

MERYL: Welcome back everybody to the Rebel Nutritionist Podcast today, a real treat because I have my longtime friend and colleague. Miss, like Queen of Genomics herself, Amanda Archibald, and so great to have you on. I'm really thrilled that we are wrapping up 2022 with this podcast because I think it's you know, you, you were actually one of my first and I think it's great. You know, now we're almost 80 something in, and to kind of revisit some of the topics and kind of just get a state of the union of where we're at.

So without further ado, welcome Amanda.

AMANDA: Good to be back, my friend. In fact, what you didn't say is we're actually gene sisters, where there's like three or four of us that you know behind the scenes like, Hey I've got. Issue or I'm not quite sure how to manage that or read this. And so there's four of us at like we're, we're sisters in this space, absolutely. So anyway, great to be back. Great to end the year with you.

MERYL: So yeah, let's get right to it. You know, I think this whole podcast was spawned out of the fact or the idea, you and I were reading **Robert Lustig's book Metabolical**. And you know, we were kind of ranting back and forth to each other.

And I think one of the really poignant notes was that he's he really does call out the industry, which is amazing. And he calls out the dietetics industry, and I always say that you and I are the out of the box and there's a bunch of us, right? The out of the box dieticians because we really learned early-ish that it's not just about counting the calories, and it's so hard to bring that mentality in our industry.

And the didactic model that we grew up on, let's say is just not working. So what do you wanna say to that.

AMANDA: Well first just going back to the point about Robert Luk, when he was talking about the industry, he was really focusing in on the food industry, right? Yes. But as you

point out, he also talks in his book about debating dieticians, which was absolutely fascinating.

And how, as you saying, is still taking the same stance. Now, not all by any means, right? But still, Who may be in the communications part of the business is still taking the same stance as when you and I went to school, what in the nineties? , anyway, quite a, quite a long time ago. So, I agree with you. And it's very frustrating for us cause some of the communications are, a lot of the communications that's coming into the field that meets the media hasn't changed.

That's number one. And of course we know we can get into it. What we're doing and how we're under science. Understanding science has turned on. Its. head. You know, every year, right? Every year we're learning, but particularly in the last five to eight years, it's a whole different world. So that's number one.

And number two, and I think you and I were flipping back and forth. We looked to something on Instagram. What were we doing on Instagram? I dunno, because we're on Instagram. Oh, because,

MERYL: oh, I know. Well, because, well, first of all, there was one, I think you had sent me something about the sugar thing. How dietician, what dieticians don't eat, or something like that.

AMANDA: Oh, that's right.

MERYL: And then there was another one that I sent you that, so you, you had sent me one about what dieticians don't eat and it was something about sugar, how dieticians combat sugar cravings. That was the one you sent me. And then I sent And then I sent you back one that was, dieticians don't eat this.

And there was a woman on there saying that artificial sweeteners were okay and they're not poison. And I. What, so that's when I sent it back to you, like, this is the crap that's being put out that people are actually listening to.

AMANDA: Yeah, and what it's representing is there's obviously, there's not one statement coming out of the medical community or the nut nutrition community, but I think, let's put it out there.

There are people in nutrition health community that make their money not by seeing patients, but by being an extension of a communication arm for a company. And Okay, fine. You know, you can quote, do PR on communications. I'm fine. But I know I learned from you. I've been friends for a long. **That you have to be in the nitty gritty of the science.**

You have to see patients and individuals and clients to understand how science is working at a cellular level or at a systems level, or basically how it's working in people's bodies. And science works differently depending on the body, the cultural ethnicity, and the environment that watches over our brains and our, our, our genes.

So you can't. A one size fits all. You can't have talking points that reach everyone. Okay. And you can't make blanket statements based on the science that you're choosing. Right. And the paycheck you're picking up, sorry, period. . And

MERYL: Yeah. That was so, so beautifully said. Right. Because at the end of the day, we don't who's the influencer here and are they looking back at the science, and I think this is a really important part, be point because **you and I are so committed to understanding the science and the biochemistry of really what makes people tick.** And no, we didn't learn that so many years ago when we went to school. Yeah. And we have spent a lifetime learning and relearning because there is new science that's coming out and I think that's really.

A misstep in all of this is that **the medical community isn't keeping up with the science** for the most part either, and this is where it's become a real disservice. to the clients that I see because they're being given a one size fits all diagnosis, i b s. Right. Okay. Well that's a catchall term for nothing.

And so, not nothing, there's clearly a problem, but they're just whatever. That's a whole other topic. But they're given a pill or, or whatever, and said, go on your merry way. Go on your merry way. But they're not getting to the root of where that came from in the first place. So there's, there's that part of it.

And then it is, it's, it's how do we reach the masses? I know it's so hard to do and, and, and **what's coming out of social media is just more of this very reductionist and just take this, just do this and, and this'll make you better.** And the science part of it, like you just said it is the environment. It's what's going on underneath the hood, as I always say.

AMANDA: Yeah. It true. Absolutely. So a couple of things that I'm seeing, so you're hearing us kind of rant a little bit because. Of the work we're doing and we're tinkering on the hood of the body. We're working at a cellular level, and there's a wonderful book out called **The Song of the Cell.**

Not easy to read, brilliant. About how the cells are the factory, the operating unit of our bodies. But, so leaving that to a little later conversation something, excuse me, let's Lusk said Ludwig. I don't know where that came from, but Lu. . Let me point to that.

Secondly, but what, here's my, my take and maybe my kind of talking point back to you as the listeners, **don't read articles that say the top 10 things that dieticians do or don't eat. We couldn't care less because it's not relevant to you.** And what you see is, Ooh, a little bit of chocolate's. Okay. Or a little bit.

That's okay. We don't. We don't care what their palette is and what they think. And even the top 10 things doctors think you should know, who cares? Yeah. So forget those.

Secondly, if you're reading a Facebook or an Instagram post where it's, ah calories don't matter, or it's a bunch of lists of, time-restricted eating or intermittent fasting, ah, that's just an old fashioned way of caloric restriction.

Unfollow that person, dump it, okay, **because it's showing to you. that they're not looking at genomics, they're not underneath the hood of your body.** These who generalize posts doesn't mean to say they're not an expert in the field, but I don't think they. **Because when you make blanket statements like that, you are not reflecting your unique wiring diagram, how you're wired. You're just looking at everyone's wiring the same,** give or take a little bit, not true, right? So dump that, avoid that, right?

And the third thing going back to Robert was, which is like, I think I was texting you, I was probably bedtime reading. I said, oh my gosh, look, you just. . He made a brilliant point, which is kind of where we started like, Hey, science has changed.

You can't carry on with generalization. So he's been a pediatric endocrinologist, I don't know, 30, 40 years. Yeah, a long career. And he said a brilliant point. So listen to this. If you do nothing else in this podcast, listen to what he said. He said, when I started, he said, and we were looking at liver enzymes.

So liver enzymes, we're looking at the health of the liver, right? With keeping. Liver is like the central processing unit of everything, right? Dump this, move that shuttle, this store that. And he said, when I started, and I'm looking at the upper levels of the lab value to look at liver disease, he said, let's say it was 25.

We'll just pick one of the biomarkers is ALT. He said it was said 25. He said, how come it's now 50? He. , you know what? That **we're still measuring the same enzymes and all we've done is shift the values to reflect that. Now 80% of people are walking around with fatty liver disease coming from reflection of the environment.**

Food you're eating. Toxicity of food and he said, that can't be true. What we've done is **we shifted the lens to make it feel okay for you.** And he's saying it's not okay. And I think too, he may not have talked about it. We've seen that with blood pressure readings. Have you seen that too? All of a sudden? A hundred twenties.

Okay. Are you kidding me? It is not. Okay. So we're being dealt a bill of goods. and that's reductionism in medicine. And it's reductionism in nutrition and it's reductionism in science. And where we are in science is tinkering under the bonnet, **lifting up the hood of your body and using cutting edge science to understand uniquely how you respond** and why P C O S may be at play for you, but nobody else or, or whatever the issue is.

So get rid of the top 10. , get rid of anything's reductionism. And if something's shouting at you, like you can see the person sunny with their hands on the hips like this, you can't see them, but they are. Or they're on TikTok doing this. No. Right. Dump 'em . Right.

MERYL: You know, and it's interesting though, and I often say that, and I go back and forth with this, right, because I probably am on social media more than you and I do the, all right, what are the three things?

Because here's the thing, right? People want to see that this is what people are dying to see. And so I, and I do, I, I really have this push and this pull with, okay, well, I wanna be the credible source and Okay. **I wanna put some information out there yet I always say If you know, here are the generalities of this, but if you really wanna know what's going on with you, then you have to do the deep dive testing.**

because there is no way Right. Genomics and all of the nutrient testing and even the deep dive metabolic testing, cuz **there's no way to know any of that. From answering a few questions on TikTok** or saying, yes, I have these symptoms. Right. So if we go back to I b. You know, and we say, well, that is a global term for, you've got something going

on in your system.

AMANDA: Yeah. Or, I don't know what's up with you, but we'll give it this label. Exactly. Right. Like, I actually did a TikTok, it'll come out, so hopefully it'll come out before this video, this podcast does. But like I wanted to do, I pointing at the I and the B and the S and it's bull, you know what the next one is.

Right. Only cause Right. People are like, they come in, I got ibs. and you know, that's what I have. And they're so married to that. And so **that means nothing. That means it could be stress that's causing your gut issues. It could be an infection.** Right. Unless we know, always gotta go back to what is the root of mm-hmm.

your issue. And I, and I do love that, you know what, what much of what Robert Lusk says is right. He's like oh my God. Feed the gut. No, feed the gut. So support the liver, protect the liver, feed the. **Protect the liver, feed the gut**, right? If, if we remember nothing else, protect the liver, feed the gut like that is, you've gotta make sure, like you said, our **liver's our operating system**, yet what do we do all day long?

You know, we are just bombarding it with, with chemicals. So let's get into the next thing. You know, he talks a lot about processed foods and this is **processed foods and ultra processed food kill our liver**, and their gut. And the gut

And so and yet those of us that are really, and him too, I, I loved some of his recommendations of how we, how we really need to change it.

But they're huge shifts. You know, **this requires a huge paradigm shift from the mentality of big food, big pharma, big government.** You know, I always say that this is, these are, this is the, these are the forces at play that are running our. Our monetary economic system that are running our healthcare or disease management system and that are again, the whole political climate.

And we're not gonna get into the politics of it at all. But the fact is, we are sort of fighting this uphill battle.

AMANDA: We are. And you know, it's interesting when, when I read his book and I, both of us really, really recommend it. It's, it's, it's kind of, what was that book so many years ago? The guy was in **Fast Food Nation**.

We all read it. Right. And that was kinda, and then Michael Pollen came along and with his books. And now you know, Robert Lusik, who's written several books, I kind of put the piece down when they're started talking about the food industry because you know what, and the reason I mentioned fast food,

He was bringing light to the issues then. And this is like 30 years ago maybe, right? We're still talking about the same stuff. So like, and **it hasn't changed. I think it's gotten worse and our health has gotten worse, so let's connect the two. So part of the solution is actually facilitating or enabling access to good food.**

I mean, and, and I also think the second thing, and that has gotten worse, not better. I think there's definitely pockets in the country where it's definitely better. But we know when in recession, I'm gonna age ourselves by saying that, but in these more inflationary times, right? Food becomes the lowest, the last thing that people often will upscale or say, okay, you can't touch my food.

Cuz you pay for the heat and the lights or whatever. But the point is about the food industry and the whole combo, it has not changed. Our health has gotten worse. So the only way out of this is to forget what the food industry's doing anyway. And **for us to understand what are the principles to eat by protect the liver, feed the gut.**

I would say first feed the gut. Understand how to feed the gut, you know? And then I think the other thing, and it was a, it was an article that came out recently and I, let me

see, hopefully you can put it in the show notes cuz I wanna pull it again. It was blaring headlines about if you eat these foods you'll get dementia or something like that.

And I'm like, but, so just one more scare tactic, headline. Of which there are so many, like the top 10 foods dieticians eat here. **What matters is the educational model, I think, which you and I have talked about forever, is forget the food label. Learn how food operates in your body.** , like why would you come up with a headline that says these foods, if you eat these they'll be processed, can cause dementia.

Okay, great. So one more scare tactic. So why do they cause dementia? What's in them and how are they working in your body? So you can say, okay, I'll make a decision. I get it right again. And we're not teaching that.

MERYL: No, we're not because I it becomes very dismissive. I have so many clients who come in and their doctor's like, oh, food doesn't matter.

I'm thinking to myself, food, and, and you always say this so poignantly, so I'm gonna let you say it. **Food is the only thing that our cells understand.** how do we get people to understand that what is at the end of their fork totally dictates what their health looks?

AMANDA: and **what's on the end of the fork and how it works in your body is different from mine**, which is why we shift things.

So **food is the information for your body, you know? I mean, yes, it responds to exercise and meditation and stress, but the operational tool that your body use is, is food, period.** Right? So, . I think what it may go back to, so we talked about two things. **Number one is critical thinking. Taking the time to sit and think about what we're saying is food is how your body operates it, and you can't cheat it.**

You just, you just can't. So critical thinking is number one, **how much you value your health.** Health is not something you put on a dashboard and forget it until the next time

you get in your car. It isn't. You know, and I think that what is really, really interesting is something you do, do, do well. You take time for yourself every single day you meditate.

So where am I going with that **Now in my life, every day I get up and do some form of functional movement. I treat my body first**, you know? Get the fascia, get the fascia outta the way, or get into the fascia. Whether it's fascia in your head or in your body. Take time to honor your body. Like first thing, morning if you can, or last thing at night.

Because when you honor your body, you'll understand intuitively what it needs and how it works. What we're doing is running around saying body, it'll, it'll be there and we're not in touch with how we feel. And you talk about this a lot and what we're doing. We're not like honoring our body as a temple. Therefore we don't care what we put on the fork.

MERYL: Well, I think absolutely true. The other part of that is we've just gotten so disconnected from that, from that understanding we think that, okay, if we go to fast food, well that's food. So I'm **putting food in my body. Yet most people realize that's not live living real food. Anything that has been that processed is dead. And it has no nutritional values, so your cells are not able to assimilate the vitamins and the minerals and the enzymes and the proteins that are required to keep us well and healthy.** And I think the other part of, to tag onto what you just said is we're a very we don't, **we think we're healthy until we get sick.**

right? So people walk around going, what? I don't really, I don't, yeah, I'm healthy. Sure I'm healthy. I don't feel bad. Maybe I'm a little tired. Maybe I'm not sleeping. Maybe I'm kind of bloated, but really I'm healthy and I'm thinking, no, those are all signs of your body saying, I'm not really healthy, but we minimize it because unless we're really sick, we think we're.

AMANDA: Yeah, **because we don't know what the benchmark is, in all honesty, because nobody sat down and said, this is what health feels like.** So we don't know what health

feels like, like you said, until we're sick. Or maybe you go through midlife, I mean male or female, you suddenly realize, hey, something's changed.

Right? And then you kind of get back and, and shift gears so you can go into a new paradigm, maybe or the next stage of your life or what have you.

MERYL: No, and it was interesting. I heard, I had a conversation with someone just yesterday and she's like, oh, well you know someone I know so-and-so was just diagnosed with diabetes and is like freaking out. You know, and part of me wants to laugh and be like, okay, diabetes is completely preventable. And so at some point in their life, someone maybe a, hopefully a healthcare practitioner, must have alerted them and said, oh gee, your blood sugar's getting kind of high and your hemoglobin A1C is getting kind of high.

Oh no. But we don't really you just stop eating a little bit of this and a little bit of that. It's so minimized, right. And **now all of a sudden, full-blown diabetes and they're freaking out. Had, they have been a little more proactive.** And this is what I always say the more proactive you are, then you don't get these diseases that again is really, really hard for people to understand. Like, get ahead of the game.

Yeah. You know, but, but again, going back to, I know we kind of bounced all over it, but getting back to **what really keeps people healthy and alive and well and thriving is eating real food.** And you talk about that all the time. You know, you're, your posts, everything.

I mean, of course it relates back to genomics and we're gonna get in that, into that in the second half. But you know, taking time to, like you said to meditate or do functional movement. **Taking the time to feed and nourish yourself is just as important, and that is a form of self-care.**

AMANDA: It's, it's like you have to water your own garden every day and how you water your, your body through meditation, through movement, time for yourself. Yes, it's hard. We're all been in that place, but taking time with your food. Yeah. And there's I'm thinking back sort of over the years, there's been some amazing work done with food.

Like food is alive. So I think two people, **Emery Colbin**, who started the oh gosh, it's a natural cook school or whatever. Yeah. And she's now passed. But I remember her so many years ago saying how do you help people understand the difference between living food and microwave food? She says, I mean, she, it was just interesting.

You know, she said when you put food in the, in a microwave or you cook it, you remove the chi, the energy from it. So cooking is also love. So it was kind of really cool. I like knew exactly what she was talking about, like food is alive and energetic. . And you know, cooking is an art form, but when you don't care about it, it's dead and your body doesn't respond to dead food. It, it just doesn't.

And there was another experiment. You may have read about it, probably when we were in school where a researcher divided a room into it, they were tasting red wine and one half of the room, like behind curtains or whatever, was actually holding wine in their wine glass. It was red wine. in their hand and they were just kind of honoring it or whatever, or talking to it.

and the other group just drank their red wine, and there was such a difference in the energy in the room and how people related to what they were drinking afterwards. So it goes back to, no, we don't have to run around and drink wine. That's not the point of this. It was taking the time to honor your food. , which is a lost start too.

I mean, how many people sit down and say grace or sit down in a moment of silence before they eat? And I think there was one, you, we kind of say, go, going off here, but it's, we're getting to the point of eating.

One of the tactics we use right to simulate the vagus nerve is to have kids and people sit down maybe for 30 seconds, and they're not gonna say grace or whatever. , why would you hum? Well, cause you're actually taking the time to stimulate, get your body set up to say, Hey, food's coming. And **the vagus nerve is so important for stimulating motility, getting your gut to move.**

So it seems like time on a traditions. I guess what we're going back to that, speak to and honor food that we've forgotten. Right, and,

MERYL: and you know, that is a great point, right? So if you go back to even the book **Nourishing Traditions**, Sally, Nancy Enig, and I have that book up here. Like I keep that up here because I go, I too that here's the thing.

We really have lost the traditional way of eating, which has compromised our health.

There's no question taking, and it's not, it's not the old way of thinking. It's really the time-honored traditions that Do nourish our body. it was interesting. I made I did a A, a

slaw, a sauerkraut I did some pickling. I did my own pickling and I followed their book because Right. I used the sea salt instead of vinegar because vinegar does kills the food when you kills the food. Yeah. Kills the good bacteria. And you know, when I was reading about all of that, **every single culture, no matter what it is, starts out their meal with some kind of fermented food**

right? And, and so think about what fermented foods do for our digestion, right? **It feeds the good bacteria. It's the prebiotic, it's the probiotic, it's the fiber.** And yet we don't do, now it's kombucha is a fancy thing, but like people, right? People did all of that. And so I almost feel like in this era of like where we. are moving so fast technologically, I wish we would go so far in the other direction of just slowing down.

AMANDA: Exactly. Yeah. E exactly. And you know, I was said, thinking about that I was in Europe for a month earlier this year and on islands actually. So we were the last island we went to for 10 days is Corsica in the middle of the Atlantic.

So sits above Sardinia. So Corsica is a French. Island now, they would like to be independent, so let's be very clear. amazing history, but the reason I mention it, the **island life is slow**, not slow, like Caribbean. So it's a very different kind of slow. But what is beautiful is the time honored traditions of bringing animals down from the mountains or you're sitting on the road for half now cause the sheep are just wandering down the road or whatever.

But the food hasn't changed there. It is changing, but it hasn't really changed. That much. And people, the slow life is a great life. People shut their businesses for two, three weeks in a year to take time for themselves. Right. You know? But anyway, the time honored traditions are still there in many, many places across the world.

Maybe America doesn't have a time honored tradition. Maybe we don't. We have Thanksgiving, we have the holidays. Right now we have the 4th of July. But what are our traditions? The very regional right, are very ethnic. But as a nation, we don't. The tradition, right? So farm is maybe right.

Whereas these countries and islands actually too, I mean they are, that is the, the bell of life bell rings, this is what we're doing. It's, it's really cool to go back and see that. So

MERYL: yeah, that, that is amazing. And I think again, you go back and look at where, yeah, the blue zones, right?

Those are the blue zones. Those people who are honoring the traditions of, of. living off of the land again not that we're doing, we, we do Less of that here. Also really understanding that **it's also about the sense of purpose and the sense of community.**

And I just feel like we just that, that's why we've created our whole Facebook community group.

Cause people really, especially since the pandemic, need that sense of community because we've, we've lost it. And and having the sense of purpose for, for why we're here and what brings us joy and what we're doing. And it still has to go back to the whole nourishment piece. And I say to people either and, and this is not I, it's not me saying it.

You either invest and take the time to be healthy or you're gonna be forced to be sick.

and you know, it's look, I've come from a place where I lived that and this is why I passionate about the work that I do because you don't want anybody else and love to get sick. And it, it just, it, it is, it's frustrating and not the rest of this was not a rant, but I think we go on these rants because it's almost like we know what we know and we know that what we know can help people.

And yet it is so dismissed by the grander picture of technology and just ego and you know, that's, that's kind of the sad part for me.

AMANDA: I hear you. I hear you. So how do we kind of honor or end on this sort of high note here, . I know, I know.

MERYL: Well, look, here's the thing. I think that more and more people, what I want people to really listen to and I want to resonate **it, is about health and it's about wellbeing, and it's about the absence of illness and how do you create that continuum in your life.**

AMANDA: Yes. And I think,

you know, from my perspective, and there's something I have to work on very hard too. **Do we know the difference between thrive and survive?** Right? How do you get from survive to thrive?

MERYL: I love that. I love that. Because how many people do I see every day who are just surviving?

AMANDA: Most, most people. Yeah. Yeah. Our practices are a little different. That is for sure. But yes, you're absolutely right. Most people, they've gotten to like, okay, I can't put up with this anymore. They can't thrive, they're surviving. Then they wanna know how to get beyond survival to thrival, I guess thrive a new word.

MERYL: So true. So true. And, and you know, and here's the thing. **Unless you are in thrive mode, your body will not be balanced. If you are just in survive mode, your body is reacting** and that's, yeah. Correct. I really want people to hear because. Again, from an evolutionary perspective, and we can end on this and that, cuz I do wanna get into the genomic piece, but **from an evolutionary perspective, we are not meant to be in survival mode 24 7** and our bodies break down and our bodies become compromised in this constant go, go, go, go, go, go from one thing to the next.

People who say, I'm so busy, I'm so busy, I don't have time for anything. You know, that is not we wear that like it's a badge of honor. , I feel bad for you if you are that person that is constantly going, going, going and doesn't take a breath and can't take a minute for yourself.

Because if your body is in survival mode, it's gonna activate your immune system and at some point you are gonna end up sick.

AMANDA: Absolutely. Yeah. And so **how do you get to thrive?** I mean, that's. With your listeners who'll be working with you, Meryl, open the door and say, I wanna thrive and not survive.

How can I do that?

MERYL: Absolutely. You know, and **I say you thrive one step at a time.** Right, exactly. Is **just recognizing that you want to, that's the biggest step** I wanna thrive. I want to put my best foot forward in 2023 and I'm gonna take a look under the. I'm gonna invest. I'm gonna invest not just the money, it's really, it's not about the money.

I'm gonna invest the time to really understand what and how my body works because my body is different than anybody else's body. And once I know that I have all the tools that I need to continue a long, healthy, productive life.

AMANDA: Exactly. **But it does start with you first thing in the morning,** right? You absolutely.

The first thing begin with you. . Awesome.

MERYL: Great conversation. You know, we can continue on this line of, of topic, but I wanna, I do wanna switch gears. So we're gonna, we're gonna regroup and do part two, which is all about genomics. Our favorite conversation,

AMANDA: our favorite conversation, . So

MERYL: thank you for, for this little rundown and Everybody stay tuned for part two.

This is your Rebel nutritionist signing off. I'm make it a great day.