Transcript:

Interview with Christiane Northrup
drnorthrup.com

Interview by Mark Hyman, MD
drhyman.com
Dr. Hyman: Hi, this is Dr. Mark Hyman, welcome to the Fat Summit.

Dr. Northrup: Hey Dr. Mark Hyman, how great it is to be here.

Dr. Hyman: Hi Northrup - it's so great. The Fat Summit's where we separate fat from fiction, and I'm thrilled to have you here. For those of you who don't know Northrup, she's one of my idols. I read her book "Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom" years ago, and it really informed a lot of my thinking about women's health and that was great because I worked at Canyon Ranch for most of my patients from between 35 and 55...so, without your book, I don't know if I would have made it through that.

And it was great and you're an OB-GYN doc, you were former professor at the Maine Medical Center, you're a New York Times bestselling author and your recent book "Goddesses Never Age" - just fabulous. And you've really been a pioneer in thinking about women's health in a way no one else has really done. And you've spoken about it, you've taught about it, you've empowered women and you really have connected the dots between our mind, and our body, our spirit, our emotions and how it all matters and really empower women with tools, knowledge and skills to actually take care of themselves in meaningful ways and transform their health.

And your new book is just all about how what we think of as aging really is abnormal aging, and we can really rethink how we look at the aging process. So it's fabulous; we're going to get into all of that.

So first, I want to start by welcoming you, and asking you to talk about your own personal experience as a woman and growing up in the era of the low-fat craze and as a doctor, also dealing with that in women's health and what you found in terms of your own health and in the patients you saw in women's health.

Dr. Northrup: Well, like all women, no, not all women but a lot of women I went on my first weight loss diet at about 12 or 13 because I had a mother who was not anorexic or anything, but it's clear to me now...you know how when your parents get older, you can actually hear what the message is everywhere
we go now she talks about how heavy someone is whether they're heavy, or they're heavy and so I know that that was a subliminal message.

And when you reach puberty for men and women's for boys and girls there's usually a period of time, when you gain some fat in order for your growth spurt to happen. Now I don't know if I ever had that growth spurt, but I do know there was a time when I knew the calorie count of every food known to humanity. Because back then, we literally told people to count calories. And I was often on weight loss diets for; I think it's safe to say 40 years.

What's interesting, and that's just to maintain what I consider a normal weight, a normal weight. So and here's how it works. You let it get away from you, and then it creeps up and then you're back down and you didn't...so it's what we would call weight management but what things really got interesting, when I began to work with Michio Kushi of the macrobiotics group down in Boston and Michio, as some people know, was the founder of Erewhon Natural Foods, he was an absolute pioneer in the natural food movement.

*East West Journal* is now *Natural Health*, but I was featured on the cover of *East West Journal*. And the diet was brown rice, sea vegetables, regular root vegetables, and then the big old macrobiotic cookies. Now, what was interesting about those in that community many of the people smoked and drank alcohol but under cover of darkness - actually the smoking they did freely.

But it was all based on yin and yang and I also, Mark, as you know, saw a lot of people who heal cancer and all kinds of things with that diet. Because it was and is a whole food diet. Now after about seven years on that and bringing up my kids on that I had a daughter who said to me at age four...I once served Cornish game hen for Thanksgiving really branching out...

**Dr. Hyman:** A little, little, tiny, tiny, tiny turkey.

**Dr. Northrup:** ...and she dove into it like a starving person and said, "I love this codfish" she literally did not know what meat was and then she told me at about the age of six, "When I grow up, I'm not going to be a vegetarian." Because her body knew that she needed more protein and what was happening to me is, I was gaining weight, my nails were starting to break my hair was not so
very good and so I begin to...and that's when the Zone came out, Barry Sears’ Zone.

Dr. Hyman: It's also on the Fat Summit with us, too.

Dr. Northrup: Yeah, okay, great. So that's good. So, then I began to add more protein and instantly that constant craving went away and so my body became more balanced, but then I hit menopause. I called Bob Atkins and I wasn't losing weight, couldn't manage to lose weight, didn't know what to do, starving didn't work, Atkins...

Dr. Hyman: The calorie counting wasn't working out for you.

Dr. Northrup: No and then, going on the Atkins, 90% - what he did for those of us who just couldn't lose weight - go on at like 90% fat...like, just slather butter on everything. Never lost a pound. Called him back and he says: "Well, you're menopausal." It's, “Bob, who do you think your patients are? They're women.”

So I began to realize that there was something more to this. So, it wasn't all fat and no carbs. But it wasn't all carbs and no fat. And what I finally know, now, is it's all about insulin, isn't it? It's all about insulin and where you are on the spectrum of insulin resistance. And that's what this low-fat, dietary approach. We all remember Snackwell cookies, Susan Powter -"Stop the Insanity!" Let's eat a bathtub full of pasta.

Dr. Hyman: I used to eat huge amounts of pasta, yeah.

Dr. Northrup: Yeah, what that does over time is, your poor pancreas gets so tired because every time the blood sugar spikes from the carbs, you get the pancreatic cells, portion out insulin, and over time they get tired and they can't do it anymore. So they've stored as much fat as they possibly can, the rest just stays in your blood as high blood sugar and then you get pre-diabetes or diabetes or metabolic syndrome. That's the long and short of it. Now what I think, most people don't realize, is there is a continuum. So there are those people who can be on a high-carbohydrate, complex-carbohydrate diet - low fat - and lose weight. I'm not one of them.
**Dr. Hyman:** Yeah, no that's true. We're all genetically so unique and different. I see that in my patients are some people who need very high-fat diets to actually lose weight and others that are eating more carbs and actually do fine. So, I think it's really individual. But within that context you need good fats, you need body protein, you need the good carbohydrates.

**Dr. Northrup:** And what is fat? Fat is the building block for your hormones.

**Dr. Hyman:** That's right, let's talk about that.

**Dr. Northrup:** All these women, right? Who would do the low-fat thing, like the big old low-fat muffin and get more and more and more depressed?

**Dr. Hyman:** Depressed, yeah. So, how does that work? How does fat affect your hormones?

**Dr. Northrup:** Well, you need fat to build a hormone because a hormone is built from cholesterol. That is the building block of a hormone. So what we've done as doctors - you and I didn't but the rest of them did - tell everyone they need a statin drug to get their cholesterol down; and then, as you know, the American Heart Association has kept lowering what we consider...

**Dr. Hyman:** The target.

**Dr. Northrup:** Okay, so I just learned this from a doc friend of mine out at Kaiser in Denver. She said the number that we're never telling people is the number needed for benefit - the number needed to treat. This here's what she told me about statins. 20 people need to be on statins for one person to get a benefit. 20!

**Dr. Hyman:** It's actually worse than that, I think, Christiane.

**Dr. Northrup:** Is it worse?

**Dr. Hyman:** Yeah, I think the data is pretty, pretty frightening around statins and how they work; and I'm going to pull up some data because it's pretty scary
and I just was looking at it the other day. So yeah, the whole “number needed to treat” thing is a big issue because it means that you have to treat a lot of people to get a benefit. If you're taking an antibiotic for a bladder infection, the number needed to treat is like one or two - maybe it's resistant to one antibiotic. But basically, it works every time. It works.

But for statins, there's this group called the NNT group and they have a website called theNNT.com, and you can look up all this data and all the research behind it. And what they found was that people who took statins for five years and had no pre-existing heart disease, they had no heart disease was documented, there were no lives saved at all.

And only 1 in 104 people who took the statins were helped by preventing a heart attack. Only 1 in a 104 people! And only 1 in 154 people were helped by preventing getting a stroke. So that means that you have to treat 154 people to not get a stroke in 1 person.

Dr. Northrup: And how many, then got harmed.

Dr. Hyman: That's it. Then even worse, 1 in 10 had muscle pain and damage. And 1 in 50 develops diabetes. So you're not even coming out ahead, in the end; you're actually creating more people with diabetes than you're saving from heart attack - so...

Dr. Northrup: What was the name of that website again?

Dr. Hyman: It's called theNNT.com. And it's, really, everybody should look at it. So even if you had a heart disease, so then the doctor, well you know, maybe you can make an argument for we can't really convince people to take it if you've never had heart disease, but everybody's recommending it for that. That's called primary prevention.

But for secondary prevention, which is if you've actually already had a heart attack or you have heart disease, well then they say it seems to have benefit. Well, what is that benefit? Well, only 1 in 83 people who'd actually already had a heart attack didn't die. So that's only a 1.2% benefit. And only 1 in 39 was helped by preventing a fatal heart attack, which was about 2.6% benefit. And
that's not a great drug. And you're getting all these people who are harmed. So 1 in 10 got muscle damage and pain, and 1 in 50 got diabetes. So it's really not that great of a drug. And when they talk about the benefit, it's an absolute risk reduction of 3% to 2%, which sounds bad. When they're talking about 30% reduction, that's what they're talking about. It's just a 3% to 2% reduction. So it's all kind of a bunch of mumbo jumbo and statins can help certain people. I'm not saying they're bad drugs. They need to be used on the right person, at the right dose, for the right reasons. So what happens when people have low-fat diets or have statins that they and how does that affect their hormones?

**Dr. Northrup:** What happens is, they often become depressed and they'll notice the difference in their nails and in their hair, libido goes down. So it's like that awful thing where the woman has had breast cancer or ovarian cancer and then she's on all the drugs for that, and when she says, "But my quality of life sucks," and then the doctor says, "Yeah, but you're alive."

**Dr. Hyman:** You're alive, right.

**Dr. Northrup:** It's, “Are you kidding me?” And it's like, if someone believes they need a statin which they're convinced they need by mainstream medicine, then they just think this is the cost of not dying. But it's ridiculous and it's interesting, Mark, that you've been saying this stuff about statins for a long time. I've been saying it, and it amazes me that so few people when they're actually with their doctor say, "I'm not going to take that."

**Dr. Hyman:** Right, yeah, no - I know people; they scare the pants off them. I have this problem all the time. I talk to people; I show them the results; I explain it all to them. They get off the statin, they go to the doctor, their cholesterol's up, they get back on it, they come back to me. It's like ping pong.

**Dr. Northrup:** I know.

**Dr. Hyman:** And then I try to explain to them. What's interesting is, we do a lot of testing of cholesterol, using particle size, and statins don't really affect that. So they'll lower the total cholesterol, and they'll lower the LDL cholesterol. They may or may not affect the triglycerides or HDL, but they never affect the particles. Which I thought is amazing, to me, because I thought it would; but
what I see is that people are still eating carbs and sugar and their insulin resistance is high and they have very low HDL, high triglycerides, and they have these really dense amounts of small particles which are the ones that cause heart disease. So when you put people on high-fat diets, that all goes away. It's unbelievable.

**Dr. Northrup:** It's so true. This is one of the things, because I've been around for a while, I have my lipid profiles from over the years.

**Dr. Hyman:** Yeah, what did you find?

**Dr. Northrup:** Yeah, when I was 35 my HDL was 35; that is way too low.

**Dr. Hyman:** Yes, terrible.

**Dr. Northrup:** Now it's 75. And we were also teaching people, right, that there was nothing they could do about their HDL. It was just genetic and you were stuck with it. That's a bunch of bullshit.

**Dr. Hyman:** No, it's true. It's true. I've had guys who had heart attacks and they were 50 years old; and I put them on this approach of higher fat, good fats - olive oil, avocados, coconut oil, even saturated fats - and their numbers got better off the medication, compared to when they were on it. So their numbers were better, actually, without taking the statin. By eating the right foods and their HDLs went up from, like, 35 to 55 or 60; and their triglycerides came up from 300 to 70, and it's really astounding to see that. And I think there are a lot of people who have weight loss resistance because they haven't really dealt with this insulin issue and they're afraid of fat. And so it's confusing for people.

**Dr. Northrup:** Absolutely. Absolutely. So actually, you have to give it a shot. They have to try it. And they'll see, first thing, what happens is we know that what you eat affects your blood sugar for the entire day. And I guess what I would say is what you've been saying for a long time. Get your fasting insulin tested, get your fasting blood sugar tested, and your two-hour postprandial; and remember that those things - in normal, regular labs across the country - the amounts that they tell you are normal are too high.
Dr. Hyman: Are too high, right. If you were a Martian and landed in America, 70% of people would be overweight, which is how we get our reference ranges. We look at the population; we go, “What's the average?” and we go, “That's normal,” but it's actually a sick population to start with.

Dr. Northrup: Yes, so it's that difference between optimal and getting by. Same with the RDAs for nutrients, right?

Dr. Hyman: And I think for people who want to try out the higher fat diet and cut out the sugars and the refined flours, if they actually measure these particle size and their lipids and look at these numbers, it's a great way to see how your body responds. And your body will tell you. It's the smartest organism on the planet, and it will tell you what works and what doesn't based on what you do with it. And you can listen to your doctor, but you'd rather listen to your body and find out what it's telling you because that's the key.

Dr. Northrup: And one of the tests that you taught me about was the NMR laboratory and those tests for particle size. And that’s really where you want to be. So I want everyone to know that you're like me - we've been in this a long time and you see what's coming - you can see the trend 10 years, sometimes 15, before it becomes mainstream. And the fact that women are still being put on statins for cholesterols greater than 200 total cholesterol means just about nothing. Nothing.

Dr. Hyman: Right, it's true, it's true. So let's talk a little bit about dieting for women because I think it's such a huge problem; and women go through the struggle of restricting themselves, depriving themselves, having a bad relationship with food. It becomes a big stress in their life; they're disconnected from pleasure around food. And what I'm curious about is your experience as women have shifted their diets to be more inclusive of fat and getting rid of the sugars and carbs. What happens to that whole dynamic?

Dr. Northrup: There's a huge revelation that suddenly they're not starving. And feeling good. And their hair and their nails - it's all good. Other things...

Dr. Hyman: It's better than a facelift.
**Dr. Northrup:** Yeah, other things...you remember when Nick Perricone came out with the wrinkle cure?

**Dr. Hyman:** Yeah, sure, the wrinkle cure, yeah, of course, yeah.

**Dr. Northrup:** And so Nick had the three-day diet of Sockeye salmon - some wild caught Sockeye salmon - and melon and blueberries. And that was pretty much...and maybe some salad. And what happens to people is the inflammation, the cellular inflammation in their body but where you can see it on your skin, instantly decreases. You look younger; you're sleeping better because what we don't realize is all of those inflammatory chemicals from the high blood sugar are irritable, create irritability in the brain, and you can't sleep. So what's the other thing that we need to do to look good? Sleep, right? But when you're eating high carbohydrate foods or foods that become glucose quickly (anything that's refined, anything that's high fructose corn syrup), you're going to get those inflammatory chemicals throughout your body. And you and I know that cellular inflammation is the root cause of all chronic degenerative disease. So women actually believe, “Oh well, I'm 50, so it's normal to have high blood pressure, it's normal to be diabetic, have arthritis.” This is not a natural thing. You can get better, more flexible. I've gotten taller in the last few weeks.

**Dr. Hyman:** I love that.

**Dr. Northrup:** Yeah, so it doesn't need to be this downhill slide. But you, really, I love your...you've got to get together with the right kind of fats. But you're right, even the saturated fat is okay. That's taken a bad rap - saturated fat. But it's okay.

**Dr. Hyman:** What's your perspective on that? Because everybody's like, “Butter is going to kill you!” and butter's back. And you're having Bulletproof coffee and what's happening? It's all confusing right?

**Dr. Northrup:** It is. It is. But again you have to try it in your own body. It took me awhile to learn how to make Bulletproof coffee. Grass-fed butter and with my oils and all that - it's pretty fabulous stuff, I have to say. At first, I just put the dollop of butter in the coffee.
**Dr. Hyman:** Oh, that doesn't work, that doesn't work. You got to watch the video. That's true. It's actually how I wrote my book. I would actually have one for breakfast, and my brain would just pop on. It was like turning a light switch on. I'd be super alert, focused. And I have five jobs. I run my practice, I'm the director of the Cleveland Clinic of Functional Medicine, chairman of the Institute for Functional Medicine, I speak and teach all over, and I have a family. And I just try to do a lot of stuff. And I don't have two years to sit and write a book. I have two weeks, or I have a week here or a week there or a few days here, and when I sit down, I work. And I've found that when I started my day with fat, it was unbelievable; and I have a bagel in the morning or I have something in the morning...

**Dr. Northrup:** NO, no. A bagel in the morning is you're eating the wallpaper at four. The pastry in the morning thing, or a bagel, it couldn't be worse. Your blood sugar goes up and then it plummets lower than when you woke up, and seriously, by four in the afternoon, you're starting your evening meal in front of the refrigerator. Which goes till midnight? I been there, done that. And then you add the stresses of daily life and...

**Dr. Hyman:** So what's amazing with this, right, is that - I'm sure you've seen this - is that when you start eating this way you shut off the hunger center in the brain. If you get enough fat, that is what regulates your brain to not feel hungry; and when you eat sugar, even when you eat a lot of it, you will be hungry. You could eat a whole bag of cookies and still want another bag, right? But you can't eat a whole stick of butter and then another stick of butter. You're going to feel full. And that's the shift that happens. And so, you don't have to be white knuckling it the whole time, which women have done their whole lives. Like you said, you've been on a diet for 40 years and now you're not on a diet, you're just eating.

**Dr. Northrup:** That's correct, that's correct.

**Dr. Hyman:** And you're having more fun and you're enjoying your food more and the struggle is over.
**Dr. Northrup:** What else is interesting is I've found some really amazing low-glycemic snacks that are so satisfying.

**Dr. Hyman:** Like what?

**Dr. Northrup:** Dates are my current...oh my God...and now I learned this from the medical medium, Anthony Williams. And he said fruit has...and he's got a whole chapter called, "Fear of Fruit" in his book...and he said that "It's not what you think when it’s whole fruit, like organically grown fruit like berries and apples and so on. They're very satisfying.” And so for the first time in my life, I can announce publicly, right here, I don't crave chocolate anymore.

**Dr. Hyman:** Amazing. By eating...

**Dr. Northrup:** Even though some nice dark chocolate is really good for you. But I don't crave it.

**Dr. Hyman:** That's amazing. Because you're eating more fruit.

**Dr. Northrup:** More fruit but also more fat.

**Dr. Hyman:** More fat. Yeah, the fat it's just amazing what it does, it's unbelievable.

**Dr. Northrup:** And so for me that's avocado, coconut oil, olive oil, that kind of thing.

**Dr. Hyman:** I interviewed Dr. Walter Willett and him and David [Ludwig] literally just published a study. It was the first big meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials on low-fat versus high-fat diets that lasted a year or longer. 53 studies, 68,000 people, and hands down, the high-fat diets won out for more weight loss and for better lipid profiles - which was not surprising to me, but I think it's going to be surprising to a lot of people.

**Dr. Northrup:** Well how long do you think that's going to take? Now, you know and I know from the time we get new data it takes 17 years to get the data to practice. It's takes 17 years...
Dr. Hyman: Yeah, 17 years. If you're lucky, 17 years.

Dr. Northrup: So hopefully the very smart people who are watching us do not need to wait.

Dr. Hyman: No that's the whole point. The great thing about the Internet is that you get to democratize information. And so where could you before have sat and listened to 30 experts and scientists having a conversation about fat and actually hearing subtleties of the issues and learning about the research and hearing about the controversies. It's pretty amazing. I think it's disrupting everything.

Dr. Northrup: Yes, it's true, it's great fun.

Dr. Hyman: It's great, it's very fun. So talk to me more about the "Goddesses Never Age" book, because I think you probably embedded in there a lot of your wisdom that you've accumulated over the years. Tell us about what that means, what you're recommending to people, how they need to think about aging differently.

Dr. Northrup: Right, first of all, I've learned from the work of Dr. Mario Martinez, who started the Biocognitive Science Institute, that beliefs are actually more potent than our genes. I did an interview recently with Vogue because they wanted me to talk to the issue of 28-year-olds who were calling themselves old. I know, it’s, "Oh my God."

Dr. Hyman: Gosh, that make us ancient!

Dr. Northrup: What's so great about when we've gone to medical school and so on, we don't even get rolling until 30. The 30s, that's when you finally start being an adult. And it sets us up in a wonderful way because we don't have those portals that other people have. But what he points out is that portals are fraught with meaning. To age 65 is fraught with the meaning of retired, obsolete. There's some data that New York policemen or policewoman are dead three years later after they retire. Because if you are called to be a cop - the meaning you give working is you're saving lives, you're doing emergencies,
you're protecting and serving, and then you're out to pasture? So we have cultural portals that we learn. Martinez did a study of either 500 or 700 healthy centenarians all over the world, in every different culture. 500 of them minimum.

**Dr. Hyman:** That's a lot of old people.

**Dr. Northrup:** And they had the same thing in common, no matter where they were - Mongolia or France. Number one, I love this, they hated being around old people. And what they meant by that was people who are complaining about their illnesses all the time, people who are complaining about their age, people who are always looking back, never looking forward. It's interesting. They don't go to doctors. The healthy centenarians, when you ask them when's the last time you went to a doctor, they say, "Well, my doctor's dead." And they practice the causes of health. Which are...

**Dr. Hyman:** That's good. That's a good way of putting it. Practice the causes of health. How do you cause health? That's a great concept.

**Dr. Northrup:** Causes of health. That's right - how do you cause health? They do rituals of pleasure. This is really important in the "Goddesses Never Age" book, is rituals of pleasure. So let's say you want a piece of chocolate cake. Now I'm going to New York soon, and there is a restaurant across the street from my hotel that happens to have the best chocolate cake that I've ever eaten in my whole life, ever.

**Dr. Hyman:** Oh my God. Oh my God, oh my God. It's that good.

**Dr. Northrup:** Now, remember, I'm not eating that every day, but when I think about it, I think I need to go there and just be with that again, but in a way...

**Dr. Hyman:** Be one with your cake.

**Dr. Northrup:** Be one with the cake through a ritual of pleasure - tasting every bite - because any woman who's been on a diet or who's been restricting fat and sugar forever will tell you she gets to the bottom of the carton of ice cream and
she tasted just the first two bites. The rest was a food coma. So you need to be absolutely mindful the way you eat. So there are whole treatises on this, that the way you eat something and you savor it, you don't want much, you really don't want much because you signal your body you've had enough.

**Dr. Hyman:** I was talking to Deepak [Chopra] about this the other day, because he just wrote this book called “Super Genes.” And talking about the super gene, which is your genes, your microbiome genes, which is 100 times the amount of genes. And then your epigenome, which is this whole collection of control factors on your genes. So you've got this super gene and it actually listens to your thoughts. It actually registers information and changes which genes are turned on or off. Your gut flora genes, your own genes, your epigenome all are actually listening to your thoughts and feelings. So if you're all, “I'm going to eat this cake and I'm going to get fat and I'm going to be sick,” it's doing one thing. And if you're saying, “Oh my God, this is the best cake I've ever had; I'm having the most happy food orgasm I've ever had; I'm so happy!” then that changes everything, right?

**Dr. Northrup:** That changes everything. And since I don't crave it, and the truth is I don't care one way or another, except that it's so good I think it's important to go there because...

**Dr. Hyman:** Pleasure is way underrated. Listen, if eating healthy was not fun or pleasurable, I wouldn't do it. Because I am a glutton for pleasure, and I love pleasure, and I love to do things that are fun and that taste good or feel good. I don't want to depriving myself or eating food that doesn't taste good. I'm the last guy that's going to do that.

**Dr. Northrup:** Yes, so what does pleasure do? It increases beta-endorphin, serotonin - everything pleasurable increases the nitric oxide elaboration by the epithelial lining of all the cells in our bodies. And because nitric oxide is the ubernetransmitter, it increases your level of all the stuff for which people are taking all the Prozac, Zoloft, Paxil.

**Dr. Hyman:** Viagra.
**Dr. Northrup:** Viagra. Yes, Viagra absolutely. That's the trick to Viagra is nitric oxide. One of the things, don't you love about Viagra and Cialis, there's a black box warning for unilateral blindness because when the blood goes south so fast, it literally can close off the retinal, little tiny arteries in the eyes, and you got to admit that's a funny side effect.

**Dr. Hyman:** As long as it's only one eye.

**Dr. Northrup:** You're so funny. But still, you know the pleasure can be virtual Viagra. It's virtual Viagra, and we know also a turned on woman is what turns on a man, assuming they're heterosexual.

**Dr. Hyman:** So what else can you share with us about the book and what you've found?

**Dr. Northrup:** First of all you and I both know (and because you're working at the Cleveland Clinic) the difference between chronologic and biologic age. It's a massive difference. So you can have an 80-year-old going on 50, and there's a lot of 30-year-olds going on 80 just from the way they talk. So I teach people about the cultural portals.

**Dr. Hyman:** Don't believe in the beliefs that actually keep...

**Dr. Northrup:** Don't believe in them. Take a look at what you want to do is find the exception to the rule. Just find the exception. So, for instance, I have them look at Meryl Streep, Dame Judi Dench, Helen Mirren - let's look at Sophia Loren, got a new lipstick line.

**Dr. Hyman:** She must be in her 80s now, right?

**Dr. Northrup:** Right. And Mario Martinez says don't give your age. And I think that's a really good idea and here's why. We co-author each other's biology. So if I know that someone's 75 or 35 or whatever, I've already got a limiting belief about them that I learned from the culture. I've had women tell me that they've been told that they're too young to have a job; that they look like they can't do it. I remember when I was a young doctor, a woman said to me, "You're a doctor? You're such a little nothing." And I've had men write to me,
“Should I lie on my dating profile? Because I'm really very young. Young biologically If I put down my chronologic age, what'll happen is the people who would be suitable for me are going to pass me over just because of that age.” And he's right.

**Dr. Hyman:** I had an experience today. I'm in New York and I went for a run in Central Park, I went to Yoga, came back and I don't really have mirrors in my house. I got a little mirror in the bathroom; I don't like to look at myself in the mirror. But there're these mirrors in the hotel, and I took off my clothes to get a shower and, oh, I was like “Wow!” If I look below the neck, I think my body looks fitter, stronger, and leaner than it did 20 years ago when I was eating a low-fat diet and I was a little pudgy around the middle and I didn't have the muscular definition. It's unbelievable and I'm 55 years old, I'm saying, and maybe that's not a good thing but I was, wow, that's pretty unbelievable. And I don't even work out that much. I'm busy - I run around the world. I've been in Abu Dhabi, and Cleveland, New York and California - all in the last week and it's a rough life, but I feel good. And I'm amazed at actually what happens when you put in the right information in your body and a little bit of exercise on top of that and your body - it's great. I had this one guy who came to my recent Public Television filming, and I've done a lot of that. And he was so great; he had done my program - he was 50% fat diet, right? And he had been a long distance biker, so he was biking 200 miles in a day. And he showed a picture of himself on his bike and he had this big, fat gut. And then showed a picture, an after picture, where he actually did the program of a higher fat diet, he lost 40 pounds. So all that exercise, 200 miles a day, wasn't helping him and he...

**Dr. Northrup:** I'm really glad you brought that up. You see women at the gym all the time. They're on the treadmill, they're dieting constantly, they never lose a pound. So this is another myth. Calories in, calories out burn more calories through exercise. It doesn't work if you don't have the diet right;, it just doesn't work.

**Dr. Hyman:** It's true. Let's talk about the calorie myth because that's a big one. You were an expert calorie counter maybe...

**Dr. Northrup:** Oh I was.
**Dr. Hyman:** ...Olympic-level and then it wasn't working out that great. So what is the problem with calories and calorie counting? And are all calories the same?

**Dr. Northrup:** All calories are different and that is the biggest myth that continues to be perpetrated on the public. That a calorie is a calorie is a calorie. It is not true. A fat calorie will be metabolized by the body entirely differently than one from white sugar. And that brings us to what's more important is the glycemic index. First of all, let me just say, if you count calories, here's what you're going to do. You will save up your calories for the chocolate brownie. So you'll just do it because that's the mindset of that. So you just...

**Dr. Hyman:** These are the points, right? The points in Weight Watchers, which was really independent of the quality of those calories.

**Dr. Northrup:** Exactly. Exactly. So the deal is we save up for a treat but here's the problem with the treat. The treat undermines your health, so you think, “I've been good all day so now I get to be bad.” It's insanity; its insanity. When you no longer count calories, this wonderful thing happens. You talk about the intelligence of the body. The body just naturally does what it's supposed to do and you eat according to your appetite and you get satiated in a normal way. We're not supposed to be going starving all the time. The bakery wafting out the Cinnabon in the airport…

**Dr. Hyman:** Oh, that should be illegal.

**Dr. Northrup:** It should be illegal. Because, you get off the plane, what's happened, right?

**Dr. Hyman:** I have to fight that when I walk by that. I *know* about all this and *I* feel like I'm getting yanked over to the Cinnabon!

**Dr. Northrup:** Well because your cortisol and your epinephrine are up just from being in the airport and traveling all around like you're doing. So when those stress hormones are up, it actually creates this whole metabolism in your body where you want sugar. What happens to our patients on steroids? Prednisone and so on?
**Dr. Hyman:** They want sugar. Crave sugar. Can't stop eating sugar.

**Dr. Northrup:** They crave sugar constantly. Pop tarts. Even people who use a steroid inhaler will crave sugar. And it's from those stress hormones, and we know that those stress hormones, even endogenous cortisol, is an independent risk factor for osteoporosis. And it's because it's making you crave the sugar. Now, how do you arm yourself at an airport? Do you take big bags of almonds?

**Dr. Hyman:** I have a whole emergency food kit, and I have it with me at all the time. I probably have an entire day's food in my bag at all time. It's high density, high-fat food. So it's macadamia nuts; it's packets of almond butter; it's packets of coconut butter; it's buffalo bison bars that are very high in fat and protein...and that'll get me through an emergency. So I don't have to be stuck in an airport or on an airplane and have pretzels and a Cinnabon or whatever. It's challenging when you're traveling. There are some airports that are good. I'm never in a food emergency, and it's tough when you don't plan ahead and don't think about it because you have to eat and when your blood sugar drops and you've got to eat - and whatever's there, you're going to eat.

**Dr. Northrup:** Yeah, you are. And the other thing about women, we're the ones with the breasts, so we're the ones who are giving food to the families and all of that. So one thing I want to say to women is to feed yourself first. It's the oxygen thing coming down in the airport.

And never a bunch of different meals for different people in your family. We've become crazy about that. This is dinner. Hello, this is dinner.

**Dr. Hyman:** I always said there were only two things on the menu at my house when my kids were growing up. Take it or leave it.

**Dr. Northrup:** That's good. That's really very good.

**Dr. Hyman:** There was no menu, it wasn't a restaurant. This is what was for dinner. And there was no kids' menu. That's a whole crazy concept on top of that. And that whole calorie thing is interesting. If you were the Olympic world
record holder in calorie counting, if you were off by 100 calories a day (and even the best experts can't be with 100 calories) - f you're off more than 100 calories a day, and eat more than an extra 100 calories over 30 years, you're going to gain 30 pounds. So you can't actually regulate your calories by thinking about it or planning. You have to do it by eating the right foods that naturally regulate how much you eat.

And that's what fat does; fat naturally regulates how much you eat. So I talk a lot in the book you can't really choose how much you eat because that's automatically governed by primitive signals. But you can choose what you eat. And if you eat the right foods that are real, whole, fresh foods - low-glycemic foods full of the right fats, lots of fiber, everything takes care of itself. You don't have to think about it and measure it and worry about it. And that's what's beautiful. Because when you eat sugared calories, the glycemic calories you talked about, they actually increase insulin which makes you hungry, it slows your metabolism, it actually makes you store belly fat. And so it's a vicious cycle, even if it's exactly the same calorie as a fat calorie.

**Dr. Northrup:** Exactly. And that's the thing. Also, are you finding that the time of day you eat matters? You remember all those studies where they'd show if you at the same amount of calories first thing in the morning you'd lose weight?

**Dr. Hyman:** Oh yeah, oh yeah. I call it the Sumo wrestler diet. I wrote about it in my book “UltraMetabolism” 10 years ago. Because I saw this in my patients. They would eat at night, they would not eat all day, they'd skip breakfast, maybe a salad for lunch, and then they would gorge and then they'd go to bed and they couldn't lose weight. And they felt bad. So - the Sumo wrestler, that’s how they gain weight. They basically feed them right before they go to bed. In the morning they wake up, exercise, have lunch, and they take a nap. They wake up, exercise, big meal, go to sleep. And that's basically what they do to gain all the weight and it works. That's what the Americans have done is basically end-load their calories in their day. And that drives this massive obesity epidemic.

**Dr. Northrup:** The other thing I want to talk about for a minute is grains.

**Dr. Hyman:** Oh yeah, let's do that.
Dr. Northrup: Okay, so here I was with Michio Kushi and everything was brown rice and whole grains and all of that. And then we found that's a good way to fatten not only cattle but humans.

Dr. Hyman: Yeah, yeah. Tell me more about that. Because I think people get confused about that. Because the government's telling us to eat whole grains. You see whole grain cereals, you see Rice Krispie treats with whole grains, and you see...

Dr. Northrup: And too, I did love it when Tom Brady came out against them. And that's like, “Go, Tom!” I love the New England Patriots. I'm sorry, but...

Dr. Hyman: No, I work with Tom, he's great. And I emailed him, I said, "Hey Tom, let's work together. It'll bring all the celebrities together, all the sports icons, and let's take this on." Because it's time.

Dr. Northrup: It is time.

Dr. Hyman: And he's, "Yes." And I'm okay, let's do it.

Dr. Northrup: That's good. And I know that the woman that he's married to is all into it. She came to one of my lectures in Florida and they're people who believe in health.

Dr. Hyman: They do, yeah.

Dr. Northrup: Yeah, so anyway, the grain thing. I think some quinoa is okay, the more ancient grains, Kamut and there's another one, Teff. But we know that the wheat in the United States has really been messed with in a big way. Bill, what is his name? Bill Davis who wrote “Wheat Belly,” he shows you what the wheat used to look like in his PBS special. So these fields of waving grain, it was tall. Now it's this dwarf GMO thing, and it's got too much gluten and too much all kind of modified genetics in it. And so I think there are countries that will not even import American wheat anymore.
**Dr. Hyman:** And in Europe they don't allow GMO wheat. That's why you can go to Italy and France and have wheat products. And my patients who actually have gluten sensitivities don't seem to be bothered by them. It's very interesting.

**Dr. Northrup:** So, therefore, in the United States, I would avoid anything made with wheat. Because here's the problem, even organic wheat, it's interesting as you get older, we seem to lose our tolerance for gluten in general. Not everybody, but...

**Dr. Hyman:** It's true. It's a big problem. But I think grains can be included in the diet but it shouldn't be a staple. And I think there are some people who say look, the Chinese ate and the Japanese ate tons of rice and they were skinny. So why can't we eat rice? Well, yeah, but they also didn't have any processed food, they also lived in a very different environment, they had lots of exercise they did every day - just their normal activities - far more than we do. And they were able to tolerate more. But it's not necessarily...

**Dr. Northrup:** But what's happening to them now interestingly, as they move into the cities, same diet, they're getting obese.

**Dr. Hyman:** It's true, yeah. So I think grains are a challenge, and I, as part of the Eat Fat Get Thin Program, for the first three weeks I recommend people don't eat any grains and actually don't even eat beans because beans actually also can be irritating to some people. They all cause digestive problems, as we know for many, but they also contain mineral binders and they also have lectins that may be inflammatory. So we actually take people off it, just as a trial period, just to see what happens and it's amazing.

We did this, Chris; we had a 68% reduction in all symptoms from all diseases in 21 days. That means migraines, joint pain, irritable bowel, reflux, acne, you name it. People got better because food is such a powerful drug and when [you] take out the things that are inflammatory, you take out the foods that drive increase in sugar and insulin, and you add the right foods, the right fats, nutrient dense food, the body really can repair in such a quick time. And that's, I think, what's the message of your book about aging, because it's really showing that at any age you can reverse that trajectory and become biologically younger.
**Dr. Northrup:** Now the other thing you did is wrote that great book “The Daniel Plan” because there is a real difference when you, pardon the term, break bread in community. When you eat with others, the digestive process is much better.

**Dr. Hyman:** I call it the love diet.

**Dr. Northrup:** The love diet, yes. Now when Martinez did the study of the healthy centenarians, they all have a ritual of pleasure. Every day that ritual can be a glass of scotch or whiskey, it could be a cigar, and it can be some kind of sugar. But it's done in ritual format, in community. It's not like, “Oh, I'm sneaking the chocolate bar in the closet and I hope my husband won't bust me.” It's a very different biochemistry, and that's important. I think you can eat more widely. Well we all know when you're in love, right? When you're literally newly in love, many people lose weight. Because they're getting...

**Dr. Hyman:** Pleasure from something else.

**Dr. Northrup:** And that DMT brain. They're getting so much feel good chemicals in their body, they don't need to get it through food. And I've always thought we should be looking at that as a thing.

**Dr. Hyman:** That's why I try to fall in love every day; it helps my slim figure!

**Dr. Northrup:** That's it. That is exactly it.

**Dr. Hyman:** Oh it's so true. And it's true. And what we did with “The Daniel Plan” is we got people to get healthy together, and they realize that getting healthy is a team sport. It's super hard to do on your own, and Rick Warren might say, "Everybody needs a buddy." So you gotta find a buddy out there to do this with. And be a partner with.

**Dr. Northrup:** That's exactly right. Now one of the things I learned was Argentine tango. So this is two people moving as one and the learning curve is a little bit steep. But what happens when you...

**Dr. Hyman:** I tried it, it's not so easy.
Dr. Northrup: It's not easy. It's not easy. It’s well worth it if you can...and YOU’RE going all over the world - you could dance the tango everywhere. They have tango in Finland in the middle of the winter in these wonderful fiery palaces…

Anyhow, when you're dancing like that, it's as though you're creating the bio-chemistry of love with everyone you're dancing with - even strangers. Because a tango is about a three-minute love affair. And you don't necessarily know the person and then you're on to the next.

It's why it's so helpful for...there are tango medical institutes in Buenos Aires…for mental illness, for Parkinson's. But again, you're talking about UltraWellness; Deepak's talking about super genes; we're always looking at the illness. Let's live this way and then you won't even get the illness.

Dr. Hyman: It's true. And I love the concept of causing health. Right? Because that's a very unique way to...

Dr. Northrup: Isn't it great?

Dr. Hyman: Yeah, we know we can cause disease by doing the wrong things but by doing the right things, we can actually cause health and it's such an empowering concept.

Dr. Northrup: Isn't it? Yeah, you're going to have to meet Dr. Mario Martinez because his book, “The MindBody Code” is astounding. He's the Vatican's go-to person for stigmata.

Dr. Hyman: Really. Wow. Well, I plan on being at least 120, so hopefully, we can do this again in 50 years. So great. Was there anything else you wanted to share with us, Christiane?

Dr. Northrup: I just want to say, if you can, it's a really good idea to buy organic food. Because the fertilizers and the pesticides and all that do get into the food, and I say eating organic food is like breast feeding from Mother Earth.
Dr. Hyman: That's good. Well, that's good. I think it's important because a lot of toxins disrupt your hormones, which you've written a lot about. And they also contribute to obesity, diabetes, cancer, and even cognitive impairment, depression. So they're highly active in our bodies. The challenge is it's hard always to get organic food. I'm on the board of the Environmental Working Group and they have a great guide called "The Dirty Dozen," which are the dozen foods which are the most contaminated fruits and vegetables that you always want to buy organic. And they have “The Clean 15”, which are the 15 fruits and vegetables that are the least contaminated that you can buy safely if they're not organic, if you want to save some money. So I think it's really a good trick. And how can people find out more about your work and what you're doing and what are you up to next - what's exciting for you?

Dr. Northrup: They can go to my website www.drnorthrup.com. I've got a nice Facebook community, and I’m over there every day. Instagram, Twitter and I'm currently writing a book called "Bringing Heaven to Earth: A Simple Guide to Making Your Life Work" and this is all the stuff that I really believe and have always believed but as a doctor was not exactly the kind of thing the board of registration in medicine is interested in hearing. But I'm far enough along now so I don't care.

Dr. Hyman: Doesn't matter what they say, right?

Dr. Northrup: Doesn't matter anymore because it's clear the future is with us and that's kind of a dinosaur now.

Dr. Hyman: I think it's true. I think you know the people who make change in the world are people who tell the truth. Even if it's uncomfortable or scary and they all can't help themselves. I can't help myself; you can't help yourself, right?

Dr. Northrup: I can't, no.

Dr. Hyman: And when I got the job at Cleveland Clinic I'm, “You don't want me here. I'm a troublemaker. I am going to say things that are disruptive, that are going to make people uncomfortable, that they're not going to agree with. And I'm not going to edit myself because life's too short and I don't really need
this job. But I'm willing to make a change if you're willing to stand up and say ‘yeah, this is what we're doing’.

**Dr. Northrup:** So how's it going?

**Dr. Hyman:** It's unbelievable. It's unbelievable. People are coming out of the woodwork. Actually just met with a breast surgeon there who is studying the microbiome in the breast and breast cancer, which is actually bacteria in the breast tissue that may be linked to breast cancer. There's a prostate guy who's super into diet. He has an organic farm. He wants to do a study with me. And we're doing a study on prostate cancer reversal through Functional Medicine. I've talked to one of the top cardiologists there who's interested in looking at how we compare diets and look at health. Reversing diabetes through studies. We're doing some amazing work. There are people who are, “This is voodoo,” but there are more people who are, "Gee, this is really interesting, let's check it out." And they're the ones who are like, “Where have you been; what took you so long.” It's just an interesting collection of people. We are swamped. There are 1,150 people on our waiting list now for new patient appointments - it's unbelievable. We're growing at a rapid rate - hiring doctors, staff and building a new space. They gave us the primo space in the main building and people are kind of upset about it. “Why did he get that?” I'm, “I don't know, I didn't ask for it.” But they're realizing this is just the future.

**Dr. Northrup:** Well, that's just exciting. That is so exciting. And you know you're right. Finally, like your organic garden doc, he's safe now. He can come out of the closet! You're making it safe for all of these docs. Because you and I both know, most people go into medical school because they're actual healers and they want to help.

**Dr. Hyman:** That's right, that's right. It's true. I've come out of the closet and all of a sudden everybody can go, "Hey, me too, me too, me too."

**Dr. Northrup:** So you're going to take the first move.

**Dr. Hyman:** It's amazing. This one guy emailed me today, he was the head of rheumatology and he was, “I want to do this; can we do this? I'm so passionate about diet and the immune system and I'm an immunologist.” And I'm, “Yes,
amazing because for years rheumatologists have been saying food has nothing to do with autoimmune disease.” I'm…it’s just unbelievable.

Dr. Northrup: Oh that's so exciting.

Dr. Hyman: Thank you, Chris, that's so great. Thank you, Chris, I love your work, your new book "Goddesses Never Age" is awesome - people should get it, read it, and also check out your website because there's a treasure trove of information. You have your weekly newsletter that I get every week, and I really appreciate it and you're always interviewing great people and doing great things and trying to bring a collection of great information to people who need it. So thank you so much for what you do and being such a leader in this field.

Dr. Northrup: Thank you, Mark, it's been a pleasure. Thanks.

Dr. Hyman: Thanks.