

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 0:03

Hi, this is Dr. Adrienne Welcome to Health bite the podcast where we explore all things health and wellness. They their health white podcasters in anticipation of my upcoming book hungry for more, I'm taking a shift in the podcast to take a deep dive into our hunger. As always, we know there are many reasons we eat physiologic hunger being just one of them. Hunger, of course can be emotional, even spiritual, and overweight or not our relationship with food is symbolic of our relationship with ourselves. How do we care for ourselves? Are we worthy of the time and attention required for that care? What boundaries are necessary to support the healthy relationships with others and with ourselves? And what true longing is our desire for food signaling, I reckon with food can be a way of opening up to these significant questions. And a change in our relationship with food can be a spark for broader change, creating a rippling effect to other areas of our lives. As always, my goal is to provide you with a small actionable health bites to support you towards your path towards physical, mental and emotional well being. In the next several episodes, we will dive deep together to explore these hungers more fully. I will draw from evidence-based medicine, scientific research, patient stories and personal experiences to help you understand the universal stories and science behind our hungers. And I encourage you to head over to hungry for more dotnet where you can download an excerpt from my book hungry for more stories and science to inspire weight loss from the inside out. Now let's dig in. So welcome back health white community. I'm so happy to have friend trainer Co. exerciser. Mommy companion JZ with me here today. I'm so glad you're here. It's great to see you.

Jennifer Zerling 2:00

Yeah, it's so glad to be back in your presence. I miss having you take my classes, girl.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 2:05

I know. I know. It's been a tough year without our routines. But we're getting there. We're getting back. So your trainer, you educate on nutrition. You're a health enthusiast. What turned you on to this world? Can you tell us how you got involved in all this?

Jennifer Zerling 2:21

Yeah, absolutely. So I've been an athlete my whole life. But I've always struggled with body image, you know, in high school into college. And I always had that ambition of being more fit. So I worked out in the gym, of course, and I was always playing sports never ate good ever. It was never taught to me as a kid. But when I went to college, I ended up enrolling in one of the health clubs around the college campus because I didn't really like the college campus. It was very grimy, and just it wasn't for me and it was far away from my dorm. I went to SUNY Albany, by the way for undergrad and it's like super cold. They're

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 2:55

just gonna sail like I'm envisioning like ice.

Jennifer Zerling 2:59

It was just like wind tunnels. I mean, you even like drive your car there. And you're like, you have to wear like this heavy coat just to go to this sweaty gym. It just didn't work for me. So I'm

like, Mom, can you please give me a couple dollars? Can I enroll in like a health club? And she said, Sure, go ahead.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 3:14

Back when it was a couple of dollars, right? Oh, my god early and not

Jennifer Zerling 3:17

to age myself. But

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 3:20

thank God for good moisturizer.

Jennifer Zerling 3:22

Exactly. She said, go ahead and join the gym because it'll make you go to the gym and workout. So at that point, and you know, this is outside of playing sports, you still want to lift and you know, do your cardiovascular and everything else in a more structured environment. So I joined Bally total fitness and I got my first two private training sessions. They were complimentary at the time. And I'm sitting in the office talking to a guy by the name of Pablo, he was my trainer that was assigned and the fitness manager was sitting in the office at the time that he was talking to me asked me about my fitness goals. And he just he says to me, are you interested in becoming a trainer? And I'm like, No, I'm in college. I'm in my last year of college. And he's like, Okay, well, you're perfect. Your energy's great. And we need a female right now. And I was like, Oh, well, what do I need to do to work here? And he's like, you need to get certified, then I have to mentor you. We're gonna put you through six months of mentorship. And I'm like, Whoa, that's like overwhelming. So he's like, get the certification first, and we'll start there. You have to do and I said, I'm like, okay, so I call my mom up. And long story short, she's like, how much is this certification? \$400? Absolutely not. I'm like, Mom, please let me do this. So she gave me the money. Got my first certification. I ended up being mentored by a guy by the name of Chaz. And he was so hot by the way. He was this like, short asian guy with blue eyes. He was just so hot.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 4:44

It makes sense. Like ABS Chaz. First of all, I want to just tell you that I used to work out at Bally's when I was in medical school. So yes, that's another thing we have in common, but I'm curious about your history of body Major body dysmorphia, were you overweight at the time? Or what was going on?

Jennifer Zerling 5:05

Yeah, great question. I come from an overweight family. So I think that when you're surrounded by that, it's very challenging. You think that you're, that's like your destiny, you're going to go that route. But to that point, we would have cereals and bagels and ice cream in the house. We all ate it. We were all I like to call myself fluffy. But I was super athletic. So I was like a fluffy athletic build, but I was never overweight. But if you see pictures of me from when I was a teenager, you would see that that compared to now I look, you know, more fit now.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 5:36

Right. But But I guess I'm just trying to point out that as often is the case, you didn't have a weight issue, right?

Jennifer Zerling 5:43

But a body composition issue, which I teach a lot of people about, because if we just glue ourselves to the scale, and that's the number we say, what does that mean, but my body fat was definitely elevated, because I was eating a lot of sugar, you know, and that was lent itself to me putting a bikini on going to the beach with a couple of these girls who genetically were super skinny, they eat the same stuff, maybe not in the same amount of, you know, volume that I did, because there's genetic dispositions to how much we eat.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 6:12

It's like every girl had the super skinny friend, right? Who ate whatever they wanted, right?

Jennifer Zerling 6:16

You're like, how do you do that and stay this skinny. But that's why I had body dysmorphia because I literally like I grew up in a very affluent town. And you know, everybody just looked great wear nice clothing. And when you tried on certain things who was fluffy? I think that's a good word to use on myself. You just didn't feel like you looked as good as someone else who was skinnier. Do you know what I mean? Yeah, and

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 6:37

unfortunately, that concept happens, no matter how thin you are. And you know, in doing research for my book that I was just telling you about, I was surprised to hear that even a good percentage of underweight girls have body dysmorphia, and they're underweight by medical definition and they still think they need to lose weight. And we're not even talking about like anorexics there. They don't have anorexia. They just have body dysmorphia, despite being, you know, underweight. So it is a universal problem. And, you know, I also think it speaks to I mean, it makes me feel more compassionate for the whole thing, because you can't judge from the outside what people are feeling about themselves on the inside, you may be looking at your skinny friend, right and thinking dammar right, but you don't know what irks her, you know, what rumination is she has. So it is kind of the human condition. And as I like to talk about it,

Jennifer Zerling 7:36

I fall in love with my body in my 20s, though,

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 7:38

so now you're working out with Chaz.

Jennifer Zerling 7:39

I got mentored by Chaz. I worked with him. You know, he had me do fitness programming. And once he felt like I was ready, then I got to the floor, I got to get my own private clients. And I was

one of the busiest trainers in the entire gym, because I had so much compassion. And I understood what people were going through because I went through it, you know, but I lost a majority of my weight being on that team because I was about to drink a milkshake. And Pablo was like, What are you drinking? Is that ice cream? And I'm like, hell yeah, I just worked out. And I'm like, What are you drinking? He was drinking a protein smoothie. And I'm like, Oh, I can't get into that. You know, but I eventually got into it. And you know, long story short, here we are, I, you know, ended up going into upper management. So I worked my way up in the chain. And by that point, I started managing other trainers on how to be great trainers. And then I went into, you know, general management. And then that propelled me into a master's degree in kinesiology because a lot of the trainers I was managing, they had, you know, undergraduate degrees in kinesiology. So I'm very competitive. I'm like, well, they have an undergraduate degree, I'm going to get a master's degree. So I went back to school, part-time, worked full time, and I ended up getting my master's in kines. And then right out of that, I ended up going into medical weight loss. And I worked with doctors and nurses, I was the clinical manager. And from there, I went to age management medicine. And that's what I'm doing today, along with, you know, doing my coaching and my fitness training, nutrition coaching.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 9:06

That's awesome. I didn't know that about you. I didn't know that. That's how it started. So you do you have a passion for getting people's foot in the door? Right? We talked about this, right? So talk a little bit about your philosophy about movement, fitness, exercise, whatever word you like to use.

Jennifer Zerling 9:24

Yeah. And actually, I'm glad you brought up those two words because I think there's a huge difference between fitness and movements. So the thing is, we were kind of talking about this before, everybody has to start somewhere. And I think that if somebody can, you know, get into someone else's hands, like either myself or some other fitness expert that they trust has the background and the credentials to provide them with the right goals, if you will. I think that's the starting point. For some people, other people just need to get started somewhere, okay, because it's all about making progress. If you never start you're never going to make progress. But for someone who's never exercised in their life, there are very small baby steps they can take to getting fit. Okay? We can't just look at athletes, we can't just look at the skinny people that are always working out. You see them in the gym and you're like, I'll never look like that

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 10:14

are the skinny people who actually aren't working out? Not all skinny people work out, right? It's just the assumption that they're fit, but they aren't necessarily Right.

Jennifer Zerling 10:22

Yeah. And you know, I kind of want to touch on that point. There are skinny people that work out. But if they're underweight, like what you've experienced in your clinic, they have osteoporosis, some of these girls they have, you know, they have arthritis, they've got things going on, that they don't talk about. We just measured a girl in the clinic, she was a bodybuilder

for years, and I'm her fitness and nutrition counselor, and I texted her introducing myself, you know, hey, let's hop on a call, let's discuss your fitness assessments, because that's what I do. And she's like, I don't know if you know, but I have over 20 years of experience as a fitness professional myself, I know what I need to do. And I'm like, okay, you're overtraining and you're gonna kill yourself, you're gonna break your bones in half, because she's full on osteoporosis. So she may look good, but she's not healthy. Okay. And, you know, for someone who's really starting their journey, I say, remove all expectations and stop comparing yourself. But start with something simple.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 11:18

Exercise is so intimidating for so many people, right? I mean, even basic stuff. We don't all aspire to be bodybuilders. Why do you think that is? Why do you think exercise is so intimidating,

Jennifer Zerling 11:28

because I think it's a direct correlation to if I exercise, I better look good. If I exercise, I better perform really well. If I exercise, I better be able to wear a certain outfit and look a certain way. And really, it's not about that, in fact, exercise is defined as challenging your muscles or elevating your heart rate to a certain level. So another thing is that people don't like to feel their heart beating in their chest so hard. It's like, Oh, my God, am I having a heart attack, some people don't like to sweat, because then they got to do their hair then. And that's all understandable. But unfortunately, if people want to age well, and keep the body young, then it's really the note, you know, a huge part of the formula that cannot be missed.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 12:10

One of my mantras is I wish that exercise and weight loss could get a divorce, right? Because there's so many benefits of exercise. And actually, weight loss isn't necessarily one of them. Right? But in terms of disease management, mood, cognition, I mean, there's so many benefits. And for me, personally, I talked about this, I have three kids, I've got, you know, a job and a side gig. And, you know, if I didn't run daily, I would be a psycho woman. So how do we demystify this for people? Because people are intimidated, right? And there is so much judgment and we associate fitness with a look, which is bogus, right? It doesn't correlate. So how can we get people to get their foot in the door?

Jennifer Zerling 12:55

Yeah, I think that people need to first set a specific goal for themselves, okay, when you say get a foot in the door doesn't necessarily mean they have to physically go to a place. For some people, that's too intimidating. You know, they just want to, you know, stay out of the gym until they feel ready. But the question is, like, what are they doing to prepare themselves to get ready. So I say, demystify it by setting a goal, like, Hey, I'm going to get 10,000 steps for the next week. Okay, as simple as that might sound. And even though it's not exercise, per se, it's still something more than what most people do. Because even if people don't get 10,000 steps a day, people don't realize that either. You know, when I have my clients keep a log for me, they're actually logging how much movement they get along with how much exercise they get. And

they're not moving enough during the day because they have jobs, they're sitting at a desk and you know, the only hour that they're moving is when they're at the gym. So I think step one is, especially if it's a beginner, set a very specific goal for yourself, okay, maybe I'm just going to do I don't know three days a week of a couple of callisthenics, I'm going to try to do knee push-ups. I'm going to try to do some squats. I'm going to try to do some crunches. I'm just throwing an example out there. Because if you could attach to something that you achieved, and you actually follow through on, that's diving in the pool for me, okay? Because from there, you're like, Okay, I've been doing this for three weeks. I've been doing it three days a week. Okay, go me. Let me add to that. Okay, how many steps Am I getting? Maybe now you add steps now you're doing your callisthenics. Now you're doing your steps or even switched the order, but something that's tangible, something that you could physically say I did it. Another thing to consider is a success chart. You know, I'm potty training my daughter who's actually fully potty trained, and we had a I was gonna put a chart up and I never got around to it. Okay, but you hear that you know, every time they go pee-pee in the potty, you put a certain like sticker on there. Instead, I gave her Don't laugh at me, but m&ms, which demystify m&m shows even want them anymore, but that's a whole other conversation, but with a beginning For exercise, maybe they have some sort of success chart where they can see what they've done. I actually designed that for a couple of my nutrition clients I wrote 2021, January, February, March, April, May, and I put little boxes within the letters itself. And every time they exercised that day, so January one had a box, it said, One, they got to color it in, two up, I didn't exercise, but three I exercise. So by the end of January, they have this colorful month. And that feels good.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 15:31

That also speaks to like having doable expectations, like you said, or something that's manageable. I think you use because sometimes people are waiting, like, Okay, I'm gonna start working out when I can go four times a week for an hour, right? And it's like, why like that time may never come. And not only that, but if you set that goal, you know, you can't do it, it's demotivating, then you start badgering or braiding yourself, why did I achieve that goal? You may do something similar, but something that I do with my patients is I ask them, what's a doable goal. And then I always want them to, like, really think and scale back. Like, I want the goal that you cannot negotiate in any shape or form, right? The goal that you absolutely will get done. And then once you do that non-negotiable, there's a certain like, agency to that, right, you're like, go me, right. And the truth is that it doesn't take a lot, right. Like there's studies to show that you jump up and down for seven minutes a day, and you're already in better cardiopulmonary fitness.

Jennifer Zerling 16:32

And you could break your exercise programming up into small little intervals. I mean, that's the whole Tabata method is four minutes and people are getting in the best shape of their life and how are we measuring that is through vo two max assessments. Okay, so if you could measure how much volume your body is getting of oxygen, you know, through all the muscle cells, it's so spectacular, that these patients didn't really exercise longer than that for a certain period of time and their vo two max went up.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 17:01

So yeah, break that down a little bit. Because people may not understand talking about that a little bit more about the timing and the measurement.

Jennifer Zerling 17:07

Yeah, so I like to describe it as the miles per gallon your body gets, okay, you're not going to buy a vehicle that gets highway mileage of like 19 miles per gallon, okay, it's a waste of money for that car. It's a waste. So the human body like when we do vo to max testing, most of our patients test below 30 milliliters per kilogram of body weight per minute of oxygen. So think of it this way, you're inhaling oxygen, how much of that oxygen is actually being disseminated to the cells in the body? Okay, there's a certain amounts, so your your body as it gets more fit becomes fuel efficient, and your body actually utilizes oxygen for everything you do. It helps as a result of that with performance. So if you're actually an athlete, you definitely want to have a high vo t max. But even if you're not an athlete, even if you're just a person that goes to work and just is always tired, and you just feel like achy and all that stuff. VO to max actually buy it being higher will help you with energy. It helps you with sleep, it helps you with fat metabolism. It helps you with aging, it helps you with your hormone production. I mean, there's so many different things that helps with that. Of course, you want that a lot of our patients that come to our clinic because it's an age management clinic, their libido is low. So the very first thing we talk about is you have to exercise and I have them do stuff to elevate their vo to max because you meet up down there.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 18:27

And what you're saying is that even short bouts of four minutes can help you achieve a higher vo two max which is I mean, it's amazing. Yeah. Can you get into a little bit about like different types of exercise? He talked about Tabata people talk about strength training, you know, Pilates, what should they do? Like First of all, give us a breakdown of the different types.

Jennifer Zerling 18:48

Okay, and before I even say that the best exercise program for the person watching is the exercise program, they'll do

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 18:56

100% right, what gives you joy, like even I'm like, if it's singing Madonna songs on your hairbrush and dancing around your house for 30 minutes. You do that girl,

Jennifer Zerling 19:06

as long as it elevates your heart rate, it counts as exercise. It's basically there's so many different types of exercise, I call them modes of activity, okay, there's strength training, there's meditative exercise, I am going to categorize that as the yogas. There's the lengthening exercises like the Pilates, there's cardiovascular but within cardiovascular endurance training, there's you know, strength type training, there's power training. So we could dive into each of those if you want. But the main thing is we we need cardiovascular and we need some sort of muscle toning exercises. So a lot of people don't like to lift heavy I have a lot of people saying

oh, I don't want to get all bulky. You know, you're not going to get bulky. The biggest thing for training with weights is you strengthen your bones. There's nothing else that's going to strengthen your bones but strength training doesn't need to be heavy, but it needs to be challenging. Okay, and you know, at that point you want to definitely make sure you're doing it correctly, where you're not, you know, lifting heavy and throwing your joints out of alignment. So that's where people also get scared, like, Oh, I don't want to do it wrong, so therefore, I'm not going to do it. So sometimes it's worth investing in a personal trainer for a couple of sessions, yeah,

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 20:13

to learn.

Jennifer Zerling 20:14

I've trained like people a couple of sessions, and I graduate them, I'm like, you don't need me just do what I taught you. I teach them about abdominal bracing, optimal alignment. And once they get that now, they just think about what I taught them, and they apply it into group settings and things that aren't, you know, so costly. But that basically, is it and then there's of course, sports, you know, so there's sports training, there's the sport itself is exercise. And then within cardiovascular, like I said, there's different types of modalities of training, there's, you know, running, there's jogging, there's power walking, they're swimming,

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 20:47

I think the big take home message is probably Well, number one, do what you love, you know, find something that you enjoy. Well, I just want to give a caveat for that. Because sometimes people are like, I just don't love running. And sometimes you have to, I'm not saying people should run, but sometimes you just have to, you know, you have to stay in that routine for long enough that you will achieve that joy from it. Sometimes you have to do what's good for you, right? And then eventually, you'll come around and he will enjoy it invariably. So there is that but I digress. But the main thing is do what you love, but also in terms of the types of exercise something cardiovascular as well as something strength training, because they have different benefits. Yeah,

Jennifer Zerling 21:29

yeah. And if they don't want to start with lifting weights, a yoga class is okay, as well, because it's bodyweight bodyweight is challenging the muscles. And for some people, they're lifting their own bodyweight. So that's not like you're lifting nothing. Right? Right. Right.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 21:42

And that they're not mutually exclusive. Right? There's there is crossover between these two categories.

Jennifer Zerling 21:49

You know, at some point, we do need to lift weights at some capacity. Like, look, I have a six month old, I'm lifting weights all day long. Okay, so a lot of new moms out there, if they're, you

know, lifting their boy or girl, it's like, you know, that does count. But are they doing it repetitively where there's actually a change. So at that point, I would need to talk to the individual and see what exactly what they're doing. If they're lifting the baby out of the crib, and then putting the baby in a chair that's not so much exercise, versus holding the baby around cooking dinner, getting the toddler going outside with the toddler running with the toddler up and down the driveway a million times, like that's exercise, you can count that

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 22:23

I'm entire just listening to you, girl,

Jennifer Zerling 22:28

that's my life. You know, I actually have a plan to take the stroller when he wakes up from his nap, I'm going to walk about two miles, I have to get my protein smoothies for Sunday's cloud, I teach four classes back to back. So I like my protein smoothies, and they're already like made for you. And you know, the walk, I walk very quick. And every time there's a light I sprint across, and these are big roads, you know, la It's huge, you know, so but I'm sweating,

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 22:53

I want to kind of shift back into the food piece a little bit and we may shift back into the exercise piece, we can kind of take it where we want but so much conversation about I don't want to focus on weight so much, but there's so much misinformation about like the proper diet, or the proper nutrition for the athlete or for exercise because, you know, so many of us are not athletes, or classify ourselves so that the carb loading the no carbs, the protein before you workout. So give me your kind of, I'm not gonna have you demystify every myth,

Jennifer Zerling 23:29

I'll never forget. So when I was working for a company called cenegenics years ago, it's an age management company. I was sitting in the office of Dr. willekes. And he's a cardiologist. Okay, he took all the fitness nutrition counselors into his office. And he asked me the US the question that will never I'll never forget this the rest of my career the rest of my life. And he talked like this. He's like, he's like, you know, his his medicine, science or an art? And he The answer was that medicine is actually an art. Okay? And he said that every single body is different, and that there's no one way. Okay, so with that said, it, it gave me the permission slip to work with each individual as an individual. We have people that come to the gym who swear that when there's nothing in their stomach, they perform better. Then you have people that say they're going to they're lightheaded. So they need something, what should they eat? Then you have that other person that says, I want to lose weight I have to eat before I go to the gym, what should I eat so that I'm burning fat, but I also lose weight and I still could perform in your class, many different stories, but it's the same class, right? I think the best answer to that is to first figure out what someone's goals are. Okay? Because it's just, it's such a broad question to give one answer that's not going to fit everybody watching this show. Does that make sense? But to that point, don't eat an hour before you exercise. Because then you have the gastric dumping, you want to make sure your stomach is not full, because then you're gonna be sick.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 25:06

There is some data though about protein before and after in terms of like muscle growth and all of that.

Jennifer Zerling 25:11

It's the before that I feel could be different the after, you know, there's the whole rule of the adrenaline rush, and that's going to suppress the insulin response. So every time you know someone wants to eat carbs, I'm like, do it after you exercise, assuming you showed up to your program. But yeah, definitely the protein. I mean, it really depends. I've had guys on my, okay, drink this protein smoothie right after you exercise, have a nice healthy meal, about two to three hours after that. And let's do a dexa scan because we do dexa scan. And so we actually have the data, you know, is the muscle increasing? Is it staying the same? Or is it declining? Everyone's different.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 25:49

And the dexa scan is to measure muscle mass and body composition.

Jennifer Zerling 25:53

Yeah. And we also do bone densitometry as well, since it does that.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 25:57

This is always like the question people ask. I was just on another podcast myself being interviewed. And this always comes up at the carbohydrate question, the vilifying the carbs. So I know what my feelings are about that. But what are your feelings about carbs? How do you view them,

Jennifer Zerling 26:15

it grows from the ground or falls from a tree, it's good for you this stuff in the box, the stuff that has like gluten in it and just preservatives. It's not, it's not organically grown. There's some sort of processing that goes into and I think that we've shifted so far away from just eating Mother Earth intentions, you know, we're eating more processed foods than we are Whole Foods. So for most of the people that I work with, we take them off of that stuff for the first 30 to 60 days, depending on where they are. And they feel great. They're like, Oh, my God, I feel like I want salads and vegetables all day long, because we're actually built to eat that. But because there's other stuff and other options for us, we ended up eating that other stuff. And that adds up in the carbohydrate load. And before we know it, we're overweight, we're tired, we're craving more, you know, we have fatty liver disease, there's like a lot of different things that are happening that could be avoided. So I think the question is, how much of that stuff people are eating? And are they eating enough plants?

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 27:19

Yeah. And I think in your answer, you in your mind are already categorizing the carbs, right? We like talking about carbs as one thing, but various are carbs and Twinkies or carbs. Like they're all carbs, but they're very different, right?

Jennifer Zerling 27:35

But like when I teach my clients, I say Twinkies are junk food and asparagus are, you know, low glycemic carbohydrates, things that don't spike the blood sugar. So quickly.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 27:44

You know what's funny, I remember when I was younger, we didn't have that garbage in our house. And when I had them, you know, they felt like, you know, if I went somewhere, they were like heaven, like, and so 30 years passed, right? And then I come across a Twinkie. And I'm like, telling my kids about it. I'm like, Oh, my God, this was and so I get it and share it with them. Because I want to share with them this like amazing thing. And it was like, oh my god. Like, how terrible like well is like, how is I coveting this when I was little?

Jennifer Zerling 28:16

I was questioning that too. Like, did they change the ingredients over the years? Or is that what it was?

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 28:22

I don't know. I think we've just we've hopefully refined our our palates. That's probably

Jennifer Zerling 28:27

what, you know, a good point. And then you look at the ingredients or certain things. I'm like, I came and put that in my mouth. Right now, it's half the stuff on that label. You're like,

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 28:38

we were not a savvy back then. Right. I mean, we probably knew Twinkies weren't good for us. That's why our parents didn't bring into the house. But it wasn't we weren't as savvy back then. So you're a mom now and you have two kids, little ones. But still, invariably, the conversation always comes up, you know about how would we handle our children? Right? And how do we manage that fine line between promoting healthy behaviors, but not playing into this whole body image thing? Can you talk about that a little bit? What are your feelings as a mom and as a professional?

Jennifer Zerling 29:15

Yeah, that's a really good question. Because when I didn't have kids, I would look at other fitness professionals who had kids that were overweight kids, and they're struggling, they're like, I don't know what's going on my kids not eating good, you know, and I'm just like, wow, that's that's really confusing to me. I don't even know where they could have gone wrong. And I started observing the behaviors of those parents. And it turns out those parents have one of two things going on. Either the parent themselves is so scared of like looking bad, that that energy rubs off on to the kid and it actually has an adverse effect on the kid where the kid ends up eating what they want because they're scared the expectations too high, they'll never meet it. So why even try and then there's the other parents that are just feeding their kids like super duper, perfectly healthy food that the kids not exposed to anything unhealthy. So when they eat it, it's a

novelty. And then they grow into loving it. And they're eating it all the time outside of their parents tension. So what I do is, you know, we started very young with Havana, we blend all of her food when she was younger. Now she eats. Same thing for my son, all the vegetables, everything that I want them to eat is blended. Their palate is so into fruits and vegetables and lean proteins, however, we give them snacks too. So for example, Havana loves her pops when she was teething, that was the only thing that got her to not cry, but I bought pops that were Greek yogurt pops, and actually I've evolved into making pops ourselves with protein smoothie materials. So we put it into these little like cups, and she's like, Oh, I want you know, the chocolate pot, you know, she loves it. So I think it's just making really good decisions, but integrating some of the stuff that you know, they shouldn't have too much of so that it's not so deprived.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 31:05

It's like everything else. It's all about balance. And it's also about early exposure to variety and enroll modeling. There are the experiences where parents feel like they're doing everything right, you know, they're role modeling, they keep a healthy home or whatever they try and expose their children but their children just refuse it, you know, there is that

Jennifer Zerling 31:30

I honestly don't think the parents are modeling the type of environment they think they are, I would have to physically be there to say, Oh my gosh, I'm shocked that your kids not following you. Like little things like, you know, one of the parents that I know that daughter was not being potty trained. So I took her into the potty and I said, you need to go pee pee. Now. I took my daughter and made my daughter pee in front of the daughter and she wanted to pay. So kids don't want to be told what to do. They want to see what they're supposed to do.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 32:02

I totally believe that a lot of it is in role modeling. And also what I find is, sometimes parents make the decision between the two kids because one of the kids is overweight, maybe or chubbier, and the other one isn't. And so that they let the not chubby one kind of eat, or they have foods in the house that they shouldn't have for that child. And so you can't really discriminate, right? Like if you're promoting health, you have to promoted for everyone no matter what they look like. But I do think you know, having kids that are a little bit older, and having friends that have kids that are older, kids are different in the same household. And I think in those circumstances is a matter of patience. Because I think if you keep role modeling the same thing over and over, eventually they turn over and I and I can tell you, I have three kids, three very different personalities. And they ranged from age eight to 17. My son was a foodie, and he enjoyed his food. And he was unapologetic about it. And you know, I had to control myself in saying certain things. I was role modeling in the house. And he eventually turned on his own. I mean, it took time, but I bit my lip and just kept, you know, kept the ship steered in the right way. And so I think a lot of it is also to your point, not jumping the gun because it's triggering your own stuff. I think a lot of times when parents see something happening in their child, it triggers their own body image issues, it triggers their own fears that triggers our own insecurities. And it takes a lot of awareness sick recognize that and it takes a lot of strength to like, zip it. Right.

Jennifer Zerling 33:45

Yeah. But you know, going back to the point of leading by example, like my daughter who's only going to be three years of age, during the pandemic, I was doing zoom calls workouts on zoom, and her daddy was downstairs with her and you know, she would watch the zoom call like every single time Okay, everything stopped because mommy was on TV. And now she does all the moves that I've been doing all those months and she's like, mommy look, and she'll do squats mommy luggage, just like mountain climbers. You know, she's outside playing right now. She's so active and you know, you know, with the whole food thing if she wants something that's not super healthy. I never ever say oh no, this is bad for you. Unless it's like, you know, the neighbor brought over this juice and I'm like, I have a better juice for you. It tastes better Honey, you want to try it? She was mommy juice and I'm like, just taste my juice. This is really good. And she did she's like, good.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 34:39

But it's also not vilifying foods, right? Like not calling him good and bad. So you get your exercise because you're a trainer and you workout but what's your like regimen? Like what's you know, what do you do? What's the JZ personal routine?

Jennifer Zerling 34:53

You know? It's a really good question because just because I'm a trainer doesn't mean that I have family In my life, right people think, oh, you're a trainer, you automatically wake up in the morning, you exercise all day long, I have to actually schedule my exercise programs. So I always take a class before I coach, that's twice a week, I walk the boulevard, two to three miles every single day at a fast pace. And then I lift downstairs twice a week. So I have like my battle ropes, I have my to racks, I have my dumbbells, I haven't been at the gym gym where I used to lift heavy because of COVID. So I have to get back there because I do love lifting heavy, you know, like the lat pull downs, pull ups, like I don't have access to that equipments here.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 35:38

But it's you demonstrate how you can have a wide breadth of activity. Some of it is lifestyle activity, walking outside, some of it is with like, not so fancy tools or gadgets, right, you can still get it in on a on a home, you know, budget and space. Exactly.

Jennifer Zerling 35:59

And they're, you know, they have the equipment back a lot of you know, during the pandemic, they ran out of dumbbells, everything's back in the stores. So people can go back to the stores, Target has it big five has it like all the major, you know, department stores habit, just get a couple of pairs of dumbbells, you know, it doesn't have to be heavy, you work your way up. It's progressive overload, you don't start heavy, you work your way into heavy over time. And it depends on the person's joints, you know, if they're starting at a later time in their life, they might just need to lift, moderate to lighter resistance, more repetitions with good form. And you know, just keep those muscles stimulated so that they can ultimately age well have good balance, you

know, we forget about that. As we get older, if you lose your balance, because you have no muscle tone, you fall on you break things.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 36:43

It's interesting. I remember a long time ago, that study came out where they took nursing home occupants, and just divided them into two groups and just had the one group the exercising group, just do five minutes of leg lifts in the morning. I mean, it was like the simplest thing ever. And that five minutes reduce fall risk and hip fractures in that group. So again, I think the big message, I know you're a believer of this, and this is also something that I promote is that it doesn't have to be like super duper fancy, like the body is so forgiving. You just have to meet yourself where you're at.

Jennifer Zerling 37:22

That's right, and the body's a machine. So you know, work the machine the way it's supposed to be work depending on where you are, and just work up from there. And if people don't know where to start, like I said, invest in yourself. It's really not the end of the world. People invest in mentors, medical weight loss all over the place. hiring somebody, a qualified personal trainer is very, very critical. And you know, I used to manage trainers. So I know there's really good ones out there and then there's the not really good ones out there. So

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 37:52

gather your army and let people teach you and guide you so to that end for people who want to people who want to find you where can they find you.

Jennifer Zerling 38:03

They can find me on my website, which is JZFitness.com. And I'm all over social media, JZ fitness nutrition on Instagram and JZ fitness on Facebook.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 38:14

And you do you offer Personal Training, you offer nutritional counselling?

Jennifer Zerling 38:20

Yeah, so right now, I'm not taking any personal training clients on but I do offer nutrition coaching. It's not just nutrition coaching, though, it's lifestyle counselling, and I came up with a course over the pandemic. And it's called the JZ fitness lifestyle course. And it's the five anchors of JZ fitness, which is optimizing your fitness, nutrition, hydration sleep, and what I call me management's. And I feel like that, you know, there's a fitness module in there that really sets the parameters for how someone can get started. So it gives you like very specifics on where to get, you know, get going.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 38:51

That's awesome. Thank you so much for spending time talking and speaking with me.

Jennifer Zerling 38:57

Thanks for having me. This was a great conversation. I hope it helped people out.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 39:01

I'm sure I'm sure. Thanks again.

Jennifer Zerling 39:03

All right. Thank you, Doc.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 39:04

This episode of health bite is sponsored by Dehl nutrition. You can find out more at dehlnutrition.com. I hope you've enjoyed this episode and are inspired to take a small bite towards your own health and wellness. If you love what you heard, please subscribe on iTunes and Spotify or anywhere else you podcast and share us. If you're looking for more info you can find lots of content and sign up for my newsletter at dehlnutrition.com. There, you can learn more about me and my curated line of supplements and functional protein bars.

Dr. Adrienne Youdim, Host 39:34

Thank you for listening, and I look forward to seeing you again next week.

Transcribed by <https://otter.ai>