



# *The Natural Healing Podcast*

*with Dr. Setareh Moafi & Salvador Cefalu*

*Episode 62: Simplifying Your Diet to Heal Yourself & the Planet with Andrew Serman*

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:00:00] Today, we're welcoming back our dear friend and colleague, Andrew Serman.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:00:06] Hi, everyone.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:00:10] So Andrew joined us in episodes 33 and 34 of the Natural Healing Podcast. If you want to go back and listen to those delightful episodes. We are super excited to develop and grow our conversation with you. Andrew.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:00:24] It's great to see you both again. We still live cross country and haven't seen you in person, but hopefully sometime soon. Definitely.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:00:56] Welcome to the Natural Healing Podcast. The show designed to guide, inspire and empower you to elevate your health so you can achieve your goals and dreams.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:01:06] We are your hosts.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:01:08] Dr. Setareh Moafi

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:01:10] And Salvador Cefalu.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:01:12] A husband and wife team of acupuncturists and owners of a Center for Natural Healing and Integrative Wellness clinic based in the heart of Silicon Valley.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:01:21] We're here to make the ancient wisdom of healing practical and accessible for your modern lifestyle.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:01:34] Andrew Serman is a world renowned musician who manages and performs with the Philip Glass Ensemble. He's also the author of Welcoming Food, a two volume series with explanation of food, energetics and recipes to live by and put Chinese medicine into practice at home. Andrew created and teaches wellness for performing artists at the New School University in New York. He teaches dietary therapy internationally and sees clients in New York and online.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:02:06] Sounds like you're pretty busy, Andrew. Oh, it feels pretty good. It is busy, but it's energizing. Everything I'm doing really gives back. Tons of energy. So.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:02:20] Well, when you're, like purposeful with what you're doing and you love it, it doesn't ever feel like work.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:02:25] Exactly. Exactly right. Andrew, we've been really looking forward to another interview with you and we have a few ideas for where we want to take this discussion.



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But I really like to know what's on your mind today. Anything that you've been thinking about that you wanted to discuss this morning?

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:02:44] Well, yeah, many things. I've been writing an article about summer heat and summer heat because it is summer. We're recording in August, and one of the problems I have is that I write two articles a year for our friends at Goldenflower Herbs. And then they're open, shared online for free too publicly. And because they come out twice a year, I always miss the same seasons every year. I've been doing this for nearly ten years and so I miss the same season. So we've talked about cold, we've talked about dampness, talked about, you know, I've been writing about the climatic factors, but I've never written about the special climatic factor in Chinese medicine that's called Summer Heat, which is. You might think, well, you know, those of us who were trained to understand the term summer heat. But to the general public, it seems like, well, it's hot in the summertime and there should be summer heat, but summer heat is referring to. Sometimes called summer heat illness. And if our health is impaired, which really has dietary foundation in specific ways of dampness, problems with sugar metabolism and things like this, obviously diabetes is involved and our blood circulation isn't good, our sweating isn't good, our fluid metabolism is impaired, then a heat wave can feel like a wet, humid blanket that's laid on top of us.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:04:16] And we're just just suffocating within our bodies, even though we can breathe air and and and such. And interestingly, right back to the beginning of the medicine, we are warned against cold drinks. And now this is an enormous problem. There's so much ice in our in our culture. There's even ice in wintertime. You walk into a restaurant, you're handed water with ice before you even ask for anything. So Chinese medicine in general, I think, would really like to have something to say about that, to counsel us to be very careful with ice. The ice, ice in your drink, if you like. It should be a rare thing just on an extreme occasion. So. So this is one thing that's been on my mind, the recipes for this explaining this mechanism. And I've been having a good time researching the writings of Zhu Dan Xi, the fourth of the four great masters from the 1300s. And I love his writing and his mindset. So that's one thing on my mind. Another thing on my mind is so for a couple things, I made a couple notes. Another thing on my mind is integrating the Chinese medicine dietary practice, which of course I started out teaching with the focus that the Chinese medicine dietary practice is in no way limited to Chinese food.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:05:36] That was one of the first things that I found myself talking about quite a bit. It can include Chinese food, but this is a dietary practice. You do with any food, the food of your culture, of your neighborhood, whatever you find in your locale, in the in the markets, you like to shop, upscale, downscale, it doesn't matter. So but now I'm very. Interested in integrating the food practice in a larger context and. Within Western medicine's dietary advice. Some of which is good, some of which is quite poor, but some of it is good. With Chinese medicine, dietary advice, and then with one other factor, which is social context. And so if we look at that, again, those three points, we can organize them. I'm quite curious what you'll both think about this, by the way, that I think and this is how I work with with people in a private context as well. We simply must acknowledge the contributions and we should. And there's no conflict whatsoever. Acknowledging the contributions of Modern Bioscience laboratory research



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into nutrition in particular in the 1920s, about a hundred years ago, as the discovery of vitamins and dietary minerals was reaching early maturity and we were solving nutritional deficiency diseases. You know, famous most famous one would be scurvy, but another one which was rampant is pellagra, which is really from eating.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:07:14] It's a worker's diet. When when the workers were being fed at by the employer and only being fed one thing, which was mashed mush of corn. A corn can be a very good food, but if you don't process it like like is done in Central America where it's processed with lime and lime water, then certain nutrients like niacin are not available. And so there was a disease called pellagra, which is absolutely horrific disease, which was relatively widespread. In the poor working classes. And so that was a nutritional deficiency disease and these things were solved. It was politically hot at the time. It's an interesting story. And but the idea that we need to learn protein, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins, minerals, all of this is very, very well explored in laboratory medicine. We also use that in the clinic, but that we would call perhaps the material or substance side, the material side. And Western medicine is very materialistic and there's a presumption which is actually not really valid, that if you eat it, you have received its nourishment. This is a typical of the materialistic model. If there's iron in a food like spinach, you've got iron. But as it turns out, whether we assimilate it or not is is another story altogether. So in Chinese medicine, according to the lineage and our shared teacher with Jeffrey Yuen, the great master, says, he likes to say that nutrition is really only what's assimilated from your diet.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:08:55] Which is exactly correct. So this is still the material side. Are we getting the necessary nutrients then? The contribution that Chinese medicine can make is looking at the the food energetics, because in the Western model, we really don't think about which foods warm the body, which foods are neutral, which foods, clear heat or cool the body. And this is terribly important. We see so many people walking around overheated from their diet and we would call that inflammation. But first of all, it's just plain heat. I mean, I see people in the middle of winter in New York City and they're going to Starbucks to pick up an iced coffee and they're walking around without an overcoat and it's literally freezing. And they're going to a maybe they're working as a trader or something like that, and they're clinically speaking, overheated internal heat. And so we can see that being played. And so Chinese medicine adds a number of absolutely crucial aspects to the discussion, which we would call overall. We call it food energetics. Is this food warming or cooling or perhaps neutral or the extreme foods cold and hot? Generally, foods are warming and cooling. Does what is the directionality of a food? And the directionality is another factor that Chinese medicine offers to add to the OR to wake up the idea that Western medicine offers that if you eat a food, it basically goes everywhere.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:10:30] It goes into your blood and it goes to all your cells and which is simply not true. And you can experiment with this at home that celery has an uplifting quality and carrots have a descending quality. And this this is traditional food practice that every grandmother well, or perhaps great grandmother now has some some degree of access to. Then the idea of which organs does a food in a sense have a home affinity to or with that. That grains when the much maligned grains that we were speaking of have an affinity or a natural



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homing affinity for stomach and the digestive organs of the pancreas and the spleen. And if they're overused, it can cause problems of insulin from the pancreas and spleen and western medicine and Chinese medicine. The small intestine benefits that grains can give and each grain different. So we have to differentiate, but at first we would say grains, something like beans and legumes or lentils and black beans, azuki beans, but natural affinity for liver and to some degree also for kidney some. And there are other aspects as well. And green vegetables like string beans have a natural affinity with also with liver and gallbladder and bean sprouts, with gallbladder and liver again, and foods like almonds that work with the lungs and the large intestine and. Walnuts with kidneys. This is a contribution that has been brought to a very high point in Chinese medicine lineage and is simply missing in biomedicine lens.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:12:07] So we would call this food energetics. What's the influence of the different foods as we eat them and not just food, by the way, as the cooking method? So the difference between baking something and pan frying, it is absolutely enormous. I know people who are, let's say, for example, allergic to eggs and which is not a particularly common but allergy. But it's getting more and more common. But these individuals, some of them can't touch egg. Some of them do just a little bit poorly. And some of them it's they notice it readily. And for that middle group that noticed it quite clearly, some of them can eat eggs if they're soft boiled or poached as very gentle cooking method, moist and gentle. But they have a strong reaction if it's fried, especially if it's hard fried, like if it's really fried with high heat. So we could say maybe. From a Western perspective, maybe the oils are being overcooked and we're denaturing the oils or oxidizing the oils in the process of that high heat of pan frying an egg. But I don't think that's the the most effective way to discuss it. It just changes the energy, adding too much heat to the liver. It really two ways of saying the same thing, but which way is more valuable in the kitchen in practice? And so this is the energetics of food and cooking.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:13:30] And the third of the three aspects that are on my mind that I would suggest or recommend that we all need to think of all three daily is the idea of of adjusting our diet for. Social consciousness aspects that could be aspects of global warming, but not just that. Also health of the farms, health of the land, health of the farmers. It's not just the land on the farms. It's the actual workers who are often most often, of course not the owners. Overwhelmingly, we romanticize the solo family farm, but overwhelmingly the food is coming from workers who do not own. Even in farms that come to farmers markets. You know, obviously it's mostly employees and. Or apprentice farmers if things are going really well. So there's a number of aspects as we unpack, as they say, the idea of socially conscious food consumption, how are we working in the economics of food? Are we putting our money where our feelings are, where our values are? And I think that, of course, traditionally that's not taught in Chinese medicine dietetics because there were only organic farms up until 75 years ago anywhere in the world. There was no genetically modified food to have to negotiate or steer to make a decision about. We didn't have to come to terms with this. That food was farmed and the farms were local and the farmers knew what they were doing.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:15:02] Most people were farmers and understood food extremely well. We cooked what was available and we knew how to cook it. And there are certain. Aspects



of the global marketplace that are wonderful. And we might as as Chinese medicine clinicians. You may be treating someone. I don't do acupuncture, but you may or my wife Ann might be or any anyone listening who's an acupuncturist may be treating someone for that matter Western physician could be treating someone for. A wooden balance for something of the gallbladder. Perhaps that there. Yeah. From a Western perspective that. Feeling that we could encourage the production of bile and the distribution into the food that we've that we're digesting, or that a person is simply feeling lethargic or that there's a condition. That they're being treated for in any modality of medicine, and they just seem like they need more energy to get over this. Maybe. Maybe they have long COVID. They're saying I'm definitely I'm not in danger, but I don't feel fully well and I don't have the energy I want to have. And we might recommend foods that invigorate Chi. And this could be something dietarily that would go along with the treatments that would and also, by the way, having more rest. So something maybe like sauteed asparagus that you're going to cut into, maybe, you know, wash and trim the asparagus and then cut into maybe 4 or 5 pieces and put it in a pan with some slivered ginger, fresh ginger and some scallion.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:16:42] The ginger will warm digestion. The asparagus works with liver gallbladder, and it kind of has an ascending nature, but it's not. It doesn't make us hot. It's ascending without heat. Much like those herbalists out there, like the Herb Bupleurum, which is has a superpower of raising cheating the body without raising heat. And because we don't want inflammation, but we want more energy, it would be the way to say it. In the general population circles, we want more energy, but we don't want inflammation. So we need something like a dish like like we're making up right now. So I would leave garlic out because we don't want too much heat, but we do want ginger. Maybe a pinch of good sea salt, a good oil. Since we're sauteing it, I wouldn't use olive oil. Maybe grapeseed oil which handles heat better. Or if you prefer, avocado or coconut coconut oil. And what else do we want to put in? Maybe slivered carrots because they're grounding. So we're grounding and ascending. But the asparagus would be more than the carrots you cut them. So they cook similar time. And maybe if we really feel we already have heat in the liver or gallbladder because maybe someone is drinking beer or something like that and there's some some damp heat in the gallbladder that maybe we would want to throw in some beansprouts the last two minutes of cooking just to warm them through splash of water, splash of oil, maybe a splash of stock or even a splash of rice wine, then cook out the alcohol and a dish like that which you would serve with rice or with millet or steamed buckwheat, if you like, or quinoa amaranth.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:18:18] So there's a lot of options in terms of of the grain and a dish like that that you would have, let's say, once a day for a week would have a medicinal effect, a beneficial effect on the liver gallbladder system, as well as providing the nutrients that are in the asparagus and the carrot and the grain that you selected, the nutrients, the micronutrients, the vitamins and minerals are the micronutrients, of course, and we're using natural foods. And so it would we don't really have to fuss about exactly which ones they are. So something like that. So what we need to do is to work on all of these and organically grown to protect the land. Thinking about how much meat and dairy we're having to reduce the huge populations of farm animals that are not well treated and contributing to climate change, etcetera. So those are the three





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aspects I think we should always be thinking about. And really they're all indispensable for modern living. That's what I'm thinking about.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:19:13] Yes, that's beautiful. And I think all of those three that you brought together remind us to reconnect to the nature of everything and the nature of food. I think when you talked about food, energetics, initially, it reminded me of my upbringing. So in my Iranian heritage growing up, we were always told what to eat based on how we were feeling, Oh, you're eating this well, you know, add a little more spice or, you know, you're feeling tired or your digestion is weak, then you should only eat soup, you know, just making sure that you're paying attention to what you eat to diagnose and also to help improve the condition that you're in.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:19:50] I love that.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:19:51] That's perfect. And different spices for different ailments or different intentions. And I think what I love about the way that you approach it and I'm doing a lot of work in this way as well with a course that I'm going to be sharing in the new Year is helping people get back to that nature. And if you weren't raised in that way with the older cultural influences, because a lot of old cultures teach this naturally, even if the kids don't realize it at the time. I think a lot of us, when we get older, we're like, Oh, that's why she told us to put turmeric or Oh, that's why we were supposed to drink, you know this with our tea, right? As we get older, we realize the value of that. And I think for those people who have not grown up with that learning, that changes your relationship to food and food, energetics. And when you have a better relationship with food, then you have a better relationship with how it assimilates in your body as well. Because unfortunately, the direction that we seem to be going is to make foods more processed. And now there's talk about, you know, creating meat instead of, you know, having but, you know, getting away from nature. And this is what this medicine reminds us, is to go back to what's natural.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:21:05] You know, And like you were referring to raising the energy and increasing a person's energy without creating more inflammation. It made me think of a patient who's been having some chronic pain. And she came in recently with her belly all distended and swollen. And I'm like, What have you been eating? And she said, Well, nothing really. I just had some big like large gulps at the pool today. So this cold just paralyzed her.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:21:31] She like those big icy drinks.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:21:34] Oh, you weren't talking about swallowing pool water by accident. You're talking about some like a gulp.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:21:38] Big Gulp. Yeah.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:21:39] Like ice.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:21:40] Drinks. Ice drink? Yes. Yes.



**Andrew Sterman:** [00:21:42] You can't do that. I mean, you can get away with it for a certain amount of time, maybe a certain number of decades even. But eventually, the cold water habit, let's put it like this. This is how I describe it to patients like that. Nothing in the human body works better when it's cold. No function. There isn't a single function of the human body that improves when it's cold. If things slow down when they're cold. Yes.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:22:10] Think about the nature of cold.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:22:12] You're not going to get circulation. I said this pain is definitely not going to get better. If you're putting a lot of cold food in your body. Right. Right. And you could see immediately the ramifications. So she got that message, right?

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:22:25] So someone like that will get it right away because the bloating is painful and you lose your appetite and you're not pleased with how you look and so forth. I used to occasionally treat a couple of models that said that they bloat because their diets have not been good. They've damaged their digestion in different ways, some just by under-eating, some by history of food disorders. And a couple of them, two of them in particular. Of course, it's anonymous, but I can tell the story from diet supplements when they were young, still teens entering the modeling world, and they would take these appetite suppressants and try to get skinny. And it damaged digestion for years. It's a very slow recovery. And then they would bloat because they're not digesting food well and they'd just be sent home. Is the modeling industry is not very compassionate. You know, they just use you and toss you.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:23:21] Once your gut health is damaged, it takes a lot of work to repair.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:23:24] That takes a lot of work.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:23:26] But it can be done. Absolutely can be done. Yes.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:23:29] So let's why don't we just give a couple guidelines on for those of us. And I always like to include myself in all the problems. And so people sometimes are confused by that. Until I start talking about menstrual cramps and things like that and people start to realize maybe, maybe he's speaking hypothetically. So but as a turn of phrase, when we say, let's say my digestion is weak and a lot of people don't like to hear that their digestion is weak. We're very proud of being strong, capable people. But if there's bloating, our digestion is weak. If I have type two diabetes, my digestion is weak by definition. We're not digesting, transforming, transporting, assimilating. Well, we just have to admit that it's very helpful to admit that. Say, I'm a great person with weak digestion. Okay, cool. Good. Now we can. Now we can move forward and that helps us understand the way out, which is to simplify our meals, to be easier to digest if we fight that idea. This is something when I work with people who self-identify as elderly, I won't define when elderly begins. Middle aged starts about ten years from the age I'm at right now, by the way. I'm just saying. But but in any case, people who self-identify as elderly, who are healthy but are eating in an inappropriate manner for their age, including a lot of ice cold drinks, a lot of raw salads and things like that. So they're not nourishing themselves, appropriate for their health status. So if our digestion is weak, we want to essentially want to put



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a sign up on in your kitchen someplace that says. And I have had a few people who have done exactly that. They write out a sign and they tape it all over, you know, over the stove, on the refrigerator and so forth. And it says, Simple meals, easy for me to digest. And that me is important because that that means it's personal. So that's where, like you were saying, as you according to how you feel, but not how you wish you felt. Right. How you actually feel. So and that's a process. It's really a meditational process of being honest and insightful with yourself.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:25:47] AD//Fatigue, bloating, gas, acid reflux, poor or excessive appetite, diarrhea or constipation. These are all symptoms related to poor gut health, which provides the foundation for your entire well being. And while making the dietary and nutritional changes necessary to improve your gut health might seem overwhelming, there is an easy way to begin your transformation. Visit [setarehmoafi.com/guthealth](http://setarehmoafi.com/guthealth) To download my free audio guide on how to improve your gut health. In just one week you'll learn three incredibly simple yet powerful strategies to improve the health of your gut, to boost your immune system, improve your mood, deepen your sleep, and even strengthen your mental clarity and ability to manage stress. Go to [setarehmoafi.com/guthealth](http://setarehmoafi.com/guthealth) to start feeling better in just one week. That's [SETAREHMOAFI.com/guthealth//AD](http://SETAREHMOAFI.com/guthealth//AD)

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:26:54] I love that you said simplify, Andrew, because I think that's where we miss the mark a lot because people think that to get their nutrients they have to first of all, I mean we say this all the time in the clinic where patients come in and they're taking like 25 different supplements because their doctors have told them you need to have more iron, you need to have more vitamins, you need to have more this or that. So they're taking everything that's good for them, quote and quote unquote. But none of those things are really being assimilated and they're wondering why. They're constantly bloated, they're constipated, they're having all these digestive issues.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:27:29] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:27:30] And still with lethargy.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:27:32] Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Right.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:27:34] Because they're not handling those nutrients in concentrated forms. The body is not designed I mean, I haven't actually spoken to the designer. I mean. Right.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:27:46] But I can still say I think we can all can say that it's obvious that the body was not designed for concentrated foodstuffs taken out of food and concentrated in a laboratory industrial setting.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:28:01] Protein Powders.

**Andrew Serman:** [00:28:03] Protein powders. That's right.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:28:04] Smoothies.





**Andrew Sterman:** [00:28:06] And that's like a simplified meal plan for a lot of people so fast that they could rely on. But, you know, they're doing this, you know, they're doing this daily.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:28:17] At their detriment. And yeah, so what we want to.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:28:20] Do then, because.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:28:21] Also, we are very entertained by food and food has become our our culture's principal entertainment that would rival films and television. It used to be people would go to theater, but now people go to restaurants much more often than they go to theater and they go to restaurants with purpose. What do you want to do? That's what I want to do. It's, restaurants are the entertainment. And then, of course, people are watching cooking shows and professional, high end, highly trained chefs and amateurs pretending to be highly trained chefs. And so this is putting a actually a burden on home cooking that we need to work with consciousness to add to what we've been saying before, mostly what you guys have been saying before about traditional cooking.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:29:06] The Holy Grail in cooking is simple food that tastes great. This is the ultimate goal.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:29:12] Very simple food that tastes great. This is what is so stunning about going to a like a village restaurant in Italy, for example, where you think I could cook this, except that we actually can't. There's you look you see, there's. Three ingredients and it's so unbelievably well done. And this to me is the ultimate.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:29:32] Now, you don't want it to always be the same. We need to rotate through a menu so that you do get different nutrients at different times. But you're right, it's not necessarily for healthy people to take supplements. It's not necessary to take protein powders. It's certainly not necessary. For any of the three points that I've proposed. This is my new proposal for a healthy diet.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:29:55] In a general way is that it meets the nutritional needs that we have. It meets the energetic needs of our personal health, and it doesn't unduly tax the Earth itself. So with those three points in mind, we definitely do not need fake meat and fake nutrition foods. We don't need it. They cost more than they give us.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:30:22] And what I say is if we don't if we want to cut down on eating meat, it's the simplest thing in the world. Yes, we eat steamed some beautiful rice, not just regular rice, but get some good stuff, you know, find some really beautifully grown rice. And there's many types available. It can be brown rice, it can be white rice, it can be red rice from the Himalayas. It can be black rice from Asia. Black and purple rice is basmati jasmine, long grain. There's so many kinds and. Or millet or buckwheat and and amaranth is underused and people don't eat barley enough. And maybe we we cook some rye rye kernels and mix that in with with another grain. There's so many good things we can do. So you set up your grain and then make some lentils. They're really easy to cook for beans. They're the easiest to digest. In



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Asia, we would say mung beans. In the West, Europe and America, we the Americas, we would say lentils or in India we would say lentils. And so rice and beans with broccoli or kale or string beans or bok choy and some olive oil on top, some sea salt. And you have a really nutritious meal, vastly more nutritious than what most people are eating when they eat out.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:31:41] And faster, usually faster. Even getting takeout takes more time than cooking a meal.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:31:47] You get it done in the time it takes to order a pizza and have it delivered or drive out to a chicken place or something. And it's less expensive. Saving money, taking care of everything, hitting all three points in our three point plan of public health, private health and nutritional needs. And you're empowered rather than disempowered, it will taste fantastic. And then you say, Then we can all become, if I dare say, I hope this, I'm going to ask for permission to be honorary Iranian.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:32:18] Of course.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:32:19] Thank you.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:32:20] Because that Persian food, Iranian food is one of the best of the world's cuisines at using herbs and spices.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:32:27] Oh, absolutely.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:32:28] It uses yes, absolutely. Uses fresh Herbs more than any cuisine I can think of and.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:32:35] Skillfully So we can use some of that. We can accept some of that influence and say, well, maybe we need to add parsley on top, maybe cilantro, coriander leaf because we want to spread our energy. And those two herbs work with liver. And the liver's connection and or affinity tying it together with lungs in particular, Parsley does that and that communication between Lung and Liver.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:33:06] If we have enough fluid and the fluids will come from the steamed rice or the steamed millet which contribute fluids, that is how our immune Qi is produced. That's in Chinese medicine. Of course you recognize where we're going. That's the production of Wei Qi, which is the way we talk about our ability to meet an immune challenge.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:33:27] I like the way you said that. Yeah.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:33:30] Do we have the ability to fulfill that function? And so this meal will support immunity, which is something that many people have been asking. What's the secret bullet? What supplements would I take to boost my immunity?

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:33:43] And we might not even accept that premise that if we boost it, we're likely to tax it.



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**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:33:48] Right without over stimulating a lot of people. They love eating garlic just because they want to give their immune system a boost. Although it could be very useful in acute situation when cold or something, but exactly so. But boy, people are just doing this on a regular basis. And sometimes I literally see people, they come in beet red. And, you know, they're just there's so much fire in their system, you know. Taking garlic capsules, we've learned.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:34:18] We've learned when people come in with a very, very red complexion.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:34:21] What I like to do. So if people who are who are listening to your podcast, if they're I know many of them are probably highly trained in Chinese medicine, but for those that are laypeople, everyone's a cook. So everyone's working with medicine. From my perspective, by the way, what it may, may or may not be well done, but we're working with with medicine, right? And but so this idea that Salvador that you're talking about, they come in with a red complexion. But compare it with their hands or compare your own with your hands because that's your own skin tone. You can't. So you're likely to say, well I just have a deeper, more Mediterranean complexion or someone African American of many, many different shades of within the African American community, of course, but or Hispanic community, hopefully. You know, we live in a very, very diverse culture. But compare a person's hands with their face and you get a sense of if inflammation is rising in their body because heat tends to rise. So.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:35:21] And then we would say we've come to learn to ask if they're taking garlic capsules. Please stop. I mean, how much do you need me to pay you to stop doing that?

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:35:29] Yeah, but this is the whole problem is we get away from the energetics of food and then food gets put into categories of healthy and unhealthy, and the person falls by the wayside. There's no consideration for the individual anymore in terms of diagnosing and treating through nutrition. And that's what I love about what you're teaching and that's what I love about our medicine is that it takes us back to that. And that's it's just beautiful and taking responsibility.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:35:58] Volume One of Welcoming Food really was dedicated to giving people the tools to have some kind of insightful assessment. We may not call it a diagnosis and get the MDS upset, but insightful, some specific insight into their health status. And because we really can't just expect the doctors to guide us, they don't have the time and they don't have the training and diet and they'll readily tell you they don't have that training in diet. So that's what that volume one was really dedicated to that. Let's go through the meaning. We don't have to do it now, but the premise of the book was let's go through the different functions of immunity, of digestion, of elimination, of circulation, the different functions of the various organs. And then once we understand what they're supposed to be doing, we can begin to match it with foods.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:36:51] What's a good food for the lungs? Well, the lungs accept air from the outside and that that needs to have a spreading quality and a deep breath quality, what we



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call dispersion and dissension In Chinese medicine. I call it open breath and deep breath. It's really the same.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:37:10] And so what foods might help us? Well, parsley, especially. The flat leaf parsley that's so popular now, can help that. Cilantro can help.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:37:18] Almonds help the descending quality of lungs and so as do pine nuts, by the way.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:37:23] So we begin to put these things together and then maybe digestion itself needs some help. Maybe we do like pasta and we don't feel we have a problem with wheat, but it's a little heavy. So maybe we want to add some oregano. Oregano. However we like to pronounce it and add some seed spices like I don't know. Maybe we'll have some cook, some string beans. And because it is summertime now and the weather is hot, so we'll cook the string beans just a little bit, not fully soft, and we'll take them out. We might even blanch them in cool water to stop the cooking. Shocking them as, as it's called, in cooking circles. And then you strain them and make a mustard vinaigrette.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:38:09] So something with some some vinegar, of course, some olive oil and some mustard seeds. You might grind them yourself, you might toast them and maybe put in some cumin and other spices. That would be a way to bring spices into the meal to help digest another part of the meal. That might be a pasta dish that you've cooked.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:38:27] And so in that way, you can guide your your cooking. As for basic health maintenance, which is different than therapy. So we have basic in Chinese medicine dietary branch, we make a very clear, conscious distinction between eating for health maintenance, basic wellness, and if we actually want to get something done that's therapeutic, in which case we have to eat the food more often and it needs to be more precisely constructed.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:38:59] //AD//Want to know the single most important thing you can do to strengthen your immune system? Improve your gut health. More and more studies demonstrate the important relationship between gut health and healthy immunity, as well as the ability to have consistent energy and mental clarity. Ahara Botanics is our personal line of products, including probiotics to support gut health, digestive enzymes, to support digestion and nutrient absorption and proteolytic enzymes to support healthy joint and muscle function, tissue recovery and circulation. Visit AHaraBotanics.com and use the promo code Healthy10 to get 10% off your first order now. That's AharaBotanics.com with promo code healthy10.//AD//

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:39:49] Imagine a vegan who wants to eat burgers. It's like it's comical. It's okay to eat burgers and it's okay to be vegan, but to be a vegan who wants to eat burgers. What I call clinically speaking, that's a conflict. And in my clinical work, I like to identify conflicts because resolving our inner conflicts is necessary to improve our health. Health is not just diet. It's not just medical therapy. Health is resolving our conflicts which impair digestion and block the flow of blood. And we can say that they reach very eventually to the somatic level.



**Andrew Sterman:** [00:40:26] So if someone, as a culture, if we want to eat less meat because meat is contributing to climate change in a significant fashion, we just eat less meat. It's not necessary to eat none. It's beneficial for the climate, for the world, for farmers, for animals, and for our personal health if we eat simply LESS meat.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:40:49] So let's say we have a goal. We set an artificial goal to begin of cutting back our meat consumption by, let's say, one third. Well, that's significant. That would be huge. And if we want to take the bullet point number one, the Western nutrition perspective, that too much meat might lead to stagnation problems. Problems of, at least from a conventional point of view, I may or may not agree with this, but as we're guided, we're told problems of arteriosclerosis and such like, which we see in Chinese medicine therapy as a stagnation based on inflammation, etcetera. And that. So meat per se is not the problem. It's the way we're handling it. But in any case.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:41:31] Let's say we would like to cut back. Our doctor says eat less meat. All right. One third would be great. Maybe even a half. Maybe you would cut back by two thirds, but two thirds might be too much to ask of the Western world at the current time. But let's say one third. Then in the other meals, you're adding more beans. If we want to replace that, maybe we feel that we're having too much protein.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:41:55] And we don't need to replace that, so in which case you're having a very simple meal of, I don't know, sweet potato and zucchini and mushrooms and such like that and it'd be excellent. It's very, very easy. You just. You just replace things with more vegetables. It's really, it's this is a win-win all around for our personal health, public health and Western defined health. So there is no need for fake meat at all and there's no particular need for supplements. What there is a need for is good farming, good shopping and good cooking.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:42:32] And paying attention. You know, just being aware of what you're eating. I think people often eat on the go. They eat during meetings. They eat in unconscious environments that impede their digestion. And then at the end of that meal, you don't feel satisfied. So when you're not sated, then you're hungry, even though you're not. Yeah. And then you're overeating. I think portion size is also important. When people are overeating, you know, you have like these, what is it like three quarter pound burgers and, you know, you don't need that much meat in one sitting. So maybe if we slowed it down and we paid attention and we practice more mindfulness with eating also, then the demands of our bodies would also change.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:43:12] The points you're bringing up are so crucial that we eat too fast. We don't.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:43:16] Chew. Yes, we don't chew sufficiently.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:43:19] Which tires digestion. Getting back to the idea of weakened digestion that the digestion essentially has to finish chewing, which is burdensome.





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**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:43:28] Yeah. Which is the first step of digestion. I think most people don't even remember that or know that, that it begins with chewing, right?

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:43:36] It's so important, I think.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:43:38] Andrew I'm just so used to watching my dogs eat where they, they just swallow the food that it's becoming a habit. No, but see, dogs have like, you know, they have a much, much stronger stomach acid. They could eat rocks practically, you know, they could eat garbage off the ground. And we can't manage that. Yeah.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:43:58] Carnivores. And they can eat garbage off the ground if they don't feel well, they vomit.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:44:04] And they then immediately. Eat some grass. Yeah.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:44:05] And they eat some grass or some and they immediately start looking for the fun. I mean a dog will look for fun within about five seconds of vomiting. So true. What's the next entertainment? You know? And of course, we don't feel like that.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:44:19] We also don't allow ourselves to feel like that because we get stuck in what just happened.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:44:24] Right.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:44:24] Right.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:44:25] So what you're bringing up is. More and more of my practice because, yes, food is crucial. Every single person should be developing a food practice with more wisdom, more insight, more mindfulness. And it doesn't have to be overly serious. It was still absolutely delicious meals. And that's one of the things, of course, that people say. They say, you know I thought you were going to take away more foods from my diet than you have. I said, no, I actually would like you to eat. More broadly.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:44:56] We're putting foods into people's kitchen rather than taking them out. And I think that's the best way. Oh, for sure. Yeah. And it's delicious. Eating it takes a little bit more time, but it doesn't.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:45:06] You get used to it. It actually is like we were saying before, it works fine. So however, we can't do everything with food, a great deal of this is the interplay between diet and our emotional terrain. And I would say that that that's true with Western medicine. It's true with acupuncture, herbal medicine as well, that I've come to think that it's unrealistic to ask the modalities themselves to be so powerful. And they are powerful to overcome health problems when the emotional causation is still in place and strong. So the way I've been working more and more is to take a look at the emotions that a person brings forward when they come online for a session. Everyone's unique and we start to look for where these conflicts are. I mean, I know this because I have my own I've worked through many of them. I



still have others. So I come at this with a tremendous humility. The only thing that may not be humble is my sense of being humble because I really feel humble. I will advertise that. I mean, that sounds really weird. I get that. I get how weird that sounds.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:46:16] But what I'm saying is that I've I've been through a lot of this. And we look at it, where is our conflict here? Why am I eating at 11 p.m., midnight? Why am I eating when I'm full? Some of them are food technicalities. For example I love this theory that if we eat refined food like white bread or rice, it doesn't it doesn't have to be bad quality white bread. It could be beautiful french bakery bread refined flour or pasta, refined flour. And we're eating that kind of a diet. Right. And in the morning you're having, I don't know, some kind of breakfast cereal or something like that or skipping breakfast. And then at the office you're having a pastry which is made from refined flour and of course, sugar, which is which is the most highly refined of all foods. And then you get tired and you have more caffeine and more sugar. And then maybe for dinner we're having something. But it could be low in fiber. Maybe you're having fish for dinner and but there's not much fiber in what we've been eating. And then at 11:15 at night, you get the munchies. And there's a really interesting dietary theory that the body's looking for the fiber. Maybe you're your health food person. You had carrot juice and apple juice, but they took the fiber out when they were making the juice. And the body's sensing a lack in its genius wisdom. And then now we're eating corn chips at midnight. And you just. I don't care. I can't stand it. I'm eating. And so the body is looking for a balance, but it's not a good balance. Whereas if we were eating more holistic foods, they don't necessarily always have to be whole, but more holistic foods than they'll solve some of these cravings and that's a food based theory of craving. But of course there's also the emotional based theory of craving. We need to look at this. What's missing? What comforts are we looking for that we're not able to find in our life? What aspect of our ability to self comfort did we never learn as a child or as an adolescent or as an adult? And eventually one of my meditation teachers said this sentence to me once. It was so kind and so at the same time like a lightning strike, because eventually we have to face it head on and learn to calm ourselves. Just us. No ice cream, no cake. I'm riffing on what he said. He said, eventually you have to sit down and be able to calm yourself. That was his sentence. What I'm saying, no ice cream, no cake, no pastries, no, no chardonnay. Whatever it is. That people use self-soothing, learning to self-soothe learning finally, which is something we might have learned in early childhood.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:49:05] You know, just through my own experience, though, I find when I have a meal that's more acidic, then I'll be craving something more like a dessert, something sweet, something something that's going to dampen. Maybe that maybe the heat the right.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:49:22] And let's add to that spicy peppers.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:49:24] Because there's an inflation going on in our culture and personally and I can testify to this I happen to like spicy food. If I didn't know what I know, I would be eating quite a bit of it. But me too. I feel the same. Yes, I relate to that the thing that's called the Scoville Scale, which is the scale. I think I'm saying it right. Scoville is named after whoever



invented it. It's the scale that's used to rate spicy hot peppers. Peppers is the phrase we use in the in North America for the spicy capsicum. So the rest of the world calls them

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:49:59] Capsicum, which is their botanical name. But hot chili peppers of various kinds. So even if we're not living in America or North America, people understand American speech, the word peppers. So in any case, they come rated in different degrees. Of heat or irritation. And the way the scale works is that they would they have volunteers who will eat one of these peppers. Raw. You know, whether it's, you know, jalapeno or the sweet peppers or habaneros or the all the different ones and there's hundreds and hundreds of different ones. And then, of course, it burns the mouth and water doesn't help. It doesn't do anything. Milk or dairy makes it worse. I mean, this is the science. They say in Indian cuisine. We often use yogurt in this way. But to the food scientists will say that that dairy doesn't help because the fat in dairy acts as a kind of coating that holds in the irritating chemicals holds them close to the tongue. So it can actually make it worse. If you've over if you're burning your mouth on hot peppers. And so what they use is sugar water and sugar is a natural antidote to spice.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:51:13] Well, that's fascinating.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:51:14] Yeah, it's so interesting. So what they'll do is they'll measure it by a tablespoon. I think it's by tablespoon. And how many tablespoons of sugar water at a certain concentration the person needs to take to feel that their taste is back to neutral. So it could be three if it's a mild pepper. Or it could be 200, if it's like a habanero or something, I'm just going off the top of my head. We can look it up on a chart.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:51:38] Well, now I know I'll reach for the honey when I when I fry my mouth.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:51:43] It's so interesting because our culture is craving hot peppers and increased spice. Not just Americans. But in India and Korea and these places that there's an inflation in Mexico, it's getting hotter and hotter and hotter. The cuisine, they were always using spices, but there's an inflation going on, self stimulation, and then there's self-soothing with sugar. And this is this is a balance of extremes that is hurting us to the level. If we go back to something controversial, we said earlier - how many people would have survived COVID infections who didn't if their diet for the last, say, year or six.

**Speaker2:** [00:52:21] Months or even two months had been free of sugar, free of alcohol, free of, let's say, dairy, which, you know, building phlegm in the lungs, in the breathing and free of excess peppers, which is causing us to crave these foods.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:52:38] Right. And free of preservatives. Okay.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:52:41] Right.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:52:42] So and we would literally the people in our families and our friendship circles, we lost. I won't venture my personal opinion. Let me go on the record with it. A conservative opinion would be 50% of those people would have survived.



**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:52:57] The CDC director said 75% of the people who passed with COVID had five or more comorbidities.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:53:06] Yes.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:53:07] So these are all diseases of excess, you know, chronic degenerative diseases, diabetes, heart disease,

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:53:14] Weak digestion.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:53:15] All you know, you know, that's all always going to be a part of it.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:53:20] And underneath that or along with, that very very simple is dehydration. Dehydration, chronic dehydration, of which there's a big debate in our culture. The recent article in The New York Times testifies to this, that. Is there such a thing as this chronic dehydration or is this overblown? And they're basically saying. Kind of both, right. They hedged their bets on it. But in Chinese medicine, we're clear that we are seeing chronic dehydration, that there is not enough internal fluid, healthy fluids to support best function. Now I'm saying best function, so we're still living because the body will keep the most important things going first. And so there's enough fluids to live. But not to live perfectly well at our best health.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:54:17] And so this underlies all chronic degenerative disease.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:54:21] And we have to remind listeners that it's not dehydration does not necessarily result just from not drinking enough water because I have a lot of patients that I say, you know, your fluids are very deficient. And they say, well, I drink water all day long. And one thing I actually, Jeffrey recently said in a lecture is that you actually shouldn't drink water all day long. Because that actually can ruin your body's ability to gauge how much it needs. So it's better to drink.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:54:50] Yes, it confuses the body,

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:54:52] Yes, it confuses the body. But also hydrating through food. So think about the most popular snacks in our culture. They're like chips and popcorn. Dry. All dry.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:55:01] Except for ice cream.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:55:02] Right. Which is very damp.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:55:04] Which is cold. And sweet. And dairy is very, very damp.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:55:07] Yes. Yeah. So making sure that you're getting hydration through things, foods like grains and soups and congees, that's very underrated. And not people don't receive that education. They don't receive that information. So they don't know. So they just drink, you know, carry these giant, you know, things of water around all day long and drink it all day long and then wonder why they have a dehydration problem.



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**Andrew Sterman:** [00:55:30] My clients very often will will make a big demonstration of drinking during sessions. These huge.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:55:36] Yeah.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:55:37] Two liter bottles of water. But it's exactly as you say. Everything we eat and drink provides nourishment. And that would be our bullet point number one. You know, the fulfilling the Western medical nutrition needs. But the energetic part we can think of as a message. Everything we eat and drink sends a message to our energy body, our energetic body, our. It's like our electrical grid. We recently put solar panels on our home, by the way, so I've been very in tune with with the concept of the grid as I learned some of the complexities of it and, and watch our meter turn in reverse. It's very fun. So it's better than television, which we don't actually have. But in any case, if you think of the energetic messaging that food and fluids are giving and cooking methods and everything we do, our physical practices are giving messages. And the real medicine happens through messaging. So you always this is something else we could think we could put a big note or wear the t shirt when we go to cook your foods, give messages to your inner body, to the inner organs, to the functions. So drinking too much water is giving a message that there's so much water available, we don't need to really organize it, or at least to disorganization. And of course we just pee it out. And so then your clients are showing you that they're drinking during the session or whatever they're carrying around like you know, so much water and weighs a ton and all that. And yet their tongues still show signs of dehydration. Their pulses are still showing clear signs of being under hydrated. We might not call it dehydration, but borderline under hydration of.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:57:14] Yeah lack of hydration.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:57:15] And the fluids are not well organized in the body. So just like you say, the Chinese medicine dietetics is extremely clear on this point. The body hydrates better from moist food than from water. Now, I would say water is also important and water is a particularly good cleansing agent. Right. So it's very important first thing in the morning. So what are the little things we can do to improve our health a great deal? You know, for the most bang, for the buck or the best leverage. Its more elegant way of saying it. Still water first thing in the morning room temperature or even slightly warm with no flavoring, no lemon, no anything. No tea, no coffee. Of course. If you like coffee, have coffee, but have it later. After food. But first thing in the morning, 1 or 2. My preference is to that's my personal practice. Full glasses of water. So I would use I have tea in this, but this is like I guess a American style coffee mug probably is. What this is. And it happens to have puerh tea in it right now. But I start with, with two of these of water and then I use it for my Puehr tea later in the morning. So that just saves me washing to be washing, to be honest, because that's a part of it as well. Sometimes people don't want to wash the dishes, they don't want to do the dishes so they don't cook. So I think one of the things I've been trying to teach lately is cook in such a way that it's easy to clean this one.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [00:58:43] Like one pot dishes.





**Andrew Sterman:** [00:58:43] Yes, one or maybe two. And yes, maybe the instapot for your grain and then one pot on the stove. And this raises compliance and happiness factor, which raises health. So morning water is what we call it. And this will go right through the stomach because there's no food in it. That's why we don't flavor it. That's why we don't put say honey and lemon in it because that the stomach will interpret that as food and slow down the process. Just water. The stomach will, will accept it. And will pass it right through the the intestines. The small intestine will say, this is not food. We're passing it right on to the large intestine, which is known in Chinese medicine as managing the waterways. That's one of the things it does. It controls the waterways. And so this lets the body know if it's dehydrated or not. And the large intestine will absorb that water into the bloodstream. It'll also help lubricate the stool for morning elimination. And now we're way far ahead.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [00:59:44] You're good to go?

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:59:46] Yeah. You're really, really helping health in the day. Then we begin with breakfast, which, like you say, can be a grain. So you think of the difference in hydration between congee and, let's say toast. Whole wheat toast. It's healthy.

**Andrew Sterman:** [00:59:58] It's whole grain. That's what the government's telling us to eat more of. But because you can't go against the agricultural lobby. What we want to have is something like gluten free something or maybe spelt bread, which has some gluten, but a traditional amount. Not the not the hyper gluten of modern wheat. Spelt bread is easy to make. Really, really delicious. If you can tolerate wheat. So in any case, think of the difference between whole wheat toast and congee, or, for example, steamed rice with two eggs on top and maybe some some seaweed or some asparagus next to it. Something like that. Really, really good eating is delicious and nourishes hydration.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:00:41] And another point that we have to be very careful to include before moving off hydration is that the word hydration really should be moistening or contributing fluids, because hydration comes from the word the Greek hydro water, word, hydro or whatever, whatever it is because what we really need to include is that the moistening of the body, the fluids are not just water, but also oils and people today we've been indoctrinated about low fat, this low fat that. And we are deprived of oils. Then of course, we have oil cravings - getting back to this idea of what's been missing. And then you have you say, well, I've been really good. I'm now I'm having French fries with dinner or whatever, or potato chips, corn chips from a bag that were cooked in oil months and months ago. They're very stale. So what will happen here is that the body has has legitimate daily needs for for good quality oil. And that oil includes saturated fat and it includes dietary cholesterol, oil. This is essential for every cell. The cell membrane includes cholesterol and includes saturated fat. If we don't eat it, we have to produce it and we're capable of doing that. But what will happen is if we don't have the sufficient resources to for the lipid needs, if you want to use a more scientific term for fat. The membrane around every cell around our nervous cell, the nerve cells in the brain, every single cell and within the cells, the mitochondria are wrapped in fat. That's what's called the bilayer lipid membrane.



**Andrew Sterman:** [01:02:28] And if we don't have good quality oils and fats available, our bodies will be forced to make these essential structures from whatever fat we have been eating, which may not be good. So we're eating these highly processed vegetable oils that are really not intended for human consumption in. Not really the byproducts of another industry, corn oil, which if it was natural, it would be okay. But we're not eating natural cornmeal. It's highly refined and high heat with the use of a lot of chemicals, and it's chemically denatured. So one of the ways to think about this is, well, the way I'm thinking about it currently, when Salvador, when you're saying, What are you thinking about these days? I have been thinking about the integrity of fats in the body. So in Chinese medicine, we'll say it like this. That we have thin fluids and thick fluids that we need. The thin fluids are mostly water based and the thick fluids, so to speak. Thick fluids are mostly oil based. And that includes animal fat, which would be, you know, if we're eating animals, the fat within naturally raised particularly Grass fed beef rather than corn fed. This kind of animal food where you don't have to have much of it, but it's much richer. And I mean, I've spent 15 years as a vegetarian without a single lapse, by the way, so I know. And then I decided that I would start eating meat. I would join the world. So I do I'm familiar with both sides of that table. So for vegetarians, we need to eat a lot of olive oil, avocados, nuts and seeds. This will be pretty good. Beans also have oils in them. As, for example, soybean oil. But we don't want soybean oil. We want to eat actual soybeans. So. Or black beans or adzuki beans or lentils, whatever is good for you in your preference. But we need to do this. Then if you're also eating meat. And by the way, I advocate that people who do eat meat. Eat a vegetarian diet with the addition of some animal food.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:04:32] That if you looked at your diet, it would actually be a strong, good diet and then you're adding fish, meat, poultry, etcetera. So if for those who do pardon me, who do add animal food, we still want olive oil on our vegetables. We still want sesame oil on our grains and our congee and such like that. We still want the inclusion of nuts and seeds which are high in protein, fiber and oils. You can see how how perfect this is. We don't even really need to worry about our diet. Just eat these natural foods and everything's pretty much taken care of. As long as we can digest them well, which is that is the proper discussion is can we digest these rich foods well? But then something like maybe if we're eating chicken. We've been indoctrinated that we have to avoid the skin because it has so much fat. That is incorrect. We need to be able to handle the fat, but the chicken should be with the skin. We should be eating duck For those of us who eat meat with that that thick layer of fat. Salmon with these fish oils that. People are actually taking fish oil capsules, which we don't need. We just need cold water, fish, salmon, mackerel, sardines, herring. Et cetera. And so that's the way this game is properly played.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [01:05:46] Andrew, I'm sure you've you've noticed. I've seen it time and again. When someone goes on a low fat diet, they start to on the exterior age much more rapidly. Yes, their skin just starts to dry up, you know, and premature wrinkling occurs,

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:06:04] Which is a sign of dehydration. But in this case, it's water and oil. Both.



**Salvador Cefalu:** [01:06:09] Right. You could just see, you know, the cell membranes aren't the integrity is breaking down.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:06:13] And another peril of a low fat diet is the inability to handle stress. Because the stress hormones you know, switching gears to our first bullet point of the Western findings, we could say that's like a three lane road, you know, So we're always these all three lanes are always available to all of us. And so in the lane of I don't believe in staying in my lane, by the way, as a common phrase that we're hearing a lot these days. It's like, what kind of fun life is that? Where's the awakening in that? We should absolutely pay attention to all the lanes. In any case, the stress hormones using the western lane are derived from cholesterol as the building block for the adrenaline, hormones for adrenaline and the adrenal hormones, the necessary stress hormones of which there's many. They cannot be made without these thick fatty substances like cholesterol.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:07:11] So a low fat diet, particularly a low saturated fat diet, leaves us incapable of handling stress. And if you look around. In our modern society, how are we doing with stress and say that as a culture we're doing increasingly poorly with stress. If you ask most people, they'll say we live in uniquely stressful times as compared to, say, the times of the Inquisition and the Crusades and the Black Plague. And different World War Two. So there were many times history has never been stress free, ever, ever, ever famines and such like that. So in some ways we could say we live in the least stressful time ever. In some ways. You know, all respect to war zones and famines that we still do have. We're not handling it well. And the other thing that and this is a Western finding, by the way. A low fat diet leaves us susceptible to depression. Which might be a corollary of not not handling stress. Low cholesterol. This is a Western finding. We should you know, everyone should look it up for yourselves. It's a scarily high marker for suicide. Is low blood serum cholesterol. And that's like we have to think about that. Are you kidding? That doesn't make any sense. We all want low cholesterol. You know, according to the markers, particularly low blood serum cholesterol, like let's say the low 100 area is a marker for suicide.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [01:08:40] Also, it's an indication of susceptibility to cancer as well. Yeah. So the numbers are real low.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:08:46] And so when we begin to look at this with an open mind. Because granted, it may be too high, maybe. There's also too high, I don't know. There is some controversy about that. But if you look at it with an open mind. Say, what would be something about too low and we begin to see, well, maybe lacking saturated fat in our diet in a healthy way. I'm not talking about wrapping bacon on ice cream or something like this, which obviously will make us sick. And I do take as a professional food guy. And I've written hundreds of recipes. I do take objection with bacon being put into all kinds of things where it really we don't need it. So if you want to have bacon, have bacon, but you don't need to put it in into everything else. So if you want to have it, have it. That's just being honest. So in any case, we're not looking for that. We're looking for the healthy addition of saturated fat, which could be, let's say, butter. In the morning. You're cooking eggs with butter and which is considered kind of dietary suicide by



conventional thinking. And and yet that thinking is no longer supported by science. So if you think about it. Back to the cell membrane idea that

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:09:58] the brain cells have a high proportion of fat very, very high. Neurology is every cell is coated in this fat membrane. Every cell has a fat membrane. The inner parts. The the nucleus of the cells coated in these bilayer lipid membranes. And if the fat is not good quality, we will be building these structures of inferior integrity and then they won't be functioning correctly. They won't be able to keep poisons out, which could at least a hypothetical reason why cancers could develop, why the cell might. Maybe I shouldn't speak. I'll stay in my lane a little bit here. Why the cell won't be reproducing in a healthy fashion because the fat integrity isn't there. Lipid integrity isn't there. So this is one of the essential points. And in Western nutrition and Chinese medicine dietary practice, we all agree the three macronutrients are sufficient protein. We don't need more than enough. We just need enough. Every day. Every day we need protein. Which can be a problem for vegans. Solvable problem. But you have to be careful. So the worst diet might be junk food vegan. That's something you don't want, right? So we counsel and we occasionally do see that junk food vegan. We have salads and corn chips. Some of my college students eat like that. They're ethical vegetarians and and they don't eat meat because it's too expensive as well. AND they get very weak. So you see that they're.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [01:11:31] They're definitely carb heavy.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:11:32] Yeah. And they're carb heavy. But I think it's even more than that. They're just they're low on protein. They're dehydrated. So I'm. Thinking about in my University teaching, I do some very light physical exercise practice for them, giving them breathing tools, some stretching, you know, move your joints, very basic things like that. And at the end of each semester and granted, they're working hard, they're ambitious college students. At the end of each semester they tend to say things like well, I stand up, I get dizzy. Right. And I hear that more and more. And you don't hear that at the beginning. Not because they're shy. They are shy, but because their lifestyle skills are so poor to be honest. So that's one of the things that we're teaching. So you need to hydrate. You need to hydrate with oils. You need to have protein every day. The other macronutrients are carbohydrates, and we need lipids every day.

**Salvador Cefalu:** [01:12:24] You know, Andrew, you touched on this new trend where they're trying to encourage the fake meat to reduce the meat industry. And it reminds me of years ago when they discouraged eating regular butter. Remember? Yes. Yes. And they started to push the margarines and the hydrogenated oils. And what happened after ten or so years, you know, heart disease started to increase. Yeah. I mean, it's so let's see what trend develops with the fake meat trend.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:12:54] Yeah. The fake meat thing is baffling because again, eventually it comes down to clear emotions is like to live. I have this phrase. There's several ways I like to say it, but food practice brings us to life and practice. And and we can't really expect to be healthy if we're not looking at the whole picture. And food is an incredibly big part of the whole picture. But I have this phrase, it's called it's going to sound funny, but it's called growing up.



*Episode 55: What's Your Enneatype? A Journey through the Enneagram  
Personality Types with Hemla Makan Dullabh*

Right? And possibly because I am a parent, but more because I am ostensibly an adult. And so we go like this. You say, yes, legally we're adults, but do we really feel like we've achieved adulthood? Don't we feel like. If we're really honest. That we're sort of kids faking it a little bit. And everyone says, Yeah, I sort of do. I know that I do know that feeling. And then we say, Look, to be an adult means that we take care of our own business. We clean up our own messes. My kids don't always clean the kitchen, you know what I'm saying? So So sometimes I give in and I clean, which I shouldn't, but. And I say to them, I'm the adult. You're the kid, and you're defining yourself that I know that they want to grow up. Right. Because you're not cleaning up after yourself. And I am. That's an adult action. But really, you think about that and we start to think, well, what about like say, the mining industry or timber? They're not cleaning up after themselves or the dairy industry doesn't clean up after, you know the pork business and they're polluting the waters. And we're thinking these are not run by adults. And it becomes a very, very interesting little game to play. Another phrase I have for it is actual sanity, right? Actual sanity, not just the conventional sanity, but actual sanity. And it comes down eventually to in the tradition of Chinese Medicine, including the dietary branch. This would be underneath the category of meditation, taking a look at our truths. Right. But a lot of people don't want to meditate. We're too busy. We can't sit still because we eat too much sugar, too much caffeine, too much spicy pepper. So we there's no way we're going to sit still on a cushion. It's out of the question.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:15:09] So maybe we don't use the word meditation in the public arena. I'm permitting it here because we're in the inner circle. But a lot of meditation so to speak can be done in a guided fashion where we sit together and bring out issues and resolve them in real time right now. And then we find that the digestive pain goes away. That the bloating goes away. That the cravings begin to ease or they go away suddenly. That we can digest foods and meals that we couldn't before. So even some of our traditional food like. I'm working with someone from India, from southern India, who can't eat daal without bloating, and it drives her nuts because these are the foods she grew up with, but now she can. We've just cleared some of the way. So one of these ideas then is. To be honest with our emotions. To do the work that we need to do. So that we're not sabotaging our diet with acting out in bad, bad habit ways and sabotaging our digestion through stress.

**Andrew Sterman:** [01:16:22] This concludes part one of our two part episode on Diet for Healing Yourself and the Planet with Andrew Sterman. In part two, we're going to delve deeper into food energetics so that you can understand how to manage your emotions and lifestyle with food. You'll learn simplified meal plans to help you do this, as well as how to use your intuition. You can revisit episodes 33 and 34 on Welcoming Food with Andrew Sterman in the meantime, and if you haven't already done so, be sure to visit [acenterfornaturalhealing.com/welcome](http://acenterfornaturalhealing.com/welcome) to join our incredible global community. We'll send you exclusive free weekly insights about The Natural Healing podcast and so much more to empower your health.

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [01:17:14] Thank you again for joining us for another episode of the Natural Healing Podcast. We look forward to being with you again next time. Bye.





*Episode 55: What's Your Enneatype? A Journey through the Enneagram  
Personality Types with Hemla Makan Dullabh*

**Dr. Setareh Moafi:** [01:17:25] Hey, if you haven't already done so, be sure to rate and review us on Apple Podcasts. This ensures that we can share this invaluable information with more listeners just like you.