

## Health and Wellness with Katie Wells

### Transcript of Podcast Episode 364

**Julie Walker:** Hello, and welcome to the Arts of Language Podcast with Andrew Pudewa, founder of the Institute for Excellence in Writing or as many like to say, “IEW.” My name is Julie Walker, and I’m honored to serve Andrew and IEW as the chief marketing officer. Our goal is to equip teachers and teaching parents with methods and materials, which will aid them in training their students to become confident and competent communicators and thinkers.

So Andrew, ever since I’ve known you, and this has been, wow, twenty years, something like that, I’ve always known you as a really healthy person. You’d have meals or something as a part of what we offered when I worked at Biola University, when I’d invite you to come down and speak. And to be nice you would have one piece of pizza with the rest of the kids, but for the most part, you were avoiding, you know, toxic foods and never ever went to McDonald’s. And I am personally not as beholden to that level of health and wellness. But my goodness, the last couple years, I think since Covid really, you really kicked it up a notch.

**Andrew Pudewa:** I have become fanatical in some people’s view, but I feel so good. You know, the proof is in the pudding.

**Julie Walker:** Well, and every year you used to get sick at Christmastime.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Yeah, because I wanted to.

**Julie Walker:** Yeah, because you wanted ... And you couldn’t get sick this year, could you?

**Andrew Pudewa:** I couldn’t; I tried.

**Julie Walker:** So I thought it would be really good for us to have a conversation so you maybe could talk about your journey a little bit. But maybe more importantly it would be great to have an expert on our show.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Oh, man. And do we have an expert.

**Julie Walker:** We have an expert.

**Andrew Pudewa:** I am so excited about this. I told my wife last night: I don’t think I have ever been as excited about recording a podcast. So let me introduce Wellness Mama, Katie Wells. I’m going to read her bio because I think it shows we kind of are kindred spirits in a particular way here.

Katie Wells, who thinks most bios are pretty boring, wants to live in a world where laundry folds itself, moms get to wear the superhero costumes they’ve already earned, and our kids never have to deal with the health problems our world is currently facing. A mom of six with a background

in journalism, she took health into her own hands and started researching to find answers to her own health struggles.

Her research turned into a blog and podcast that turned into an amazing community. If Katie was writing this,—I love that part—she wouldn't tell you that she's written over fifteen hundred blog posts, three books, and was named one of the one hundred most influential people in health and wellness, or that she's been called a thought leader for the current generation of moms.

When she's not reading medical journals, creating new recipes, or recording podcasts, you can find her somewhere outside in the sun and six kids, or undertaking some DIY remodeling project that inevitably takes twice as long as it was supposed to. Obligatory additional unrelated randomness: LEGO® Walking world record holder.

**Julie Walker:** Oh, my goodness.

**Andrew Pudewa:** I don't know what that means. Is that, like, walking on LEGOs?

**Julie Walker:** Yeah. Sounds like it. Well, that's sounds scary.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Doula, speed-reader, SCUBA diver, amateur pole vaulter, INTJ (very aligned with me). Highly experienced in answering the question *why*. Loves the Oxford comma, irony, and missed opportunities. Katie Wells, welcome to our Arts of Language Podcast. I am so happy to have you with us.

**Katie Wells:** It is such an honor to be here and to get to chat with you guys. And yeah, to clarify, a team of moms and I, during Covid, set up and built a track. And we set the team LEGO Walking world record with *Guinness World Records*. We realized who better to have that record than a team of moms because we've been training for them since our kids were little. And we did; we walked a 5K on LEGOs in an hour.

**Andrew Pudewa:** On LEGOs? Like, barefoot on LEGOs?

**Katie Wells:** Barefoot on LEGOs. Yeah, all kinds of pieces. We definitely had some blood at the end and had to wash all the LEGOs. But it was a fun project, and I've always had the motto with my kids, "You were made to do hard things." And it was cool for them to get to see all of us moms do something difficult that also was really fun and hopefully inspiring to other moms during that lockdown period.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Whew.

**Julie Walker:** My husband has said that he is convinced that there are LEGOs on the moon because they're just everywhere, and you just step on them all the time.

**Katie Wells:** I think I read there are more LEGO people on the planet now than human people.

**Julie Walker:** Wow. That's hilarious.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Well, so a little fun thing. I don't know when it was—probably seven to nine months ago—I heard you as a guest on someone else's podcast. And I don't remember which one. And I thought, wow, this woman is incredibly informed and articulate. And I just fell in love with you right at that spot.

And then I started listening to your podcast. And then I sent a link to it to my daughter Julia, who is, I think, twenty-seven, twenty-eight right now. And she wrote back and goes, oh yeah, I've been reading Katie Wells since I was fourteen.

**Julie Walker:** Wow, that's amazing.

**Andrew Pudewa:** And she's a mom of four kids. And we're a pretty crunchy bunch on our end, but you have a very interesting story. I would love to know, how did you get started in this area of health and wellness and kind of pursuing the best in, you know, for you and your kids and your family?

**Katie Wells:** Yeah. Well, I know this is a shorter form episode, so I'll give you the concise version. My background actually was in writing. And I was in journalism school prior to having kids. And then when I was pregnant with first child, I started to have some weird health stuff starting to pop up. And then especially after he was born, I started having some weird symptoms.

Also at his six-week follow-up appointment, after having my son, I read in *TIME Magazine* that for the first time in two centuries, the current generation of American children would have a shorter life expectancy than their parents. And it was such a like lightning bolt moment for me to be holding this tiny new member of the next generation and reading about these predictions of all the health problems they would face at increasing rates, which, of course, we're seeing play out now.

And I sort of vowed in that moment to help change that statistic. And I had no idea how I would do it. But those two things, my own health struggles and my desire to change that for all of our kids, sort of like lit this fire in me. And I turned to my background in research and writing and really started to delve in, trying to find my own answers.

And also realizing in the early days of this fifteen years ago, there weren't a lot of answers out there. Things that are so mainstream and available now really weren't talked about yet. And so I just started sharing my own experience and my research as I went with the goal of trying to take really complex topics because I love being in science journals and reading through the data. But I realized most moms may not really want to do that, nor do they have the time. Moms are so busy.

So I started trying to compile what I was finding in the data into actionable blog posts with the idea that moms are the busiest people on the planet. But moms have really a unique power to affect the next generation. And so if I could help moms make baby steps, we could really create ripples that would sort of start to change those statistics for our kids and their kids.

**Andrew Pudewa:** I love it. I absolutely love it. Now, you homeschool. Is that correct?

**Katie Wells:** I do. Yeah.

**Andrew Pudewa:** And did you always homeschool, or did you have something that brought you to that? What was your motive for choosing that option? Because not a lot of people do. It makes your life a lot more complicated real fast for a lot of people.

**Katie Wells:** It does, though I would say it also simplifies in a lot of ways. And I've always been a little bit contrarian. But I made it a habit in my life to always ask "why." And I'm glad I decided to do this when it came to education before choosing what I was going to do with my kids. I was actually homeschooled up until high school and then went to a regular high school because my parents were really intent on me getting scholarships.

But when my oldest was approaching school age, I tried to go back to first principles and really look at what is the purpose of education in today's world and understanding that and understanding the core things I'm hoping in education for my kids. What that exists out there best accomplishes that? And when I started stepping back and looking at it that way, what I realized was, as it's often talked about, many aspects of certain current education models are sort of outdated.

And they're not necessarily preparing our kids for this really rapidly moving, adaptable, high-speed environment that's going to be their adult life. And I realized the things that I do as a job now didn't exist when I was five. So someone who was educating me couldn't have anticipated those directly and directly prepared me for it.

But the things that my parents did really well that helped me in the future were things like teaching me to ask why, thinking me to be a rapid learner and to love learning, and to have curiosity, and to think outside of the box. And so I started thinking, well, what would best help children nurture those qualities?

Because I think children are already born with so many of those qualities out of the box. And I realized none of the existing systems out there were exactly what I was looking for. And so I started sort of from the ground up, using that first principle's approach of saying, what would a system that did that really well look like?

And then I built it along with my son as he went through all those different grades and then with the other five below him. And we now have a really well oiled system that I've named UNstitute, which is just our home education sort of program that is very anti a lot of things that you'd find in a regular school. But we've really made it a focus of keeping and nurturing that curiosity and that level of learning and the adaptability and really building that into a very hands-on, applicable curriculum. And so far the kids have loved it, and they have been thriving.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Oh, that's beautiful. I love the way you said that. And I think a lot of teachers who are a little bit counter to the constrictions that the institution puts on them – they're trying to kind of do that ... you know, be an UNinstitute. I love that word. I'm assuming you coined that word there.

**Katie Wells:** I did.

**Andrew Pudewa:** As you know, I have traveled around and done a lot of homeschool conventions and school conventions and speaking. And with the Covid year, I created a talk called “Culture, Curriculum, and Care: Building Community in a Time of Need.” And in the care portion, I quoted a man I respect greatly who had a talk on the Seven Keys of Great Teaching, one of which is teaching is really about you, not them. If *you* are in good condition, if *you* have good energy, if *you* are full, if *you* are excited, you can overflow into your students whether it be homeschooled or in a classroom.

And that idea of how do you do that and this idea ... And I don't like the term *self-care* all that much because I think there's a lot of extensions and extrapolations of that that don't really fit my idea of it. But this idea of *care*. And when I was listening to you, I was thinking back: Man, I just want to take all of what you just said and squish it into a capsule and give it to everyone who knows that they need to take care of themselves so that they can take care of their family so that their children can thrive better.

I was just so profoundly affected by the beauty with which you articulated so much. So in the short time we have, I wanted to touch on four points that you could just say, okay, here's the best five minutes of information I've got for you on nutrition, on movement and exercise throughout the day. Sleep, of course, is a big thing now, especially, you know, for teenagers and moms, and then general environmental things.

And I know there's a lot of people argue which of those should come first, but if we could start with nutrition ... If you could just say, okay, here's what I've learned over the decade and a half or more that I've been learning and thinking and researching. What are the most important nutritional tips you can give so that moms can be more effective, teachers can teach better, and kids can learn better?

**Katie Wells:** Yeah, I love this question. I'll do my best to answer it as concisely as possible. And I also just wanted to briefly mention, you know, you talked about teachers and despite me having dislike of some of the things that happen within school systems, I always like to give the really important caveat that—because I talk a lot about health information as well—some of my favorite people on the planet as groups are doctors and teachers.

And I think those people especially really go into their profession with a desire to help people. And often both of those professions – they feel equally frustrated at times by some of the limitations of the systems. But I just wanted to make sure that I put that caveat in there that this is not at all a commentary on doctors or teachers in their professions.

I love what you said, too, about teaching being about you, not about them. I think this really speaks to some of the nutrition things I'll talk about in a minute. But the idea really that we set the tone of that energy and that what we model is going to be more effective than what we just say. And I feel like this is a universally true principle even for people who aren't home educating their children, but anyone who's parenting children – is that if we set the energetic and emotional tone for interactions, our children are much more likely to meet that. And if we are able to enter

even tense moments with our own emotional *regulation*, which I would maybe use in place of *self-care*, our children are better able to learn that skill versus us trying to force emotional regulation on them by being emotionally dysregulated ourselves.

But all that to say, also, when it comes to ... I love this question. It seems like kind of asking what is the eighty/twenty when it comes to nutrition and health? What are twenty percent of things we can do that give eighty percent of the results? And I think about this in a lot of areas of my life because I think it helps us really hone in on the most effective, not just efficient, but effective things we can do in every area of life.

So when it comes to the kids specifically, because of things like their rapid growth or hormone changes, their circadian clocks, there are some things that seem to be especially impactful, especially in the under-eighteen age category. And I try to also pick ones that are going to be high impact and low or no cost.

So no matter what someone's budget is or where they're coming from, these are things you can implement pretty easily. And the first one that's non-negotiable in our family that people often underestimate because it seems too easy, is the importance of light and especially morning sunlight. And again, this is what people often don't think about because it's so simple. But there's a tremendous amount of research showing that due to specialized light receptors in our eyes and our skin, that when we get outside, even on a cloudy day as soon as possible, after waking up, we begin the clock for our circadian rhythm for the whole next twenty-four-hour period, including our sleep cycle, which we'll talk about in a minute.

But that for kids especially – they are so affected by light that if we can get our kids outside even for just ten minutes in the morning ... And ideally if you want to incorporate some gentle movement or cup of tea in that as well, that's awesome. But that light early in the morning is going to have a big impact on sleep.

And it's also going to support their natural cortisol rhythms, which is going to help them have more focus during the day. It'll help them have more ... They'll be more in tune with their natural hunger cues, which make the other parts of the nutrition side easier. And it really, really helps sleep. So that's what I say is a non-negotiable. And very few things in my house are non-negotiable.

On the nutrition side, I think with kids – they're obviously in a rapid growth phase. And so with my kids I try to focus and make sure that every meal includes enough clean sources of protein because they're in such rapid mitochondrial function time and rapid growth that all the amino acids in those proteins help support that process.

And when kids don't have that, you'll start to see the kind of like ... more signs of, like, meltdowns and frustration and being stressed or angered easily or just being more bickering with their siblings. And so that's another non-negotiable. And I've got on my website, people are interested. I've got meal plans that are family friendly, high protein that you can sort of bulk cook to save time.

But I think that alone makes a big difference. I think beyond that, there's a whole lot of personalization as far as supplements that you can do or other, you know, tweaking of how much healthy fats and which kind and what kind of vegetables your kids are going to want. But I think if you get the protein part right, that really helps with satiety; that helps them not crave sugar. It helps make a lot of the other areas of nutrition more effective. And then I would say when it comes to supplements, which I think only come after a really good diet, the only one I sort of universally recommend for kids is magnesium.

And they even have a topical magnesium. And we now know ... We used to think magnesium was used in about three hundred reactions in the body. And new research is showing it's actually more like six hundred reactions in the body. But it's really pivotal in sleep and also in hormone function. So for kids at various ages, this is obviously a big one. And I use the analogy that if you don't have enough magnesium, it's kind of like having a kink in a hose within your body. And things are just not going to be flowing effectively.

And often for kids, especially like a transdermal magnesium on the skin will help unkink that hose, and you'll see a big difference in sleep and in how they're eating and in their frustration levels throughout the day and their focus. And then all of those things feed into the topic of sleep, which you guys mentioned is a hugely important one.

We know this is true for adults, and it's especially true for kids. And I think to the degree that we can cultivate a really good sleep environment and a sleep routine with our kids, we will see that pay off in their school performance, in their attitudes during the day. And even, like, we know long-term, getting that solid sleep during childhood is correlated with different longevity factors, with making sure they reach their full adult height that they're supposed to reach with hormone function, and so much more.

And the things I've mentioned all help support sleep. But some additional things people can do that really help as well are having as dark as possible of a sleep environment, keeping the sleep environment in the right temperature, which ... A tip I've used here with my kids: If you don't want to keep your whole house cool, you can get something like a chili pad that keeps your bed cool, which saves energy. That makes a big difference often, especially for teenagers when they start having the hormone stuff kick in with sleep. And also for me as an adult, that's one of the things that makes a huge difference in my sleep.

And then things like taking magnesium before bed, having a routine of winding down and avoiding screens and blue light after sunset is another one we do in our house. And to circle back to that first point, human beings are very much light-driven beings. We're very attuned to light cues, and modern society often really confuses our body when it comes to light.

We're not getting natural light enough. And we're getting artificial light all the time. And so our body can lose sight of its natural circadian rhythm. So by really dialing in that morning sunlight and midday sunlight if you're able, and then avoiding bright lights after sunset, you can really reset that circadian clock pretty quickly.

So even in our house we have daylight bulbs in the ceiling because that's the angle where we would get sunlight during the day, but then at sunset we switch to lamps, which have orange-hued bulbs that don't have blue or green light. That would mimic more of like campfire or sunset type light.

And that helps cue the body to start making melatonin, so we sleep better. And that change alone has led to so much better sleep in our house. So those would probably be my top four. And of course, there's so much more beyond that. And I've written a lot about (in more detail) these topics. But that's where I would say I would give a starting point for any parents.

**Julie Walker:** So Katie, I'm going to just jump in and ask the temperature question. You talked about chili pads. When I was thinking temperature, I was thinking is the room warm enough for the kids? So what's an ideal temperature for a child's bedroom?

**Katie Wells:** This is a really fascinating question. So the average ... They give the average without age specification, but it is in the mid sixties actually. And yes, you don't want your kids to feel cold and shivering at night because that will interfere with sleep. But when I visited Finland, for instance, and this is true, I believe, in Sweden and some other countries as well; they will actually bundle up their babies and put them in a little stroller, bundle it up really well, and leave them outside of a coffee shop while the moms are inside having coffee because babies naturally have so much brown fat that they temperature regulate really well.

And they're now finding that's actually really good for their metabolic health, for life. And so I think often as parents we kind of, like, over-warm our kids. Not, again, that we want them to be cold or shivering or anything like that, but that we might tend to over-warm them. But the ideal sleep environment is more in the sixties. And so especially for my teenagers – they tend to sleep hotter as they're going through those hormonal phases. Just keeping the chili pad on like 68 or 66 doesn't feel too cold to them. And that helps kind of signal that deeper sleep response.

**Andrew Pudewa:** It's funny; my wife likes everything warm. And when the grandchildren come over, she always wants to put blankets on them and keep them warm. And within minutes or seconds, the blanket is off. And she's all worried they're going to get cold or get sick or whatever. And I'm trying to help her understand this. When you're sleeping, and it's cooler, what is the mechanism there that allows for better sleep at cooler temperatures? I know this is true. I've experienced it myself, but what makes that happen? It seems counterintuitive to so many people.

**Katie Wells:** It does, and I think that's why ... And of course, you can do this by just cooling a room as well. You don't have to have a chili pad. But I think the reason that a chili pad seems especially effective for people is kind of ... If you go back and look at sort of human sleep development throughout history, for a long time humans were sleeping on the ground. And the ground typically has a cooler temperature than the air environment.

So you were getting that cooler, that cooling sort of ambiently happening below you the whole time you were sleeping, which is what the chili pad mimics. And that causes the body to naturally mount a little bit of a heat response. But the new data is showing that keeping it in that



temperature range and that the body responds to that by being able to get into those deeper stages of sleep, which we know is the time when the brain and the cerebral spinal fluid flush, and we can get rid of things like beta-amyloid plaques in the brain, which they think might correlate to things like Alzheimer's.

And it's also when your liver can reset and your glucose response, your pancreas. So a lot of things happen during that phase of sleep. And that is statistically the phase of sleep that Americans especially struggle the most with. So I think anytime we can build really strong habits around deep sleep, especially in kids, that's going to be like a lifelong payoff for them as far as a habit.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Wow, that's excellent. This thing about light and being outside, I think we probably have several mutual acquaintances. I'm sure you know Jenny Yurich of 1000 Hours Outside. But I've found this to be really significant. If I get outside first thing in the morning, even if it's thirty-four degrees, which I guess you don't have to worry about too much where you live ... But I just feel better all day.

And if I don't, if I'm, you know, hurrying to get somewhere, I actually now miss the fact that I didn't have fifteen, twenty minutes outside. And I'm wondering, you know, with kids and having to hurry up, eat your breakfast, get ready, we've got to get you to school. And then they go to school. And they're sitting under fluorescent, cheap, bad-quality light in classrooms for the first three or four hours of the day. And maybe they get ten minutes recess.

Although, you know, even now kids are doing recess inside the schools. And even homeschool ... you know, I think people just don't value that. So what I'm hearing you say is of all the things you could possibly do, kick your kids outside early in the morning will have one of the most beneficial influences. Is that correct?

**Katie Wells:** Mm-hmm. And a much less effective second choice would be you can get one of those broad spectrum, 10,000 Lux or higher lights that can go, for instance, at your kitchen table while they're eating breakfast. But I really think nothing even comes close to that outdoor light response. And I've actually tested this sort of. I've been the guinea pig myself and done labs consistently as I was implementing that habit. And there were really substantial improvements in my hormone levels, in my cortisol, in my ... like any hormones related to sleep. My progesterone got better. So it wasn't just anecdotal. There were really big, measurable effects.

And this is also echoed by studies like the camping study, where just a few days of camping in nature away from artificial light was enough to completely reset the circadian rhythm of the people in the study. And so we're so light dependent. And I think in today's world we've lost sight of just how big of an influence that is.

And of course, other things like food also come into play with our circadian clock. But light is by far the biggest one. And you're right; there are a lot of people out there arguing that we are, as a population, very light deficient in the right types of light that we need. So I know schedule can make it difficult ever to get that ideal. But in a perfect world I would say we all get a little bit of light first thing in the morning. We all get maybe ten minutes of midday sun, which is a different

kind of signaling mechanism. And then also that, like, nighttime, sunset light with the red light frequencies – that one is also really beneficial for signaling sleep.

But I think the morning, the kind of go in reverse order of the morning being the most important. So to whatever degree possible that's one I really encourage. And like I said, people underestimate it. But people are often amazed when they implement this, how big of a difference they see.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Wow.

**Julie Walker:** So eat breakfast outside.

**Andrew Pudewa:** It is funny as you're talking, everyone in this room, the three of us, we're all just nodding continuously, like yep, yep, yep, yep. One of the things I am particularly grateful for is that my wife, who's always been very nutritionally health-minded, taught all of my children (well, the girls) to cook well. And this, I always tell everybody: teach your children to cook. That way when you go visit your grandchildren, you'll eat well.

But a lot of my kids, when they went off to college, they were almost shocked to realize that their peers didn't even know how to boil a pot of rice. I mean, they ... Everything had to come to them ready to eat. And I'm wondering if you have found or created any materials for moms to kind of, if they don't feel like it's their natural aptitude, they could use something to work on this idea of helping their children learn to be a bit more self-sufficient when it comes to, you know, choosing and preparing foods. Do you have any recommendations there?

**Katie Wells:** Yeah, actually a couple. And I think it's kind of like a two-part answer to the question. On the practical side there are resources. There's a great course, actually, called *Kids Cook Real Food* that kids can do on their own without too much parental supervision. So even if the parents aren't great cooks, that one will take kids from like very young, very basic skills up through like advanced knife skills and advanced kitchen skills and teach them to cook from start to finish.

And then,—shameless plug—my oldest son actually wrote a cookbook with his friends called *Chef Junior*. And it had kid-friendly recipes but also instruction on how to learn those things. So I think anything like that. Also, kids seem to have a natural interest in wanting to cook, and often when we just sort of nurture their natural interest, they will pick it up really, really quickly.

But I think the deeper point here that I would make is – one of the few rules I have for myself when it comes to my kids is that I will not do anything for them that they're capable of doing themselves. And I think this speaks to the self-sufficiency side because my realizing when I went back to that sort of asking

What do I need to prepare my kids for?

What does education actually do?

What am I trying to make sure they're prepared for in adulthood?

I realized that I needed to get out of their way and not do things for them once they were capable of doing it themselves. And so that's me. It meant that with my kids, even when they're four or five, they start doing their own laundry because they can. And by the time they're four or five, they're helping in the kitchen because they can.

And keeping that sort of top of mind for me, and keeping the focus on "my goal is to raise you as an autonomous, self-sufficient adult who's going to contribute to society" helps me not fall into the trap of wanting to do it for them because it is easier when they're younger. And putting in the time of helping them learn how to do it themselves, which now with my kids age six to sixteen – they're all so self-sufficient that my life is infinitely easier now because I put in all those hours when they were all in that toddler age.

**Andrew Pudewa:** And it's so great as they get older and start to take care of each other and teach each other stuff. I always tell people: Have more kids; your life will actually be easier. But I wanted you to tell us about the three books you've written. And if you would tell us which one book, if we had to choose, would be the one you would most hope that the most people would take advantage of?

**Katie Wells:** Oh, so I have technically two cookbooks. But there's an updated one that is more available on Amazon. And that has a lot of these recipes that fit some of the nutrition stuff that we talked about as well as a lifestyle detox book, which we didn't get to go into as much. But people have probably heard that the average person is exposed to hundreds of chemicals per day in their environment.

And this was my solution on how to, without getting overwhelmed,

- just easily detox your environment as you run out of different products that you use in your house,
- and either make your own or find natural alternatives,
- and with that same idea of like eighty/twentieth,
- and choose the things that are going to have the biggest payoff.

I actually have two books in the works that will be coming out this year, and one is a sort of mindset book for moms called *Zen in the Art of Dirty Dishes*. And then the other is a parenting book that talks about the philosophy of parenting. I would say for most people listening, maybe the cookbook would be a really practical starting point as far as my books go.

But I also always encourage the book that I obviously didn't write myself, but *The Four Agreements*, which is kind of a really ... one that we keep top of mind in our family structure that's just a very short, easy read. All of my kids have read it, and that one helped sort of keep our mindset in a good place within our home.

**Andrew Pudewa:** *The Four Agreements:*

**Julie Walker:** *A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom.*

**Andrew Pudewa:** Yes. No, I'm familiar with that. And we're going to put links to all of this in the show notes, so that's good. I would like to encourage people to look at your website. You have so much content, but it's so nicely organized. And I guess if, you know, you could point people to, say, the five best resources on your website that they could get started with, then they might not get overwhelmed and say, I will never read all of what this woman has given us. What would you point people toward?

**Katie Wells:** If people are working on the nutrition side, I would say my recipe index is really just an organized way to find recipes that'll work for your family. But then beyond that, I would actually encourage people to just check out the podcasts because starting next week we're going to be doing once-a-week short episodes that are kind of my fine mint summary of different topics because like you said, there are thousands of posts on the website and now over six hundred podcasts.

And there's a lot of information to wade through. And so I'm compiling everything I've found in my research in the last fifteen years on any given topic like magnesium, like sleep, like shifting into parasympathetic, or whatever it may be, into these shorter episodes so that people can just take the practical, key takeaways and not have to delve into the research unless they want to. And each of those will also have a list of resources within it if people do want to delve into the deeper science.

**Andrew Pudewa:** That's great. Of course, if they get all those recipes, they might not buy your cookbook, but who knows? Maybe then they will. I looked at your recommended things, and I thought, wow, you know, there's Keon Aminos. I take that every day. There's a Power Plate. I just bought one about eight months ago. There's so many things you're recommending that I thought, wow, I am right in there with you on that. And I think it's just a tremendous, tremendous resource. So I hope that you will keep doing what you're doing. One of the things I love about listening to you is you talk fast.

You know, at some podcasts, you're like, this is slogging on. I have to put it on a 1.2 or a 1.5. I would never speed you up because you're already just, oh, just pushing it out so well. And I hope that you will have an opportunity maybe to go to speak at a homeschool convention someday. I think there's so many people out there that would just be so blessed by meeting you in person and hearing what you have to share.

So if I can provide an introduction for you to any of the convention people that I know, just ask. Last question because we are out of time here: I would love to know what's the one thing you've learned just in the last five years or so that you wish you had known ten or fifteen years ago when you just got started? Because it seems like, you know, the amount of information, the research ... There's so much available today.

I mean, just knowing that you can go get a blood test and look at your panel and understand yourself ... I mean, nobody was ever talking about that ten years ago. What's the one thing you wish you had known a long time before you learned it.

**Katie Wells:** Oh, I love this question so much. And also, yes, I would love to speak at a homeschool conference one day, and thank you for saying that. I have literal post-it notes all around my workspace right now that say, “Talk slower,” because I know I talk fast.

**Andrew Pudewa:** I like it. I love it.

**Katie Wells:** The one thing I wish I had known—and it took me an embarrassingly long time to figure it out actually, and it’s been my journey over the last five years—has been the connection between the mental, emotional side and the physical side.

And this is many topics all in and of itself, and I share my really personal story with this in Episode 309 of my podcast. But really just in short: that I had done everything on paper for health that I knew I was supposed to do. And I had worked with all the best doctors. And I had spreadsheets and routines and systems. And everything was dialed in. And on paper it was perfect. And my health was not getting any better until I addressed sort of like some underlying emotional trauma that I had been ignoring, thinking I was fine and that I could just power through, and I didn’t need to think about it.

And when I integrated that part and addressed that, the emotional and mental side, all of the physical stuff got better. And there’s ways to explain this from the science side with understanding that if our body is constantly in a sympathetic nervous system state, we’re not going to be able to do things like rest and digest and make hormones effectively. and that that stress in the cortisol response from that will impair all of our organ function and so much more.

But I think also, I just wish I had been open sooner to the importance of having all of those areas in alignment within our lives. But I’m glad I know it now because it’s something I am hoping to model and teach and have foundational for my kids so maybe they never have to go through that long process in adulthood.

**Andrew Pudewa:** Oh, that is beautiful. And it makes me realize that, you know, I’m very resistant personally to looking at any kind of emotional stuff in my past. It’s like it almost takes a degree of humility to say, wow, I am imperfect. And there are these things that I did, or that I experienced, that were done to me. And to face it, you need this parallel strength of courage and humility: the courage to face it and the humility to be willing to go through and process that pain.

So, oh, that’s beautiful. Well, Katie Wells, I’m sure we could talk for hours. One of my sincere hopes is that we will meet in person someday, and we can have a nice, long, leisurely conversation over some bone broth or, you know, something really appropriately good for us.

**Andrew Pudewa:** But again, I want to tell everyone: Get to [wellnessmama.com](http://wellnessmama.com). It’s one of the best websites in the whole world if you want to be a better person, be a better mom, be a better teacher, be a better dad. You know, I’m not a mom, but I love what you do. And just, I exhort you: Keep on keeping on. Do not grow weary of doing good.

And because I’m one step further in life, I will tell you: The best is yet to come because as Julie and I both know, the absolute greatest thing about being alive is when you get grandchildren.

**Julie Walker:** That's right. It's like ... it's our joy. Yep. So even as you were describing some things ... The sleep thing, you know – are my grandchildren's rooms too warm, too cold? What kind of children's magnesium can I send to my son so that he can give them to his child, you know? So I love it. Thank you, Katie, so much for being a part of our podcast.

I know our listeners will find this so helpful, and you know, just to tie this back into what we do here, which is better listeners, speakers, readers and writers and thinkers have got to start with a healthy brain to be able to do so. So thank you.

**Katie Wells:** Thank you so much. You guys are phenomenal interviewers. This was really, really fun. And I'm so glad we got to meet virtually. And I echo, hopefully we meet in person sometime soon.

**Andrew Pudewa:** God bless.

**Julie Walker:** Thanks so much for joining us. If you enjoyed this episode and want to hear more, please subscribe to our podcast in iTunes, Google podcasts, Stitcher, or Spotify. Or just visit us each week at [IEW.com/podcast](http://IEW.com/podcast). Here you can also find show notes and relevant links from today's broadcast. One last thing: would you mind going to iTunes to rate and review our podcast? This really helps other smart, caring listeners like you find us. Thanks so much.