

52. The Fun Five Series - Sugar - Stacey & Matty Turner

8 Reasons to quit sugar after stroke.

8 Reasons to quit Sugar after stroke is episode 1 in a series of 5 that I have recorded with Stacey and Matty Turner from the Chief Life

Stacey is a qualified Nutritionist and Matty is a Personal Trainer. Together we discuss how removing sugar can enhance performance not only in the gym but in everyday life for all people whether they are recovering from stroke or not.

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Episode Highlights

3:29 Interferes with performance

12:00 Sugar Can cause inflammation

15:10 Can cause skin irritation

18:13 Sugar Is Addictive

28:49 Helps to reduce risk of other diseases

34:11 Can Increase cortisol & May play a role in higher blood pressure

35:12 May Increase fatigue

Transcript:

Bill

And what else? What's another reason why we should avoid sugar?

Stacey

It's addictive.

So I mean, I think you kind of mentioned this right at the start, but you know, getting rid of that sugar addiction. But how does that mechanism actually work. Because once somebody gets addicted to sugar, it's more addictive than cocaine, it becomes more of an issue and you need assistance with your mindset and with weaning yourself off of that. So what happens when we eat sugar, and even if it's just a small amount to start with, it triggers the reward center in the brain and it makes you want more sugar.

So then to get that same hit, you then need a little bit more sugar. And this becomes a perpetual cycle of needing more and more and more in order to feel the happy hi getting the serotonin and the dopamine release from the brain.

Intro

This is recovery after stroke with Bill Gasiamis helping you go from where you are to where you'd rather be.

Bill

Stacey and Matty from the chief life. Welcome to the podcast.

Stacey 2:15

Thank you Bill,

Bill 2:17

it's I'm looking forward to this episode, because I can bring to the guys listening. And watching. I can bring them some information about sugar, and why they should quit sugar, which is a little bit of a thing that I'm on at the moment. But before we get stuck into that conversation, can you guys tell me a little bit about yourselves individually? And then what the chief life is about?

Stacey 2:44

Yeah, absolutely. So, um, I'm Stacey Lee Turner, we are married. And I studied nutrition actually I qualified 10 years ago now down at Sydney Uni with a passion to help people who are suffering from all sorts of horrible diseases and, and nasty things, to find a way that food can be medicine, and fuel rather than a privilege that a lot of us see it as these days. I'm also a CrossFit trainer, a yoga teacher, personal trainer. So just very involved and interested in health, wellness, looking after yourself and just getting the most out of your life through diet and lifestyle changes.

Sugar Can Have A Negative Impact On Your Performance

Matt 3:29

Yeah, and so I mean, my my soft iconic came from a different perspective where I can perform inside. By being in CrossFit and being in training and different I was a personal trainer, I've been in personal training for the last 10 years and kind of came from the aspect of I was trying to make myself fitter and perform better but also in turn help others out. And along the route kind of found out that it's not about exercise, or it's not all about exercise, like a lot of it comes down to nutrition and how you feel yourself really makes a difference to how you respond as a performance.



And performance doesn't have to be in the gym, it can be how you perform in on the computer, or how you perform daily with your family, like how present, are you with people? And how do you respond to day to day interactions. And for me it kind of the deeper down the rabbit hole, I go into nutrition, the more and more I find out and

I mean, sugar is such a, it can be such a damaging thing to people that we don't understand. And there is a lot of studies coming out which is great. But it's like it is such an addictive thing as well. And that's where it does become tough.

Bill 4:29

Yeah

Stacey 4:29

And are those studies getting to the people that need to see them

Matt 4:32

Yeah, exactly.

Bill 4:34

Not enough because people that need to see them don't know that they need to see them.

Matt 4:38

Yeah,

Bill 4:39

if you don't know what you don't know how you're going to go and search for something and to make you better. So what I love about podcasts is that people that are listening to this are recovering from a stroke or they know somebody who's recovering from stroke. And they're curious about stroke recovery, they're not curious about sugar addiction.

But isn't it great? Now we can have this conversation about stroke recovery and talking about sugar addiction. I'm like Matty, I decided to get better and feel better. And all those types of things because I was recovering from a stroke. But I really didn't know what I needed to do or how to go about it. And the more I

looked into it, the more I tried things, and the better I felt by fluke, it started to work in my brains favor. And then it was like that was the lightbulb moment. Okay, so for the first time, I'm losing weight and feeling trim and feeling terrific. But actually, that wasn't my intention. My intention was to heal my brain. And it's an amazing thing that happened as a side effect. So, Stacey, tell me about the path to becoming somebody who's qualified as a nutritionist, what does that involve? that you do with those skills? How do you take those to other people?

Stacey 5:54

Yeah, that's a great question. Because it's actually a bit two pronged. When I first studied nutrition at university, I was looking to go into hospitals and work as a dietitian, with people who are, you know, sick and needing that that care. And I just became a bit I guess, jaded with the whole system, once I did my prac and my placement and saw that the food that people are being fed in hospitals isn't what it should be. And

Matt 6:21

even the case that some people weren't willing to change when they needed to,

Hospital is not always the correct place to implement changes

Stacey 6:24

yeah, yeah, that that mindset and being ready being in that stage of readiness to change. So I thought I wanted to make more of an impact. And I wasn't going to be able to do that in the hospital system. So I ended up actually deciding to go more down the private practice route. And I guess I've been consulting with people on a one on one basis, I've been running group challenges in order to educate many people at once. And we've now taken that into the chief life, which is our online platform, so that we can not only help the people that are in our surrounding location within the gyms that we see every day, but also taking it further afield to, you know, elsewhere in Australia, and even elsewhere in the world. We've been lucky enough to help people in other countries as well. And because I am a dietician, it means that I can assist people who have all sorts of diseases. And unfortunately, these days, there's, it's hard to find somebody who doesn't have something on that list of you know, what's going on with you health wise.

Bill 7:23

That's a massive statement, you just said that is so true. Everyone you come across is struggling with something. And it seems normal that's surely isn't normal?

Stacey 7:34

it's scary, isn't it? It's so scary. I mean, I think the thing that got me into this in the first place was that I've got somebody in my family who has type one diabetes, and I've always had a passion to want to help. It's my Dad, I've always had a passion to want to help him. And he's not really listened to the information I've wanted to tell him because of his baby girl. So it's then pushed me to want to find other ways of communicating with people, other ways of connecting with people so that you almost find what their pain point is what drives them, and then help to heal them from that perspective.

Bill 8:11

Yeah, so Matty, you know, when we met, we spoke about this topic, stroke, etc, was talked about what you do and how that all works in what Stacy said was interesting, when you go to hospital, you're not in that state to take on everything that you need to do from day dot to heal and recover. And you're not interested in quitting sugar and and your not interested in any of that what you're interested in is going home and getting out of the bloody hospital because it's depressing in there.

Matt 8:42

Yeah,

Bill 8:43

I had my hospital stays over three years. And I was in there regularly. And by year three, and brain surgery sort of stage. I was very aware of all the things that Stacey just mentioned the food and all that type of stuff. So I was getting people to bring food to me rather than eating what was being fed to the hospital. Right.

Stacey 9:07

You shouldn't have to, but how good is it that you took that initiative?

Bill 9:10

Yeah, no, I shouldn't have to. But how crap does it taste? Firstly, and then secondly, we spoke about, you know, how Matty spoke about performance. And

what I didn't realize is how food was interfering with my performance. Now, I'm not a physical kind of guy. I am a guy that just goes about does work and uses computers and made his brain to work and all that type of thing. And it was affecting my performance. But I noticed that most when I was being fed in hospital, and because they're highly carb, you know, diets, they were draining my energy, and my brain would stop working. And I will notice it immediately. Yeah, tell me about performance, and carbs. And then let's sort of include the sugars into that discussion. about the carbs. Well, how does it interfere with performance?

Stacey 10:03

Yeah, definitely, I think, like you said, some really good things. And that correlation, actually knowing that when you're not performing that it is due to the food that you're eating, and making that that that actual understanding, because I think what a lot of people don't understand is that your body will give you signs and symptoms when you're not, when you're not at a high functioning level. Like if you're not, if you're not able to think for long periods of time, if you not allo if you're not able to focus. If you're drowsy and tired all the time. If you're bloated, if you're feeling like a like really obesity and things like that are all signs that your body is giving you because it's like, hey, you're not fueling me correctly, I'm not at a state that I need to be at.

Matt 10:43

When it comes to. A lot of people really think that carbohydrates are the thing that make us keep moving like carbohydrates are the thing that you need to have to make sure that you've got brain power, that you've got that fuel to be able to actually move like, I've got to go for a run tomorrow, so I better have my carbohydrate hit. But there is a common misconception there, a lot of people don't understand that you're you're that fat is actually the higher is the better fuel source realistically across the three macronutrients.

So you put your protein, your carbohydrates in your fats, and the fats are the most efficient. Carbohydrates do work really good and they are awesome. However, you need to make sure that you're not eating in excess when it comes to the carbohydrates. And in particular, like someone like yourself Bill who doesn't actually train that much isn't going to need a high carb load, you're not using a Holly but your glycogen each day, to be able to type on the computer and do the work that you're doing.

So someone like yourself would probably be better off with a higher fat or just tailoring your carbohydrates to be more around less processed foods, because the processed foods have a lot of hidden junk in them. So it's not just coming down to sugars. But it comes down to the additives that we have within the food as well, that can highly affect our mood, and how we actually respond day to day, the different hormonal, I guess, hormonal responses and how your body actually acts.

How Does Sugar Cause Inflammation?

Bill 12:00

Stacey Tell me about inflammation. So the big thing that happens in the brain, when somebody experiences a stroke is the brain becomes inflamed. And it's just a side effect some chemicals go to the brain to actually help protect it. And because they are there for a longer period of time than necessary, because it's such a dramatic issue that causes inflammation. And what I learned early on was that I needed to reduce inflammation in my brain to try and help it heal. And I learned that some foods cause inflammation. And when you're already inflamed in the brain, it just makes matters worse. What's your take on that?

Stacey 12:40

Yeah, hundred percent. And I think it's so awesome that you figured this out early on, because it's something that still a lot of people don't make that connection about that that sugar is an inflammatory food. And when you think about carbohydrates, you know, depending on where you're sourcing your carbohydrates from, they can be broken down into sugars, whether they're complex sugars, whether they're simple sugars, it's still sugar, so the quantity really becomes important there.

And we often talk about what we call the fun five, it's kind of a jokey way of saying, like, stay away from these foods, they all the foods and drinks that tend to make you feel good for a short period of time. But they're also the ones that mess you up for a longer period of time and in large amounts. So sugar is definitely on that list. And I'll come back to that, because obviously the focus of the podcast, but we've also got gluten, dairy, caffeine and alcohol.

And so these things can cause inflammation in the body. And as you rightly said, it's, it's a swelling in the body. And on an acute level on a short term face swelling

anywhere in the body can be a good thing, because it's a healing process. Like if you cut your arm, then that's just acute face swelling that's healing, you know, the little white blood cells come in and help to heal that area up. But when you're consuming a diet that mainly consists of these five food and drinks, which we tend to, you know, it's the used to be what we experience mostly with the populations that we work with, you know, what's meat, what's vegetables, give me all the processed carbs and give me a beer at the end of the night or whatever. And that's a heap of sugar right there. And it causes this chronic inflammation in the body.

So this swelling and it, it's like the body's trying to heal itself, but it doesn't get that opportunity to and we've got those four defence systems within the body. One is the gut. So that's where most people feel that inflammation as bloating as constipation as diarrhoea, any kind of like gastrointestinal discomfort or gut discomfort, you've got your blood, which is kind of involved a little bit in strokee stuff. You've got your skin, and then you've also got your brain which is heavily involved in stoke stuff. So sugar is going to exacerbate and cause a lot of issues within these defence mechanisms if you're not reducing it and making making an effort to swap it out for more healthful healing foods.

Bill 15:00

So it sounds like we're going down the path of five or six reasons why we should avoid sugar one is because it's causing inflammation.

Stacey 15:09

Hmm.

How skin is impacted by the Fun 5

Bill 15:10

Talk about sugar and skin. What did you just say about skin?

Stacey 15:14

Yeah, so skin is one of our defence systems within the body. So as part of your immune system, and so it might not be sugar specifically. But you know, sometimes people have like a rash, psoriasis, eczema, and it might not specifically be sugar, it could be one of those other inflammatory

Matt 15:33

Usually highly related to dairy when it's skin. Like we find the dairy if you remove dairy from that person, they tend to get rid of a lot of their skin issues. But I mean, it does come across the all the fun five unfortunately, it's not just like you can say Hey, get rid of dairy and you'll get rid of your skin issues. It's any sort of inflammation is getting cause it's getting cause usually by those fun five,

Bill 15:52

you guys are just triggering so many things. So when I first experienced the brain injury, one of the first things that changed other than my brain my brother reckoned that I didn't have one then we had an MRI, she proved that I did. So Up yours Harry. My scalp became what's the word?

It became like they became a like a scaly and it started to flake off etc. So I by at that stage, I hadn't changed my diet. But I noticed this massive difference in my skin on the left side of my body which the injuries on the right side so the left sides got all the challenges. And my my scalp became became extremely inflamed, inflamed and itchy. And I couldn't do anything to to ease it other than puts a steroids steroids cream on it. Yeah, and then it went away but I didn't put it down to it going away because I cut certain things out of my diet Matty I didn't know

Stacey 17:01

and that's going back to that whole correlation thing I was saying before I like connecting it that your body does give you signs and symptoms and pretty much anything that's going on with within your body if your body is trying to extract something go trying to tell you something it will let you know through unfortunately swelling disease, like all these things are functions of Yeah, what's happening in the body.

So did you just have a lightbulb moment there Bill

Bill 17:22

another one

Stacey 17:23

did we just make you realize

Bill 17:24

You did especially when you say stuff like sugar and dairy like I I know a lot of

challenges that are caused by sugar, but I never put it down to my skin being one of those things that gets impacted by by that how I don't know it just feels like the skin is like like a tin can you like it's on the outside? it holds stuff in, it doesn't do

Stacey 17:45

anything that is a really crazy. Actually, we absorb more through the skin than we do through our digestive tract 10 times more.

Bill 17:53

Wow.

Stacey 17:54

So what ever goes on your skin goes into your blood straight up

So you think about all the chemicals that we have just in the world in general. But if there's any sort of body products that we're using, like chemical products, so for instance, just your bath wash, if you're using a bath wash that has potential, like falates or different chemicals that that are not great for you, your body absorbs them, which is not cool.

Bill 18:15

Not cool at all. We're going to have a lot of more podcasts about these topics with you guys.

Matt 18:21

Definitely.

Bill 18:21

So we've got two reasons why we should avoid sugar. Yes, the skin is impacted by that. And what else? What's another reason why we should avoid sugar?

The sugar addiction challenge



Stacey 18:31

It's addictive.

So I mean, I think you kind of mentioned this right at the start, but you know, getting rid of that sugar addiction. But how does that mechanism actually work. Because once somebody gets addicted to sugar, it's more addictive than cocaine, it becomes more of an issue and you need assistance with your mindset and with weaning yourself off of that. So what happens when we eat sugar, and even if it's just a small amount to start with, it triggers the reward center in the brain and it makes you want more sugar.

So then to get that same hit, you then need a little bit more sugar. And this becomes a perpetual cycle of needing more and more and more in order to feel the happy hi getting the serotonin and the dopamine release from the brain. And you literally become addicted to something without even realizing every time that we have that sugar, it sends a massive spike into the blood system of sugar. And the body does what it needs to do to help clear it and put it where it needs to go.

So we release a hormone called insulin, which is a storage hormone to take that sugar, that glucose and put it somewhere in the body for later use or stored as fat or use a little bit of energy of you doing exercise. Some of it gets used for the brain. But as Matty said before, like, you know, the more effective fuel source for the body's going to be dietary fats. From olives and nuts and seeds and oils,

Matt 19:53

avocados, coconuts,

Stacey 19:54

yeah, healthy fats like that.

But when we get that trigger into the body, then we're doing that constantly for

days, weeks, months, years, that builds up to us, you know, needing a lot of storage containers for the extra energy that's in the body

Bill 20:10

ahh i like that,

Stacey 20:11

causing more inflammation. But then, you know, creating this kind of roller coaster of Okay, we get this spike, we feel good, then insulin gets rid of the sugar, our energy level comes crashing back down. And our brain triggers us to think okay, well, I had this awesome energy high before what was it that gave me that energy high, give me some sugar. So not only is it triggering to feel good, with the happy hormones is also giving you some artificial short term energy that then disappears about 10 to 20 minutes later. So that's kind of a main reason was

Matt 20:44

Its a two edged sword really, it's like

Stacey 20:46

addiction

Matt 20:46

through addiction. But also you think about energy levels and how it actually makes you feel. And if we look into it at a deeper level, your brain function on high carbohydrate diets is not good. So if we can bring you back like more of a balanced diet, and what we're talking about when we balance is protein, carbohydrates and fats and making sure that carbohydrates aren't the devil, but there are definitely bad carbohydrates or less favorable carbohydrates and more favorable carbohydrates to use.

And so if you can get some more favorable carbohydrates, it's usually going to be like your plant source food. So things that are real. When it comes to fruit and vegetables, yep sweet potato is a real food. Whereas if you look at a loaf of bread, it's not necessarily real, like it's had to have steps taken. Or it's like a hierarchy of food steps had to be taken before it can be made into bread. And so yeah, like I said, a two edged sword, you're getting energy, but you're also getting your brain function and how how it actually, I guess how much you have control of your function?

Stacey 21:39

Yeah, so I guess that's another reason to avoid it is negatively impacting your brain function. And the food industry is kind of on to this. And so they're putting sugars into everything in order to get you addicted to it so that you buy more and eat more. So things that you wouldn't think even have sugar in like a vegetable stock.

Matt 22:00

Or a sauce like tomato sauce, or do you think about what else? Lot's of different things like,

Stacey 22:06

like bread and sugar.

They use sugar as a preservative

Bill 22:09

I found sugar in a can of, what are they? A can of what are the what are the really red Beetroot a can of Beetroot?

Stacey 22:25

Yeah. They use it as a preservative

Matt 22:28

Yeah,

Bill 22:28

Right is that what they use it as? I was gonna say? Because it's so sweet. Yeah. And sugar is already so sweet. I'm sorry, the, the fruits are so sweet why they need to put sugar in it. But I get that. So if they're if people are addicted, and they don't know about it, and then they go to you Matty to the gym, and you said on, you know, we're going to take you in and we're going to do some stuff in the gym and you're going to change your diet, what are they going to experience so we can pre empt it for people, what type of withdrawal symptoms are they going to experience?

Stacey 22:59

Depends on what level you're at. But when you do detox the body, once again,

your body has to remove like that's the whole point of detox is it's removing things and it will once again give you signs and symptoms and these signs and symptoms of just because it's releasing the toxins from the body. So you might get headaches to start with you might feel drowsy. To start with why you're changing energy levels over like something we like to do with people is a change them from being a carbohydrate burner or a sugar burner to being a fat burner.

Matt 23:26

So they start to use their own fat stores instead, rather than digging into the carbohydrates that we're eating and foods to use. And so when you're a carbohydrate burner, you tend to store a lot of extra fats, because you're releasing so much emotional. And that's what's nice was talking about before. But realistically, probably the biggest thing we do see is drowsiness and a little bit of headaches to start with when they're removing that sugar, we tend to find it's about 10 days, like if you can get past that seven to 10 day mark. And it's depending on where your diet is at already. And how much of a change you have to make. But seven to 10 days seems to be that that turning point where people just like the energy comes like it becomes alive, it's really like that just switch

Stacey 24:07

they jump out of bed all of a sudden

Bill 24:10

yeah, I remember doing that. And I really wasn't paying attention to how I was feeling because I was already feeling unwell because of what was going on in my head. And then I just noticed one day that I was a lot more switched on a lot more balanced, a lot less reactive. And I just experienced less downtime, even when you're recovering from stroke. And fatigue is a big issue. I was noticing that I had a lot less downtime in that, in that when my brain wasn't working.

And it's hard to describe to you. But I know the guys listening would understand what I'm saying. So the brain, when I get tired, it just goes off. Most people have pushed through things. And when I get tired, don't matter if I've got 10 things to do, they're not getting done. So I'm best in the morning, and I'm not good in the afternoon. So I suppose the best way to describe it is I started to notice that I could get my afternoons to go for a bit longer. And that's just happened.

And that just happened without me paying attention until I sort of stood back and

observed myself and thought, oh, okay, here is a massive difference. So I can relate to what you're saying.

If, in my experience, if you're going down the path of healing the brain, it shouldn't be about what you can't have, it should be about what you can have. So like what Matty said, about switching things over and taking it from being somebody being a carb, somebody who needs carbs to burn sugars, to somebody to swap them over to fats. And we'll talk about that a bit later. But I know the standard fats that are being talked about now are amazing. And there's a great book by Dr. David. Hy. No, I'm getting confused by you know, it's called them eat fat get thin.

Matt 26:14

Yeah, I know that one

Bill 26:16

Mark Hyman

Matt 26:16

Dr. Mercola

Bill 26:17

Mark Hyman



Matt 26:19

That's right. Yeah,

Bill 26:20

yeah and they talked about all those types of things. So I can really relate to what you're saying, I've read that book. anyone listening or watching should definitely get that book, I'll put the link in the show notes. So we've covered a few reasons

why we should quit sugar. Stacy, what else was another reason?

Stacey 26:35

I guess, it's just bad for you.

I was going to say long term health. So we're talking a lot about like maybe for your your group of people like, Hey, this is why you should change it once you've actually suffered from it. But there's also the chance to prevent it. So helping others around you to even prevent this from ever happening. Like one thing within a stroke is that it can be hereditary. So if you've got kids underneath you and and something you could do is maybe influence their diet now because there's a fair chance that they've inherited the gene to maybe potentially have a stroke.

Matt 27:12

But what we know is that you can swap your genes or I guess, turn your genes on and off by the foods and things that we eat. And sugar is not necessarily the cause of strokes. We know that but it definitely increases your chances of having a stroke. So if we can remove that from maybe not your Yes, definitely your diet, but potentially other people within your family, you're going to help to prevent potentially them going through what you've had to go through.

Bill 27:36

Yeah, I get asked a lot people ask me stroke. Something that happens to families is genetic. you know can you catch it, whatever. And what I tend to say to them, and then I be and I'm quite blunt when they asked me is that stupidity is hereditary. And why I say that is because I'm doing something that gets me unwell, and I experienced an issue you and say my grand dad did the same thing. And my dad did the same thing. And they've all had the same experience. Well, if I haven't paid attention to what's happened to them, and why it's happened to them, it's likely that and I do the same thing, it's likely that I'm going to go down that path as well.

So I like that what you're saying. Because I I try and tell these things to my kids now so that they can avoid ending up like me, you know, because they're 20. And you know, they're in their 20s or they're, they're young guys, so they have the opportunity to avoid a lifetime of drama.

I also like what you said about it preventing disease like Stacy, like, if you don't

eating sugar, it's preventing potentially cancer and other stuff as well. Is it not?

Stacey 28:49

Yeah, yeah, hundred percent, right. Prevention is the best treatment. So if you're working to eat in a way that's preventative of all diseases, because it is a similar protocol for keeping you healthy and well, for most people, I mean, there's specific things going on. And there's obviously other measures we need to take to make sure that certain nutrients are being hit by eating certain foods. But for the majority of people, eating real food, staying away from processed foods, which have those hidden sugars in is going to help to prevent diseases further down the track.

Bill 29:27

And preventing diseases. Believe me, guys, it's much better than dealing with diseases because dealing with diseases sometimes never ends. And I've been seven years post my first experiences stroke, and it just the recovery is ongoing. It doesn't ever stop. Yeah, no matter who I've met who's had a experience with stroke, whether it's 5, 7, 15, 20, 40 years, they are still dealing with it on a daily basis. And it's just not worth it really, is it?

Stacey 29:57

Yeah, definitely. I think something that we haven't actually mentioned, like we've talked a lot about food. But something that goes un touched is is the drink as well, like a lot of people don't put the two together. And so things like soft drinks, and the biggest one is actually like your diet soft drinks, your your one

Artificial sweeteners

Artificial Sweeteners are no better

Matt 30:15

Yeah, exactly the ones that don't have calories or sugar in them. But they're full of artificial sweeteners and full of additives. And these things, they respond very similar to how your your carbohydrates or sugars would respond within the body.

Stacey 30:30

Yeah, so carbohydrate digestion begins in the mouth. And so as soon as you taste something sweet in your mouth, whether it's sugar, or an artificial sweetener,

your body starts to release the hormones to help you then process that thing. So then whatever ends up going into your digestive system then needs to get broken down and digested. So even if it is a sugar free variety, it's still needs to go somewhere, once it goes into your stomach into your intestines, and through, your body stuff's going to get absorbed into your bloodstream into your cells and affect you in a negative way. So whether it be sugar, whether it be an artificial sweetener, because that sweet taste in the mouth has triggered that it's going to have a negative response.

Yeah, it also has a bad response to your gut lining or your gut flora. And a lot of people talk about like your microbiome, and how important is to have gut health at the moment. And these, these sweeteners and artificial flavors and additives can really affect your gut. And when we talk about the gut and the brain, there's a very strong connection for every one message that you get sent from your brain to your stomach nine messages going back up from the gut to the head. So it's quite quite crazy that what we do in the stomach can actually really influence how your brain responds.

Bill 31:52

Yeah, absolutely. I noticed that the biggest recovery for me occurred when my diet was the best that I had ever been. And I had to remove a lot of those inflammatory foods. And as soon as my gut started getting better, and the bloating in my gut went away, my brain started to come on line better. So what people may not realize is that in the gut, we have, you know, all the chemicals that create all the feel good hormones, like serotonin we have everything that we need to create the feelings of feeling good, and the communication signals in the brain, all start in the gut.

And they're used by the brain to create, to create the things that we need to feel good or to be good and to achieve the things that we need to achieve. And when we interfere with our tummy with our gut by putting stuff in it, that's going to slow it down, of course, it's going to struggle to communicate with the brain, and it's going to slow the brain down. We need to definitely keep telling people that this is not separate, just because you go and send neurologist to fix your brain just doesn't mean it's not connected to your shoulders, and therefore to the rest of your body.

Matt 33:08

Yeah

Stacey 33:08

It's sure it really does get compartmentalized, doesn't it?

Bill 33:11

Yeah, and it has to, and has to for medical reasons, you can understand how someone who's a specialist in the brain can't be a specialist everywhere else, so we get it, but we need to differentiate ourselves from doctors because they do it for a specific reason. But we can't do that we've got to treat our whole body as one body.

Stacey 33:33

I just like to add to that, because a lot of doctors don't actually go through a nutritional studies at all, but don't go through the education and they need a lot of the time there and they do about like a month or so. or thirty, I think it's equivalent to 30 hours worth of nutrition studies or something like that. So

their focus is that body part.

And so a big thing is that all the time, we find doctors will say things like don't change your diet right now, because your body's dealing with too much. Whereas it is not necessarily the best way to take it on. Because really, you're probably in that state because of some of the foods that you've been eating. So it's the best chance or the best time to actually make a change right now.

The right time to quit sugar is now.

Bill 34:11

Yeah, absolutely. It's never been better anytime to make the change is now, the one of the things I learned about sugar is that it increases cortisol, the stress hormone. And if you're somebody who's very stressed, and you continue to eat sugar, you continue to get stressed. And the impact that that has on the body, especially when you're recovering from a brain injury is even more dramatic, because the last thing you want to do is stress yourself out even further, it increases blood pressure.

So if somebody is struggling with high blood pressure, and that was a cause of

their stroke or lead to stroke, then definitely want to avoid it for that reason. And I don't know, but I just felt a better version of myself when my mood was in chicken, I wasn't stressed. I didn't experience those heavy mood swings that stroke survivors get because their body is all over the shop and their brains all over the shop. What have you heard about that?

Stacey 35:12

Well, that's been linked to you the fatigue that you mentioned as well, because if your adrenal glands are creating a lot of cortisol, the stress hormone that you mentioned from eating excess sugar, then the body actually does get tired from that just having that excess stress hormone in the body can really fatigue your your adrenal glands, which has a lot to do with your energy and your recovery.

So as you mentioned, it is super important to help to reduce cortisol levels. And one way that you can do that is by what you're putting into your mouth. And so if you're reducing the amount of sugar that you're putting into your body, then you're helping to reduce the amount of cortisol that's getting released into your blood system

Matt 35:55

and cortisol auto some pretty funky things the body like it can make us feel like even when you're so fatigued and so tired, it will make you not sleep. So even though it's the thing that you need most because you've got high levels of cortisol, essentially, like adrenal fatigue, it it just makes your body not not actually get to sleep, which is crazy.

Stacey 36:15

It makes you hungrier makes you crave more sugar,

Matt 36:18

it also blocks off receptors to make sure that you're actually storing more. So you start to store more adipose tissue or fat is some pretty bizarre things that happen.

Stacey 36:28

I always think of cortisol as part and parcel of that inflammation package. Yeah. So you know, it's heavily involved in that.

Bill 36:34

And it's inflammatory as well. Because if it's in into higher dose, it's

inflammatory, because we don't need it to be around constantly. That's one of the things I discovered with meditation and decreasing my stress levels with meditation and just going inward, I noticed that it also supported the brain to heal. And it just continued to add to the little gift box of beautiful things that I was offering my body to actually create that cycle of recovery, instead of the other cycle that I was running, which was, you know, to get unwell to become unwell.

Matt 37:13

Yeah, definitely you're talking our language now.

Stacey 37:17

Our big of a big thing that we do is not only focus on nutrition, like, Yeah, that's a good thing. But we actually focus on lifestyle more like, Hey, we're good to eat, that's fine. But if you're not, if you're not focusing on these other lifestyle factors, then nothing's really going to change. Like, if you're stressed out your brain not sleeping, you're

not drinking enough water,

Matt 37:36

not drinking enough water, you're not getting outside of the sunlight, and you're just eating, the food is not going to change you, you need to look into these other factors as well. And stress is a big thing. And it probably responds a lot as to why people do get run down. And then disease comes on because they're highly stressed. It's like you need to look into these different factors

Stacey 37:54

Even breathing correctly. Yeah.

The importance of breathing correctly

Bill 37:59

That's a beautiful topic. Breathing correctly, I've done an interview with a guy a little earlier, who spoke about the challenges of sleep apnea and what that causes, and how just breathing through the nose, closing the mouth at night, breathe through the nose really impact positively, your your sleep. And it decreases sleep apnea. And if you're sleeping better than cortisol levels decrease, then you need to eat carbs to have energy decrease, and then the cycle stops. So

it is a massive conversation. And one, you guys and I are definitely going to continue.

We've had a really good chat today about some of the reasons why people should give up sugar, especially when they're recovering from a stroke, but anytime in life to event to prevent stroke even. And I suppose what would be great to finish up with is you know, just give us some feedback from some people that you've helped out and what kind of differences they noticed in their lives, and that what they're able to achieve.

Stacey 39:04

Yeah, I've got an example in my mind right now, as you said that one lady was a hardcore chocoholic. And she, you know, thought she couldn't get through a day without having a piece of chocolate. And then it was causing her to then experience these feelings of guilt because she knew it was a bad foods that she was a bad person for wanting to eat this sweet thing that tasted so friggin good.

And in transitioning her to a more balanced way of eating, making sure she was getting good quality foods, protein, carbs, and fats every few hours, it helped to balance out her sugar levels. So she no longer experienced that crazy rollercoaster of energy of those happy chemicals. And she just became, like you said before, like more balanced, more stable. And then she was no longer emotionally craving the things that she thought she had to have, it was no longer an addiction. And now further down the track, she said still is she says to me, I'm so blown away by how like, she can now reflect back and go, the old me would have done this. And now I don't need that anymore. And I feel so good in being able to live my life and have energy and not feel the need to rely on like a sugary item in order to get through the day. Definitely.

Matt 40:23

Also got another guy says a guy who was actually he's a business coach. And he actually has multiple businesses himself. And he is the is a very type a personality. So it's like you tell him what to do and he'll do it. But the effects are massive, because he was in the stage where he was slumping, he wasn't able to perform for his people, like his job is to help other people perform. And he wasn't able to do that himself. So just by changing his nutrition and having a little bit more focus around his intent for his day and setting up his mindset correct each day, well, I will to completely spit him and he wakes up feeling 10 out of 10,

which then is a able, like it allows him to be able to be there for his people. And I mean, you can kind of look at that not as if you're a business coach, but for your family or for your friends or for whoever it is, is being able to be there for them not just having to have them support, you

Stacey 41:15

not, get through the day but thrive through the day,

Bill 41:18

it's interesting. Most of those people wouldn't have known that they were addicted because I reckon addiction starts when we're children like really, really young, doesn't it?

Stacey 41:28

Yeah, it's a lie. I mean, those cereals we had for breakfast. You know, I used to go to the I grew up in the UK and used to go to the sweet shop and get lollies, for only, you know, one two P

Matt 41:40

We had the five cents for Yeah, tor three lollie I think it was at the corner store across the road. So you'd find 10 cents on the ground

Stacey 41:46

It's integrate into your life. And so as we get into our 20s, into our 30s into 40s, some of the people we're working with are in their 50s or 60s. And they identify this addiction, and they heal this addiction. And then they feel better now in their 60s, and they did in their 20s. And that just that's so rewarding that you know, it's rewarding for us, but it's also so rewarding for them. And as many said their families to see them thriving

Matt 42:10

I might just add a quick, quick tidbit when you're looking at food or the nutrition panel, a lot of people will look at it and just kind of think it's it's like gibberish.

Stacey 42:17

It's all about the numbers,

Matt 42:18

yeah, exactly. The best thing to actually look at is your ingredients list, not the

nutrition panel. So it will tell you how much sugars per serve, which might be completely foolish. If there's 20 servers in it, you're having five of those serves, but it's only showing you what one server sugars worth

Stacey 42:33

of its fruit sugar or honey. Its not going to be as bad as cane sugar. So

Matt 42:37

the best thing to look for is actually your ingredients list and go along the list of things, whatever is first, second, third, they're the things of second and third highest amounts of food. So they put it from highest to lowest in quantity within that ingredients list. So for instance, if it's got coconut milk, sugar, water, salt, it means that sugar is the second highest thing gradient, which is not a great thing, you want to get something that's not going to have the sugar within within that label. Like ideally, if you can remove sugar from that label, then you've done incredibly well. And there is always an option or there seems to generally be an option,

Stacey 43:14

Just got to investigate a little,

Bill 43:15

yeah, and get help, right? Because people doing it on their own. For the first time or second time, even the third time I know me every time I decided I was going to get healthier, or better at, you know, the way I ate or Let's face it, I was motivated because I wanted to have an AB, ABS or something like that, you know, I never succeeded because I never really got advice. And I never got somebody to help to keep me accountable. I always went down the path of trying to do it on my own.

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And what I realized, you know, recently is that the best tennis players in the world who make millions and millions of dollars playing tennis still have coaches, even though they're the best in the world, and they've been playing for four decades, or they've made \$400 million out of it. Guys like us, you know, I think about how much I'll avoid getting somebody else to help because I think I can do it all by myself. And I've never made \$400 million doing anything.

So I'm no expert, and it really does help when you go and get somebody to help you. So I hope that the people listening and watching got a lot out of this. I know they actually did. And what we'll do is we'll have some more conversations about those other things that people should take out of their diet, like caffeine and, and what have you. For right now, is there something that we can leave for the listeners to get their hands on so that they can start this process this process to avoiding sugar at least,

Matt 44:46

you know, I was gonna say we've, we've got a lot of free content on our website, they want to follow up and do some more like we've got a heap of blog posts, we run a podcast ourselves, there's a lot of a lot of content there. We've also a scorecard on our website, which is a free thing. And it's literally you go in and you score yourself of where you're at and where you'd want to be. And it kind of just gives you I guess the step by step process or a bit of a guideline as to how you can start to take those steps because it's like, this is what my eat my my eating does right now. But this is where I want my eating level to be. And it kind of lays it out for you. So it's literally like a step by step process as to how to how to kind of progress. So I mean, that's a few different resources that people can definitely

jump on if they if they want to

Bill 45:30

Yep we will send the we will post the links to the show notes as well so that they can get their hands on that. Anything else to finish up guys?

Stacey 45:39

Just want to say thank you so much for having us on. it's been awesome chatting to you and hearing a little bit about your story. And I want to learn more about you and what's happening, what you've been through. I guess I'm I mean, I'm fascinated with your recovery and what you've done to take the steps to be be your best self and heal yourself.

Matt 45:56

And I think that's a big point that's come across definitely from this podcast bill is how much you've just said, like take that first step and how much it made a difference for you. And I think that's definitely something that we can leave the listeners with is it's about taking that first step. And it's usually the hardest one to take to be honest like and and really it doesn't come down to getting rid of everything. It's about making those swaps and steps. Yeah, exactly. It doesn't have to happen overnight.

Bill 46:22

Yeah, I did that. Exactly. I just started with sugar. Believe it or not a coach of mine she said that I could not work with her unless I stopped drinking fizzy drinks and cut out sugar. I thought she was being extremely rude.

Her name was Louise Gilbert. She's the first person I interviewed for this podcast. And she made it so difficult for me to work with it. I was annoyed. And Anyhow, I did I quit sugar. And a couple of weeks later, we started working together. And it was the most amazing thing. So then it did become easier after that to quit the next thing and the next thing and the next thing and then it wasn't so bad.

So that's why I wanted to focus today on just one topic. And this is it. I think it's one of the most important things for people who are recovering from a brain injury to quit and to decide to quit is were the hard part comes from once you've decided then it's easy. Guys, where can people get your podcast and go and where can they find out more about your the chief life.

Stacey 47:30

So the chief Live podcast is on iTunes. It's on Stitcher and it's on Spotify. You can also find it on our website, www.theChieflife.com and our podcast page and that's also a great place to look for more information about what we can offer services wise.

Bill 47:48

Excellent. Thank you so much.