

## Transcript



Title: My plate is full

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Growing up, I was always the different one or the alternative kid, or whatever.

Good thanks.

Can I just get a soy iced latte?

Both my parents and my sister are all very sporty. Like my sister was really big in Taekwondo.

And my parents run marathons. And I was never really the sporty kid. I was the complete opposite.

I don't like preparing food. I don't like cooking food. I think it's also like, deep down a respect thing. Like I, don't really care enough to fill my body with the right nutrients, I guess.

Cheers, man. Have a good one.

I definitely always prioritise drinking, or like cigarettes, or clothing even over food. I just hate spending money on food. For lunch at university sometimes I'll just buy a cucumber. I don't know why, I just love cucumbers. Or like a bahn mi from this place near Swinburne. But apart from that, that's like the most I'd spend money on food.

I'm studying the Diploma of Justice at Swinburne at Hawthorn campus. Legal matters and justice that I've seen tend to go hand in hand with those low socioeconomic areas. I was pregnant at 15 with my daughter.

I had my son at 18 and moved out of home early. Diet is everything to make somebody whole. I eventually did TAFE qualifications and became a professional chef myself.

Yeah?

What happened? Oh, I've just rerolled them.

I had a motorbike accident. I've got permanent damage which stopped me from being able to continue employment as a chef.

I didn't have the best time in high school.

Hey, Mum.

My mental health was not very good.

And I didn't have a lot of friends. I came from a very sporting family.

Mum always made sure we had good food on the table, make sure we were all eating healthy and stuff. A lot of fruit. I think that was probably when my diet was its best, when I was younger.

Hello, Jimmy.

What's going on here?

Sunday lunch.

That's it!

So I'm living on campus at Swinburne at the moment in Hawthorn.

Being able to go to class 15 minutes before is quite easy comparatively to like, you know, when I lived on the farm.

G'day.

Can I just grab a quarter pounder on its own, thank you.

It is quite a problem cause, there's however many restaurants down Glenferrie Road.

Instead of going to Woollies and picking out something to buy, and then cooking it, and then preparing it, cleaning up and all that stuff.

Sometimes, if studying really hard it's just easier to go and pick up something to eat really quick.

My favourite things do to chill are just like playing video games and watching basketball. If I'm at home and I'm not at uni, I will sit down for like a couple hours and I'll watch basketball.

If I play a video game, I'll play for three days straight. Until it's finished. And then I'll probably never pick it up again.

I do breakfast, lunch, snack, dinner. That's generally what I try to do. That goes out the window when I'm playing games. When I'm playing a game and I want something quick and I want to treat myself I'm like, it's fine.

You know like, you've wasted your day. Just eat the pizza. It's going to be ok. You're going to be alive tomorrow.

I think that my parents influenced me growing up. Because obviously when you're exposed to something like your parents working out and being healthy, then it's something that you incorporate into your own life.

Leaving high school, I know it's so easy to fall into a trap of Melbourne's scene. And it's so easy to just get chewed up in it. Yeah, I just love the social aspect of drinking and partying.

Hey man, can you just give me one sec? I'm just in the library. I'm just going to go outside. Just give me one sec.

Sorry, man, yeah.

I was just studying.

What's up?

I was thinking, well I've got a set at the Gaso, and I'm playing pretty late. So like if you wanted to come with to that, probably have pres at mine. And then who knows what we'll do after.

Drinking, especially with friends, especially in like a queer circle, it's just like a way of release. And it's just like, it sounds lame, but I guess like ingrained in history just like kicking back with mates, having drinks. I just like to have fun.

Throughout the younger years, it was always quite difficult on Centrelink payments to be able to provide the best possible health in the way of food and dietary requirements on a low income. It led to me finding an awful lot of charity agencies to not let my children and myself go hungry. People are quite giving and quite friendly at the food banks.

So I found after the first few times I was able to get rid of any of my apprehension. Because it was for the greater good of my children's diets.

My daughter particularly, Sara, she's now a young adult, almost 19. She gets the freedom of choice now on what food is brought home from the food bank.

Seeded.

Also gets to help me come up with the good, healthy meals.

There might be some bruises or there might be a little bit soft in the fruit. This to avoid wastage and still have an amazing diet? All right, grab your mangoes. Those are very soft.

Hey?

They're very soft.

Yea.

Could puree them.

A lot of it's a bit like a Master Chef mystery box in being able to create the best possible diet for the children with what's on offer throughout these charity agencies.

Yeah, the eating habits are a little weird sometimes. It's just sort of not as structured as I'd like it to be. I did let it slip a little bit, especially in my first couple of months in the city, that's for sure. Because I sort of didn't really think that I needed to do too much about it. Like I'd always sort of been fit and healthy. And like I'd let my sports slip a little bit. And with that came my food slipping a little bit. And, yeah, it wasn't the best. It's a bad sort of ripple effect where it just keeps on cascading. You know, I need to sort of get out of that rut.

Yes, Suzanne?

Hello.

I was going to ask are you and Dad going to the gym today?

Yesterday we went about 5:30, because Josh wasn't home. But the day before that, we didn't go until about 7:00, 7:30, because he was on the simulator.

Yeah, I'm on the way to the gym now. So I will let you go.

My parents never really told me anything about eating healthy. It was the working out aspect of it.

So when my boyfriend and I started dating, I was really fit, doing cross fit. Being healthy, being active, eating healthy. And then we got together and he doesn't have a good diet at all. He's skinny, eats everything, never puts on any weight. And then I ended up putting on 20 kilos.

And I'm just wondering what you feel like for dinner. A steak?

OK.

What do you want on the side?

Hi, how's it going?

Hi, good thanks.

I grew up around a lot of food. And always pretty healthy food just like the occasional treat. So I think I had like pretty good knowledge of like what to eat and stuff. If I know there's like food at home, I'll just wait until I get home. I don't think there's any specific person that taught me about food. I definitely didn't get much through school, just like the basic eat your fruit and vegetables.

But then she said, but would you do this?

She actually cooks meat for her partner. I wouldn't do that. I wouldn't do that at all. But also like, I wouldn't cook meals for my partner

Anyway.

Yeah.

Is that because you're philosophical, or you're lazy?

Because I'm lazy. Dinner time at home for me is intense. So I try to eat very healthy for dinner. I try to. I cook my dinner because I always eat a little bit earlier, I eat something a little bit healthier. And then my I'll cook my boyfriend's dinner a little bit later, because he likes to eat later. And he also likes to eat junk. I think I carry so much responsibility because I don't see anyone else who can take on those responsibilities. I really do enjoy cooking. I just wish I had more time and more kitchen space and stuff. Like, my roommates are more closed in. They don't really want to eat together as a group. It's not economically practical to buy, realistically, just for one person. Because you know, a lot of stuff will go off.

University study changed my lifestyle. I can travel up to two hours at times, even longer should I miss particular trains. I am pretty cheap when it comes to food with uni. Taking those leftovers from the freezer to utilise the microwaves at uni. So that I'm self-sufficient and not spending the very little money that I have.

Wi-Fi is an absolute killer to one's budget, but I can sometimes utilise free Wi-Fi, which relieves it a little bit as my daughter also uses the Wi-Fi quite a lot with year 12 at high school. So night time for me, it's different.

I have insomnia. So I got that when my dad had some heart attacks when I was 12. And just, I don't sleep very well at all. When sleep knocks me around, it definitely impacts me on how I eat. Because I eat at really irregular times. There's just a lot of stuff going on, especially with the thoughts already in my head.

Music in general is really good to just listen to to block out some of that noise.

I went to a very upper-middle class private school. And I live in like an upper-middle class area. Growing up in a very conservative family and then being the way I am, it's always an internal battle.

Alright, well, I'm going to do some uni work.

Alright, see you when you come back for your next meal.

Yeah, fully.

I'll either like, watch Netflix or like play PlayStation or something. Or like, play around with music stuff, play on my synths.

So when I'm at uni my eating pattern basically is just rubbish. I generally try to have breakfast in the morning, but sometimes it has to turn into a snack. Because I have to go to uni so early. I generally try not to eat at uni. Because nothing in my opinion or what I think that I need to be putting into my body is available to me.

I think mostly it's just time and like taking the initiative. And then like building new habits. Every day that I'm not at uni, I'll be working. And then weekends I normally like just party. Just drink with friends or like DJ. I've noticed that my body is not as it was when I was 18. I've noticed that I can't do the huge late nights like I used to do. And I can't just continue treating my body like this.

I tend to not want to cook when I'm stressed or suffering from fatigue.

I do need to leave Swinburne early in order to get home before midnight. At the same time, my daughter has had to take on some cooking duties. But I do tend to cook a lot in bulk when I am home to do the cooking.

Squash works well.

Yes, around the front.

I have understood myself in growing up and bringing my own children up that socioeconomic status can change. You can bring yourself up in the world. And it's very possible to do it. It's always been my main priority to help others. People can use whatever help in many areas, not just food. So in another way I can help people other than feeding them now.

I will never not have that social aspect of my life. Because I understand how important it is to me. But I guess I still need to eat meals before I start drinking. And eat healthy meals so I have some form of nutrients.

Rather than just like not eating until 5:00 in the morning and eating crap that's open 24/7. So I guess it's just like, once again, allowing myself the time and respect to make myself proper meals.

I really want to get back into doing a lot of sport. And I really want to get into the music and the writing aspect of my life. And nutrition is a really big part of that. Like I do really like eating well. I would really like to make sure that I'm giving myself the best opportunity to do the things that I want to do and to keep doing the things that I want to do. But mental health is a super-important thing that people really need to get around.

And something as simple as having a meal with three other blokes or three other people can be so helpful to someone else in a really bad time. The internet is saturated with information that is written by people who are just enthusiasts, or people who think that they have the knowledge from experience. But don't actually have a background that suggests that they can be giving people this information.

There needs to be more of an emphasis on people with backgrounds in health nutrition to be giving this advice.

Having opened up a can of worms in this, like this is probably the first time someone's asked you about it, how does it feel to kind of put those things together? I guess it's like really confronting actually, now looking back on it. And just saying the words out loud about my routine, and about my schedule, and realizing how bad that sounds, and how stupid that sounds.

Like, why would someone do that? So that reflection of just hearing it all out loud and just really like, cementing it in my brain and making it real makes me realise that I do need to change my eating habits. And I do need to take the time to fuel my body. You can't survive off like coffee all day. It's not a thing.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]

