

Women's Vitality Summit

Dr. Keesha Ewers Interviews Megan Buer

April 2017

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Hi, everybody. Welcome back to the Women's Vitality Summit, Caring for Yourself, Body and Soul. I'm so excited to be introducing you to Megan Buer today, who is a mother of three children. She struggled for years with Hashimoto's disease, adrenal fatigue, sugar addiction, food intolerances, panic, and anxiety. Went on a journey of health and discovery for herself, spending over 10 years researching, experimenting, and finally figuring out all the unique tools that she needed to naturally heal herself. Welcome to the Summit, Megan.

MEGAN BUER: Thank you. I'm excited to be here.

DR. KEESHA: I love to start because the Summit is called the Women's Vitality Summit about how you define vitality. What's your definition of vitality?

MEGAN BUER: My definition and that's a good question. I think vitality to me is really waking up every morning and feeling excited to get out of bed. I talk to my clients about automatic health where it just kind of happens. You don't have to think about it. It's just you're just in constant state of rejuvenation and that to me has got to be vitality.

DR. KEESHA: That's a great definition. And what do you think keeps people today, women of today, in particular, from feeling their most vital?

MEGAN BUER: I think stress. I got to say it, especially in the alternative health world. I know when I was sick it was like I was so focused on diet and exercise and I wasn't taking care of myself emotionally and I wasn't dealing with my stress and I was stuck. I never got better. That's where I think, women, we've put off taking care of ourselves on that level. We can change our diet and we can take supplements and do all of that, but then, when it comes to our emotions and our mindset and stress levels, we just put that off. That's really what drains us, I think, the most.

DR. KEESHA: I couldn't agree more. I would love to have you share your personal wellness journey because I was telling it before we started. You have a

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very similar one to me. I think I would say 100%, but it's probably maybe 99.8%, of people who are in the functional medicine world have their own story. They have a story of converting themselves out of the match the drug to the symptom paradigm. You know, oh my gosh. I have to take responsibility for everything I put on my fork, in my cup, and in my head. I love it when we arrive to that space, but there's always this great story about how you got there so I'd love for you to share it.

MEGAN BUER: I'll try to nutshell it. It's a pretty long story, but it all started—I have three kids now, but when my youngest, he was diagnosed with autism at age two. At that point, they weren't very mainstream. We didn't have a lot of knowledge of alternative health and all of it, by this amazing, beautiful, majesty of the universe, this naturopath just fell into our laps. We got open to this whole world of changing—healing foods and homeopathy and all these things. I like totally poured myself into healing my son and I stopped taking care of myself.

DR. KEESHA: I get it. I want people to really register that because I think that this is a big, big thing for a lot of women, especially, people who are mothers that this happens, right? Here they're care giving a parent. They're care giving a friend, a partner, kids, and they have to become health advocates for their loved ones and then they stop taking care of themselves so I wanted that to play in.

MEGAN BUER: Yeah. We say that and it's like, oh, you're a mom and you're not putting makeup on anymore. It's not about getting dressed and putting makeup on. I mean that is a piece of it, but we stop taking care of our emotional wellness. We just get stressed out and we don't think that's an issue. We think that's just normal to be stressed out all the time and it's not. That's really the piece of the puzzle that's where it started for me.

DR. KEESHA: That's an event right there, right, that took you off your rails?

MEGAN BUER: It took me off, yeah. That's where I had always had a little bit of anxiety, but it was never debilitating. Then, my son's diagnosis and just completely losing myself in that. At that point, that's when the anxiety ramped up. That was my first symptom that really started to show up was the panic attacks and the anxiety like I hadn't experienced before. I was still just like, okay, this is just another annoying thing we have to deal

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with and I wasn't worried about it. I just got myself on meds and they helped, but I wasn't getting at the root.

Eventually that just led me more and more down the road where I eventually got this Hashimoto's diagnosis because I spent years there, totally into alternative health and researching and stressing about every bite of food that crossed my lips and I wasn't getting any better. It was so frustrating to be in this place of feeling like I'm doing everything right and I keep getting sicker.

DR. KEESHA: Okay. Another pause. I hear this from my patients all the time, right? People that've gone to doctor after doctor after doctor and they come in. They say, I'm doing everything right. I think that that paradigm of right and wrong, good and bad, really messes us up.

MEGAN BUER: It does. Well, it creates another level of stress.

DR. KEESHA: And shame.

MEGAN BUER: Yes, the stress and shame and guilt that wasn't there. I was stressing about whatever. I always make the joke of chlorine in my baby carrots because I remember one thing in alternative health years ago. It was like, oh my gosh, if you ate baby carrots, you're eating chlorine and it was like, oh my gosh. I was so stressed out. Just running out of this fear of I'm eating the wrong foods or oh my gosh, I can't go out to dinner because I'm going to get glutened or whatever. What's the next supplement I need to take and what am I missing? I'm deficient in this. It was just so stressful.

DR. KEESHA: I like the use of the verb glutened. I've never heard it as a verb before so.

MEGAN BUER: Yeah. It was just I got to this point in my life where I hit rock bottom where my son seemed to be getting better, but I was getting worse. Again, same thing, feeling like I was doing everything right and not getting anywhere. I got that diagnosis and it shifted something for me mentally where I was like okay, this has to stop. I'm not a sick person. I've never been a sick person before. I've no idea. Something is going on. That's where I finally started to explore some of that woo-woo stuff that I'd heard about and it was like mindset and I'm like. there's no way that I can think myself out of this. I don't have time to deal with my stress. I

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don't have time to handle my emotions. I'll deal with that later once I get all this stuff under control.

DR. KEESHA: Easier to take a supplement and watch your diet, right?

MEGAN BUER: Right. Exactly. So it was like, okay. It must be another thing, another supplement I'm missing. Kept going to the physical when in reality, the issue was more emotional. It was more my thoughts and my emotions and my stress levels. That was the key for me. That was the thing that I kept pushing off and kept thinking there's no way this is going to help. It's got to be another diet or something is the answer. Once I finally did explore that other side of it, that's when all the puzzle pieces just finally came together for me.

DR. KEESHA: Good. I see this all the time, of course, with my patients. You probably do too.

MEGAN BUER: Yeah.

DR. KEESHA: I teach it in my Health Coach Certification Program. This is the missing element in functional medicine that people, they'll talk about it, but not have actual tools, right?

MEGAN BUER: Exactly.

DR. KEESHA: What is it that you discovered in your mindset that was causing part of your autoimmune disease?

MEGAN BUER: What was interesting is I started doing the Emotion Code, which is what I practice now. This is just an energy healing modality where we release emotional traumas and stress. When I started doing that, I would say I got about 75% of the way back. I just had all these symptoms just started unraveling for me so quickly. I felt about 75% of the way better. But there was still this chunk. There was this little thing where I felt better, but I was still stressed out. I was still reading and researching and not really going to restaurants, not really living my life like a healthy person because I was just worried about everything. I had this lightning bolt moment where I was sitting on the back porch. My husband and my kids are out playing in the yard and I'm sitting there.

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It's this beautiful day and I'm sitting there with research books just all around me, all these diet books. Okay, I've got to find the last puzzle piece. I've got to figure this out. I've got to change my diet or whatever. It was this moment that hit me and it was like, oh my gosh, I know why I can't get over this. I know why I can't get better. It was because I believe there's something wrong with me. I believe that I'm not well. If I believe that I'm not well, there's no way that I can ever actually be well.

It was just this moment of total clarity for me where I realized if I believe that I'm a sick person, it doesn't matter how great I feel. I'm always going to be stuck in this cycle of trying to find the next answer. That moment, I was like, oh my gosh, that's the last piece. That day I decided that I was not sick anymore. I started eating, breathing, living, thinking like a healthy person. Within three months, my blood work was normal.

DR. KEESHA: Fantastic.

MEGAN BUER: I know. So fun.

DR. KEESHA: Now I do want to circle back and say if you're believing you're a healthy person and you're living like a healthy person, that means you're not drinking Diet Coke for breakfast. It means you're not having a cup of coffee for lunch and having a glass of wine for dinner. If you believe yourself to be well and you're living like a healthy person, then that means you're nourishing your body. You have enough self worth that says, I deserve to nourish myself with these beautiful whole foods and this wonderful way of talking to myself and this incredible regimen of self-care that I adorn myself with. It's such a different thing than I have to eat this smoothie because I have to get better, right?

MEGAN BUER: Right. It's doing it out of fear.

DR. KEESHA: This amazing green smoothie. I know it's nourishing me and so I deserve this smoothie. It's such a different paradigm.

MEGAN BUER: Up until that point, I was doing all of that, but I was doing it out of fear. I was doing it because I was scared I was going to get sick or I was scared of whatever. All of a sudden it was like, I'm going to continue to do this. I'm going to continue to treat my body with love and respect, but I'm doing it just for that reason.

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DR. KEESHA: Because I love it.

MEGAN BUER: It's not because I'm sick, not because there's something wrong with me. I'm going to do it because out of love instead of out of fear. That's the thing that really irks me with alternative health right now is there's so much fear underlying a lot of it. That's what's making people sick. You have to get to this point where you're doing these things because you love yourself, because you care for yourself, because you believe in yourself in that whole way rather than out of I'm terrified of getting cancer and so I'm going to do this.

DR. KEESHA: In a way of checking in to see, if you're a mom, you have a child with autism. My oldest is Asperger's. I've been on that path of, okay, I love my child so much that I'm going to make sure that I don't feed them toxic crap. It's that same well of nurturing your child that you want to turn toward yourself and make sure that I love myself so much that I'm not going to feed myself this toxic crap. I think that sometimes people will make that mental shift that you talked about where I'm tired of being driven by the disease. I'm tired of everything that I think about, everything I read about, everything, every documentary I watch, all this research that I'm doing being fear-driven. Therefore, I'm just going to go live my life.

What they do is then have cheesecake at the end of dinner and have rolls out of the breadbasket when they go out to eat and saying that's living their lives. It's not living their lives with this idea that they're so worthy and deserving of so much better nourishment than that. I think what you did was this really beautiful transition in your head that wasn't saying either or. I'm either living the life that I used to live and I got sick with that pathway and now I realize I'm not sick. I'm actually whole and complete. I'm whole and complete on all my layers, my mental, my emotional, my spiritual, and my physical. They integrate and they collaborate and they talk to each other. I'm a whole human being shining for the universe and myself. That's a different place.

MEGAN BUER: Totally different place. Because I got sick eating all the healthy food. I got sick doing all of that. I was doing all of it and I got sicker and sicker and sicker. It was the fear. It was the lack of self-compassion. That is the

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stuff that was so lacking. As soon as that showed back up, it was just like click, click, click, click, click.

DR. KEESHA: Yes, that's so beautiful. Of course, that makes the disease, Hashimoto's or autism or whatever it is that we want to label the feedback from the body, that becomes the guru, that becomes the spiritual path, that becomes the teacher. Here's this feedback that I'm getting from my own self. What is it that my own self's trying to say? What's the attention that it's asking for? It's not going back into that disconnected place that I started out in. It's moving into this more full way of being, this whole way of being.

MEGAN BUER: I tell my clients all the time, illness or whatever it is, is your opportunity. That's your opportunity. It's your body communicating with you. It's your opportunity to create something new for yourself. You have a choice here. You can just walk down this totally beautiful amazing path of compassion and love and understanding or you can just get scared and hate yourself for what's happening and have two very different outcomes.

DR. KEESHA: Or hate God for what's happening or hate your mother for what's happening.

MEGAN BUER: Right, hate everyone, government, whatever.

DR. KEESHA: It's an opportunity to create you.

MEGAN BUER: Or your husband, your partner, whoever.

DR. KEESHA: Yeah, yeah. That's just so great. As you then work with people what are some of the tools that you use to help them make that transition? Because it's just such a tiny little transition in your mind, but it's a massive step. This giant step for humankind on the moon.

MEGAN BUER: Yeah. That's the thing. We hear about affirmations all the time. There's one thing to say, I love myself, I love myself and to actually feel it and do it and live it. One thing, most of my clients come to me for the Emotion Code. What we're doing is we're releasing all this old baggage, which definitely helps because a lot of times it's all that old baggage that keeps stuck in those mental patterns, those negative mental patterns. I always

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suggest you can work with an Emotion Code Practitioner. You can do EFT. There's so many different ways to release some of this old baggage.

DR. KEESHA: [Inaudible 00:17:35]

MEGAN BUER: Of course, stands for Emotion Freedom Technique for those that don't know. I talk about it. There's plenty of videos to talk about how to do it.

DR. KEESHA: Plenty of stuff.

MEGAN BUER: It's just a great way to dig into the subconscious there a little bit and release the baggage, release the stress because that's a huge thing. Outside of those things, I tell all of my clients, go create intentional joy in your life. I don't care what that means for you. If that means watching a funny movie or having a dance party with your kids or going to lunch with a friend, I don't care. It just needs to bring you joy. I think a lot of times as women, we hear the term self care and we think this luxurious bubble bath with candles and music and maybe we, A, don't like that. We don't even want to do that and, B, we don't have time. That's okay, but do something else. Do something that brings you joy every single day. If it's just going outside and getting a walk or whatever it is. Getting outside of your to-do list and the routines.

DR. KEESHA: It's not a pint of Ben & Jerry's every night.

MEGAN BUER: I talk about this where there's a difference between—there's something called Authentic Self Care. That's something else I tell people. Eating Ben & Jerry's and watching Netflix is not self-care. That's a form of numbing out emotions. There are so many things going on with that. That's not self-care.

DR. KEESHA: Self-medication.

MEGAN BUER: Yes, that's a way to escape your problems. That's not self-care. Self-care is things that actually enliven you, inspire you, make you feel better. Maybe it's listening to an uplifting podcast or journaling for a minute at night, whatever. Think back. I have some clients who are like, I have no idea what brings me joy. I'm like, okay, well, think back to your childhood. Did you like drawing? Did you like writing? There was a sport that you played. Those things are so important. We get caught up in just

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our day-to-day stuff and we think everything else is so important. If we're not taking care of ourselves and creating that joy, it can lead to health problems.

When we're in this place of creating intentional joy, it's a lot easier for us to change that mindset and to have those moments of inspiration. I can be here with my kids and laundry and clients and all this stuff. If I can get out, outside and go for a walk and just clear my head for a minute, all of a sudden, it's like inspiration is coming and I'm getting clarity. I wouldn't have had that if I hadn't taken the time for myself to just go outside. Yeah, clearing up the emotional baggage, creating joy in your life. I tell people just step back from your life and be aware.

Listen to the things that you say in your mind. What are the things you're telling yourself? For me, my example is, I would get stressed about my health and then I would go start researching like crazy. I was like, okay, that's what I do. When I'm feeling like I'm not good enough or I'm sick or I'm whatever, I go to the books. I needed to create a new pattern with that. I would do something different. Just shifting your routine a little bit, can really be helpful too.

DR. KEESHA: I need more information is your strategy.

MEGAN BUER: Yeah, like I'll fix this.

DR. KEESHA: When my dad was diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukemia, that is exactly the mode I went into was the information-gathering mode and distilling all of the science into a way that he would understand it and then creating this huge self-care plan for him that would help him with it. Then I felt so powerless because that's the job of cancer is to help you understand you never did have control and you never will have control and any control you think you have is just an illusion. Cancer really helps you out with that. Then I ran a marathon with the Lymphoma Leukemia Society and raised money.

Then as I was running that, while I was in finals week of grad school, I realized I'm not doing this for my dad. This is me on the hamster wheel, trying to soothe myself. This is my method of self-medication. I don't sit on the couch and binge watch and eat Ben & Jerry's. Instead, what I do is I do this mad scurrying and just burn myself out. Then I thought okay.

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That was the last marathon I ran. I just thought, got it. Thank you for the lesson of the cancer that my father had just to say, okay, I'm not in control of this. I never will be, never have been, right?

MEGAN BUER: Yeah. I know. I do it. I have to catch myself still where there's times where if some minor symptom pops up for one of my kids or myself or something, I'm like, oh my gosh. I immediately go to the bookshelf. My husband's like, get back over there. We're just human, chill out. I'm like, I have a headache. Why would I have a headache? I'm flipping through all my hormone books and it's like, no. Just go for a walk. You're fine.

DR. KEESHA: Or check in with your body, not the books. What are you asking for to your body? I haven't actually given you any food or water for the last four hours. Okay. I'll have a drink.

MEGAN BUER: That's where it is. It's getting away from listening to what everybody else is telling you to eat and do. Just what do you need? What does your body need? It will tell you. It's in this constant state of communication. When a symptom does pop up, it's like, check in. What's going on? It's as simple as that. Just keeping yourself on this straight little path where now if I get a headache, then I immediately know, oop, get back on. Instead of going off into this crazy path, that you just listen to your body and it will always tell you what you need to hear.

DR. KEESHA: Just to retract a little bit on this, I want to make sure that people that are listening, I always say test, don't guess. You wouldn't know the word Hashimoto's had that testing not been done, had you not gone through that process, and the research was essential for you. In Eastern philosophy and spirituality, what is said, and I think this is so true, is that you gain all the knowledge and then let it go. That gaining of the knowledge is important.

That part is important because then you have the language that you can speak with your body with where if you don't know that that bowel movement that looks funky is actually a feedback mechanism or that rash that I get under my eye when I eat certain things is a feedback mechanism, then I haven't learned that. Books are the boat to get you to the other side is what the Buddha says. That book knowledge is really important.

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MEGAN BUER: It is.

DR. KEESHA: Then you start just living with your intuitive understanding that you have developed through knowledge with your body. I want to make sure people get that because I think that part is important.

MEGAN BUER: Absolutely. Exactly. It's perfectly said. That's where I needed all of that and I still need all of that and I still research because it's a passion of mine. But at the end of the day, rather than looking for a book for the answers, now I can look within as well and get confirmation from different things that I have learned over the journey to keep myself in check.

DR. KEESHA: Beautiful, beautiful. What do you do to increase your vitality level?

MEGAN BUER: To go back to what I had said before, daily intentional joy. That is my number one thing. I like to start the mornings before my kids get up and I have my cup of lemon water. I just take a few minutes to be grateful and to just think about all the amazing things in my life. It just sets my mind up for the day to be more positive. I don't want to get out of bed every day and do that. There are some days where I'm like, for [inaudible 00:17:35], but I do it anyways. It is something that I actually really enjoy. I go for walks every day. That's a huge thing for me.

Some people like to run. I would rather cut off my legs than run. I love to walk, though. I will go for walks in the morning. Sometimes it's silent. Other times I listen to a podcast or some music. It's just my time away from my to-do list and away from the noise where I can just reconnect. I get my answers there. I just feel so refreshed and alive when I do that. For me, it's the walking and it's getting up a little bit early. Those are two really key self-care things that I do every day, no matter what to keep me happy.

DR. KEESHA: You have a child with autism.

MEGAN BUER: I do, yeah.

DR. KEESHA: You've researched a lot around this, obviously. We know it's your pattern. What can you share with listeners because this is something that's gone up in incidence rather than down? Something that we're

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facing, demographic trends that are exponentially growing. I love to talk people, especially parents who become the best advocates for their children. I know a lot about this subject because I have a child. As that fierce, passionate advocate for my child, then I've also spent a long time looking at what can I do around this. Then I've learned to surrender a lot. In that process, what can you share with our listening women here?

MEGAN BUER: It's been such a journey with our son, Seth. I remember sitting in this naturopath's office. At that point, I was like, this woman's crazy. I had just no idea what she was doing. He's two years old. She said, these kids are here to change the world. I was like, what? What are you talking about?

DR. KEESHA: She said that?

MEGAN BUER: Yeah. She told me that, yeah.

DR. KEESHA: I say that to my patients too when I diagnose somebody with Asperger's.

MEGAN BUER: I was like, yeah, he's definitely making ripples in our family, but I don't know how this kid is here to change the world. Looking back, that's where it started and it started with him. He completely transformed my life and our family's life. There is no way that I would've ever been where I am now without his journey. There's just this beautiful interplay, I think, especially between mother and child where he will go into a place where he's struggling more and it's like I can feel it in my soul. There's this calling for me to dig deeper and heal deeper and love more and connect more and simplify. He is also my messaging system. I get messages from my body and I also get them from him because I know if he's out of balance somehow, I need to, not do better in a self-demeaning way.

It's just this call for me to love deeper, to connect and to heal on a deeper level. There's this beautiful dance between he and I where he's brought me to this journey. He's brought me to where I'm on the other side of it and now I'm helping people heal. I'm creating that for them. It is so hard. The day-to-day is so tough, but to see the bigger picture, it is so beautiful. It's so beautiful. It's difficult.

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That's where it's so important for moms to take care of themselves if they have a child, I mean, if you have a kid, you need to take care of yourself, but a kid with Asperger's or autism, it is tough. I know how tough it is. You have to take care of yourself or it's going to take you down. You have to have those moments where you can step back and breathe and see how beautiful this journey is that you're on together with your kid because it's gorgeous.

DR. KEESHA:

I used to do home health years and years ago in hospice work. I used to say, I'd come home and say this to my husband, that the people that had children that had Downs, they're bright, sparkly, shiny people. I would say, I often think that we're rocks inside of a rock tumbler. Especially, in a marriage and a family, you're rubbing each other's sharp edges off and you're polishing each other so that you come out these gorgeous, shiny gems. I would say that they have the fast track to that. These parents, they're so shiny. I didn't have another word for that. When I had a son that was around his fifth year that we finally started really looking to see what was going on, I thought, he's my teacher.

He's got his challenges, obviously. The way I look at it is he signed up for me as his mom and his dad and this particular challenge for his earthly life and that I also did. He's my greatest teacher. I took it on pretty early as that. I thought, gosh, we're going to rub each other's sharp edges off. When you can look at it from that direction and obviously, it brings me to tears to talk about it, but it's just such a beautiful, beautiful journey that you get to walk with these children. I appreciate you sharing your own journey with your son.

MEGAN BUER:

I still work with an energy healer now. She takes care of me and I take care of my clients. We were saying not that long ago because we've been having a difficult time with our son again. She said, I can see this where you wanted huge change in your life. Before you came here, you wanted massive change.

DR. KEESHA:

Big growth.

MEGAN BUER:

Seth is fast tracking. You asked for it and you got it. He's here to completely fast track total transformation. It's true. Again, the days can be so hard sometimes, but to see it in that light just changes your complete outlook of the whole thing. It is a fast track to change for sure.

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DR. KEESHA: Do you notice the foods you give him make a difference?

MEGAN BUER: We do, yeah. That was the first thing we did when he was two was take out gluten and dairy. It started to make a little change. We added in some supplements and things. We have to be really careful with his diet. He's to the point now where he can go to a birthday party or something and just eat what's there and be okay. At home, we have to be really careful with our food. There's times where I feel resentful because I want to just be normal sometimes. It's such a gift. He's protecting us from so much. We are able to treat ourselves with so much more kindness and respect with that kind of food that we might not have been doing if it wasn't for him. He's brought us to all of it.

DR. KEESHA: I interviewed Tom O'Bryan again for this Summit. He gave this really, really alarming statistic that since 1970, we've lost 57% of our animal life on the planet. In this 46-year period, 57% of animal life is gone. Another way of seeing this because I hear this from my patients too that they feel resentful that they can't be normal or eat normal, normal for us is very toxic. We're losing 57% of our species and we are an animal. We are one of the animals. Being more careful and having this canary in the coalmine that you have in your family, it's protecting you. It's putting you in the path that's keeping you away from extinction, which is where we're headed, right?

MEGAN BUER: Exactly. Our naturopath, that's what she said, that first appointment.

DR. KEESHA: I think I'd really like your naturopath.

MEGAN BUER: Oh my gosh, you would love her. She's so fabulous. She was like, these kids are here to change the world. At that point, I was just so what are you talking about. She's like, they cannot tolerate the toxicity that we've created in this world. They are screaming literally because of what we've done here. I'm like, oh my gosh. I was so overwhelmed then. They cannot tolerate the toxicity.

I think back to my childhood and the kind of diet that I ate. My parents had great intentions. They never intended to harm me or cause physical harm, but we just had and I had no idea. When I had Seth, I had no idea that there was even an option of an alternative. It's just so sad to think

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how many people are still in that place. I feel really grateful to not be in that place anymore and to have this gift of Seth and my own health journey where we've had to completely eradicate all toxins and junk food and processed foods. We're so much better off.

DR. KEESHA: Isn't it sad that that's normal?

MEGAN BUER: I know, it is.

DR. KEESHA: That's not food. The stuff we call food is not food. There's that saying, I eat organic. My grandparents just called that food.

MEGAN BUER: Regular food, yeah. I know. I know. The hardest part is, especially with kids, you send them to school or different places and this is how everybody eats. It's just crap. I cringe because oh my gosh, I know too much. It's so hard and we just have to keep going because we have to do it. We just have to keep doing it for ourselves and for the planet and for generations to come. We have to keep going. If we have that knowledge, we just have to use it.

DR. KEESHA: You don't know too much. You know enough to help others to be able to make those choices too. I think that this is really important as a parent advocate, which is what you are. Then you can advocate for other children in the school system too. I refused to take the Costco packaged treats for after soccer practice and game snacks and did something completely different than that. My kids weren't so happy with me at all times, but they grew up. Now they're in their 20s and this is how they eat. We had a band teacher in the high school who asked me to bring soda pop for a bake sale for a fundraiser they were having.

I just wrote back and said I haven't served that ever to my children and I'm definitely not going to serve it to other people's children so I'll bring something different that will be a healthy alternative if you're okay with that. He actually thought I was very self righteous and very sanctimonious and judgmental and I wasn't doing that. I was just setting a boundary. Turns out that he actually started looking up what I was talking about and lost over 100 pounds, got rid of his back problems and put his kids on that same journey. They were little tiny kids. It made a difference and you just never know what you're planting when you say

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and have a boundary with us and just say, no, but I will bring something different than that. You don't know too much.

MEGAN BUER: It's amazing the impact that we can have, especially as women, on the people around us. When we have this knowledge and we can share it with our kids or a spouse or a parent or a friend or whoever, a sibling, whoever it is, we're making a huge impact. The way that we take care of ourselves, the way that we hold ourselves, energetically and emotionally, affects everybody and everything around us. Like the saying, if mama ain't happy, nobody's happy, it's true.

If you are taking care of yourself and you're showing your children and the other people in your life that you matter and that your life needs to be respected and that you're going to treat yourself in this way, it empowers other people to do it too. It makes them start thinking. Just it's this beautiful ripple effect. Taking care of yourself and creating that vitality for yourself is so essential to the wellbeing of yourself and the others around you and the world at large, really. It's amazing the impact we can have as women.

DR. KEESHA: It's true. I'm sure you've heard this before. The UPS trucks just driving into my home. I'm letting you know. I'm sure you've heard this before where if I go to somebody's else or I'm traveling with somebody, I don't want to offend them. You can bring a dish that you can eat and you don't have to say a word. You're never going to be offensive. You just bring what you can eat. You offer it to everyone else and you just don't need to say anything about it. If you're going to happy hour with your friends and you're not drinking and you order something that's a soda water or I always order warm water with a lemon, like a tea.

MEGAN BUER: Party animal.

DR. KEESHA: I know. I am such a party animal. I had an autoimmune disease. I know where my body can go if I don't treat myself in this really, really nourishing way.

MEGAN BUER: It happened.

DR. KEESHA: I don't feel at all like it's an offensive thing. No, you get to do what you want. I'm certainly not judging you. I want you to have whatever rituals

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are important for you. I get to do mine. If you're worried about people being offended or people judging you then that's something you need to work with in therapy.

MEGAN BUER:

Yeah. It made me think too. As far as taking care of our self, going back to that idea of these toxic foods being normal, I think we create emotional connections to these toxic junk foods in our childhood and different times in our life. That was really hard for me because I grew up on junk food and I had this huge tie to it. Obviously, my body did. I was addicted to it physically, but emotionally, I was addicted to it as well because it created emotions of comfort and joy and security. It created all of that in my life. That was the piece too. It was not just about the food. It was about how I felt.

I felt like I can't enjoy all this stuff that I want to enjoy. I felt resentful. I remember feeling that for a while. It was like I just want to eat normal. I just want to eat the stuff that makes me feel good and then you get to the point where you realize it doesn't make you feel good and you realize how great you feel. You had no idea how good you could feel. That's the other piece of it. All those emotions that the food brings, the Ben & Jerry's or the pizza or whatever it is, figure out the emotions that that food is creating for you. If you go to that food for comfort at the end of the day or for joy when you're celebrating something or whatever it is. You have to create that in a different way in your life because that's a need. That emotional fulfillment is a need. You need to find a better way to do it than with food.

I always tell people, if you're trying to cut sugar out or whatever you're trying to do, you have to look at the emotional aspect of it. What is that sugar for you? What is that junk food for you? What does it create and how else can you create that instead? For the first few days, it might not feel quite as exciting as the sugar, but you'll push through it and you'll get on this other side where you feel so great and so clear and alive that it just doesn't matter anymore.

DR. KEESHA:

I interviewed Kathleen Desmaisons who's the author of Potatoes Not Prozac years ago on my radio show. She does this little test called the Cookie Test. She'll get in front of audiences and she'll say I want you to close your eyes and picture you're at the end of a long day of work, get in your car, going home. All you want is a really wonderful hot meal, a bath,

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and bed. You stop off at your favorite really nice restaurant. You order your favorite dish. It's got lots of vegetables and protein and it just feels so good inside of you. You feel satiated and satisfied. You get in your car. You go home. You're picturing the warm bath that's awaiting you as soon as you get to the door that you're going to draw for yourself. You open the door and the smell of freshly baked cookies wafts through the house. It hits your senses. What do you do?

She says, half of the room will laugh and the other half will look at the people laughing and go, what's so funny. The people that are laughing are saying, well, of course, you have six cookies. If they're hot, they're out of the oven. They're on the counter, right? It doesn't matter that you're not hungry. The people that are looking at them saying, what's so funny, are going, you're on your way up to the tub. Those cookies mean nothing. It's not even in the formula. That's when I realized that I was a dry drunk, that I was a sugaraholic, and that the same exact pathways that are utilized with alcohol for someone that's alcoholic were being trained inside of me with sugar. I would definitely have mood changes. I definitely felt super happy after I ate it and I would crash. Everything was there that indicated an addiction.

I came home after that radio interview and I told my kids so if I were an alcoholic, you would not leave a cold beer sitting on the countertop for me when I get home and so therefore. What I said is we're going to clean out the pantry. We're going to get rid of anything that's sugar. If you want something when we go out, you can order a single serving of a dessert and then you can have that. That's how we started organizing it until I started learning how to cook with monk fruit and luohan and stevia and working with yacón syrup, things that don't have a high glycemic index.

Then I could start making and baking things from my kids' childhood and my childhood that actually were in a good healthy way, without the flour, without the dairy, without the sugar. That took years to get to that point. I just want our listeners to hear that. It takes years to do that, to replace that, to understand what's going on underneath it.

MEGAN BUER: It does.

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- DR. KEESHA:** I think oftentimes they want the magic wand that says just turn this off. Actually that's an inside job.
- MEGAN BUER:** Right, right. It's like you read stop eating sugar. You think that it should be that simple. You read that. You might see a story online of somebody and it's like I stopped eating sugar and I lost all this weight and blah, blah. There was a huge journey. You did not just stop eating sugar. There's a massive journey around that and that's okay. We have to stop comparing and beating ourselves up that things aren't perfect or whatever.
- DR. KEESHA:** And shaming and blaming and guilt. There's just no place for it.
- MEGAN BUER:** Yeah, exactly. It's just like one small step in the right direction is good enough and that's perfect. It's really understanding that there's so much more emotionally to that equation than just stop eating sugar and taking care of yourselves in its different ways is just so key to that equation.
- DR. KEESHA:** When I was a young nurse, I was 19 years old when I came out of nursing school and I worked at this hospital that had many, many floors. I used to go from the seventh floor. I'd run down the stairs. I'd put money in a vending machine, which we had a vending machine on the seventh floor, but I'd go all the way down there. I'd get my Reese's peanut butter cups. I would run the stairs back up, which is 14 flights of stairs. I'd put that in my pocket and I would carry it around through the rest of my rounds and everything until I had a break time and then I'd go have my—and that was in my head. I've been walking and running all day. I deserved to eat two Reese's peanut butter cups, which was my poison of choice. I loved them.
- MEGAN BUER:** I did too. Those were my favorite.
- DR. KEESHA:** Yes. I didn't consider myself obviously worthy and deserving of nourishing in a healthier way because I didn't have that information. Now I actually know how to make them in a way that's super healthy.
- MEGAN BUER:** Yes, exactly. That's the thing. At the end of the day, you do deserve some nurturing. It's just finding the right source. It's not about taking those routines and traditions that we have away. We still want to celebrate things with food. We still want to feel comfort and nourishment at the end of the day. That's all fine. It just needs to be just

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exploring other options outside of food or exploring different ways of creating those foods in a healthier way. Because again that's where I see a lot of clients where sugar is the thing that gets them through the day emotionally, not just physically, but the thing that they look forward to the most. We have to find other things too.

DR. KEESHA: This has been such a great discussion. I so appreciate you taking the time to share your wisdom with all of the participants of the Women's Vitality Summit. I know that what you've shared has been helpful for a lot of people. Megan, thank you so much.

MEGAN BUER: Thank you for having me. I'm so happy to be here.

DR. KEESHA: Of course, your bonus material and your contact information, everything, is on your speaker's area of our website so people can contact you and reach out.

MEGAN BUER: Yes. Lots of good stuff. I'm all over the web so any questions, I'm somewhere you can find me.

DR. KEESHA: Okay. Thank you so much.

MEGAN BUER: Alright, thanks.