

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

Hello. Welcome to Unstressed. This is Doctor Ron Ehrlich. This is it, the final episode for this year, 2019. And I thought I'd take the opportunity to share with you some highlights, or things that stuck out in my mind. And of course, if you go to the show notes, you can just follow the hyperlinks and each episode will be hyperlinked to make it even easier for you to have a listen and catch up if you missed some episodes along the way.

Regenerative agriculture is a favourite topic of this show and with good reason. I mean, agriculture is something that affects absolutely everyone in every single way. It's not just related to the food, not just related to our health. It's also affects drinking water, it affects culture. It affects the environment in terms of coral reefs, rivers, lakes, the climate, of course, food safety, and livelihood. So there are so many issues around this. And if we think that nutrient-dense food is important, and it is, then we need to have nutrient-dense food to be grown in soil that is also full of those nutrients.

And we need soil. We've kind of discussed whether there are 60 harvests left if current trends continue because soil degradation and desertification is happening as we speak. Just recently, I spoke to Charlie Arnott and there were some real pearls in that. He's talking about three archetypal types of animals, the worms in the soil, the bees in the air, and ruminants all playing such an important role.

And I love the way Charlie described the microbes in the soil and the fungi in the soil as sort of the stomach of the plant, sitting on the outside of the plant. It was a great conversation. And Jonathan Latham, Independent Science News. We went over some things about how the EPA tests for chemicals that we are all exposed to, and it was a pretty confronting story. Cyndi O'Meara spoke of the story of wheat and the fact that the modern short semi-dwarfed high yield wheat is higher in gluten, and it's not like the ancient grains that we have come to know and love in centuries gone. The emmer and einkorn wheat variety is no longer the main wheat source in the Western World.

Terry McCosker spoke to us about regenerative agriculture. And Terry runs courses which have inspired so many people. And I loved Terry's ... The whole program was terrific and he drew ... When he said to me that ruminant urine was a wonderful thing and told that it had plant growth hormone in it, I was pretty blown away by that. Because soil is a really important thing that we need, and if you leave nature to produce soil, it takes something like 500 years to produce one inch or two and a half centimetres of soil.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

But if animals are well managed and you know, they've been demonized by so many aspects of the health discussion, but if animals are well managed in regenerative agriculture, holistic land management way, then ruminants can produce an inch of soil every three to five years. Now, compared to 500 years, I think that sounds like a pretty good bet. And we need to regenerate. Sustainable agriculture is not enough. We need to regenerate the soil.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

And he also made the point that an organism in the soil, when ruminants urinate in the soil, it stimulates an organism called *Pseudomonas syringae*, which, get this, floats up into the air and seeds rain. Go back and have a listen to that podcast, that episode that I did with Terry McCosker. I had the pleasure of visiting Armidale up in Northern New South Wales and doing a workshop for the Southern New England Landcare. And the CEO of the Southern New England Landcare Group, Karen Zirkler, took us on a one day tour with my wife Annie. And we were accompanied by organic cattle farmer Glenn Morris, and organic cattle and sheep farmer, or regenerative shape and cattle farmer Tim Wright. And that was such an eyeopening experience for us and I did interviews with each of those. So go back and have a listen to that.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

And also did a separate episode with Tim Wright. Who, when he was showing me the map of his property, which is a 4,000-acre property divided up into, I think about a hundred different paddocks, so small paddocks that he moves his animals around in tight herds. And he said something which was a real 'aha moment' to me. He said, "Ron, I rest 95% of my land at any one time. I put the cattle or sheep into a paddock, they intensively graze it, urinate, trample it, defecate, spread that wonderful urine on there with plant growth hormone. And then I moved them out to the next paddock. And I leave those paddocks there to recover and regenerate and grow more soil." He's a soil farmer.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

But I thought it was so interesting to make that analogy between resting 95% of his land at any one time. Because for us, stress is not a bad thing. And if we spend 5% of our time in a stressed state, hey look, that's okay. But 95% of the time it would be good if we were in the parasympathetic rest and digest mode. So that was a great metaphor when Tim said that to me, I said, "Gee Tim, that is a metaphor for how we should approach stress." But that's how he manages his land.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

I then got to speak to Nick Jacobs, The International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems, to get a global perspective of this whole regenerative agriculture movement. And that's a really worthwhile episode to go back and listen to. And then I really enjoyed talking to Professor Fred Provenza, who spoke about Nourishment, his fantastic book Nourishment and What Animals Can Teach Us About Rediscovering Our Natural Wisdom. And Fred, that was just such a fantastic episode, I mean he shared some wonderful facts there about how wise animals are. And this is, again, giving another perspective to the important role that animals play in our world, in our lives. And have played for millions of years.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

He also made the point, which I thought was rather interesting, and said that plants actually communicate with one another. When they are being attacked they tell other plants they are being attacked and release chemicals which warn other plants of that attack and tried to resist the attack of whatever is attacking them. They also communicate with the microbes and the fungi in the soil. I mean, apart from the fact that they don't move, one could almost say that plants are sentinel organisms. And I posed the question to Fred, "Gee, I'm not sure that I feel very comfortable, in an ethical way, of consuming a sentinel beast in the form of a plant." Well okay, we should honour the beast, we should honour the plant. Particularly if it's all grown on nutrient-dense soils.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

So they were our sort of regen-agriculture episodes. I did a great podcast interview with Sam Manger, Dr Sam Manger, who is the President of the Australasian College of Lifestyle Medicine. And we talked about lifestyle medicine, something we should all be very familiar with. Oral health, of course, was not far away from our minds, my background being dental, you know. And this was of interest to anybody with a mouth who is interested in their health but has never fully connected the two.

And I spoke to my friend and holistic dentist in Brisbane, Australia, Dr David Cowhig, who had this wonderful model called Oral Fitness. And the F-I-T-N-E-S-S stands for ... F stands for 'function and fauna', so that's the microbes and how our jaws function. The I stands for 'infections and inflammation'. The T stands for 'toxicity', because of the materials we place into people's mouths. N stands for the nutrition, nourishment. E and T, the fact that the shape and size of our mouth reflects the shape and size of the upper airway. S stands for 'smile', and that is the fitness program.

So go back and have a listen to that. And Dr. Lisa Matriste, who is also a holistic dentist in Melbourne, Australia, and very instrumental in the Say No to Mercury movement. The UN has put out the Minamata Agreement, and Lisa was just recently in Geneva speaking to 1500 delegates on this very issue of mercury in the environment. And when we speak about mercury in the environment and the dangers, that includes people's mouths. Because mercury amalgam fillings have been the most commonly used filling material for the last 160 years in the dental profession.

Meditation was another topic we touched on, and I spoke to Tom Cronin on his wonderful film, The Portal, talking about Vedic meditation. My old friend, Dr Shankardev Saraswati, we did two episodes there, Finding Life's Meaning, a light topic if ever there was one, but I always have so much fun talking to Shankardev. And we also discussed Ayurvedic medicine. Nutrition obviously, with Brittany Darling, whole food healing and starting on solids. Jeff Chilton, we talked about the magic of mushrooms. And Stephen Cabral, the rain barrel effect and how ... Well, I guess this is the thing about loading one stressor on top of the other until the rain barrel overflows. And that's a great metaphor for how we can approach health.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

We kicked off the year talking to Dr Rod Tayler, from Low Carb Down Under, an amazing movement in



Australia that focuses on low carb and healthy fats. And Rod then introduced me to one of Australia's, in fact, one of the world's leading sports medicine physicians, Dr Peter Brukner. The episode we called 'A Fat Lot Of Good', and it was an insight into sports medicine. And Peter had an epiphany at the age of 60, where he discovered the wonders of low carb eating and how ... And we also covered some interesting aspects of sports medicine.

And that led me to a discussion with Dr Rob Szabo, a medical practitioner in Melbourne, who is from the Low Carb Clinic in Melbourne. And Rob described his own experience with type two diabetes as a doctor. And we discussed the standard advice that is given by medical practitioners who are approaching this until they experienced type two diabetes as Rob did, and then had an epiphany himself. And if you are pre-diabetic, if you are diabetic, or if you just want to avoid diabetes, which as you may or may not know, is an absolute epidemic in our modern Western World, then that episode with Rob Szabo is well worth a listen to.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

Environment, environmental health, and putting your own house in order is another focus that we have on this program. I mean, you could be on the best diet in the world, taking the best supplements, meditating, exercising. But if your own house has problems, and by problems, we're talking about mycotoxins such as mould, that can be devastating to your health. Amie Skilton, the episode 'A Compelling Story on How Devastating Household Mold Can Be', was a tremendous example of that.

And Nicole Bijlsma, who is doing her PhD at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, and has written some fabulous books on home biology, we had a terrific episode with Nicole talking about that very subject, about how to assess your own home. Pri Bandara, Dr Pri Bandara, a medical researcher at the University of New South Wales, discussed EMF, electromagnetic radiation in 5G. And she is part of the Oceanic Radiofrequency Scientific Advisory Service, and that was a real eyeopener as well. And she related her own family experience but approached it from a medical researcher's point of view.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

Lisa Matraste, of course, was talking about ... I mentioned her in the oral health review if you like, but it's also a big factor in the environment as well. It is illegal for a dentist to put any scrap mercury amalgam into the garbage, or toilet, or down the sink, but it is legal for them to ... The only place it is legal to put dental mercury amalgam, as I said, you're not allowed to put it in the garbage, the toilet, or down the sink. The EPA will come down, the Environmental Protection Authority will come down very hard on you with that. But according to the authorities, the only safe place to put mercury amalgam filling is in a human being.

Now I pause for a moment because with the logic of that you kind of go, "What did he just say? Did he just say that?" Yes, I did. And that is why it's so important to take control of this environmental toxin issue yourself. It's an overwhelming issue, it's an overwhelming problem. But the good news is, that with information comes power, and by making informed decisions, you can reduce your chemical toxic load by 80 or 90%, and your EMF, wifi, 5G load by similar amounts. So you do have control over this and you should not rely on the authorities to protect you.

We also covered the topic of vegetables, because plant-based vegetable diet has come in for a lot of attention. And veganism is a very strong and powerful movement. And my view on that is that the ethical issues surrounding being a vegan, and that is the cruelty of animal agriculture, industrial animal agriculture are a problem. I mean, I have no argument with that. I think things that are ... It is cruel, the way animals are put into feedlots, into pens, into sheds, and crammed in, and force-fed, and that is a problem. What is not good for the animal is not good for the human. And what is not good for the human or the animal is not good for the planet.

So I have no argument about that. But to imagine that just eating vegetables, where millions of acres of land are cleared and smaller animals are exterminated in the process. I mean billions of animals and I don't know whether size counts here, but I think an animal is an animal. And I think we should respect all animals. So avoiding animals is not the solution. Managing them properly, as we started talking about in this review, through regenerative agricultural techniques and holistic land management, is the answer. In regenerating soil, regenerating healthy soil, not having an adversarial approach to microbes in the soil, and learning how to nurture healthy microbes, healthy mycorrhizal fungi, healthy animals, healthy plants, and healthy animals that eat those plants and regenerate the soil. That is the answer and I do not believe veganism is the answer.

But ethically, I agree with them about the cruel treatment of animals. But hey, if we're going to talk about animals, let's talk about all animals here and let's not ignore the fact that if you're on just a plant-based diet, to imagine that animals are not affected or exterminated in the process of growing those plants is naive, to say the least. And of course, if you think plant-based nutrition is the only way, well let's just pause for a moment on that great episode I had with my friend Maria Hunt, where we talked about a healthy bum, and specifically oxalates was a great episode.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

Now, every single day, your body sends you a message. And that's like your private health report and it comes in the form of what is in the toilet bowl. And if you want to reference the Bristol Stool Chart as to what constitutes healthy bowel movements, then that gives you a reasonable idea of how you are doing, nutritionally. You might also look at your skin, you might also think about your mood because mood and food are connected. But your bum gives you a great laboratory report every day, and it doesn't cost you a cent. So pause for a moment, for a week or two, and review everything you put in your mouth, and see how that translates to a toilet bowl report card.

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

But Maria also spoke about oxalates as a potential problem in plants. And while we're at it, we also covered the fact that phytates, salicylate, FODMAPs ... FODMAPs stands for fructo, oligo, and disaccharides, and monosaccharides, and polyphenols, as components of vegetables that are potentially damaging to a person's health. So how about that? Yes, plants are an important part of our diet, I guess. We're often told that I've often espoused that. But hey, let's remember we're all individuals, and if oxalates, phytates, salicylates, or FODMAPs negatively affect your health, vegetables may not be everything they're cracked up to be.

So, the year in review, I hope I've covered a few topics there. There'll be hyperlinks to each of those episodes in the show notes. And again, don't forget to go and leave us a review on the iTunes. There will be a link on the show notes to make it easy for you to do that. 2019, wow, what a year. What a year it has been. And you know, we could be excused for feeling a little bit despondent. We seem to be polarized, more polarized than ever. I had a very interesting insight into that polarization, listening to other podcasts as well and the whole idea of mental health and connection is so important.

I've referenced this study many times during the year, but the Harvard Longevity and Wellness Study, which has gone on for 75 years, has said that the most important predictor of health, wellness, and longevity, is relationships. And that means real relationships. I mean if you're fortunate enough to have a significant other, that's great, but it doesn't have to be just that. It can be your family, your friends, your sporting club, your church, whatever group you belong to. But real connections are important.

And there was another interesting study that was done which said ... About 25 years ago that asked the question, "If something serious happened to you, how many people could you rely on?" And 25 years ago, the average was about two and a half people, which is rather reassuring, because having two and a half people you could rely on is pretty done well. Today, that study was redone just in the last 12 months. And the average response was 0.7 of a person. Now, what does 0.7 of a person look like? Well, go onto any public space and watch how people are relating to each other. They are looking down on their phones, they're not engaging with each other. And there you have the 0.7 of a person.

But the important point here is, that with our attention economy, where we are clickbait. It is so easy to become polarized because we're grasping at connections and we love certainty. So I guess at the end, if I had to resolve what was my new year resolution, it would be to put my phone away from a hell of a lot more, and engage with the people around me regularly. I know if my wife is listening to this, if my family is listening to this, they will be nodding their heads and going, "Oh really? I'll look forward to you doing that."

Dr Ron Ehrlich:

But that's my new year resolution, that's what I'm aiming for. So I hope you've enjoyed this year. I'm looking forward, 2020 is going to be an awesome year. There's going to be so many exciting things happening. And hey, look, let's get this message out there. My parting messages will say, "Leave a review on iTunes." But, I hope you've enjoyed the year, until next year, this is Dr Ron Ehrlich. Be well.



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