

ADDICTION

SUMMIT



Identifying Issues and Removing Toxins

Guest: Zen Honeycutt

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Dr. Paul Thomas: Welcome to another session of The Addiction Summit. I am Dr. Paul Thomas, your host. It is my pleasure to introduce to you Zen Honeycutt. We met last year at the Revolution for Truth rally in Washington, D. C. And she is such an inspiration.

Zen Honeycutt is the founder and director of Moms Across America. She is an international speaker. I think very importantly, she is a mom. She has 3 boys. She has a great story to share with us today. And she is one of the most knowledgeable people I know about GMO and glyphosate and those sorts of things. And I think you are going to see where these tie in to addiction and recovery. So please stay tuned. And welcome, Zen, to this interview.

Zen Honeycutt: Hi, Paul. Thank you so much to you and your viewers. It is such an honor and pleasure to be on with you today.

Dr. Thomas: You also have an upcoming book. Or has it already been published?

Zen: Well, it will be out very soon. It is called *Unstoppable: Transforming Sickness and Struggle into Triumph, Empowerment, and a Celebration of Community*. And I am really excited to be able to share this book.

Dr. Thomas: I have read the previews and I can't wait. This is going to be the book that we need to go to. Maybe just introduce yourself and how you sort of

came into being involved with this whole process of getting healthy and chronic disease and perhaps even how you tie in with addiction.

Zen: Great. Thank you so much. Well I do first of all want to say that it is an honor and a pleasure for me to be on The Addiction Summit. One might not often think of GMO's and glyphosate to be connected to addiction, but it is. And we will get into that depth.

It is an honor for me to be on because I have spent actually many days for years in Al-Anon groups. And I strongly believe in the connection in those groups. But what has been difficult for me is the struggle with not being able to crosstalk. So when I hear people sharing stories and I have knowledge and information that could help them, you know in Al-Anon meetings you can't share that. You are just there to listen and to support.

So today, I am going to be able to share with you everything that I wish I could share in Al-Anon meetings. And this is very meaningful for me as well, because we all do need to connect and support each other. So I am really grateful for this opportunity.

Dr. Thomas: You mentioned Al-Anon, Zen. Just tell our viewers. I think there is going to be a large percentage of our viewers who are struggling with addictions. But there is going to be a really equally large percentage who have family members or loved ones who are struggling with addictions. And maybe you can share what Al-Anon is and how that plays into this.

Zen: Oh, great, great idea. So, Al-Anon is a group that supports people who are struggling with family members with addictions. It is not an advice group. It is just a group where you gather. And each person goes around. And they just say their first name. It is supposed to be anonymous, like Alcoholics Anonymous or any other anonymous group. And you simply share what is going on for you, what you are struggling with.

They do like to hear experience, strength, and hope, especially people who have been dealing with addiction for years. It is great for them to express the hope, like triumphs that they have had or successes that they have had. So, it is a great group to go when you need a place to share something that you normally would not want to share with your coworkers or a dear friend that perhaps may know this person, who wants to remain anonymous.

So you can go to this group, and it is a safe place. No one talks about what was heard in the meeting. They don't reference names of people. It is just a safe place to connect with people. And you can hear from people who have

been struggling with addiction in their family members and their lives for decades and how in some cases they have dealt with it successfully and how they have gotten through that. It is a great group, and I highly recommend it.

Dr. Thomas: Yea. I am myself a member of a 12-step group. And I am also qualified to go to Al-Anon. So if you have a family member or a very close friend, I think everyone in the world is qualified to go to Al-Anon.

Zen: Probably. And you can find them at your local church or community centers or sometimes even doctors' offices. Just Google Al-Anon, and you can find them every single day somewhere around you almost for sure.

Dr. Thomas: Yea, absolutely. And you can learn how to set boundaries. You can learn how to deal with your own journey. In my 12-step journey, I actually feel sorry for people who don't have a 12-step program because it is such a tool for life. So if you are struggling, you should certainly look into it.

But Zen, I want to get back to your journey and your story, because it is very powerful. So maybe run with that and how you became involved as this charge to save America, really, and the world.

Zen: Thank you, Paul. Well, like millions of moms across America and parents, I am a mom of 3 children who have struggled with autism symptoms and allergy issues and auto-immune issues. There are just far too many of us now today.

1 out of 2 children in America have a chronic illness. And 1 out of 5 suffers with mental illness, which is strongly connected with addiction. And 1 out of 2 males are expected to get cancer actually, and 1 out of 3 females are expected to get cancer. We basically have a health epidemic here in America.

And so, looking into those issues, one of my children almost died from a nut allergy on Thanksgiving night. And like many people who deal with health issues and addiction, frankly, for many years we were resigned and doubtful that anything could change. We just put up with it and just avoided it as best we could. And it was a struggle going to friends' houses or families' houses to avoid the nuts. It was a struggle.

But one day my son said that he wished that all of his allergies would go away. And in my head I was thinking, "That is never going to happen." But to him I said, "Me, too, buddy." But then I realized what I was thinking and that it was not empowering, that we had an opportunity to actually shift something. If we saw that as a possibility, we could.

So I asked him, "Would you like to, maybe a year from now, be able to eat a slice of pizza at birthday party and be able to tolerate it?" He was like, "Yes!" And I said, "Will you be my partner in this? Will you partner with me? Will you try green drinks?"

Dr. Thomas: Nice approach.

Zen: Yea. "Do whatever it takes." And he said, "Yes." He was only 8 years old, but he could understand that it would take something, you know, to do that. And I said, "Then I promise you, buddy, you will get better." And that was scary for me, because I didn't know how. It wasn't mapped out. A doctor hadn't told me how we were going to get better from this.

In fact, doctors told me that nut allergies would get worse and that they were life threatening. But I knew somebody who had a gluten allergy who avoided gluten for a year. Something happened with her gut. Her immune system strengthened. And she was then able to eat gluten. So I knew it was possible. So once I made that promise, I began to take action that I never normally would have taken. Right? When you put your butt on the line.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah, promise your kid.

Zen: Yeah. Or like with Alcoholics Anonymous, when you say I am going to go to a meeting everyday for 90 days to get started. You put your butt on the line. You get a sponsor, you get accountable, and you take actions that you normally would never take.

So we did that. And there is a saying that goes that a worried mom does better research than the FBI. I became that mom. And I researched about the food supply, because I knew it couldn't just be my kid. My husband and I did not have food allergies when we were younger. So something was going on with the food.

And so when I researched, I found out about GMOs and toxins, which I am sure we will get into. And then I wanted to share the tremendous healing that my son experienced. And within 4 months his allergies were dramatically better. Within a year or two of eating organic, his allergies went from a 19 down to 0.2. He no longer has a life-threatening allergy.

My other son, to keep a long story short, autism symptoms resolved in 6 weeks by eating organic and addressing the gut and really restoring the gut environment and the gut biome, which we will talk about more.

So I had evidence, very strong evidence, not only from myself, but from the thousands of moms that we connected with through Moms Across America, that the world needed to know about this. So I asked myself, "How could I raise awareness with as many people as possible?" And I started Moms Across America.

We marched in July 4 parades to raise awareness about GMOs and toxins. We reached tens of thousands locally and millions nationally in a single day on July 4 in parades all across America. And we have been doing events like that, joining parades, movie nights, speaker series, park play dates and just getting together for coffee, tabling at natural grocery stores.

For 5 years now, about 600 leaders have created almost 1000 events or attended almost a 1000 events and shared our free flyers and information. And we now reach 1.5 million on Facebook every month, mostly without paying for any boosting, just organic sharing. And hundreds of millions more, frankly, throughout the year through TV and news and podcasts and webinars and docu-series and events like this.

So, we are very excited to be actually transforming the food industry and the health and future of America, simply by tapping into the power of moms who buy 85% of the food and make 90% of the household choices on spending. So I believe that we consumers have the power. And it is up to us to just learn and share and take on that power.

Dr. Thomas: Absolutely. I love the motto of your organization. I think it is "Empowered Moms, Healthy Kids."

Zen: Absolutely.

Dr. Thomas: Or healthy families.

Zen: We are a national coalition of unstoppable moms.

Dr. Thomas: Unstoppable. Absolutely. You touched on a couple of points in my book, *The Addiction Spectrum*, that is coming out. Running through it is this theme of empowering the individual to be able to heal themselves. And part of those things, a big piece is nutrition and avoiding toxins and getting your nutrients. So I am going to have you segue over to how to do that in this world that we have where so much of our food is mass produced in a dangerous way.

And another piece that you touched on was the biome. So we will hopefully have time to touch on that, because that is so important to the healing. In my

experience, both from my family, my patients, my addiction clinic, I think the brain is inflamed, as is the gut, when you are suffering from addictions, anxiety, ADHD, depression, mood disorders, and that craving and obsessiveness that goes along with addiction. This is a big part of that.

And before we end, don't let me forget, because a big piece of the entire solution is having a safe community. And you have created one.

Zen: Yeah. Thank you.

Dr. Thomas: You created a place where people can go and be connected in a powerful way. So those are some of the things I wanted you to touch on. How about segway into the food piece and what is going on with our food and what did you learn as you did all of your research?

Zen: Yea, good question. Well, first of all, the media and most of our doctors will not tell us this. It is just now coming out in the past few years that our food was changed back in the late 1990s. GMOs, genetically modified organisms, were introduced into our food supply. And "genetically modified organisms" means that they have been altered. The DNA or the RNA of the species has been altered in a lab in a way that normally does not happen in nature.

And primarily, GMOs, there are 3 different kinds. The first one, the most popular, 80% of GMOs are engineered to withstand toxic herbicides, herbicides that kill any plant except for the crop that is engineered to withstand it. So the primary GMO is called "Roundup Ready." So it is Roundup Ready corn or soy or sugar beets.

And they are engineered to withstand an herbicide that is based with glyphosate. They are glyphosate-based herbicides. You would know it as Roundup or perhaps Rodeo sprayed in your town. And there are now over 750 different brands, though, of glyphosate-based herbicides.

So what happens is the farmer can spray with a crop duster or with a tractor. Or your backyard neighbor can go and spray. In your backyard, it's just weeds. Your farmer can spray the entire crop and kill the weeds, and the crop will still withstand the herbicide.

Now the problem with that is that glyphosate herbicides soak into the crop. They do not dry off, wash off or cook off as is largely believed. I was very upset when I found out, because I had been washing my fruits and vegetables and thinking I was getting the pesticides off.

But this herbicide does not wash off. It soaks in and we eat it. And proof of that is that the EPA allows residues up to 400 parts per million of glyphosate-based herbicides on about 160 crops of feed and of animal feed and food. And to put that into perspective, it only takes 0.1 parts per million to destroy beneficial gut bacteria and to allow the proliferation of pathogenic gut bacteria.

So this is a very serious issue. Basically if you are not eating organic, you are ingesting glyphosate in pretty much all of our foods. Because it is not only sprayed on GMO crops, it is sprayed on soil a couple of weeks before crops are sprayed in order to sort of burn down the weeds. And then if say potatoes or carrots are planted in that ground, they will uptake residue of glyphosate into those plants or berries.

And then, it is obviously sprayed on GMO crops, like corn and soy and sugar beets during growing. But it is also sprayed as a drying agent on wheat and legumes and beans and peas and sugar just before harvest—oats as well, very high on oats—to speed up the harvest process. So it dries, and it basically kills and gets rid of a lot of the nutrients in that process.

And so we eat it, again, in a lot of our baked goods, our crackers, our pastas, our beans and legumes and humus. I am very sorry to say, folks, if you are eating wheat, pita bread and humus for lunch, you are eating some of the highest levels of glyphosate that you could possibly consume. If you are adding a bowl of oatmeal in the morning, very high levels of glyphosate. It is just something you really have to be aware of with this glyphosate issue.

Dr. Thomas: Unless it's organic, right?

Zen: Yes, unless it is organic. Now, there could be very tiny levels of contamination in organic, especially if there is fraudulent labeling. But I have to say that not all organic is contaminated. And the amounts of glyphosate in conventional food versus organic are anywhere from 26 to hundreds of times higher in conventional food. So you are definitely preventing exposure to glyphosate by eating organic in very large amounts. You are reducing your exposure.

Dr. Thomas: Yea.

Zen: The second type of GMO is genetically engineered to have a pesticide built into the plant. So it is a BT toxin that comes from the carcass of a dead grain caterpillar. And it is genetically engineered to constantly reproduce more toxins.

So when the bug takes any bite of this plant, leaf or the corn or anything, its stomach will eventually basically explode or get perforations or holes in it. And the toxins will come out into its body, and it will die. So again, unfortunately, that is a toxin that goes into our stomachs as well when we eat BT toxin corn or BT genetically engineered corn. And only God knows what is happening in our gut and how that is impacting our health.

The third type of GMO is what I call DT, or desired trait GMO. There are many different names for them now. But I lump them all into that category, because the desired trait is like more vitamin A or non-browning apple or pink pineapple. Again, God knows why we need that. You know, a desired trait like greener lettuce or redder tomato.

Dr. Thomas: A tomato that never rots.

Zen: Yea, a tomato that doesn't rot, just different things like that. Now obviously there could be some beneficial aspects to this if the genetically engineered, for instance, fruit or vegetable will resist a pest or a plague, some type of disease. However, I haven't seen scientific studies on that, whether that is healthy for humans to consume.

It is beneficial for the farmer. But I don't know if it is beneficial for human beings. And I am very concerned about that, because these desired traits have promoters or silencers on either end of this information.

So let's just say you have a sugar cookie recipe. and you want to make it a chocolate chip recipe. In genetic engineering, you need to put that information into the recipe. We need the promoters or silencers on either end. And my concern as a mother is, are those promoters, which wake genes up, going to wake up genes of rare diseases in my child?

Dr. Thomas: We don't know.

Zen: Are one of those silencers going to silence a mechanism in my child, like how to process manganese or transport sulfur, or something like that that's essential for the metabolism? I don't know. And nobody can ever prove that.

So I am very concerned about these new GMOs. They are calling them GMO 2.0, crisper gene editing, gene drive. They are making up a lot of different agriculture technology names for them. And they say still that they are years out in the making. But even testing for 3 or 4 or 5 years does not prove anything to human beings.

Dr. Thomas: We need generations of testing.

Zen: Generations of testing! And I don't approve of animal testing, but that is really the only way with many of these GMOs that you would see any impact. And in the meantime, I choose not to make my family the guinea pigs for that because we don't know how those GMOs are going to impact our bodies.

In fact, we do know that when there is a foreign protein or a foreign invader in the body, the body resists it. And that resistance can cause inflammation. It can cause fatigue. It can cause all kinds of disruptions in the way the body functions.

And I have got homework, sports, schools and tantrums and things to deal with with my kids. I don't want to have to worry about gene mutations. You know, this crisper GMO, one gene edit has shown to have over 1500 off target mutations. I don't want to have to worry about mutations in my kids very much.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah. I think I have heard the term, "Frankenfood."

Zen: Yes, not something I want to worry about.

Dr. Thomas: So maybe share with some of our viewers who are not as familiar with GMO, which foods you can almost count on the fact that if you are eating that food just from the regular grocery store, you are getting GMO. You are getting exposed to glyphosate.

Zen: Absolutely. So for sure, anything with sugar in it. Now, it could say natural cane sugar, but that will be sprayed with glyphosate as a drying agent. So it won't be GMO if it is natural cane sugar. But anything that says just plain old sugar is usually GMO sugar beets because the source of sugar from sugar beets is 100% GMO.

And over 90% of soy in America is GMO. Over 80 something percent of the corn in America that is grown is GMO, and there are some yellow neck squash and zucchini. Definitely Hawaiian papaya is GMO. But the main sources are corn, soy, sugar and cottonseed oil and canola oil. Any kind of vegetable oil is going to be GMO.

Dr. Thomas: So folks, if you eat anything in a bag or a box or a can, it is almost a guarantee it is GMO.

Zen: Thank you for making it simple.

Dr. Thomas: So, Zen, what do people do? So I have got people watching this who are struggling with addiction. They are just struggling with the basics of survival almost. And what can they eat? How do they make that leap?

Zen: Yea. Well, first of all, I want to address just a little bit more that the importance we are doing this is because if you don't address the food issue, you are going to be destroying your gut bacteria with glyphosate on GMOs and non-organic foods. So it is very important to go to organic foods as much as possible.

Don't just avoid GMOs, which is very important, but go organic, because non-organic food is going to be sprayed with glyphosate as a drying agent. And we are going to be destroying our beneficial gut bacteria and allowing for the proliferation of pathogenic bacteria. And I want to go into that in more detail in just a second.

But let me answer your question of how to do this. Buying organic simply means starting to shift when you go to the grocery store. There are organic bananas and here are non-organic bananas. The organic bananas cost maybe 10 or 20 cents more. Okay, in some situations like that it is not a big deal to make that shift.

It is very important to do with things like berries, where the pesticides are on the outside of the berry. And there are very high levels on apples. It is important to do.

But to reduce your greatest exposure to GMOs and glyphosate, I suggest the breads, pastas, corn, any soy products that you eat, for sure switch to organic. And if you want to eat organic and want to avoid those in general, a bowl of rice and beans with a little salsa on it that is all organic costs less money and is cheaper than a can of soda and small bag of Doritos.

Dr. Thomas: My wife is Hispanic. She would love to hear that, rice and beans.

Zen: Yes. And it contains folate, which is important for the proper formation of a baby, if you are pregnant. And if you can only afford rice and beans and a little salsa and chopped up lettuce for a meal almost every day, that is fine. You are getting the nutrition that you need and that your baby needs to grow.

That is versus junk food that is in a slice of processed bread that is very high in glyphosate. Even whole wheat bread is actually much higher in glyphosate levels than white bread because of the spraying of glyphosate as a drying agent, and the hulls of the wheat are not removed.

So go organic. Buy bulk, meaning like a 25 pound bag of rice or flour. And make your baking mixes at home. It costs less than a dollar to make a loaf of sourdough bread. I don't know if you know that. But it is very inexpensive to make bread. It is very inexpensive to make oatmeal bars.

I usually do my cooking on Sunday. And I make bread and oatmeal bars. When or if we are eating meat, which we don't that often anymore (which is also a big cost saver, to not eat very much meat), I would roast chicken on Saturday ahead of time so we have meat for early on in the week.

And baking and cooking ahead of time really cuts down on the sort of dread that a lot of people have at the end of the day when they are tired during the week. And they think, "Oh, I have to go home and spend a half an hour cooking when I could just stop at this fast food place and buy fast food instead."

Now keep in mind, you are going to have to wait in line for that fast food. And the amount of time that it takes to wait in line, which is at least 15 minutes in most places, you could chop up some vegetables and throw it in with rice that has been precooked or potatoes that have been precooked. And you have them sitting in the fridge. You just need to heat them up. You could cook a healthy organic meal in less than 15 minutes.

And according to an author, she has got a book, *15 Minute Healthy Organic Meals* for less than \$10 a day. You can do it for less than \$10 for a meal for a whole family. In fact, it can be about 2 to 3 dollars for an organic meal cooked at home. So, yes, you can do it.

Dr. Thomas: Fantastic. That's awesome. Super! So segue into, I think you were going into biome, maybe?

Zen: Yes, the gut biome. Thank you! Okay, so again, I am not a scientist or a doctor. But I have had the privilege of speaking with many different scientists and doctors about this. And I think because I am not a scientist or doctor, I communicate this in a way that is sometimes easier to understand for people.

Dr. Thomas: Perfect.

Zen: Yeah, to make it simple. Again, glyphosate has been proven to destroy the beneficial gut bacteria and allow for the proliferation of pathogenic gut bacteria. And the difference between the two is really that they play different roles. We just call them good or bad in order to distinguish them in our

brains. But they all play essential roles. It is just the imbalance that throws off our body and how it works.

So in general, the whole gut biome hosts essential hormones like tryptophan, which is essential for creating serotonin and melatonin and [inaudible] and other hormones which are essential for doing things. For instance, serotonin balances whether or not we are satiated or feel happy. I mean everybody knows that SSRIs are introducing serotonins into the body to prevent depression and bipolar.

So, if you don't have enough tryptophan in your gut bacteria, then you are not going to be able to make serotonin, which will allow your body to feel satiated or happy. If you don't feel satiated, you are going to eat and eat more food. You are going to drink and drink more drink. You are going to take more and more drugs.

So this is the foundation. Your gut bacteria are the foundation of being able to break free from addiction. This is essential. You can pray to God until Sunday. You can try to resist certain foods or alcohol or drugs or whatever all you want. But you will not cease from desiring, I don't believe, these things if you don't sort out your gut biome, if you don't balance your gut biome, because your body will not have the ability to feel satiated or happy or satisfied.

So your gut biome is so important. And if you destroy the beneficial gut bacteria, you are destroying the home of where serotonin lives in your body, and melatonin, which allows you to sleep. If you are not getting proper sleep, you are going to get depressed. If you get depressed, you are likely to self-medicate. If you are self-medicating, you're likely to get addictions.

So this is a very important sort of chain of events to understand. And it starts with the gut bacteria, which comes after what you put into your gut, your food. That is incredibly, incredibly important.

Dr. Thomas: Yea, that is huge. Folks, what you just heard there was all those cravings you are suffering from, the depression, the anxiety, the mental angst that so many of us struggle with when we are in our addictions or trying to recover, the healing starts in the gut. The damage continues if you are still eating glyphosate. You are eating those toxic foods. And through eating organic. And then what other things can we do to boost good bacteria in the gut?

Zen: Great idea. So if you can't eat 100% organic, I always suggest to people to please introduce fermented foods into your diet. And those are organic

yogurt. If you don't do dairy, you do organic coconut milk yogurt, some things like that, because beneficial gut bacteria are essential to the gut.

You can take a probiotic. But that is not a long term solution because many probiotics only have 6-10 different forms of bacteria, and you are supposed to have 30,000 in your gut. Most Americans now only have 10,000, so we are severely lacking of the beneficial gut bacteria.

Eat sauerkraut, organic miso soup. Make sure the sauerkraut is raw. It is not that bag with vinegar, cooked sauerkraut. It is raw sauerkraut. You can make it, by the way, by cutting up a head of lettuce and just smashing it until the juices come out, for pennies. You can make your own sauerkraut. So look up Cultured Food Life, Donna Schwenk, for how to make your own fermented foods. She is amazing.

And you can also do things like we have a supplement called Restore, which is on our website, on momsacrossamerica.org, which helps with resisting the damage that glyphosate can cause to your gut bacteria. You want to restore the integrity of your gut. With the leaky gut, stuff is coming out of there. And we need to restore the integrity of the gut in order to be able to improve your gut bacteria.

So you can introduce fermented foods for many people. Some people have FODMAP issues, which their body reacts to certain types of food. You want to try it. If it doesn't work, move on to another diet. Check out a book called *The Elimination Diet*, things like that. But you can introduce fermented foods into your body and boost. One tablespoon of sauerkraut has a trillion good bacteria. So you can right away start balancing out your gut bacteria with fermented foods.

Dr. Thomas: Yea. I think you bring up a really good point. As an integrative physician, we tend to think about, "Well, take probiotics." But there is not enough diversity. It is not that it is bad to take probiotics. But when you take sauerkraut like you are talking about, or fermented natural yogurt, kimchi, miso soup, all these things, the number and the diversity of what you are getting is what you need.

But the other thing just to highlight is you have to keep doing it. I remember in high school biology, we looked at a pond, and we had to find all the different organisms in this pond. And it is a community.

And our gut is a community, as you said, of hundreds, tens of thousands at least of organisms. So if you take whatever you are taking out, those

organisms are still there. And if there is some dysbiosis, we call it some of the more dangerous bacteria, you can suppress them by taking healthy fermented foods. But if you stop and go back to your SAD diet, the standard American diet, it will go right back to problems. Right?

Zen: Right, excellent point, yes. And feeding it sugar will promote the growth of the pathogenic gut bacteria. So avoiding processed sugar is very important. For some people, avoiding dairy is very important.

Avoid gluten, which has gliadin, which is like nicotine in cigarettes. Gliadin is a modern protein that was hybridized. It's not GMO. It is hybridized into modern wheat. And for many people like myself, that is the only gluten protein that I am intolerant to. So I can eat ancient grains, especially organic ancient grains. Avoid the glyphosate. Avoid the gliadin, and I can eat bread again.

Dr. Thomas: Fantastic.

Zen: Yeah. Some people need to avoid that entirely in order not to feed the pathogenic gut bacteria. So when my son reduced his autism symptoms in 6 weeks, he had to eat no sugar during the holidays for 6 weeks.

Dr. Thomas: That's tough.

Zen: Yeah, he did it. And after awhile now, he can eat sugar now and then. But over-consuming processed sugar is something that you want to avoid. I want to touch on inflammation, because that sugar can stimulate the overgrowth of pathogenic gut bacteria.

And according to Dr. Matt Buckley, what can happen is on the outer walls of the pathogenic gut bacteria are something called lipopolysaccharides. And those lipopolysaccharides, their job is to alert the vagus nerve, which is in the gut and goes up to the brain, to go on attack. It says, bad guys, attack.

And so microglial in the brain go on attack. And they create something called glutamate, which is an excitotoxin. And that excitotoxin causes inflammation of the brain neurons. And they can eventually die.

This is why many people believe, you know scientists and doctors, that children suddenly develop tics or stammers or Alzheimer's symptoms or dementia systems or fatigue, brain fog, depression, inflammation in the brain does cause behavioral reactions. It can cause aggression. It can cause just erratic behavior. So again, addressing the gut bacteria is extremely important and balancing that out.

Dr. Thomas: It is huge. I just had a patient in my addiction clinic who was struggling with his opiate addiction. He was drinking 5 or 6 sodas a day. And I finally got him to stop doing that, and in 2 weeks he lost 13 pounds. He came in and looked like a different person. His head was clear. I mean, just that simple maneuver.

So it is so important what you are eating, folks, what you are drinking. And I would just add one last thing and we can move on from the gut part, perhaps, and that is fiber. So if you are eating a lot of fiber, that supports a healthy gut immune system and the right bacteria.

Zen: Yea. And let's talk about what that is. To me that means lots of kale and vegetables and fruit and foods that are wholesome and whole. Getting away from the packages as much as possible is very important. I have to say we have huge bowl of apples, bananas, oranges and fruits out on our kitchen table. That is what my kids relate to as snack food.

Dr. Thomas: That's your snack. Yep.

Zen: Maybe once a week my husband will get a bag of chips. It is gone in like a day. But we don't have chips around every single day. My kids don't get a packaged granola or fruit bar or things like that in their lunches. They don't get sweets and packaged foods in their lunches. They only get sandwiches or salads or fruits and vegetables chopped up in their lunches. They eat whole foods.

Dr. Thomas: Folks, you need to eat real food, the way it came from the earth. Think of yourself as a hunter/gatherer perhaps. And it is okay to be a farmer, too. But just farm organic.

So Zen, I was curious. Your son's health improved. You had these dramatic recoveries from allergies, from an autism spectrum sort of situation where there were neurological things going on. And you could have just sort of been quiet and happy and chosen to go on your life. But you became an activist and started Moms Across America. You are just such an inspiration. Maybe tell us about Moms Across America, how it came into being. Share a little more about that.

Zen: Well, thank you, Paul. I appreciate it. I never had the intention of being an activist. In fact, I used to think that activists were fuss budgets with too much time on their hands. Like they smelled of patchouli. And even if I agreed with their ideals, like saving the whales or polar bears, I was like, "I do not want to be an activist. They turn people off."

But when I saw that I could do something. When I learned about GMOs and glyphosate and I felt the deep betrayal of my government to me, the FDA, the CDC, the EPA, who have all allowed our food to be changed such that poisons are sprayed on them. And they have allowed these health issues to happen.

And we are being introduced to toxins through our food, through our water, through our vaccines now. We have actually found glyphosate in vaccines. There are all kinds of other toxins in vaccines. Through our pajamas, through our furniture—the couches have chemicals sprayed, fire retardants. There are 80,000 chemicals that we are being introduced to now in our society. And the EPA has only regulated either 9 or 12 of them at most.

So, our government is allowing this to happen. And when I got mad, after a few days of being mad, I realized this is not going to do anything. And just being angry doesn't make change. Action makes change, doing something about it. And being angry when you are taking action doesn't usually attract that many people. I mean a protestor rally, it does. Everybody being angry together, that works for getting your voice out there.

But then you have got to connect. And then you have got to communicate this information to the people in power who can make the changes, which includes consumers and how we buy foods, in a way that appeals to them, in a way that is mainstream and friendly and engaging and clear and understandable.

So I asked myself, how can I get involved? And at the time, there was Prop 37, which was the GMO labeling initiative. So I took that foray into getting out there and passing out flyers at my farmer's market. I got started.

But then when the Prop 37 initiative failed, and I was at the back of the room when we were going to find out whether or not it passed, the person up front, volunteer organizer, was describing all of the different efforts people made. And she was acknowledging everybody.

And I thought, “How did I contribute? Oh, I passed out flyers at the farmer's market.” And I thought, “Well, hm. That was kind of convenient.” It was great that I did it, and I am proud of myself. But I didn't take on leadership. And what I saw, there was a person in the front of the room who was being a leader. And I was in the back of the room just sitting in a chair.

And I thought, “Why is that? Why didn't I take on leadership? And what could have happened if I had taken on leadership? Or more importantly, what could happen in the future if I could take on leadership?”

So I began to wonder, what if I said, “I am the one? I am the one who is going to transform the food industry.” Not me by myself, not like an ego thing. But I’m not going to wait for somebody else to do this. I’m not going to wait around for somebody else to fix the food system. Right?

So I began to wonder what could happen if I took on leadership? And after I found out that it lost, we were in the parking lot and I started crying. And my son said to me, “Well, you know, Mom, even *Star Wars* took 6 episodes.” And I thought, “Yeah, and they had Yoda.” And we laughed about it.

And I am like, “Maybe it is just time for a new episode. Maybe it is time for me to take on leadership and just see what happens. If I fail, I fail. If I look bad, I look bad. If I don't know what I am doing, I will figure it out. If I need other experts, I will ask for help.”

And I got a donation from a non-GMO seed company for my website. Within about a month I had a website up. Within 3 months we had reach on Facebook of over 300,000 a week. And because I had an initiative that was easy and affordable, joining in July 4 parades...

Any group can do this by the way. Health freedom, fracking awareness, addiction groups, anybody can join into a 4th of July parade as long as you are family friendly. And you can reach thousands of people. One parade, 3 people deep of spectators for 3 miles, means reaching close to 30 or 40,000 people.

Dr. Thomas: Good point.

Zen: So you can reach thousands of people in a single day and millions across the nation. And these are our towns. These are our neighbors. These are people who need this information but may not want to hear it if you are screaming on the side of the street with a sign in protest.

But they will take it if you are happy and friendly and you have got a friendly looking flyer that you pass out at a 4th of July parade, either before or after or during the parade. Some don't allow flyers to be passed out during the parade. But you can do it before or after.

So that is what had me get involved, with just asking the question, “What can I do to raise awareness in as little time as possible,” because I am efficient and a busy mom, “and reach as many people as possible?” And that was the solution for me.

For other people, it might be, what can you do in your school? What can you do in your church? What can you do in your group, whatever group that you have? You can do a lot. And every person that you touch reaches thousands of other people.

And it is not enough for my family to eat organic, because my sons' future spouses are out there somewhere. And I would like their spouses to be healthy so they can experience the profound love that it is to have their own children and to have their own family someday. And so I am motivated by love.

And I continue to give up the fear of messing up and making mistakes or not being effective. And I just keep going. And that is why my book is called *Unstoppable*, because I think everybody can be and is unstoppable when they get in touch with how much they love their family members and their own health.

And when they take action, they will see results. And then they will be triumphant and they will be in celebration with community, much like we were at the "Revolution for Truth" in D. C. That community, wasn't that a celebration?

Dr. Thomas: That was powerful.

Zen: And we all need that. We need connection. And I want to touch on that, too, about addiction. Number 1, we all just need to be willing to face our fears and our feelings because that is where the addiction is stemming from. It is stemming from trying to numb either physical pain or emotional pain in most cases.

Dr. Thomas: Yes.

Zen: So feeding that addiction happens from not being able or willing to face those fears or those feelings that you are having.

And then number 2, connect with others. Get in those groups and connect with people or community, whether it is Al-Anon or an AA group or a Celebrate Recovery group, at churches, or some other type of group where you feel safe and you can share in person. I would urge you, get out of social media circles and share in person. It is very different to share in person.

And then number 3, be responsible for your actions. Own that you are the one putting the food in your body or the drink or the drugs in the body. And get that it can be different. You can do differently.

What is happening when your body is telling you to take that drug or addiction is simply brain neurons firing. They are not you. You are something else. You are not brain neurons firing.

The person putting the foot on the brake when you are trying to avoid an accident, that is not you telling yourself to put the foot on the brake. Your body just does that. Those brain neurons fire, and you just do that.

So that is what's happening when your body says, "Oh, I want another bottle of wine." It is just brain neurons firing. What you are committed to is something completely different than just that brain neuron firing.

I would suggest you are committed to health. You are committed to freedom. You are committed to connection. You are committed to love and adventure and success and fun. There is something else that you are committed other than that. So get in touch with you are responsible for your actions. Those brain neurons firing are not you, and you can make another choice.

And then number 4, be accountable. Get a buddy. Get a sponsor. Have somebody who is going to hold you accountable. When I made that promise with my son, I was suddenly accountable.

With Al-Anon or AA, you get a sponsor. You get somebody that you are accountable to calling every day and saying, "I am going to do this today." Or, "I did this yesterday, and I am going to be accountable for that." So I believe everybody needs an accountability buddy to have breakthroughs in addiction, or anything.

I wanted to create fab abs in 90 days, by my 45th birthday. And I got an accountability buddy. She said, "I want to see a picture of your stomach every day." So I had to text her a picture of my stomach every day. And it worked. I have to state, I don't have a 6-pack, but I don't have a muffin top anymore. And I am 45, and I am proud of my body because I fought for it. I went to the gym 3 or 4 or 5 times a week sometimes, because I had accountability.

And then 6, I want everybody to celebrate. Celebrate every day that you are free from addiction. Every day that perhaps you are dealing with somebody with addiction and you don't say something hurtful or you don't enable or you don't go into the abyss of depression, celebrate every day.

Write down what you did at the end of the night instead of to do's, what to do the next day. Of course, you want to get clear on what you need to do the next

day. But also write down what you did and be grateful and celebrate with your community the things that you have succeeded in.

Share with people, hey, you know I have been free from addiction for a week. Yea, I want to go out to the beach and celebrate being outside. Celebrate by connecting with other people who get the struggle. And be proud to say, "I did this." And when you do that, you inspire other people. It is actually a service to tell other people when you have been successful because that inspires other people, and it inspires them to take action. And you are creating connection and empowerment.

So, those are the 6 things. Be willing to face what is going on. Connect with other people. Be responsible for your actions. Be accountable. And celebrate.

Dr. Thomas: Wow! That was like, can you wrap it perfectly for those of us who are suffering with addiction? And bam! If you are watching this, you have got to make sure everybody else you know watches Zen's interview to the end, because that was the most powerful, beautiful sum up I have ever heard.

Zen: Oh, thank you.

Dr. Thomas: Thank you so much for that. That is a real gift. And there are pearls just jammed into those last points you made, just jam packed with truths.

I have lived with addiction. I am in the recovery side of it. And it is a celebration. Every day is a celebration. It is no longer a struggle. But in the beginning it was. I hadn't identified that there was some adaptive/maladaptive things I had done that led me to try to find relief in substances and food. I think probably 80-90% of the population is not aware that they are addicted to food in some way or manner. So we all need those pearls of wisdom.

So I just want to thank you so much for being with me today, for sharing all of this, that sense of belonging. If you are a mom and you want to be part of something huge, how can people join Moms Across America?

Zen: So you can go to momsacrossamerica.org. And first of all under Home, it says sign up for our newsletter, sign up to volunteer. And we send out action alerts. It is not really a newsletter. It is more like actions alerts. I would say no more than once, maybe 2 or 3 times a week if there is something big that is going on.

And the best way to get involved is to invite others to be involved. So that means to host a movie night or a coffee night or maybe a coffee gathering or park or play date or something like that. And it is not a big deal.

I do organic potluck movie nights, I would say once a quarter, once every couple of months. I would love for them to be every month, but I do travel a lot. So just have people over. Make the requirement be organic food and show a movie or have a discussion about an important topic. And start connecting. Gather those emails.

You can also do things like go to Earth Day, which is coming up, or join into a 4th of July parade or festival or fair. There are lots of wellness fairs that happen during the summer time or street fairs. And bring your flyers. We have lots of flyers that you can pass out. You can pass out these underneath doormats. This is about getting Roundup out of your towns.

And just pass out the flyers. But also print out one of our signup sheets that we have under action. So Moms Across America/Action. And there is a signup sheet under Toxin Free Town Campaign, where you can gather emails when you go to things like parades or fairs or festivals of people who are [inaudible].

Immediately within 24 hours, follow up with an email with them and host an event. Say we are going to get together at this park. And work it into your schedule. If you go to the park, make that a gathering. If you like to watch movies, make that movie night where you invite people over. It is really not that much more work.

But you go to momsacrossamerica.org. Go to action, where you can take events. Go to events, where you can find that there might be an event, especially an Earth Day event near you or a parade coming up near you. And get involved. Just get out there and connect in person. We also have on our website help solutions if you are interested in starting to support your gut bacteria.

And I also want to add in that it's important to add in minerals back into your body. Because of GMO chemical farming, the minerals in our food are severely depleted. And so one another thing that won't happen if you are not putting minerals in is the development and formation of your brain and your body and your function. So you want to check out our health solution store as well.

Dr. Thomas: That is fantastic. Well we are going to be also looking for your book, *Unstoppable*.

Zen: *Unstoppable*. Somebody said *Unstoppable Love* was too much like a romance love.

Dr. Thomas: Gotcha. *Unstoppable*. That is something we are all going to be waiting for, for sure. I can't thank you enough. Did you have any final parting words that I didn't get drawn out of you because any time you speak, I am like, "Wow! I needed to hear that."

Zen: Oh, thanks Paul. I appreciate it. I just want you to know that you are not alone. And all you need to do is to connect with people and to be sharers. Somebody once told me that our power comes in our ability to be authentic about our inauthenticities.

So share where you are being authentic, where you are failing. What are you fearful of? Where are you messing up in life? Share that in your groups. I strongly urge you to go to groups. And you will find that there is power in that. There is freedom.

And then start to take the steps, you know, to be responsible. And you can. And you are not alone. And we will support you. Moms Across America, we will not give up. We will not stop because the love for our families will never end. And we are here with you. And you can transform your health. You absolutely can recover, and you absolutely can live a long, healthy, successful, productive and loving life. And I just want everybody to know that.

Dr. Thomas: Thank you, Zen. That was perfect. We appreciate your time.

Zen: Thank you very much.