



Episode 214: Using Mindset and Personalization to Make Lifelong Health Changes With Dane Johnson

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This episode is sponsored by Fabletics- In my normal life I wear workout clothes and yoga pants more than anything else because I'm often running to the gym and then to the grocery store to picking up kids from art class. This is why I'm super picky about the athletic wear I choose and I need it to be flattering, functional and long lasting because I wear it hard! That is why I am so excited to get to partner with Fabletics. It was co-founded by Kate Hudson, who is one of my favorite actresses, and they make really cute but also affordable activewear. Because I'm not going to name names, but some brands are just out of my price range and I won't spend that much on a pair of leggings. Check out their website at fabletics.com/wellnessmama for all of their awesome specials and to grab 2 pairs of leggings for only \$24 when you sign up as a VIP. I actually just got my shipment in yesterday. The delivery was super fast and I'm obsessed with power hold leggings and seamless bras, so check those out. The material is super stretchy, lightweight, durable and comfortable. I basically could live in this two piece all day- it's THAT comfortable. In fact, I'm wearing it right now. And I've already received a few compliments from friends... because I also wore these to a moms night out! If you've never tried Fabletics, I highly recommend starting at their collections page so you can see all the trending pieces. Fabletics also releases brand new styles, collections and prints every month! And as a pro tip- if you guys become a VIP with Fabletics, you'll get up to 50% off regular pricing and instant access to their latest collections. Plus the best part is that there's NO commitment to order on a regular basis- you can skip any time you want, or you can order for friends. Trust me, you do not want to miss out on their very special offer. Get 2 leggings for only \$24 (\$99 value) when you sign up for a VIP. All you have to do is go to fabletics.com/wellnessmama to take advantage of this deal now. That's fabletics.com/wellnessmama to get 2 leggings for only \$24. Of course, Terms and conditions do apply.

This episode is sponsored by Four Sigmatic, a company whose delicious drink mixes I use daily pretty much in some form. I've been fascinated lately by studying the benefits of medicinal mushrooms like Chaga for instance, which has more antioxidants gram for gram than anything else on the planet. So one serving has the same antioxidants as 30 pounds of carrots. Crazy. Cordyceps is another one that is great, which is great for the immune system, Reishi which helps promote restful sleep, and Lion's Mane which is thought to promote focus and brain health. Four Sigmatic takes these superfood mushrooms and blends them with coffee for a brain boosting jitter free morning drink. They also have a line of delicious elixirs that are caffeine free and great for any time of the day. I almost always end my day with a warm cup of their Reishi elixir, which makes a noticeable difference in my sleep quality and I often begin the morning with a cup of the coffee with Lion's Mane. My kids love their superfood hot cocoa and I love that it contains Reishi which helps promote calm and sleep! You can check out all four stigmatic products at foursigmatic.com/wellnessmama and save 15% with the code wellnessmama.

Katie: Hello and welcome to the Wellness Mama Podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com and I am here today with Dane Johnson, a new friend of mine who is a board-certified holistic nutritionist, the founder of Crohn's Colitis Lifestyle and co-founder of the nonprofit eFundYourHealth. Dane was inspired to build his website after experiencing a near-death experience with Crohn's and Colitis himself. At the age of 26, he dropped to 124 pounds, being told he would live on drugs for the rest of his life and most likely go through multiple surgeries or perhaps even lose his life. He eventually used holistic medicine to eliminate his symptoms, regained 55 pounds of lean muscle, eliminate drug use, and rebuild a thriving career as a speaker, author, health coach, and model for self-empowering lifestyle. I have met him in person and he certainly is the picture of health and I'm so excited to jump in. So Dane, welcome and thanks for being here.

Dane: Thank you for having me, Katie. And I must say that was a...well done with the biography. Definitely one of the best I've heard.

Katie: Oh, thank you. And I feel like I can't lead with an intro like that and not ask. So let's start from the beginning. Tell us your story. Because like I said, I've met you in person and I have a hard time imagining you at 124 pounds. So take us through that story.

Dane: I know. It's a strange thing that that happened. I first started getting symptoms of ulcerative colitis when I was 19 years old. I was a personal trainer in college though. I was always very into fitness and health and aspiring to get in the best shape I possibly could. What I later on learned is I was exercising for fitness but not health. They're actually different. So while I was pushing myself to lose water weight, lose body fat, increase muscle mass, all at the same time, I started getting some skin and bowel issues that were very strange for me. And I soon stopped some of the stuff I was doing, some of the supplements and caffeine and all these things and symptoms eliminated.

Then around 23 years old, I was working 80 hours a week. I had just finished college, under those fluorescent lights, cubicle job, you know. Every college kid's worst nightmare after finishing four years of fun in the sun. And I started getting extreme gut health issues, went to the doctors and was first diagnosed with ulcerative colitis. Then, later on, it was diagnosed as Crohn's Disease and then other professionals would say it's ulcerative colitis with gastritis and then others would say it was Crohn's Disease. So I started calling it Crohn's Colitis.

And the moral of the story of what happened...it was almost like a vicious cycle where as time went on it just seemed to get worse and worse and the amount of foods I could tolerate got less and less. So by the time I was 26, going on my 27th birthday, I was in the hospital for around 6 weeks straight. I had...previously I was at a fashion show. I was a model for a lot of years. And I was at this fashion show for UGG shoes in Santa Barbara, California and we were about to go on stage. And I knew the team very well. We'd worked together for a lot of years. I was working with a lot of my friends. It was a really good time. Right before we went on stage I was...I knew something was terribly wrong.

For the last two days, I had been having extreme issues of vomiting and cold night sweats and zero energy and my vision was starting to go in and out. So I went up to the art director and I said, you know, "I'm so sorry. I don't know what's wrong. I think something is seriously wrong. Like I feel like I can hardly stand. I think I need to go to the hospital." She excused me. I went directly to a local gas station, got a bunch of vitamin C emergencies for electrolytes, chugged those, drove myself to UCLA, had to switch to a few different hospitals because my health insurance was not accepted at UCLA or Cedar-Sinai, which I had no idea that was the case. They wanted me to pay for the whole experience out of pocket if I was to stay at those hospitals. So they put me in an ambulance and finally took me to a hospital that my insurance allowed me to go to, which was a subpar place with people who didn't really specialize in Crohn's or Colitis. So I think that was a big problem as well.

I stayed at that hospital for six weeks. My family flew in and kinda took turns taking care of me in there. And by the time I left I was...around 3 days after I left I was...122 was my lowest, 122 pounds. So I walked in around 175, 180 pounds and then I walked out at a 122. And that was a mixture of issues. I just couldn't absorb food. And I was...my body was having such chronic inflammatory responses and I was having chronic diarrhea that I was losing massive amount of electrolytes and water. And my body had really just started eating itself.

So it was a very traumatic experience especially for a young person, you know. I was...in my heart, I was on top of the world where I was able to live this career that I was able to travel the world and make money taking pictures. And for me, it was more about this experience that I was gifted in my 20s. You know, I was a businessman turned model. I really kinda just made it happen and I always wanted to travel the world and getting paid to travel the world was a dream come true. And on the flipside, I had this chronic disease that happened around the same time as my modeling career and it just kind of kept me in this cage where I had this, you know, amazing gift but an amazing weight on my shoulders of having Crohn's Disease. So for me, it felt like the most ironic thing in the world. How could I be so lucky but so unlucky at the same time?

And that was hard. That was very hard for me. I felt a deep amount of shame. I felt like no one was going through what I was going through. No one understood it. And I felt like I eventually was a disabled person, that I would never be normal. I mean, I spent years with these problems and going up the chain of pharmaceutical drugs first starting with lialda and Prednisone and 6MP and methotrexate, Remicade to Antivio and then looking down the barrel of a colectomy surgery to remove my colon and parts of my large intestine which the doctors told me would be...you know, I would then have a bag attached to my lower abdomen where I would have my bowel movements. And then if everything went smoothly over the next year I would then have a J-pouch to create a new colon.

And that to me...especially when you're, you know, 25 years old was just something I was not willing to absorb into my body. So through that great deal of pain, that pain was enough of a catalyst in my life for me to start looking at natural remedies and really take them seriously. And for everyone out there who is suffering chronically with an issue, I know that it feels almost impossible to do it yourself or to be your own answer. To me, that's exactly what held me back from doing it all those years. Being gluten free or dairy free or, you know, doing bone broths or fasts or...I even read diets and tried diets where I was just eating pureed carrots for days on end. Just didn't seem manageable and it didn't seem realistic.

And that was my truth for years. But through that pain, it created enough catalyst for me to put every ounce of energy I had into natural medicine and really start with trying to simplify what I was trying to do. And that's where my journey started is when I allowed myself to be my own answer when I started trusting in my own divinity that the human spirit, the human body's ability to heal and fight and be its own answer. That was the change.

Katie: Yeah. I think mindset's huge and I also think of how many of us that in different ways we have the same story of our own health struggles that led us to our research or being let down by conventional medicine and having to kind of find our own answers. And for me, that was Thyroid Disease. And in hindsight I would guess a lot like you it's easy to look back and be grateful because we wouldn't be where we are now, we wouldn't be able to help people like we do if we hadn't been through that struggle. I think one of the...maybe the...perhaps the best challenge in life is to eventually learn to see that silver lining while we're still in the cloud.

But that seems like it must've been a huge mental and physical transformation to have to go through all that and in the middle of that have to kind of research your way out of it. And I'm curious because it sounds like you actually started with some of the dietary changes and the things that would normally be recommended for Crohn's and Colitis early on and then eventually even had to adapt from that. So I'm curious, kind of two-part question. A would be why do you think we are seeing such a rise in problems like this? And then B, what were the things that eventually ended up working for you?

Dane: So why the rise? You know, I was talking to Tom O'Brian about this who's a leading functional practitioner. And he, you know, was reading off some stats to me and I remembered one that said, "By the year 2030 one in two people will have been diagnosed with a chronic disease." And that's huge, you know. We are living outside of our organic selves. I think that there's a number of reasons that they...we're having issues and there's a number of reasons why we're not always relating with each other. People who have thyroid issues and people who have Crohn's Disease are going online and researching and a lot of people are studious enough to really sit down and dig into what could be the solution and finding a bunch of the information that doesn't connect and correlate with itself.

So, you know what...you know, that goes with part of the answer with why the rise. I think the rise is one, we're destroying our microbiome. Two, we are under chronic amounts of stress. Three, we're not living in our natural earthy environment, constantly stuck around electronics, on...you know, in buildings with, you know, no fresh air, no good lighting, no earthing. Chronic stress, microbiome issues, and then constant, constant toxins from air pollution to the foods we're eating. You know, I mean, never in human history have people had to work so hard and pay so much for food that was not tampered with which is such an ironic thing to me, you know.

I mean, we have five ways of labeling real food. You know, there's real food and then there's kind of real food. And if we want real food we go, "Oh, it's USDA organic and it's local and it's, you know, and it's, you know, antibiotic free and pesticide free." And all these ways of labeling real food and it just goes to show the struggle and the revolution we are in, which I believe to be the most important revolution of our time period which is the right to health and the right to purity of Earth that is completely connected, mind, body, and soul. And, you know, we are not much different than plants or animals. We need a healthy environment to be healthy ourselves. We are completely connected and we are starting to see the pain from that.

And the good news is is the pain of all the sicknesses coming up is creating a catalyst for us to become aware of how truly we are connected to the Earth. And it just can't be taken for granted and the answers really lie in our history and in our future with technology kind of coming together where science keeps leading to show us that the natural ways of the Earth are really the best ways. And whether, you know, it's, you know, a certain type of diet, just being a vegan or being paleo or going to a state of Ketosis or using, you know, carbohydrates as a state of fuel, they all are better solutions or a way of empowering the body than what we're seeing especially in America today with the fast foods and the lack of real food and the high doses of refined sugars and gluten and basically everything we're eating.

And so to me the rise is an overwhelming amount of toxins, guys. There is toxins everywhere. We live in a detox world. Even us people who are starting functional medicine are constantly putting things into practice that are helping us detox constantly. Liver detoxes, fasting, sweating, breathing practices, all ways of allowing ourselves to release these toxicities. You know, everything we eat...I mean, it's almost impossible to not get some sort of glyphosate introduced into your body over and over again because GMOs are in everything. So we constantly have to detox and the microbiome is not the same. The...you know, a lot of children are being born with, you know...I think I read a statement that the average kid is being born with 250 different types of chemicals in its body, you know. Is that our fault? No, it's just everywhere. It's almost unmanageable. So the, you know, the same bacteria can't be grown. We're using antibiotics like they're Skittles. So we're destroying, you know, very unique and powerful clusters of bacteria that can't just be regrown back or be...or a probiotic be taken to fix everything. One does not equal the other.

So, I think those are the reasons for the rise and what I found that allowed me to start changing my reality is I started identifying things that empowered my body to be its most powerful divine self and eliminated things that were holding back my body from healing. So, you know, I think what's more important than, you know, all of the things that you're putting in your body, especially if this is new for you guys, is what you're not putting in your body, you know. You could go out and you could find the perfect detox program and you could start taking massive amounts of chlorella or spirulina and you could try to eat a perfect diet. But, you know, you have to ask yourself is it manageable long term, what is the stress like, and if you're gonna revert back to stopping in at the fast food or, you know, having foods that are causing sensitivities or allergic reactions, that's gonna negate any of those above and beyond efforts that you're taking. First and foremost, we just need to learn how to flow through life without, you know, putting our body in harm's way of chronic stress, air pollution, and chronically acidic foods.

So what's more important than what you're doing at first is what you're not doing in my opinion. So that's what I found and the way I came at that is I decided to start journaling my efforts every single day. So when I sat down and I finally had gone through enough pain I just got back from a trip in Ohio. Things went terribly. And I got back and I just was so upset that I said, "That's it. Healing my body is gonna be my number one priority. Not my Friday nights, not my social life, not my Instagram feed, not my...not even my job. Not even making money. I am gonna get paid in the currency of health and that is what I'm gonna wake up and devote myself to."

And the second big worry was, "Well, oh, my God. How long am I gonna have to live like this? Is this gonna be my new life living in this prison I've made for myself? Am I gonna become what I like to call a bubble boy?" And that to me was immensely intense and very fearful. So I said, "No, no, no. I am just gonna do this for 40 days." So for 40 days I'm gonna devote myself to being my own best doctor and tracking everything I do. So the first thing I did is I took a piece...a bunch of paper, put them together, safety pinned them and called it 40 days and 40 nights just like that Josh Hartnett movie where, you know...anyone knows what I'm talking about? Forty days and 40 nights. It was...but, you know, that was my inspiration.

But 40 days, 40 nights, I was just going to track everything. I was not gonna eat anything that I didn't make myself. I was gonna hold myself to a schedule of when I went to bed, when I woke up, the first thing I did. So for instance, the first thing I would do when I woke up is I'd open the blinds, let the sun in. I'd say a prayer. I would use an essential oil and I would devote out loud what my purpose of that day was. Then I would track my notes from the night before. Did I have to wake up in the middle of the night? How did I sleep? What time was I able to wake up? Did I have to run to the restroom or could I walk to the restroom or could I take two or three minutes and then go?

So I would then take those notes, go up, usually put on some Bob Marley or some kind of healthy inspirational music, open the windows, let some fresh air in and start cooking breakfast. Then I would, you know...usually while I was eating breakfast go outside and read for 20 minutes at least 10 pages a day of a book on healing, spiritual growth, mindset because if any of you guys have heard that you are the average of the 5 people who are...you surround yourself with. I decided to make one of the five people I surrounded myself with someone I had very little chance of meeting, an author, a one-percenter, someone I really admired. So I was surrounding myself with Tony Robbins every day and Jordan Ruben who was a Crohn's Colitis warrior. You know, I also found Doctor Susan Blum who was an autoimmune specialist or Tom O'Brian or other spiritual books, Deepak Chopra, Yogananda, people like this who I would just devote myself to reading every single day.

And then I started identifying things that empowered me. So what I'm saying here is I found things that allowed me to build my faith, build my belief, reduce acidic things both tangible and intangible and I sort of...understanding that those are all forms of energy, that what I eat to what I watch and the conversations I had and the flow of my kitchen, the cleanliness, organization, the flow of my bedroom, the flow of my bathroom, all had a major effect on my energy levels. And so just like the currency of money I started seeing energy as a currency. So I only wanted to spend my currency on things that paid me dividends.

And then I wanted to eliminate things that were liabilities. Stressful conversations, people who didn't get what I got, who just only tried to tempt me to do things that were out of my needs and...or just even what I was listening to, being overly stressful. I tried to, you know, listen to things that were calming or podcasts or read those books or...and then add meditation and constantly just give things that were dividends, being in the sun. I started gardening. And by, you know, a year later I had this massive garden. So I just found ways to empower myself. And a lot of you guys are probably saying, "You know, that sounds real great, Dane, but how do I do that when I've got two kids, a full-time job, and bills up to my ears?"

And I hear you. There's...it's not easy. We always have to find our personal unique experience. I don't think there's one blueprint. The best thing you...I think people can do is understand the root idea of healing which I believe to be the understanding of the flow of energy. And then just taking that understanding and trying to get wins where you can. You know, it's not about winning everything but as you start grabbing the little things in your life, you might be finding that you can start manipulating the bigger things that might take three months for you to be able to change. Hope that makes sense.

Katie: It absolutely does. And so many of the things you just said I think are so important but I love especially that you said, you know, maybe there's kind of the time and the place for all these things and whether we're vegan, or paleo, or Keto, whatever, it's all...these are all increasing our focus on what we're putting in our mouth. And I've said this for years now. Like what if we're all right to some degree? What if we all have a part of the puzzle right? And also there's so much personalization like you said. So we may find out...like I have found out what works for me with Thyroid Disease and you found what works for you with Crohn's and I know all of us are on this mission to educate, to help people find those things for them, their own puzzle pieces.

And I also think you're so right, unfortunately, that we have to be proactive about our health in today's world. Our grandparents had the luxury of...they could just eat food and it was organic food largely or certainly our great-grandparents could. And now we have so many negative inputs that we do have to be a little bit more proactive, like you said, whether it be through sweating in the sauna or just making sure that we're taking in positive food and positive...enough hydration and positive energy. But I would love if you could talk a little bit more about nature because you mentioned that a couple of times, getting back to our natural environment. And I know from my research and my perspective there's so many benefits there. Obviously, just light which controls our circadian rhythm and the beneficial bacteria in the soil that are a great source of probiotics, the vitamin D and just all of the studies from Japan and everywhere else that show that time in nature really correlates with stress reduction and longevity. But I'm curious how you make that a priority in your daily life and basically any suggestions you'd have around that.

Dane: That's a great question, Katie, and I always trust my inner consciousness. When I started reading all of the crazy information online about what science is finding, it made me feel overwhelmed after a while. It's not that I...it wasn't useful. It was how do I approach that now? What's my north star now? I can't just become the

ultimate bio-engineered doctor at this moment while I'm learning and reading and implementing these things through life. How am I gonna navigate myself? How am I gonna find that north star? So I've always used my consciousness and I ask everyone out there just to allow yourself to be calm and listen to your inner knowledge.

The most amazing thing about humans, one, is if I put two different types of apples in front of you...if you...if I gave you the ability to taste one, smell one, look at one and compare them, you guys would be able to know which one actually had more nutritional value, meaning which one was most likely to be GMO or maybe even rotten, which one was locally picked and organic and actually even be ready to be eaten. The other one wasn't ripe yet. There's a...we are born with innate genius, right? Another...here's another example. If every single one of you guys...you know, no matter your IQ, if I put a genius in front of you who really had a strong understanding on life, you might not be able to speak like them, but if you heard them you would become aware and know deeply of...if they spoke truth or not. The only way you know they're speaking the truth is because deep down you're conscious of truth. You recognize truth. You recognize genius, you recognize divine universal law. It's already there. It's just a matter of tweaking it and awaking it and becoming conscious.

When a baby is born it already knows to hold its breath underwater. Why? There's a consciousness to each and every one of us. We are more connected to God and to the planet than we give ourselves credit for. We don't always need science to tell us. It really is a lot of times there. So I say first and foremost is just calming the mind. That's why I think meditation is important, opening your third eye and just becoming...allowing yourself to be aware and using your gut instinct and that inner consciousness to know. And when I look over a mountain, especially if I'm practicing breath work and I ask myself deeply what is my truth, I usually get an inkling feeling on which way I should go. It doesn't mean that I'm not scared to, or I'm not in fear, or I'm not confused about certain things with, you know, diet or supplements to use or daily protocol. But I have a knowingness about it. So I like that to be my north star.

And every time I'm in nature, I'm at a park, I'm in the woods, I'm getting sun, I feel a release of tension. If I stare at this computer...I mean, I'm on the computer a lot of hours, guys. You know, building business and emails and working with clients, there's this tenseness in my body. There's almost this headache from looking at the screens. There's like this little loss of eyesight. I look in the mirror and there's bags under my eyes. Like what if, you know, my body's been like taking in all this negative energy? But, you know, when I go into nature, when I get the sun, when I take off my shoes and allow my feet to touch the Earth, I always feel a deep sense of release and energy flow. Chi, chi flow is the only way I know how to explain it. And I just...I know it's there and I know that belief is the most powerful energy of all. So if you guys are able to create belief it doesn't really matter what your perspective of truth is.

If you believe that your body can heal that belief changes your actual genetic makeup. It changes your hormone levels. It changes your nervous system. Isn't that the most ironic thing in the world that if you just...if you practice faith which leads to belief then you...then everything within you will start changing? I mean, that's godly power. That's creation of health, creation of self, you know. It is scientific fact that what you think and how you act, it will affect your nervous system putting you in a parasympathetic nervous system or fight or flight sympathetic state. It will change your hormones and that will change the inflammation, your digestion levels, and your optimization of nutrient absorption and your...and how you respond to negativity and the energy you give your boss and your ability to get a raise and the energy you're giving to your child and the energy you give to your husband or wife and the energy you allow yourself to feel and where you choose to live. I mean, that's the compound effort of life and experience. I mean, that is the real currency to be chasing.

Money follows that, you know.

You know, people spend all of their money trying to find those truths and higher experiences of energetic flow. So, you know, starting with mindset and walking in faith towards what you want out of your life. It's not what you think is realistic. The word realistic is the biggest disabling word in human history and same with finding a cure. There is no cure for anything. Life is temporary. Life is...you know, death is in remission, you know. We are all just living and constantly re-growing while we're here. So it's a matter of just choosing to have faith in something and that mindset will open up things beyond your wildest dreams, even if it doesn't come in the colors or ideas that we want it to.

I mean, man dreamed that we would wanna fly. How many of you have had a dream and said, "Man, I wish I could fly. I wish I could just take off and fly through the crowds." And then someone created an aircraft that allowed us to fly through the clouds. I mean, is that not the exact same thing, you know? I mean, the fact that we can get on this call. I'm talking to a big plastic thing right now called a computer and I'm touching all of you and it's not just with the sound of my voice that you're hearing instantaneously. It's...you're hearing my energy. My energy is coming through these waves and touching each and every one of you. Isn't that...you know, if you were being to inspired right now and it's changing your energy, it's changing your genetic makeup as we speak, know that that is the root divineness of your life. And if you allow yourself to be your own creator that is where you can start. And that's where I started. I allowed myself to have faith. I allowed myself to be my own best doctor. And I didn't listen to that little voice in my head that said I couldn't. And every day I had to practice building my faith, giving myself enough positive energy that I didn't fold under the pressure of worry and fear and a lack of belief.

And I think that there's something to be said beyond willpower. It's just choosing to put yourself in states that nourishes you. Like this podcast can be nourishing, Katie's podcast. Listen to other Katie...of Katie's podcasts. They can all be nourishing to your needs. You have to invest in things that allow you to keep walking this path of faith persistently.

Katie: That's so important. And I think that's what makes your approach so unique is that you very much...from what I've read at least of your work are mindset first and keeping that in focus and I think it is easy especially if you are the more academic type or intellectual to fall into the research and the details, which I know I'm guilty of because that's my default. But you're so right. We have to keep both of those and keep that mindset first and foremost. And you have a program that you call the S.H.I.E.L.D. Program. So can you kind of walk us through that a little bit more and explain what it is?

Dane: Yes. So, you know, after I got the results I did, I...doctors told me I was gonna be on drugs for the rest of my life, they were talking about surgeries. I checked myself out of a hospital eventually and I was working with my naturepathic professor while I was in school and I spent the better part of a year housebound, at first bedrest and then housebound. And I started creating small goals for myself and I started journaling every day and I...once I got the results I gained about 55 pounds, up to 60 pounds and I got myself off every drug, I avoided all surgeries, I was able to take back my career. I got rid of my symptoms and it was not easy.

And still, to this day I still have goals and, you know, symptoms I look to, you know, battle and continue to learn and I'm always learning. The learning won't stop. But when I decided that everything I've been through I really wanted to share. I think that when you achieve something special, which I knew I achieved something different because I just didn't see anything like this, I knew I had a gift to really give to the world. And I think

that that's one of the most special things you can have in life to, you know, create a career out of something unique where you can wake up every day and devote yourself to an idea that was your idea. I mean, that to me is the coolest thing. It's just...it's like playing, you know. Just using your imagination and creating.

And I decided when I wanted to help people that there was no way I could teach someone some one size fits all program and it would just end up in backlash from the community. So when I looked at the pillars...I call it the six pillars of health that allowed me to create a healing effect through daily compounded efforts. I realized that it wasn't one thing that allowed me to get the results. It was everything but everything combined together. So I've met a lot of people out there who've tried certain diets, who've tried certain supplements, tried a probiotic, tried the anti-inflammatory, tried a fast, you know, tried getting more sleep, tried adding in meditation and they're still stuck and they're not getting the results they want. But personalizing them to you and doing them all together on a consistent daily regiment is where you're gonna get that compounded interest to create a tidal wave of positive energy. And I called that S.H.I.E.L.D.

So S.H.I.E.L.D., just like it sounds, building your natural...so your defense against these problems in your life. And S.H.I.E.L.D. is a personalized healing program of the six pillars of health. It is an acronym that stands for Supplements, Herbs, Imagination, Exercise, Lifestyle, and Diet. So each one of those systems, you become empowered to personalize it to your life. We aim to help teach you all the different ways that you can utilize supplements, which ones have been most, you know, effective for a lot of people in our community, what have we experienced with them, why, which herbs, how can you change your mindset to start...stop seeing this as a sacrifice and start seeing it as an investment in who you would want to be anyways. That was the biggest catalyst in my imagination. I started investing in the person I wanted to be and I stopped sacrificing my Papa John's pizza and sacrificing my beer and sacrificing my candy. It was no longer serving me on who I wanted to be in this world and what experiences I wanted to have.

And exercise. I stopped exercising for fitness and I started exercising for health. And lifestyle. I started surrounding myself with things and creating an environment that empowered me and did not cause even more stress. Diet. I cherry-picked from different diets. I learned, I read the SCD diet by Elaine Gottschall I looked at the low fodmap diet and I tried Ketosis and I tried Doctor Klein's fruitarian diet for IBD and paleo and vegetarian or vegan. And I started getting experience with all these types of diets and then cherry-picking certain foods or meals that I felt worked for me. So I no longer needed to represent someone else's brand of diet but just took what I wanted. And a lot of people feel that that's cheating. Guys, it's not cheating. There is no...there's no white...there's no, you know, like Nike check that says the vegan, you know, way or like the paleo way. We're not at odds of proving who's right and who's wrong. If a certain thing from a certain diet works for you, implement it. It's your personal life. You can take from whoever whenever. You don't need to follow the whole nine yards.

So I started cherry-picking diet philosophy and I realized that there were certain...what I call the four keys to food philosophy that allowed it to work for my gut health. So I don't teach diet necessarily. I teach food philosophy. How does a vegan meal work? How is it best digested? How does a paleo meal work? How does someone who's running on fat versus carbs...you know, and so on.

Katie: I love that. It's...I think it's...if anybody takes just one thing from what you just said there's obviously so much there but the idea of...that you focus on the positive and that you started choosing the good, not avoiding the bad. It wasn't about not eating pizza. It was about being able to choose the good, high-quality foods that really nourish you. I think that alone, that mindset is so, so important.

This episode is sponsored by Fabletics- In my normal life I wear workout clothes and yoga pants more than anything else because I'm often running to the gym and then to the grocery store to picking up kids from art class. This is why I'm super picky about the athletic wear I choose and I need it to be flattering, functional and long lasting because I wear it hard! That is why I am so excited to get to partner with Fabletics. It was co-founded by Kate Hudson, who is one of my favorite actresses, and they make really cute but also affordable activewear. Because I'm not going to name names, but some brands are just out of my price range and I won't spend that much on a pair of leggings. Check out their website at fabletics.com/wellnessmama for all of their awesome specials and to grab 2 pairs of leggings for only \$24 when you sign up as a VIP. I actually just got my shipment in yesterday. The delivery was super fast and I'm obsessed with power hold leggings and seamless bras, so check those out. The material is super stretchy, lightweight, durable and comfortable. I basically could live in this two piece all day- it's THAT comfortable. In fact, I'm wearing it right now. And I've already received a few compliments from friends... because I also wore these to a moms night out! If you've never tried Fabletics, I highly recommend starting at their collections page so you can see all the trending pieces. Fabletics also releases brand new styles, collections and prints every month! And as a pro tip- if you guys become a VIP with Fabletics, you'll get up to 50% off regular pricing and instant access to their latest collections. Plus the best part is that there's NO commitment to order on a regular basis- you can skip any time you want, or you can order for friends. Trust me, you do not want to miss out on their very special offer. Get 2 leggings for only \$24 (\$99 value) when you sign up for a VIP. All you have to do is go to fabletics.com/wellnessmama to take advantage of this deal now. That's fabletics.com/wellnessmama to get 2 leggings for only \$24. Of course, Terms and conditions do apply.

This episode is sponsored by Four Sigmatic, a company whose delicious drink mixes I use daily pretty much in some form. I've been fascinated lately by studying the benefits of medicinal mushrooms like Chaga for instance, which has more antioxidants gram for gram than anything else on the planet. So one serving has the same antioxidants as 30 pounds of carrots. Crazy. Cordyceps is another one that is great, which is great for the immune system, Reishi which helps promote restful sleep, and Lion's Mane which is thought to promote focus and brain health. Four Sigmatic takes these superfood mushrooms and blends them with coffee for a brain boosting jitter free morning drink. They also have a line of delicious elixirs that are caffeine free and great for any time of the day. I almost always end my day with a warm cup of their Reishi elixir, which makes a noticeable difference in my sleep quality and I often begin the morning with a cup of the coffee with Lion's Mane. My kids love their superfood hot cocoa and I love that it contains Reishi which helps promote calm and sleep! You can check out all four stigmatic products at foursigmatic.com/wellnessmama and save 15% with the code wellnessmama.

Katie: And I'm curious if you have any advice for someone who probably is really resonating with this and I know I hear from a lot of readers and listeners who have digestive struggles and even I've heard from some who did have the surgery and who had to have part of their colon removed or who are on that line and they're trying to do the right things and they're trying to eat healthy. But for anyone who's struggling with the health problems, do you have any starting advice for those who are already maybe eating clean but they're just not getting results yet?

Dane: Yeah. That's a hard one and that is I'd say the biggest problem, one of the biggest hurdles is when

you're already eating healthy and you're not getting the results you want. And two things. One, healing starts in the mind. Your body will not change until your mind changes. Until you start nourishing your mind...it's not just willpower, guys. It's nourishment. Okay? Mental nourishment, surrounding yourself with things with...that'll give you peace. Why do you think we go on vacation? Mental nourishment. Every day should be little tidbits of mental nourishment. Beautiful music, get some sun if you can, calling...you know, having positive conversations. I mean, why do we call someone our best friend? Because they consistently without a doubt always give us amazing positive energy and inspire us. That's why we surround ourselves with them because we just build each other. So just create more best friends. Just don't ever give someone negative energy. It's a waste of both your times. You're just poisoning the pool.

So, you know, practice, you know, putting yourself in places to be nourished. Like getting a mental massage, right? Like making emotional love to yourself, allowing yourself to be loved and nourished every day. It's not just willpower. So that's one thing and I see that a lot with people who are eating perfect diets is they're stressed about stress. They're eating perfect but they're freaking out because they're doing it on a time crunch. Almost like they're running a triathlon waiting to see some end in sight, some light at the end of the tunnel. And they're not actually finding peace in this perfect way and they're isolating them self.

And so for one, guys, I see...you know, check your stress, check your life. Are you really finding contentment in your daily habits? Because this isn't just willpower. So that's one is a reset. And two is I find that a lot of times if you have systemic inflammatory responses that diet alone won't save you. Diet can be healing but a lot of times you need extra systems in place to really create a catalyst of change. Changing the body is the hardest thing. Maintaining the body is much easier. It is much easier for me to maintain my results than going back and trying to go from a 122 pounds to a 132 pounds to a 140, you know, and so forth. That change was extremely hard. I had to work much harder than just to maintain my results now.

So anyone who's going through that know that once you get there you'll...it will become easier. It was much easier to maintain. But changing sometimes takes a lot more than diet. So looking at systems of how can you change the microbiome, how can you change your stress response, how can you simplify, right? To master anything is to simplify. If you went to the best healer in the world, he should...he or she should be able to simplify your day with easy doable steps that even a six grader could implement. Okay? So mastering things is extremely hard but to teach people how to become self-empowered should be more of a simplified manner. So simplify your day. That's how you master it.

And lastly is just because something's healthy doesn't mean it's healthy for you. A lot of people are stuck on, "If I increase my greens, if I increase my micronutrients and my antioxidants, that should overwhelm the disease within me." Not true. What's more important than all the healthy food you're putting in is making sure the healthy food is not causing an inflammatory response. So understanding can you properly digest this food. If not, it's mostly likely causing inflammatory response. Are you having a food sensitivity? Is your immune system reacting to it? I've seen people have reactions to lettuce, onions, asparagus and never know that they did. Does it mean they can never have that stuff again? No, it just means that their immune system needs to be calmed down, the mucosal lining probably needs to be healed correctly. Leaky gut needs to be gotten rid of. The time...the body needs space.

The best way to imagine that is imagine that you were a runner and you said...and everyone just broadly said that running three miles is very healthy. It's good for your cholesterol, it's good for your heart rate, it's good for sweating and detoxing. It's a boost of serotonin, it helps increase mitochondria energy production. It's all

good. That shouldn't be a problem. But if you have a problem with your knee and you keep practicing running three miles, that three mile run for you specifically is extremely damaging and it's not good for you and it's inflammatory. Does it mean you'll never be able to run three miles again? Does it mean you'll never be able to have that perfect kale salad again or that vegan quinoa salad again or, you know, some other type of fruit or vegetable that you're not having a problem with? No. It...you will be able to have that meal or do that three-mile again but you have to properly heal first.

So don't see everything so black and white. Find your personal regiment. Just try to heal yourself. Don't try to understand the whole concept of human healing, you know? Leave that to the people who are writing the books and getting the PhDs...is just find your answer. Don't try to find the answer. And that starts with understanding that if you can't eat it, it doesn't mean you can't eat it now. If you're having a sensitivity to a certain food it doesn't mean that you can't eat it later. It just means that you need to work on allowing your body the space and giving it the energetic response and reducing the inflammatory things to allow for proper healing.

Katie: So much wisdom in that and I...it reminds me of...I've heard several stories like this and met several people who for instance received a terminal diagnosis of cancer. And they realized they only had a few months left to live and they got rid of everything that wasn't actually important to them in life and they focused on family and the experiences they truly wanted to have and sleep and just nourishing their body in that way so that they could live those last few months to the fullest and then they got better. Because I think you're right. That really illustrates that the mindset is so important and I think it is easy to get in that trap of being so worried about the details and doing everything perfectly and forgetting that stress is extremely toxic in and of itself.

And you also mentioned like relationships and community and surrounding people with...or surrounding yourselves with people who really uplift you and who keep your mental state positive and I think that also...if we can only take a few things from this podcast that that alone, if we would all give a little bit more time and insight to that community aspect, it would improve our lives dramatically. I'm curious if there was like a community and relationship aspect to your healing as well. Was that...did you have a support community or relationships that helped you along the way?

Dane: Yeah. You know, for a good amount of time I had a girlfriend who was close and really accepted what was going on. I mean, you know, guys, you know, when I was a young kid I got...you know, I became a model. I mean, you can imagine my ego was a little high, you know. I was trying to be in fitness magazines and I was trying to get paid and look cool in clothes. And she got in a relationship with that douchebag and ended up with a sickly, you know, a sickly 122-pound boyfriend. She didn't exactly sign up for that. But, you know, it showed me some grace and she was really there for me in a big way.

Family was really big, big for me in a big way. I had a roommate, my best friend for six years and, you know, he was really there for me and just gave me that space and, you know, really...as I started learning about diet and nutrition and getting into holistic medicine, I found that he was really excited about what I was doing too because he had signs of GERD and, you know, just some other health issues that he started getting benefits from what I was doing. So I started sharing what I was learning with my community and they embraced it.

So I absolutely had a community and, you know, I recently moved from New York City to Santa Monica, California because of the lifestyle and the community and the daily, just reality. So it's absolutely still in my

mind and I know it makes the biggest difference. It's not just willpower, guys. It's just making a rational choice to give yourself what you emotionally need. The spirit is so old and wise and it's not rational. It doesn't care it's 2018. It needs what it needs and it knows what it knows and you have to use your rational mind to put yourself in place to get those nourishments and not just try to be strong-willed about it and just try to use your willpower because that's gonna create a stressful response.

You have to just ask yourself what do you need. How can you be nourished? Having a community that understands you and thinks likeminded and empowers you is absolutely important. So communicating that, being in a home that speaks to you and gives you peace and allows you to create healing meals and allows you to have the most restful nights and gives you a place to create is very important. Living in a place that makes you excited. I think a big piece of advice for you guys is I lived in Santa Monica for years and I moved to New York because I was pursuing a career and I really wanted to start going after success. And it did pay off in a lot of ways but my lifestyle dramatically went down and I was constantly stressed and in these environments that weren't healthy. And I eventually came back and I tell people now that the only reason living in New York was right for me personally is because I got out of there. So I got the experience and I got out.

So if you guys are kind of wondering, you're not sure what to do, you know, I personally believe that you can create a career and you can go after those things anywhere if you can do it in a place that first and foremost has the blueprint of making you happy. That is gonna be I think one of the best strategic choices you can make for yourself because if you get yourself in a positive energetic state, your solution-oriented mindset is going to open up. Your ability to start bringing people to...to start being a magnet for like-minded people is going to dramatically increase. And you're gonna be able to create those solutions in the right environment. Don't try to be...don't try to create your life in a place where you don't actually wanna build your life. Be a place that you wanna root. That's the most important thing.

You need a basis of who you wanna be and where you wanna be to grow on. Don't build on a...don't build your perfect house on a sea of sand. It's just...you're gonna have to restart anyways. So find a place in this world that gives you some contentment and build from there. And when you start putting out those positive energy of solution-oriented positive thinking, surrounding yourself with being...you know, one of the top five people you're surrounding yourself with is someone from a book or a podcast that really inspires you, that might not...you know, you might not have the ability to make your best friend one on one, face to face, and giving yourself nourishment.

And the last thing I'd really like to say about that is I noticed...last year I had this epiphany that the human spirit in each one of us is almost the exact same and that's why we're able to speak to each other and realize what each other might need. And we can try to communicate what we're feeling a lack of or what we are feeling tons of joy in because we all have the same basic needs in our spirits. Our spirits are really blueprint of each other. We're all made from carbon from the stars. If you look at astronomy you realize that humans are just, you know, basic compounds from the universe and the stars and our spirits are really just, you know, copied and pasted within each other. We all have the same basic needs, unconditional love, higher experience, validation of community, validation of life purpose or, you know, or community need. And we're all here to really seek those same things and we're doing it in our own unique way. So once you realize that, your spirit has those basic needs, use your rational mind to start nourishing those. Don't always just use willpower. I think you're gonna get really, really far.

Katie: Absolutely. And I can't believe we're already almost at the end of our time but a question I love to ask

toward the end is if there's a book that has really had a profound impact on your life that you would recommend to others?

Dane: So the book for me that I wanted to say was the "Maker's Diet" by Jordan Reuben. And I don't say that book because it was filled with the most unbelievably huge amount of knowledge. It was a great book and it did teach me a lot but because I related with that man's story so much it acted as a humongous catalyst for me. Guys, what I recommend is find someone out there who has gone through something similar to you that you can really resonate with, that you can see yourself in, that they have enough of a similar path, that you...what they say resonates and they can be a catalyst for you.

Tony Robins or anyone out there. Tony Robins really inspired me as well...is...they will never be able to heal you. A doctor can't heal you. Only you can heal you. Only you can change you. The best thing, Katie, can be for you or I can be for you or any of these people could be for you is a catalyst in your life to build enough faith so that you can start making dramatic change. So find a book that can be a catalyst and you feel can really have an impact on you. Don't just read something just for the golden nuggets of philosophy or idea or diets. Those are all really good but I think the thing that's gonna have the most impact for you...for someone is something of relatability.

Katie: I think that's a perfect place to end. And Dane, thank you so much for your time. This is definitely an amazing episode and I know it's gonna help a lot of people. Where can people find you online if they wanna stay in touch?

Dane: Yeah. So anyone with Crohn's or Colitis...I consult people specifically with Crohn's or Colitis. That's crohnscolitislifestyle.com. You can follow me on Instagram, [danejohnson1](https://www.instagram.com/danejohnson1). And you could follow me on Facebook, [facebook.com/crohnscolitislifestyle](https://www.facebook.com/crohnscolitislifestyle). If you're looking for more information, I would join my email list. My first email has a complimentary eBook, "Six Tips To Healing Crohn's and Colitis" and then it comes with a...my 60-day healing journal which is the exact journal I kept for 185 days during my healing process. So you can start to see the daily things I asked myself and how I track that. So even if you don't have Crohn's or Colitis and you're looking to start creating a large impact in your life I would recommend using that. So that's complimentary on my email list as well.

Katie: Wonderful. And all those links will, of course, be in the show notes at wellnessmama.fm for any of you who are driving. Don't worry about writing them down. And Dane, thank you so much for your time and thanks to all of you for listening. And I hope to see you again next time on the Wellness Mama Podcast.

If you're enjoying these interviews, would you please take two minutes to leave a rating or review on iTunes for me? Doing this helps more people to find the podcast, which means even more moms and families could benefit from the information. I really appreciate your time, and thanks as always for listening.