Workshop Session #2 Key Summary Bullet Points: Secrets to Healing Your Gut Using Fermented Foods

with Summer Bock

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Workshop Session #2 Key Summary Bullet Points:
Healing Your Gut with Fermented Foods

1:22 Fermented foods are foods that have been predigested by bacteria to help preserve them. Traditionally, humans used fermented foods for a preservation process. They contain beneficial bacteria (probiotics) that help our bodies.

1:53 Not all fermented foods are created equal. There's different probiotics in different fermented. Fermented foods like beer, wine, breads, and coffee don't have probiotics in them, even though they've been fermented.

2:18 Fermentation can help increase assimilation and flavor of certain foods. It can also increase psychoactive effects, which is the case with alcohol.

2:44 Alcohol is a tolerable toxin. It's toxic for our body, our body has to process it, the liver has to use a lot of enzymes to break it down properly. In the process, some of the components created are very detrimental to our health—they can speed up aging and mess with normal liver functioning. It very small amounts it can increase gut microbiome diversity.

3:36 Our gut/intestines are filled with trillions and trillions of bacteria and some yeasts. All different kinds of microorganisms are living there. Collectively they are called the "gut microbiome."

3:53 The gut microbiome interacts with our system. It "talks" to our immune system and digestive tract, and it helps produce various vitamins like B vitamins and vitamin K right on site. It also calms our immune system down, while strengthening it. We can't live without the gut microbiome.

4:21 The key to being healthy and having a healthy gut microbiome is having the right balance of organisms. It's like a rain forest—it's a beautiful ecosystem filled with trees, plants and animals. If you dropped a banana peel in that rain forest, it would compost itself back into the soil. It would get reabsorbed back into the system. It's the same when the gut microbiome is healthy—we can keep creating good soil. It's a balance.

4:47 Antibiotics, processed foods, and stress are the three key factors that destroy the gut microbiome (your "rain forest.") You end up with a "concrete jungle." If you put a banana peel in this environment, you end up with a sludgy pool or brown slime—it doesn't get reabsorbed. It rots because it's being fermented and broken down by bacteria that are not ideal for a thriving system.

5:33 We want the whole system inside of our gut to be a self-contained, balanced microbiome that's allowing us to put food in it that turns back into "soil"—it's turned into nutrition and absorbed. And everything is able to use that and recycle it.

5:58 Summer's favorite fermented foods are fermented vegetables. They're a great option because they're not full of allergens, you can avoid dairy and grains—foods many people are sensitive to.

6:21 You can make sauerkraut, kimchi or other fermented veggies at home without a starter culture. It's called a "wild ferment." You can chop up some cabbage, put it in a jar, add salt and water and let it ferment for anywhere from 5 days to 3 months on your counter. It's a great way to make probiotics in your own kitchen.

6:53 You can choose how long you ferment the vegetables. If you don't like as sour of a flavor you can add water and ferment it for a shorter period of time. Or you can adjust the spices you use.

7:10 Summer's second favorite fermented foods are kefir—dairy or coconut. It's made using a starter culture. Dairy and coconut kefir have amazing probiotic profiles they're very good at strengthening the gut microbiome.

7:45 In terms of probiotics and getting more good bacteria in the gut, fermented veggies and kefir are the top two choices.

8:51 The easiest and best way to get starter cultures is to talk to people and get them passed down to you. They've been passed down for thousands of years. We don't make these started cultures. They were spontaneously created at some point in time and there's theories about how they were created to preserve milk to last longer. Friends, farmer's markets and even groups on Facebook are possible sources.

10:28 When buying a kefir starter grain, make sure it comes from a reputable source, ideally from someone that is making it themselves.

11:02 There's different starter cultures for different fermented foods. There's two different kinds of cultures:

1. Powdered cultures, which are made in a laboratory and can be used for different ferments.

2. Scobies, which a natural and have been passed down for thousands of years. They're gelatinous and need to be sent in a liquid so they don't dry out.

12:00 Whether or not you can get enough probiotics from eating fermented foods alone depends (without taking a probiotic), depends of your health situation. People who have moderate to minimal gut health issues can just use fermented foods and be fine.

12:31 With more complex digestive issues sometimes ferments can make the situation worse until they've corrected their whole microbiome balance. For example, if someone has histamine intolerance, they'll have issues with ferments because they're high in histamine. (Histamine is made by bacteria.)

13:03 People can produce histamine in excess in their gut if they have the wrong bacteria growing there.

13:10 Common histamine reactions to a ferment: Getting flushed, hives, and acid reflux. Those reactions might indicate that right now might not be the right time to eat ferments and you might need to do more work to heal your gut before you add ferments into your diet.

13:33 Ideally, if people were healthy ferments would be enough. In conjunction with our lifestyles and the other kinds of foods that we're eating, we should be creating an environment in our bodies that's ideal for these probiotics to live. They've lived in us for a very long time.

14:00 It's only recently that we've altered the entire state of internal *and* external environment drastically. And now we're having a harder time.

14:15 Sometimes you need probiotic supplements as well. Some ferments don't have every single probiotic that you need.

14:25 In more complex cases, it's beneficial to have a stool analysis. And use the results to determine what you need.

15:33 When you have Candida you have *dysbiosis*. You have a lot of different organisms that are growing in in appropriate amounts. Sometime people will treat just a fungal infection and they don't feel better on an anti-candida diet because they're dealing with overall dysbiosis. Their immune system and gut bacteria aren't strong enough to stave off the other organisms from growing and taking over.

16:10 When it comes to candida you have to consider that fact that it's not just one organism. It's a multitude of organisms that are imbalanced.

16:18 Fermented foods in mild cases of Candida is fine and usually does a good job at helping. For people who have leaky gut, food allergies/reactions like headaches, reflux and bloating etc. fermented foods may not be appropriate.

16:45 When there's lots of symptoms it can be helpful to take out the ferments and follow a "low microbe diet," taking out as much bacteria as you can (even probiotic supplements) for a period of time to give the body a break from having so much to work with.

17:12 Bacteria are really reactive creatures. If you give them food, they grow and replicate like crazy. If you give them stress, they start creating a bunch of stress response hormones and neurotransmitters that our body can read.

17:35 Sometimes you want to clean the slate and let the bacteria settle down and then start adding in the ones you want there very selectively.

18:24 Eating too many fermented foods can lead to an imbalance on the other end of things. Ferments have been primarily used as a condiment throughout history—they weren't eaten in massive quantities at every meal, every day.

18:50 Eating foods at the beginning of a meal helps stimulate digestion.

20:01 Try to make fermented veggies at least once in your life. The whole process will help attune you to your senses. You need to smell it first and taste test it. It will change the way you interface with food.

21:33 If you're too busy to make fermented foods, here are some tips for buying the best kinds:

1. Make sure it says it's *unpasteurized*.

2. Make sure it's refrigerated. (Legally, it has to be if it hasn't been pasteurized.)

3. It should not have vinegar added. Vinegar will kill off the probiotics if there's too high of a concentration of it.

You really want to make sure you're eating a naturally lacto-fermented vegetable. Vinegar is a by-product of fermentation, and it can be used to preserve vegetables and boost digestion, but it's not probiotic.

4. Bonus tip: Make sure they were made in either stainless steel or ceramic food grade crocs. These are two important materials that interact with the acids in fermented foods in a healthy manner. Most conventional fermented foods are fermented and stored in plastic containers. Plastic contains many different kinds of endocrine disruptors.

24:10 Someone struggling with hormonal issues, fibromyalgia, or MS has to take extra precautions, so it's important to ask the people making the ferments how they are making it—what kinds of containers are they fermenting it in?

24:31 The best place to start with making fermented veggies: If you like the taste of fermented veggies, that's a good place to start.

25:02 If you don't like fermented veggies or you're not sure, start out with kombucha, which you can buy at Whole Foods or a local health food store. Kevita is a good brand. Read the different brands and labels and see which one sounds good to you and try it. If you don't like it—try another one.

NOTE: Most kombucha comes in a 16-ounce bottle. A big misconception is that you're supposed to drink the whole bottle at once—it's not. It's really meant to be consumed in 1-4

ounce shots. It does contain a little bit of alcohol, but not enough to be considered and alcoholic beverage. It also contains some caffeine, sugar and lactic acid.

27:00 Kombucha is a fermented black tea beverage that is made using a scoby, like kefir. (Summer explains the process of how it is made.)

27:47 Due to the sugar content, Kombucha is not great for someone with candida or diabetes.

28:19 How long does it last once you open it? It lasts a long time. It's meant to be left out without refrigeration. You will lose the carbonation over time.

28:52 In general, Kombucha is not inherently probiotic. When you buy it at the grocery store *bacillus coagulans* have been added. It's one of the most common bacteria that has been studied and it's patented. There's lots of studies that show it's effective against antibiotic use, it helps restore gut function, it works against diarrhea and stomach aches etc. So food companies add it to claim it's probiotic. But in the wild, only 30% of kombucha scobies have the lacto-bacillus species present and the rest of them don't.

29:41 The lactic acid and vinegar help to reshape the gut eco-system to make it a happier place for probiotics to live.

30:10 The difference between kefir and yogurt—yogurt does have probiotics in it, but it's one of Summer's least favorite ferments.

Here's a few issues with yogurt: It's made with a bacteria starter culture that's made in a lab. This starter culture is a dehydrated powder. After it's added to the milk, by the time it's eaten up all the milk sugar (lactose) and it produces lactic acid, you end up with a food product that doesn't have a lot of probiotics left in it. The probiotic that is added gets used up once all the lactose is gone.

This is why so many companies add different bacteria to the yogurts as a vehicle for probiotics. They're adding *lactobacillus acidophilus* and *lactobacillus bifidus* as "premier probiotics," but these are just the most studied probiotics that we know about. When you're looking at an ecosystem of bacteria you should have a minimum of 200 different species of bacteria in your gut. With yogurt there's only 1-3 different species.

32:45 Unlike yogurt (which is made from a more industrial process), kefir is made from scobies that have been passed down for thousands of years. On their own, their ecosystems contain a multitude of bacteria and some probiotic yeasts that are growing in symbiosis in the little scoby. When you put the scoby in milk and let it turn into kefir, and you drink the kefir, you're getting a more robust probiotic profile. And you're only fermenting it for 24 hours, so you're getting at the peak when all probiotics are at their maximum amount.

33:28 The benefits of kefir are widely studied. Sick babies, who couldn't be breast fed, have been shown to benefit from kefir. It has anti-tumor properties and helps the immune system get in sync with the gut microbiome.

35:10 When you're getting yogurt from a local farm you're getting a much fresher yogurt, so you're getting when the probiotic numbers are high. This is the difference between what you might buy at the store.

35:44 In terms of pure probiotic benefit, yogurt is not the best choice. It's more of delicious food snack.

37:00 Fears and misconceptions about consuming fermented foods:

1. Biggest fear—that you're going to poison and kill your family. But if you're doing it the right way the risk is negligible.

2. Myth—all fermented foods are good for you or all fermented foods are probiotic.

3. The ferments that you buy at the grocery store are the same as the ones we're talking about in this training and they're not. For example, kefir you buy in the store is basically yogurt with a different strain. Manufacturers isolate one of the bacterium from kefir grains, propagate it, make it into a powdered starter culture and use it industrially to make kefir. But the reality is, kefir is meant to be made in small batches.

40:00 Summer shares her personal healing journey using fermented foods. She had frequent panic attacks, multiple chemical sensitivities, she could only eat about 30 foods without having a reaction, random rashes and hives, sun sensitivity, bloating, IBS, heart burn, acid reflux, food cravings, and emotional eating. She felt like she was dying.

47:13 A lot of reasons people get sick has so much to do with what they believe, what they think and actions they take each day based on those beliefs. Disease is not someone's fault, but every disease and every disease is a learning experience to gain new awareness.

47:47 Every now and then you backslide and things get wonky, but you learn from it.

49:00 The first step in your healing journey is deciding. You decide that you're going to do whatever it takes to heal your body. And you have the make the decision 100,000 more times. You have to make the decision again, even after failing. You can't let anything that comes up be an excuse to stop making this decision.

49:43 You're going to first start out with a clear decision of what you're going to do. Second, you're going to be committed to the fact that you're going to re-make that decision time and again. You're not giving up.

49:56 You have to believe somewhere deep within you that you're worthy of being healthy, that you deserve to be happy and have fun, and realize that pain doesn't have to be a part of your life. You need to be optimistic and hopeful.

50:28 There are a lot of people walking around right now that are super uncomfortable—they have discomfort in their joints, their bellies, their brains and their emotional state. And they're doing all sorts of numbing behaviors to deal with it every day. Like eating cupcakes, drinking coffee, smoking cigarettes, drinking a glass of wine at night.

51:19 Heal yourself first, then move onto your family, then your community, then the world. The world is desperately sick.

51:47 The only way to get less focused on yourself is to heal your body.

