good strategy that I feel comfortable with that's not too restrictive, or I can do one that's a little bit better, or I can do the one that I think is the best, but maybe the hardest at first.

[00:17:09] So what would a good strategy look like for some of our people on Halloween? Maybe it means you are going to still engage with some candy or treats. How many days worth? Do you start a week before Halloween or do you have one on Halloween and it's done? Kind of contain it. Keep it specific to that. If celebrating with that food feels important to you, you celebrate it once. You don't celebrate it for the next six weeks. So to me, that's the idea of a good strategy. It's containing it without feeling completely restricted.

[00:17:47] Now, as Nadia said a moment ago, for many of us, that's almost impossible because starting with one leads to ten, leads to a hundred, and suddenly it's June. [laughter] So for some of us, starting with some doesn't work. And so we need to go a little bit more extreme. Maybe we start to establish something new that we do for Halloween, some new tradition. You know, Megan, maybe you and Angel come up with you each decorate one part of the house and the other person doesn't get to see it until you're done, or you come up with your own costume - some other way to make it fun, make it meaningful, but it's not focused on food. And I've heard you describe that about a lot of other things in your life that you've learned to just shift it away from food at all, especially problematic food.

[00:18:42] And then maybe for some people, the best strategy is they totally almost like wipe out that this holiday is anything about the candy, unless you're ten or younger, and they make it about connecting with people, they make it about socializing, they make it about, you know, honoring some traditions, something that feels meaningful for them. But take it completely away from that childhood tradition of it being a permission slip.

Nadia [00:19:19] And now this may be tough, so maybe we'll leave that for a little later, but it might be tough when you're trying to define a strategy for you as an adult and also your family that, of course, are still in that childhood phase. And also, I struggle a lot with (not just for Halloween, but any holiday, any event) the idea that I'm perfectly fine making food

rules for myself and following them. I have a hard time (even though I shouldn't, being a parent), based on my experience, making rules for my kids when it comes to food. Because even though I have very good intentions and it is my parental responsibility to keep them healthy, it's really hard to put them in that deprivation state and it doesn't usually lead to great results.

[00:20:06] But I'm all for focusing on creating new traditions. I have started, but I am all for focusing on learning exactly what you just mentioned. What's a good strategy, maybe even a better strategy, or what is the best strategy? But I think we may have to categorize this strategy for yourself and maybe (if we have time today, Terri) we can think about some strategies that you make up for your family, your kids particularly. So let's start focusing on the strategy for yourself, your 50-year-old self, 60-year-old self, 70, what not.

Terri [00:20:46] So I think to start there, people really need to look at, is this something that I can afford in my health journey or my weight loss journey right now? Maybe I don't have to make a decision forever, but right now where I am in my journey is eating this problematic food something I can kind of absorb and be okay with? And if so, how much? How many days? Like I said, some of us may say, "I am going to have something on that day." Okay. Some of us may say, "I'm not going to even have one piece because (like I described earlier) that just leads to more, which leads to December I'm still eating it, leads to January I'm having problems with it." So how do you contain it or refocus your energies?

[00:21:41] Nadia, I know that you, with young kids, you do some things for another holiday that you and your husband don't believe in anymore, but you enjoy it because you watch the enjoyment of your kids experiencing it. So again, thinking about, "I can't eliminate candy and Halloween. I don't have that power, but I have the power to eliminate it for me. What is my Halloween going to be about?" And so if you are a parent or grandparent, it's okay, even if you do decide that you're not going to eliminate it completely for your kids. It's no longer part of *your* Halloween experience.

[00:22:23] And so many people in our Community talk about this. And I know in your recent episode when you interviewed Sonja and she talked about that idea of just eliminating certain foods that are no longer okay. They don't work for her body. She also talked about the idea of kind of being married to this lifestyle. I don't know if this may trigger some people, but for some people, it may be a powerful way to think about it. "I am divorced from candy. I had it in my life. It was super big in my life. And it's no longer in my life. It no longer serves me well. And so I've divorced it. It's gone." Using something, a powerful image like that, it's not, "Yeah, sometimes I still get together with my ex." No! "We are divorced. We are separate now. Candy has gone its way and I have gone my way."

Megan [00:23:15] I had a clinic patient, Desmond. He used to come around with us and share his experience with fasting. He came off of insulin in like three weeks after 30 years, and never needed it again. So we would do group coaching in the clinic just like we do online. He was with an individual who was new to this and he was just giving friendly advice in a very friendly way. He said, "You know, ice cream used to be my biggest pitfall. I had it every day for years." He said, "I'm 80 years old. I have had enough ice cream in these 80 years than 80 people have in their lifetimes. I don't need it anymore. I hit my quota and I've surpassed it. So now it's time for me to find the foods that I enjoy now, that I can, you know, help have those quotas, you know, and reach those goals." So he was saying like, you know, that there's this one poultry dish, chicken dish, that he really loved making and he would indulge in that. So he's like, "When I want ice cream, you know, I'll make some of that. It doesn't take very long." And that really just, I don't know, patients say

very profound things to you at certain times that stick with you and transform you, even though you're on the other side of the desk or the table or the monitor. That really stuck with me.

[00:24:37] A few weeks later, awful day, like awful day in clinic. I think my office actually flooded that day because there was piping issues from the dialysis. There was a dialysis patient I had known since I was a child who had passed away. There was just a lot going on. And there was a mall across the street from our clinic and they had something called Kernels, which is a popcorn chain in Canada. And there is one specific popcorn there that I really enjoyed. So I'm walking in an emotional state to go to the mall at my, quote-unquote, lunch break to get this popcorn. And I just started having these flashbacks of every single bag of Kernels ketchup-flavored popcorn I'd had in my life. And I'm walking and they're just flying in, these memories are flying in and it was just wild. Like, I felt like my brain had suddenly become in the center of a tornado of popcorn scenarios. And I got to the corner of the streetlights waiting to cross the street and I said, "I've had enough popcorn in these 31 years (I was 31 at the time) than most people have in their entire lifetime. I don't need any more." And I turned around and I walked back and I made myself some tea. Desmond, I need to thank you. I don't know if you're listening to this podcast, but very much along the lines there of what you were saying, Terri.

Nadia [00:25:57] This is feeling like a bit of a confessional here [laughter], but unlike Megan, I was the sweet-tooth child that grew up into the sweet-tooth adult, not the savory food. And everybody knows this about me. It's written in our book. I talk about this in every meeting and even our Community knows that I have (They don't know what they are, but I have a nickname for them.) the three amigos. When things go real, real bad in my life, I go to the, well, I don't want to, but kind of this is why I say this is like a confessional. But when things are really bad, when I have like a real emotional... And I'm aware of it, it's an awareness that I have that it only happens in very extreme circumstances. I go to the gas station and I buy the three amigos, as I call them. And I won't tell you what they are, but they're three types of candy and I will binge on them.

[00:26:50] And in the past, I was, as I said, a child and an adult who didn't like food. I would just eat candy and I would go to bed with a bag of candy and I would eat it until I would fall asleep. So really, this has been you know, this is probably the reason why I developed (You know, of course, genetics loads the gun, but lifestyle pulls the trigger.) PCOS and it continued. I really didn't eat very much, but I had a whole lot of candy and I would binge on it, whether I did it in public or in private.

[00:27:19] So for me, I do have a best strategy for Halloween and for every other day of my life. Candy is just not my food. And you know what? I'm not going to lie to you guys and say it was an easy thing to do, but it was a simple thing to do. Similar to what Megan was saying, it was a simple decision at some point. And it's because I don't like how I feel and I particularly don't like the fact that I have absolutely zero control over it. I'm very aware of it. I cannot have one candy and I never will, I don't think. And so I just choose not to have it. And again, it's part of my journey and I'm very comfortable with that best plan strategy for me for Halloween. Again, I'm not saying I'm an alien, that I don't have times... And I've mentioned this, you know, one of the last times was, unfortunately, when I dropped off my husband at the hospital to get (and it was during COVID, so I couldn't go in with him) his heart stent put in. I remember this (It wasn't that long ago, was less than a year ago.), you know, driving to go pick up my kids at school and consciously stopping at the gas station, getting the three amigos, bingeing on them in the car, throwing the wrappers out before my kids got in the car, you know. It's something that I am aware of. It's

a huge problem in my life, but it's not a holiday. It's not something that I celebrate with. It just isn't. And I'm saying this because I know many people can probably relate to this, not something that I'm extremely proud of, but for Halloween, I just don't have it. I'm having fun. It's a great day. I have all these other strategies and I'm not emotionally eating the candy. It's just easier for me to not eat it. Much easier.

Terri [00:28:48] Absolutely. Now, I have taken note as I've been listening to the two of you [laughter] - Hot Topic for future episode: stress and emotional eating...

Nadia [00:28:57] Oh no. [laughter]

Terri [00:28:58] ...with problematic food. We'll talk about that; definitely a great topic for everyone in our Community.

[00:29:04] The other thing that I wanted to add, maybe kind of to bring people to some thoughts about this now, because when this episode comes out, Halloween will have just completed. So we obviously are recording this a little bit before Halloween, but I can picture myself as the listener sitting there having a bag or a bowl of candy, sitting down to listen to the three of us talk about this and saying, "Oh, shoot, what do I do now?" If you are listening and thinking of that, I want to really highlight this. It is over. Halloween was yesterday. If you are listening to this, the day this episode comes out, it's done. So if you did indulge and you chose things, that's okay. No guilt, no shame, but today it's done. Now you might be listening to this and it's already December and you're still sitting there with a bag of treats from Halloween. It's over. Let it go. Throw it away, give it away, whatever you need to do to get it out of your accessibility immediately. And then you get to keep making new decisions about what's coming next, new decisions about how you might handle Halloween next year. But don't let the fact that you chose to engage in it this year be a reason that you have to continue engaging in it. It can stop right here.

Megan [00:30:28] So I've got a question for you, Terri. This is something I commonly face in coaching individuals in the clinic, online, in the Community. The Halloween candy lingers for days, weeks, months. I have this one recollection of a patient coming in early February and the blood work being disastrous. Not the weight, not the waist, but the blood work really being disastrous. To the point where that weight, the waist measurements, all were going to start going in the wrong direction. And I asked the individual, "What happened in January?" I mean, it was all of January to get back on track, even if things slipped up a bit. And she said something about having people gifting her these chocolate-covered cherries. And I realized, doing this in Toronto, that was a thing that was never part of our family's tradition, were these chocolate-covered cherries and she just couldn't get rid of them. And I said, "But why? Christmas is over. Get rid of them." I mean, these are things that people, humans, should not be safely consuming anyways, you know. And I get, you know, people don't want food waste, compost as much as you can. You know, there's different ways here. But she grew up living through days of her parents going through the Depression, the Great Depression, different mindset, her being really young, sort of coming out of the Great Depression.

[00:31:54] Real conversations, you know, about the affordability of food. So there's this issue that, hey, you know, you can't get rid of food, you can't be wasteful. Food was so scarce. And I actually heard this a lot from some of our older patients, and I hear it sometimes from younger people. So there's someone in my family, who married into my family, and they grew up very poor - a single mom, two kids, food stamps. It was very, very difficult for these individuals. Even throughout university, they were sleeping on an air

mattress and had to count every single penny. It was really tough. And there's this whole concept of food waste, which drives them to want to eat. So, I mean, this is obviously a problem that people face on an ongoing basis, but I think a holiday like Halloween can be really triggering.

[00:32:45] The last pre-COVID Halloween in Toronto, there was like some sort of monsoon rainstorm. We got two kids, our neighbors' kids, and that was it. And I buy things like superhero masks and Halloween snap bracelets and glow sticks. You know, I try to make sure our house isn't going to get egged for not giving out candy. You know, try to make it fun. But for that Halloween, I know so many individuals I was working with at the time who were in Toronto, there was no Halloween, it was unofficially canceled because of the monsoon storms and flooding. Not real monsoon storms or anything. [laughs] For Toronto, heavy Toronto rain. So there were just a lot of leftovers because kids just weren't there. And another thing, too, is when people move to new areas and they end up buying excess and then they realize everybody in their neighborhoods is like 16 older and is not trick or treating. So how do you speak to that mentality with the individuals?

Terri [00:33:42] That's a great question, Megan, and it comes up often in my groups within the Community. Let's first focus on something like candy - the Christmas candies that this person was telling you about or the Halloween candies. First of all, I think all of us can acknowledge that these are not food, these are not nutrition, these are not things that are going to help us live and sustain us. So if I learned that throwing away sustenance is, you know, "You should not do that. It's horrible," throwing away highly processed, triggering things is not the same as throwing away sustenance. And I really want to be sensitive to people who have that, you know, that belief system that we should not waste food. I guarantee you the bags of Halloween candy you might have in your house right now, those aren't food. They aren't going to give you the nutritional support for your body to be well; they're actually going to harm you. And so to really start even thinking about, "These are bags of self-harm. I should throw them away and not feel guilty if I'm throwing them away."

[00:34:49] But then even with real food, people say, "Well, I can't throw it away. You know, my kids didn't finish their dinner, so then I eat it." And I totally get that. But at some level, if you really think about it, excess is excess. There's going to be a receptacle for that excess food. Is it going to be your trashcan or is it going to be you? Because when *we* take that on, when *we* become our excess-food receptacle, we know what that leads to. It leads to metabolic conditions. It leads to obesity. And so we have to really dig into that value system around, "It's bad if we throw away excess food." Is it bad to protect your body from becoming a waste receptacle? Because it's extra food anyway. It's actually going to waste - in your body as excess or in the trash can.

Nadia [00:35:47] I can totally... First of all, I'm super proud of myself. I know we've been teaching ourselves and our Community to celebrate ourselves. This is not something I say often, but I am super proud of myself for having learned at some point that candy is trash, it's actually poison. It's not food and it's okay to throw it out. And that is something that I have been doing with my kids. I know this is a really hard thing to do for some parents, but my kids know to expect it. Now, I'm sure I don't remember, but I'm sure that the first year that I broke it to my kids that once we're done trick or treating and you pick whatever the number that I decided for that year, whether it's five candies or whatever it is (I'm going to throw out the number five because I think that's what my daughter said.), that we throw it out. And I'm certain that they complained. They were probably so little they can't even remember. I'm certain they complained about it then, but now they know to expect it. We throw it out as a family that night. And at some point (I'll tell you what I went through.), we

went through this whole like, "Oh, you should donate it. There are places where you donate it." That is something that I got rid of, that notion, a long time ago. I do not want to donate trash, poison, to anyone. I throw it in the garbage. Zero remorse. It is not food. Not only is it not my food, but it is not food, period. That's for sure something that I am very comfortable with and I'm so glad that somehow (It wasn't even through you, Terri. I don't know where I learned that.), a long time ago, we came up with that strategy. So that's definitely one of our strategies.

Terri [00:37:19] Fantastic.

Megan [00:37:21] I think that's really great. You know, it's the same thing here. Terri and I are both in the United States now, and so I'm a Canadian coming from public health care who has, in the last decade, fallen into this unique space with fasting and reversing disease, getting to know populations outside of Canada and their health care system. So now I'm in the U.S. and you hear about giving this excess stuff to people who might not be able to afford food. They can't afford health care. It is absolutely wild. I can't afford to give these children type 2 diabetes. Do you know how many tens of thousands of children under the age of ten have type two diabetes in the United States right now? It's mind-blowing. In 2016, over 8000 had bariatric surgery, gastric bypass surgery, to lose weight. It's just crazy. You know, so I do make a conscious effort throughout the year to donate healthier food options to places because I think that that is important. We've got to help our community members, but we don't need to give them this stuff. And, you know, in our household, we try to find other things to give out.

[00:38:29] We're at a place, I think, where many of us across the globe are trying not to be wasteful in general. So we all hear about the dangers and the impact of food waste. And I know that sometimes drives people, but it's finding other things perhaps. I have a friend who's very into the low-carb space, him and his wife, and they have three little kids. And Halloween just sort of terrified them initially. You know, what are they going to do? And their oldest daughter was just old enough to start to get into it and recognize certain traditions. Prior to that, their kids were pretty young. And he said, "This is the year where traditions are going to stick in her brain." They lived in a more unique neighborhood. You know, they were not necessarily going door to door in that particular neighborhood. You would have to leave to go elsewhere. It was a little bit of a gated community of sorts. But what he did was invite everybody over for a costume party with a fun movie and there would be some fun foods, but they had someone there that was helping them with crafting, special Halloween crafts, and just trying to change the traditions around it. Now they were in a bit of a unique predicament. My children are not going to be in a gated community [laughs], a community with British royalty where people are not going to be trick or treating. So I was trying to find things around that.

[00:39:53] I know one of our colleagues, Ben Bikman, he has two younger daughters and they barter their candy for other things that they want that serve them. One of his daughters is very, very crafty. She now goes to local fairs and I see such a proud dad posting all of her great art all over social media. But for crafting supplies that she wants, and that's one strategy they learned.

[00:40:19] So it's so interesting hearing from them, hearing from Nadia what the approaches are. In my family, you know, again, Halloween wasn't really a food-centric holiday, but Christmas was. And we would bake with my grandmother, the cousins, and I was the oldest cousin. So when she passed, I kind of took that on. I'm like, "I can't do this." And my cousins, some of them are old enough that they also understood, you know, they

can't do this either. So we just turned it into a cousins' game night. And we would eat, but we would have good foods. But our ritual then wasn't around baking, it was around playing games. And our grandmother loved playing games. We spent every Christmas Eve playing rummy till it was Christmas Day, practically. So, you know, it was a great way to still honor her and she would just know that we were happy together. So just trying to figure out, okay, you know what, what are some things? You know, going to the corn maze, going to the pumpkin patch, Halloween movies - that's really what it's become in our household. It's a time when we get to go back and watch these classic movies and some new movies that we're interested in. And that's really what it is for us.

[00:41:28] I do have a younger cousin and when she was much younger and she would stay with us often for Halloween because her parents would have a conference every year on the other side of the globe. So we really got into like pumpkin carving and stuff. She wasn't really into food or into sweets or anything like that, so she's very similar to me in that respect. So pumpkin carving and roasting the pumpkin seeds and being able to watch, you know, Hocus Pocus, those type of things. So it's really interesting to hear all of these different strategies that people are doing with their households, whether they keep it to a treat or two treats or five treats, or how the different styles are. Giving me lots of ideas because, with my luck, my children will inherit my husband's sweet tooth. [laughs]

Terri [00:42:17] I also love the idea some people do something kind of similar to what you talked about with Ben Bikman, but they do a Switch Witch. So maybe you get two pieces of the candy and then you trade the other. You give it back, the Switch Witch comes overnight and takes it and brings you something that you've been wanting. So you get something else that feels rewarding and fun rather than, you know, type 2 diabetes down the road.

Megan [00:42:45] That's very cool. Well, thank you both for the great discussion. And we're so grateful to have you here with us, Terri. And everybody listening, we can't wait to bring you more good content. We understand we do have a backlog of questions, so we are trying to come up with some strategies to make sure that we're answering your questions in a timely fashion. So we ask you to just hold off sending in more questions for right now. We're working with our team to figure out again what's the best way to get those out there. So we're going to try to answer a question or two in each episode on top of our regular Q&A episodes, and then we will hopefully have an announcement soon about how we're going to get through the bit of a backlog. But we love answering them, so bear with us, everybody. We are working on it. We'll get you those answers soon.

[00:43:32] Thank you, Nadia. Thank you, Terri. We'll see you all back here next week with another episode. Bye for now.

Nadia [00:43:38] Bye, everyone.

Terri [00:43:39] Take good care.