



## *Alexx Chats to Shalani McCray*

A: Hello everybody, joining me today is the wonderful Shalani McCray. Hi Shalani, how are you?

S: Hi Alexx I'm really well, thank you.

A: can you tell us how you came to be doing what you're doing today for anyone who doesn't know you yet.

S: I fell into it actually and I sort of realized now that my hobby has become my life purpose. I've always been in natural health and health food stores. But my first career was a preschool teacher, I'm in childhood education from then I went on to do nursing, it was a university degree and then that was it, I was done I thought. And then I had children and I think when you have children, you start to look at life in a different way, you start to take notice of things and things that you put into your children's bodies and including your own. I was from a real medical background, my dad was a doctor, my mom was a nurse educator at the time and of course I've done nursing so I had been in a very accepting sort of way. Anyway, I started looking at things in a different way and decided I wouldn't mind studying naturopathy just for the hell of it and because I was doing it that way I studied each module one at a time. As I was studying nutrition, people started asking me questions, next thing it became a practice and now I'm doing what I'm doing. So that was about 15 years ago and things have sort of morphed since then. I was also in that time someone who was never gonna study and never really wanted a career, just wanted to get married and have children. I gotten on to do that, I've gone on studies and be certified by Dr. Natasha Campbell McBride as a gap practitioner, I studied at seminary and I'm an inter-faith minister so I sort of work at the spiritual side of things as well and I'm in the application process of medicine so I've become a bit of a study nerd.

A: Okay so we're here to talk about kids, all ages of kids as well. In terms of your practice and the time you've been helping families, seeing children in your practice. What changes have you seen over the past 20 years? What's presenting more these days, what's exceptionally common. I mean people out there might just be on the precipice of getting curious to see holistic healing as a modality that they might consider for their family so it would be really interesting to hear your thoughts.

S: One of the scariest things that has become evident we're now seeing the first generation outliving their parents and I find that outstanding in this day and age with the science and technology we have and when we look about why that is. A lot of these things are actually things that we can do something about but we've sort of fallen into bad habits or we've been subliminally suggested that there may be better ways but had now turned out to be not better ways. I think that it was always a given that a baby was born healthy, but during our grandmother's time they ate organic food, or as our grandparents call it food so they didn't have to worry if it's been tainted or the way it was produced or anything like that. The environment was cleaner, there was still stress but of different type, not as much of it I think. And there's the introduction of things like antibiotics, oral contraceptive pills, all of that as we know has an impact on the sperm and the egg for a start, a healthy baby comes from a healthy sperm and egg and then there's all the environmental factors. I think in general today, and I can see the progression and it is interesting that my children are 22 and 25 so I can see unfortunately real decline children's health when mine were young. And one of the biggest thing I see, even going back to when I was a child 50 years ago or 40 years ago, we didn't know children with allergies, cancer, diabetes, things like that, those are old people's conditions. They were probably around but they weren't as prevalent as they are today and by the time my children were 10, they've been to the funeral of 3 classmates with lifestyle-related conditions. Being a gap practitioner mainly I'm seeing children on the autism spectrum so that could be related to food allergies, it can be related to digestive issues, it can be neurological issues, attention, behavior, those sorts of things, learning difficulties. Lots of it again related to the food and digesting things, lots of eczema, conditions now that we are juvenile to the beginning of it that we never did like arthritis, like diabetes that would have come on later are coming on in young children like under 10 so they're the sorts of things I'm seeing a lot of.





**A:** You studied natural health and you've come across GAPS, why do you think it was GAPS that really appealed to you to dig further into a way of healing than other things that were kind of floating around.

**S:** Back when I was studying, we did talk about what they say is weed, seed and feed the gut, it was like a gut-cleaning program. Weed is to get rid of the bad stuff, seed is to plant, say you've taken out the weeds or to get rid of them you normally starve them out, you seed it with good quality, so we're talking bacteria, we're talking about the microbiome, the gut, it's full of organisms like organisms, fungi, viruses, yeast, all those sorts of things, the very things we've actually been fighting all these years. So we've got bad guys there, actually happens is the bad guys take over, so we get rid of those by starving them out, we seed which is putting on new seeds of good bacteria and we feed the good bacteria, with sorts of food that we know bacteria like to eat. So we only learned about this weed seed and feed and it was mainly supplement-driven. We worked through it a little bit with elimination diet but I can say now that they were very elementary. So I had that little bit of understanding of the gut, we didn't really talk much about what Hippocrates said 2000 years ago which is all disease begins in gut but we know that there was some sort of correlation there with many conditions and the gut. My son had a lot health issues, he started off on the wrong foot, being born early, lots of antibiotics, all of that sort of thing, had lots of respiratory conditions, raced to hospital a lot, by the time he was I think 5 he was resistant to all antibiotics except the big guns. So we went to a naturopath and she suggested this gut-healing but it was along the line of probiotics things like that which was still quite elementary, there'll still be acidophilus in your body and those sorts of things and talked about gut-healing in a different way and so I started researching a little bit and implementing it with my son and really started seeing some great improvements in his health. And then about 2 years later maybe, GAPS became known, the GAPS book came out, so GAPS stands for gut and psychology syndrome and now we call it psychology or physiology syndrome. So basically it means the gut and it's connection to the way our brain works, the way our whole body works. When I read the book, it crystallized everything but what I loved most about GAPS is that it makes us mindful, it makes us really mindful about the food we eat, where the food comes from, the providence of the food, the quality of it and it's impact on our body. And I think if we can implement that with children when they're really young, we're giving them a huge gift. Everything about GAPS made sense, it made sense about eliminating everything and starting from scratch, again with really nutrient-dense, easily digestible foods and then building up on that and then just watching at each stage when you introduce something else, what sort of reaction occurs, that's a little clue for you about that person's individuality and then you just sort of build on from there and what I loved about it it that it wasn't a band-aid, it's getting to the source, it's not dealing with symptoms. Let's get to the source which is the gut, really heal it up and then continue on from there.

**A:** So with the people that you worked with specifically with the behavior or the autism spectrum, etcetera, attention issues, how have you seen the progress develop, what sort of men you started to go wow this is really working with the people you have in front of you.

**S:** It's very varied, you can't really pick it quite often, like you might get someone, a child or an adult who is quite debilitated and maybe has been for a long time. And you sort of in your mind, you think this is gonna be a long slow road and like within 24 hours, a mom would say wow, the child's different or the child slept well or behavior's different, they've calmed down, or they're both focused. The biggest thing is when other people like teachers notice and say what are you doing. And that's a great encouragement for parents as well and for children too. It's very individualized as how quickly, everyone wants to know about time frames and go how long do we have to be on it this week. As I said for some it can happen within like 24 hours that you can notice the difference and for others they have this terrible day of reaction and the symptoms might get worse for a period of time and then after a period of time there's like a clicking over. And that clicking over into healing is gonna be different for everyone but once that happens you tend to be on a really good road of improvement. But the sort of improvement, well it depends, so you can have a lot nearly or have skin issues, most eczema are related to digestive. Constipation and diarrhea is a huge thing, from babies in nappies onwards, constipation seems to be the big one more so than diarrhea and that to me is really important because you shouldn't be constipated for more than 24 hours, you need to have a bowel movement at least every 24 hours. That's where they see a change as well. Parents are sort of rejoicing that their child has a formed bowel movement and any parent who's been in that situation will know. And the learning one is a really big thing, that's what one of the big ones parents will really notice and again teachers will rally notice with children. They calm down, they focus more, they're more in tune, in sync, not so sensitive,





when I say sensitive there's a lot of it, be it food sensitivities, sound sensitivities, smell sensitivities, touch sensitivities. And sometimes you even notice an improvement in things you didn't know were a problem in the first place. So they are all the things that you notice and it's wonderful and even my family, my husband and children have picked up when a get a phone call from a parent or an email or whatever saying oh this has happened and it's just like it's one of my own children you know, oh, a bowel movement or oh they slept through the night or they got an award at school, that's the other one and I've been doing intro and at the end of intro we often do a group together with our GAPS support group and we come back after Christmas coz I normally do it then, and all of a sudden about March, children are getting awards and things at school.

A: Well it impacts them socially doesn't it? So you can totally see the downward spiral of not addressing an issue like this because they start concentrating or never did in the first place, don't do well at school, a misfit, then they get in with the bad kids, then the drugs start like you can actually see how these things play out and that's also terrifying by the way. Like a child with attention deficit who's small, it's just to say that now is the time if you do have a small child but if you have teenagers, then there's also a lot of work that can be done as well so have you worked with teenagers if we can just talk about this for a little minute because that to me would be a much tougher group to convince to radically change their diet when it's all about conformism and being with your mate and having a pizza on Friday nights and maybe even drinking for the first time in the later teen years, how have you dealt with those sorts of cases?

S: Teens are the most difficult and that's probably one of the reasons why, the reason I talk about preconception here is yes we want to produce a healthy baby but it also puts mom and dad into healthy eating habits. They start to experience for themselves when it's easy, when it's only them they have to deal with, they start to get into habits and start to see how easy it is being fit for themselves when they eat well or don't. Then they have a child, healthy child coz healthy sperm and egg and they took care of the environment or whatever, not a given but a better chance and then they'll instill in the child really healthy eating habits without being, sort of, I think when you discover these stuff later be it when your children are toddlers or primary school age and even as teens, there is that tendency as parents, it's such a wow thing that we tend to go over board and sometimes it becomes an issue and a currency. So if it's your normal from the beginning then the battles are latent.

A: But what if the battles are big because it wasn't your normal?

S: NO, it's just because I know there are gonna be people who are pregnant or are thinking they wanna have children and so I just really wanna impress that coz as what you said, it's sort of after everything's happened they come in and seeking help and that sort of thing but make use of yourself. But if it is after, you're dealing with different personalities be it being the teenager, but also with yourself and the relationship you have with your child has a huge impact on it as well. I guess it's like this with everything to do with teenagers and is likely to do with husbands too and you get everything is their idea.

A: Yes, it's actually in my mom's little book of rules, I just dug it up the other day I wonder if I have it here today it's not easily accessible. But when we turned 18 she gave us a list of successful ways and tips for living out a healthy life and one was to let your partner think they have come up with the idea so that you get to move on to the issues that are more important to you. And I didn't really think much of it as an 18 year old but by golly that come in handy now.

S: So let them make choices and let them think it was their idea but even more so, I say this a lot, if you don't want your children to eat certain foods, don't have them now, basically that's what it comes down to. So even with your teenagers, and it's harder with teenagers coz they have more autonomy and I saw the difference with my son too, that everything was great when I had control over him, but then he goes to high school, he has money and the shop around the corner and all of that but at least at home you can have that foundation that there is only meat, seafood, fruit, vegetables, dairy, eggs, whatever, that's all that's available and that's the food that's going to school. The bulk of what they're eating is healthy. I guess in a manner their own way of pointing out when they have had eaten food that's not that healthy and they get a headache or they cant sleep or they have no energy or a rash comes out or whatever, just to point out do you think maybe, or interesting that in a really loving non-judgmental sort of way. So you have to be really clever when you're dealing with teenagers and you really have to read them and again as I said, take your ego out of the way and what you actually have to take out of the way is that mama bear. Because mama bear is so protective to almost sort of arrogant, aggressive sort of way. With teenagers they like putting hands up and say back off and you can say I love you til the cows come home but I





mean I can't tell you how many times my son said well mom, then I wish you didn't love me so much. So it's really a work in progress in so many areas of how you deal with them and you just need to keep reading them, reading them and reading them and it is a common error so it is a thing that I had to work with but it's really worth it. And they do caught on about mentioning the connection of how they feel. My experience, I've got both extremes, my daughter she just knows and she just chooses healthy options from then on. My son is one who really needs to be careful, he is Mr. Junk Food and all day he eats his junk food but he has seen the difference in himself, he knows the difference and then all of a sudden I'll get mom can you start making me lunch again or those sorts of things.

A: And you sound actually relatively relaxed about the fact that he would eat junk food and I really like that because I think that the message cannot be that if you have failed me or yourself if you have eaten that food coz this is where anxiety, OCD around food, eating disorders and all of that sort of stuff can come into the picture so it's really important that they know. I believe that if we set a really good foundation when they are younger, the time that they actually explore all of that stuff will actually be far shorter because they're okay well I've done that and that actually was horrible. If I really am honest with myself to you down the track let's say when he's 24, let's just eat normally, I know how to cook now, and they come back to that base mainly because they're not living at home anymore and they really want to be able to eat that kind of food around the clock.

S: Absolutely. But it also comes back what you were saying about them trying it out and then sating uh it doesn't feel that good, even with little ones too, your reaction is really important. Eat with little ones around the food they eat too and using it as currency because children from toddlers right up to 10, they'll see what gets you going. I've just come back from a trip speaking in Sri Lanka and in Asian countries especially there's this real thing about eating, you know "they must eat, they must eat" and it's not really about what they eat as long as you can say they've eaten and a lot of them had this real light bulb moment because they said yeah we are like that but I said to them but is it okay that ate but it doesn't matter what they ate and it wasn't that healthy but at least they ate something. To me and that's what I suggested or would have done is here's the food, you don't want it, that's okay, don't engage, you don't have to eat it but that's what we're eating. And similarly with my son as a teenager, if I go oh my God... or whatever, it's like oh I got a reaction.

A: Parenting is so tricky. But I do like that don't engage, I've never given my son a plan B, I have to say that's a French culture thing as well, you eat what you eat. And so my son starts school and once his friends opened his lunch box one day said ooh it's yucky and everything and my son said you get what you get and you don't get upset, that came to back to me through his mom and then it became like an act and then apparently his little group will eat their lunch without problems now because it was a new way of thinking that they haven't thought of yet. But at the same time, my son doesn't love every meal I produce, absolutely not and sometimes he will only eat half or a couple of bites. It's rare, but it happens and he just knows that that's it.

S: Yes, and I think that this is a really big one too with the little ones, because it happens with me, I go through phases where I am loving it and other phases where I'm not eating a lot. Right now I'm going through that, last week I couldn't get enough food into me, I know it was partly jet lag, coming back home and all of that but I was just eating everything inside and part of it probably was hormonal too but like this week I've noticed yesterday and today, I'm not eating that much and it happens to children you know they have growth spurts and some days they feel like eating and some days they don't so there's really no point forcing them on the day that they just don't feel like eating. Some time when growth spurt comes and you'll be wondering how you gonna keep up with the amount of food that they wanna eat. So allow them to be into this intuitive. We go oh 7:00 breakfast, 12:00 lunch, 6:00 dinner we have to eat whether hungry or not but they're not, they're really in tune and we can learn from that so don't go trying to change that.

A: I would say hunger is a very important conversation our body has with us, we should leave space for it to occur rather than constantly filling up or eating on time. Especially on the weekends, I like using the weekends as a real free-flowing don't even think about lunch until someone actually says oh what are we having, what's going on there because then sometimes we'll eat it too but no one was even remotely hungry and I think that's a really nice little thing to relax on as well. So this message of healthy eating becomes one to get mindful and get conscious and get proactive but at the same time be relaxed, leave things open, don't stress if something doesn't go right or they don't eat their dinner that night or all







of those things because stress is counter-productive to the goal every single time and it's something you're really passionate about as well.

S: People know I'm supposedly all about food, but I have learned after all these years more and more, I mean everyday there's a new example to be honest, you can do the right amount of exercise, type of exercise whatever that is but if you are stressed, it just undermines that right diet and the exercise coz it affects so many parts of our lives, and I'm saying parts of the way our body functions. I have clients where I say to them we're not even looking at your diet, we're not even looking at your food, we're not looking at your diet, just eat whatever you need to eat, we're working on the emotional stuff first, we're working on the stress first and once I see that we've got something happening there then we'll start looking at what you're eating but looking at what you're eating while you're in this amount of stress is just gonna add more stress to you and we're wasting your time, my time, your money, all the effort and whatever, I need some job satisfaction as well, it's just not happening.

A: Can you explain to the people that don't know how stress is linked to gut problems?

S: Back in the day when we were first created, our biggest stress would have been danger from things like well, a mammoth, we have to get out of that stress and so you run for your life. So when you are running, your body has all this different systems and they all sort of work in unison together but when in you're in certain situations, certain systems are needed more than others. So, when you're stressed, all the blood need to run to your muscle, you need acute sight to be able to look for danger and get out of like see the path out of the danger, you need your lungs to work really well because you're running, to be able to breathe well. And so as a result, if you can imagine that each of these body systems has a whole heap of stuff and what happens is the body says, we need to have all in actions sort of thing in the muscles and in the lungs and everything so we're gonna put the skeleton stuff in the digestive system coz we don't need your digestive system to get out of trouble and we don't need your reproductive system to get out of trouble. So they're gonna be on stilts and stuff and everyone else is we need all men on deck to get out of this danger. So you get out of the danger and well the mammoth's gone, you're safe and the body's back, alright everyone back to their stations everything's cool now. While we're stressed lots of chemicals are being released, it's like a little bit's good and that a lot is bad. So a little bit of them is good to get us out of the danger, the adrenaline and whatever but we don't want that running through us too long, we want it to go back to normal and that's what happens, we get out of the danger and everything's fine. Today, we're not worrying about woolly mammoth, our stress tends to come and we're not usually trying to run from any danger that's only for 5 minutes but our body doesn't know the difference. So what we're stressed about is money, relationships, work, all those sorts of things, so when you're stressed about those things, they're really short-lived. You look at your bill and you go oh my god how am I gonna pay that and then it's not like you go alright, so I got stressed in 5 minutes and then put it aside and go on with life. It's pain in your mind, you're awake at night. So your body doesn't know Willy mammoth, so it shut everything down, your digestive system and your reproductive system and everything else it doesn't need and it's still working. That's why a lot of the time many of us who are stressed are wired, because our body's primed for action, movement, and that's why we're snappy, and that manifests that way but also it manifests and the digestive system shut down. And then we're putting stuff in it and expecting it to work but it shut down, it's got on in on deck for getting out of danger so that's why stress is so important and that's why often when we deal with the stress, everything else takes care of itself. I discovered quite recently that the wonderful thing about eating is that when we eat, that's all we're doing and I say well maybe once. Even the families eating together at the table these days, it was always like a rule in our house that we all sat together at the table and again, my children being in their 20's, my children didn't have those things like iPhones and iPads and things when they were in primary school and even in high school they did but it was new, so it wasn't at the table. But today, everyone's eating on the run, looking at the computer, or like something over the screen or they're watching TV, there's no conversation. One of my teachers talks about how, she said in life we're doing doing and we're missing out on so much joy and she said you're washing up, and you're thinking when I finish washing up there's that beautiful chocolate cake that's in the fridge or whatever, and I'm gonna sit down, have a cup of tea and that beautiful chocolate cake and then after that I'll get on with what I have to do, but you finish washing up, you do have the piece of chocolate cake and that cup of tea but while you are having it you're thinking you're either checking your emails or you're thinking about what your gonna do next and you're just not in the moment and then 2 hours later you thin did I eat that chocolate cake? And you didn't even enjoy it.





A: That's why I teach chocolate meditation. We actually sit and you close your eyes and you enjoy right until that last little sliver has gone down the hatch and just makes you really realize that you've eaten chocolate instead of 4 squares while you were doing something else and then going I don't feel like I had my fix coz I wasn't even in the moment while it was happening.

S: Thich Nhat Hahn is a blessing because he's very well at the moment. He also has a meditation, and a lot of retreats and things, we'll do this meditation about eating an orange or mandarin, and it starts with feeling it in your hand and then it goes to smelling it and then it goes to eating. It takes you about an hour to eat it because when you do it this way, obviously it's just an example, but it's amazing, and I'm really encouraged if I were to do it because feel a mandarin skin, it's beautiful, you feel it and even smell it as well and that is a spray as you break open the skin and eating each piece and encourage your children and say hey, we're gonna eat a mandarin in a different way now and just notice it, it's lovely.

A: Beautiful. Now, the gut is talked about as our second brain and I think that's an interesting little thing to explore. How can you best explain how our gut and our brain have such a close relation in terms of gut health impacting brain health.

S: Well it's actually the same thing because when the sperm and the egg come together and apologies to everyone who's heard this talk before, this is just my analogy that works really well, oh it's not an analogy, it's a fact. So the sperm and the egg come together and then cells start to divide to form a baby and at some point that mass of cells divide and  $\frac{1}{2}$  of it becomes your brain or your central nervous system and the other half becomes your gut or your integumentary system so it's the same tissue but they're separated and they're connected by what we call as the vagus nerve and that forms communication between the 2. So as a result, I often tell to people, think about it that when you're nervous or anxious about something, it manifests in your stomach, you might feel nauseous, you might get the runs or you might get butterflies in your stomach, that sort of thing. How is that that you thought about something and it manifest in your gut and that's because that communication between the vagus nerve and it further emphasizes how stress affects us because what's going on up here is going to have an effect on what's going on down here. Similarly our gut, we now know, so there's been a huge explosion in the field of the microbiome, micro being small, bio being life form. So our gut, we now know as they say is the source of, all disease begins in the gut, the actual functioning of our body is dependent on our gut. It's dependent on the organisms that live in the gut, the ones I mentioned before, as well as on the gut lining. So there's 2 different things, ones that disposes which is the gut or the biofilm or the organisms or the other is about the gut lining membrane and that membrane is like a piece of muslin that lines the gut wall and so it lets some like little molecules and things, the ones that are meant to go through the blood and it stops bigger molecules from getting through but if you have a leaky gut which means there's tears in that muslin then bigger piece molecules are getting through and the body doesn't recognize that and then immune system goes on alert and says ding ding ding, we don't understand these, we don't get these, we're gonna form an immune response to it and that's when you get any number of reactions be it to your skin, to your joints, to your brain with anxiety or depression or AD, you get central nervous system things like degenerative diseases like muscular sclerosis, lupus, all those sorts of things occur, are autoimmune and that's the body attacking because the other thing that the body does is it recognizes those food molecules as similar to parts of their body and so it then goes oh well that molecule looks a little bit like joint tissue so I'm gonna attack the joints and then we have rheumatoid arthritis or whatever. So that's where the leaky gut comes from. What's very interesting is that babies are born with a leaky gut, they need to get the nutrients in their body really really quick like from breast milk and the colostrum and all of that and so they're born with a leaky gut and that's also why first foods are really important that starts to close round about 4-6 months.

A: Obviously immunity was just mentioned there as well but the gut is a huge part of our immune system too.

S: The bulk of the immune system occurs in the gut say like  $\frac{2}{3}$  or whatever and the microorganisms in our gut are responsible for keeping that immune system buzzing along well. So if you don't have the right sorts of organisms in your gut in the right balance then your immune system suffers and then you'll either notice that your catching frequent colds and viruses and things that are going round, you're just getting sick a lot, you might really allergic, or you might be prone to gastro bugs and things going around more or you'll also get to people who say oh I haven't been sick in years, I haven't





had a cold in like 5 or 6 years and they're people who I'm worried about because the immune system has been primed. We need to keep priming our immune system, it's why little ones it's okay that I get a cold every now and again and they're getting exposed to it, they're priming their immune system but it's just when they're getting them too frequently or they're just back to back colds and cough and things like that, ear infections, whatever that's when it's a problem.

**A: That's interesting. If your child has a couple of colds or a fever once or twice in the winter season that's perfectly normal, no one needs to worry about that?**

S: What's not okay is to not let it happen. Be it with medications or Panadol for fever or whatever and I know it's really scary and I myself has had a child who has fitted from fevers so I know how scary it can be and you have to do what you're comfortable with right, we have to have more trust in our body. Our body works with us if we give it what it needs to work with. But when we go in to that whole suppressed poison thing that modern medicine does a lot of, then we're not allowing the body to express the way it's meant to express and when it expresses the way it's meant to then it's primed and it's acting on all cylinders. Ultimately with any advice, be it from the doctor, be it from anything, you have to feel comfortable for it. We outsource a lot of help these days and as a result we outsource responsibility, but really we need to sit, I really encourage people and I'm not trying to be rude but really how does that sit with me, does it make sense with me, am I okay with that because ultimately am I okay with the consequences. They say when you point a finger at someone 3 fingers are pointing back at you, so sit there and make sure it's really okay with you and don't worry about anyone else, it's your journey. So if you choose to give your child Panadol or antibiotics or whatever yay for you, that's what feels right for you, but just be informed.

A: I think that's key. When I started to let fevers go a little bit, I started to realize that actually he just wanted to sleep it off and so I would support him and then when he was about 3, when he had a fever I said do you want a Panadol coz it feels like you're really really hot sweetie, it's been for a couple of days so if you wanna just feel a little bit better, I just need some vitamin C and some good sleep that's coming out of his tiny mouth. I let him decide, now that he's old enough I let him decide on that front because I don't want to give him things, or medicate him, make him think that he doesn't have a choice as well. That's a beautiful gift to give our kids. To finish with, a little question on what your dream foods are for children and I think this would, let's like briefly touch on that 0-5 kind of group, or maybe 1-5 like they're definitely eating now and there's food on the table now and they're eating with mom and dad and also teens as well in terms of studying, a little bit more pressure in life, so if you could just look at those 2 groups.

S: Basically, it's really boring but I don't think there's any one or miracle food or whatever. I think that personally if the bulk of the diet is meat, seafood, fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy, those natural foods that on the haul, the way I said you could produce it yourself. If you have a block of land by the water, that's for the seafood and you can produce it yourself you don't need machinery, that's the food that should be the bulk of what we eat. And you have a nice variety of colors, textures, flavors, but really it doesn't have to be like gourmet masterchef, child doesn't know and there is nothing wrong in the days of eating free veg. To me, it will always be laced with the broth and fermented food and again going back to my grandma's time and I think you heard me said before that Christians had a thing what would Jesus do and would have the be the good person and in nutrition well what would nana do or what would nana think about these and did these make sense to her and so really they always had things with broth like cooked with broths and the naturally occurring fats, the tallows and the butters and the things like that and every single culture in the world has some form of meat food that is a part of their daily diet until recently we tried to improve on things. So, it's called traditional wisdom and I think that's really important even more so today because of the environmental influences and the quality of our food and things like that. We need to help our microbiome as much as we can because ultimately, I say to people don't think about feeding your body, think about feeding your microbiome. That's your focus and do it intuitively, what feels wrong, is this thing ok. We really need to get back in touch and that's one of the reasons I love GAPS, it's one of the reasons I love letting your children, the thing is there's nothing wrong with letting children decide what they wanna eat if all that's available to them is good options anyway. I mean remember years ago telling someone or everytime I hear a mothers' group talking I told them about my ice cream recipe and all that and I said oh my nieces just hugged me coz I told them mom could give them ice cream for breakfast. Well hey, if you're making the ice cream and it's got eggs and cream and fruit, isn't that a great breakfast? So let them have ice cream for breakfast. As I said if the options you have, oh I'm gonna tell you about my cousin, I just wanna tell you quickly alright. We're having coffee and her little one, 4 kept going to the cupboard and pulling





out chocolates and those cheese, snacky things and it was causing grief. Now one of the reasons it's causing grief and it happens a lot is because I am there and what Shalani does as a professional and the other thing is well it's causing grief anyway because obviously she doesn't want him eating this sort of thing. Why did you by it? Why is it there? It's like people took that treats and things like that and I'm like you know there was a time when those things were treats because they weren't in the house like I know ice cream but we didn't have chocolates and things like that in the house but very now and then mom would bring home those Terry's orange balls, the dark one and that was our treat or sometimes dad would come home and we weren't poor, we were like the rich kids when I was young and all that so it wasn't a money thing or anything, it was just, and mom and dad weren't new to nutrition, it's just that it wasn't done, we had dessert every night but there were things like that, that it would come into the house and it would be like, that's a treat. It happened every now and again. It was not an expectation that happens everyday.

A: To that point, quite often my son will say, is there dessert tonight and one of us will say, no. Whenever we don't have dessert for tonight, we don't make any issue of it, it's not because he didn't do something right, it's just there's nothing here, we'll I don't know, do you wanna split a mandarin? And then we'll just have a couple of segments of mandarin and that's done. And so interesting isn't it how we stuff in our house, just in case, and because it exists, it plays to our human....we have to stock pile while there's food, that's like in our biology to do that and so we stock pile in case someone comes over or in case there's a play date or in case there's a birthday coming up and what we end up with is one of those 12-pack of chips in the cupboard or there's some kind of soft drink in the fridge. And of course our bodies know where the fastest energy is and we now know because we tasted those things and we know how quickly we fire off on all cylinders when we eat something like that or drink something that's packed with sugar, we then inherently have the knowledge that as soon as we feel like something, if we need a lift that's the first thing to go to. And if it's there, then that's the first thing you will go to so I totally agree. Step 1 is just not have it in the house.

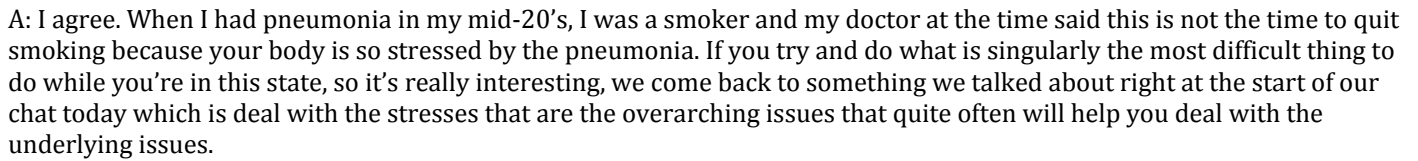
S: And you'll save money. I once said it's expensive to be healthy well, really you know, we're so lucky these days. When I first started we didn't have farmers markets and things like that and organic produce, and I haven't bought organic I wouldn't even say 2/3 of what we eat is organic because things change for us financially as well as availability and whatever. I buy the best I can afford with what's available to me. But these days there is so much more available easily. The amount as I said of things like farmers markets and even supermarket options and things like that. And the other thing with nutrient density and you're talking before about hunger, hunger is our body's call for nutrients, not calories. If you give it calories it keeps asking for more but if we eat nutrient-dense food is so rich in density, I can eat a small amount of it anyway. Well we know it inside liver which is what I consider should be babies' first foods, is so nutrient-dense that you only need to eat it once a week so it can be economical to eat.

A: So true. It's all about reinvesting those snacks. Quite often we do this thing when we go healthy which is we swap everything out instead of ditching some stuff. What we can ditch is all of the empty snack foods. There's still plenty of processed carbs in organic land and gluten free land and whatever free land you wanna talk about and you reinvest the money you spend in those empty grubs into the actual meals themselves and you feel satisfied, you're nourished, you look for food less and it's a really nice thing when it all starts to fall into place and you don't need 4 morning teas which is exhausting to prepare. And I do believe, only because I'm doing it right now and I'm totally feeling the benefits of it, in checking in on yourself so if your family's a little bit out of control and it just seems to be that there's something sweet at every turn, getting dessert after lunch, sweet afternoon tea, something sweet after dinner, there is a limit as to how much our livers can process in the sweets department. And that little something that we cherish as we have our cup of tea, if that does go out of control sometimes, and I know for myself it was with dark chocolate recently where I was having half a block almost everyday. That to me I consider an addiction, to just take a couple of weeks out where you don't have that stuff and recalibrate your taste buds and your enjoyment, and being present, and as you say treasuring it and thinking god it's delicious instead of this mindless kind of part of what we're doing.

S: the other thing I would suggest however too, is if you do find yourself reaching for those things, what's going on? Because often it's a sign of something going on, be it in relation to stress in your life or some sort of nutrient deficiency or something that's out of whack too. Sometimes these cleanses come along which is great and all of that or recalibrate or whatever. Just pinch yourself, is this the right time for me, because if you want this whole period, doing those things is stressful to the body so maybe think about, can I handle this really strictly right now that it's gonna be a benefit as well.







A: Absolutely and if we create that haven, we are less stressed, and if we're less stressed then our body's digestive systems work better. So it's all linked, I love that. Let's finish there thank you so much for your time.

