

*Stephanie
Dodier*

**The Beyond The Food Show
PODCAST TRANSCRIPT**



the
BEYOND THE FOOD
Show

WITH STEPHANIE DODIER

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Stephanie: Welcome to Episode 51 of The Beyond the Food Show. Today we talk to Drew Manning from Fit2Fat2Fit, a personal trainer who imposed on himself a 70-pound weight gain so he can feel the challenge of his clients – an amazing, powerful story for you to hear.

My name is Stephanie Dodier and I'm a clinical nutritionist. At 35 I was trapped with severe anxiety, panic attacks, obesity, and my health was absolutely collapsed. I needed a solution and that's when my journey began.

Each episode of The Beyond the Food Show brings you an expert or a message to help you achieve your health goal, unlock your self-confidence, and live a better life. Let's dive in.

This is Episode 51 of The Beyond the Food Show, The Crave Cure Series, and it's brought to you by stephaniedodier.com. The show today is the number one show of The Crave Cure and I have somebody that I recently just met, Drew Manning from the website Fit2Fat2Fit. This guy has such a compassionate and beautiful story.

Four years ago, he was a personal trainer, had always been an athlete all his life, never struggled with weight and never struggled with food cravings. Food was not a problem for him. There was never a relationship to food, either. He could not understand his clients, his personal training clients so he said, "You know what? I'm going to go through the same thing that they're going through when they want to lose weight." So he stopped training, changed his food habits, went to the standard North American diet and gained 70 pounds in six months and challenged himself to lose that weight. What he discovered is what you and I likely have a challenge with all our lives.

He has this amazing perspective now on weight loss and food craving. He is going to share that with us today. That's part of our series, She Share Her Story, but for the first time instead of being a "Her", it's a "His". It's an amazing way of kick-starting our Crave Cure Series.

The Crave Cure Series, if you haven't heard of it yet, it's starting today at Episode 51 and it's going to go on for ten shows. It's going to be centered on emotional eating and food craving. I'm bringing in 11 world-renowned experts and we're going to talk for 45 minutes about one aspect of food craving. If you go to the show notes at stephaniedodier.com/051, you will see the entire schedule of who I have. It's mainly all MDs, doctors, functional medicine practitioners, Ph.D.s and psychologist so we can deep

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dive and find solutions and find ways of changing our relationship to food and find our food freedom.

To help you in this journey, I'm actually going to give you two homeworks. Number one, go to stephaniedodier.com/cravecure or in the show notes and download the guide. I've created this free 50-page guide called The Crave Cure and it's going to take you through everything we're going to talk about in the next ten shows in a summed up way. It's a guide to take you on that month's adventure.

And I want you to find three other women in your life that you can share this adventure with. The reason why I want you to do that and why this is so critically important, when we transform or when we want to change an aspect of our life, we cannot do that in isolation. We need the support of our tribe. We need the support of other people. If you've been struggling for a while and haven't been able to change the aspect of your life to which you want to change in a positive manner and you've been doing it by yourself, it's likely why. You have to find a tribe.

I've made it easy for you to share. Either you can share this episode – if you're listening on iTunes, just hit the share button. If you're listening from the website, just hit the share button. Share the guide, share the notes and find three women with whom you're going to share this journey with, maybe create a meeting every two weeks or a book club type of meeting where you can share what you've learned, how it shows up in your life, and how you can help each other go through the possibility of changing your relationship to food. That's your homework.

Now are you ready to hear the amazing story from Drew Manning? Let's dive in.

Drew Manning is a New York Times bestselling author of the book Fit2Fat2Fit and he's best known for his fit to fat to fit experiment that went viral online. He has been featured on shows like Dr. Oz, Good Morning America, The View and many more. His experiment has become a hit TV show called Fit2Fat2Fit airing on A&E. Welcome to the show, Drew.

Drew: Thank you so much, Stephanie. I'm so excited to be here.

Stephanie: I am too. We met ten days ago, I think, and I fell in love with you.

Drew: Thank you. Thank you so much.

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Stephanie: I wanted to have you back because this is the first episode of a series called The Crave Cure, where for the month of May I'm going to explore with people in depth cravings from all aspects of it. When I met you on your podcast, I'm like, "He's the perfect guy to talk about craving with me." From a completely different perspective that people probably will never experiment is the story – and your journey – from fit to fat to fit. I'd like to start our interview there to share with people what is fit to fat to fit if they've never heard of it before.

Drew: If they've never heard of it, pretty much the title gives it away. In a very quick, short version, I was in shape my entire life, I never knew any different, I'd played sports, I had 11 brothers and sisters and I grew up my entire life in shape. For me, it was easy to be in shape because that's all I had ever known. I became a personal trainer with that mentality of like, "Oh, this is easy, all you do is eat healthy and exercise." Well, that caused a very big disconnect between my clients and I because they would tell me, "You know, Drew, I just gave in. I had that soda. Even though you told me not to, I just did it." I'm like, "Why did you do it? It's not that hard, just don't do it." They would be like, "Well, Drew, you don't understand because for you it's easy."

That's where it hit me like, "Okay, maybe there's something I need to learn as a trainer. Maybe I'm wrong and I need to see why it's so hard for these people because I don't understand why it was so hard." That's where the idea came up in my mind like, "Okay, this is something that I need to do." I started exploring ideas of what could I do.

For whatever reason, Stephanie, the idea of getting fat on purpose – as crazy as that sounds – it made sense in my mind. It was like, "You need to do this." I chatted with all my friends and family. I'm like, "What do you guys think?" Ninety-nine percent of them were like, "You should totally do this. You definitely need to do it." The only one person that said no was my mom. She was like, "I don't want you to go through this because I don't want you to be unhealthy." But I did it anyway, of course.

Stephanie: Mom wanted to protect her son.

Drew: Exactly.

Stephanie: You literally jumped in and gained weight.

Drew: Seventy-five pounds in six months. I know, it's a lot of weight.

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Here was the concept. Six months of no exercise – I couldn't exercise – which was really hard for me. Someone who was obsessed with the way I looked and exercise, that was really hard for me to let go from a mental perspective. Then I could eat whatever I wanted to. It was this – I'll be honest with you. The first month was fun. It was this freedom. I could go to the grocery store, go past the vegetables and go down the cereal aisle, the cookie aisle. There are so many options here in North America for foods that you can just choose from and it's amazing. I felt like a kid in a candy store.

It was so fun until I started snoring at night and my sleep was affected and had heavy breathing just walking up the stairs and having to hold my breath to clip my toenails. I had never experienced that before in my life. I had to go down, clip my toenails holding my breath, come back for air and go back down, clip, clip, clip. These little things started to take that sense of freedom. It started to go away really quickly.

Stephanie: It became painful.

Drew: Yes, it did. And I still had four months left. I was like, "Oh my gosh, how am I going to do this?"

Stephanie: That is so much dedication. When I said I fell in love with you is because of that, because I can only imagine for someone who's been in the fitness industry his professional life – and before that you were very active, you were probably in sports and competitive sport – your physical image and the way your body performed has always been probably one of the most important things in your life beyond your family.

Drew: Yes. It's so true.

Here's one thing I've realized over doing this – you identify who you are, your identity with what your body looks like, whether you grew up your entire life in shape or you grew up your entire life out of shape, that becomes part of your identity. So this journey of fit to fat to fit, even though it was physical, I gained a lot of weight, it was way more mental and emotional than I ever expected. I freaked out when I was overweight because I lost my identity. I didn't know who I was. I wanted to go up to a complete stranger and be like, "Hey ladies, I'm not really overweight, this is just an experiment. This isn't really me. Here's my before picture. Go to my website." I didn't know how to handle it.

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I covered up in front of my wife at the time. I would sit by the shower and I didn't want her to see me naked. I didn't want to see me naked. And that's where it became so much more mental and emotional than I ever imagined.

Stephanie: It's amazing because I watched your video on YouTube as a research for my preparation for this podcast – and I'll link in the show notes to his YouTube channel where you can see he did a video every week.

Drew: Yeah, a weekly weigh-in video.

Stephanie: Obviously, we can see the transformation in the face. But for me, what struck me is the tone of voice that decreased. Like your energy was – like your chest was up, you were proud at the beginning. As you progressed, you became more caved in and the tone of voice went down.

Drew: That's an interesting observation because it's so true. I didn't notice it but from an outside perspective, you can totally notice it. My energy levels were definitely not what they used to be. I'm not a lazy person by nature. I had so much energy before. But then when I was overweight, that energy was just gone and I couldn't help out around the house. I lost my confidence. My confidence was gone.

My wife at the time – she wrote a chapter in my book about our relationship and how it affected it from her perspective. To her, it didn't matter if I was overweight. She still was attracted to me. But what made me unattractive was my lack of self-confidence and my self-esteem. That's what she was unattracted to, not so much the big belly.

Anyways, it was really, really interesting how it affected our relationship. Even though I was doing it on purpose and I knew it was temporary, it still affected – and like I said, that's where it became so much more mental and emotional than I ever imagined. That's what my book goes into and that's where the lessons were learned.

Stephanie: That's amazing because that's – when I was on your podcast – and I'll to that in the show notes as well – that's what's profoundly effective from you is your ability and your willingness to go to that emotional place. Let's dive into this, the relationship difficulty with your wife while you gained weight. I'm sure sex life was affected as well.

Drew: Yes, definitely sex life was affected. I didn't have as much energy. And here's one thing – and I'll be totally blunt and honest because I'm an open book – I freaked out because I didn't know this, but about every 30 pounds you gain, you kind of lose length in your

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penis. I had a doctor tell me this because I'm like, "What is wrong? It's bigger than this, I know for sure," but every 30 or so pounds that a man gains, it sucks it in an inch less. So yeah, it really did affect our sex life. And like I said, it went back. The good thing is that when you lose the weight, it goes back to its normal size.

Stephanie: But I'm sure the libido was affected as well, your desire to even have intercourse with your wife was affected.

Drew: Oh yeah, I would choose sleep over sex most of the time.

Stephanie: Probably because your self-confidence was down, because you were talking about body image.

Drew: Yeah, definitely, just because I'd never been overweight. The self-esteem, the lack of self-confidence all took its toll on me. I don't ever feel like I was depressed but I definitely felt down, like sad and just not me. But I knew I had to go through this. That's where the lessons are learned. When you're down on the rock bottom, that's where the most important valuable lessons are learned in life. That's why I have zero regrets doing this because that's where I learned so many lessons.

Stephanie: We'll get into that a little bit later on how it changed your life. Let's stay to that place where you've now gained the weight, the body image issue, because that's a huge thing. Most of my listeners are women and that's probably one of the top three topics that people talk about, for women, their inability to relate to their image and having to cope with that. How did you cope with that in the four months that you were overweight and how did that affect you?

Drew: Here's the thing, I think it's mostly common among women but men struggle with it too. Men feel that comparison to other men. I felt all the time so unhappy with my body and I would look at these others guys like, "Man, I used to be that." I wanted to go up to these strangers and tell them, "I'm not this. This isn't me." But it was me and I had to embrace it.

It took some serious soul searching for me, deep digging to realize that I am not my body, that we are not our bodies. There is so much more to us than what our bodies look like. There is so much more to us than our relationship with gravity. And men struggle with it but women, too, mostly. We need to let that go and realize that you

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have so much to offer this world other than what your body looks like and your weight on the scale.

Stephanie: Absolutely. You're speaking what I speak all the time.

Did you get to work in the fitness industry for those six months, by the way?

Drew: I stopped training because I knew that for me being in the gym was a temptation.

Stephanie: Yeah, because it is an addiction.

Drew: I was like, "I'm going to stop training clients." I had a job in the medical field full-time so I had a job. It's not like I didn't do anything. But still, I had to stay out of the gym.

Stephanie: Let's talk about this physical fitness addiction. Before the challenge, did you know you were addicted to fitness as a regimen?

Drew: No, because no one really talks about fitness as an addiction, really, as an unhealthy addiction. It's like, yeah, I was addicted but it wasn't like a drug addiction. It wasn't a bad addiction so I didn't realize how obsessed I was until I did this journey and how hard it was to let go of that part of my life, because it was a release. That was like my release. That was my therapy, to go to the gym. And now that I didn't have that, I didn't have that release so I didn't know where to get that from, so I had to find it through food – which took a while, to be honest with you. I didn't have that emotional happiness connection like some people have with food until I consistently did it every day because I didn't have that release from the gym. So food quickly became that therapy, that release for me.

Stephanie: That's soothing because that's what we talked a lot about for people in the community that were emotional eaters so we sooth our emotions with food. You were soothing your emotions with fitness.

Drew: Yes.

Stephanie: We took that away from and you had no skill sets, you had no coping skills, and you quickly went to food.

Drew: Yeah. And by the very end of it – I'll be honest – it was very comfortable. It became very comfortable. I started to realize, "I see why people get stuck in this," because the idea of change seems so big and so hard that it's just so easy to stay where you are where

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you're comfortable. Even though you feel uncomfortable living this way, it seems more comfortable than wanting to change, to live a healthy lifestyle, because especially me, you know the hard work you have to put in to change, to exercise and eat healthy again. You know how hard that is physically, mentally and emotionally, but it's so tempting to stay where you're at.

Stephanie: Let's talk about this. You went from soothing your emotions with fitness to soothing your emotions with food. You put on that weight and then you had to come back to your regular weight because that's part of the challenge of fit to fat to fit is come back to what you were before.

Drew: Yes.

Stephanie: How was that transition of no longer soothing with food?

Drew: The first two weeks back to fit were hell. They were the worst two weeks of my life. That was very, very powerful. It was so powerful for me to experience it because here is what I remember feeling during those two weeks – I was eating healthy, eating spinach and kale and broccoli and whole foods again yet my body was going through withdrawal symptoms of the macaroni and cheese and the cinnamon toast crunch and the Mountain Dew and all the sugary foods that I was eating. I had the worst headaches, I was grumpy all the time, I was moody. I didn't like it to be around myself. I can only imagine what my wife at the time what she felt to be around me during those two weeks. It was like getting off drugs. Your body fights back and wants that high again.

It took me two weeks to go through that. But during those two weeks, I finally realized what my clients were telling me when they struggle to follow the meal plans that I gave them. I realized how powerful that emotional connection to food really is. And I wouldn't have understood that had I not done this because people think, "Oh yeah, I get it. Food tastes good, it makes you feel good, blah, blah, blah. Stop eating it." That's how people who have never had a food addiction think it is. They think it's just as simple as stopping eating the food.

You wouldn't say to a drug addict, "Hey, just stop doing drugs, it's not that hard." You know what I'm saying? Food really is just as addictive to some people and it's such a powerful emotional connection that I didn't realize was there.

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Stephanie: Because your first month – when I was watching your video – you didn't go back to exercising right away.

Drew: I wanted to show people how important nutrition was when it comes to health. So I skipped exercise for 30 days and just changed my diet because I feel like when people try to make a transformation or lifestyle change, they go all or nothing. They go everything – diet, exercise, supplements, all out, and then they make mistake and they're like, "This is too hard," instead of just little baby steps at a time. So I just focused only on nutrition and tackled that and saw amazing results in the first 30 days.

That's the hardest part for people to stay consistent with is the nutrition. Exercise, people can stay consistent with that. I think that's the easier part, in my opinion, for the majority of people, but nutrition is the hardest part.

Stephanie: Why do you think it's the hardest part?

Drew: Because of that emotional connection that I was just talking about. There's such a powerful emotional connection that we don't realize that some people have, and for each person it's different. For some people, it was their drug since they were four years old or five years old to cope with something that they were going through or some kind of powerful emotional experience that they've had in their past where food became that therapy. To just say, "Stop eating it," your body wants that high again, just like a drug.

Stephanie: Physically and psychologically the body connects that soothing both ways to food. So now you go back on this attempt to lose the weight – and I'll keep the surprise till the end – but you want to lose the weight so you take the food away and you're not going back to exercise. You're still in that space where you have nothing to soothe yourself with for that month.

Drew: That is true. But the one thing that helped me push me through it was accountability. Accountability, people watching me – because here I was, by this time I had gone on all these TV shows. People were watching me on YouTube live as it's happening. So that accountability, that fear of failing in front of all these people was what pushed me past that lack of having a release from the gym or from food.

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I think for some people that's really important. Not everybody has that platform but what I'm saying is everybody can find accountability whether it's through Facebook groups or your family, your friends.

Stephanie: Coaching, whatever.

Drew: You have to have some type of support system no matter who you are. Even for me, I had to have it. That's what I'm trying to say is what helped me during that first 30 days.

Stephanie: That's amazing because support is the number one element for people's success when they're doing transformation, whether it is individually with a coach or a group setting. That support is likely what's going to make a difference in your transformation.

Drew: Yes, it's so true.

Stephanie: Back to this month, nutrition, you lose a bunch of weight and then you go back to the full regimen of fitness, am I correct?

Drew: Yes. I lost 19 pounds the first 30 days, which was really good. But all my blood rec went back to normal levels. My blood pressure –

Stephanie: People don't know that but you were followed throughout by a doctor, correct?

Drew: Yeah. Once a month I would get my blood rec done and we would go over it. I was really, really bad towards my fattest part but the first 30 days your body is resilient. If you consistently treat it good, it can heal itself over time. So I lost 90 pounds but I still had to go back into the gym. This was another powerful learning experience for me because here I was, still 50 pounds overweight and still super uncomfortable, and going back to the gym where I used to be so confident, I was so nervous and anxious. Because now here I was, this person that was overweight going back into the gym, and I was worried about what other people were going to think of me, like, "How are they going to look at me?"

Here's the thing I learned. Whether people judge you or not, you still feel judged going into a gym being overweight. I had clients who told me, "I don't like going to the gym," and I'm like, "No one's judging you. That's just all in your head." Whether that's true or not, you never know. No one said anything mean to me or rude to me, but if someone looks at you differently, you automatically think, "That person is judging me."

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- Stephanie: That's a look you probably never had before.
- Drew: Yes. No, never.
- Stephanie: You probably were able to recognize that different look, that different vibe or energy that people were sending your way by looking at you.
- Drew: Yeah. It was very good for me to go through that. Very, very humbling.
- The other part that was humbling was I lost a lot of strength and struggling to do push-ups on my knees. For someone like me who used to be this in-shape trainer, it was very, very humbling. I think it's very valuable for almost anybody who's never been out of shape to go through, to kind of see – kind of see – what it's like for people who have never been in shape.
- Stephanie: It's amazing because, again, I was watching the video and I'm watching the body language. I was watching the video where you did your first pull-up – you did one. The look in your face when you put your feet back on the ground was worth like – if you want to learn about body language, go check that video. It was amazing. You could tell what was going on in your head when you came down from that pull-up machine. It must have felt terrible inside of you because it was how you valued yourself before.
- Drew: Oh yeah, I defined myself by how fit I was and I kind of still was going through that struggle of finding that identity now being overweight and losing all my strength. I had to realize there's more to me than my body. But still I was – I just kind of gripped on the mentality of being hard on myself and struggling to do one pull-up. Inside my head, probably what was going through my head at the time was, "Man –" I was just saying negative things to myself, probably.
- Stephanie: Probably. And if I was in your head at that time, it was probably something around, "I'm not worth it anymore if I cannot do a pull-up."
- Drew: Yeah, exactly.
- Stephanie: That's what goes on in many women's heads when they look at themselves in the mirror, like, "I'm not worth it if I don't look a certain way."
- Drew: Yeah, it's so true.

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Stephanie: It's very difficult for women because, particularly for women, when they have this intrinsic need to be attractive to attract a male and the most basic function of a human being, so it's the same thing. It's amazing that you went through that. What did you learn? What's your learning from this whole experience?

Drew: A different things. Obviously, just to make a long story short, I did get back to fit, in case people were wondering.

Stephanie: Let's go for that, I forgot that part.

Drew: I did fit to fat for a reason, not fit to fat and stuck or fit to fat and happy. You know what I'm saying? But by no means was it easy. It was way harder than I thought.

The big thing that I learned that we've kind of already touched on is how much a transformation is mental and emotional. Even though you could do the workouts and the meal plans and the physical side – we all know that, we all know we need to eat healthy and exercise – that's not the part people struggle with. The key to make this lifestyle change, whatever lifestyle you choose, whether it's vegan or paleo or keto or P90X or Zumba or whatever it is, make it a lifestyle change. But the key is to know how to overcome your mental and emotional challenges, and that's how you make it a lifestyle change instead of just focusing on, "What's the next diet that I'm going to try?" – that diet mentality of trying to lose the most amount of weight with the least amount of effort and the shortest amount of time. Unfortunately, especially here in America and probably in Canada too, people are looking for that magic people.

The biggest thing I learned was how much a transformation is mental and emotional, and also how much of that food addiction is real and way more powerful than I thought. To be able to empathize as a trainer, now I totally shifted how I train people. Before, I used to focus so much more on the physical, "Oh, you're not losing weight? Well, let's change up your meals plans, let's work harder in the gym," and that's all I could relate to because that's all I knew. But now, having done this and understanding a little bit better the mental and emotional side – just for everybody out there, I don't pretend to know or I don't pretend to have a complete understanding. I did this for six months, it gave me a better understanding, but in no way do I compare myself to someone that's been 100 pounds overweight for the past 20 years. It's totally different, but I do have a better understanding.

Sorry, I'm kind of rambling on but those are some of the biggest lessons I learned.

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Stephanie: You have a better understanding of what it is than 90% of the world who has never attempted or even thought of doing what you did. That's what needs to be brought forward is that courage and that willingness to go where you never thought you could go. For you, being fit, being physically attractive and have a certain body type, that's all you knew. You were willing to give that up to learn something else. The same people who have been overweight their whole life, are you willing to change your habit to go where you've never been before?

Drew: That's so powerful out there. That's what I'm trying to get across with my TV show is these trainers who have never been overweight who are out there helping people. They're doing a great job but there needs to be more empathy, in my opinion. I see a lot of judgment that goes on, especially in the fitness industry, and misunderstanding. If I can get these trainers to go through this process even for a short period of time, they come out of it more empathetic, with more respect and a better understanding of their clients. At the same time, their clients respect them so much more, having gone through this process.

Because here is the thing, in the fitness industry, nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care. You can have all the knowledge in the world about diet and exercise, and that's all cool, but the person that you're trying to help doesn't care until they know that you actually care about them as a human, as an individual, as a person. So don't focus so much on just gaining all the knowledge. Focus on that emotional connection to that other human first before you try and tell them exactly what they're doing wrong.

Stephanie: That is brilliant. I'm sure there're a lot of young trainers or young coaches that haven't figured that out and then they're – you know what? I want to say something here because you're from the keto community as well and a lot of my listeners are from that. This is where the keto community is at right now. It's this world of science and technical knowledge. Have you noticed the same thing?

Drew: Yes, definitely.

Stephanie: And absolute avoidance of anything else that has to do with the human being's healthy. I know, for me, that's why I call the show that we're listening today beyond the food because it fully adopts that low carb, keto, real food from a physiological perspective but we need to dig into the psychological aspect that you've just talked about because food is not enough to give you health.

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- Drew: That's why I love the name of your podcast, Beyond the Food. It's so much more than that. Because I see it all the time, people are counting their macros and they're freaking out because they're one gram over their amount of carbs for the day. They get so fixated on the numbers and the technical side of it, they're forgetting about the mental and emotional side and they're beating themselves up if they – it's so weird that we as humans nowadays have this relationship with food where we feel guilty, like it's a sin, like we just committed a sin and we feel so much shame towards that eating that when we know we shouldn't have. It's just interesting how it's developed into what it is now.
- Stephanie: And to this complete emotional relationship to food, in all aspects of it, from guilt to actually soothing our emotions. If we just dial back, I don't know, 200 years ago or 300 years ago, who would have ever thought that we would feel guilty about eating bread?
- Drew: I know. It's so true.
- Stephanie: Because, let's face it, people ate bread all the time 300 years ago and we didn't have an obesity issue. But we ate it first naturally in a real food perspective with no chemistry in it and we didn't have an emotional relationship to bread. We ate one slice and we were done.
- Drew: We've created this over time, with society and movies and magazines and you name it – to be chosen. Then we get into comparing, to be comparing ourselves, that we're not good enough. We think health should look a certain way on our bodies when in reality health looks different on each body.
- Stephanie: Absolutely.
- Drew: Health doesn't look the same on each person. People need to remember that and realize that there's so much more to them than what their body is. I know that we're all in this pursuit of looking good and we all want that but let that be the by-product instead of the main goal because I can guarantee you, there are people with six-packs out there and there are people that are skinny that are super unhealthy. That is not the end goal, to look a certain way. The end goal is to be healthy and fit no matter what you look like. That can be a by-product over time but when we have that as our number one focus people sacrifice their health nowadays to look a certain way. I see it all the time in the fitness industry.

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Stephanie: I see it. I used to work more in the gym setting doing nutrition and I used to see it, people that were going through particularly fitness competitions with absolute hormonal chaos inside of them because of what they were putting themselves through, things that bring consequence for the rest lives just to get to a certain level of conditioning and body look. And the same thing would apply in reverse. We do that when we are obese. We may be very unhealthy because of how we consume the food and how we have a relationship to food. But we can also be round and be extremely healthy as well. Like me.

Drew: Yeah. I believe that 100%.

Stephanie: I'll never have a six-pack and I'm now totally okay with that. I wasn't back in the day but now I'm totally okay with that. But I'm likely more healthy than the vast majority of physique competitors.

Drew: It's so true

Stephanie: Because of what I know now. Anyway, it's a long discussion to say this, but how do you live your life differently today based on what you've learned?

Drew: A lot of stuff. One, I'm not as obsessed about living this type of lifestyle as rigidly as I was, as strictly as I was. I do work out still, I do eat healthy, but at the same time I'm not as obsessed. Honestly, I go to the gym three to four days a week and I'd never feel guilty about that. Whereas before, if I didn't go at least six days a week, I would feel like, "Oh my gosh, I'm getting fat. I feel fat right here." It would affect me and I'd feel guilty about it. My workout used to be so brutal and intense where I would just like punish my body. Now, yes, I do work out hard but for short periods of time, 10 to 20 minutes, but it's more about longevity. It's more about loving my body now instead of punishing it in the gym.

My relationship with food is totally different where I don't feel guilty if I step off-plan for a little while or if I go out with my daughters and we have a pizza night or something like that. Because here's the thing I've noticed, especially as a parent, if I come across as super strict with my kids, it's just going to cause them to want to rebel. When they go to grandma's house or their friend's house, they're going to reach for the stuff that they can't have with dad. I need to find that balance with them and start teaching them at a young age because it's not just about me anymore. It's about teaching my two girls how to live a healthy, balanced lifestyle without pushing it on them.

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Stephanie: That's so true. I also want to say to the moms who are trying to adopt their lifestyle change versus a diet because as a woman, when you have children – or even as a man – and you go on diet, what a huge message are you sending to your children? That you can only be good if you weigh less. I see that with family members around me where a mom always talks about calories and being on a diet and using supplements to be on a diet. Well, her daughter at 11 years old, guess what she talks about? Dieting.

Broaden the aspect of just being strict but think about think about what we are giving to our children when we go through this as a diet versus a lifestyle change.

Drew: And how ourselves talk – how we talk to ourselves – our kids notice that. Our kids pick up on that. How you talk to yourself, your kids are going to notice that, so be kind to yourself.

You would never say the things you say to yourself to your best friend. You know what I'm saying? When you speak to yourself – we're so hard on ourselves and we don't need to be. Life is too short to be at war with yourself the rest of your life.

Parents out there, you definitely have to realize it's not about you so much. It's about teaching your kids to have a healthy relationship with themselves. Because my kids are seven and five and they're already talking about – I can tell, their friends are like, "Oh, I feel fat." I'm like, "Oh my gosh, where does that come from?" It scares me but it's out there.

Stephanie: Yes, it is. But what they learned from you – because you were willing to put yourself through this experiment, you are teaching them probably from a completely different perspective than you would have been six years ago.

Drew: Totally. Six years ago, I would have been – being more forceful about it to them, like, "You have to eat this. You have to be healthy. Let's go exercise because of your weight," or something like that. Whereas now, I'm not that judgmental person anymore and it's all about health. Health first. Weight loss, looks – those stuff are not the priority.

Stephanie: You coach people now. You have programs to help people, am I correct?

Drew: Yeah. I don't do anymore one-on-one personal training like I did back in the day. All my programs are online now. I do coach people. I do coach other trainers from the TV show, though. I coach the trainers through their fit to fat process just to make sure they don't go crazy and they don't get too depressed. I'm there. I'm like, "I know what you're going

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through. Here, eat some more fries. But you've still got two more months, buddy." So I coach the trainers on the show. Other than that, I do have online programs.

Here's the thing, this is kind of what I talked about before. You could get somebody the best meal plans, the best workouts, the best trainer, the best coach in the world – none of that matters if that person isn't coached on the mental and emotional side. That's where the accountability and the support system come in, where people, when they sign up for my programs, they'll have access to my private Facebook group where they get coached from me personally on the mental and emotional side.

Stephanie: Amazing. You are addressing both of those aspects, which is significantly different from other programs which are strictly meal plans and exercise.

Drew: Exactly, which are a dime a dozen. For some people, it works. Don't get me wrong, some people are born with this discipline that I don't know where it comes from. But the majority of people need their hand held in the beginning. The support system, what it does is it gives people a balance of love and encouragement, letting people know that they're worth it. Also, we all need a kick in the butt every once in a while. We all need to get pushed in a certain direction. But it's a balance of those two things.

Stephanie: That's amazing. I've put the link in the show notes as well for your website so people can go check it out. I'll put the link to your TV show as well on A&E for people. Are you in this season? I don't have A&E in Canada. Are you in this season right now?

Drew: Season 1 aired last January. That's on demand if you want to go watch it. Season 2 should air in June sometime here in the US, but my hope is actually – I did talk to a production company out there that wants to make a Fit2Fat2Fit Canada with Canadian trainers and Canadian clients. So look out, Canada, it might be coming. It's not yet but hopefully in the near future. It's just a long process you have to go through.

Stephanie: Amazing. Well, thank you so much for being willing to come and talk through this huge learning journey in your life and sharing with people how it felt and what you learned from it, because I think it's going to inspire a lot of people.

I encourage you guys to go and follow Drew on Instagram. I've been on your Instagram for ten days now and I'm loving it.

Drew: Thank you. I appreciate that.

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Stephanie: Go and check it out there and check out his programs as well.

Thank you very much, Drew.

Drew: Thank you. I really, really appreciate it.

Stephanie: There you have it. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did interviewing Drew. Thank you for sticking around until the end of the show. I hope you have been impacted by his story and how you can implement some of the tips that he had into your own life. Go to stephaniedodier.com/051 to get all the links of what we discussed during the episode. And I want you to share those show notes, as I said earlier, with three other women so you can take this journey together.

Leave me a review on iTunes. If you go to stephaniedodier.com/review, you will get taken right away to where you can leave a review of the show. I want to hear from you. I'm behind a camera right now, I'm behind a mic if you're listening to audio, and I'm all by myself. I want to hear what you thought of the show and what you would like us to deep dive into further in upcoming shows. I want to hear from you either on social media by tagging me or into the review.

I will see you in the next episode, show 52, with Samantha Skelly from Hungry for Happiness. That's show number two of The Crave Cure. We're going to deep dive into what currently is my number one passion which is the emotional aspect of food craving. That is my number one adventure personally right now, and I know for a lot of you, that resonates. Be sure to come on for show 52 which will be released in three days.