

## Andrea's journey to weight loss success

MERYL: hello everyone. This is your Rebel Nutritionist. And today I am so excited to have one of our clients talk about her journey with us, because nothing is more powerful than listening to it from someone who has lived it.

And we often talk about the work that we do here and why it's so important and the way we do it, but there is nothing better than hearing it. Someone else who has experienced the journey. So without further ado, Andrea, I want to introduce you to our audience. Andrea has been with us about a year and a half, and I'm not even going to try and butcher the commentary.

Tell us a little bit about first, why you came to us and what you were looking for, and then we'll, we'll continue to go from there.

ANDREA: Okay, absolutely. Thanks for having me, Meryld. The start of my journey really had been many years in the making, kind of for a health journey of trying to find peace within my body and not, not finding it within Western medicine.

About a year and a half prior to coming into Brandwein. I was seeking doctors, seeking endocrinologists, seeking balance within my thyroid and my blood work within my body and my mind and my soul. And didn't find it. So came into the doors of Brandwein and was seeking the education from someone who knew more, someone who understood the holistic body, someone who understood a 40 something year old body understood, the challenges of the day to day and the busy-ness and incorporating health.

MERYL: Excellent. I love that.

## The problems with Western Medicine a lot of clients experience

So maybe we should start actually with a little bit of the frustration with where you are with Western medicine. Because I always talk about the fact that **we need to be our own best advocates**.

We need to listen to our bodies and our own intuition, despite what we hear from others whether it's friends, relatives, or anybody in the medical community. I mean that intuitive sense, which you are so in touch with. And, and we'll get to that mind body piece. Cause I think that is so important for people to hear because we preach that all the time, but

until we really live that and breathe that and manifest that it, it doesn't resonate, I think, and it doesn't lead to, to the whole encompassing piece. Because I know it was more like the band-aid that **they were treating the symptoms. It was the bandaid.** And I always talk about how I run quarterback for people. And we look at the whole piece. And even though I always say science isn't sexy. **Understanding your unique biochemistry is so important.**

So speak to a little bit of that. If you can.

ANDREA: So prior to coming in, I had gone through **roughly five years of trying to balance thyroid** going on Synthroid, going on on Armour Thyroid, taking natural, more natural approaches, taking more Western approaches, swinging out the experts advised and following direct guidance from them.

And I did. But I only got results up to a certain point and results that weren't particularly acceptable within my blood work. For me, it wasn't acceptable. So every day that I expected more of myself, I wasn't, I was at a brick wall and not getting more. There's a part of **not having knowledge or the power behind the knowledge of understanding of my individual body**, but also the indicators just understanding the biology of it, not being able to interpret blood results. Being able to move an action of what was particular for me, but also just general knowledge. What can get me over those hurdles. So having many major health hurdles throughout my life I was done with it and I was ready to move to the next level. and coming in the doors that the knowledge that you Meryl and Kirsten had to be able to **guide me towards what my individual body will absorb won't absorb and where I should be to day**, teaching me a snack from a meal were all indicators that helped me push through and ultimately lose another 30 pounds and ultimately, balance my bloodwork

## This is a process not a quick fix

MERYL: great. Thank you for that. So let's talk a little bit about that journey because the other part that I talk about with clients is that **this is a process** and intellectually and rationally. We can understand that. And we can process that emotionally. It's a whole other thing, right? **People come in, they want results. They want them quickly**, people don't understand. I think to the degree that **the more imbalanced your biochemistry is the longer it sometimes takes to see results.** And we've got to change behavior.

Very small behaviors, one at a time so that they become our habits. So can you speak to the things, because this was a process for you? Right? We really started somewhere.

Sometimes we took a step forward. Sometimes we took a step back. So can you speak to the process of how important it is for people to hear that and what that looks like.

ANDREA: Yeah, absolutely. So I think that the process is that **we can know something and not live something**. And so for sure,

MERYL: I love that. I love that

ANDREA: **for many years, I knew exactly what to do**, or I thought I knew exactly what to do. And **I moved some of it into action and some of it, I acknowledged I wasn't moving into action coupled with an excuse** or a reason that was very justifiable, whether it was being a single mom or caring for family members and taking care of the world around me and not myself, which we're all kind of guilty of. And so in turn, coming in really.

Just even coming into an appointment meant that I was taking that hour for myself and nobody else. And so it was little messages like that that I was sending to my body that was allowing me to gain the knowledge and then move some of that more into action. So , in my mind then said, **if I take this hour, I'm not going to waste the time afterwards**.

I have to move it into action. If I'm putting this money into it, if I'm investing in myself time and material, Let's do this. So it's just a different mindset overall, to walk with. And it's a commitment and it was day to day and it wasn't at one. As a matter of fact, I would say it was **probably a solid six months before I saw even a 10 pound loss and a move in my blood work**.

And so I do think the year and a half is the start of this journey with Brandwein and think that in the next year and a half I'll accomplish a similar level.

MERYL: Thank you for that. So, as I, it's hard for people to hear that when we live in a diet culture and when you live in a world of, I want the quick fix and I want the quick fix.

And I think I'm just going to have to say it until the day I die. The body does not work like that. The body, **it takes years for symptoms to manifest or for things for health conditions to develop**. And I always say **the body whispers until it roars**. And we don't always listen to those whispers or we don't know how to deal with those whispers and we minimize or dismiss them yet when it roars, it roars really loudly.

And then people come in and go, okay, well I'm feeling these things. And I'm like, but **it was years and years and years in the making; biochemistry, doesn't just turn on a dime**. So it doesn't turn in a negative way on a diamond. It certainly doesn't rebalance in a

positive way on it. And your journey speaks to that, but really, I will tell you the people that are most successful with us, I always say that the person who is sitting in the chair, the right person in the chair, understands that, and really owns that.

And you, I don't think there was really anyone who owned that and understood it and lived it more than you with your success over the time. I mean, yes, we've had, we have had lots of people with success. Talk about the mind piece and how important, because you came in and I remember on maybe one of our first sessions, I always say, I said you were so enlightened to begin with, right?

You got that mind body piece quicker. And even before you had walked in the door, I think that's the other piece, the mind part of this, the emotional part of this, that if you don't shift the mindset, like you said, it is a commitment. How do I shift that mindset from, I want the quick fix.

I want it to happen now, too. You know what? I've got to believe it and think it. And how does that, how does that play into this for you?

## Why mindset is so important

ANDREA: Coming in? I had already been in a rhythm of the day. That was getting up in the morning. And doing what I thought was sufficient exercise, which was cardio for my body, which I've learned is not the right exercise for my body at this age and this time.

And meditating when I got up in the morning, whether it be a prayer, a simple, thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Or a full meditation, whatever I was feeling for that day. And that would set my day off in a really good way. What I did realize quickly. Every other choice that I made that day, whether it was a business decision, whether it was a food decision, whether it was what my environment was going to look like that day all impacted that mind frame.

So being conscious of vitamins, being conscious of food, being conscious of everything else that surrounds the day allowed me to shift my mind frame to a more consistent place throughout the day. So the journey has led me to. You know, more minutes in the day being covered with mental health than when I started.

**I think it's essential for us to keep our mind and our reactions and our environment and the choices that we make top of your heart every day, which will help us drive our mind.**

MERYL: Right. And I think, again, really such a poignant statement. We think that this has to be difficult and it's not about being difficult, like you said, **it's about being consistent and recognizing the small things that we can do.**

I think that that is key. Talk a little bit about, because what people don't often realize in the work that we do and why the success has been so great for the clients that I've worked with. It is because it really has **evolved into this all-encompassing approach.** Meaning we look at the medical nutritional stuff.

We look at the imbalances, we look at what's going on with the biochemistry, but then there's that piece of **accountability and support.** And you've worked with Kirsten. And so talk about how that also helped shift this for you.

ANDREA: I think again, the knowledge and it's simple knowledge. **I don't think there was any given session that I didn't leave, like mind blown with new knowledge.**

And coming in, I had understood a good amount. . Processed food and you know, I'm not a McDonald's eater and I had some kind of basics down, right. My cheat meal wasn't such a bad cheat meal. But **it was a shift every time in simple knowledge.** And sometimes it took me a week to realize what, what even clicked during that session.

But again, **it was a mindfulness of coming in and saying, this time is for me, that was step one.** Two was, **I was engaging with someone who I would welcome in my environment if I wasn't coming in for a session.** And three would really be that that **pondering was about me. It wasn't about somebody else.** It wasn't about, again, a business decision or somebody else's life decision.

It was about pondering something about what was going to make me better and then **allow me to move through the world in a stronger way.** And so I think that it. **Like the food journey, the mind journey comes way after the session.** So you leave and then there's that moment in the day where you're like, oh yeah, Kristen told me that or, oh, that relates to this is what that is.

Or that's not a meal, that's snack, whatever it is, that's coming to your head. And again, super simple knowledge, whether it's that. The reasoning that I gave myself coming in it all mixes in your body at the end of the day. So if you're eating a protein here and a fat there it all mixes in your body and not understanding that together, it works together again, related to the spiritual, emotional journey of working together with those environments personally and professionally, and that in turn grew me in those areas.

MERYL: So, one thing that you said about self care and taking the time about investing in yourself, oftentimes I think people that come in are afraid, or like you said, you just didn't want it.

## The difference between self-care and being selfish

Take the time for yourself. And you realize if you were investing in this, you had to take the time. So can you maybe identify a little bit **between the difference and the importance of self care versus being selfish**? I think especially women that I see men have it too, but I think more women because we're such nurturers.

And so giving of ourselves to others that we think if we take the time. For ourselves, it's considered selfishness as opposed to self care. So speak to that as well.

ANDREA: Yeah, I think there's a couple of components of that. **I think it's again, a time and material component**, right. I'm taking money out of my households to invest largely in myself.

I think that was a commitment for me. And being a sole provider for my home, that was a big commitment for me. I think the second part of it was taking the time, right. Walking out the door and saying, I'm not putting this into something that's going to quote unquote, grow. It's a conscious decision.

Again, it snowballs and that what ends up feeding back is tremendous to yourself in the world around us. But I think really the decision came to the fact that once you make the decision that it's not selfish, it falls into self care and then you just move into action. So I think selfish is a thought frame. It's an excuse. It's a mind it's, again, it's a mind frame. It's something that we're choosing. And **self-care is an action and love is an action**. You just you're, you're moving into that to know that you're ready for it. So I think that **when we say selfish, we're all just admitting. We're not ready for it. When we say self care, we're all just saying let's go**.

MERYL: I love that. I love it. I love it. I think I might actually take that and quote that, but that somewhere. So thank you for that. We'll have to give credit where credit is due. And then we were just talking about that last piece that I also want you to articulate that you just said so beautifully.

So give us the thought that in terms of what you want to say about this for yourself.

ANDREA I think for myself, it's just, **it's a work in progress**. Acknowledging that there's not a destination, it's just, it's literally saying I want to be better. You know, yesterday's don't matter. Because it brought me to today and then **I want to be better tomorrow than I am today**.

And the only way to do that is to invest in myself the same way I would a portfolio you know, , financial portfolio, or I would put a individual development plan together for work for myself or somebody else. It's the same thing. It's a, **it's a conscious investment in who I am as a person so I can serve myself**.

MERYL: Right. I love that. Thank you. And, and again, you had just mentioned something about that mental piece, right? I always say what goes on in our mind, **the thoughts that we think manifest in our bodies**. And I think you certainly felt bad because you're so in touch with yourself.

I talk a lot about the genetics that we do, the genomics, the nutritional genomics and because you did all that. You've done all the testing.

Can you speak to the genomics in a way that has resonated with you? Because I think people, it is very intangible for people. They're like, wait a minute, you're going to tell me something. I don't want to. When I tell them, well, no, it's really about how do we put you on the right trajectory? So like you said, I can be better than I was yesterday and you know, better moving forward.

So speak to that for a second. If you don't mind.

## How genomics helped Andrea discover what her body needed

ANDREA: I'll actually give you an individual example because I think that saying a general statement, like I said, previously being better tomorrow, is very general and almost unrelatable. But to be relatable, what I would say is I learned tons of things in that testing.

And again, it was a decision to say I'm going to put finances toward this, and I'm going to learn myself at a better level. In my head at the moment, I had to say, okay, this is going to provide knowledge for my niece and my sister and everybody else around me and then realized that what I was looking to gain was, was for me.

But I think to give a very specific example again, to go back to exercise. One of the things that I had learned is that **I might not burn as many calories in exercise as somebody else's body does**. So my adjustment in my plan of action for a day was not to go off net calories or net. I know it's not about a caloric intake, but there's a guidance and awareness around that.

But to go off of the gross amount, and I think where I saw the weight loss difference was specifically learning in that testing. That's how my body functions and that I can sit in that. And **I can not accept it, or I could accept it and say, let me make this adjustment**. And in turn that allowed me to take 30 pounds off in a year and a half.

Right.

MERYL: And it was a year and a half, right. It wasn't in two months and three months in four months. And I think people need to hear that. And, the fact that, yes, **our idea of calories in calories out exercise the harder I go, the more I do, the more I will burn and see results**. And then people come back at me and go, wait, this is not working.

And this is why the genetics, exactly, that example speaks to that. I talk about that all the time. You know, **I was exercising very early on in my life. The harder I work, the more I exercise the worse I did, the worse I felt, the worse I looked**. Yeah, I was doing the cardio stuff. Right. Because in the eighties it was all eighties and nineties.

It was all cardio. Right. Nobody, especially women didn't lift. And I have to say, the more I lift now, the smaller I get. Right. And it's not something you wanted to hear. Right? You looked at this and I remember you're like, oh my God, this is what I have to do.

And **it doesn't resonate because it goes so far against what we are 'told'**. Right, because you were told to exercise a certain way. And I remember you're like, wait a minute. Really? I don't have to work that hard and I have to switch this up.

ANDREA: And then going back to the example of your team that are in, everybody who is sharing knowledge, the first thing Kirsten told me was 'I never do cardio'.

Yeah, this is what I do. And you know, looking at her and, and appearing to be a product of health and being engaging certainly that testimonial is meaningful. So you know, it all just comes together in very discreet and indiscreet ways. I think one thing I would add to it is that I came into the Brandwein Institute already losing 65 pounds.

So it wasn't initial. Weight loss. I think anybody can get, could really listen to this and say, I can get 30 pounds off. And you know, it's easy to have water weight loss, easy to make some modest adjustments when you're grossly overweight. But I think that being that it was already 65 pounds into my weight loss journey and then losing an additional 30 pounds.

It was meaningful to me to know that again, to reiterate what you said, that the longer you live, the smaller you can get is, is a true statement.

MERYL: Yeah. Good. Well, thank you.

As always our conversations go from one thing to the next and I love that. I love your insight. And I just love the work that you've put into this for you, because we knew, I knew Kirsten knew that you could get there.

You know, it was just tweaking and changing. And you having the faith we were going through your lab results the other day, and I was explaining to you now what we need to change. And I love the comment that you made. You said. Well, it's a good thing. I trust you guys. Cause I have no idea what you're talking about.

ANDREA: It is definitely like everything else in life. That's meaningful. **It's a foundation of trust that comes first.** Right. And I do believe the team at Brandwein to be very trustworthy.

MERYL Well, thank you. And look I always say I've grown this business literally organically because of the integrity with which I work. Look, it is really easy in this industry, to what I would call sell out, right. To, to try and say to somebody, oh yeah, well oh, try this pill, try this diet, try this. And they'll see success, but they'll see short-term success. And then ultimately they're going to gain the weight back. So the work that we do is really, really hard because we know the attrition rate.

I don't know whoever is listened to. And if you haven't listened to Howie Kra's podcast, you should because it talks about this. But the attrition rate in the diet world is 90 percent. And we see that, right? We see people come in and aren't willing to make the changes and aren't willing to make the mindset changes.

And the, the emotional piece of this, if they're not really owning that they aren't successful. And , my coaches will come to me all the time. Like, oh gosh this one fell off or that one fell off and I'm like , it's not you it's them. And they're just not ready to own this.

**And you have to be in the place where you are ready.** And yeah, you certainly came in more than ready. But you know, thank you for trusting us because that is part of it that you do need to trust some of the process. With that being said, know that, Your intuition serves you.

And if something doesn't sound right, challenge it, right. If something doesn't feel right. Challenge it. And, and I'm always a big proponent of that because that's how you move forward. Like I said, I always love our conversations. Love your insight, love your introspection more than anything else.

Cause you do that so beautifully and articulate it and articulate it so beautifully. And just really look forward to continuing this journey with you.

ANDREA: Likewise, thank you so much for everything you guys have done

MERYL: our pleasure, our pleasure, and, Make it a beautiful weekend and we will, this won't be the last conversation we have with you.