



Episode 16: The Holistic Mom's Tips for Optimal Energy

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Hello, and welcome to the Fix Your Fatigue Podcast. Whether you can't get out of bed in the morning, your energy crashes throughout the day, or you're a biohacker looking to optimize your energy, productivity, and focus. This podcast is for you. I am Dr. Evan Hirsch. And I will be your host on your journey to resolving fatigue and optimizing your energy. And we'll be interviewing some of the top leaders in the world on fatigue resolution. Welcome.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Hey everybody. Welcome to another episode of the Fix Your Fatigue Podcast. I'm so happy that you're here joining me. And today, we have my good friend, Dr. Madiha Saeed. And so Dr. Saeed is a practicing board-certified family physician in Naperville and a traditionally published author of a bestselling book, *The Holistic Rx: Your Guide to Healing Chronic Inflammation and Disease*, and bestselling children's book *Adam's Healing Adventures*. One of Dr. Mark Hyman's favorite picks and mine. I got it right here. Dr. Saeed is a mother of four holistically raised boys who also educate the world. They've got their own podcast, which is super cool.

On social media, she's known as the HolisticMom, MD, and as the Director of Education on Documenting Hope, which is a national organization dedicated to healing chronic disease in children. She writes for a holistic primary care and is on the medical advisory board for MommyPotamus and Wellness Mama, who was named one of the most influential people in health and wellness and has one of the largest wellness blogs. She won the Up and Comer Award at the Mindshare Summit. Yup. She did. She's on the board of Nagamia Institute of Islamic Medicine and Sciences, where she speaks to physicians all over the world. Her boys have started the popular podcast called *The Holistic Kids Show*.

She speaks internationally, igniting the world with her energy and passion. You'll see the kind of energy she's got, it's amazing, to ignite a healing revolution. She has appeared in numerous prestigious, holistic online summits conferences, even Dr. Terry Wahls Conference Academy of Integrated Health and Medicine, radio, and newspaper. She is a regular on the international Emmy winning medical talk show, *The Dr. Nandi Show*, airing on seven networks in 95 million homes in the US and over 80 countries. The

Deen Show over 5.6 million followers on Facebook, and My Halal Kitchen, with over 1.2 million followers alone on Facebook.

She has been a keynote speaker for MAS-ICNA Convention in December 2018 with an audience of 12,000 at McCormick Place, Chicago. She has direct connections with the UN and has been asked to speak to an audience of 40,000 at the UN. She continues to speak worldwide, igniting the world with her passion with her four boys of Abdullah, Zain, Emaad, and Qasim. Dr. Saeed exemplifies the holistic healing model for a happy and healthy life. She loves to walk alongside her patients, being their cheerleader along the way toward optimal health. She gives others hope that if she can do it with a busy lifestyle, anyone can. Dr. Madiha, welcome to the show.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Thank you so much for having me. This has been such a huge honor. I'm so excited to do this interview with you today. Yey.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I just love your bio. I mean, you've done so many wonderful things, and you're so young. I mean, look at you. You're like, how could this woman be a mother of four? So let's dive in here. So let's talk about your passion here. And let's talk about specifically moms and fatigue. I think this is going to be a really important topic. So let's talk. Let's start with your story. So what brought you to wanting to heal others in this way?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. I was born and raised in Naperville, Illinois had all the same bad habits that have led most children and adults down the road to chronic illness. My mom used food as love, even though she's an amazing cook, but all of our food was processed because that's what kids like, at that time, and even now, but we had an entire basement filled with cereals of every kind and every day we would take an entire cans of coke to school and may [unintelligible 00:04:29] because we thought were cool.

So I grew up in that type of lifestyle, and it continued. I had one symptom and then another and another, and then I didn't really comes to a head until residency. So my baby daddy slash husband. So he is, he's also a family physician and my, I mean, I have all, all my siblings, are physicians. And so, but it really, all of my symptoms are lupus, Hashimoto's, digestive issues, chronic fatigue, where I couldn't even lift a finger. And I'm like, I know I have all this energy in my body. Like I just felt like I was trapped in this body. And, even despite being a resident, everybody and I went to doctor, to doctor, to doctor, trying to figure out what I could do to have get all this energy back.

And they just told me, "Oh, you're a new mom, a new wife, a new resident all at the same time." Would you ask, like can you both me and my husband are working 80 hour work weeks, but I'm like, even after a good day's rest, I'm still exhausted. Like I can't even just lift a finger. It was just exhausting. And even at that time, they, I was sort of diagnosed as chronic fatigue syndrome, because of joint pain and all of these rashes. And I was like, "Oh, all these crazy things that were all these things that doctors couldn't figure out what was going on with me." To the point, I even had shingles in residency.

That's how my body was totally falling apart. And I continued on a hamster wheel, and I continued because that's where everybody's just told me, "Oh, it's just stress. It's just you. It's my new normal. New normal." And I continued on the hamster wheel until one day it came to a screeching halt. And at this time, my son, my oldest, who is now 13 yesterday, was 10 months old. And I walked into the daycare. It was like a huge blessing because I was like, "Oh yey, there's a daycare that's right across." As it was attached to the hospital and I can go nurse, and then I can go still be on OB call, still doing all of this. I was still trying to juggle it all. And, but I want my husband's like, can you go check up on our child right after noon conference? And I was chit-chatting like I normally do.

And I was like (pushed it with) him, but just a piece of mind, like, okay, I'm going to go and check up on our 10-month-old. That's when my nightmare unfolded. And I walked into my 10-month-old being suffocated to death, almost like he was basically in a rocker, arms and legs are tied down in a receiving blanket. And he was, the daycare provider was rocking back and forth in a dimmed room. Like, see he's got infections, couldn't get any scarier and eyes bloodshot, face was swollen. I couldn't. I could barely get him get it off because it was tied so tightly around his face. And I'm like. You could have killed my child.

And I ran out and that day I, I'm like, God, your universe, you saved my child. I promise I'm going to care. Take care of these kids the best that I know how, but how can I take care of these kids? That's the night I know how, but as a family physician, I, myself, I'm falling apart. And that's when I was like, there, there has to be a different way. I'm not going to let with my autoimmune antibodies, but one by 380 and joint pain. And all of these basically diagnosed with lupus. And I know I'm like, I know how this ends, you've seen patients where, it's a very, it's a scary disease, and I'm like, I'm not gonna let this take my life. I got to do something that's going to help me take charge of my overall health and well-being today. And that is when right after residency, I joined this medical practice.

We're under one roof. There was me and OB-GYN, and it turned us into exercise physiologists, nutritious, counseling, chiropractor, massage therapy, all brought together for the complete healing of the whole person. And that's when it like blew my mind because I'm like, wait, you can actually look at a person as a whole person, not just compartmentalize it, but we've been doing. And that's when, and my first patient was a 31-year old with the nine autoimmune diseases, Myasthenia gravis, Psoriasis, like Spanish Sjögren, Hashimoto's and the list goes on and on and in one in one month, 50% resolution.

And then I'm like, "Oh, I'm going to try it on myself." Yes. My, and I realized all of these. And then just in a couple of months, weeks, actually, all my fatigue resolved once I was able to implement all this stuff, so. And since then I have been, I'm like, everybody needs to know about this. This is so cool. And why aren't we teaching? And that's when I started the HolisticMom MD, because as I was learning on this journey because as a family position if this is difficult for me to figure out where I'm going to start and what I'm going to do, and how am I going to get just like a totally different world out there outside of medicine.

And what was so crazy was that it was so super easy. I'm just by educating my family and myself, with these easy, fast, cost-effective lifestyle tips that I can do with the growing family, anybody can do it. And that's what I've noticed with my patients over and over. I think we make medicine in specifically functional medicine, really complicated, and it doesn't have to be.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: And especially for a mom. I mean, right now I'm juggling, like all these things. Plus, on top of that, I take care of a family of eight on a daily basis. Because I have four children, and my husband is a fifth child. And then we have as the, my in-laws, I live, my in-laws also live with me. So it's taking care of a family of eight on a daily basis. Can you imagine if I like, and then thinking about adding some of these, where to start? It gets overwhelming for moms. And it sometimes it's just easier to just ignore and continue on that hamster wheel.

And that's what I wanted to really bring out to the world that we can change that dynamic it can be super easy, and we can incorporate into your routine, and you're going to have more energy, feel fabulous and be able to do your job ten times better once we take care of ourselves and incorporate these easy lifestyle tips.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I love it. Thank you for sharing. Yes. So let's talk about your fatigue. So what do you feel like was the most helpful thing that you did to resolve your fatigue?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Well, it was so crazy because I really feel, I mean, my, as a covered woman and then I was indoors all the time, South Bend, Indiana doesn't even have any there was really, we didn't go outside. It was really dark outside. It was always cold where I did residency. And I know that, and plus remember a lot of it was, I was eating free food at the cafeteria. So as a resident, now me and my husband are working 80-hour work weeks and now with a newborn. So how well our sleep was.

And then in residency, you're not sleeping as well anyway, especially on those cold months. And then now we have free food at the cafeteria. Oh, fun. Guess what? I was eating Ben and Jerry's every day. What? Nutrition has nothing to do with how you feel, so there [inaudible 00:11:36] find choice and then there, either of those hot pizzas that came out of the oven every day, and then they had a word oven. And then so those, the lack of sleep, high stress, because just trying to keep people alive and keep your child alive.

And then a new MeNTS, so again, high stress, sleep, social. Everybody's telling you what you're doing wrong and how you're going to mess up. Right. In residency at the tough culture was very toxic. And then you have attendings telling you to doing wrong all the time and then residents and then nurses. So it's a very toxic and it can become a very stressful environment and then not eating well. And obviously dumping sanitizer, every

patient that you see living in the hospital, what is not the, I mean yet we're like, we've totally sanitized everything, including our gut microbiome.

So it's just, I think all of that together combined, it was the storm that I needed. I mean, where there's, it was like fatigue, and then shingles to the point where, I mean, like I had, even though I was a 20-year old, I had a body of an 80-year old. So, once I recognized those pieces, just by, I mean, I literally went to everybody. I'm like, Oh, I need to start off with my stress. And but I went to, we had a psychologist on staff. He was like, yes, there's some YouTube videos you can start watching. And I know that for me specifically, that when I started looking into how can I manage this stress? I mean, doctors, as physicians, we were never taught how to manage stress, and that's what's crazy.

And even at this practice, and then we had DIA was working for us. I mean, everybody, so they're a little bit more holistic, but nobody knew how to manage stress, but just by incorporating those stress management techniques, starting to get chains of my dietary habits, but mostly really supplementing what some supplements specifically Vitamin D. And I had to beg somebody to check my Vitamin D like, they're like, no, you don't need that. It's not.

It's not evidence-based. I'm like, can you just check it? And so I had to like convince actually my husband I'm like, please just check my labs. Like this is, I don't care what it is. We got to figure out a way to check it. But my level was like five.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Whoa.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: And I was like, and I lived with years trying to figure out what I could do. And then at that time going, when we were, I was rotating with the Rheumatologists, and I would be like, what can I do? And I would see Rheumatologists, and nobody ever thought at that time, like, can you seriously just check my deficiencies? So just these simple lifestyle tips that I did, and then just fixing simple deficiencies for me, that was enough to like clear someone [inaudible 00:14:26] and really like able to take the next step forward because otherwise, I was like, I can't like, you really want me to do what now? So I couldn't even lift a finger, and it was really exhausting.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Excellent.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: So that's what I did. That's what I did to start. And then it just continued to build from there.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: And so, what do you find was the best diet for you?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: So that's were for me when I so going with my, we're now doing this entire full panel, I saw that for me, I needed to get off of grains and dairy and sugar and processed foods completely. And so I live more of a, an even now I sort of live a keto green-type lifestyle where it's basically tons of vegetables, clean for some clean protein, healthy fats, and then intermittent fasting. That's what I needed to do. I mean,

for me to really balance because a lot of my, so every person, I mean, every person in my family also has a severe insulin resistance.

And to the point where I'm like the thinnest in my entire family, and this is, and then everybody else is very obese. All my people that have died really young ages in their forties, actually my uncle died at the age of 27 with a heart attack, right? So that's how that we are. We have huge diabetes, blood pressure, insulin resistance family on both sides of the family. And I know that was another piece of my puzzle with all the stress and the deficiencies, and then the food that I was eating and the insulin resistance, it was also causing a problem for my fatigue. And so once I was able to get to more of a diet that could help me lower my insulin levels and then balance on adding the supplements and then focusing on foods that would help enrich the gut bacteria because one of my levels are also elevated.

So I really wanted to focus on food like and help heal their gut bacteria just so I can lower my leaky gut and really fix the dysbiosis and also then balance the insulin levels. And as the most nutrient-dense foods for me, and those are tons of vegetables, clean protein, and healthy fats. And I know that if I can just stick with those one, I keep it simple in my brain. That's easy. And I get all my nutrients that I need. Plus, I then take a bunch of supplements [inaudible 00:17:02] fix those nutrient deficiencies but that's what I really found that as soon as, and then magnesium deficiency. I take magnesium, Vitamin D probiotics, fish oil as a bare minimum.

And that has been my cocktail for really boosting my energy. And then just trying to keep it super simple because even when I cook for other people, that's what I do. So I'll have a roast. I have tons of vegetables. I have like tons of healthy fats. I'll do a cake made out of almond flour. So then they get cut that healthy fats and the dessert all in one go, I'm kidding. But the thing is, we can really, that's what I really focused on as vegetables, clean cook [inaudible 00:17:43], and that's what I've done for my patients also.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Excellent. Yes, that was going to be my next question. So have you found that with your patients, that's the same diet that you espouse?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: So that's what I do because, for me, it's, so I really work on lowering everybody's overall inflammation. And because and by focusing then on your digestive health and your detoxification and the forest of stress, sleep, social and spiritual health. And I have all of my patients start off with gratitude every single day, no matter what, like it's, we need to subconsciously change our mind to be instead of being negative, to thinking positive. And I've been doing that over the last 14 years.

And it's like most powerful thing I think I can do for with my patients because they can be on the best diet, they can be on all of these other things. But if they're like, nothing's getting better. This sucks, guess what? It's not going to get better. I tell them that, if you're, if you're not right up here, then the rest of it's not going to get better.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: And then, so I have them focus on 10 things that they're grateful for every single day. I've done that with my family. And that's what I think specifically, living with a multi-generational family. That's what's helped me thrive in this because it's really about focusing on all the things that are going right in your lives, and that's, what's going well, not what's going wrong in your life. And then, so the spiritual, then focusing on the sleep, the stress management.

Stress leads to 80% of the complaints that come to primary care physicians. I mean, educating them about stress management and then the digestive health exactly. So lots of vegetables came protein, healthy fats, and then really going no grain, no dairy, no sugar, no processed foods is what I've done over the last 11 years with a great success rate. Everybody just keeps on getting better. So I just keep on doing it. And then we have is, then your bone broths and then sauerkrauts and all things to help heal your gut bacteria and add some good, beneficial micro bugs to your gut. And then focus on detoxification. So that's those, that's where I basic, where I start off with people.

And then obviously, if they're still not having they're still having problems, then you go into the zebras, right? The chronic infections and then the mold and then the toxins, and then all of those other zebras. But I found that 90% of my patients improve just with the simple basics, and that's what's super powerful. And that's why I'm like, wait, that was easy that I didn't have to do. And then fixing deficiencies, obviously. And I found that I'm like, Oh, that was super simple. It's just super. Why are we making things super complicated?

And that's what I really want to educate families that it doesn't have to be complicated. It could be something that you can start today, even despite you're crazy busy. And if I can do it, anybody could do it.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Excellent. Yes. I'm the guy who sees those 10%. Right. They've done all that stuff.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Exactly. So you.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right. And then there's still not better, right? Yes.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. And that's what I've seen. I find a lot of, at least, this is where you start people off, and then you can start to go more specialized.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Yes. That's so important, and diet cannot be overestimated.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. And then we think as specifically as moms, unfortunately, we, we put ourselves last and I know culturally. Specifically, I've been taught that. I know when I initially started on this journey specifically, I was born and raised, even though I was born and raised in the USA. My parents were from Pakistan, and everybody around you is from Pakistan. They're like, Oh no, you, we give up your

dream. We gave up our dreams for our children. And now you need to give up your dreams for your children.

And so that's where it's always been that in my notes specifically in the Pakistani in their packed communities, specifically, we sacrificed our purpose in life was just for our children. And we have to sacrifice everything for our children. And I was like, that didn't make no sense to me cause I got hopes and dreams. And that's what I tell my kids. I'm like, you got to clean up after yourself because mom was not meant for the kitchen. Mom was meant to change the world. So we got to work together. I can't change the world if I'm stuck with your work.

That's all we can. That's what I've done. I've sort of made that. I've put myself as a priority because I realized when I was falling apart in shingles, how am I helping my child? If I make time now for like in the morning, I already woke up. I had my 20 minutes of sunshine. I took a walk. I mean, I took a run in the morning, I took like a two-mile run, and then I took my Epsom salt bath. And then I had my. I did my meditation. So I already did all of that before the kids got up, and now I'm like able to like take charge of the world.

And then when they got up, then they'd helped me with the kitchen and like cleaning and all of that stuff. So now I'm done. So if we work together and you prioritize yourself, it just makes everything in the family works so much better, and you're set, and then it helps your sanity. And that's what I felt like I was doing is specifically as a mother. I was putting myself way at the bottom of the list, and I needed to now say, no, I am the most important person in this family because I realized my husband, like I need food. I was like, okay, if I'm not feeling well that he goes, he doesn't enter it. He'd handles like the finances.

And he handles [inaudible 00:23:17] out here because I don't have to touch the trash. So, that's where I'm like. I'm the most important person of the family. I got to take care of this. And we are, we're all part of, we all need to think that, that we're all important. We all have to start taking care of ourselves. Fathers, mothers, any caregivers need to take care of themselves first. Because if they don't take care of themselves, they'd role model those bad behavior to the age vulnerable.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: So, in essence, moms have to take care of themselves in order to make sure that their daughters will take care of themselves.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. Yes. I got four boys, so yep. We got a major boys take care of themselves and the kids take care of themselves because if they see and we got to stop the cycle, and I think this has been going on for so long that mothers would put mothers and fathers and caregivers have take, put them, put themselves on the back burner and we have to now and specifically, okay, we have to say this, the doctors are the worst patients. So if you're a doctor, I mean, my husband, I remember the last time he went to a physical, we need to start. So it's not just mothers. It's also fathers.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: And if you're a physician, forget that then you're never taking care of yourself, but we need to now to bring this, put the spotlight on, we have to start taking care of ourselves as caregivers, because otherwise, we're going to get tired. We're going to get cranky, and it's not going to help anybody. And then the kids see those type behaviors and then just continues going that way.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right. Well, and the easy route is just to do what our parents did. I grew up very much in the same way. My mom used to say, love is service so great. That self is forgotten. And I'm like, WTF. Like, like, now I know better, at the time I was like, Oh, mom loves me so much that she's like forgetting about herself. And I was like, Oh, that seems very sweet. But now it's like, yes. So how do we, how do we teach moms? How to start that process? Because a lot of them, it's probably not, it's going to take a pretty radical shift.

And like I know in my family, like, so I grew up with a pretty conventional relationship dynamic between my father and my mother, where she was taking care of the home, and he was working. And so and so I kind of brought that with me into my current relationship. And my wife's like, you're not holding the mental load that the woman has to handle. So the question is, how do you, how do you empower women so that they can have these conversations with their partners, with their kids, kind of much in the way that you have so that they can get their needs met?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. And so I find that it all starts with, I loved what Dr. Perlmutter talked about in his new book Brainwash. And he talks about how we have our, our decision-making is, there's two main pieces of our decision-making. And so the amygdala and our prefrontal cortex and the prefrontal cortex is responsible for your rational decision-making. And while they make the lie like fight and flight, it's just like, Oh my gosh. And I feel, really felt that a lot of us mothers, because we've taken the back burners, we're not being mindful anymore because we're constantly thinking about what the next thing we need to do. Oh my gosh, like you're sleeping, you're making lists, what do I need to do?

And now, specifically with this quarantine and everything that's going on right now, now we're even wearing even more hats because now I got four kids at home. I got to make sure I'm like music teacher now, art teacher, like all of that on top of everything else that I'm doing. And now you're like, okay, now you're going to ask me to be healthy. Forget that. Are you freaking kidding me? I don't even have time to even breathe. And so, but all of these things that we have brought, like just not being mindful constantly, our mind is on the go and all of the things that we're trying to juggle at once.

And then on top of that, we're not sleeping because I, I mean, as a mom, I, I've been there, and I don't want to just go to sleep when the kids go to sleep. Cause I feel like my today just started all over again with the kids. And then I'm up like, so that I, before I was up, I'm like, Oh my God, I go watch it, got, gotta watch it at least two hours of

television. So then I could relax. That's what we do this to ourselves, thinking that it's we meet, then we're not sleeping, and then we're not eating well because you're like, "Oh, mom's just skipped the last like week." And we pick up all the scraps that nobody's eating and shove into our mouths. But all of that is like cutting off the connection between the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex.

And now we're making this irrational decision-making, and we're always stressed, and we're just not functioning to our very best capability. So this is adding in all of this at once to a mom that's already overwhelmed is exhausting. And so what I do with specifically moms and anybody that's overworked, and it's too, it's too exhausting to even think about change because that is, that can be really overwhelming, and it can be really scary to change now your entire life, the way that you did life. But I haven't started off with one thing. And that's gratitude. If I can show if we can start with gratitude that in of itself if we could just say 10 things that we're thankful for every single morning, that can help empower the mom to make better decisions later on. Because I do feel it's like, Oh, screw this, my base never going to get better.

And then you make one bad decision after another bad decision. But if you say, Oh my gosh, there's so much here to be thankful for. I need, I'm so thankful for the health of me, my family, my, the house, that's roof over my head, shoes on our feet. Now you woke up with like positivity and ready to rule the world because you're like, there's so much good out there, and I just need to take care of myself because I'm worth it. And I think that that's where the gratitude that's where I have everybody start off with is immediately when they wake up in the morning, say 10 things that they're thankful for because studies have even shown that just by being more grateful, you could lower inflammatory markers.

You can turn genes on and off. You can lower the stress that somebody already has. And on top of that, when they've done, as studies checked, heart rate variability, when you live a life of frustration, your heart rate variability is all over the place. But when you live a life of appreciation, your rate availability is a nice sign weight. So it just, everything works so much better when a mom is not frustrated.

And especially when you're handling it, it's very easy to fall down the frustration rabbit hole and then never get out of it and then start feeling sorry for ourselves and the start eating junk. And then it just continues. We're on that continuous cycle. So to really start that day with gratitude, I feel it's the most powerful thing that we can do.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I love that. Yes. I have people go through and create their own daily mindset practice. And the first part of that is gratitude. And so if that is the.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: I love it.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I could definitely see that as being a huge takeaway from this. If you guys didn't get anything from this podcast episode, it's about gratitude and implementing gratitude in your life. It changes your physiology. It changes your brain. It changes. So, the neuro-plasticity, it changes so many of these things it's so important.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. And when you start making one change, now you've started to build that connection between the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex. So now you're better at making other changes and decisions. So it's really powerful. It's a great place to start a specific specifically, if you're already overwhelmed, and you don't know where to, where else to start, everything else seems like it's too complicated. This is free, easy all. You just got to do it to say it. You don't even have her write it down.

Writing it down is too complicated. Just start with saying it, just thinking it. And I even had my moms, and everybody put little sticky notes all over the house, sometimes. Specifically, if too overwhelming, and that way, you're creating a zone of subliminal positivity. And that will all those sticky notes will then zap, that all this, Oh, this positive, positive, positive, positive, positive. Sometimes when we, when we, especially, if a mom is dealing with a lot of chronic health conditions. Now on top of that, it's really easy to just dive into that rabbit hole of negativity, or I'm not feeling well, just trying to get by when you have all these sticky notes all over. It creates a zone of subliminal positivity that can help you focus on pot and changes in your subconscious from instead of immediately thinking negative to thinking positive. So that's another tip that I've done with the moms and my parents.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I love it. So then what's the next step and stress management after that. So they've got their gratitudes on board. They're doing 10 every day. They're starting to feel the difference. What's the, what's the next step.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Then it's a stress management. That's when I sleep, but specifically just incorporating in my house. We have, I try to do that one meditation in the morning time before the kids get up. If I can't get that done, then at their lunch hour and do they have, like now it's like an hour sometime. Actually, my kindergartener has like an hour and a half lunch hour. I'm like, what am I going to do with you for an hour and a half?

And so, I give them half an hour. So I kind of like my meals and meditation, we for half an hour it's like we do lunch. And then the rest of the time I've now incorporated this into their daily routine is that they know that half an hour is meant for lunchtime. And then the other half an hour is meant specifically for a meditation. And that's where all of us will do meditation together. And I mean, actually, during this quarantine time, we did Emily Fletcher's chorus in meditation, mindfulness and all of them have started this and they love it. So they're like, Oh Mama, it's meditation time.

And now that forces me also to stay on top of it. And now I'm also teaching them a good positive behavior that will then not only help them now but in the long run. And I'm getting my own meds, forcing me to do my own meditation because we get as moms, we can get really busy unless we sort of integrate it into our daily routine. And that's where I found that was the most powerful thing for me to do is now integrate it into the kids' daily routine.

And now they're sort of getting me to do it. They're like, cause they're, they feel such an

amazing difference on it. And so we're like, Oh, we gotta do our meditations. So we start with a deep breaths and then the mindfulness, and then we go onto the mantra meditation we end with manifesting. And then they're like telling me all the ideas that they have and all the dreams that they want to accomplish. And then it becomes like it's a really fun conversation. Every time they're manifesting something different. So again, that's something that I've started doing as in my own routine that has been so beneficial specifically when this quarantine and stuff started, and now I'm home more.

And I, my routines of going to the gym and drop the kids off and then doing this and then having a couple of hours of just doing work has been disrupted. So at least we can use these school's schedule days to add in those times in that. So that's the next step that I do. And it's so powerful because remember stress leads to 80% of the complaints that come to primary care physicians, and it weakens your gut bacteria, it destroys your immune system. It leads to insulin and pre-diabetes that all causes fatigue. So no matter if you're trying to heal your gut bacteria, dealing with all these chronic infections, but if you're not dealing with the stress, forget it. So then incorporating that into daily [inaudible 00:34:52] is really important.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I definitely agree.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Right. And it's so easy. And then, yes, no,

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Well, I was going to say, I think, I think what would be really helpful at this point is, is to hear about how you run your day. Cause I'm thinking about, okay so she's got this lunchtime with the kids, she's doing lunch, she's doing, so if you can end, you start, restarted with if you can tell us kind of like what time you wake up and take us through your day and then what time you go to bed.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Yes.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Exercise, I think that could be really helpful for folks.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Oh, absolutely. And that's what I found, and that's what I did with [inaudible 00:35:30] adventures. Then I call it primary care unless we call it our healing routine. And that's what I've done to make things super easy because routines work, and they we've, studies have shown that they just work in, it takes off the stress of it. And honestly, I'm not a hundred percent all the time because it's the real life. But I've tried to stick with 80% of the time. And so in the morning time, I mean, my husband leaves in the morning at seven o'clock. So he's up at six o'clock.

And so at six o'clock, my day begins. And then, so after getting him off, the kids wake up by eight. So I have that one hour to myself right now, specifically, but it, because they're home, they wake up at eight, the school starts at nine. Before they were wake up a little bit earlier because actually, you have to get them to school. So, but I have that one hour, in that one hour is rarely where I go for a run. I can do my 20 minutes at the, when you go for a run. Now you get your 20 minutes of sunlight all at the same time also. And then you do here. Then I come back and do my meditations. I drink my water, right.

Sitting outside doing my meditation, Jen. And then now you have the triple top of the kids coming downstairs. So here I have already exercised. I've already done my meditation.

I got my exercise in. And then on top of that, drinking my water, try to get my lemon water, first thing in the morning, all in fasting. And then the kids come in, and that's when they helped me with that. That's when we get some of the chores done in the morning time. So I try to get all of my chores done before their school starts. So that gives me eight o'clock to nine o'clock. All the chores are done in the kids know that's the time they'll quickly have some breakfast, but then they know that my nine-year-old will come and take the dish, start taking the dishes out. So it's created a routine. And my five-year-old will get the vacuum. My seven-year-old will start cleaning and picking things up.

So then as the five-year-old is vacuuming, so things like that. So to really, and that's when I'll get my cooking done. So they throw stuff in the Instapot, or get stuff out that I need to defrost for dinner, whatever it needs to be done, but I try to get it all done at nine o'clock. At by nine o'clock. The kids are starting at school, and guess what? I'm done. And we all just work together to make sure that it was all done now the rest of the day, once I can get that baggage out because that's stuff that needs to be done that is just, otherwise it just, it just gets stuck. And then you, you can't get anything else done.

It's really difficult. So once I get all that done, shows the kids about chores, then the rest of the day, I have to really do my work to take my Epsom salt baths. And then also I see clinic patients. So that's when I do a lot of online patients right now. And then at lunchtime is when they're remember, because my kids only eat their vegetables, clean protein, and healthy fats. So a lot of times what happens is because I did already have the cooking in the morning time, the kids have can now come in and they'll be like, "Oh, I want this. This, I'll quickly some warm it up." We'll sit them down and vegetables, clean protein, healthy fats. Yesterday, I made, I made meatballs, but the meatballs had onions, cauliflower, broccoli sprouts, olives, and onions all in the meatballs. And that's what the kids (sauerkraut) with potato and that, and then a handful of like an apple at the end. Right?

And so that's what they would have with some, either avocados, whatever. So in their mind, they go vegetables, clean protein, healthy fats, vegetables, clean protein, healthy fats. And so we're always stocked for success, which makes things so much easier. And then the rest of the half an hour, we'll go ahead and do the meditation. So now, before 12 o'clock, I've already gotten these basic things done. And then well then by the end of the day, when they're done, they will we try to get outside actually at that time because I want them to run around specifically when there's no gym, I have that we have a yard outside that we'll garden together.

We'll spend another couple of hours outside, and then they will, they do have like a half an hour to an hour of screen time, and they don't have any iPads or anything like that. So they will watch some like a movie or whatever they want to do for like an hour. And then it's again, chores cleaning up, running around we'll play, we'll play a game together.

And then they have their sleep routine, which is an Epsom salt baths meditation, prayer, gratitude, helping me clean up. And actually in that right before they have their own dry brush, they do the cold, they love the cold showers.

Now we've talked, we learned all about cold showers and helps it helps your body detox. And they're like jumping up and down in there. It's fun. And so just, and then they go to sleep and then the day starts over again. So I try to incorporate all of these main pieces, your digestive health, and detoxification on a daily basis, and then your stress, sleep, social, spiritual health, making sure they helped me with the chores. So then I can lift all of that burden off of my shoulders and help them, help them raise leaders. And then I started for me. Specifically, I'm like, "Oh my God, what am I going to do with them afterwards?" And then just a couple of times a week, I know you were amazing guest on our show. So now we started The Holistic Kids Show, The Holistic Kids Podcast.

And so that was another thing that we started doing together as a family after we go outside, we'll talk about it. And that's what these are the conversations I had normally have in my house. I know I'm a geek, but like I have these conversations. I'm like, Oh look, you guys, we're going to do Brussels sprouts today. You guys are the benefits of Brussels sprouts. We're going to do this. And so I'm always talking to them about the benefits of these foods and then, and so my kids at the age of five, Mama, Oh no, that food is not good for our microbiome. And so that's, I think that's, we've sort of lived our lives too. And I've taught them that every decision that you make, every decision can either help you or hurt you. So do you want to make a decision that's going to help you, or do you want to make a decision that could hurt you?

So, because we've had these conversations and every part of the day, there's a purpose for it. And that has an underlining reason why we're doing it. It really empowers these kids, and that's when I'm able to. It makes life so much easier to for me because now they're sort of in that routine. And then now we're sort of, accountability partners for each other and it's, and that's, what's so much fun and they understand they're like, Oh, we gotta go clean up Mama because Mama has to go finish our podcast or Mama has to go finish her book. So we're going to do this cause, so then we've sort of become healthier together as a family.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: That's brilliant. Thank you so much for sharing that. I think that, and so, so the question that comes up for me is, my 12-year-old would not be willing to do this right now. And so how long did it take you to admit it? I mean, this is just who you are, but it seems like you modeling this, and you talking about these things that implementing some of these things were kind of a natural extension, but I guess, did you get pushback from them initially? And then how, how do you deal with that in order to affect change?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Oh, absolutely. You get pushed back their kids, right [inaudible 00:43:02] mom. And then I talked to them actually for me and my house, we have like one big rule, and you only treat somebody the way you want to be treated. So if, if you're going to be mean to me and we're not going to work together as a family, then I can't help you. Right. Because if you're not going to be here to help me, then I'm

not. I shouldn't be helping you. And they saw, they learned that eventually when Mama they're like, Oh, well we're not helping Mama, but we need food. Oh, my mom was not cooking. So we realized that this, we talked them to that very early on, and we treat somebody the way you want to be treated. So we're all part of a family.

And so if we're going to do this together as a family, it's not my job just to sit here in the kitchen [inaudible 00:4346] all day long. We have to work together. I mean, and for me, I mean, there's eight people at my house that take care of on a daily basis. I sort of am like, you guys need to help me. And I, and it's really fun because you can start, if you have logical conversations of them, they understand. And I do. I have really deep conversations of my kids, like on a daily basis, like really deep, like, if I was stuck in the kitchen all day long, doing this all day long for you, when will mom be able to help anybody else.

And they're like, no, they're like, do you want me just to do this and not help anybody else? And just even my five-year-old will understand that to that point, even though they're like we're won't do the dishes at the beginning, it was hard. But I realized that if I can be strict with them at a younger age, when we get older, I can just, just pray what, cause at that, I won't be able to do anything strict with them per se, as they get past to that age. But now they're seven. I can be like, okay, this needs to be done because Mama needs her help. And when you need help, Mama's here for you when, when Mama needs help and that to be open with them, that I'm not a superwoman, I can't handle everything on my own. I'm not, can't just juggle.

And I think that was another thing that I had to break because I think we're like, "Oh, moms or superwoman, they can just handle everything." I know my husband will be like, "Oh, you can handle it all." I'm like, "No, I can't." I still need like a cell breakdown. I still need help. And so really getting everybody involved and I really thought that just educating them and starting with these key pieces, because I, I'm like, if you want, I'm trying to create leaders for the next generation for the next world.

And so for a future generation. So I need to make sure that they have those, like rituals every day to create those leaders. And I know many read books on leadership all the time, right? This is the, what creates a leader. This is how you're going to get out there. And then I'm trying to then implement it with these kids, but then educating them. And I found that if you can educate them and not just tell them what to do all the time and then role model that behavior, it slowly open the door. And I know that I mean, for me, that the food piece was huge. And I really feel that because once I was able to cause my kids, I mean they're hundred percent non-GMO 90% organic.

They, even if they have like a candy, they will not even eat it. If I'm not even there they'll be like, no Mama, that's just the artificial. Why would I put that chemical in my body? And so either you can brainwash kids one way you can brainwash the other. So what I've done, what I've done is not really brainwashed them per se. It's basically really educating them. I'm like every they know exactly what happens when that kit enters your mouth. When it goes into your digestion. How, I mean, that's where nerd we're nerd parents, right? So they do what they do. My husband's a physician. I'm a physician,

their father, then my grandfather. My their grandfather is a physician. All the aunts and uncles are.

So they know exactly what happens. My sister, she's a pediatric ICU position. She came in, and she gave everybody just yesterday. She gave everybody a detoured talk about all the parts of your liver and all of the parts of your intestines. And the kids are like, oh yes, so I guess we incorporated this education. Just start with small steps, educating them slowly about the impact of sugar on your body. Just talk about it, show them books on it, show them on documentary on it. And then the next time they'll think about it. And I'm just slowly making those small little changes to go. And that's what I've done in my house. It did take time.

It takes, I mean, my oldest is now 13, and I started this 11 years ago so, and then but I wasn't a hundred percent off the bat. Like I was just completely hundred percent gluten-free only five years ago before that I was like, Oh, he on and off on and off and then so, and then paleo just four years ago completely just because I felt like my body it's been a struggle, but then as I've learned more about it, my family's looking more on that, and I educated them. And so that's what I've done in my house is really just using education and love.

And I make everything fun. I mean, I'm the type of mom that gets on the ground and then just like plays with them and like, Oh, we could totally do this. Let's do this together, we'll dance, and I'll sing and let's have lots of fun with it. But then when it comes time to discipline, I'm like, okay what you treat with the way you want to achieve it. So either you're nice to me otherwise, guess what? You can sit in the garage for a little bit and think about what you've done.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Yes.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: So it's all about, creating that balance, but really educating the children really as best as you possible. And even if you have teenagers that are not going to change, education is power. And that's what I've done with all of the patients that I've seen.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: So then for the moms who don't have that education, they don't have a family of Docs. Do you have education available on your site? What do you recommend for people you talked about, watching a documentary, do you have a list somewhere? How do you recommend that people get educated?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Well, so that's what I've, that's actually why I wrote the books that I written. And so the first book was called the holistic or extra guide to healing, chronic inflammation, and disease. And then to the best of functional, integrative, holistic matters all covering over 70 conditions for all ages. And so for me as a mom and then as a family physician, right, we see patients every day, not people with like eye problems with digestive issues. And so that's where I'm like, I needed to start somewhere for moms. So that's why I put it together. I put this together for my first, for my own patients, just for my patients, like a resource with everything that I use in it.

And then I got it published into a book with a traditional publisher. And then, then I'm like, Oh my God, we have to start doing this with the kids. And that's what the children's book. And that's what I've done with the children's book is really go into, okay, somebody has, somebody's not feeling well. And then, Oh my gosh, it was about gut health and then bone brush. And why we do that? And then how eating the rainbow. And then, so I've taken all, everything that I've done and I've created a routine here. So all that routine that we just talked about, I was starting, I basically, whatever I did with my kids, I was able to then translate into a book and have Adam's friends talk about those different pieces to the point of even going outside I'm grounding and making sure that we're taking your Epsom salt baths and doing your meditations and then parenting and then what you're going to do without that.

So this is what this is really. This is how I've helped to teach my own children. And that's why I wanted to create this resource. And right now, I'm working on actually the next one, that series. So that was hopefully about be, about rainbow foods. But that's what I'm going to hopefully do is, has with stay tuned for this entire series of Adam's healing adventures. And then I've given people a specifically at the back of this, a little checklist of what they can do. And that's what, like just simple things, like get up every morning and say ten things that you're thankful for it. This is something the parents and the moms can do with their own children and eat the rainbow, drink your water, use natural projects, Epsom salt baths, and sweating detox, different ways that it can be detoxed.

And then we have is incorporated meditation, prayer, play outdoors, make sure to sleep well, surround yourself with love and positivity. I mean, these are just simple things that are super powerful, that if you, if we can just start incorporate as moms and as children, it can be, create a really big difference in your entire family dynamic. And that's what I've noticed in my own house is now I can talk to my kids as normal adults and children and where they, there's no temper tantrums anymore. If I don't, if I, if I'm busy with meetings all day long, they're able to find food themselves.

And I know they're eating no, cause I have to be realistic. I'm in sometimes in meetings all day long, and now it's all online, but they'll be able to go cause my house is up for success. So now they're able to make those decisions, vegetables, lean protein, healthy fats, and it gives moms peace of mind. Plus, on top of that, I'm not always in the kitchen.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: And so it really does. There's a lot of benefit for starting these simple lifestyle tips, because one, you can cook less, less sad. Like you could have more sanity. Your kids will be able to, be a little bit, they won't be little monsters, there'll be little human beings, and you'll be healthier together as a team. And just start with those one step, just start with educating. And I have all these tools, even on my website, I do have a healing bundle that is they have with 25 of my recipes, what a healing day looks like, what a healing week looks like, and a shopping list guide. So that's, that's what I do in my house. And then, I just translated it over and created a package and opt-in on my website called the Healing Binder.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I love it. And so, what is your website?

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: So it's called the holisticmommd.com.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Awesome. Okay, great.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Yes. And then we have, yes.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Yes. We'll put the link below, and then the books are also, you'll give me the links, and we'll put those below as well.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. And I, and there's a lot of fun because my mind keeps ongoing. I'm just keep on. This is literally what I eat and dream, and live. And I'm trying to just think, how can I really take what I've learned with my only fan with my family? And if I can do it, anybody can, and how can I do this? Take it to take this message to the world and create these easy, fast, cost-effective lifestyle tips to really integrate them into the family structure. And so I'm, actually, I put together the first family health expo of the in the United States. It will be next year now. It was, I rented out at 13,000 square foot ballroom. I know, and it was all set.

The end of minutes, I was kind of gonna like speak at Katie Kim's book, all these amazing people that were ready to speak and to really educate and empower families. So I have lots of fun stuff on my social media. I actually post what my days look like, what I'm able to feed somebody because I think that we over complicate things, and it doesn't have to be complicated. The kids can just eat, some meatballs and some salad and just some, like just soup, apple sauce and that'll be good. And this is like the avocado. It doesn't, I think we make things really complicated, and it doesn't have to be, and that's what I've tried to do.

And then when I have a family of 20 people are coming this weekend, and I will be cooking, I'm the one that's going to be cooking the entire weekend. And just again, keeping it super simple. And so I have lots of great things that's all it can be found on my social media. Lots of fun things coming up. Yey.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I love that. And I think that what you're talking about really are baby steps. Like, you're not going to, people aren't going to implement all this stuff at once. It's like you implement one thing every couple of weeks, and, and that can, it, it accumulates it'll.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: And I think that's when the anxiety happens is when we think that we have to add everything all at once, and then we don't do any of it. And it's taken me. I'm in 11 years to get to where I am. It doesn't happen overnight. I know it's taken you years. So like, if this is something that if we can do it, anybody can do it. And we also started with those baby steps. And so, because you're right, all of those baby steps accumulate over time. And, but each one of those baby steps is super powerful. So

don't underestimate those baby steps. Those baby steps are super powerful to get you to the, even the next step. So, so, and so I'm empowering that.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: I think it's important for folks to remember that it takes three days to break a habit and 21 days to make a habit. So it's just that consistency of every single day just doing it and getting creative and having fun with it so that you can incorporate into your life. I think another important point, too, is that if you're having a hard time as a mom, as a parent, incorporating this stuff into your life right now, or taking care of yourself, do it for your kids.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right. It's a lot easier sometimes for us to do things for our children than it is for us to do them for ourselves, but it'll rub off.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: I know. Absolutely it will. And that's actually what I did because I, at the beginning, I thought this gratitude stuff was difficult. I'm like, Oh my God, what am I going to do? So we started making it into a song. So every day like so in the morning, as the kids wake up, we're like thank you for eyes, thank you for our ears, thank you for another beautiful day to change the world. And my voice is not, I mean, you are an amazing singer, so I'll break some windows as I do it. But the, what's exciting is that the kids, they don't care.

They're just like, so then the one-on-one we started with the younger and one of them would be like, "Oh, I'm thankful for my belly button." And the other one will be big. I'm thankful for my poop. So each turn it to a game, I, the kids, would really be excited to incorporate into their daily routine. And that's what I found that okay. I'm able to really incorporate this a little bit easier once I can make it fun and exciting and then get the kids do it for our kids. Right, because I was like, Oh, if I, if I, if I can't do it, how am I going to get them to do it? And I don't want it. I don't want negative teenagers. I don't want to deal with that.

So and then too poor of that poor boys. And I don't know. And so that's where incorporating it with your family, doing it for your family is super important and doing it with your family because that just creates a bond that will, it's fun. It's, and my kids still like, even to this, my 12-year-old, sorry, 13, 92, 13, yesterday, 13-year-old, he still is like, "Mama, Oh, that's so funny, ha ha ha." And then we'll do that together. And it's just fun.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Right? Well, I so appreciate you. I appreciate the energy that you bring. I appreciate these practical tips that you've shared today. This was really a great interview that people can go ahead and start implementing, get your books. I think that everybody needs to have the money on their shelves. They need to share them with their children so that you can have these resources to move forward and create the life you really want and create the life you want for your kids. So, thank you.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: Absolutely. Thank you. My pleasure. And thank you so

much for everything that you are doing. We met three years ago, and I know that you've been doing such great work out there. And so thank you again for all the work and yey this is we're going to work to like, get it, get people energized and healthier specifically our future generation there and our parents.

Evan H. Hirsch, MD: Amen.

Dr. Madiha M. Saeed, MD: So thank you so much. Yey.

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