



Simple, with Tsh Oxenreider

Episode 192

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## Segment One

Tsh: [00:00:03](#) This is simple. I'm Tsh Oxenreider.

Hey friends, in this episode I am chatting with contributing writer Christine Bailey and this is a conversation we've been excited to have for months now. As always, we're talking about what we wrote this week and we both wrote a bit about our eating journeys. Yup. Our relationships with food. Christine really beautifully articulates what it means to feast, to embrace a season of coming around the table to share a meal and how that pairs really well when you also embrace more fasting in your life. This is especially a great conversation now that we're in this season of Eastertide and then I get into my own personal guidelines with eating, which sounds stoic and hardcore, but it's really not. It's actually really completely embraces a philosophy of feasting as well and it's been a mental game changer for me. It's so interesting the package we often carry with food and what it means, isn't it?

Then in the third segment of this episode, I am talking with Stephanie Landford, who's currently in Guatemala, as we answer another one of your travel questions. Before we get into the meat of this chat, I want to quickly let you know that starting today, as in if you're listening when this episode drops, so that's Friday, April 26, 2019, I am closing up my class, The Essentials, as in closing for good. It will no longer be open for enrollment ever again. It will still exist for everyone enrolled, but after this week it will no longer be available to the public for new people. If you've ever wanted to take part, this is literally the last time you can. What's Essentials? Essentials is my go-to class that covers the seven basic adulting tasks that make a grown up being a lot easier. It's the foundational 101 stuff that I suggest anytime someone asks me what to do first to embrace a simpler way of living. It's these seven things I talk about in the Essentials. It's totally self-paced and you can get into the lessons again and again. If you had like in, do it now, enrollment closes for the final time on Friday, May 3rd, 2019 so go snag your spot. You can head to [StartWithTheEssentials.com](http://StartWithTheEssentials.com) or find the link in the show notes of this episode number 192. Okay, let's get right into my chat, here is Christine sharing her wisdom on the beautiful philosophy of feasting.

Okay. Christine, I've been wanting to have this conversation with you for quite a while and I know you have too. I'm really excited to dig right into this thing. You wrote this week about intermittent fasting, which is a practice that I have embraced in my own life for over a year now and it's done me a world of good. I would love for you to just get right into it and tell me more about why it's a thing in your life.

Christine: My post was about intermittent fasting and I started back at the beginning of January. The kind of fasting I've been doing, there's several different ways to do intermittent fasting, but the one that I've been doing is 16/8 intermittent fasting. It's super simple. I do it pretty much daily and basically what it means is I just don't eat for 16 hours and then I eat within an eight hour window. I go into that in the post, but just like you said, it has really, really changed a lot of things for me since I started in January and now it's just become just something I do daily and that will probably be a part of my life for a while. In the post, I shared five good things I've learned through intermittent fasting. One of the things I talk about is just how fasting has made times of feasting, all the more meaningful. I thought it'd be fun to dive deeper just into the topic of feasting.

Tsh: [00:03:53](#) With Easter now, just a fun fact to toss out, I think Haley Stewart and I talked about this when we brought up what's on the liturgical calendar for April, but technically, historically Easter is actually part of Eastertide, which is a whole season that lasts for 50 days. It lasts until Pentecost and it is considered a season of feasting. That doesn't mean literal nonstop feasting and gorging ourselves on food but it is a mindset shift after 40 days of fasting. I'm really excited about this feasting topic, especially because I've embraced intermittent fasting now since Lent 2018 for me, so a little over a year. With you being who you are as a farmer and your husband being a chef, I feel like you have a lot to teach us about feasting, so get into it.

Christine: [00:04:45](#) Oh, thank you. I totally agree. As I was researching this idea of feasting and I came across these two really beautiful definitions of what a feast is, I just love how these are said, a meal that is well prepared and abundantly enjoyed.

Tsh: Oh, I love that.

Christine: I just love that abundant word. Then another way is to give someone a plentiful and delicious meal. I read that and I'm like, oh, that is just so what we're about and so what we love to do. It just really connects on a deep level. Like you said, feasting from a spiritual perspective, for me personally, it really is a gift and a symbol and a way to celebrate and connect with each other over the abundant provision of food. I feel like that's really a gift that God has given us and that it's wonderful to enjoy even just the tangible good things he's given us, fresh pasta

and homemade bread and rich butter and all these beautiful things that we can enjoy when are feasting. I also love this. I came across this recently that some scholars say that Jesus, "ate" his way through the gospels. I love that image because it's really true. There's just so many instances all through the gospels where Jesus has just sat down and shared meals with people often the people that no one else would sit down and share meals with and he just fed so many people. I love that. I love how the early church broke bread together in their homes. It's just a really beautiful symbol. It's not just a physical thing. I think it goes much, much deeper than that.

I also wanted to share three kinds of feasts that have been meaningful to me in my life that will maybe spark some things for our listeners and just some ideas for maybe how you can have feasts and just some different ways that it can be doable and meaningful.

Tsh: I love your definition being well prepared and abundantly enjoyed, to me as beautiful and poetic as that sounds, that's also pretty freeing that we don't necessarily mean a 12 course meal. This can be just a lovely simple spread.

Christine: Yeah, absolutely. My background, some people might know this, but I grew up in New Jersey in a big Italian American family. Feasting was absolutely part of our lives. Every major holiday, every birthday, we would feast like there was no tomorrow and we always gathered at my Aunt Lucille's house and she had this tomato sauce that she would just simmer for hours and she would use that sauce to make baked ziti. I can just remember the smell of walking into her house and everything smelled like it. There were loud voices everywhere, all these cousins and babies all the way up to elderly. The family was so big that when we finally sat down, we had to literally use every chair in the house mismatched and then put all the leaves into the table to extend it all the way to the walls. The feasts were first the salad course, then the pasta course and then you're already stuffed and you think you can't eat anymore and then out came the meats and the chicken parmesan and the sausage and the bracirole, that rolled Italian meat dish that is so good, it's cooked until it's super tender. Then after all of that, the table's cleared and it's time for dessert and the entire table is filled with dessert and Italian cookies and cakes and coffee with sambuca shots in it. It was just so wonderful. I can smell it all right now as I'm thinking about it. I think what was beautiful as we just sat around the table for hours and connected and it was just all different ages and just this beautiful loud meal. I think that just is part of me since I grew up and so that's where my first experience was with feasting. When I got to go to Italy for the first time in 2003, I just felt like I connected with a part of myself I knew was there, but to actually go to my homeland, it really meant something to me. We had this one three hour meal in Corniglia, one of the villages and the Cinque Terre, it was Hotel Checchio, I just remember we stayed

there and we ate there and the owner came out and just sat with us and it was this big table of all the different guests so we didn't know anyone else there, it was just my mom and I, and it was my first experience really sitting down with strangers and sharing a meal. There's something really beautiful in that too, and just connecting with people and just seeing how food and feasting connects us and that long slow meal.

Tsh: [00:09:29](#) Italy is really the embodiment of a culture that feasts really well. I've been several times and each visit I've had some sort of significant meal that is a literal several hour course and then several course meal. One thing that I thought was a really great takeaway from my time there, and in France they do this as well, but Italy really feels visceral, is they have several courses, but it's one thing at a time at these courses. It's the cheese course, the pasta course, the salad course, the dessert course. You're focused on eating one thing at a time instead of just inhaling your food, and to feel like you're given permission to slow down and really savor each course and each conversation that's being had around each thing that you're eating. My first time, we went to a vineyard that also made pasta. We got a lesson in making pasta and that was actually a part of the preparation of the feast is getting to make our own pasta and that's still stuck with me how getting your fingers into the dough before you even eat it and made meal all the more special, which I'll get into in my my part of this chat because I think that's a really neat part of the feast, is the preparation.

Christine: [00:10:52](#) I love that. I love that you said that because we really want to add some classes like that to the farm this year.

Tsh: Oh, you should.

Christine: Where we do that same experience where you get to prepare the meal and then eat it and maybe learn a different technique. My husband does make homemade pasta a lot for his clients and that's so fun. I love that idea. I think you're right, there is something about learning something and getting your hands actually into it and then getting to share that meal. We do these little mini Italian feasts just at home with our friends often. Steven does make homemade pasta, but you don't have to make homemade pasta just get a really nice one from the grocery store. I was actually going to share his spring pesto sauce recipe and we could link to that. Because for spring it's fun to have a green sauce and toss it with that. Either by a good loaf of bread or make your own. I also have a fun bread recipe that I promise is so easy a child can do it. I know that some people are like, yeah right. But it really, really is. It's super easy and it just makes this beautiful artisan bread so we can link to that one too. Then add a big salad and some nice wine and you've got a great little feast there.

Another one I wanted to share is we had a charcuterie and cheese board on our friend's house boat this summer and it was so memorable and you mentioned at the beginning just that it doesn't have to be this big multi-course spread.

Charcuterie boards are the simplest thing because there's literally no cooking. You don't even have to have plates. You can arrange everything on a big platter or a cutting board placed in the middle of everyone at the table. I think that it just has this element to it where it's just a shared experience and it really encourages that you're actually sharing your platter and you're all eating from the same spot and you can stretch it on because everybody is really just nibbling and grazing throughout the night. It's really the perfect way to have a slow meal that's also really simple and low maintenance to prepare.

Tsh: What's even nice about that, I feel like, is that that is a great couples double, triple and quadruple date meal or it can also be a family oriented meal. My kids love what they call finger foods and that's basically what this is, just a spread of things they can pick up with their fingers and just pop into their mouth. I love that.

Christine: Yeah. My kids love that too when we do platter meals and we just put all these random things on a platter, I think they just love something about choosing and the different flavor combinations too. That's how you can connect over food and it just encourages that conversation of have you tried this cheese with this cracker or you need to try this one. It just really encourages talking the whole time and really thinking outside the box. If you do a double date thing, each person can bring something to contribute. I just love that it's this beautiful mishmash of ingredients. Steven encourages us if you don't know what to buy, go to your grocery store and just ask the cheese counter employees and specialists there and say what would pair well with this and really take the time to buy something you wouldn't normally eat and try different kinds of cheese or try different kinds of cracker. Some of our favorite things to put on our charcuterie boards is always a mix of soft cheeses and hard cheeses, thin, crispy crackers and thick buttery crackers. Then we'll always add a fig jam, a bowl of honey, some dark chocolate, dried fruit, some fresh fruit, olives, Marcona almonds. Those are all some really great things to add that speak to all the different elements of taste and in texture.

Tsh: These all my favorite foods, honestly, this could be my final meal or like the last food I have. You know that question, if you could only have one meal the rest of your life? I honestly think I would do something like this. This is my favorite.

Christine: It is so good. I don't know what it is about it, but I crave it now. If Steven and I are going on a date, either just going and making our own charcuterie board or going to a restaurant, one of our local restaurants in Columbia does them. I literally crave it. I feel like it is just the best meal for connecting with people and

just having that, I don't know, there's just something fun about getting to both serve yourselves off the platter and those combinations are so awesome.

I don't know if he knows Siete Foods. They make those grain free tortilla chips.

Tsh: Yeah, they're here in Austin.

Christine: Oh yeah. I forgot they're based in Austin. But have you tried their dairy free queso? It is so good. You can warm it up, but you can't even tell it's dairy free, but we use that with our charcuterie board on the boat and it was awesome.

Tsh: That is impressive. Dairy free queso sounds like an abomination.

Christine: I don't know how they did it.

Tsh: No, that's fantastic.

Christine: [00:16:02](#) That's just an idea there. My third favorite feast is our first farm dinner last October 2017, not this past October, but the first one. We've done five dinners on our farm since then and nothing will replace that first time. There were 88 people seated down the middle of our meadow at one long table. I was worried at first about how it would go and it would feel weird and invasive to have people we didn't know on our farm because this was really the first time we were welcoming outside people and selling tickets and all of that. But at the same time it just felt so much of what we were called to do and just this idea of gathering people and putting together this big feast. It felt so right. We're really excited about that vision coming together and the culmination of our journey for so many years leading up to this and I actually got emotional when I first saw people coming and gathering at the table at the top of the hill. Just to see their expressions on their faces, to see this meal prepared for them and the expectation and just the delight in people's eyes to get to do such a special experience like that. A lot of people came with friends and then there were so many people that just didn't know anyone. I think that's something really neat to have that kind of experience to go to a big dinner where you just don't know everyone and to see how you can connect with total strangers over a shared experience. We've had so many people say that they develop relationships at these dinners that have lasted long after and they're now friends with these people that they sat next to. I just love that. I think that is so part of our vision of why we do these dinners and why we continue to do them that we keep hearing these cool stories of how people connect.

Tsh: It's funny in our Internet, hyper-connected world that I am hearing left and right everywhere around me, how much people are craving in person connection and community like that. I think there's something to be said about how much

people love your dinners like that because it's so different then as great as it is to connect via a screen because we can connect with people we otherwise wouldn't, there is something really sacred about sharing a table and eating food together across from each other. I think that's so sacred and important.

Christine: Yes, I agree. At the beginning of every farm dinner, we always get up and we welcome everyone and we say, everyone just slow down. Exhale, there's no cell phone service up here anyway, so you don't have to check your phones. But just to expect that this is going to be a long, slow meal. Because I think, so many people that come are from the city and they're driving 45 minutes to an hour to come to the dinner. It really is so different than how we live on a day to day basis and just to expect it's going to be a slow drawn out evening and we're going to keep surprising you and delighting you with each course. Like you said before, just presenting each thing one by one so you can really enjoy it and savor that particular dish.

I wrote a whole post about just that first dinner experience that we can link to and just what gathering around the table taught me through that. One of the things I love is I had this moment of feeling that it was just a tiny slice of heaven and just a tiny slice of what the Bible talks about of that ultimate future feast, that is prophesied in Isaiah and that is talked about in the book of Revelation. I wrote this at the end of my post,

"I hope for another table except this one will be filled with every single person I know and love and it will go on as far as the eye can see. The feast will stretch on for hours and no one will have any food intolerances or restrictions. We will never be full. Our souls will be satisfied in a way that we can even fathom now if we tried."

I really do believe that will happen one day and the scripture I was thinking about, it's in the book of Isaiah and it just so beautiful,

"In Jerusalem, the Lord of Heaven's armies will spread a wonderful feast for all the people of the world. It will be a delicious banquet with clear, well aged wine and choice meat. There he will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth. He will swallow up death forever."

Tsh: That's fantastic. I love it. Thank you for sharing that.

## Segment Two

Tsh: [00:25:40](#) It's funny that your first half of our chat was so poetic and so lovely and so calming and setting that I to hold on to that as I move into explaining a little bit of my eating journey without getting too practical or

maybe I want to get practical, but I don't want to get too prescriptive or dogmatic because everything that you have said is foundational to my mindset about this. Those of you listening, keep that in mind, if I start getting a little bit like these are the steps that have helped me, that really ultimately I have come to really embrace this idea of feasting. I love, Christine, that you mentioned at the top of our chat, that definition of feast being a meal that is well prepared and abundantly enjoyed because that is very much the concept that I have embraced.

I'm going to seem like a total nerd by saying that I have basically created my own philosophy of eating that works for me. I've called it MIRK. That's why I'm saying this is very nerdy because I came up with my own acronym that stands for M. I. R. K. It sounds really gross, it's a gross word. I tried to arrange the letters to make it even better and no, I'm just going with it. It's not like I sit around and talk about it much. This is just in my own mind. MIRK stands for mindful, intuitive, rebellious, keto. I will break it down a little bit, and this is honestly to just remind everybody, this is not prescriptive. I am not telling you to do this. There's no way I'm even qualified to do that. Plus you'll hear as I get into this why I'm not a big believer in somebody like me telling anybody else how to do this.

To unpack that idea first, I want to get into R of that, rebellious and the reason that's important, that's actually the foundation of all these other terms. Have you ever done The Four Tendencies with Gretchen Ruben, Christine?

Christine: I have and I cannot remember what mine is, but I know I'm an abstainer rather than a moderator. I actually wrote about that and my fasting post so I know that's a Gretchen Rubin thing.

Tsh: I'll put a link in the show notes to her little test. It's not a big long, huge test. This isn't Enneagram or something that's got a lot of layers to it. It's pretty basic, but it just basically how you form habits. For me, I'm a rebel. What that means is basically, it sounds initially like off-putting because it sounds like you do what you want and you stick it to the man. It's not that. It has to do with the fact that you have to embrace both inward and outward expectations as something that matters to you. You have to care about it personally or else it won't happen for you or you won't prioritize it. For me, this is really something I've known about me for several years, but it's only been within the past probably eight to nine months when it comes to food that I have learned it's healthy for me to have parameters for a whole host of reasons that I won't get into because that's like, therapy inducing. It's good for me to have parameters, but I need to make them my own so I can read all the books on the planet by nutritionists. I can look at all the food bloggers out there who have great things to say about nutrition, but I have to embrace my own parameters or else I won't care enough to stick

with it or to do it or to live it out in my own way. That's why I say rebellious. It's not because I'm completely doing the opposite of what good wisdom says. It's because I am doing them because I want to. At the core of all of this, this is something that works for me. That's what I mean by rebellious. I even wrote out my own, I guess you can call them guidelines. I posted them for me to see and I stick to them. The reason I stick to them is because I made them up. Nobody else is telling me. In fact, as soon as somebody tells me you should do this, it kind of kick starts this mental game in my head that makes me not want to do it. It's very weird. We're ridiculous in that way, the rebels, I mean. For me, I've made them myself.

Now the guidelines are really generous and that's where I get into the mindful and intuitive. These are two terms, mindful eating and intuitive eating that a lot of times cross-pollinate and sometimes people even mean the same thing when they use these terms, but there ever so slightly different and they play really well together.

What mindful eating is, and it fits perfectly into that definition of feasting, is it is simply about awareness and intention. The core of this idea is to slow down and to be fully in tune with all the tastes and textures of the food at hand. You can read out there some tips on how to mindfully eat a little bit more intentionally in your life. I'll just share a few that have really resonated with me. The first one is to not have any devices around. This is pretty easy for me at dinner time with the family because we have embraced this habit of nobody bring phones to the table. We're not going there. Yet, it's actually really helpful for me to remember that in my midday meal. Like you, I do intermittent fasting and that means I eat two meals a day and I feel a million times better when I do that. That's again, not to say anybody else should, but this is just what works for me and my body and I've learned over the years. I eat my first meal around 11:00 AM at home and I'll get into what when I talked about the keto, but that's the meal where I am working on being more intentional about not bringing a device. That's challenging because I work from home and it's so easy for me to say, oh, if I just bring my laptop, I can just keep working as I eat and get more done. But that's actually completely antagonistic to the idea of mindful eating. I keep the device at my desk or on my charger or whatever, and I come to the table. Sometimes I'll bring a book, even that I have to be a little intentional, otherwise I won't pay attention to the food. It has to work.

The second one is to use my senses. This means involving all five senses and that means taking notes, not only of the taste and the smell, which is obvious, but even the appearance of my food, the textures, even the sounds as I'm making them to embrace that as part of the meal experience. It's not just putting my food on my fork and putting it into my mouth, chewing and

swallowing, that's just one part of the entire meal experience. I'm talking as though this is like a three hour lunch. It's not. This can happen in 30 seconds. This can happen as I am sautéing the spinach in the skillet that I'm going to put under the eggs that I'm going to make next. This is very simple, but it's just being aware of the sound. It's making what it looks like and just appreciating it that there's a lot of creativity, a lot of colors, a lot of textures and ways that food is prepared that is just cool if you think about it.

Christine: [00:33:09](#) I love that and it's so counter to what our culture does. I think that overall people are just used to eating really quickly and shoving it in and not really being mindful. I love the idea of just paying attention to what you're eating and just slowing down. I love that so far.

Tsh: [00:33:25](#) Then with that, there's also this idea for me of noticing the flavors and the textures as I'm eating. It's not like I sit there and I keep chewing until I can say this is salty and that's sweet or that's Umami, whatever it is, but it is just being aware of that. It's not just inhaling the food that I've had a million times. I know this sausage, I know these potatoes, I know this, whatever. It's actually as I'm chewing, noticing the salt on the potatoes or noticing the bitterness of the greens or whatever it is and just appreciating it. Along with that, the texture, noticing this is crunchy, this is creamy. I guess this is just a matter of pausing and slowing down and appreciating what it is I'm eating and I promise you those listening and thinking, well that's all well and good, but I have errands to run all day or I've got a two year old at home. This is not taking any more time than it normally does for me. It takes the exact same amount of time as it does when I am just popping a sandwich into my mouth. I'm actually just paying attention more. It's not like I'm literally slowing down and taking two hours instead of 10 minutes.

With that, one way that it does help me slow down as I eat is setting down the fork or spoon between bites.

Christine: Oh Wow. Cool.

Tsh: This sounds so duh, but it's really amazing how much harder that is than you would think, especially when you are just eating a quick meal in the middle of the day, that it feels like you should just shovel it in and then get back to what you were doing. Setting it down while you are chewing just makes you slow down and do all those other things a little bit easier. You're more engaged with your senses when you just put down your fork. It's a really small but simple practice that goes a long way. It packs a lot of punch. It's funny that way. I've been surprised at how helpful it's been.

Christine: [00:35:15](#) I'll have to try that. That is so good. I'm thinking the same thing about that I also eat my first meal at 11 o'clock and I have that same struggle to almost just want to eat really quick and just get back to homeschooling or whatever, farming, whatever we're doing, especially because you're just so hungry because you've gone however many hours overnight. I love that tip, that's a really good, I'm going to try that.

Tsh: I say I don't have to practice it as much at night. I do for our evening meal as well. It's actually good to remind the kids not to be all task mastery, put down your fork. But just to remind them, because I have some kids that come to the table ravenous and they just want to inhale their food but to remind them to put down their fork so they can chew and swallow their food completely, that it's not going anywhere. Sometimes my kids act like they need to get the food in their mouth so it doesn't escape or something just to remind them it's going to stay there, no one's going to take it.

Christine: My five year old does that as well.

Tsh: [00:36:13](#) That's mindful eating and intuitive eating to me feels like its counterpart, it's cousin. What this is about and it's funny that I'm even saying this right before I talk about keto. This is about eating what makes sense to your body and to your state of mind in any given moment. It's about, in a way of rejecting the diet mentality that is so pervasive in our culture. What I've come to embrace is this idea that I love honestly reading food bloggers and nutritionists, there's just still a lot of art to the whole approach of feeding ourselves and really if we think about it, we were given conscience and convictions and maturity and wisdom as adults to really be able to feed ourselves and it doesn't have to be that complicated. What's funny about this idea of intuitive eating is that at first it's actually harder than following some prescribed plan like Paleo because you have to listen to your body so much more than just following no dairy, no gluten. You have to really pay attention to what your body wants. People sometimes when they hear what intuitive eating they think if I do this, I'm going to do nothing but eat donuts all day. I can't be an intuitive eater. I don't trust myself. Here's the thing, if you think about it, you might do that at first, but are you really going to do that? If you are paying attention to how your body feels, do you really think 72 donuts is gonna feel good? It sounds like maybe you know your 12 year old version of yourself dream come true. But honest to goodness you're probably not going to, your body will actually start craving greens and protein and the things it actually wants and needs. It's about rejecting the prescribed diet mentality. It's also about honoring your hunger. Keeping your body fed with adequate energy when it's time to eat. For me, what we talked about with intermittent fasting, it is time to eat usually around 11:00 AM for me. But if I am ravenous by 9:00 AM and it hasn't been a full "16 hours", I'm going

to eat because to me it's time to eat and it's helpful. It's helpful to have the guard rails for me of intermittent fasting because it feels better, like it pairs beautifully for me with intuitive eating because it just works. My body actually feels too heavy when it eats three full meals a day. It feels better when I only eat two, but I've only come to embrace this because of also pairing it with intuitive eating and listening to when I'm genuinely hungry. I think the flip side of that is also not eating just because it's "breakfast time". That doesn't mean if I'm genuinely not hungry I shouldn't eat because my body will tell me when it's time to eat, you know?

Christine: [00:39:14](#) Yeah, I totally agree. I think that I was so programmed before to just eat breakfast as soon as I woke up and I just don't think I needed that much food. That's one of the things I love about intermittent fasting is like you said, I feel so much more in touch with what my body actually needs now and it feels very healthy. It feels like a very healthy balance. I have a very yucky past with body image and restrictive eating and controlling my diet and things like that. I feel like this is the complete opposite and like you said, it's just a very good way to be in tune with what your body actually needs. If you actually do need to eat earlier then do it with no guilt and move on and just enjoy that meal for the sustenance that it is.

Tsh: [00:40:01](#) That's right. Along with honoring your hunger, another thing that is key to intuitive eating is respecting your fullness, meaning listen to your body's signals that tell you you're no longer hungry. There's a really great, I mentioned this whenever I was talking about podcasts I'm currently listening to, there's a really fun podcaster named Corinne Crabtree and she has a podcast called Losing 100 pounds. I feel a little hesitant recommending it because she's got a mouth, like a sailor so just know that going in that is not family friendly, but she has this idea of negative two to positive two, which is she encourages people not to eat until they're at a negative two of hunger and to stop when you're at a plus two. That means not eating until you can't breathe anymore or until you need your Thanksgiving pants or whatever it is. Actually just respect your fullness. Usually the signs are a lot more gentle than we think. It's not whenever you feel the heartburn coming or that you're uncomfortable, it's usually a gentle, just the feeling of hunger goes away. I think it's helpful to remember that you can always eat more if you get hungry again, but it really hurts to overeat and then to have to wait until you are truly hungry again. Just to respect the signals of being full and so that does mean slowing down, what I was saying about the mindful eating.

Another part of intuitive eating is making peace with food slash challenging the food police. Meaning what I was just saying, we as a culture have labeled certain foods as good and bad and I really have learned to let go of that idea. It's so

easy to label carbs as bad and evil and you greens as good and everything else just depends. While yes, I do have strong feelings about commercial food or the food that over the years we have genetically modified enough to where that doesn't resemble its original ancestral form. I am completely all about that. At the same time, there are cases when food is just food and it's okay, like what you were saying with feasting. There are seasons for feasting and seasons for fasting and to not equate for example, desserts with bad, to equate them with tools or reasons to gather and feast, really. Whenever you start intuitively eating, you recognize these seasons in your own body cues that it is time to eat a salad and it is time to eat ice cream.

I'm not saying I'm perfect at it at all. It is a lifelong process. It's just funny having to unlearn what you said, this weird baggage that maybe some of us grew up with. To really embrace that food is just food and there are times when it is perfectly okay to feast.

Christine: I agree and I don't know if you're this way but since I've been doing the intermittent fasting now after I do feast the next day, I am so ready to not feast. I'm so ready to get back to my normal way and I'm totally perfectly at peace with that and I love [inaudible] and just that balance of it.

Tsh: That's right. I agree. Another important part of philosophy of intuitive eating is feeling the difference when it comes to exercising. I'm not going to get into that too much because I got into that a few weeks ago when I wrote about habits and how I am finally working out on a regular basis for the first time in years.

The idea behind this with intuitive eating is this idea of embracing just getting active and feeling the difference and noticing how it feels to move your body rather than counting calories or steps or even timing it or forcing yourself to do something that your body is screaming, not today, it's not good. It's a lot more of that intuitive idea even when it comes to movement. That pairs really well with the idea of intuitive eating as well.

Another thing is honoring your feelings without using food. This could be a whole separate episode that maybe we can get into some time, but this idea that our hunger cues signal the need to eat. But things like loneliness, boredom, stress, anger, don't necessarily signal the cues to eat as well. There are other ways of working through those feelings that are surprisingly much more effective. But in the moment, our brain has this weird hard wiring to want to run to the fridge whenever we're feeling those things. Emotional hunger needs a different kind of food than our physical food, if that makes sense.

Christine: Totally. And our brains can actually make us feel hungry when our bodies don't actually need food. That's something I read in *The Complete Guide to Fasting*

by Dr. Jason Fung. That's what I read when I started fasting and he outlines that. I learned a lot about that just from a scientific perspective that hunger signals actually can be like from emotions or just habit almost. The first couple of days I was fasting, I just had to push past that and then it evened out and then I wasn't really hungry first thing in the morning anymore. There is a lot more that goes into a hunger signal than just like I actually really need nourishment right now.

Tsh: [00:45:44](#) This really is a whole interesting thing I mean that you could go into for hours and hours about what it means about our childhood patterns and what we really think about ourselves and our bodies.

Finally, to wrap that up with intuitive eating, it also embraces this idea of respecting your body. That doesn't mean just throwing in the towel and saying, oh well I'm not going to cultivate a habit that leads me to a healthier lifestyle or healthier body, less body fat or stronger muscles or whatever. Those are all well and good, but this idea of just as though someone with a particular shoe size wouldn't do all this work to become a smaller shoe size, it's equally futile to have the same expectation with certain bodies sizes. It doesn't mean necessarily not caring, but it does mean embracing who you are. I'm learning to embrace, I am short, I am under five foot three and I am petite and this is a little bit of why I feel much better eating two meals a day because I don't need as much food as my husband who is much taller and much more physically active in his job renovating our house versus me writing. I'm coming to embrace that idea of how we're made, it stinks really, because he can eat and eat and eat and is still pencil thin, but that's just who he is. That's also part of his family's DNA and that's not part of mine. Just coming to embrace that and almost celebrate it just as being, it's a lot of this body acceptance idea, I guess is what I'm getting out.

Christine: [00:47:26](#) I love that. I could talk for two more hours on that. I love that topic. I've definitely found that I have to eat, there's definitely grace in this because as we've been gearing up for spring on the farm and I've been doing so much more manual labor, I've found myself needing to eat a lot more, just more calories, because I'm burning a lot more. Just having grace in that and not being, oh, you're over eating and just realizing my body needs that right now and it's okay. I think that's a really healthy perspective.

Tsh: Yeah. That's a huge part of intuitive eating. So I've done mindful, intuitive, rebellious, my last the K in my dumb acronym is keto. There's tons of stuff written out there, so I'm not even really going to get into the principles of keto. Plus, if you are just somewhat cognizant of Internet chatter, you have seen that term come around. But keto for me, what it looks like, really comes to this idea of making sure I'm getting enough fat and not eating too many empty carbs. Like I said, I am all about mindful and intuitive eating. I am not sitting there with

a calculator. I am not counting anything, but for me, I've come to learn, a keto-ish meal actually feels really good for me. I try to embrace that within each meal. Do I make sure I'm in ketosis? Heck no. That to me is just not sustainable for me personally, longterm. I care much more about embracing a lifestyle of eating that I can actually do the rest of my life. Measuring ketones is not part of that. However, the idea of us generally giving fat, good, healthy fats, a bad rap is something that I've really experienced to be true in my life. And so just with each meal, making sure I have plenty of healthy fats and not empty carbs. I have said before, and this is just part of the curse of the fall, I feel like gluten does not sit well with me, at least gluten in the North American version of it. I've talked about how, places like Italy, the pasta does not bother me. That's a whole interesting thing that we can get into some. But in general, I can really feel it when I've had too much gluten. I don't have celiac disease, but I do have the brain fog, the bloating, the general muscle cramping, that just feeling unwell if I've had too much gluten.

For me it looks like mostly eating gluten free and it looks like mostly laying off a lot of carbs and mostly eating a lot of protein and fat. When I say a lot of fat, it's really surprising how much more fat we tend to need. That is also something designed to help us feel full. It's as simple as having avocado or embracing butter or embracing olive oil, these simple things. It doesn't mean getting a scoop of lard and putting it on the side of your salad. It really is very simple. It's just making sure you get enough of it. That's all I mean when I say keto for me, I am not a purist at all when it comes to that.

Christine: [00:50:36](#) Yeah, I totally agree. That addition of extra fat, at first I was like, ah. But I definitely think that's what helps me feel the most satiated. I eat the same way as you. I look at it as a keto-ish, but I'm not measuring anything, for me that is not healthy mentally or emotionally. The addition of the fats really, really helps. Just the healthy fats, the coconut oil and the grass fed butter. I totally agree.

Tsh: [00:51:04](#) I feel like I want to wrap up back to where you started off this conversation and this idea of feasting and fasting that you wrote about fasting. I alluded to fasting in my post this past week and really they pair so beautifully with this idea of feasting and it comes down to enjoying the food we've been given and the creativity that can be had with food and really the conversations that can go back and forth. It's funny you mentioned the idea of Jesus eating his way through the gospels. It reminds me as an English teacher now, one thing that we talked about at the beginning of the school year with my students is to pay attention in storytelling whenever there's food because usually the conversations in the novel that happened over a meal are important and it's just this funny by-product that I think mimics real life.

Christine: Wow.

Tsh: That really meaningful, deep relationships really are cultivated over food and to embrace that part of feasting as well. To go ahead and eat the healthy fats and to listen to your body and when it's time for ice cream to celebrate that and to do it with other people because then you're eating slowly and mindfully and you're really embracing what it means to feast around the table.

Christine: [00:52:22](#) I love it. I love this whole conversation.

Tsh: [00:52:40](#) I'm talking with my friend Stephanie Langford here who is currently in Guatemala, which means she's in a guest house, which means her sound set up a slightly different. If Steph sounds a little bit different than usual, that's why but I think actually you sound really great. I'm looking forward to getting going on this.

We're here to answer more of your travel questions. We asked not too long ago for some more and you guys hit us with a whole bunch. The funny thing is, is that we can largely categorize them into the same six or seven categories. We're going to umbrella several of them in this particular episode.

I have got @claire.atkins asking, how do you pick where to go when so many places sound appealing? @ivymamma also asks, how can I find new places? We go to the same places every year. @findinghomeblog asks, how do you decide where to go? There's so many places I want to see. @peppy5135 asks, how do you decide where to go? I just want to see it all and have trouble deciding.

We are going to be covering how we decide where to go. Steph, you being in Guatemala right now with your family for a few months, you want to share a little bit about your experience with making choices on where to go?

Stephanie: [00:53:48](#) Yeah, it's interesting because I was trying to write down a list of how do we choose where to go. There's so many different ways that we figure it out. As I look back on our trips, I can see that every time we've settled on a trip or settled on the places that are part of that, it's always different reasons. It's really interesting to see how there's not one way that we decide, it's what's going on in our lives at that time. It's something that we hear about it. It's somebody that we know who's gone to a particular place. It's an event that we're using as a pillar and we work a trip around that event. Do you know what I mean? There's so many different factors that go into where we actually end up.

Tsh: [00:54:31](#) Yeah. I think a lot of it has to do with mindset from the get go. I think @peppy5135 said it well with, I just want to see it all and have trouble deciding. I think it's helpful to remember as you approach travel to remember

you're not going to see at all, unfortunately. We will never get to see it all. Instead of that anxious feeling we get sometimes when we think, oh, I'm gonna go there, but what about there, and saying yes to this place means saying no to this place. Just to lean into that and say, you know what, it's okay because I'm not going to see it all. What is best for us right now? Instead of trying to feel that like queasy feeling of, oh there's too much we want to do. It's a form of decision fatigue, you know?

Stephanie: [00:55:12](#) Yeah, absolutely. We had to wrestle with that right away in our first big trip because you quickly realize, oh man, we will truly never see it all and our bucket list will always grow and everywhere we go is going to indicate to us that there was this other whole area that we missed. Sometimes we just say things like we'll come back again. It's okay, we didn't do those things. We'll come back again. And other times we just have to recognize when we're going to get to know these places and there's always going to be these other places that we didn't get to and that's okay. It's like you said, you lean in to what you get to do and we just had to make that decision literally yesterday. I texted Ryan because we have to go to Boston for a conference in June and all said to him, what if we turned the Boston conference until a little road trip and we see a bunch of eastern Canada because we haven't done that yet. And he was like, oh, you are going to be so exhausted if we do that. That is totally the wrong time for us to add in that trip when I was so bummed out because I was like, ah, I really do want to see more of eastern Canada. And he was like, it's okay. We're just going to lean hard into Boston and we're going to really have a great time in Boston and that's fine. He's right. We can go to eastern Canada another time.

Tsh: [00:56:28](#) I think that's a really good point. I think it's helpful to think about what is your number one objective in the travel you're planning? Is it to rest? Is it to have fun, have an adventure? Is it for family bonding? If you think about what's the one thing that you hope you take away when you head back home? Almost like work backwards. Think about what would be the best way to achieve that goal you have in mind. For example, if you really want to rest almost like in a sabbatical way then you might not want to go to a place and see 10 different cities and two weeks. You might pick one place and just be okay with not seeing it all. If you're looking for an adventure, you might want to do a cool road trip, what you were just saying, fly somewhere cheap and then rent a car and go around. I think it's an important to remember the ultimate objective because there's different reasons to travel and different ways to travel, even within your life stage, which you alluded to a little bit Steph. How old are your kids? What's your money situation? What's on your calendar? Do you need to be somewhere at a particular time and just consider all those factors and then work backwards.

Stephanie: [00:57:41](#) I totally agree. Actually the thing you just mentioned was number one, I did actually make a little list of how do we do this? I came up, I got down to H, I started listing them out by letter, but season of life and the purpose of the trip was actually the very first thing that I wrote down. I think that's bang on. And then the next thing I think, one of the things I consider is how long do we have? What time, what season of the year we going like, what's going on with us at that time and what sort of a trip is it going to be based on our lengths? That's another really good thing to consider because it's easy to choose between places when you realize we really don't have that much time and this was a country that we would really want to dig in deep that requires a little more. But say we only have a week. We just made that decision between Peru and Cuba. We felt like we didn't really have enough time to do Peru sufficiently to really feel like if we had made it worth our while to go there. We're just going to go to Cuba for a week and that's not a "just" that's amazing. We're going to go to Cuba for a week and I'm super excited about that. But that came down to the time and the energy that I felt like we had. That's another way to make the decision.

Tsh: [00:58:52](#) As a total side note, enjoy being Canadian there, if you don't mind because I would love to go to Cuba and it is so much harder for us to go then for you. I'm happy for you.

Stephanie: [00:59:01](#) I know what we'll share all about it. Do you want me to just run through a few of the other things on my list?

Tsh: Absolutely, tell us what you know.

Stephanie: Another thing that we have started considering is are we going to have a chance to be with anybody else? Like when you and I, when our families met up in France, we partly structured that trip around getting to meet up with you. Lately we have done that and more. Is there going to be community? Would family come and visit us? Is there somebody we know in a particular place like missionary friends who live in Nigeria that we want to go visit, for example. We consider the people, we also consider the types of activities that we would like to do.

Right now my husband and my two big kids are really into paragliding and we have based three of our last trips recently around where they can go to do awesome paragliding and continue their training. That's another thing, what is your family into? Also I find that once we've picked a single place, if I start looking around on the map or I start researching, I find other things pop out of the woodwork and it fills in the rest of the trip almost easily. We know we're going to go to this area in France because of the paragliding but suddenly the little road trips that we're going to take of the things we're going to do while

we're there, just fill in because I realize all the cool things there are to do in that area. The trip [inaudible] but it sometimes it happens like that. The bigger our kids get, the more conversations we have. Now we've got big kids who are 11 and a 14 and they're saying, can I help you make the decision? Can we brainstorm it and choose together? I love pulling them in because how much more engaged are they going to be when they've helped to choose? Another way that we can make a decision is by deals. I mean if you're on any flight deal list where you like to watch for when prices go down, you do a fare finder thing. If you find the deal sometimes that makes the decision for you, like \$200 tickets. Yes, we're in.

Tsh: [01:01:05](#) I actually really love that you brought in your older kids. This is something we're experiencing as well because we're planning a summer road trip and I have found it to be really helpful to ask our two, well honestly all three of our kids, so our older ones are the ones that maybe have more actual feedback to give us when it comes to when to go, where and why. I think it's actually, not only is it more fun for us collectively as a family, but it is teaching them a good life skill when it comes to planning, it's almost built in education.

Stephaine: [01:01:33](#) I agree. If they get excited about where you're going and they want to start doing part of the research and the planning like we've had our kids do some of the research on when we went to New York City, what should we do in New York City, so they did the research for us and they chose the activities that you know within reason, there was budget involved. But they got to pick what we wanted to do and they, and it made the trip really special for them.

Tsh: [01:01:57](#) That's cool. I love that. I wanted to kind of hint at a little bit of what @ivymamma has said when she asked how can I find new places? We go to the same places every year. I have two quick thoughts about that and then I would love to hear Steph, from you. The one thing I want to say is I actually don't think it's a problem to go to a place repeatedly if you are really enjoying it because of that thing I said at the top of our chat where you won't see at all. Sometimes if you really embrace that idea of you won't see it all, it's okay to just enjoy a same similar place repeatedly. We were talking with our kids the other day about for our next big trip, where would you want to go? There was a little bit of a mix of, we would like to go back to place x as well as see these new places. I just want to encourage those of you listening who feel a little bit like, well, gosh, we're not that adventurous. We just go to this one particular lake house in this one particular town every year. That's not a "just". I think there's a lot of value to be had in that kind of experience and the memory building you've got with your kids. That said, if you really are itching to go somewhere new, I have found the number one way to find somewhere new is to ask around. Not so much in a Google search kind of way, although sometimes you can find forums

where people give suggestions, but to literally ask somebody in your life who maybe you admire their sense of adventure or what you are after or just go ahead and ask on social media, hey, I'm looking for feedback because I have found it's usually the people on the ground that have really good feedback of maybe you go to this well known place, but consider staying in this part of town because then you would have access to these things that aren't as well known. So honestly, the best way to find new places is just to ask around. So Steph, I'd like to hear from you your response to a question like @ivymamma's about how you find new places when you go to the same place every year.

Stephanie: [01:03:46](#) I think that's a good question and I actually totally agree with both of the things that you said because we love finding new places to go and for us that inspiration often comes from a book we're reading or maybe an Instagram travel account that we follow or we like to watch a YouTube travel videos or like you said, talk to other travelers, people who have been to different places, get recommendations for where you're considering going and you often will be really inspired. I have come up with so many great new places just by following what other travelers are doing and I hear about their experience and often they find something that's off the beaten path. We watched this one couple on YouTube, they went to Kyrgyzstan to go to the World Nomad Games which is Olympics for nomads and I watched that video and I was like, um, that's going on our list. I would have never found that by myself. But to go back to the staying in places again, we're here in Guatemala for the second time. We've already spent a month here two years ago, so why did we come back again and why did we come back to the exact same town that we stayed and again last year? Because we loved it, we dug in here and we started to find a little bit of community and we really got to know the place and when we came back now, it's familiar again, it feels like we've come to a second home and now we're making even more friends here and we just feel like it's a place that we really know in one of our goals this time is not to just go to all the restaurants and all the cafes and all the local places that we typically go. Our goal is to discover new parts of town and to take different day trips that we've never taken before and I'm so excited about it.

Tsh: If you are listening to this because you like the show and you are maybe encouraged or inspired by Steph and I that you can do this, we're regular moms with regular families. Then I want to share a couple of resources we have that you might benefit from as well.

Steph has actually started a YouTube channel that's really well done. I was literally watching it before you and I started recording. She will provide as she shares videos with different places maybe some bits of inspiration you might find

and say like, oh my gosh that looks beautiful. We should maybe check that out one day with our family.

I am also in the process, I've mentioned this before but just to make it official, we're working on travel guides. They are going to release some time this year where I'm going to share fully comprehensive guides but for individual specific places. I will have four day guides, one week guides and two week guides, for specific places both here in the US and internationally. If you are interested in finding out when they release, in the show notes of this episode, we've got links to where you can be on the email list to get early notification when they release out in the world as well as a link to Steph's YouTube channel and her Instagram account because I find it highly inspirational and fun. It's a form of traveling from our own living rooms without going anywhere getting to watch Steph do all the work.

Thanks Steph for your feedback and we'll have you again soon.

Stephanie: Thanks ish.

Tsh: [01:07:05](#) You can find Stephanie [wonderlandfamily.com](http://wonderlandfamily.com) or on Instagram at [@wonderlingfamily](https://www.instagram.com/wonderlingfamily). You can find Christine at [christinemariebailey.com](http://christinemariebailey.com) and on Instagram [@organicstine](https://www.instagram.com/organicstine). To keep up with me, I'm on Twitter [@Tsh](https://twitter.com/Tsh) and Instagram [@tshoxenreider](https://www.instagram.com/tshoxenreider) and of course [theartsymbol.net](http://theartsymbol.net) where you can find my writing as well as Christine's. Head to the show notes for this episode, number 192 at [thesimpleshow.com](http://thesimpleshow.com) where you can find all sorts of things, links to things we've talked about, where you can sign up for my weekly email called Five Quick Things, how you can become a patron and support the work it takes to create the show for just a few dollars per month, as well as how to connect with Christine and myself. Right now to also enroll in The Essentials. Remember this is the last time it will ever be open, so enroll now in this class if you'd like in. You can head to [StartWithTheEssentials.com](http://StartWithTheEssentials.com) or like everything else, find the link in the show notes of this episode number 192. This show is produced by Chad Michael Snavely and Jesse Montonya, and thanks also to Caroline TeSelle Andrea Debbink and my furry intern, Ginny. Thanks so much for listening. I am Tsh Oxenreider and I'll catch you back here soon.