

Can Carnivore Diets be great Medicine - Mikhaila Peterson reveals all - Podcast 8

- Ivor: [00:00](#) Hey Mikhaila, I'm delighted to meet you here. Finally. Nice to meet you too. Yeah, I've been trying to catch up with you be or are living in Canada and I mostly just go USA, stateside.
- Mikhaila: [00:10](#) Yeah, yeah. It's not worth visiting in the winter anyway.
- Ivor: [00:13](#) Yeah. Well I think we'll start off with your fascinating story. You know, I know you've told it many times, but it's a story worth re-telling in my mind. So if you maybe if you go through your younger years, and the challenges you've begun to experience and then through to your, kind of - revelation, if you will, and how you began to address those issues.
- Mikhaila: [00:35](#) Okay. Okay. I'll run through this as quickly as I can. It's a lot. I started experiencing symptoms of juvenile rheumatoid arthritis when I was, when I was two. my mom noticed I walked funny. So I was actually formally diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, at age seven was put on enbrawl methotrexate and neproxin. I was the first kid in Canada actually to be put on enbrawl and I had 35 active joints. when I was first diagnosed and most of them were a shot with cortisone, which actually did improve my mobility at the time. So it was like my, all my big joints. It was basically every joint except for my spine, like my jaw. It was everywhere. then was taking those medications And then in grade five I got put on Ssri is for really severe depression and I was having like severe enough that I was having like suicidal ideation as a kid and my parents kind of clued in because my dad has this severe depression or had this severe depression, and so he kind of saw it in me and brought me to a psychiatrist. They put me on medication, which honestly made a huge difference. So like I, you'll see I have a problem with the medical system, but we didn't know what was going on. And then the SSRI really helped. When I was a kid. they brought other problems, but they helped. Then when I, then when I was 14, I got diagnosed with, I didn't get diagnosed. I started experiencing really horrible fatigue. So fatigue and itching everywhere. And I didn't have a rash or anything. I was just really, really itchy. I got kind of ignored it, but it was like mosquito bite, itchy. And I was exhausted. I was 17. I got my hip and ankle replaced. So even though I was on these immune suppressants, whatever was causing this, arthritis was bad enough that even with the medication, my cartilage just disappeared from my hip and ankle in a year. and that was a rough year. It was like, May, I got my hip replaced in November.

I got my ankle replaced, I was on Oxycontin for the entire year. it was, it was like the worst year of my entire life. It was really horrible. and then I went off to university and my diet deteriorated because I started eating like a university student eats. which was basically, it's basically cinnamon toast crunch and Ginger Ale and Portuguese and Mr Noodles, right? Yeah.

Ivor: [03:15](#) Okay. So that's not, not high nutrient dense ancestral food, shall we say.

Mikhaila: [03:20](#) No, not at all. And I had no idea about that. And I also didn't really think it mattered because from what I knew, first of all, I didn't know grains were a problem. I thought grains were still healthy. I was, I still thought "everything in moderation" and that it's just exercise, right? So that's still what I thought. So I was like, "well, I'm skinny, I can eat all these terrible things" and that it doesn't matter. So within the first month of going away to university and my mental health deteriorated even further, and by Christmas it's like three months of eating worse than I'd been eating at home. I was having hypo manic episodes and I was still on. I had tried to up my antidepressant. I had gone to walk in clinic and said like, something is wrong, I need more. And they'd said, well, actually, this is associated with a heart problem, so we're going to have to cut it in half. And I like burst into tears in the walk in clinic and they're like, okay, actually, you know what, just stay, stay where you are for now. But I went on another, I went on Wellbutrin and I upped that to 450 milligrams a day and ended up having a seizure from that amount of medication. I tried switching over to an Snri that made me really, really angry. so I stopped that right away. But my mental health mostly is what deteriorated. I always kind of had arthritis, but mental health just got shot. I started gaining weight and I moved back home the second year university because I was like, I was crazy. I was sleeping all the time. my fatigue got to a point where I was like, I couldn't, couldn't wake up. My roommates would come in at like 4:00 PM and be like, wake up, wake up, wake up, I'm tired. I'd get up. And then I drank because drinking helped me wake up. And so my parents were like, well, you're sleeping all the time because you're drinking all the time. And I was like, well maybe but drinking makes me feel awake and nothing makes me feel awake. so it was hard to figure out, well what was caused by me and what wasn't caused by me. Yeah,

Ivor: [05:24](#) but you acknowledge though, and this is interesting, some people who are very frustrated and disappointed with the medical system to become anti everything but the medications, although they would cause negative deleterious effects, they

gave you a huge boost at times. They did what you needed at that time. Many of them.

Mikhaila: [05:41](#) Well, the like it's harder to yeah, it's hard to say like the cortisone injections when I was a kid, I went from not being able to walk to running around when I went on the enbrol the immune, the immune suppressant. But I still needed to have an ankle replacement when I was 17. It was like, why is it, it's reducing the inflammation but the joints are still getting eaten of the Ssri I guess is what I would say had the most benefit for me. And I did have side effects that weren't pleasant. But My like teenage years, I don't know if I would've made it through that without them

Ivor: [06:18](#) Actually, and that's a point. You mentioned suicidal thoughts there, and I saw your great interview with Joe Rogan, but one thing that occurred to me was to explore that. You obviously went pretty close to the edge. The amount of suffering you were basically having to succumb to was huge. So to what extent were you thinking "life's not worth it" or to what extent were you always able to just "prop yourself up"?

Mikhaila: [06:43](#) Well, I remember, so when I was a kid and I first had some suicidal thoughts, they weren't, I didn't have a plan or anything. It was just like, I wonder if people would care if I was gone. Like just, just like little things like that. And I went on medication pretty quickly after that started and then it went away. the second time it happened I was 17 and it wasn't actually depression exactly. It was pain. So, I was on a lot of pain medication for my hip. and then I had my hip done and then my ankle hurts so much that it was just like, oh no, I have to go through this again. And then they told me I had to wait three and a half years for an ankle replacement. And I like freaked out. One night I was in bed. It was like hyperventilating. I was like, I can't, I can't do it. I can't do it. I can't wait three and a half years. And, at that point I like made this plan and I was like, no, it wasn't three and a half years at that point. At that point they said, we don't know when. And that's what got me, it was like, I don't know when this is going to stop. Like if there's a deadline, then it's different. and that night I thought, okay, well if they don't tell me by the fall, then that's it. I can make it like four more months. And that's it. So that was rough. But by the time the fall rolled around, we had a surgical date. and then when I went to university, like how did I, I didn't pep myself up, I guess when I was 17 and I had that night where I was like, I can only do this for four more months, something like snapped. And I was, it was like, this isn't what's going to take me down type of thing. So whenever I got to the point where I was like, I can't, I

can't handle this, I cant handle this. I was just like, no, that is not what takes, like I'm not letting this get me, this isn't the end. Like screw you, that, that's not how it ends. So I kind of changed the depression into anger and the anger is a moral, it's not healthy. It was more positive emotion. So that's how I dealt with it. It was like, no, I'm not letting this get me. That's not, that's not how it ends.

Ivor: [08:40](#) Yeah. That's, I mean that's clearly resilience and often it manifests and you switched those emotions that could take you down. You switched them into anger and fighting back and it's, it's a healthy thing. Yeah. Yeah. Well it seems to, it seems to have worked. Got You through it. Yeah, for a period. But this is now into the whole college period. You're eating cheerios or whatever, all this crap and um, you're gonna now decline again. You put on a lot of weight. I think

Mikhaila: [09:06](#) I put on, I gained 30 pounds in a year and a half and I didn't have a scale. It was just like, my pants don't fit. And I was like, and like, I'm pretty, you know, exhausted and ill and on a whole bunch of medication and drinking all the time. So I wasn't as aware as I should have been. But at one point I was like, okay, this is weird. Like something. So I started going to the gym and it was like, because you know, I gained weight, clearly I'm not exercising enough, start going to the gym. It was like, this isn't working. And I was exhausted. It was hard going to the gym. So I moved back home at one point. I like went through a bad university breakup and I, it was like, that was the end. I was sleeping constantly. I was really depressed. It was arthritic, itchy. I moved back home and when, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Ivor: [09:52](#) it's just that you repeatedly mentioned the sleeping constantly and the exhaustion, I have a friend who had undiagnosed Lymes disease for over 12 years and he went through hell, but that was the first manifestation was he just had chronic fatigue and it took them 12 years to diagnose them, by which time he taken a drug for every disease known to man.

Mikhaila: [10:11](#) Yeah. So, yeah. Speaking of which, we can get into this later, we'll get into it later. Chronic fatigue is a tricky one too because, because you don't see it, you get blamed for it. He was like, Oh, maybe you're just not pulling yourself out of bed. Like everyone's a little bit tired. Just try harder. And so I got that a lot. And my parents, I would say are pretty apologetic now, especially once I was formally diagnosed with idiopathic hypersomnia, but there was a solid period of time, maybe like seven or eight years where it was like, Mikhaila, like you're being lazy. And I was like, well, maybe I am being lazy. Maybe

I'm just not trying hard enough. But at some point it was like my whole body would just fall asleep. But like I was sleeping in exams. I started taking out, so I moved back home and I kind of clued into how badly I was doing. So I had just been coasting and being like, I'll take this medication. you know, I'll drink, I'll, I'll just coast. And I got home when I was like, I'm really ill. and I also started getting another symptom was like my skin started getting affected and started getting rashes and things and I was like, I can't, this I can't handle, I can't do all these invisible illnesses. And then, and also a visible problem. I don't want a visible problem. started getting little tiny blisters on my fingers, just like Itchy, blistering, like, oh my God. Too many things. so I went home and started researching and started taking Adderall and the Adderall, actually I started taking, because I was driving home one day and I fell asleep and drifted into another lane. And it was like microseconds of sleep. Right. But i was really tired. I relaxed, fell asleep and a truck, giant truck honked at me and swerved and I was like, I'm going to die if I don't figure out this fatigue thing, I'm going to die. So I started taking Adderall after that.

Ivor: [12:09](#) That's a wake up call? Yeah, I mean it's happened me maybe once or twice and it makes you think... and Adderall is a pretty significant kind of upper...

Mikhaila: [12:18](#) It's scary, it's scary. Holy Cow. Yeah. I used to try, I used to take caffeine pills. No, just like nothing. A coffee, nothing like I could sleep through anything. Started taking Adderall and I went from 10 milligrams a day and then like had a tolerance. They grew pretty quickly. I went to 40 milligrams a day. 40 milligrams a day is a lot of Adderall, so I had that like beside my bed. So I'd set an alarm for seven, take the Adderall, go back to sleep, and then about, takes about 30 minutes to kick in. It takes less than that really. But I'd wake up about 30 minutes later and I just like spring out of bed cause it was like my heart is, you know, it was a lot of Adderall, but I needed that much to actually keep myself awake and I'd still have a nap after lunch and it's like I can feel my heart pumping and it was like I still need a nap. but that's when I started really, really researching and eventually eventually got into this whole diet thing

Ivor: [13:13](#) and the skin of course you, you've repeatedly explained. Whoa, that really hit you personally, whatever about all the dreadful replacements of hips, dreadful pain to have your skin rashes and pustules and all, that's just offensive. Yeah, it was, yeah, it was like, I felt like jobe was like not this too. like i always wore makeup to like kind of put on a mask to face the world and then it was like, oh no, now people can see your sick.

- Ivor: [13:41](#) So basically it was time for Doctor Google. Big Time. You hit the web?
- Mikhaila: [13:57](#) Doctor Google. Yeah, I googled, I googled like every skin condition imaginable, looked at horrible pictures, um, and eventually became across like this blistering rash called Dermatitis herpetiformis. which can happen if you have Celiac disease. And interestingly enough, um, id never considered myself having something like that because I never had any gut pain. It's like throughout this entire thing I was like, at least I'm not allergic to food. Um, never had any gut pain so I didn't think about Celiac disease, but it turns out a huge percentage of people with Celiac disease have no gut pain and a lot of those people get this rash. So that's the first thing. So I went down to like the uh, yeah, I went down the research route and hit the whole gluten thing with Celiac disease first. Um, and I cut out gluten right away. And honestly, it did not change much. I was convinced it was bad for you. It was like I looked into, you know, what it does to the gut, you know, what kind of molecules it releases and how that can lead to leaky gut. And I was like, oh, all this is in the scientific literature. Like we know gluten triggers Zonulin. Zonulin gives you leaky gut. Why didn't my doctors tell me that? So i was really confused. I was like, this is out there. Celiac disease, couples with other autoimmune disorders. I have an autoimmune disorder. Why wasn't I tested? Why wasn't my, why weren't my doctor's telling me not to eat gluten? I was really confused because it's like in the literature. Um, yeah. And then things just got weirder from then. Then on, I went on an elimination diet and things improved pretty quickly. Um, I gave up like a little bit into it.
- Mikhaila: [15:27](#) So I was on basically autoimmune Paleo kind of, um, at the very beginning. more restricted, but I just tried to eat things that people weren't allergic to because I hadn't, I hadn't heard of any diets. I'd heard of Paleo, but I hadn't delved into it at all. I didn't know what it meant. So I just was like, made a list of foods I thought people wouldn't be allergic to. From my limited knowledge, it was no nightshades because I'd heard nightshades were bad. That's a cliché most. Hmm. Because there's no nightshades. No apples were okay. Apples, root vegetables except for potatoes, meat because like no one's allergic to meat, fish, eggs, I suppose. No one, I wasn't, I didn't even include eggs at the beginning. Like, eggs are an allergen - right? That's a pretty common one. They put warnings on foods if things have eggs in them, eggs, nuts, soy, wheat. Okay.
- Ivor: [16:26](#) Yeah. I often wondered about the eggs. You're right, that has come up.

- Mikhaila: [16:29](#) But I that's like a true and not a sensitivity necessarily, but a true allergy. They may put that on the outside of boxes. Anyway, that's where I was getting my information. Mainly from the packets and they're like, yeah, top allergens.
- Ivor: [16:29](#) So you have meat apples i suppose, green veg, above ground leafy veggies, salads and not much beyond that. It was a strong elimination diet.
- Mikhaila: [16:51](#) Oh, it was yeah, I did that for a week and then, now looking back on it, I was probably experiencing cravings. cause I had gone pretty high carb to that - and I know you get cravings and things. but I reintroduced banana, almond, gluten free, dairy free sugar free muffins that I'd made myself. It was like the healthiest muffins you could possibly have.
- Ivor: [17:18](#) It's quite a few ingredients there together though, that you brought in?
- Mikhaila: [17:23](#) Oh yeah. Yeah. and now I know it was a probably actually bananas and almonds both gave me really bad flare ups. but I didn't know that at the time so I had a bunch of them and I woke up the next morning and my wrists are sore. and by this time I should mention I'd stopped taking my arthritis medication. I stopped, I just stopped. when I went gluten free cause I thought, how am I going to be able to monitor my flare ups when I take out gluten if I'm on this medication? And I wasn't really convinced it was working anyway considering I'd had these joint replacements. I was taking Tylenol three every day for pain anyway. so it was like, it's not really doing anything. Anyway, so I stopped that. So then September rolls around, I go on this elimination diet and I reintroduced this banana almond flour muffins, and I had a really horrible, arthritic flareup from that, which didn't just randomly happen.
- Mikhaila: [18:15](#) It was like, this isn't a coincidence. It happened too quickly. I was like, in bed, I'm not able to walk because of my knees and my knees never really flared up. it was like, this is weird. So then I actually believed in it because I first went on it and I was like, this is stupid. Basically it was like, my mom had brought me to a natural path. They had given me this like a elimination diet, and I'd looked at their elimination diet and thought, you know, why can I eat lemons and not oranges? Like this is a stupid elimination diet. Maybe it wasn't, but I was skeptical and annoyed at everything and I'd been to natural paths before and I was just like, no, if I'm going to do this, I'm gonna do it my way. Come up with my own elimination diet. so I really went into it after I had that first flare up and the first month I saw like huge

results. Really. I lost three pants sizes and five pounds and that was awesome because I was like, oh, I have abs. It's been like a month and I have abs. I thought I'd been going to the gym trying to get these stupid abs that never forms. Like, oh, that was just bloating. I was bloated. Like that's what bloating was. Like. That month was crazy. My skin healed for the first time in a really like it, it was always kind of flaring up. Even after I dropped gluten and that month my skin looked better than it had in years.

- New Speaker: [19:35](#) So it was maybe 60, 70% better? I mean, not, not completely amazing, but big improvement?
- Mikhaila: [19:40](#) I got better. It like 85%, like huge, huge improvement. And then so I was thinking, okay, the arthritis obviously is food related. That's great news. The skin looks like it's food related. That's great news. I'd never even occurred to me that the depression would be food related because my dad has it or had it. My grandpa. Um, I've, I just thought that was a genetic chemical imbalance, which is, you know, what you're told. So that didn't even occur to me. but three months into this limited diet, my depression started to lift and a good feel like even on the medication I was taking, I could feel it go away. You can still tell you're depressed when you're taking that medication. It just, it's like it takes out, puts a net at the bottom of the pit you're falling into. It doesn't actually get rid of the hole, the hole. and so yeah, my depression started lifting, lifting in the wintertime in Canada, which isn't usually when depression lifts if ever. So I stopped taking my antidepressants and I was fine. I was good, I was happier than I'd ever been. And at this point I was still eating. Like it's a strange story. I was still eating some rice, which later really started to bother me. I was still eating some rice, but mostly what I was eating was like slow cooked stews. So it was like meat and root vegetables, salads, apples - that was basically it. No seed oils or anything. Olive oil, coconut oil, spices. But I was, yeah - spices. it was pretty, pretty whole foodie limited.
- Ivor: [21:23](#) So it was quite simplified kind of meat and two veg type thing. Pretty Much.
- Mikhaila: [21:29](#) Yes.
- Ivor: [21:29](#) Okay. Which is not a bad elimination diet, especially if you get rid of vegetable oils and all the modern fake foods and you know, the high starch, sugary, refined carbs and sugars. So it was pretty good. And your skin cleared up, which was a huge thing. Obviously that was your big totem. I mean that was massive, right? And the depression had lifted, sans [without]

the drugs, the drugs were gone, but your depression was still better than it might've been before.

- New Speaker: [21:53](#) Way - It was gone. It was essentially gone, gone at that point, like gone. I stopped taking and when I stopped taking my SSRI because I had thought I was going to be on that forever. Like I have a youtube video up from 2013, and it's like "I will never stop taking this medication" or something like that. so I thought I was on that forever.
- Ivor: [22:14](#) And as an interesting aside, I know these SSRI's, they believe they know the mechanism by which it works, but I got a paper sent to me literally a few days ago and they are now investigating and finding the SSRI affects neurological inflammation, yet it's acting on pathways, not just on the receivers/receptors that they thought...
- Mikhaila: [22:31](#) Yeah. So everything goes back. I know. Weird, crazy. so yeah, that lifted. and I felt more, I felt better than I'd ever felt. yeah, in my entire life. And I was really excited about it. And I got my dad to start cause he was at this point, he was overweight. He was around 218. Um, and he's napping all the time and he had GERD and he had this, but mostly had this horrible depression. And I was like, mine's gone. Mine's gone. I don't know how it happened, but it's gone. And he had been watching me obviously, and like my arthritis is clearing up like my fatigue, is getting better. So at the same time, my depression lifted, my fatigue starts to lift and I stopped taking all my medication at that point because as soon as I let go of the SSRI, I was like, "oh, if I don't have to take this, I don't have to take anything."
- Ivor: [23:25](#) Yeah. I know that that's a battery of huge changes. Taking medication out and getting huge improvements simultaneously. So this is a massive shift. What time chronologically? This is 2015...?
- New Speaker: [23:35](#) It was 2015 December.
- Ivor: [23:37](#) Okay. So major breakthrough going on there. You're really getting somewhere and Jordan, then himself is beginning to maybe leverage what you're doing?
- Mikhaila: [23:47](#) Well, it was like, it was basically like, the effect with me was so huge that he couldn't say "there's nothing to this" because he, he'd been on the "Diet has nothing to do with anything" train, which I had as well. Mostly because of him. My mom had been like "we should eliminate sugar. We should eliminate meat."

She wasn't necessarily on the right track, but she was like, "we should focus on diet." But Dad was like "there's no scientific evidence concluding diet has anything to do with anything." But then when he saw these changes with me, he was like, okay, there is obviously something to this. So then he started on it - and then I had my first, well my first un-medicated really, really horrible food reintroduction - reaction. And that was after I put my dad on the Diet and if I had known how horrible the food reintroduction reactions would have been, I probably would've waited. Because the next year it was pretty bad. Yeah.

- Ivor: [24:43](#) And this was another introduction or is this the bran muffin or the banana muffin thing?
- Mikhaila: [24:47](#) Oh no, that was before, I was still on antidepressants and things - that was a couple of days of arthritis that happened. But arthritis is one thing. It's the mood stuff that is really scary. So I tried to reintroduce soy in December. I talked about this on Rogan. Yeah, it was horrible. It was, that was probably the scariest thing that's ever happened to me.
- Ivor: [25:08](#) And sustained and persistent. It wasn't a a dreadful short-term thing only?
- Mikhaila: [25:12](#) Nooo it that legs - three and a half weeks? It was like who expects that from food?
- Ivor: [25:18](#) Well Soy. I mean, yeah!
- Mikhaila: [25:20](#) Yes well now I know, but I thought I knew what a health food was like my first, the first thing I tried to get back after my elimination diet was Sour Patch candy because I looked at the ingredients and I thought there's no wheat. That was basically it. It was like "the only thing that's in here is sugar and dye. No one's allergic to sugar" - because I was still thinking like "allergy". Right? Like, so that's where my brain was at still. I didn't know anything about diet. So sour patch kids didn't go well, like...Shocker...!
- Ivor: [25:54](#) But the soy was the real killer. And it's true. Exactly what you're saying Mikhaila - how would you know soy was bad - and the vast majority don't know it either. And the American heart association are telling us to take heart-healthy vegetable oils. Now we know vegetable oils are basically effluent from an industrial run-off tank. but top official bodies are still telling us to eat these "foods". But we'll get back to the soy, the soy experience - it was several weeks of a kind of hell?

Mikhaila: [26:22](#) Hell, hell, like it was like, yeah, it was, it was as if my entire world had switched into the same world, but a "hell" version. I ate a whole bunch and then I had terrible digestive distress within 15 minutes. My body was like, "no way." And I was like, okay, no more soy, whatever. I was still in a good mood. My depression's gone, whatever. But soy. Oh, wow.

Ivor: [26:48](#) And it was soy and noodles, the meal?

Mikhaila: [26:52](#) No - so the meal I had was: I had a Atta-mommy beans, Tofu, and Miso soup, but the Miso soup sometimes has gluten. So I had gone to a specific place to buy Miso, so that it didn't have gluten. And then Bok-choi. So it was basically all Soy and some Bok choi - and it was not the Bok choi that I reacted to that badly. So then it happened. Terrible digestive distress. I can just put it at that. And then five hours later I got really, really itchy everywhere. I was like, oh, that's, that can't be good. I'll just go to bed. So I went to bed in the morning, I woke up and I was like, something's really, really wrong. And I got into the shower and I just like bawled in the shower. It's like, how could I be so stupid thinking that this depression, like the depression was back the next day. It's like, how could I be so stupid thinking that this was food related? Like how could I be so naive? Like I told myself I wouldn't be this naive. So like all those thoughts, right? And I'm in the shower and like crying. And then I was like, wait a minute. I ate the food, the depression was gone. It was definitely gone. Then I eat the food. Then I had this like horrible digestive reaction. Then I got all itchy and now I'm depressed. Like logically this - is caused by that. But I couldn't like, it was hard to get that in my head with the depression back. And then I was like, well, it'll go away. Maybe, probably not because I was in that state of mind. It's like it'll go away and the next day it got worse. And I was crying, like crying all the time. And, by the nighttime, my brother drove me home because I needed to get home. Like I was so out of it, I couldn't see very well. It was really bad and I was like, I can't drive myself. Can you drop me off at my apartment? And he dropped me off. And (I talked about this on Rogan) but I turned around to look at him, like to wave goodbye. And he looked at me and his face was a "demon head" and it wasn't just like a flash, like I saw it long enough - he looked at me and then he turned and started driving away and then I could see that it was my brother again. I was standing at my door and I was like, okay, that wasn't real. I was like, "great. Now I've made myself insane. Now I'm insane." I thought I was crazy before, but now I had just hallucinated. So I got into my bed and then spent the next three and a half weeks, like miserably depressed, itchy. My skin broke out, my arthritis came back after about a week or more. There were steps to it

and I wrote down everything mostly to stay sane. Like these are my reactions every day and just like prayed and waited to see if it would lift. And then it did - in about three and a half weeks. And then I repeated that pattern with introducing foods for a year.

Ivor: [29:32](#) And you were - crucially - not simply going willy-nilly and trying foods randomly. You knew the extent of what could happen and the duration of the aftermath and how long it was. So you were, I think doing a diary and recording each introduction and being very careful to track and make sure you were clear - safely - for say a couple of weeks, okay? Now that's safe because if you have people who just try different foods randomly, they will never decode it. No Way. Not when the effect can last for weeks, or maybe be delayed a week or more before it starts?

Mikhaila: [30:02](#) Yeah. That took a while to figure out too, but I knew because of that first reaction and I was like, okay, three and a half weeks and I wrote it down yeah - every day I wrote down all my symptoms and now I know with re-introductions, sometimes if I'd have a little bit wrong - I'd be okay. Usually it hits by day four, but I've had some experiences where it takes up to day seven. The more minor ones, right? But the bigger the reaction, the faster it hits. So, soy was instant. The bigger the reaction is either at that time or the next day, but it can take up to seven days. Um, so yeah, you gotta go super, super, super slow.

Ivor: [30:39](#) That's a killer - "lag time" with any complex problem, and your problems were certainly complex - "lag time" from an input can really fool people. But congratulations - you figured that all out and you tracked it and you got to the source. So you began to find out, then there's myriad different foods that can cause a reaction. So you were heading towards a conclusion that hey, I need an extremely limited food set to stay in this great zone. Yeah. And that was trial and error as you say, over pretty much 12 months of trial and error. Yeah. Okay. That was pretty comprehensive work. So where were you at 12 months? Your full learning - as to what I need to eat, and what I don't eat.

Mikhaila: [31:20](#) Well, I'd been able to reintroduce pears and apples. Fruits. Mm. And that was, that was it. I tried, but I mean, to be honest, like what I had tried first was, well Sour Patch, like no wonder that didn't go well and then. And then almond butter and it turns out I'd just developed a nut allergy - an actual allergy. So that didn't go well. Then soy and that didn't go well, and then I think I tried cane sugar again, that didn't go well. And then I tried whey, I got like lactose-free whey powder and I was really trying to find something that was easy - because I wasn't eating out and I was

used to eating out all the time. But I was cooking everything myself now. I was in university; I was like, this is a huge pain. I just want, I found this like whey protein powder from a gut health store that was pure lactose-free and Casein-free whey (it's called absorbed plus). And I was like, oh, I, if I can just live off of that, I don't even want to eat food anymore. I had a, horrible reaction to that.

Ivor: [32:26](#) Even with the Casein-free as well as the Lactose-free, yeah - so super-sensitive. But then again, given you have an autoimmune history of such severity, your artillery - and it has a very impressive artillery the immune system, the innate and the adaptive - it's poised to react to nearly anything. So nearly anything is now triggering it. But at this point, after the Whey, and you've tried everything - were you beginning to just center down on...an ultra-elimination diet? You were closing in on that?

Mikhaila: [33:00](#) Well, at that point I knew 20, I have 27 safe foods. So, I had a list of it. And they were on my parents' Fridge door and I was like dad, "eat that - nothing but that!" And he had a hell of a time with that. And which I guess makes sense after like 50, you know, 54 years of eating whatever you wanted to, he was like "well, I'll just have a little". He was doing, he was doing 99%, which would have been pretty much good enough. Right. But because of this mood disorder, it wasn't good enough. And because the reactions are three and a half weeks long, every three weeks he would have like he'd go over to his friend's house and they'd bug them and bug them and bug them about eating food and he's very polite and he'd be like, okay, so he'd have a bite - and then three and a half weeks were gone! Right. So then I was, I was trying to explain this and he was like, well that doesn't, that just doesn't make sense. Right. he like understood That's what it was like for me. He could give me that, but it was like he couldn't give it to himself. So part of the reason I was drawn to reintroduce things was to vary the diet more so he would have an easier time because I was okay with being symptom-free. It was like, "yay, this is what life is like? Great!" But he was having a really hard time with it and was still reacting, he had a miserable year that year. Like I would say his mental health actually, he lost a whole bunch of weight. He stopped snoring, he stopped napping, his GERD went away, his gum disease went away, but yet his mental health just plummeted from these stupid reactions.

Ivor: [34:23](#) Ironically. Given all of that improvement in diet, all of those benefits, and then you get hit with one of the killer ones. I mean - neurological.

- Mikhaila: [34:33](#) Yeah - and he was still medicated and it was, and it got worse. It changed, what was like, what, what is going on? So part of the reason I was doing the re-introductions was because he was having such a hard time, but I ended up with a list of 27 foods and it was like, screw it. I'll just live like this. things were good. And then I got pregnant and my immune system problems came back. And at first I thought it was the pregnancy, we limited carbs more. We cut all the sweet potatoes and cut out the apples. We cut out the Pears because I noticed that if I ate a whole bunch of those one day, I'd be itchier the next day, and my dad noticed his mood would be worse if he ate a whole bunch of sweet potatoes. So we cut out those. So then we were eating meat and greens. It was just meat and greens, like apple cider vinegar. Everything was organic. I've been asked like, well, are you sure it wasn't the pesticides? But we cut out that variable way early on. I'm not dumb. You got rid of that.
- Mikhaila: [35:23](#) And my symptoms didn't go away after the pregnancy and I was like, I'm done. I was doing better than I had been on, you know, when I was doing really badly, I was still un-medicated, but I was depressed. I'm not horribly depressed, but depressed, itchy, arthritic, arthritic with a baby is really not a good time And so December, this is December, 2017 at this point, it's been two years of playing around with Diet. and I drop the Greens. I saw Sean Baker on Joe Rogan and I had been, I'd been considering going down to meat, but I was getting a lot of hell for not getting enough nutrients. And especially because I was breastfeeding. People were like, well, "you need your vitamins, you can't, you're already not getting enough vitamins from this limited diet." Probably. so I was scared mostly because of the baby, but then I saw Joe Rogan and was like "whatever, I'm just going to do it" - so I went down to just meat December, 2017. Okay.
- Ivor: [36:24](#) Just meat - and water of course - no even drinks of note, just water?
- Mikhaila: [36:28](#) Yeah. At that point it was just water, water and a chicken and beef. I was what I started on.
- Ivor: [36:34](#) Okay. And of course you knew in terms of nutrients, you know, maybe long-term without these vegetables, there might be some element of lack of certain nutrients, vitamins, minerals. But I suppose you could always do it for four or eight weeks. You can do anything for four, eight weeks to try it out. So you're kind of just doing that. Really?

- Mikhaila: [36:51](#) Yeah. Yeah. That was the plan. That was the plan, so I did that, and pretty quickly. So within the first week, my itching and arthritis went away. and I wasn't itchy like I had been before. Like I was so itchy when I was on a regular diet that I had, I wore fake nails because when I was asleep, I had scratched my legs until they bled. That's how itchy I was. So I wore fake nails, so I wouldn't scratch myself until I bled. So this itch was just an annoying itch, it wasn't like a "this is ruining my life itch." Um, so that went away within the first week, but my digestion was just a mess. I had bloating when I ate and diarrhea. And I was like, this never happened when I was eating salad. It's not like I have a meat sensitivity, so what's happening? So I thought, well, obviously you need vegetables and this is stupid. So I stopped. and I reintroduced what I was eating before, which was literally like lettuce and apple cider vinegar and olive oil and salt and pepper. And I had a salad, there's some olives in there too. Organic olives with no added ingredients. and I woke up the next day and it was itchy and arthritic again. But my digestion was now normal. just walked backwards. Yeah.
- Ivor: [38:13](#) So you've got this impossible trade off - the razor's edge. You can have your symptoms be at their best with just meat and water. But, you've got diarrhea and cramping and bloating - alone - kind of singularly. Then you put back in, all of a sudden some lettuce, some other bits and pieces - and your digestion gets okay - but some of your more challenging things come back. So now I guess you switched back again to meat and water only?
- Mikhaila: [38:40](#) Yeah. Yeah. It was frustrating. It's like, are you sick? Is there something I have to choose between? Like why is this happening to me?
- Ivor: [38:46](#) Just a note there actually - most people will tend not to believe this because I suppose like your father, we all, we all have been brought up to believe "it's genetics - diet can only do a little bit. You must eat this way. It's healthy." Everyone is programmed. I know from birth I was programmed that saturated fat gives you heart disease. But I was not programmed that sugar gave you heart disease. So I had reverse-programming. We all have. But anyway...
- Mikhaila: [39:12](#) I know and, and honestly like I've been there, I had people when I was depressed to be like, why don't you fix your diet? Which is really negative way of trying to get someone to fix their diet because it's like you're doing something wrong and this is your fault. but I was like, how dare you suggest something this serious could be caused by diet. And so I've been there and

especially if you have a mood disorder and your mental health is affected, like you're sensitive to suggestions that it's something you're doing that you could change. Especially cause you get hopeful occasionally. You're like, you try a whole bunch of things to get rid of all these problems and when none of them work, eventually you're like, "I'm done. I can't, I can't deal with the hope anymore." All right, get it.

Ivor: [39:49](#) You're dispirited for sure. BUT. The irony is you just need a lot of intellectual horsepower and logic, etc. etc. - to negotiate your way through all the things you did, to get to the end game. And the vast majority of people don't have the wherewithal to do what you did. They would have fallen down with all the kind of counter-intuitive responses and ambiguities that occur. They would have just fallen down and ended up on some generic diet. You, however, actually persisted through to the actual very end, which was the true solution and that's something to be highly commended. That's extremely rare. I mean really rare. I worked in complex engineering, problem-solving and even amongst engineers, there's only a small percentage who can deal with the most complex, ambiguous, counter-intuitive twisting ones. It's very rare. So "fair play to you!" [as we say in Ireland]

Mikhaila: [40:41](#) Oh, thank you - seriously. It's like it's been, I've had my mind blown like multiple times throughout this whole thing with things changing. Even just like, you know, overweight, having that have to do with diet. That blew my mind. And then I was walking. I've been like, you know, walk down the street in 2015 especially - and saw all these people who are like, they're tired or they're falling asleep on the subway and they're overweight. And I'm like, oh my God. So I stopped taking the subway for awhile because I was like, all these poor suffering people and they have no idea that we know that the muffin they had as a snack because they were hungry is what's making them miserable. It was like, ah, yeah, it's been a wild ride.

Ivor: [41:18](#) It's frightening. Yeah, it's frightening. And now the latest figures show that around 64% of adult Americans over 45 are now essentially diabetic - and that's CDC figures. And if you measured their insulin, it'd be more like 75%. So we live in a world where it's not acknowledged properly because only measure the blood glucose. They don't measure the insulin. So they don't really acknowledge it publicly. But three quarters of your adult population >45 is essentially diabetic. Something's gone seriously wrong and it's not genetics and it's not lack of exercise primarily. You know - everyone didn't suddenly get lazy 40 or 50 years ago.

- Mikhaila: [41:54](#) Thats what your told! You're like, well, now everyone has an office job and everyone's lazy. Yeah. Everybody is lazy. That's the...
- Ivor: [42:00](#) America all during the sixties and seventies: two cars, boom times, post war - there were no gyms. You can look at the black and white photos from back then and you can look at Woodstock photos and all - everyone is slim. There's automobiles everywhere. No gyms. Yeah, but they were not eating the modern toxic food, that's the key. But anyway, that's an aside. So you're, you're, you've come now to, your list of 27 safe foods has compressed down, you're coming to kind of "meat and water" and just a few other things at this point in 2017...?
- Mikhaila: [42:31](#) I'm at, so that's December, 2017 I'm at beef, chicken and water and salt. I think for the first week I also had pepper and then I dropped the pepper like, meh - I like pepper, but I dropped the pepper, right? Yeah, yeah, yeah. A lot of pepper. So I dropped the pepper and then so I'm, I still have this digestive problem. I'm like, whatever. I'll just deal with that. And then I started getting dizzy after I eat chicken and I'd been surviving off of chicken wings during most of my pregnancy. It's seeming like I wasn't getting this dizzy problem and I had associated this weird dizzy drunken feeling with eating sugar, like carbs. Sometimes I eat, I'd a bunch of carbs. I noticed if I had a whole bunch of sweet potatoes, I'd get kind of like brain fog, dizziness. and then I started getting it with chicken and I was like "really?? This isn't possible." So I tested it out five times and then I cut out chicken and I was like, okay, I'm just doing beef, beef and salt and water and my digestive symptoms improved at about six weeks. It took six weeks. and then that's when my mood also improved finally. So my itching and arthritis had kind of gone down really quickly in about a week. But then I had this, which I now know are transition symptoms even just from dropping the lettuce. But I didn't know that at the time. I was just like, I hope this goes away. and my mood stabilized at about six weeks. And then at about five months I started getting like these, happier / positive feelings - it took a while to get back though. It wasn't like when I first went low carb, I swear things happen faster. But then after the pregnancy it took a while to heal from whatever it was. But things have been very, very good. Like this year 2018, I guess has been the best year of my life for sure in then. Yeah, it's been, it's been crazy.
- Ivor: [44:27](#) So all of your issues resolved and ultimately a much heightened mood over any period in the past. Basically all boxes ticked - as good as it gets nearly - after a long period on this diet. But the

first six weeks though of meat and water only - in a digestive comfort sense, purely digestive-related issues were there - diarrhea, dizziness. Basically a significant transition period was part of it.

Mikhaila: [44:53](#) Yeah. That was just really dropping salad. like lettuce alone. It wasn't even like a "proper salad." It was like lettuce and olives,

Ivor: [45:02](#) Right. Well those things could have been interacting with your microbiome at the time - and a sudden lack of any plant material could precipitate maybe something tricky for a period.

Mikhaila: [45:12](#) I think so actually I'll get into this a little bit later cause it gets more interesting. But one thing I'd like to clarify, my mood actually was more positive when I went low carb then it has been on the carnivore diet. So I've been stable - but stable like - like a wolf! Like when I first went low carb I was thrilled about life and things, and I haven't been able to get to that. But I think I found out why. So I had these really horrible digestive problems and then they kind of resolved, but it was still wasn't great - but it was like "whatever." I'm in a pretty stable place. I'm good. Like I'm happy I've lost, I lost like 10 pounds. As soon as I went pregnancy weight, as soon as I went on the Diet, my arthritis is gone. Like I could live like this forever and I'd be okay. I'd be all good compared to before. Anyway, in September I did a whole bunch of tests and found out I have C.difficile, which explains part of the digestive problem. And I think that probably explains the mood not being as good as it should be because C.difficile which is normally saved for immuno-suppressed, you know, people in nursing homes or people who've been on antibiotics for a long time and it's a very serious infection. And I hadn't taken antibiotics. The only thing I did that precipitated these symptoms was switched the Diet to the all-meat diet. Maybe I had it before then and I didn't have symptoms. I have no idea what happened, but I found it. I have had C.diff in September. And then I was like, well, I'm not taking antibiotics to get rid of it. That's seems stupid. So I want and did a microbiome transplant. So I went to The Bahamas recently, like a couple of weeks ago.

Ivor: [46:58](#) It's all the rage!

New Speaker: [47:00](#) It was like, oh, it's like, does this what I have? Like there are so many things in life I haven't experienced, but now I've experienced this. It's great. and nothing really changed. And then my symptoms started to go away and I started to get this happy feeling again. So I'm still only eating meat, which you could say is a problem with new microbiome. We can get, we

can deal with that later. But, I think the reason my mood didn't get as good as it was was because I had underlying infection for a while. But it's just like one thing I've just been battling, like just battling one thing at a time. But the meat diet has even even with C.difficile infection, this has been the best year of my life.

- Ivor: [47:44](#) And post- or after the C. difficile, how was it - somewhat resolved or...
- Mikhaila: [47:48](#) yeah. Yeah, that's resolved really recently.
- Ivor: [47:51](#) Really recently. Gotcha. so you have to wait a little, see how that pans out...
- Mikhaila: [47:55](#) yeah. Yeah. I have to wait a little, see how that pans. But um, as soon as it started resolving, my sleep drastically improved. Like, I stopped sleeping after I had my baby and I thought it was, because I was a mom and mom's just don't sleep. So I like I sleep with white noise because any sound wakes me up. I thought that was just from having a baby, but since the C.difficile has been gone, I can sleep. So I've think I've been dealing with not sleeping very well. and the other thing that's happened is I've been getting these like happy feelings that I got when I first got went low-carb. like - like excessively positive feelings. So that's very recent though. So it was hard to say and I'm pretty careful at not putting too much emphasis on anything until I've like seen it through for a while. So I need like a couple of months we can re-discuss but I think the reason I didn't get as good as I was low-carb on this meat diet isn't the diet. I think it was the underlying infection.
- Ivor: [48:53](#) The C.difficile. Yeah - methodologically you are very thorough. So yeah - every signal you're going to wait and see for sure. And these moments...of what did Greenspan say? "Irrational exuberance". So these little "highs". They're just nice little highs though. They're not like manic...
- Mikhaila: [49:10](#) oh, manic episodes no!
- Ivor: [49:12](#) Just out to check!
- Mikhaila: [49:13](#) Yeah, no, fair enough! No, no. I know the difference too. I've, I've had like hypo manic episodes. I know what those are like. No, this is like positive, just positive...

Ivor: [49:22](#) I think I know exactly what you mean. My mood certainly improved greatly on it, and I'm in no way comparing to you. I had insulin resistance syndrome problems, but none of what you talk about. But when I switched to low carb, high-nutrient-dense food, obviously the weight fell off me - 30 pounds. All my blood markers got better - extraordinarily better. But my mood and my sleep as well, all improved significantly. I think I had, I began to have those little moments of just "hey, life is good". Yeah, right. Like you know, you're in the car, maybe the sun comes out from behind the clouds, and you say to yourself: "hey, life's not bad!"

Mikhaila: [49:56](#) Yeah exactly! I had never experienced that. Like I used to see people walking down the street smiling. It'd be like, what is wrong with them?

Ivor: [50:04](#) They're on drugs!

Mikhaila: [50:05](#) They're on drugs. Basically like if, if life is good, then you're just that neutral. Right. I didn't realize that. If life is good, you're actually just happy about being around.

Ivor: [50:15](#) It's a great feeling.

Mikhaila: [50:16](#) It's a great, it's a great feeling. Yeah.

Ivor: [50:19](#) So this is, so now you are really cresting into "happy life". Everything pretty much right, but you "may not be getting the nutrients you need". That's something someone could say...?

Mikhaila: [50:31](#) Yeah. I'm not convinced of that. So I've had vitamin testing. I'm getting another one back probably tomorrow and I'll update my blog. I've been putting all my blood work on my blog. I did vitamin testing - I did it through my doctor, but I did it through naturapath as well. That looked at intra-cellular levels of vitamins, and my zinc is low and my vitamin D is Low and neither of those should be low on this diet. Everything else is normal. My B vitamins have all recovered. When I was just low carb my B vitamins were low except for b12, all the other ones were low - and those are all good now.

Ivor: [51:09](#) Okay. So most of your vitamin status has improved, what remains a bit low is zinc and vitamin D?

Mikhaila: [51:17](#) Yes. But those have been low since I was a kid. And I think that has to do with whatever's making me as sensitive as I am

- Ivor: [51:23](#) Actually yeah, vitamin D is very interesting because there's so many people now who are inflamed or have autoimmune issues in today's world with our food supply, that people are driving down their vitamin D status. So the disease state is causing the vitamin D levels to be lower in the blood test. So simply throwing vitamin D pills in is not going to fix that. You need to fix the root cause, which essentially YOU have now, it appears largely done. So I'm guessing your vitamin D status will now begin to gently rise now...
- Mikhaila: [51:50](#) I'm hoping, I mean, I'm going to keep testing. we'll see. I mean, I can't imagine having C.difficile for who knows how long, um, would help any vitamin level or anything. Um, yeah. So I'll just keep testing and waiting.
- Ivor: [52:05](#) Right. Very good. So another one is vitamin C, you know, there's a lot of controversy around that now that maybe on a very low carb diet because vitamin C is needed for glucose metabolism, you may not need as much vitamin C - and I guess you're getting vitamin C through the meat your eating, at least low levels
- Mikhaila: [52:24](#) Yeah, that's what I've heard too. And um, I mean, vitamin C is normal, and calcium though I haven't been bothered about calcium. Calcium is normal, like everything's normal except for zinc and vitamin D. But I don't think that's diet related. Zinc certainly isn't.
- Ivor: [52:39](#) Right. And you are by eliminating, of course the **salicylates** and all of the plant things that may cause people issues. Well, they're all kind of by definition - eliminated now. Yeah. So any anti-nutrients or phytates or any of those things by definition they're taken off the table in your diet.
- Mikhaila: [52:57](#) Yeah. Yeah. I've eliminated like everything I could eliminate basically.
- Ivor: [53:01](#) Yeah. And missing fiber then. So fiber has importance - I think it's much more important to have plenty of fiber if you're eating a high-glycemic or a high-carb diet - it will then have mitigating properties against that diet. But if you're eating your diet, how is your digestion generally, bar The C.difficile problem?
- Mikhaila: [53:19](#) Since, since it's gone? Yeah, it's great. But like I'm, I'm bad example unfortunately of that because I've had the C.difficile problem. But I mean, so you're supposed to be eating fiber for what - so you're not constipated? That hasn't been an issue. I haven't heard of anyone, especially if they're not including dairy

doing the carnivore diet - that has constipation issues. It seems to be veering the other way, if anything. So, so far so good since the C.diff is gone, like fantastic. No bloating, like nothing, right?

Ivor: [53:53](#) Yeah. And dairy, you mentioned dairy? Dairy and the Casein in it, has come up as problematic from many people, even people who don't have issues with other plant foods. Dairy comes up quite a lot. And with say ApoE4 Genotype people who have had significant heart disease - their inflammatory markers can rise relating to eating cheeses and dairy. So I think dairy has some question marks around it, unless you're a fully tolerant...

Mikhaila: [54:21](#) Yeah, I'm pretty, I'm pretty skeptical of dairy. Like if you go to my blog and I say, you know, if there are some things you have to eliminate, like we'll get rid of processed foods, get rid of sugar, get rid of soy, the least you can do is get rid of gluten - getting rid of all grains would be preferable. And get rid of dairy. And so I do lump that in, because it was so mostly because it was really hard on me. I also think perhaps some of the studies that have been done on animal protein being bad for you? First of all, maybe those studies just aren't done properly in general. And should be like booted off to the side, but also lumping dairy in with meat and then seeing ill health effects. Maybe it was the dairy, not the meat? I'm not entirely sure. I just know it was really hard on me and when I tried to introduce Casein-free lactose-free whey, I still reacted to that terribly. so yeah, I'm skeptical of dairy,

Ivor: [55:14](#) So anyone with significant issues, irritable bowel, bowel issues, autoimmune or anything you really want to get rid of, that is very difficult for the medical system to get rid of with medications. You kind of have to go towards the ultimate elimination diet, and really carefully bring things back in. And dairy, I agree with you as well to be honest, Mikhaila, that dairy comes up a lot. And mixing dairy in with meat and fat and protein is a little problematic because I'd love to see them separated. And I know doctor Steven Gundry - interestingly, actually he has the plant paradox book where he lays out all the challenges for certain people with myriad plant foods. And he also specializes in ApoE4 people who have challenges with fat and protein animal, dairy and it can raise their inflammatory markers. But I think he too would acknowledge he mixes dairy in with the animal kind of fat and protein. And it would be good - I must try and get him on the podcast and see, can we tease those apart, if you will.

Mikhaila: [56:21](#) Yeah. It'd be good to tease those apart. Yeah, yeah, for sure.

Ivor: [56:25](#) So you're feeling great. You're, you're on the top of your game, shall we say, and your father Jordan is now even higher in his game than he was, the, God knows he was high enough anyway. He's pretty much meat and water - essentially similar.

Mikhaila: [56:42](#) Yeah. And I think beef - chicken occasionally and he thinks it's okay, but he's mainly beef.

Ivor: [56:48](#) Yeah. Very good. Well, I saw him last July. I went to his show with a couple of doctor colleagues, in Dublin. He did a big show, I think it was Sam Harris and hey, they were on fire, but he's always on fire...

Mikhaila: [57:01](#) Yeah yeah, he's doing good.

Ivor: [57:17](#) Yep. So father and daughter are both doing fantastic on a very unusual, but fascinating diet that seems to have the ability...to fix things which are seen as un-fixable, really?

Mikhaila: [57:17](#) Yeah, I know. It's been crazy. It's been crazy.

Ivor: [57:18](#) ...but crazy good the end.

Mikhaila: [57:19](#) Crazy guide. Yeah. You know, I'm doing great.

Ivor: [57:23](#) Excellent. Thanks a lot, Mikhaila. And long may it last.

Mikhaila: [57:23](#) Thank you