

MERYL: Hello everybody. Welcome back to the Rebel Nutritionist podcast.

I am here today. I'm really excited about this podcast. I know I say that at the beginning of all of them, because I love doing this stuff. But really thrilled to have Erik Maka on, who was a former co-owner of The Art of Shaving, developed and created and now has launched a brand called Ingredients Co-Owner of that.

And it really is all about purity, safety, and transparency. And we're gonna talk more about what that even means. So welcome, Erik. Thank you.

ERIK: Thanks for having me. Thanks for being here. So let's talk about your journey where obviously the art of shaving so many people have heard of. I think most people have heard of it, right. Talk about what. How you transitioned from that to this, what ingredients is all about and, and yeah.

ERIK: Yeah. I mean, The Art of Shaving was, was very successful. Fortunately. We my wife and I started from a kitchen in New York City Oh wow. In 1996. Okay. And really took off with the metrosexual movement of the early two thousands.

We found ourselves at the forefront of the emerging men's grooming world. And since we were obsessed with natural health, when we started creating that brand, my wife, who's the formulator started using botanical ingredients and pure essential oils to make shaving products for, for dudes . And that was really early on that, yeah, that's before Clean ever existed.

We didn't even know what to call it back then. And we sold the company in 2009. And immediately after leaving that company, we trademarked the main ingredients because everything we do in our, in our products is focused on what's inside the bottle. **And we really wanted to bring ingredients to the forefront of the conversation with consumers.**

That's what you're consuming at the end of the day. So you sh you shouldn't be worried about packaging and brands and marketing claims as much as you should about what's really inside the bottle. And **you'll be surprised to know that the personal care industry spends less than 10% of their cost on what's inside the bottle.**

Which means it's about one, 100th of what you pay for is inside the bottle at the end.

When you buy it in retail for \$10 probably 10 cents went into making the product. That is my 100. \$10, 10 cents. Yes. So that's mind blowing. It's mind blowing.

MERYL: So we're paying for the packaging and everything, and the marketing and everything else.

ERIK: Paying primarily for marketing. Advertising, marketing. Advertising, marketing

MERYL: Okay, we're gonna come back to that. I wanna back up a second. So in 1996 it would be the equivalent of me talking about GMOs in 96. So when I was talking about it and people were like, well, what gm, what now everybody knows what GMOs are.

So what was the impetus? Because you had said something like, well, our shaving brand the art of shaving was, was clean and it was healthy and, but nobody really paid attention to that. What was the impetus? You said your wife was the one who developed the botanicals of keeping it clean. Like start back in 96. You know, what was, nobody cared, right? Nobody cared. So what was your passion for it then?

ERIK: So both my wife and I started a journey of natural wellness early in, in our adult life. . And when we met, it was really something that brought us together. You know, I think she told me on our first day that she was vegetarian, and I said, well, I'm vegan.

You know? Right. Match made in heaven, of some sort. Then she started studying Eastern medicine. Aroma therapy before we start she was 20 years old. Wow. We both had digestive issues. She had some issues with acne, which she says was chronic, but I

couldn't really see it. you know, little story. So it wasn't adult acne, but it wasn't as bad as she makes it sound. And then we, we were very sensitive to foods since My early teens , I always had indigestions and migraines and I didn't know what nobody could help me with it.

Nobody knew what it was. And I discovered through natural foods and remedies that those ailments went away. So it became a part of our life. And when we set out to develop our products, we didn't even think twice. For us, it was kind of odd, the natural right. We're gonna go **we're not gonna use natural in our personal lives and sell chemicals to our customers.** that's the beauty of being an entrepreneur, right? You, you bring your personal lifestyle your values to what you sell. And I think that's been a big impact on our success both professionally and, and personally, is that we've adopted this this lifestyle that we're very proud about and we continue to learn every day. You know, it's a journey. That's what we call it. Journeys. Never ends, never ends, never ends, you

So we also found out that our consumers couldn't care less that it was natural , right? So we made a decision to really keep it in the backstory of the brand. Y if you bought our products, you would read it on the back of a bottle, you can read it on our catalog, but it wasn't how we right messaged the company.

It was all about getting the best shape of your life. It was an elevated, luxurious routine for men. And natural ingredients were kind of the backstory. As you got to know us a little bit more, you started understanding that we're using very high quality botanicals in our product. Now, fast forward after we sold the company and we started seeing this clean movement starting to really expand and consciousness first with foods and obviously beauty products came right behind that. We still weren't satisfied. **Most of the clean products we wouldn't use on our own skin because they're first of all made with a lot of water. All personal care products are diluted greatly in water because the base**

ingredients are all powder forms. So 80% of what you're buying is usually water, sometimes 90% when you're talking about shampoo and conditioners.

So . And then there's chemicals. There's always some kind of chemical. You have to preserve these products. For three years at the art of shaming, we preserve, that was the only chemical we used was a preserve preservative system, because back then the technology hadn't cut, caught up to our philosophy.

But now it has with probiotics, You talked about yogurt. **We use lactobacillus, which is the same thing we use in yogurts.** Yeah. And it's a, it's a, it's a probiotic that preserves the products. Right. Instead of putting in antibiotics, which is what preservatives are in foods or in personal care products, we use probiotics to preserve our products.

And they use, it's a dual function. **Not only does it, it's used to preserve the product to be on the shelf for years. Yes, it supports, but it also supports your microbiome.** Yeah. When you apply it to your skin in. **The chemical preservatives actually killed the microbiome.** Yep. Which we, a lot of brands claim anti-aging, but you're disrupting the exactly good bacteria on the skin.

MERYL: Right. You're causing more oxidative stress and inflammation, low grade, and then you are exactly solving it,

ERIK: which makes you need more products, .

MERYL: I wonder about that. Right. Talk about the marketing. So fascinating. I love it. I love it. When we talk about, I'm trying to figure out which question I wanna ask first.

Right? So, so water is one of the ingredients. Obviously water is not an unhealthy product. Right. But most of the products after that are petroleum based.

ERIK: Hold on. Because water is not unhealthy. Oh. But why are you going to spend \$80 for water? Right? It comes out of your f Yeah. Our, our, **our message on that is, , why are consumers paying a premium for water?**

Right? I mean, you know what I mean? Yeah, absolutely. It's like an add-on Yes. That you're paying.

MERYL: Right? So we don't need water in the ingredients, so we're gonna talk about,

ERIK: we don't believe you need water. Right? But water costs 10 cents a liter. And when you walk into a, a cosmetic factory, the first thing you see is a huge installation of water distillation.

Ah. Because that's what they use. That's the number one ingredient they use. Right? Instead of water, **what we do is we use hydrosol, which is a plant water that is an upcycle ingredients. It is basically when, when essential oils are made through distillation, the vapor. Is captured and the vapor contains whatever essential oil you have.**

Oh, so **rosewater is the byproduct of rose essential oil.** Oh, amazing. And we capture we use that as a base instead of water. So our products are a hundred percent active ingredients. Now rosewater has great properties. It's not as concentrated or as expensive as essential oil rose, which in our, just to give you an idea, the rose essential oil that we use in this product costs \$12,000 a liter.

Oh. Now we use is so concentrated these thousand petals to do it. So we are not we are not selling this for \$50,000 ,

MERYL: cost prohibitive, buy this face serum for \$15,000 .

ERIK: But the hydrosol, the byproduct, instead of 10 cents a liter for, for water this could cost us \$15 a liter. and they have properties. Yes. The same properties you'll find in the roses, essentially you'll find in the hydrosol, but in much more diluted way. Yes. So most of the industry is dominated by huge conglomerate companies that are publicly traded, and it is not convenient to use natural ingredients right there.

You know, there's no two apples that are the same on a tree, for example, right? So, **inconsistency, price, cost all these things and chemists are not trained to use hydrosols.** Chemists are trained to use synthetic chemicals, right? So the whole industry is based on these basic formulation processes that you'll find through, and that's really the, the blind spot.

Also, not only are chemicals toxic. But **whether you're paying \$5 for a moisturizer or \$300 for a moisturizer, the ingredients are identical** because there's no different grades. It's not like the \$50 olive oil is better than the \$5 olive oil, right? **When it comes to petroleum based ingredients, there's one grade comes out of a lab.**

MERYL: So how do people get away with charging \$300?

ERIK: Marketing. Okay. Perception, right? Perception. Right. It's perception is reality, right? And **when you think that that serum is precious and it's gonna make your skin look great, and everybody's talking about it, and it's the biggest thing in the world, you're gonna spend the money,**

MERYL: And then the placebo effect will be, oh yes, this is working, right?

ERIK: Yeah. I mean some, some Some cosmetic brands have done extremely well by presenting products at extraordinarily high prices to make consumers believe that they're buying something extremely scientifically proven, and they've been wildly successful. Where the same formula can be found in a Walgreens for \$6. Right, right. And almost identical part. Right. We've done the work.

MERYL: I'm sure you have. So let's go back for a second. We talked, we had, as a matter of fact, one of my previous podcasts just recently with Gay Riley, one of the, a nutritionist who I work with, who **we were talking about environmental exposure and toxins** and all that.

So the skin is our largest organ. What we put on it matters. And when we talk about, when I talk about what happens with the toxins that go on our skin, and then they get into our body and we talk about petroleum based products and how everything from the stuff we put on our skin to the stuff we wash our clothes in, To we clean our house is petroleum based. So what is, can you explain to the people that are listening? What does that mean? If it's petroleum based, it's basically coming from fossil fuel,

ERIK: which is oil coming from fossil fuel, which is food, oil or natural gas. Right. Or carbon,

all, all chemicals, this is something that people really need to understand. **All chemicals come from one source. they come from fossil fuel.** even though they have different names, that's how they differentiate. Every one of the 85,000 chemicals in distribution around the world, they're differentiated by their specific name.

It's like a brand name for that chemical, but the source of it is all fossil fuels. Right. And it's foreign to our body when we're, when, when we put, when, when we put basically fossil fuels, when we put petroleum right on our skin, when we slather it it, 70% of our skin is permeable. Right. Our head and our genitalia are a hundred percent permeable.

So, shampoos, hair dyes, which are the. Top, top of the top pyramid of toxic personal care products, those can permeate a hundred percent into your, and they bioaccumulate

MERYL: Now, wait, wait, take a step back. Bioaccumulate. Not everybody knows what that means. .

ERIK: **Bioaccumulate. So when you ingest natural ingredients, your body recognizes it and uses it.** So we know they have properties and the body, it's, it's, there's a biochemistry that is Yep.

MERYL: Your body understands that. Biochemistry, I talk about that with food,

ERIK: It uses it and it gets rid of what it doesn't need. Yes. Well, **when it comes to petroleum, whether you ingest them, inhale them, or apply them to your skin, the bioaccumulate, the body doesn't recognize them, so it stores them somewhere.**

And doesn't take. An expert to know that the rise of illness in our society is through the roof. it's a new normal, whether it's children, I mean, cancer is out of control. And where is, where is it coming from? Why, why has it exploded since the 1960s and fifties? Why is it more prevalent in western societies? And why is it happening later in life? Right. So my theory at least I think it makes sense, is that because of the bioaccumulation of toxicity in our bodies, you'll find that if you, if you look at the statistics of cancer in children under 10 years old, it's what? One out of a hundred thousand. It's very rare. under 25, it goes up to 10 out of a hundred thousand. Still very rare. You get to 50 years old, now you're at a hundred, out of a hundred thousand, over 65, you're at over a thousand per. Hundred thousand. And that's because the bioaccumulation, you're not gonna put lipstick and have like stage four cancer, It's just not happening like that. It happens over a co you know. Right. And so if you live, **if you live in an area where you're near a water source that's been intoxicated by a factory of petroleum based products you might see a high rate of cancer in your little town.**

But for most people, Are just in contact with petrochemicals. Depending on how much awareness you have of this, **it could accumulate over a lifetime and really cause some serious health issues that are not correlated to the source.**

MERYL: Well, and I think, and we treat them with petrochemicals by the

way.

Well, so let me back up a second because I do really wanna, I wanna kind of tag onto this. So, . So when you're saying, well, they accumulate Yes. And not only do these petrochemicals, right. Gasoline, fossil fuels, not gasoline, but it's Right. It's like, think about it like it's the same thing, right? They're like in your car, what you put on your face.

Exactly. So think about this. If you're listening, you would never slather gasoline all over your body. Right. But you're doing that, you're really doing that. If you're using lotions, you're breathing it and you're slathering it. Right? So those are the three ways they can answer your body.

Absolutely. And, and this is what we talk about, and one of the things that I think is really important to tag onto this is **when we talk about the cancer risk, is that these chemicals. Turn into what we call xeno estrogens. They're fake estrogen-like chemicals in your body.** And so when you have too much estrogen in your system, remember, estrogen is a growth hormone.

Yes. It's a growth hormone. It's, it's a growth hormone. And so if you have estrogen that you cannot get rid of because you're, you're consuming it in amounts on your skin, in your food. Like you said, you're consuming it in amounts that your body can't get rid of. And then, oh, by the way, **if your body is not functioning at a hundred percent metabolically because you're not eating a clean diet and your liver is compromised, now, you're not detoxifying it.** You're not de detoxifying it. So the body Exactly.

ERIK: It's overwhelmed. It can take a little abuse. Of course, you know it, of course. There's three things that's important to note here. First of all, **everything we're talking about is common knowledge if you look for it.** Right. But nobody's, it's not a, it's not a conspiracy.

I mean, right. . It's not you, you just Google it. It's there. Right. You know, what are petrochemicals? Are they harmful? It's all there. It causes cancer. It's all there.

MERYL: Absolutely it is all there. But it's, **but it's crowded out by the noise. And that's the problem, is that there's so much noise around everything else.**

People are not, it's, it's the smoke in the mirrors. Of course, you, and I know

ERIK: that people are talking all day long in our industry about is, is parabens harmful? Is that ingredient bad? They're all petrochemicals. Yes. bisphenol, a Right. You know, dividing and conquering, they're all the same.

MERYL: It's all the same thing. Right. Arose by any other name is Rose.

ERIK: and this is something that people really need to understand, is **that 99% of medication, pharmaceutical. over the counter drugs are made from fossil fuels.** it's made with petrol. When you pop a pill, it's made from the same stuff you put in your car. These are things that to me are mind boggling

MERYL: listen, you and I speak the same language, we could probably sit here for three hours and have this conversation. I mean, I'm so excited that we're talking about it, but it is weird, like you converted . Right. I know people often say I do these, these videos and people are like, you sound so mad. I'm like, no, I'm just so damn passionate because I just want everybody to know what I know. So, so we definitely speak that language, but so, so you know, if we go back and look at Right, all of these things that we are using, right? So now we have everybody scared half shitless here about, oh my God, I'm putting all this stuff on.

ERIK: **that's an interesting topic that we're fear monger.** Yes. You know, and I'm writing a book and I was thinking, I don't wanna be a fear monger. Right? **My goal, like if you wanna smoke a cigarette, smoke a cigarettes, but you need just to be aware that it, they are consequences.** You know? It's not free help.

Yeah. You're an adult, **you're a free human being. If you want to eat an apple or you want to eat petroleum, it is your choice. What I have a problem with is people doing things unaware** that they're not aware. Like the doctors in the forties when they cigarette during your, during the consultation, right. They have no clue.

Once you're aware, then it becomes a conscious decision and you're an adult and you should do whatever you want. The other thing that most people don't realize is that the US government, well the world medical association, whatever we want to call it there's **three products that are known. To be the highest carcinogens out there. Two are not gonna surprise anyone to tobacco and asbestos, the third one is alcohol.** Again, I enjoy a little bit of wine here and you know, I'm not an alcoholic by any means. Right. But I, I find that a lot of friends of mine that have had a health scare drink more than the average of my friends. I agreed. So these are things that we should just be aware of. It doesn't mean move to a mountain and be mom and never speak again. you're saying be aware,

MERYL: but I think and I like, and, and I agree with you, but here's the thing, there's so much noise out there. You know, you wanna talk about advertising and marketing and especially with social media, I think **people are well-intentioned and they wanna be aware. , but they're being flooded with misinformation.** Oh, have this and, and it's good for you. Right? Oh, do this and it's good for you. I mean, look at big food, right?

They, they will promote any kind of **the food industry is out there promoting all of these cereals and all of these packaged goods, and they're labeling some of it as healthy, and**

we know that it's not. It's a very powerful lobby. So, so on the one hand, we want people to be aware, but then on the other hand, they're being fed the wrong information.

Right? So it's almost like, well, who do you know who to listen to? And I think that's where it becomes really frustrating for someone who is not necessarily doing the research.

ERIK: I agree with you, and I've thought about this a lot, and for me the answer is as simple as the pink elephant in the room. The blind spot, right? Once you start realizing that, all these things people are talking about, whether they're good or bad, they're all coming from petrol. You can't avoid that reality, right. It's okay to say I know it's not good to take so much medication in my life, or antibiotics are not great.

I need to like, do something after I do the treatment. It's one thing to say that, it's another thing to say, I'm taking petrol . Right. You know? Right. I don't have that moisturizer said water Petroleum, petroleum, petroleum, fragrance made from petroleum. You might not buy it.

MERYL: But it, but there's deception in that. Right. There's a reason the industry doesn't want you to know

ERIK: It wasn't always like this. You know, I saw advertisements of Exxon from the, the thirties. They were proud of their discovery of petrol petrochemicals. Right. They the advertise it in magazines.

MERYL: Well, because before we knew better, and now there's how many bazillions of chemicals that we know disrupt our body's natural process?

ERIK: And they used to call it petroleum jelly. The number Right.

MERYL: and Vaseline was petroleum jelly. It, it was

the, it's it's still being used today.

ERIK: Oh yeah. They changed the name to Mineral Oil. Now that sounds really healthy compared to vitro and jelly. Right, but it's mineral oil. Yeah, it's mineral oil. That's the same ,

MERYL: but that's what I'm saying. Right. So there's deception in all of it. So when you say, well, we want, but, but I it's, and I'm not, not to sound cliché, but common sense is not all that common when you start looking around, it's pretty uncommon and Exactly. You know, and so, and I think part of the other issue is that **we live in a society that is very reactive and not proactive.**

And, and what I try and encourage people to do is be proactive about their health. Be healthy before you get so you don't get sick. People think, well, I don't have any diseases yet, so I'm healthy. And I'm like, no, we really have it all wrong. You need to stay healthy so you never get, an Ounce of prevention, but Right.

Again, if they're, frankly, they're a long time. Yes. So did, right. So does Hippocrates, right? Hippocrates, yes. But, but we don't really listen to that anymore. And I think that is really where we have just lost our way in both the food industry, in the, I I don't even wanna say healthcare industry because it's not healthcare, it's disease management.

Right. But **in the wellness industry, still, there's a lot of noise.** And we are, we're gonna talk about that in a second, cuz I'm gonna do that as a part two because we're gonna otherwise go really, really long on the first one. But I do. I think we'll end off with this and then we'll go into the challenge.

It is, it is the challenge of staying right. Staying ahead of it. And being committed to it. So, because it's really hard. So you know, talk about, **it's really hard to go up against the noise,** right? Like you said, well, I don't wanna take my new line of this ingredients line

and go where I need to be beholden to shareholders and people that I have to answer to about the money part of it, when, because that's gonna dilute my product.

ERIK: Therein lies the challenge. Right?

MERYL: Right. So speak to that, because I think a lot of people don't understand

ERIK: it's the noise. **There's two things. There's bias and there's noise.** Together, they're formidable. Okay. And we all have biases. Right? Right. You and I have a bias towards natural health. But there's a, there's a bias, **you know consumers sometimes don't even want to hear. That ingredients are toxic.** They, they'll, they just want to look better just do whatever you want. To me, if I look better, I don't care about the health consequence. You know, we live in denial.

Yeah. So therein lies the challenge of marketing a brand that is purpose driven. Swimming against the current. And I don't have the answer to that, except that **every person. We touch with our message that believes it is a win.** Yes. You know changing the world. One person, one person, that's what I say.

MERYL: I say the message, we, we wanna push the message. But the fact is is, and and I know you are the same I wanna do it with integrity. I wanna be **I want there to be full disclosure and transparency and not disingenuous.** Yeah. And that, like you said there's many days I feel like I'm streaming I'm swimming upstream because it is really hard to stay committed to that when people come at you and say, oh, well, but you can make so much more money doing this.

ERIK: Well, we're impatient cuz we don't, we, we live about 78 years. Right, right. So we're very impatient beings. Yes. And you know, there's a long game. I believe in the long game. and when I see. My journey of nutrition when I started I was maybe 26 years old. , I mean, impossible. Yeah. To be in Impossible. Yeah. You know, you couldn't eat anywhere. The health food stores were these smelly savage smelling , dusty places that

you couldn't find anywhere. And today, look, look how far we've gone. Yes. We're talking about 30 years or so. And **these message about petroleum are just starting to come out because we're starting to feel the effects of what society has done 60 years ago.**

I mean, the infiltration of petrochemicals in our life has been tremendous welling in the fifties. and then exploded in the seventies and eighties. And now we're starting to feel the effects. And I think it starts with the cause and effect. People are sicker. Yes. You know, and it's almost for a lot, it's normal. like every kid has an allergy, every kid has asthma. I mean, when I was going to middle school, nobody, one guy at asthma was like, you talked about like the worst disease on earth. It was a big deal. You know what's going on.

MERYL: Exactly. And nobody's going back. And I say this, it's about the root cause. Right? You gotta go back and find the root. It's not just saying, okay, well why? Right? Why do we have allergies? Why do we have so much

ERIK: fossil fuels?

MERYL: Right. Fossil fuels. And people are not eating. It goes back to the, I I, I would be willing to bet that whatever's on the table here, I have all of hismany of his products sitting here.

For those of you that are, that are, that obviously can't see us **I'd be willing to bet I could probably eat just about every one of these.**

ERIK: They're edible,

MERYL: right? So, so again, all of the ingredients in your product line, which is primarily a skincare body line, right? It's not food. Are safe to ingest, it has to go back.

The same thing with food that comes out of the ground. **The only thing that speaks to our, ourselves in our body, the only thing that our body works on our operating system is food.** Yet we've come so far. Right. That's what is skin. Food, exactly.

ERIK: Right. But you know what really makes the matter worse is that **the government bodies that are here protect consumers, give mixed messages.**

Yeah. And we, **we tend to trust our government.** I mean, yeah, I don't think they're evil. I think they're confused. .

MERYL: I think they're really confused. But yeah, that's a whole other conversations. They can't change and they're confused.

ERIK: I mean, the FDA says clearly that beauty products used for beautification are not permeable. And they're not regulated. But medicated moisturizers are need to be regulated because they penetrate the skin, you know? Nicotine patches, right. Pomades all kinds of medicated creams and, and lotions. **What's the difference? How does the body, the formulas are the same. It's 3% of that changes. One has that medicated chemical, the other ones doesn't.**

So consumers believe that what you're putting on your skin is not that harmful, and **the industry tells you that in minute amounts that you'll find in a moisturizer, these things are not harmful to your health. That's true. Again, if you apply it once or twice or 10 times, but the average woman comes into contact with over 500 chemicals per day over the course of 20, 30 years, that is a huge amount.**

MERYL: It's crazy. .

ERIK: And that's not just, and, and then if you don't eat well and then there's a blind spot. You have a huge amount of consumers that are more conscious right now. They're gonna go yoga class, they're going to have the beautiful green juice, they're going to eat

healthy at home, and then they slather petroleum on their skin and they're breathing chemicals, cleaning their homes. they're sleeping on an oil slick mattress. You know, so there's a lot of blind spots here, right. That we need to bring the,

and then there's a huge amount of effort towards environmental. Awareness. And what people are not bringing into the conversation of the environment is that human health and planet health are inextricably linked right. To fossil fuels. And I just heard the statistics, which was completely crazy, which is that **71% of CO2 emissions are generated by 100 corporations in the world.** 100. Yeah. **92% of CO2 emissions are caused by fossil fuel,** and 71% is by 100 corporations in the world. It's crazy. And, **and you can't take petrochemicals out of the equation. It's not like tobacco. Like, okay, everybody stops smoking, we're fine.** The economy in the world is going right.

Petrochemical is everything. Markets are based on companies that are selling services or products made of petrochemicals because everything is plastic. Everything. You can't go I tried to go into a Walmart or Target and find one product in the entire store that doesn't contain petrochemicals and I couldn't find it.

MERYL: Right. So they're in right now. Right. So, so they're in my water. What if it's not in a plastic bottle? Right, because the plastic bottles are so right. So again we can go down this rabbit hole. I think what, what we don't wanna do is really is throw that fear factor now. Cuz now people think, oh my God, there isn't anything I can do that's not gonna be toxic. Which is sort of true, but like again, how do we, how do we guide the right it is baby steps. So you had said something that I, when we were talking with our staff, and then we're gonna end it and we're gonna talk more about the product. But you had said something about it's not You, you start throwing all this and **people become overwhelmed and then they become paralyzed because they don't know where to start.**

So you said something about, well, not about adding and changing everything, but what did you say?

ERIK: Well, **my philosophy is that what you don't do is, is much more important than all the things you can do to be healthy.** Right. You know, when you hear. **I mean, yes. Goji Berries are great for you. They have, they're super food, but that's not gonna fix your world.**

MERYL: It's not gonna make your financial Right. Eating more kale is not gonna fix your world. Exactly. So what did you say that you, you, your message on that?

ERIK: There's a, **there's a few things you should start avoiding as much as you can.** you know chemicals, which are a little bit everywhere, but chemicals you clean up your house, look at your cupboards, look at your bathroom cabinets.

Look at your cleaning. Cabinet. Start there. You're gonna be a way ahead of the game. Yes. And you know, the rest on nutrition. You know, avoid seed oils, avoid packaged foods. Avoid you know, industrialized protein. **You don't have to be a vegan or plant-based. You know, it's okay to. , eat a little bit of protein, but eat high quality in low amount**

You know, we're always eating like it's our last one I know ever. You know, we know that lower calorie diets is linked to longevity.

, I mean, we know that, and what I try to preach here is this is not a live longer thing. Nobody knows when you know, you walk outside and get hit by lightning, Florida, control that. No. **But you can control the quality of your life Yes. While you're alive. Through a few simple things** and it becomes, **at first it's a little bit of awareness and it's a little bit of effort, but it becomes effortless. once you get used to it.** Mm-hmm. You're used to. Shopping the peripheral of the supermarkets.

Exactly. You find a good brand that's not loaded with chemicals just stick with it. that's what you use. Try to avoid plastic a little bit. Drink high quality water. You know, get a wa

water filtration system in your house that gives you right healthy water that you don't have to put in plastic bottles.

Cook more at home. I know it's not easy for everyone, but it really is. It doesn't have to be that complicated. You don't have to be like a, a Michelin chef, six hours of prep. You should be able to make a good meal within 30 minutes or less. Absolutely.

MERYL: And that's what we talk about. So I'd love that. I think we're gonna end the first part of this conversation here because, well, we gotta go into part two because we gotta cover the products. We gotta, we haven't even talked about them, and I think it's important that we talk about them. So I really wanna thank you. This was great. I think really, we could be doing this. We we're gonna have to do this again. But,

ERIK: Look forward, I gotta tell you, I don't I look for people like you that I can have this conversation and not having to sell it. Yes. So it's, it is actually a real pleasure.

MERYL: Well, thank you. Thank you. All right, everybody. Stay tuned for part two.

We're gonna start talking about the ingredients, the literal ingredient product line. And stay tuned for now. This is your Rebel Nutritionist signing off. Make it a great day.