

## Lesson 3: Stress and Sleep Management

Hi, everyone. I am super excited once again to talk to you today about two of my five pillars. So today is lesson three, and I just wanted to quickly go over lesson one and two. I hope you enjoy those. And if you didn't get a chance to watch one of them or both of them, please remember that they are saved. You go to the website or the app under categories. Please find the icon for master classes, find this masterclass, and you can either re-watch the videos or you can watch any of the ones that you miss. So today is lesson three, and I am going to finish off going over my five pillars with you.

So you will probably remember that in lesson one, I talked about my first pillar. And as I joke, the Beyonce of the show, the main event, the epitome of intermittent fasting, which is TRE, time restricted eating. Plainly said, or in practical terms, focusing on full rich satiating meals and avoiding snacks. This is the epitome of intermittent fasting. And whether or not you're doing long, fast, if you're doing alternate day fasting, extended fasting already, I really want you to take a leap forward and make sure that on your eating days, you are doing proper TREE. This is really the focus and what you should put all your weight and effort into at all times, on good days and in bad days, when you're on vacation or when you're home, when you're eating really well or maybe not.

Pillar number two is early time restricted feeding. Our insulin production is based on a circadian rhythm, a day-night cycle, eating before sunset, whenever possible. Three, we talked about what to eat. So I shared with you my food pyramid, and I explained how it's a guide if needed. It goes over how different foods are impacted by insulin and how insulin production varies depending on what food we're eating, based on how insulin resistant you are. So it's quite interesting, complicated, and challenging all at once. So I hope that my food pyramid is helpful. So that you can obviously create your TRE eating windows and your meals in a way that you have the most success.

Today, we are going to finish off with pillar four and pillar five, which is stress and sleep management. These two are actually not independent. They're quite connected. Of course, we cannot eliminate stress from our lives. Every single person I speak to has their fair amount of stress. Sometimes we're under acute stress, so higher than normal and short term stressful situations when it comes to some family concerns, or health, or financial concerns, change in work, moving houses. There are some temporary events, life changing events that can increase your stress levels quite a bit. And that's an acute stress situation that I actually would like to address both today and in another lesson, when we talk about adrenal health, and when we talk about periods of time when maybe women should not fast, or at least should not do extended fasting. So we'll talk quite a bit about that.

But today, I just want to talk about our daily stress and our possibly daily struggle with sleep. Sleep is a big one for us adults. It's a big one for kids as well. If you've had little kids, you know that infants have a lot of trouble sleeping. And that, in return, can have a big impact on your life as a mom. My sleep issues actually started when I became a new mom. So with my very first

child, almost 11 years ago. What I noticed though, is that my sleep has been impacted ever since. I often joke that this is an adult issue. Most people I speak to have trouble with sleep. They either have trouble falling asleep, or they wake up numerous times during the night, or they just don't sleep long enough, or they wake up too early, or they only get sleepy very late on into the night and tend to be very, very sleepy or sleep in the morning if their work and life allows.

Sleep is a big, big topic. And everybody that I speak to about this will give me a little bit of a different insight because, of course, we're all very different. The one thing I want to share with you today, information that I believe to be extremely helpful is that regardless of how you feel when you haven't had enough sleep, because this is a big difference, some of us feel fine if you just sleep a couple of hours. Your mood isn't terribly impacted, and you feel like you can just go about your business. You're one of those people that feels like I don't need a lot of sleep. I'm married to one of those people.

And then, there are people like me. If you don't get enough sleep, you feel it. Every second of the next day. It impacts how your mood is, your productivity, how you react to people, how you react to food and fasting. And some of us might sleep enough, but we just don't wake up feeling rested. We can tell that we're not getting quality sleep for a number of reasons, but I'm not a sleep expert by any means. And there are some great books out there and experts out there that might be able to help you. Some people even feel like they require some medication to help them sleep and possibly some supplements. And we'll talk about supplements in just a bit. There is some help out there. If you really struggle with sleep and you need some help, please, I do encourage you to learn about it, to read about it, to research about it, and to get all the help that you need.

Many of us have sleep issues because of things like sleep apnea. Sleep apnea is very big in the insulin resistance and in the metabolic syndrome community. And that's really all of us hear. And so, sleep apnea is huge. It is a serious medical condition that needs to be addressed and properly treated. So that might be another reason why you don't sleep well. And many other factors in your life.

I just wanted to highlight the importance of sleep in your healing journey and in the successful reversal of insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome. So for successful weight loss, for successful diabetes reversal, for successful PCOS reversal, it is really important that you understand the importance of sleep in your life and that you work on it daily so that you can get better and better sleep. And there are ways to improve your sleep. Even if you don't think sleep is a big deal. All research points to the fact that sleep will directly impact your insulin resistance, your metabolic syndrome, your weight, your diabetes, your PCOS, and everything else that's related to insulin resistance. Clearly, there are direct and probably many indirect factors that will make your sleep that important to your metabolic health. And this is why I have made daily sleep and stress management as two of my five pillars.

So how is stress and sleep related? Well, when we are under stress, our stress hormones increase. We have a gland in our body, the adrenal gland that produces stress hormones,

naturally, normally in reaction to stress. So we do need the ability to reduce these stress hormones so that we can react accordingly. The fight or flight response from an evolutionary perspective, of course, it is advantageous that we have this adrenal gland and that we can produce these stress hormones so that we can react accordingly to actual stress.

In modern days, we might not be running away from lions and bears all the time, but there are other daily stresses in our lives that our body perceives as stresses, and we react accordingly. The problem here is that if we don't know how to manage these stress hormones appropriately, if our adrenal glands are overproducing these stress hormones, this too will have a serious impact on our health overall, our mood, but also our metabolic health, and our insulin resistance, and our increased blood sugars, and all the other expressions of insulin resistance. When you do not sleep well, you increase your stress, hormone production, your cortisol, and your adrenal stress hormones a lot more. Meaning, that if you don't sleep well, even if you don't feel it in your mood per se, or energy levels, per se, it is having an internal impact, physiological impact on your stress hormone production. And lots of people can see this.

I have worked with diabetics for nearly 20 years. Diabetics are a big part of our client population and our community. All of the things that diabetics unfortunately can tell us, can share with us are things that we can learn, even if we're not diabetic. I will speak about different expressions of insulin resistance, diabetes being one of them, and how the different expressions like diabetes, and obesity, and PCOS, how these are all related, and how even though you might not have higher blood sugars like diabetics, the same root cause that's causing your obesity is the same root cause that's causing the diabetes and PCOS. And we'll talk a little bit about that. So these conditions are all related. This is a very important point because the underlying factor here is insulin and insulin resistance.

These stress hormones that are overly produced from either being in very stressful situations all the time, not knowing, and not properly lowering your stress hormone levels, but also not sleeping properly, not sleeping enough, and not having good quality sleep, how that is going to increase your stress hormone production. So when your stress hormones are higher, you are going to naturally produce a higher amount of sugar. You're going to go into gluconeogenesis or sugar dumping. So you're going to increase your blood sugars, and that is going to naturally increase your insulin production. The more insulin that you produce and more frequently, the more likely you are to become insulin resistant. And also, over time, the more and more insulin resistant you become, and then, of course, the more expressions of insulin resistance. So this is how stress and poor sleep, which are related, will cause an increase in insulin resistance, an increase in your insulin resistant expressions.

If your expression of insulin resistance and obesity is weight, then not sleeping properly and not managing your stress levels properly is going to get worse and worse over time. So you're going to gain more and more weight over time. So this is regardless of whether or not you have insomnia or serious sleep concerns like sleep apnea, and regardless of whether or not you have some adrenal health issues. Just regular, everyday folk, people like you and I, consider ourselves to sleep all right, or to have normal amounts of stress in our lives. It is still advantageous in your healing journey, and your weight loss journey, in your diabetes reversal

journey, or PCOS reversal journey, it is advantageous to improve the quality of your sleep and to learn how to lower your cortisol levels.

So you might be someone who thinks that I don't need to sleep, or my stress levels are just fine. I have a lot of adrenaline, but that is great because I get a lot done, and I'm a very type A personality, and I work really hard, and I'm a super great professional. It's still totally important and beneficial for your healing journey. It is directly related to your reversal of insulin resistance and all the expressions of insulin resistance. It is highly beneficial to learn, first of all, that stress and sleep management are related to our metabolic health, but it's totally beneficial to learn how to sleep better and how to lower our stress levels and cortisol levels daily. So that's what I want to talk to you about today. And I'm going to share some resources.

We do have an expert in this field, within our team in our community. So Dr. Terri Lance, who just recently did a masterclass as well, has meetings every week within our community. She's got a group challenge every week for healthy habits. She has great, wonderful resources and courses on specifically how to improve your cortisol levels, your stress levels. Of course, this will all impact your sleep as well. Her coach Lisa, in our program, has a wonderful book club and she often mentions books. And she created this list of 39 cortisol lowering techniques. Even if you don't fully understand the science, please remember, lowering cortisol is going to help lower your insulin levels. It's going to help reverse your insulin resistance faster and more effectively. It's why it's one of my five pillars. It's something that you want to consider every single day, and you want to put your effort into.

Here's the kicker. Most of us that are very stressed, have very high stress levels, and I'm one of these people. I am a type A personality type. I run on a lot of adrenaline and on fumes at times. And for that reason, I need to do these daily cortisol lowering techniques a lot more than somebody else who probably doesn't run on fumes all the time, and who's adrenaline and cortisol levels are not so high. So whether you've tested your cortisol levels, whether you even know how to test cortisol levels, that's a conversation for another time. But what I want you to know and remember is that regardless, even if your stress levels are okay, just remember that working on stress management, which we all need daily, is going to help your healing journey.

There are many, many things. And I just want you to go over this list and think about which things will work for you in which things might not work for you. You can do different things every single day, or you can do the same thing every single day if that works for you. I do recommend that you choose two or three that you feel really comfortable doing. For example, the number one thing on the list, and this will not shock any of you, is meditation, and right next is yoga.

Meditation is, of course, a technique that has been used for thousands of years, in many, many cultures. And some people do it naturally, and some people learn how to do it. I am not somebody who's great at meditation. I'm one of these people that will find every excuse and will often say I don't have time for this or that. It's obvious that we have time. We can make time. These things don't have to take a whole lot of time. I often joke that I hear people say, "I don't have time to breathe," because breathing is on the list. Of course we have time to breathe. We breathe all day long. We need to breathe to survive. So how about learning how to breathe

properly? How about learning some breathing techniques that you can do five, 10 minutes of the day or the whole day that are going to be more beneficial to lowering not only your cortisol levels but, again, improving your metabolic syndrome and your expressions of insulin resistance.

So let's go over this list very, very quickly. We've got meditation, we've got yoga, stretching, Tai Chi, Pilates, labyrinth walk. And some of these you may know, and some of them, you may not recognize, but you can look them up. And Lisa has great resources on her list. Getting a massage. Getting a massage feels really good. So of course, that helps to lower your cortisol levels. And maybe this is not something that you do all the time, but you take some time to provide self care. Self care is a big thing. I know Terri talks a lot about this, but it is part of the cortisol lowering techniques. Gardening. This is huge. Gentle dancing, take up a hobby.

This is a big one. I think for me, this is the biggest one because it's one that we all need. What's a hobby that I find is really helpful for lowering my cortisol levels? Knitting in crochet. This is something that I have realized, many of you have realized, and it's something that I actually make a point of doing when I'm in very stressful situations. I'll give you an example. My husband was sick in the hospital not too long ago, and he was away for quite a while. And so, in the evening especially, after I had put my kids to bed, this is the time, of course, when you're by yourself, that I felt most stressed. And I knew that getting my knitting and my crochet next to me, and I made it very accessible, and doing that in the evening hours that I was on my own, made me feel so much better. And I know that that was a big key component in helping me deal with my stress levels at that particular time, which is very, very important.

Coloring for pleasure, very, very similar to knitting and crochet, and the impact that it'll have on you. These are things that you can do daily. Spend some minutes practicing your breathing. I talked about that a little while ago. Having a consistent sleep schedule. So we'll talk about sleep in just a bit again. Listening to relaxing music, spending time laughing and having fun with someone. Our social interactions are really important for stress management. They can, at times, raise our stress, but there are ways to learn how to socialize in a way that will help lower your cortisol levels. Interacting with a pet. I cannot say this enough. Last year was a challenging year for many, many, many of us, and I got not one pet, but two. And even though pets, little pets, especially can, at times, raise your cortisol levels, overall, they have a tremendous impact on your overall health in helping to lower your cortisol. And there's a lot of studies that actually show this, not that you need studies to know this and recognize.

Learning how to recognize stressful thinking and beginning to change that paradigm shifting mindset. Prayer, prayer and meditation are not all that different. So if you're a praying person, continue to do that and do that every day if it helps you. I pray, yet I don't meditate. So there's a really good example. Forgiveness, practicing mindfulness, black and green tea may help. These are some of the supplements. And I'm going to talk about supplements in just a little bit. Probiotics and prebiotics are huge for your adrenal health because actually your gut health is related to all of this. Fish and [inaudible 00:18:3] oil, Omega-3s.

Making a gratitude list. This is huge. I've done a gratitude journal many, many times in my life. And I find that when I'm doing it, it has a huge impact. Magnesium, again, another great supplement for lowering your cortisol levels. It is a muscle relaxant. It's something that we will talk about when we talk about electrolytes and extended fasting. Getting bright sunlight. So this is important, not just for your daily management of your stress levels but for your daily sleep hygiene. Getting sunlight, early morning sunlight. So moving, which I'm sure is here somewhere on the list, but movements, any type of exercise. It doesn't have to be strenuous exercise, but movement is key for a lot of things directly and directly impacting our stress levels, our sleep, and our metabolic syndrome in insulin resistant expressions.

Avoiding blue lights. So again, screens and things like this. We need to, at this point in time, learn how to manage and how to deal with this. Maintaining healthy relationships, letting go of guilt. Water. Water's great. Tapping, this is a big one. Standing tall, acupuncture. Acupuncture's huge. I personally learned how to do acupuncture in school and it was something that I did for a big part of my career. Forest bathing and really any nature, listening to Binaural & Beats, grounding or earthing. This is another big one. I really encourage you to look into this and all these natural things. So I want to encourage you to go over this list as many times as you need to. Try out different things. Don't make it too complicated for yourself, but do make sure that you put some time and effort into cortisol lowering techniques every single day of your life.

Now that you understand that not getting enough sleep, it might feel just fine to you, please remember that it will have a significant impact on your metabolic health and on your healing journey. If you sleep better, your healing journey is going to go a lot better. A lot of us disregard sleep because it's something that we've given up. It's something that's been so hard to fix in the past that we've just given up. When we work with diabetics, we learn a lot. Even if you're not diabetic, it helps us learn how certain things will impact the rest of us that are not diabetic as well if we have insulin resistance like obesity and PCOS.

All diabetics will notice that if they don't get enough sleep, the next morning, early morning, blood sugars are a lot higher, significantly higher. This is an expression of increased insulin resistance. So if you don't sleep well, your insulin resistance increases, every little bit every single day that you don't sleep well. And I know it's hard. I know it's something that we will not fix in one day, in one week, and probably not even one month, but it is something that you need to work on all the time.

One magic pill is not going to fix your sleep issues. You are going to have to try many different things and probably do many different things. Hopefully, enjoyable things that will help with your daily sleep management and sleep hygiene. Dr. Fung actually talks quite a bit about sleep. He actually mentions sleep hygiene in his book, *The Obesity Code*. He also wrote a blog post that I'm sharing with you in the resources about how sleep and obesity are directly related just to motivate you and to inform you. If you want more information on sleep and stress, there are things that you can do every single day. Any of the things I on that list, coach Lisa's list of cortisol lowering techniques, will help with your sleep.

Here's some of my recommendations for sleep. You do need a sleep routine. You do need to have really good sleep hygiene. It is very important to go to bed at a decently early time. I know a lot of us don't because of life, because you're not sleepy, because your cortisol levels are so high that when the regular bedtime hours come around, you feel too agitated to sleep. So it's important to lower those cortisol levels and to make a concerted effort to go to bed significantly early. I don't want to give you a specific time, but I will share with you a couple of things. It is often said that if you get to bed before 10, you're going to have much better quality sleep. I'm very interested in researching and learning about much more so lately some of these devices that measure your sleep and quality of sleep. I won't mention any right now because I haven't tried them out myself, but I know that there are some devices that measure your quality of sleep.

And every time I talk to people that have some of these devices, or I research it myself, I always hear the same thing, the same confirmation that if you get to bed earlier, your sleep quality improves. So we have a great person in our team that does a lot of research and knows a lot about supplements. If you want to pick coach Larry's brain about different supplements, go ahead. I think magnesium is essential for all of us in the intermittent fasting world. I think you should take magnesium every day, both on eating days and fasting days. And your magnesium dose recommended amount is going to vary based on many, many factors. If you're fasting longer, you'll need more magnesium. And you'll feel that your cortisol levels will change. And we'll talk a little about that when we talk about adrenal health and extended fasting. You can also do not just oral magnesium, but topical magnesium, like Epsom salt baths and Epsom salt foot baths. These are great cortisol lowering things, and they will really help with sleep. So taking some extra magnesium before bed is going to be very helpful.

I have personally used and experimented with CBD quite a bit. I have a lot of thoughts on CBD, but I will let coach Larry and the experts maybe tell you a little bit more about that, but I personally have done very, very well with CBD. And it really does change the quality of my sleep. So that's something that I've used. I know a lot of you have heard or have used melatonin. I have some mixed feelings about melatonin. I think there's a time and place for it. I think it works quite well for some people, but only on occasion. I don't think it's a supplement that you should use daily. I have a concern that it will impact your own internal production of melatonin.

This brings up another point that I wanted to share with you guys that you might read about. People that work shift work. And I know a lot of you guys work shift work. Unfortunately, this is further evidence that not sleeping at the right times, not having quality sleep is going to terribly impact your metabolic health and your insulin resistant expressions. Knowing that, it's really important that even for those of you that work shift work, that you still find ways to improve your sleep quality.

Sleep hygiene, a few things that I have found to work really well. Getting to bed earlier, making sure that your room is comfortable and ready for sleep. Noise is a big problem for me. Since I had kids, any little noise will wake me up. It will trigger me to wake up, my cortisol levels increase, I go into fight or flight response, and then I'm like this for the rest of the night. So one thing that I do in my house, it's not a huge deal. My kids sleep well at this point, even though I

have two little doggies, they sleep very well. I've been very blessed. One thing that I always do, especially when I travel, is I use earplugs. If I do not use earplugs and something triggers me and I wake up in the middle of the night, I have a hard time going back to sleep. CBD oil has helped me quite a bit with going back to sleep after I wake up for whatever reason, or if I have to go pee in the middle of the night.

Noise, temper levels, making sure you're nice and comfortable, these are things that you're going to have to work out. There's a lot of information on sleep hygiene. Sleep is something that you can improve. It's not something that I am suggesting we're going to fix in one day, but every single step that you take to improving your sleep quality and lowering your stress hormone levels is going to help you that much more in your journey of healing, losing weight, reversing diabetes, reversing PCOS, getting pregnant, and anything else, whatever other goal you have that's related to reversing insulin resistance.

I'm done going over my five pillars. Very quickly, first and foremost, how often you eat or how you eat, what time you eat, what you eat, and daily stress and sleep management are our five pillars. Now we're ready to go on to all our other lessons and to put all of this into practice and to figure out what the best protocol is for you, depending on what your goals and objectives are, and doing some great work together. If you have any questions, please don't forget to email them to me at [masterclass@thefastingmethod.com](mailto:masterclass@thefastingmethod.com). I hope you enjoyed yesterday's Q&A. If you missed yesterday's Q&A, do not worry. It is recorded and saved for you to watch whenever you can, and as many times as you'd like. We do have another Q&A tomorrow, so please send in your questions, and I will try to address them tomorrow, and then the rest of them next week. Thank you for sitting through lesson three. I will see you tomorrow for lesson four. Take care, everyone.