



Steph: Hi, Damo, and welcome to the show.

Damo: Hello, Steph. How good's this? Great to be back again, thanks for inviting me back again.

Steph: Yeah. Always good to have you on the show. Now, I was thinking, a lot of our listeners might not know your entire history and I know that you used to host a television program called Downsize Me. So I wanted you to start by sharing a little bit about that and where that journey took you.

Damo: Okay. Well, that is true, Steph. I moved to New Zealand to study to be a chiropractor and so at that stage Jackson had just turned three years old and in the February of the following year I moved to New Zealand. So it was really weird because at two Jackson's mum and I had separated, I looked after Jackson exclusively for that whole year and so I was a single dad studying to be a chiropractor in Melbourne. And then moved to New Zealand and Jackson stayed in Australia with his mum.

Because I was kind of lost and kind of floundering around, I was like, "What am I going to do? I'm over in New Zealand, I want to be there with my son back in Australia." I thought, "Well, if I'm going to be here in New Zealand I better make a bloody good go of it. I don't want to stuff it up and I don't want to come back having not done much with my time away from Jackson."

So I started running weight loss programs and I was running weight loss programs out the back of a chiropractor's office and then one day I got a phone call from a director and she was asking, a director of a TV show, she was asking me whether or not I would write the nutrition plan for an upcoming TV show on food and nutrition. And they were looking for a female nutritionist and a male trainer, and I said, "Well, that's pretty cliché. Why don't you have a male nutritionist and a female trainer?" And they've gone, "That's magic. Why don't you come into TV3 and come and audition for us?" And I'm like, "Okay, cool."

So I drove in TV3, which is the same as Channel 10 here in Australia, TV3 in New Zealand. Logged in, had a little chat with them, the production crew, and they said, "Hey, you sound Australian." And I said, "I am Australian." "Oh, that's weird. What would you do if you saw margarine in a fridge? What would you do?" And I go, "I'd probably chuck it across the room and yell and scream." They said, "Can you show us what that would look like?" So I said, "Sure."

Damo: So I went into their like little kitchenette area and they had a fridge full of ... I don't know if I can swear on this podcast.

Steph: You can.

Damo: But bad, bad food. And so I opened up this fridge, opened up and gone, "Timtam's? Five minutes on the lips, five years on the hips!" Chucked them across the room and they had to duck and then I got the margarine and I chucked that in the bin that's just death. And then I saw Coke and I said, "Oh, that's black death. It's death in a bottle." And I threw that and it landed in the bin. They've gone, "This is amazing."

So they sent it off to the producer of TV3 and they said, "We want this guy to be the producer ... to be the presenter." And I got the gig and they called me up and said, "Oh Damian, look, we want you to be the presenter." I said, "Oh, what's a presenter?" And they said, "It's the person that speaks in front of the television. You'll be the person." I'm like, "Oh, okay, cool. I've never done that before." They said, "It'd be all right, just be yourself and you'll be fine."

So I then filmed a 10 part first season, which was supposed to just be like a trial of Downsize Me, but it hit. It was like the Top Of The Pops, everybody in New Zealand, they watched it. And we were up against The Apprentice and we were up against this other TV show called Coronation Street and we topped the charts. So we knocked off The Apprentice, I fired Donald Trump which I love. And Coronation Street played third fiddle to Donald Trump and me. And so they said, "Lets do season two, season three and season four." And we did four seasons teaching people how to get healthy by eating real food and exercising.

It was just such a novel approach because so many other things were in the pipelines. There was protein shakes and there was diet drinks and then there was this little sachets you'd rip open, put them into water and it'd suppress your hunger and there'd be fill it up with gum that would swell up in your tummy so that you'd be satiated. But it was just a really dirty time around the diet industry back then. It's possibly dirtier back then than what it is now, even though it seems pretty dirty now.

Steph: That's saying a lot, yeah.

Damo: But it was pretty bad back then, it was rank. We're talking 2005, yeah, 2005 was when the show went to air, we filmed it in 2004, 2005, 2006 and then 2007 we finished it. And so we filmed for a long time and there was lots of different trends that came and went and the underlying premise for it was to have heaps of vegetables, heaps of good quality

fat and heaps of good quality protein. And people couldn't believe how much food they had to eat, they were full all the time. But they had to eat all of this food and they would drop kilos and kilos and kilos. And so we did documentaries and all kinds of stuff with it, that's just a really simple food plan.

Almost identical to what you do these days I reckon, Steph. So it's just tried, true, tested philosophies around food and nutrition which means that you build a diet around plants and then you add protein and fat. It's pretty simple, it's pretty simple.

Steph: I love that this was 2005 and then we see where we went with the examples that you've given us around, whether it was low fat diet, diet pills, weight loss shakes, isogenics, the soup diet, bloody margarine and oil sprays, whatever it's been. And then finally we land back on real food, like, "Come on."

I know it's New Zealand but it's the same in Australia. The trends are just everywhere and then we look at the way the health and wellness industry is in 2019 and, yeah, I'd be surprised if it wasn't equally as bad, because it's just horrific at the moment. Especially with all the quote-unquote, "Experts." On Instagram.

Damo: Oh my gosh, those fricking experts. They just drive me crazy. Anyway. Just because you get your boobs out and you're in a bikini doesn't mean you know how to make a healthy green smoothie. It might look good, but it doesn't mean that that's what everyone's got to do. It's just it drives me crazy, it really does. There's some people out there that are doing really good job with it, but you don't need to sell food with sex. Food just works. If it's real food, it'll work.

Steph: Definitely, and then I think it's really, as I always say, it's about being really mindful of who you take your advice from. If we look at, say, The Blue Zones, it's never about aesthetics and wearing bikinis or having a six pack. That is the least of their goals, right?

Damo: Right.

Steph: And then we see so many things being sold online with that aesthetic as basically the sole focus. I'm not saying don't ... that you can't want to look good, but I mean taking your health advice from someone because they have a six pack I think is the definition of ridiculous and it seems to be happening more and more from people that do not even have a degree in nutrition or naturopathy for example.

Damo: Look, I have joined F45. I have joined F45 to do a bit of exercise, just to be dedicated to it. I tend to find if I part with the cash then I go and do whatever I've got to do, as opposed to doing it ad hoc. It doesn't really worked for me, I've got to get that commitment factor in. So I'm doing it, but not to get abs, but just to kind of be part of a community that's moving.

I could've done crossfit, I could've done a yoga studio, I could've done anything but Amber and I decided that that's what we're going to do for eight weeks. We're going to

do a little challenge. But what's really interesting about it is I went to the nutrition information component of the night.

Steph: Did you?

Damo: And there was two nutritionists. Yeah, I did. So I was sitting there in the back and there was two nutritionists, one nutritionist who really knew her stuff. She was super smart and used big words and I understood them but there was other people that really didn't understand them and they were going, "What you talking about?" But she really knew her stuff and then there was another nutritionist who had no idea what she was talking about. And it was concerning to me because there was some things that were being said that just weren't accurate.

And so I had to bite my tongue and Amber's nudging me saying, "Don't say anything, don't say anything, don't say anything." But at the end of the day the fundamental plan, the diet plan that F45 provides in their eight week challenge is rich in plants, have some protein and have some fat. And it the same philosophy because that's the only thing that works and it doesn't matter what you do. It's the only thing that makes you healthy and at the same time you normalize your weight.

It's not that you lose weight, it's just that you normalize your weight. It's part of your body getting back to being healthy and well again.

Steph: Yeah, I think they've got some really great principles and my intention wasn't to talk about F45. But I think it's a good segue into the calorie conversation, because what I disagree with is the generic prescription of calories across the board. And so I get it's a one to many program, so obviously at this stage they haven't got the functionality to prescribe calories to you and to me and to Ian and to Amber and to whoever else has signed up.

But I see a lot of issues, I've had many people come to me out of or during an F45 challenge and they're struggling with either not enough or too much. They're struggling with volume that's not being tailored to them, which goes back to that whole calorie conversation that we've seen through the weight loss and low fat era.

Damo: Totally. Totally. Well, they opened up the information session saying, "It's the calories, in versus calories out scenario. Don't get us wrong, it's definitely still about calories in versus calories out but it's about the type of calories that you put in versus the type of calories that you take out." So they were saying that it should be better quality foods and that I agreed with and so kind of let them go with it for a little bit.

But then to read and find out that, I think, women are limited to like 1,500 calories a day and men are limited to 1,900 calories a day. That kind of works in a situation where there's significant amounts of excess body fat, but if you don't have heaps of body fat, you can't. I can't go that low. 1,900 calories for me, if I did that, I'd lose all the excess body fat that I've got in half a day.

So I've got to be really careful with that, so I'm going to monitor the amount of calories that I've got. But what was interesting this morning when I thought, "Oh, what do I want to eat this morning?" It was some kind of a muesli that you make yourself out of oats and you stir in coconut oil and then cacao and then you sweeten it with rice malt syrup and then you bake it and then you serve it with some fruit and some coconut yogurt. I was like, "What is that? I wouldn't even eat that."

I'm a cereal magnate and I'm not going to do that, I'm not a magnate, I'm just joking, but I'm a cereal manufacturer and I'm not going to bloody go and eat something like that. That's ridiculous, why would I want to cook up those beautiful omega-6 fatty acids from their raw state into now a cooked, adulterated state? So I didn't want to do that, so I thought, "Oh, I wonder what the egg option is?" So I had the egg option this morning and it was a four egg omelette, four egg omelette. I'm like, "I don't eat four eggs, I'm not going to eat four eggs." So four eggs with some vegetables, I had a two egg omelette with some vegetables and that was more than enough for me.

So imagine the confusion that there is for these poor people that are supposed to have a limited calorie diet at like 1,400 or 1,500 calories a day. Four eggs, I don't know how many calories that ends up being, but just in one meal it's probably close to 600 calories. It just doesn't make sense.

Damo: And then they've got to have these protein balls that are made with rice malt syrup and they've got to have these other things. It's just all a little bit not right. Anyway, I shouldn't be ranting about that.

Steph: No, no, no. I mean it raises some interesting points. I think the calorie conversations is a big part of it because that has been the vast majority of the trends and the fads that we've seen in the recent years and we know that shows like The Biggest Loser even lower calorie diets and we know the repercussions of that. So I don't know, I can't say that I've had many conversations with people that've done it, something like F45, and then tracked their consistency or their ability to stay at that goal weight long term.

Steph: So let's put F45 aside, but in the examples of The Biggest Loser, everybody knows that the weight goes back on plus much more. And that's something that we've...

Damo: Plus GST.

Steph: Plus GST. And that something I'm really mindful of, because of the metabolic damage that creates and that vicious cycle that we've got to get out of.

Damo: Yeah, that's right. It's very, very important to consider that. The Biggest Loser's coming back. So The Biggest Loser's being revisited, it'll be back on television in 2020 and-

Steph: I did not know that.

Damo: ... got to be on the nose, Steph. It's the people you know.

Steph: Clearly. Lucky you are my friend.

Damo: So they're coming back on and they're kind of looking at more of a spiritual dimension from what I understand.

Steph: Okay.

Damo: They'll be looking at ways in which they can help people with their mindset around food and nutrition, their mindset around exercise, their mindset around obesity. And so it's probably more of a mental gym with respect to helping people shift their mindset of who they are and why they're trying to achieve what they're trying to achieve.

So that's what the rumor mill has and so I suspect we'll probably see another iteration of The Biggest Loser. Obviously it's a franchised format that Fremantle Media's purchased and they'll make it. What's it now called? Endor whatever? There's a different name now.

Steph: Endor?

Damo: Yeah, whatever. I can't remember what it's called, but they're ... it's going to happen. So we've got to almost prepare ourselves for another onslaught of potentially another style of eating. Could it be keto? Could it be vegan? What's it going to be? I don't know. I don't know. I hope that it's sensible eating, that's what I'm looking for.

Steph: Well, I mean the last time they relaunched it, so was that last year or the year before?

Damo: I think the year before.

Steph: I applied, did you know that? Not to be a candidate, to be a nutritionist.

Damo: Did you? Wow.

Steph: Yeah.

Damo: You'd know way too much.

Steph: Well, I just really wanted to encourage that real food message and I was really hoping they would stop the calorie counting conversation, but they didn't and then the show was an absolute flop. And I honestly believe that a lot of it is that the, quote-unquote, "Science" they're using is so outdated and people are so much more savvy than when the show was in its prime. What do you reckon?

Damo: Well, I do, I think it's that too. But the other thing I think it might also be is that people are sick of people just losing weight. They want to see people get healthy and they go, "Oh yeah, cool, great. You lost 55 kilos. But now we're going to see you in a women's weekly in six months' time with 85 kilos on you so I don't really give a shit." So they're

kind of wanting to see people make a lifelong change or to make some permanent changes which are measurable with their health but also their behaviors.

And I think that maybe this new iteration might actually cover that, but it's interesting. It's an interesting situation I think that we find ourselves in that from a voyeuristic perspective, if we've got 68% of Australia's population is overweight or obese and we're prepared to watch people on television lose weight, really we're missing the point. Because what we could be doing, and I think would be wise to be doing, like you and I, Steph, it would be great if we were working together on a television show teaching people how to get healthy. That'd be amazing. Imagine we actually taught people how to get healthy.

Not like TV shows that maybe showcase a number of different health approaches and maybe then flog some vitamins and all that sort of stuff, which are great and very much needed. We need those sorts of shows to be able to open people's minds and they need to be at primetime. But we also needs shows that actually honestly teach people how to eat well and live well and then to find their purpose, the reason why they want to do it. Really drill down into that's sort of stuff. That's what I'm thinking.

But hopefully they don't muck up The Biggest Loser again. Just for the sake of the people that are watching it.

Steph: Yeah. Well, I didn't watch the last season, almost out of spite. No, I'm kidding.

Damo: I did, I did watch it out of spite. I mean you might've told me that you tried out for The Biggest Loser, you might've actually told me that. And I recall there was I had in my mind a reason why I didn't want to watch it and maybe you were the reason, Steph.

Steph: Well, I got asked to apply, it wasn't even ... I didn't sort of just decide out of my own goals. But I got contacted to apply by, it turns out, a client of mine from when I first started practicing, I think. And he's in that space.

Damo: Right. Well, there you go, they chose-

Steph: Anyway, I didn't watch that round, I will watch the next iteration.

Damo: Well, I'd like to know what they're doing differently. But they made a bad choice, but maybe they made a good choice because they didn't want to destroy your reputation going down with a sinking ship, so..

Steph: Oh, I was very grateful in hindsight. I actually, yeah, during the airing when everyone was sort of unpacking and understanding how, unfortunately, how bad it was going, I was very grateful in the end. So I got over my little grudge, let me tell you. I built a bridge.

Damo: There was a little show that was on Channel 10 and I was supposed to be the presenter that show. I don't know if I told you about this one. So I was supposed to be the

presenter of this particular TV show and then they found out I was a chiropractor and they asked me to not use the title chiropractor. They wanted me to only be a nutritionist and a naturopath and when I say only, I'm just saying that because I have another qualification that I'm very proud of.

Steph: I know what you mean.

Damo: But they didn't want to have that in the media. And so as a result of that I ended up not being the presenter of that particular TV show, but that TV show also went down after only I think 60 or 70 episodes, which is probably 10 weeks. So it kind of flopped and I was grateful that I wasn't on that sinking ship, but obviously they got the format for that wrong too.

Steph: Wow. Yeah, that's interesting. And you did briefly mention that chiropractic convo. Oh, there's so much I want to say about that, but I won't. I'll leave that for another time.

Awesome, so what else have we seen in terms of fads? Did you ever do or were you aware of a program called Ultralight?

Damo: Yeah. So my very first foray into kind of understanding how to get people to lose weight was with the naturopath Pat Tyrell and he used to practice out of a physiotherapy practice in [inaudible 00:20:49] And Pat basically drew up an eating program for people and said, "This is what you've got to go." And then they would follow it and they would lose weight and because in naturopathy school we weren't really taught how to teach people to lose weight. We're taught something about a little bit about nutrition, but not a whole lot. I was kind of like, "Oh, how do you help people lose weight? Because it doesn't really make sense and don't you just give them herbs and then it all happens?" Because naturopathy was all about prescribing and giving people stuff, not actually helping them make better decisions.

And so I fell into that trap and he said, "Well, this is what you've got to do." So I say like, "Okay, cool, cool. No worries." And I was studying at the time, I was like fourth year and so I was just doing my placement with him. Anyway, so then I looked after his practice when I graduated and I gave a few people some tips on what they could do to lose weight and they put on weight. And so I was like, "Oh, far out. Maybe they didn't do what they were supposed to do. I was like, "Yeah, I probably would've put on weight as well if I followed those recommendations."

Anyway, so I then thought I better learn how to do this and then Tony Lavana, or Tony Lavanis, had started this thing called Ultralight and I think that, "Oh, I might go along to the introduction session of that. He's a naturopath, he's obviously got something going on here." And so I thought I'd go check it out and a mate of mine who I'd studied with, his uncle was Malcolm McClean and so Malcolm and Tony had started this particular company.

Steph: Oh, Malcolm. I know Malcolm, yeah.

Damo: Yeah. So I thought I'd go along and learn it, so I started learning it, I was going, "Wow, this is like this is really interesting. This is ketosis. Oh, I thought ketosis was bad and it would give you kidney stones and blah, blah, blah." And then so I then went to my friend, Brendan Penwarden, who was at Metagenics. I said, "What do you think of this stuff?" He goes, "Well, I've heard of ketosis, but I don't really know if it's safe or good and stuff. Why don't you do some case studies for me and we'll see what happens?"

So I started writing up these case studies for Metagenics on ketosis and we were getting these amazing results, people losing weight, and I was going, "Far out! This is how you help people lose weight." And so it was all about, at the time, ketosis and keeping the ketones at 1.5 to four. And I thought I was doing really, really good thing by limiting people's calories to next to nothing and feeding them this powder, which I didn't even know what was in it and just that it was a prescribed supplement. That's what you had to do according to the Ultralight Program. And then I was telling Brendan about-

Steph: Those sachets? Are you talking about the sachets?

Damo: The sachets.

Steph: Yeah.

Damo: The sachets, right so I thought, "I'm going to find out what's in these sachets." And I don't know whether or not I should say on this particular program, but I was underwhelmed with what was in those sachets and I confronted Tony about it and I said, "Tony, the sachets have nothing in them. It's just I can't believe you're making me pay this much money for what you actually put in it. It's basically flavored skimmed milk powder."

Steph: Yeah, milk, yeah.

Damo: "What are you flogging?" And he said, "No, no. Flavored properly, scientifically validated, blah, blah, blah." And then other people were also buying these sachets through some company and you'd buy them in big boxes and I thought, "I just can't do this. I can't do this." So I thought, "There's got to be a way in which I can help people lose weight. Doesn't have to be in ketosis, but there's got a to be a way in which I can use the principles that I've learnt through putting people through a ketogenic sort of style eating program, but just do it a bit more gently." And so that's kind of where my food rationale came from.

I then went and worked with another guy, Cameron Mack, who had a really successful practice in Lower Plenty, and he works on a ketosis model as well. And I like some of the things that I learnt in that. But I also learnt that people probably needed more food for longevity, as opposed to this really strict calorie restriction that was potentially metabolically disastrous for some people.

So I changed my mindset and here I am today talking about eating whole food and it works.

Steph: Okay, still. I don't know if I've shared this with you, but my very first job as a nutritionist was prescribing Ultralight.

Damo: Really?

Steph: I don't know that anyone actually knows that. But I would like to personally apologize for all my previous clients as to how little food I gave them. Because I was similar to you.

Damo: Me too.

Steph: ... to you, I don't think you're taught enough at university about how to communicate health and wellness to your client. So my degree was quite obviously science focused and very good at the sort of societal level, like if we talk about obesity as a general disease. But I did not know how to teach nutrition to a person. So I actually really loved that program looking back, that it gave me the framework to actually be a practitioner.

Damo: Me too.

Steph: Not just a person with a degree that says the word nutrition on it.

Damo: Me too. I'm grateful for what I learned from Tony and Malcolm, I really am. But I'm really apologetic to my patients that I saw at the time because I was green, I was wet behind the ears still and so I didn't really kind of understand what I was doing. And so I really hope that people are okay afterwards. I'm sure they are and they might've found their way, but it was definitely a time in my life that I learnt a lot. But there's a lot of things that I learnt that I wouldn't do again, there's no doubt about it.

And I think as practitioners, that's kind of the way it is. You've just got to look at medicine and look at all the things that they've learnt along the way and the things that they wouldn't do anymore. It's the same, look at dentists.

Steph: Yeah, well, you didn't kill anyone. Yeah, no.

Damo: That's right.

Steph: I think you've got to have an open mind. I think we will always look back and think, "Okay, well I wouldn't do that now." Or, "I would change that if I was to know what I know now." And that's, I think, actually something to be celebrated because in the medical world, unfortunately, they're all very much like, "This is what I learnt in my degree which was bloody 30 or 40 years ago." And they haven't upskilled, and that's where we're seeing a lot of the problems and the confusion and the myths being perpetuated.

Whereas I can hand on heart say that I'm always learning and I will always be that way and I might've been wrong in the past, but at least I think it's important to really keep up to date with the science.

Damo: I agree with you, Steph. I really agree with you and the science sometimes is slow and it's easy for us as practitioners to decide, "Ah, that looks like a great idea." And there maybe an absence or a lack of science and so we might tread cautiously and I think it's wise. The wisest practitioner will tread cautiously and select what it is appropriate for that particular person, rather than cookie cutter approaches to wellness and wellbeing.

There was another TV show you will recall I'm sure, around the same time. It came out I think almost in the same week as I started filming Downsize Me and it was You Are What You Eat and it was with Gillian McKeith. And Gillian McKeith was a hardcore, British nutritionist who looked at people's poo and tried to diagnose that they had meat stuck in their guts for six days and that they had parasites and all kinds of things. And she was kind of all over the place and she put people on a vegetarian diet, basically, and tried to give them lots of carbohydrates and vegetarian sort of approaches. And what you would see with her results was appalling.

The results that people were getting with their bloods weren't good, they were getting elevation in triglycerides, they were getting fat loss but their cholesterol markers were getting worse, they were getting increased inflammatory markers. It just wasn't that good, but the TV show was fascinating, it was really, really successful because had lost weight and we got to see their poo, which was like just kind of grossed people out.

So you had Gillian McKeith and so, poor Gillian, I think that she's probably a very intelligent nutritionist. But the way in which that TV show was actually portrayed and done, I don't think did the full amount of justice to it.

There was also another TV show in New Zealand around the same time, there was a lady by the name of Nicky Hart and Nicky was a dietician and she decided to go into competition against Downsize Me and she was putting people on a high carbohydrate. Bread, cereals, pasta, rice, potatoes, low protein, low fat diet and everybody on that TV show got sick.

Steph: Wow.

Damo: And it was uninspiring, people looked really fat and tired afterwards and it was really quite amazing. I can't remember what that one's called, but I think it was called ... No, it wasn't called Feeder... But they basically, that show got axed, it was on TV2 I think it was, and it just didn't do well.

So there's been lots of people trying to give it a go, to try to teach people the best way to eat. But I think both you and I would agree, Steph, that the best way to eat is to have loads of plants, high quality plants, super good quality proteins and super good quality fats. That just makes sense.

Steph: So then I've got a little segue, pardon me, I've got a little segue for us. What do you think about the Carnivore Diet?

Damo: What the fuck?

Steph: Actually firstly, how many times have you been asked that question the last couple of months? Because I have had text messages coming out my eyeballs from clients and I am over it.

Damo: Well, it's the universal balance, isn't it? So we go all the way to vegan and then to balance that we go all the way to chewing the arse off a cow and being happy with that. And so it's not the way it happens, we don't have to be that hardcore with it. In fact I would, anybody who asks me, "What about the Carnivore diet?" I go, "Why? Why would you want to do the Carnivore diet?" "Oh you know because blah, blah, blah." I say, "Well, if it's just to lose weight then it'll probably help you lose weight. But if you want to get healthy there's no evidence that it's going to be make you healthy." "Oh, but this person said there's 100s of studies about the Carnivore Diet, that it makes you healthy." And I would go, "Well, show at least one of them to me. Just show me one."

Because there's no studies anywhere in the world for any other program that says that a particular is the diet for every single person on the planet. So I don't know how they'd get a diet up ... a study up for a diet. Because they can't prove that vegan's healthy either, so there's no need to go to extremes. Just come back to where we are, where Steph and I are right now, and build a diet that's got some principles from Carnivore, principles from vegan and then you'll be pretty healthy.

Steph: Yeah, it's just-

Damo: What do you think about the Carnivore Diet?

Steph: Well, look, how can you possibly eat meat for every meal for the rest of your life? If you think of it, if you use any principle of longevity it's a no from me.

Damo: It's a no from me.

Steph: It's a no, because it can't be something that you do forever. So as cliché as it is and I am a walking cliché sometimes, but it's about a lifestyle not a diet. So if we then look at where it might work in an N=1 scenario, and I've done the research, I know that in some people who have tried everything, I'm talking they've got a collection of autoimmune diseases and they've tried Paleo, they've tried autoimmune Paleo, they've tried low histamine, they've tried everything. Where it works for them is as an intervention, so they might do it for eight weeks or 12 weeks or one week or whatever it looks like in their world. And you might visualize it as wiping the slate clean of any potential dietary triggers that they can't see when they're eat their normal diet because there's too many food and it's too tricky to work out what I ate yesterday or what I ate three days ago.

So they kind of use Carnivore as an intervention and then they can gradually add in single foods to make sure that they're not then going to be consuming any triggers to their current health conditions. But again, it's an intervention, it's not a long term strategy.

Damo: Yeah, it's basically an exclusion diet. That's basically what it is.

Steph: 100%.

Damo: Just a really clean, yeah, clean, low reactivity diet just to ... And we call it a diet because it's a intervention, not because it's a lifestyle. It's a low reactive intervention, not a low reactive lifestyle. Because a low reactive lifestyle would actually then cause you to be highly reactive when you get exposed to things that you're not eating anymore, so we've got to be really mindful of that. That the more you exclude from your lifestyle, the harder it will be to bring those things back in at any point in the future.

So you've got to find a way in which you get a collection of foods that you desire, that you like, that work for you, that fit into a model of health and wellbeing. Preferably within the parameters that Steph and I are talking about and then build a lifestyle around that. And then it will take maybe a little bit longer for you to get the net result, but it will be more sustainable. As opposed to racing to the finish line and then crashing at the end.

Steph: Yeah. 100%. And look, I've always got an open mind when it comes to new things that come into the space. But I also cannot get my head around what the gut health strategy is in that Carnivore picture. Because what are we feeding our microbes?

Damo: Protein, protein and fat. You think about that, it's an absolute nonsense. It just doesn't stack up and if you throw all of the work of the last, let's say, six year years around gut health into the air and just dismiss all of that just so you can promote the Carnivore Diet you're doing a disservice to humanity I reckon.

Steph: And what concerns me about the protein element, obviously it's going to be really high protein being a meat based diet, is we know that if there's meat and not enough fiber, that our bacteria will eat the gut wall. So we will create leaky gut because there's not enough fiber for those bacteria to live on and that's a huge problem with high protein diets.

Damo: Yeah. Huge problem, huge problem. And then there's hyperactivity, so that's where people get this hyperactivity and then immune challenge as a result of what we would call leaky gut, which is leaky gut, but being brought on by something that you thought was actually healthy but it's not. It's just somebody else.

Damo: It's kind of like that, what was that protein powder thing that you said before? Was the name of that company?

Steph: Ultralight.

Damo: The multi level market one. No, the multilevel marketing?

Steph: Ah, Isogenic.

Damo: Isogenics, if you take real food out and then supplement it with chemicals like that, that's just not going to cut it, that's just not going to work. Again, it just doesn't make

sense. I think if we are to go sensibly into the future with this, it's probably our request would be that you would be sensible about it. Ask some questions, "Hmm, does this really make sense?" If the answer's no then stay away from it.

Would this grow on trees or did this once walk around? If the answer's no, then probably stay away from it. You've got to kind of ask yourself those questions.

Steph: 100%. You do not need a degree in nutrition to read an ingredient label and think that maybe fructose and then 4,000 other words is perhaps not the best choice for your long term health.

Damo: The thing I hate the most is when someone's been doing it for a week and they go, "I feel the best I've felt in 30 years." They do a detox of some ilk that's cost them \$500 to do a detox with some sachets of some powder that they've bought from some multi level marketing company and they say, "I feel the best I've ever felt. You've got to get on it because it's the best." And really what that is is a justification for them spending \$500. It's not real.

Maybe because I'm getting old, maybe I'm getting skeptical, but I do like the idea of doing a detox. I love the idea of lightening the load on the body, I love that. But it shouldn't cost the earth and it shouldn't be coming from multi-level marketing.

Steph: Well, it technically should be free if you really think about it. Maybe a couple of supplementary ingredients, but yeah, obviously real food focused.

Damo: Yeah, totally.

Steph: it's a whole nother conversation.

Damo: That's why you do the Real Food Real and that's why you're the Natural Nutritionist because that's.. it makes sense.

Steph: I'd like to think I have some common sense. But yeah, I encourage everybody to ask those questions. I think that was a really good point that you raised, because it's about anything in the health space, like is it real food? But also what is the motive going back to what we were saying before around that whole Instagram influencer and where you get your information from. Watch the motive, we've really got to be careful of that because it's a huge space. It's a trillion dollar industry and it's easy to ... might not be easy for some, but I mean in some cases we can get tricked. And doctor's making sure you ask the right questions to avoid that in the long term.

Damo: Absolutely. Agreed, agreed. Here we are again at the end of another podcast agreeing on everything that we've both just said. I wish it was more contentious. What jeopardy have we got? Is there any jeopardy?

Steph: We'll have to chat about ... We might have to talk about parasites for a little bit of conflict, maybe.

Damo: Okay, yeah, yeah.

Steph: Maybe a little.

Damo: Yeah, I'd love to talk about parasites, yeah, for sure.

Steph: Let's do that. Damo, as always I'm very grateful for your time and I know our listeners are too. Thank you for joining us and we'll speak to you again very soon.

Damo: It's my pleasure, Steph. Thanks for having me on, Steph. It's great to see you.