

Everything in Moderation, Including Moderation with Leah Silberman of Wellhaus Health

Julia Chebotar 00:04

Spice up your life with me Health Chef Julia, as I set out on the journey of What is Healthy. In each episode, we'll explore the different meanings of healthy for some healthy means indulging in something decadent and delicious. For others. It's a mental health day and a good workout. There's more to health than just food. It's about living well, enjoying your life and having fun. Having you heard redheads do it best. Come with me, and we'll find out just what healthy is. Welcome to new podcasts of What is Healthy? podcast where we share every hack to get a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle. I'm Chef Julia and today we'll be talking to Leah Silberman. It's great to have you. Thank you so much for being on.

Leah Silberman 00:44

Thank you for having me.

Julia Chebotar 00:46

Can you give the audience a little spiel on who you are and what you do? And then we'll go from there?

Leah Silberman 00:52

Yes, absolutely. So I am a registered dietitian, and I am practicing at Wellhaus Health, which we actually launched a little over a year ago. And it is a subsidiary of a private medical practice in Manhattan. So it's its own wellness, health and wellness division. And I'm the leading dietitian there. But we work in conjunction with the medical practitioners, which is great because I have access to some of the most incredible and brilliant doctors, nurses, PhDs. And we just kind of are able to work together on client cases. And yeah, that's in a nutshell.

Julia Chebotar 01:29

That's amazing. So I like to start every podcast with asking, like, what is healthy to you? Because everybody has a different take and a different idea of what healthy is. And I think that people sometimes get pigeonholed into what healthy is and do unhealthy things because they are healthy. So you're a dietitian, you probably know best. So what is healthy to you?

Leah Silberman 01:54

So I can answer this question in two buckets. The first one is more related to actual health and nutrition. And the second one is more related to the mindset around it. So first off my approach in general, what is healthy to me, I'm very much all about Whole Foods, real foods, natural foods, incorporating foods that you can buy at the grocery store, that don't have these lengthy ingredient lists. You know, if you go through your produce aisle, there was no ingredient list your buy all spinach, bananas, whatever the fruit or vegetable is. So I'm very much about like going back to basics, eating real natural foods, eliminating the processed junk that's cluttered in so many of our cabinets, shelves and shelves of grocery stores.

Julia Chebotar 02:42

I feel like people get triggered by name like things on the box, and they never actually look at the ingredients lists and figure out they can't pronounce it

Leah Silberman 02:50

totally. Or they'll see buzz nutrition words like gluten free cholesterol free and get excited and go for that product without actually reading the nutrition label. And if you just turn it around, you'll see often these foods are loaded with unhealthy additives ingredients like you know fillers, junk colorings, things that if you knew were in the product, you probably would not go for it. So part one of my philosophy is again, back to basics and actually maximizing the nutrition, the quality of your diet, not just the quantity and how much you're eating. And then the second, I guess, bucket is about the mindset, and a quote that I've kind of always lived by is everything in moderation, including moderation. I'm sure you've probably heard that one before. And I think that often people can get any there's just so much out there and articles social media about food, health, nutrition and body image. And I think that people can get really caught up in an unhealthy way.

Julia Chebotar 03:51

Yes, very much so.

Leah Silberman 03:53

And you have to remember that this is life food is meant to be enjoyed. It's a part of, you know,

Julia Chebotar 03:58

yes, it is meant to be enjoyed. I love that it

Leah Silberman 04:00

really is and to get so wrapped up in food as a number or counting calories or obsessing the last meal that you ate. It's just no way to live. So everything in moderation, including moderation. Got your life. I love that.

Julia Chebotar 04:16

Okay, so I think some people might not exactly know what a dietitian is or what you do specifically. Could you elaborate more on that? Yeah, absolutely.

Leah Silberman 04:27

So a registered dietitian has gone through a very specific credentialing process. I personally did my undergraduate work in nutrition, which you don't not everybody does, of course, but I did that. And then I immediately went to my master's program at NYU, which again, the Masters is not required, but it was something I did in conjunction with my dietetic internship which is required to become a registered dietitian and then I pass pass a national exam to allow me to become a registered dietician. So versus a nutritional spa. Sample or the term nutritionist, there's no real credentialing required. Not, you know, there's room for everyone, by the way, but that is the definition of the dietitian versus anything else in the health and wellness space, I'll meet with clients one on one to help them reach their health goals.

So it can be anything from weight loss, weight gain, to diet clean up someone who knows, maybe they haven't been having the healthiest food practices lately, especially during COVID definitely getting a lot of that

Julia Chebotar 05:32

do you go into people's homes and do like a, like a pantry clean out or no, just like all virtual

Leah Silberman 05:37

really once upon a time I used to. But and I love doing it, it's so much fun. But with the pandemic, it's it's not an option. And honestly, like it's the time doesn't allow for it these days. But I work with them one on one. And right now everything's remote. Normally, I do have an office in Manhattan on 51st. And third in the medical offices of Manhattan office there, but right now everything's virtual. And yeah, I'm working with clients to help them reach their health goals, whether like I said, it's weight loss, weight gain, maybe we're working to prevent a certain chronic disease from occurring, someone who has a strong family history of heart disease, or cancer, or whatever the situation may be. Sometimes I'm managing chronic illnesses or acute illnesses with dietary intervention. To mitigate symptoms, let's say. So yeah, that's kind of what I'm working to do, clients will sign up and there's a whole process we go through, I create a sample meal plan for them. And then we have follow up sessions to really help hold them accountable. And in a nutshell, that's kind of like the work that I'm doing

Julia Chebotar 06:46

on the day to day. Are you Pro, or against or like, ish about vitamins.

06:54

So

Leah Silberman 06:55

I am pro vitamins, but I'm all about get everything from your diet first. Diet is kind of like your first line of defense, so to speak against a deficiency. And then vitamins are your insurance policy. So I hate when someone comes in, and it's like, whatever, I'm just going to take my multivitamin, and then I'll supplement with vitamin D and vitamin B. And I'm like, hold on a minute,

Julia Chebotar 07:16

let's talk about your multivitamin already has that, like you're just I mean, like people overtake all these vitamins, they don't realize that usually just like passing them through, go into the bathroom. Like they're not actually being adjusted,

Leah Silberman 07:29

like, Yes, 100%. And also, I don't like the mindset of someone who have used vitamins as the means to get all of their vitamins and minerals and vitamins, supplements, I mean, to get all their vitamins and minerals, because they're missing out on opportunities to get that from their diet. And just using my own clinical tucsonans I really do think there's something about the synergistic effect of vitamins and minerals coming from real foods versus taking them in the synthetic vitamin pill form.

Julia Chebotar 07:57

I absolutely agree.

Leah Silberman 07:58

Yeah, like think about it, you eat a salad with spinach and vegetables, peppers, whatever else you throw in there, and you're not just getting like those isolated specific vitamins, you're getting the antioxidants, you're getting fiber, exactly fiber or whatever nutrient profile that specific fruit or vegetable contains. It's an opportunity to just rely solely on the vitamins or minerals supplements.

Julia Chebotar 08:21

Yes, I agree. Going into that, because like how would you describe your relationship with food,

Leah Silberman 08:27

I actually think that I have a great strong and healthy relationship with with food, which I feel really grateful to have. Because especially being in this space, I know that it can, like a lot of things can be triggers for people. I think the right my reason for entering the health and wellness space to begin with. is unique in the sense that I guess I'll give you this little story.

Julia Chebotar 08:52

Yeah, that's your

Leah Silberman 08:55

So interestingly, what kind of led me to the space is when I was in middle school, a friend's father passed away and like out of nowhere, and I'm not sure if they just didn't really tell us what happened or you know, I don't know what accurate information I actually had at the time. But I remember being so freaked out with my first experience with death with someone that I knew and I remember being so freaked out that you could just die at any given moment from some condition that you didn't even know you had so I started doing I don't even think like I don't know if Google was even around that it wasn't it it was whatever search engine was there. And I started like like Ask Jeeves literally asked you that. I saw I asked you it was all of these questions and I made myself like a medical encyclopedia. And there was a one liner I remember at the end of like each condition that I researched and it was like having a diet filled with fruits and vegetables and this and that can help prevent condition X can help prevent condition Why? So I became obsessed with prevention and started reading about like her herbs and plants. And I remember when my mom used to make like steamed vegetables for dinner, I would have her set aside the water that the vegetables were steamed in that had all of the nutrients drained out. And I would drink that separately, like I just became obsessed with

Julia Chebotar 10:13

as a How old were you doing that

Leah Silberman 10:16

middle school, like I had no idea. I was

Julia Chebotar 10:19

like what middle schoolers like sipping on like, vegetable broth, basically,

Leah Silberman 10:24

euro and they would taste It's so bad, but I knew that the nutrients a lot of them, you know, drained into that water, I wanted to maximize my health. And I would just do I became obsessed with like drinking tea and eating vegetables and not in a not in an unhealthy way for my weight, just obsessed with getting nutrition and realizing that, you know, different cooking methods lend itself to different levels of certain nutrients. And that was kind of like what, what made me under the space to begin with is prevention. So being that my mindset has always been about prevention versus anything else. I think that I'm lucky that I do have a great relationship with food. And I really look at my diet. I don't want to say on the day to day because I do have my days don't get me wrong, where I'm not eating as. Yeah. But I really look at food as like how can I maximize nutrition in each meal or snack?

Julia Chebotar 11:21

I love that. I think that more people need to think about that versus the weight, that weight loss mindset or a restrictive mindset. Like I feel like we're I never understand the people who say they forget to eat because all I do is think about food. But I also don't understand that people that are so meticulous with controlling what they eat. Like, I feel like they're missing the pleasure of it, it should be somewhere in the middle

Leah Silberman 11:46

100% and honestly, I think food should be 100% a pleasurable experience except for a few ingredients that I added to my species that are not. Um, but otherwise, you know, everyone again, it's food is just such an important part of life about enjoying life. And that restrictive mindset can be dangerous, but I also think that it can be a behavioral issue for a lot of people. And that is its own situation to work through. I was just gonna say it. It's I think it's a mindset when people do become obsessive or restrictive like that, that they don't like choose to have. And I think that again, that's why it's something that really needs to be worked through from from a behavioral standpoint because I don't think anyone wakes up and says like today I want to be super restrictive and I want to count every thing and think about it

Julia Chebotar 12:35

all day. Is there someone in like the wellness nutrition space that like is your go to for advice or like you know, if there's someone that you stock in that realm on Instagram that you're like, I like follow everything this person says

Leah Silberman 12:50

I love Dr. Mark Hyman. I listened to his podcasts, and I listened to what he says. And honestly, like my little group of dietitian friends that I have formed. They're incredible women and I love running things by them and having them as a soundboard. So I'm lucky.

Julia Chebotar 13:11

That's so true. Like everybody needs a soundboard, people that are in the same or similar space. And I love that about New York because I've noticed that like there are plenty of chefs there, like plenty of

dietitians there all the things but there's also plenty of people. So no one is ever competing with each other. It's more like a soundboard or like you know,

Leah Silberman 13:34

your resources,

Julia Chebotar 13:35

what nutritional recommendations would you make for vegetarians or vegans,

Leah Silberman 13:39

I mean, probably the biggest thing you can probably guess is getting adequate protein. So looking at someone's diet and making sure that they're getting enough vegan sources, maybe they're actually supplementing like the synthetic supplements, if they're not getting what you would normally get primarily from animal foods. And that's something that obviously vegans or vegetarians might be lacking. But again, it there's no one size fits all approach. So I would have to look at someone's diet intake and really see what they're doing on the day to day and what they might be missing.

Julia Chebotar 14:12

Is there like one nutrition thing that's like very general but you like say to every client and that you do on a daily basis?

Leah Silberman 14:21

Yeah. So aside from my whole philosophy, about maximizing nutrition, and you know, how can they make each meal or snack like the most nutritious that it can possibly be? I feel like you're looking for more of like a little tidbit. So they really, really to most clients I recommend a turmeric supplement. Turmeric is as you know, it is a spice so it's not a vitamin, it's not a mineral and it has incredible antioxidant capacity. And when it's consumed in conjunction with black pepper, which is often in the supplement itself. It increases its ability to be absorbed. So it's biovail. So I really,

Julia Chebotar 15:03

it's curriculum curriculum.

Leah Silberman 15:05

curcumin.

Julia Chebotar 15:06

I know it I like see it.

15:09

Yeah, exactly. So that's something that I do recommend to a lot of my clients just to incorporate another means of anti inflammatory antioxidants and,

Julia Chebotar 15:19

and how much like what's the dosage that you would do daily?

15:22

You know what I can't tell you the exact like milligram quantity. I want to say it's a little over 1000. But the brand that I like to take I know it's three pills a day is one serving. And you know, you don't even have to take all three if you really don't want to. I'm happy for everyone just to be getting exposure in some capacity. So if they want to, that's totally fine as well.

Julia Chebotar 15:42

Do you have a favorite food? Oh,

Leah Silberman 15:43

that's a really hard on. No, I really don't have a favorite food. I like so many foods

Julia Chebotar 15:48

before. Like I asked everyone this question. And I think it's so interesting, because everybody is like so different. But if this was your last day on earth, what would your last meal be? appetizer entree dessert can be from anywhere can be anything, but you have to think on the spot.

Leah Silberman 16:07

Yeah, I got a hate thinking on the spot. Um, I would probably I know this is so weird. But maybe my appetizer would be a whole wheat toasted bagel with cream cheese from Merck from Murray's bagels in New York. It might be this is really hard. Places rubirosa pizza.

Julia Chebotar 16:29

Yes, the tide. I

Leah Silberman 16:30

won the vodka pizza. Okay, so good. But definitely to get that in there. If I could really have it my way. I might do a caviar hand roll from ucci which is the restaurant in Manhattan.

Julia Chebotar 16:43

You have it your way you have it. It's the last day on earth. You can do whatever you want.

Leah Silberman 16:47

And then for dessert, salted caramel Van Leeuwen, ice cream. Hmm. With really cold raspberries on the side. I just love cold raspberries. Okay,

Julia Chebotar 16:59

I agree like raspberries room. Temps are not as good as cold and you need them cold. Yeah, blueberries too.

17:05

I agree with that cold blue. Yeah, honestly, cold berries, cranberries. I agree. Where can people

Julia Chebotar 17:09

find more information about you contact you all of the things?

Leah Silberman 17:14

Yeah, absolutely. So my our website rather is well house health.com. And it's spelled w e l l . h . A u s , like a German house? Well, house health.com. So yeah, you can check out the site, there's a way to contact me through there. You can also make an actual if you are interested in services, you can schedule an appointment or free consult with me through the website there. So that's probably best. Graham wellhouse help. wellhouse Health is the handle and yeah, that's the best way.

Julia Chebotar 17:49

Okay, do you have any new projects ahead or anything that you want to share?

17:54

We have lots of new content coming from the Wellhaus sector. So stay tuned. You can find me on social media. And yeah, we're excited.

Julia Chebotar 18:05

Okay, amazing. Well, that's all for today's podcast. Thank you so so much for being on. I really, really appreciate it. And then anyone can subscribe and listen and follow and help chef Juliet calm.

Leah Silberman 18:18

Amazing. Thank you so much. Again, I love this.

Julia Chebotar 18:21

Thank you for being on. I really appreciate it.