



Marc David

Shape-Shifting the Body
with Sacred Metabolism

THE COMPLETE
HOLISTIC
WEIGHT LOSS
COLLECTION
TRANSCRIPTS

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SHAPE-SHIFTING THE BODY WITH SACRED METABOLISM

Shelley: Hello, Marc. Thank you so much for taking the time to do this. I've really been looking forward to speaking with you.

In your view, what is the underlying cause of the weight gain and obesity epidemic in our culture today?

Marc: This is such a wonderfully huge question and impossible as it is to answer, I would love to answer it because in so many ways I think usually when we ask this question, we go blank. The collective scientific wisdom tends to think, well, we're just eating too much and we're not exercising enough. We reduce this powerful, sort of global symptom, to what really is something that I believe is woefully inadequate to describe what's happening.

To me I'd like to look at our symptoms, our unwanted habits, our unwanted behaviors, our diseases really as divine messengers. They're here for a reason, they're here to teach us. We could look at them as, oh my God, this is this terrible problem and we have all this excess weight across the globe. Let's beat it with a stick. Let's get rid of it.

Let's use our willpower, everybody, and get on the treadmill and start dieting. We've been using this strategy called eat less, exercise more since the 1960s, so that's when that sort of gold standard was first born for weight loss, and 50 years later it hasn't worked.

We are gaining weight as a globe. I think if I could take planet earth and put it on the eating psychologist couch, I think what I would see is yes, for sure, we have a challenge around what we eat.

Clearly the food chain has been inundated with foods that are not so healthy and not so natural to the food chain. I'm talking about refined sugars, refined carbohydrates, poor quality fats, synthetic fats, trans fats, hormones in the diet that are coming in through the meat, through the dairy products.

We can certainly point to nutrition, but I think on a deeper level, the poor-quality diet there's really symptomatic of a disconnection that we have from the body and a disconnection that we have from the earth, a disconnection that we have from nature.



We've sort of lost our bearings as a planet in terms of what's important and what actually keeps us healthy. [Inaudible 00:03:07] I want to suggest that if we have a global epidemic of obesity, it's trying to tell us something, and listen to the message. I think the message is that we're living out of alignment and not [inaudible 00:03:24] living out of alignment with the earth, with nature, we're living out of alignment with the food chain.

We're also living out of alignment with what it means to be human, how we relate, how we overwork ourselves, how we're overstressed. How we get greedy, how industry gets greedy about producing cheap-quality food so we can make money. There's this sort of belief system that you've got make money at all costs, even it's harming other humans.

I think there's a melting pot of reasons that are all contributing to weight and it is nutritional, it's social, it's spiritual, and it's collective. It's not just one simple piece. I think our ... we're charged with the task, all of us, of just asking the question, not so much how can I just lose this weight? How can I exercise it off? Why is it showing up and how can I live my life more in balance?

Shelley: Yes. That's incredible; thank you. You are widely regarded as one of the world's leading experts in eating psychology and how our minds affect weight and health. What inspired you to specialize in this unique area of expertise?

Marc: Yet another beautiful question, thank you. I believe that often times we think we choose what we do, but often times what we do chooses us. I definitely have the sense and have the experience that the field that I'm in and the mission that I serve has surely chosen me. I was born ... popped out of the womb sickly and asthmatic and from a very early age I couldn't run, I couldn't breathe very well. I was deeply allergic; almost died a handful of times in infancy. This was back in the '60s where there really wasn't a lot of options when it came to health and holistic health.

I remember at the age of five, I was a little frustrated because I was going from doctor to doctor and nothing was working. I asked my mother to change my diet; I'm not sure why. I think I'd heard a rumor that fruits and vegetables were good for you. I was brought up in the age of Froot Loops and Kool-Aid and Marshmallow Fluff, and my mother actually bought me fresh fruits and vegetables. I don't think I'd ever had much of that.

Coincidence or not, my health started to change. From a very early age I had what was for me the magical, and I really mean that, it was a magical experience that I had the power to effect change in my body based on what I ate. It was just profound for me. That began a passion for nutrition and a passion for nutrition science and a passion for food science that led me to see my first clients literally when I was 18, 19 years old.



What I started noticing as I became a full-time practitioner in my early 20s was that I would have clients who were, quite frankly, smarter than me, older than me, more educated than me, wealthier than me, and I would tell them what to eat, how to eat it, when to eat it, told them what supplements to take and they would come back a week or two later and said I couldn't do it.

I started realizing, my goodness, I could know everything in the universe about the science of eating, but if I don't understand the mind of the eater, if I don't understand the psyche of the eater, the soul of the eater, then that's not going to do me much good. I started to look around and I noticed, my goodness, I want to learn about eating psychology and there was no place to do it. Again, this was back in the late '70s. There was one clinic in Florida that would let me come down and do an internship in anorexia.

I thought, well, that's interesting, but I'm not interested in anorexia, that's an eating disorder; what about the rest of us? What about all the clients I've been seeing who have five pounds to lose, 10, 15, 20? What about the people who overeat and binge eat? What about my friends, my relatives, my mother? People who don't have a clinical eating disorder, i.e., the other 99 percent of us?

There is no eating psychology that described us. After looking around trying to find where I can study that, it hit me one day that the book I wanted to read was the book I needed to write. I needed to educate myself in psychology, so I went back to school. I got my masters degree in psychology. I found a program that gave me the freedom to do independent study. I took two years of my life doing everything I could to put together what would be an approach to eating psychology for the rest of us.

It was all inspired by my deep desire to heal the way we split apart mind, body, heart, and soul; the way we split apart science and psyche because it doesn't work. What was fascinating was that as soon as I started to understand feminine psychology, masculine psychology, behavioral psychology, spiritual psychology, I thought, oh, I can understand better why somebody would want to eat right but couldn't. I can understand why somebody would want to sabotage.

I could better understand the pieces inside of us, the voices inside of us that often get in the way and started to look at how do we speak to those voices? How do we integrate and bring to the table all these different parts of ourselves that are normally set against each other. Usually, yeah, there's a part of me that wants to eat just my perfect raw food diet, but then there's the part of me that just wants to party and eat ice cream, and it's usually either one or the other.



What inspired me was to learn how do we as human beings become our full potential? How can we just find a diet that works, find a way of eating, find a relationship with food that works, and let it go and go about the business of doing your life? That's some of the things that got me going in this field.

Shelley: This is fascinating and let's just keep going because you're enlightening us on this psychology. I think this is the missing key and I've heard you speak about how our calorie-burning capacity is fueled by our inner transformation. Please clarify for our listeners what you mean by this.

Marc: Ah, yes, so how is calorie-burning capacity fueled by our inner transformation? This is a concept that's based on really the simple fact that the body lives downstream of the soul. It's based on the simple fact that mind and body exist on a continuum. The yogis of old knew this for thousands of years and Ayurveda, Chinese medicine understood this.

Excuse me, they understood this and really scientists in the Western world didn't get on board, particularly in the United States, until about the 1980s when we got really excited and discovered that, oh my goodness, the mind really does influence the body when it comes the immune system. We developed with field psychoneuroimmunology and we make sound really fancy like we just discovered something that's been around forever.

The point is this; I like to work off of a very simple formula a that formula is this: personal power equals metabolic power. Personal power equals metabolic power meaning the more I become who I'm supposed to be, who I'm meant to be, who ... the more I become my fullest, most empowered, creative expression on planet earth, the more I become who I'm supposed to be, the more the body can become what it is supposed to be.

We cannot expect, as human beings, to be incongruous with the truth of who we are. If I'm walking through life as a liar, as a cheat; if I'm walking through life being an authentic; if I'm walking through life not telling the truth; if I'm walking through life pretending to be one thing but being another, and we all do this to the degree that we do this, we're not living in harmony with the truth of who we are.

How could chemistry, how could metabolism, how could health, how could our organ system, how could physiology be what it's supposed to be if I'm out of spiritual and emotional and character alignment with who [inaudible 00:13:17] to be?

It's all about focusing on our morals, spiritual, soulful compass as a way to understand that this is what's going to help fuel our metabolism.



What I often find happens if you look at this and maybe some of the most practical terms ... over the years what I started to notice with clients. I've been seeing weight-loss clients now probably for about 35 years. Because I was trained in eat less, exercise more, I quickly noticed that eat less, exercise more didn't work and I could help clients lose weight but they'd gain it right back.

In deed, if you look at all the studies that are done on weight loss and this particular statistic I'm about to say to you should be headline news across the globe, but for some strange reason it isn't, analysis of everybody that's ever been on weight loss between 96 to 99 percent of all human beings who lose weight on a weight-loss diet gain it back within a year.

Now you can go online right now and you'll hear all kinds of people bragging in their studies, oh, well our people lost 20 pounds, 30 pounds, 40 pounds. Yeah, follow them up a year later and talk to me. Short-term weight loss is easy. Marc Twain had a great line; Marc Twain said, quitting smoking is the easiest thing to do in the world. I should know, I've done it over 500 times.

Marc: Losing weight is easy. Go on TV, watch the Biggest Loser, you can whip someone into shape, you can beat them with a stick to lose weight, but giving them a sustainable way to be in their body and with their body in a way that truly works. Yes, there are certain dietary changes I could make with a client.

Often times, yes, it might be that they have a low thyroid problem. Yes, they have an adrenal problem. Yes, there might be something metabolic; they could have prediabetes, which would mean I can alter their diet, give them fiber, give them supplements, et cetera, and help them lose weight.

That's a percentage of people that you can truly help them lose weight with diet, but I find that in the Western world there's a large number of people who you can do all the right things from a dietary and nutritional perspective and you don't get a result, until you start to notice where's the energy blocked?

Where are the intense stressors in life? Where are the fears? Because when we get stuck emotionally, when we get stuck in our personal or our spiritual development, metabolism is going to get stuck. How could it not?

Of body and mind we can't sweep our inner world under the rug any more and believe that it's not going to affect the body. What I noticed, I'll give you a typical example: stress. Stress, we all have stress, and the stress of I need to make more money.



The stress of I need to go to work. The stress of kids, the stress of my aging parents, the stress called I hate my body. The stress called I'm not good enough, I'm not rich enough.

The stress called, ugh, I haven't forgiven my parents. The stress called, oh my relationship, my marriage is terrible but I'm not going to talk about it, not even to my children or to my wife.

Well, when we're in stress, we're in stress physiology. When we're in stress physiology amongst the many chemical changes that happen in the body, you're producing more insulin, you're producing more cortisol and low-level stress day in and day out over time [inaudible 00:16:54] more insulin and cortisol.

These particular hormones signal the body to store weight, store fat, not build muscle. There are other parameters in the stress response when you're under chronic low-level stress you'll be producing less thyroid hormone. Both of those hormones literally rev up the metabolic rate of almost every cell in your body. You're generally producing less sex hormones.

Chronic low-level stress as a day-in, day-out state is actually unnatural to human biology and it will have the strange side effect of fattening us up. Part of that, which tells us that when we're stressed, you want to hang on to weight, the more fearsome creature you are.

If I'm living in a jungle, the bigger I am the more chance I have of surviving. Our survival brain understands that a big body equals protection. Our two-hour genetic memory, our DNA understands that the bigger and more fearsome a creature you are, the best chance you have for survival; not only to fight other creatures, but the bigger you are, the more body fat you're holding, the longer you can survive if food source is cut off.

The point is this: when you and I are hanging around and we're feeling, oh my God, I'm not going to have enough money, I'm not going to have enough money. There are people who live with that every day, you're creating stress, you're creating excess insulin, excess cortisol, decreased growth hormone, decreased thyroid hormone, and you're creating the conditions for essentially what I like to call, non-caloric weight gain. That has only some [inaudible 00:18:37] with how many calories you're eating simply by changing your level of stress response or relaxation response.

Now here's a typical story that science does and this has been repeated many times. You take two groups of rats, and one groups of rats you put them in a cage and you give them a nice rat lifestyle. They're relaxed, they have all kinds of rat toys and rat TV. The second group of rats, you stress them out, and the way you do this is you introduce an electric shock intermittently into the cage.



It stresses the rats out; they don't like that. Both groups of rats get the exact same amount of food. Both groups of rats eat the exact same amount of food. The stressed rats gain weight and get obese. The non-stressed rats maintain normal rat weight. Same amount of calories. The body that's receiving those calories because it's in a stressed state, it is exploding in its weight because that's what it's intelligently, evolutionarily designed to do.

My point is this, when we start to look in the mirror and go, huh, where am I holding onto [inaudible 00:19:54] to my relationship with money? How can I relax into my relationship with work? How can I let go of this negative self-talk that puts you in a stress response? How can I let go of the self-judgment?

Who do I need to forgive? How do I create a world for myself where it's a more harmonious world because when I do that I step into relaxation response. I'm having inner transformation, which is literally changing my calorie-burning capacity.

It's very simply about how we are wired at the most primitive level of being and this was understood since the 1920s, 1930s, that there is indeed sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems instantly interchanging with each other. These are the yin and yang of our biology. When the sympathetic nervous system is dominant, you're in a stress response and digestion shuts down.

When the parasympathetic nervous system is dominant, you're in a relaxation response and digestion and calorie-burning capacity is at its highest. It sounds counterintuitive, but when you're in the most relaxed state, you're actually in the highest state of calorie-burning capacity.

Now a lot of people think, well, no, that can't be true because when I intensely exercise for my one hour of power walking and power running and power exercise, I'm not relaxed. I'm going to say true. That's the one hour a day that maybe you're doing intensive exercise, but there's 23 other hours in the day.

That's where you do the majority of your calorie burning. Even though you exercise, it doesn't burn the majority of your calories. It's the other 23 hours of the day where you have a specific basal metabolic rate.

The more relaxed I am, the more efficient I digest assimilating calorie burn. Think, oh my God, I'm all stressed, I'm all freaked out. I must be a lean, mean calorie-burning machine. There is a small percentage of people who, when they're super stressed, are going to lose weight.



The majority of people I've noticed, it's about 85 to 90-something percent, will tend to be weight gainers when they're under chronic day-in, day-out anxiety, fear, push, worry stress.

Shelley: This is another important distinction you've touched on, the emotional stress, forgiveness, how our metabolism is affected by this, and it can also be empowered by trust, love, and forgiveness. This is something you can explain here, so please explain further how these seemingly unrelated emotions influence our metabolism function.

Marc: Oh, good question. We mentioned some of the various biological underpinnings of why that happens. We talked about how the relaxation response which is parasympathetic nervous system dominance, which is ... it's literally it's like a switch in the brain when the parasympathetic nervous system switch comes on, you're in the relaxation response and your fullest, healthiest digestion, assimilation, and calorie-burning capacity is automatically switched on.

Now what's fascinating is when people hear the term relaxation response, they think sitting down and meditating. Sure, you can go into a relaxation response when you meditate, but I'm not talking about meditation. Fine, let's include meditation, but relaxation response is a huge tent under which we put things such as love.

When you're loving in this moment, when you're loving your son, your daughter, your dog, your husband, your wife, you're in a relaxation response.

Our trusting in the universe you're in a relaxation response. If you don't trust life, you're in a stress response. If you're holding someone as unforgiven, you're in a chronic low-level stress response, because literally that person is conceived as an enemy by your brain. Perceived as an enemy by your brain, and any time the brain senses enemy or threat, that's what produces stress response.

When you forgive someone, they are no longer a threat, you drop a long-held biological stress response that has been operating at low level and sometimes not so low level in the body.

Think of a time literally when you've ever forgiven someone. You take a deep breath and relax, like, ugh, let that go.

Shelley: Yeah, and there's that saying, it feels like a weight's been lifted off my shoulders.

Marc: Because we've relaxed, so relaxation response is not meditation. Relaxation response is trust, it's love, it's forgiveness.



When you have faith, when you have fun, when you have pleasure, any time you're receiving pleasure, pleasure relaxes us. Any time you're in an intimate momentum, you're in a relaxation response. When we're in trust, love, forgiveness, intimacy, all these things, we are literally empowering our metabolism to the place where it is naturally its best.

When you become who you're supposed to be, your metabolism can become what it's supposed to be, and then when it comes to this thing called losing weight and ideal body weight, there's no such thing as ideal body weight until you have ideal you. Sure, yeah, there's plenty of people walking around out there who quote-unquote reached their target body weight. Now, as an example, I live in Boulder. Here in Boulder we have a ton of what I call false positives. Meaning, you could look out my window right now and I can see the people jogging on the trails out in the mountains.

There's [inaudible 00:26:05] who are joggers here, and they're thin and they have not a lot of body fat and they have eating disorders and they're constantly miserable. They're constantly sickly. They running all the time. They're literally not enjoying their bodies. [Inaudible 00:26:16] weight that [inaudible 00:26:18] they're living in fear of gaining weight. They don't enjoy their body. They don't have pleasure. They don't have turn-on. They're not even sexually active. They're not plugged in. They're not in their sensuality, but they have their ideal body weight. Who cares?

Give me somebody who's quote-unquote 50 pounds overweight who's loving her body, enjoying it, dancing it, being sensual in it, and living in it. I'd much rather have that. Saying is ultimately at the end of the day when we start to follow our spiritual compass, which will always guide us towards love and light and forgiveness and transformation and looking at ourselves in the mirror and seeing how we have to grow. Then when we take that up, that will potentize all the good dietary strategies that you do.

Meaning, I meet a lot of clients, and I mean a lot of people, who they'll tell you, yeah, I went on a medical fast. I ate no calories for 12 days and I gained three pounds. You can eat the perfect diet or you could eat no food at all, but ultimately the body doesn't care. We have to be in alignment.

Shelley: This is so true, and you speaking to ultimately as spiritual awakening when you start to instill love, trust, forgiveness into your life. Spiritually you become alive and become in alignment. I can so relate, I do have an acquaintance that has done fasting, lots and lots of fasting, and just the last fast that she did, she said, "You wouldn't believe it, I gained weight, 21 days of no food, except juice, broth, water." It was quite stunning for her as well. This is where some of the keys that you're unlocking for us here, learning more about what this relaxation response, living in alignment is about.



Let's keep going, because I know one of the more fascinating things we talk about is how the issues with our weight are actually soul lessons. What are some of the soul lessons our weight challenges are here to teach us, Marc?

Marc: Another beautiful question. I define ... let me give you a sense of what I mean when I use the term soul lesson. The lessons maybe you learn as a parent. There's the lessons you learn in your relationships in business. The lessons that I believe are larger soul lessons, they're life lessons that when you're a hundred years old and you're on your death bed, they're the big lessons that when we learn them, we can say, "I did it."

They're lessons that sometime take a lifetime. Even if they take less of time, then that's pretty glorious. Soul lessons can be related ... they're the deeper lessons that we are yearning to learn that help us evolve as spiritual beings here on earth. As an example, probably the most common soul lesson I see across the board is this thing that I'll call agreeing to be here. There's all kinds of people out there who are out there, are alive, they're your friends, they're your loved ones, they're the people you need every day. They're here, they're walking around, but they haven't fully agreed to be here.

Meaning, ugh, I don't like this life. Ugh, I hate this body. Ugh, I wish I was a man, I wish I was a woman. I wish I was taller, shorter. I wish I was richer. I hate dogs. I hate war. I don't like Republicans. I don't like Democrats. I don't like Jews. I don't like Christians. Whatever it is, we find ways that we've soured on life.

Now to this, life is hard. It's hard to be a human on planet earth; it really is, it's not easy. If we don't fully agree to the whole mess, because it is messy being alive, you get sick, you get disease, you gain weight, you don't know what to eat, you lose your money, you lose your home, your friends leave you, you get betrayed. War happens, stealing happens.

It's hard, and we often find ways to check out of life. We're walking around, but we're not fully here. I haven't agreed that this is my body. I haven't agreed that these are my parents. You might be 50 years old and you've lived 50 years of your life and you still don't like your parents. You still don't like your [inaudible 00:31:13] and the journey that you've been on. I'm not saying it wasn't hard. I'm not saying there was a lot of pieces we'd rather erase and have it done differently.

The point is, our life is our life and at some point we have to agree that this was my life. You don't have to agree to love it, but there's a level of acceptance that allows us to be here and be here fully. Fully agree to be here, the soul lesson called I agree to this life.



I agree to my whole past. I agree to all of it. If we don't fully agree to it, then we're not fully invested in taking care of ourselves. Why should I exercise? Why should I be in my body? Why should I face some of the difficult things inside of myself? That's [inaudible 00:31:59] it. Let me just get by.

Because we haven't embraced what earth life really is. I see this in so many of my clients; they're apathetic. What apathetic really means is I don't want to be here. You can't ... and people come in and I've had clients in the past who say, "You need to motivate me." When my client says you need to motivate me, I say, "Absolutely not." If I motivate you I'm doing you a disservice. You need to be inspired, not motivated.

What's going to inspire you to be alive? What's going to inspire you to be here? What do you want to do with your life? What's important to you? What gets your creative juices flowing? What makes you want to be here on planet earth? Tap into that and that's what's going to make you eat well, take care of your body. Because if I really want to be here, you bet I want a healthy body. That's the soul lesson that I see.

Honestly, another one that often happens, another soul lesson, is humility. We get so caught up in the outer form of what the body is supposed to be. I have clients who have been haunted by that same five pounds for 15 years.

At the same time, I have clients who all of a sudden they hit menopause and they freak out. All we just need to learn to have humility around the body. The body changes, the body gets old, the body might gain weight.

Sometimes we have no control of these things. Sometimes we just have to love what is. Whether you want to lose the weight or not, you've got to love it in order to lose it. You can't transform something by hating it.

If you take a road of beating up your weight and hating yourself into weight loss, if that's the road then trust me, hate and upset and beat-up is going to be the destination. A soul lesson, I'll mention one more, and this will particularly apply to women, and it's called reclaiming the higher feminine or the Divine Feminine in us. We have very ... and I say Divine Feminine with capital D, capital F.

In this world, we have a very limited view of what the feminine is. I asked a client of mine, 46-years old who was trying to lose 15 pounds. I said to her, "What's your definition of the feminine? When I say feminine, what do you hear?" She looked at me like I was asking the dumbest question. She said, "Skinny and pretty."



Because she was no longer, in her mind, skinny and pretty she was in absolute suffering, and I mean suffering and misery; dieting without losing weight, exercising her brains out without losing weight, because her definition of the feminine was skinny and pretty. The feminine is so much more. The feminine ... we try to control, women are trying to control that appetite, control their desire, control how much pleasure they get. Oh my God, food is the enemy.

Well, the feminine is all about pleasure. The feminine is desire. The feminine is nourishment. The feminine body is designed by evolution, designed by a higher power to gestate a baby, to bake it in the oven, and then to feed it. They have amazing, insane, wonderful, wild relationships with food and nourishment that's built it. It's beautiful, it's powerful. When we forget that, when we forget that the feminine has a special relationship with food and nourishment, we collapse our definition of the feminine.

Women are trying to control food, control their diet, control pleasure, control appetite, and it's actually learning how to celebrate those. It's learning how to celebrate the flow of one's emotions. It's learning how the feminine is chaotic, it is like the ocean. It could be smooth, it could be calm, it could be wild, it could change from moment to moment; that's the nature of the feminine in women, the feminine in all of us, men and women.

What I'm saying is that there's a different psychology for women than for men. We've got to get with the program. Yes, men and women are equal in the eyes of the universe, but man, are we different. More expanded definitions of what the feminine is because often times when women have a challenging or dysfunctional relationship with food it's because their definition of the feminine is limited, and they're not living into to who they are as women in the world.

Are you stepping into your feminine power? Are you stepping into your feminine heart? Are you stepping into the feminine aspect of your body, of your turn-on, of your pleasure? Are you stepping into the feminine power in your womb, like where is it? Have you tapped into it? Because it's different when you tap into it. You feel [inaudible 00:37:07].

Those are some of my examples of soul lessons when it comes to weight challenges. I've noticed when men start to tune into a higher definition of the masculine and women start to tune into a higher definite definition of the feminine, and up from that place, the weight comes off.

Shelley: Yeah. Yeah, just that shift in perspective, it's pretty empowering what you're sharing about that feminine and I love that you connect the fact that men have that feminine aspect within as well. It may not be their dominant energy, but it definitely is there.



You're a pioneer in the field of holistic weight loss and your work is always on the cutting edge. What are some of the latest findings in neuroscience that you're discovering about weight loss?

Marc: Sometimes it's less about what science and neuroscience is discovering, and other times it's more about what it hasn't discovered. Let me tell you what's not figured out, which really gives us some insight.

When science and neuroscience looks at weight loss, when you sum total up, and science has called this when you do a meta analysis of all the research on weight loss, what you start to find is this. That we, the scientific we, cannot conclusively say that excess weight on the body, we can't conclusively say that excess is a disease, is a symptom, is a non-factor in disease, is a predictor of health, is a genetic issue, is a psychosocial issue, is a nutritional issue. You can't pinpoint any one of those and say, "That's what excess weight is."

We don't know. The science doesn't know what the heck is going on. In its confusion it always gets back to some of the same, I'm going to say, outdated and really scientifically silly principles of eat less, exercise more, which science even says ... there's a ton of research that shows more and more that exercise has nothing to do with all the amounts of weight that we're gaining. It's not necessarily lack of movement, lack of exercise. It's a piece of the puzzle for some people.

We don't know what's going on, and we don't know what's going on because we, the scientific we, tends to look for the one factor, find the one genetic key that we can turn the key in the lock and then we're going to make everybody skinny.

Science is always promising us genetics, it's always promising us a vaccine, it's always promising us a drug, it's always promising we're going to find that one little gene, that one hormone. Oh, it's leptin now. We keep reproducing the same nonsense thinking it's going to get us somewhere when it's a full spectrum of factors.

As we were talking about in the beginning of the call, yes it's nutritional, yes it's the food. It's psychic, it's emotional, it's how we do relationship in this world. It's our soul lessons, it's our stressors.

It's the internal conversation we have with ourselves, it's the toxins that are in our environment and coming into the food chain. It's the drugs that we're taking. It's so much, so I also want to mention one particular piece of neuroscience that's useful here for your question is this thing we call post-traumatic stress syndrome.



Very briefly, post-traumatic stress syndrome is a fancy way of saying stress response that doesn't leave the body. If you're a soldier and you're in war and we diagnose you as having post-traumatic stress syndrome, it simply means this: you witnessed horrific things and they were so stressful for your nervous system that your nervous system never calmed down.

After every stress response, you have an alarm phase and a heightened phase of that stress response, and then the stress response diminishes itself and eventually brings us down into a relaxation state.

In nature every animal that goes into a stress response eventually dials itself down into relaxation response. When that doesn't happen for a human, we call it post-traumatic stress syndrome. Dogs often have that.

You meet dogs who've been abused by their masters and the dog walks around for the rest of its life kind of freaking out. Humans do that, too.

Now there are degrees of post-traumatic stress syndrome. Neuroscience is just beginning to tap into that, but here's where it's important for weight. What often happens, there are many people, not all but many, who are truly walking around carrying excess weight often times since childhood and that excess weight that they're carrying around since childhood is due to a trauma.

It's due to a stress that they never let go of. It could be sexual abuse, it could be physical abuse, it could be emotional abuse. It could be an intense home environment where the person didn't feel safe, the child didn't feel safe, and gained a bunch of weight, stayed in that stress response and the weight never comes off, literally in a post-traumatic stress that locks the weight into the body.

For that subset of clients, until you can access with them what that initial stressor was, you can't really help them lose the weight. That weight will stay on forever until you identify the precipitating event or experience and being to sort of unlock and unpack that.

I created and founded the Institute for the Psychology of Eating a handful of years ago to start an organization where we can begin to train professionals in how to deal with the very things we've been talking about.

How to use enlightenment approaches to weight loss that actually can yield success and yield results. Yeah, these are just some of the things that we teach, the kinds of tools and techniques that give you the best probability of getting down to business in terms of, wow, what does the client need?



Because it's different for everyone, but at the very least we need to have those maps. We need to have that list of distinctions in our mind so we can assess somebody and go, oh, I need to move in maybe this direction, or I'm going to try that direction with this weight-loss client.

Shelley: One of the important things you address in your work, too, is the notion of toxic nutritional beliefs. Maybe you can talk about that, what exactly are these toxic nutritional beliefs and how do they affect our metabolism?

Marc: I call toxic nutritional beliefs the kinds of thoughts, the kinds of factual beliefs that we hold in our mind that are actually incorrect, untrue, or outdated, but they're so strong and so pernicious that they can be more debilitating and, in deed, more toxic to our physiology than the worst foods and the worst poisons in our diet.

One of the main toxic nutritional beliefs that's out there is called food is my enemy. If you start to look around, if you start to notice your friends, your loved ones, when in particular will hold this one, people who are worried about their weight, people who want to be thinner, people who are worried about gaining weight are walking around thinking food is the enemy.

Why? Because if I eat food, food makes me fat. If I'm fat, I will not have love because clearly what the world and the culture tells me is that the skinnier I am, the more men will love me and the more I will then have love and have intimacy and have relationships and have connections. Damn, I better be skinny. I don't have this perfectly skinny body, I wasn't born that way.

The only way I can see to do it on my own is eat less and exercise more. [Inaudible 00:45:31] food is the enemy and literally people, women, men, who walk around day in and day out in fear, in anxiety, and in stress about eating, and how much they eat, and how much fat is in the food, and how many fat grams are in the food. They start to go into stress response when they're eating, even though they're hungry, they're in a stress response.

Why? Because food is the enemy. Remember the scientific definition of stress is very simple: any real or imagined threat and the body's response to that threat. Any time your brain perceives threat, i.e., enemy, your system automatically in that [inaudible 00:46:16] goes into some degree of stress response.

If you think food is the enemy, that's no different than you thinking a lion is chasing me or a guy with a knife is chasing me. Eat at least three, four, or five times a day, plus you're thinking about food maybe even more than that; so every time you're eating or you're thinking about food, you're going into a stress response.



Remember when you're in a constant low-level stress response, you're producing more insulin, more cortisol, less growth hormone, less thyroid hormone, less sex hormone, net result weight gain. [Inaudible 00:46:51] fascinating how the very belief called food is the enemy creates a sort of self-fulfilling metabolic prophecy. If I eat food I'll gain weight. If I eat food I'm going to gain weight.

Well, you're creating such an intense stress response, such an intense amount of cortisol and intense amount of insulin, yeah, those two hormones are designed in excess to signal your body to store weight and store fat and not build muscle, yeah you're going to gain weight non-calorically just by self-producing those chemicals in your system.

It's a strange quirk of nature that when we lose control over our mind, when we are not operating in alignment with universal law. According to universal law, food is your friend. How do I know this? Because just look with your eyes. We're designed to be eaters.

Life, evolution, God, the higher intelligence of the universe designed you and I to be eaters. You have a digestive system. We have food. Food is inherently pleasurable. It's designed to be pleasurable. You eat food, your endorphin amounts go up instantaneously. You have sweet, salty, sour, bitter taste buds on your tongue. You have more sweet taste buds on your tongue than any other kind.

Food is your friend. [Inaudible 00:48:18] nutritional belief is food is my enemy, which then creates a physiology, it creates a chemistry, a metabolism that actually does the opposite of what we want. We have to stay in consciousness, we have to use skillful means. We have to use our intelligence to understand who am I? How am I using my mind? Are my beliefs correct? Are they serving me?

Shelley: I never thought of it as toxic nutritional beliefs, but I can remember a time when I was thinking, don't eat that, don't eat that and stress, yeah. You become more aware of okay, that's not what I want, but, of course, [inaudible 00:48:58] you're going to be gravitating towards those things. That's really enlightening, thank you.

Since you're on the leading edge of holistic health and weight loss research, I want to get your perspective on what you envision the weight loss science of the future to look like.

Marc: Beautiful question, and I believe that the weight-loss science of the future will truly look at every individual as fantastically unique, and will look at metabolic parameters, what's going on the body? Is there a dysfunction somewhere in organ system, in the glands, in our chemistry, perhaps in our genetics, that might be influencing weight? Just the same, yes, we're going to look at the diet itself, absolutely.



Equally as important, we have to look at what's going on in each person's inner world, in their outer world, because all the stressors in their life ... it could be their marriage. I can have a weight-loss client who's gained [inaudible 00:50:06] pounds and he's trying to fast and he doesn't lose weight. He goes on a diet and he doesn't lose weight. Maybe he intensely exercises, he finally loses weight, but as soon as he stops exercising it comes back on, but the issue is, the marriage isn't working. There's disharmony in the marriage, which is causing stress, which is causing the weight gain because it's changing his chemistry. Until the relationship issue gets addressed, the weight is going to stay exactly where it is.

It could be a relationship with work, relationship with money, relationship with sexuality, relationship with spirituality. We have to see where does this doorway called weight lead us to? If somebody truly has excess weight, I'm going to say it's a doorway. It takes us somewhere, but we have to be willing to see where it takes us because it could take us anywhere. It could take into the person having been sexually abused 40 years ago. It could take us into the same toxic nutritional beliefs since they were born. I have clients in their 70s who are still trying to lose 10 pounds and be skinny. Wow, that's terrible. We should be loving what we have.

The weight-loss science of the future is really the weight-loss psychology, the weight-loss spiritual psychology. It's a beautiful combination of all of who we are as eaters and all of what would impact the human body, then we can really get somewhere.

Shelley: That's beautiful. Many of our listeners know you're the founder and as you mentioned, Director of the internationally claimed Institute for Psychology of Eating. Here you teach students and professionals how to effectively work with the most common eating and nutritional challenges of our times. Please share more how our listeners can learn about your programs, and how these programs can help them reach their weight-loss goals and improve their overall health.

Marc: The best way to plug in is to go to our website, which is Psychologyofeating.com, and when you go to Psychologyofeating.com, by the way, we have a free audio gift that will give you some good, insightful information and also gets you, if you like, plugged into our alerts email list to let you know what we're up to. Our main activity is we have a wonderful distance-learning training that's a seven-month training.

It starts each October and it's designed for people who want to be certified as eating psychology coaches or counselors.



We certify [inaudible 00:52:57] psychology coach or a counselor and we have students from all walks of life and from all over the world. Some are dietitians. We have doctors, we have psychologists, we have massage therapists, we have health coaches, nutritionists, career changers, students. You learn how to work with the challenges such as weight loss, body image, overeating, binge eating, as well as all the nutrition-linked health concerns like digestion, mood, fatigue, immunity and so on that have an emotional component.

Two fields that I've helped originate; mind, body, nutrition and dynamic eating psychology, that really combine the science of eating and the psychology of who we are and blended in a beautiful way so we can work with people and really start to see the kind of success that matters. Where we're really elevating people and uplifting people. We have all kinds of live events for the public in different parts of the country, and as well, we're going to have an online program for people who don't want to study with us as professionals, but you just want to learn more about we do and how to apply it in your own personal life.

Again, if you go to Psychologyofeating.com and sign up for our email list, a free audio gift, check out the website. It's beautiful, it's easy to navigate and you could also give us a call or email us and we're happy to chat with you and tell you what we do.

Shelley: Yeah, I'm just so grateful for your institute because I think you are on the pulse of where this is going and how we can turn this all around. Just thank you for sharing about your programs.

I want to ask you some practical questions before we go here, just so our listeners can take away a couple things today to do and to start right now. If you could recommend certain foods or ingredients to avoid when wanting to lose weight, what would those be and why?

Marc: Probably the easiest is to cut down on your sugar, sugar as kind of refined carbohydrates, all the typical store-bought pretzels and chips and muffins and crackers and cookies and cakes, et cetera. It tends to be the excess sugar and the excess carbs in our diet that can be pretty problematic. If food is, in deed, influencing us, that's often times the issue. If somebody is too high in refined carbohydrates generally what that means is they're too low in high-quality protein and they're too low in high-quality essential fats.

Most people, well I should say many people, fat in food is going to equal on their body. Then that might be true if it's poor-quality fat or trans fats or synthetic fats. In deed, the true high-quality essential fats that you may get from avocados, from nuts and seeds, from a good-quality olive oil, olives, fish, et cetera, that's, oh, where the action is and will empower metabolism as opposed to detract from it.



We tend to run into problems with most of the commercial meat and dairy products will have hormone residues in them, the hormones that are fed to cows are designed to fatten them up pretty quick.

Those hormones do not degrade fully in the processing of the dairy and the meat so they get into your [inaudible 00:56:50] and will do the same thing to you that they do to the cow, which is fatten you up a little faster.

Shelley: Wow, yeah. If you could recommend certain foods or ingredients to add to someone's diet to lose weight, what would those be and why?

Marc: Well, if you're the kind of person that's eating low fiber and if you're the kind of person that maybe has a history of diabetes in their family, or you've had a lifetime of eating a lot of sugar, then increasing the amount of fiber in the diet will tend to modulate blood sugar and insulin levels and sometimes can be a very interesting way to sort of turbo-charge weight loss.

Now that doesn't [inaudible 00:57:33] for everyone, but again, there's a large number of people out there, again, as I say don't have a lot of vegetables in their diet and/or have a long history of eating a lot of sugar, a lot of low-quality carbohydrates and/or have a family history of diabetes. If [inaudible 00:57:55] even if you take a fiber supplement that can often yield a very dramatic effect if one truly has weight to lose.

Also a little bit out of the food realm, what's really great for weight loss is to sweat. Sweating means you've inspired body chemistry to a certain place. Even if you don't exercise, there's a lot of people who are doing infrared saunas now.

Or if you have a health club that has a dry sauna or wet sauna and you can go in there and begin to sweat, that is a great way for many people to jump-start metabolism as well.

Shelley: Thank you, that was my next question if there was a recommendation for an activity. Any other techniques or practices you would advise to help further support the holistic weight loss process?

Marc: Anything that helps you get more oxygen into your system to help you lose weight. I tend to less [inaudible 00:59:02] exercise and more like to inspire people to do movement, i.e., what do you love to do as opposed to what exercise do you think you should do?

Any kind of a movement that really speaks to you, that makes you feel happy to be here. In deed, just getting outdoors and getting connected back to nature.



There's an X factor, I think, that happens when you start to walk in nature, hike in nature, get with oxygen, get with air, [inaudible 00:59:36] negative ions, get with the trees and the plants and the sun, there's something magical, something else that happens that when we've been disconnected from that, there's a reconnection that happens that I think [inaudible 00:59:55] has yet to describe that, but I think it's there and I think it's important.

Shelley: Well, thank you. Thank you so much, Marc. This has been an amazing interview. You've shared some really important messages with us and I trust many people listening to this will benefit.

Is there any other way that our listeners can learn more about how to find out about you and your books? You've written best-selling books and just all of your programs. If you want to share where they can find that information, that would be great?

Marc: Well, so thank you for mentioning that. Yes, I have a couple of beautiful books that have been out there for a while.

One is my first book is "Nourishing Wisdom." My second book is, "The Slow-Down Diet," and both of those you can tap into on my website, Psychologyofeating.com. The books are sold on Amazon and a great CD set called "Mind, Body, and Nutrition."

Again, if you go to our website, Psychologyofeating.com, we have an events page that will let you know the next places that I will be speaking and, yeah, those are the main ways to find out about us, so thank you for that.

Shelley: Thank you so much, again, Marc, and there's anything else you want to add for our listeners?

Marc: Thank you for taking the time. I really appreciate and I would love for each of you to feel really inspired, just about even one thing that came out of this conversation that we just had.

If there's one piece that inspires you that you can explore or act upon, I would say, "Go for it," and follow your heart and follow your intuition, follow your [inaudible 01:01:59] and if you're the kind of person that yourself is interested in losing weight, start to ask yourself what would be my unique way to lose weight [inaudible 01:02:11] approach, but if I had a unique way that was truly in alignment with who I am and with how I am in the world and with what I'm about and with how I express myself and with what gives me inspiration and excitement and pleasure, what would that be?



Shelley: Wow, thank you. Thank you so much. Yeah, I just love what you're doing. I just feel a resonance and I'm looking forward to diving into something ... I don't know which, which one would you recommend for someone who's studied nutrition but wants to get into the psychology?

Because I know some of my clients it's the motivation or it's the, yeah, the more emotional or the traumatic things like you're outlining.

Marc: Any program, our certification program. It's fabulous, it's so information rich and dense. It will be more than what you bargain for.

Shelley: This interview's really inspiring.

Marc: Thank you very much. This has been a great interview. You did wonderful. I hope this is a successful event for you. Thanks so much.

Shelley: Yeah, thank you. Have a beautiful night.

Marc: Okay, you, too. Bye-bye.

Shelley: Bye now.



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