

Rujuta Diwekar | Creating Healthy Food Habits In Kids (Fussy Eaters Included)

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SUMMARY

Rujuta Dewekar discusses her journey as a nutritionist, emphasizing the importance of a diverse and culturally resonant diet for children. She advocates for sustainable eating practices, the significance of local food, and the need to move away from processed foods while addressing common misconceptions about nutrition.

- Dewekar reflects on her challenging childhood and how her mother's support shaped her.*
- She emphasizes the importance of patience and long-term thinking in both fitness and career.*
- The discussion highlights the low meat consumption in India and advocates for sustainable meat-eating practices.*
- Dewekar argues that vegetables are not the only source of essential nutrients and stresses the importance of diversifying food sources.*
- She encourages families to embrace local cuisines while traveling to understand cultural histories.*
- Dewekar advises against processed foods and promotes fresh, wholesome meals for athletes.*
- She discusses the challenges of breastfeeding and the importance of maternal support during early child-rearing.*
- The conversation touches on the need for shared cooking responsibilities in families, especially for those living abroad.*

okay so first up we're obviously very very excited book is redlined needs autographed houses all of them thank you guys ask questions from everywhere especially the children because they're the ones who want to know that what has changed mama's thinking okay but everybody wants to know that as a kid were you always so good well i don't think i'm very good even right now and i would like to say that i was

probably a very difficult child for my uh mother to raise you know not easy at all so for uh um well i think it's thanks to my mother's endless patience and kindness and unconditional love i guess something which every mother has for her child that i kind of uh got through otherwise it can be tough raising children you know as all mommies you know so you were a naughty kid well i'm not fussy about food i wasn't fussy

about food but uh you know um a child can throw fuss just about and just about anything not just about food okay so everybody wants to know was this your dream profession when you were growing up pretty much my dream profession was to not be in a nine-to-five job my dream profession was to be in something which would involve an activity which would allow me to travel which would let me meet many people obviously i didn't know

exactly what i would do at that point of time but by the time i was in my 12th standard aerobics and the fitness scene had kind of picked up and i i felt that i have to be doing something in this career but my family is very academic so i was not sure what i would end up doing here but by the time i graduated thankfully i said that he had a course called post graduation and sports

science and nutrition and i was like this is god sent for me were you ever scared to fail when you started out no no no see there was no such thing as failure at that time because even one client meant success you know any kind of work that came your way meant success you know because failure just meant having nothing to do how many years ago i started in 98 yeah guys it just doesn't happen yeah yeah it's between more than 20 more

than 20 years yeah yeah okay um did you ever feel like quitting when that phone first land didn't happen never never uh well um the fact that you know if you have faith and if you're patient and if you find clients who are committed then then everything just comes through and everything comes in its own good time if i'm going to ask people to be patient with their own bodies and to look at it

from a long-term approach i cannot be looking at my career from a very short-term approach either you know even i need to be sustainable and if i cannot be sustainable then i should surely not be asking them to be very sustainable in their approach towards fitness you haven't emphasized too much on meat and the importance of meat for children why because we do have a whole lot of purely vegetarian communities and even in terms

of statistics india has amongst the lowest consumption of meat uh you know as compared to other countries while like i mean us is somewhere like 114 kgs and you know we are at like four kilograms a year so we are not such a big meat consuming nation to begin with secondly if uh and i have clarified about the seven in my book that if you do belong to a meat eating community it is important that you eat it like your

grandmom did and she basically ate it with her rice or with her bhakri along with her vegetables and sometimes in the week and not every single day of the week the problem with meat is if we look at it only from the point of view of protein then we start eating it every day or we have vegetarian societies thinking now that this has protein should i actually get my child to change the way of you know we've been eating as

a family and then that leads to confusion that also leads to unsustainable practices of growing meat and that's when it's dangerous especially for people who are meat consumers you know because they should have the right to eating meat in a more sustainable manner and that can only happen if all of us maintain our diversity in our food culture interesting most nutritionists and meal plans for kate include you know sneaking in the veggies and you

know emphasis on vegetables you haven't emphasized so much on it you were like it's okay it's okay to not eat vegetables correct why because we have multiple sources of vitamins and minerals and vegetables are not the only source of vegetables if we are talking about future proofing our children's health we have to teach them to eat in a way which is climate resilient which is linked to the crop cycle and which is also culturally resonant so if you look at

all the communities we have i mean green leafy vegetables for example in our crop cycle we only get it in the winters we don't get it in the summers we don't get it in the monsoon in the monsoon we have uh you know more pulses based diet and summers we have more creeper based uh diet like the doodies and the tories and yeah in winters we have like the more green leafy uh based diet so we have to teach them that

because that's what our parents taught us too it's only now that you have all vegetables bhara maina and that's again thanks to unsustainable practices of agriculture that's not because you know that's how they naturally grow that's one aspect the second thing is linking them to the crop cycle would also mean getting them to eat more native food so right now in fruits you have bear you have avla and how many kids and mommies and daddies who are watching this have

actually had their children eat the bear and avla this season so if we are fussing about the vitamins and minerals we have to also work at diversifying the sources from which they get those vitamins and minerals so that other than vitamins and minerals they also get you know develop their palate to these foods they also work at maintaining the forest and the forest produce they work at getting many more phytonutrients from the from these kind of native fruits

they also get fiber and they learn to eat in a way which is in sync with nature right i think that won't be on diversity is very important because you're actually right the same minerals can be found in multiple sources and we're not exploring those we are not exploring those and by saying veggies veggies veggies all the time and by chopping them and putting it in various things we are just teaching our children how to cheat you

know the last thing that a child wants to grow up feeling is being manipulated by the mother because the thing is that at some point the child grows up and i work with uh you know a whole lot of people and i'll tell you about this very interesting case about a 30 year old girl that i'm working with i mean 30 is fairly grown up an adult and she's like you know as a child she hated her vegetables so

her mother would chop them in various things and just like put it in different things and the minute she would like eat a roti which had like little chopped carrots or onion or whatever she would just throw up today as a 30 year old she wants to include vegetables but this whole memory of manipulation is not letting her eat the vegetable even now so you know these sneaky yeah pink rotis and green rotis and the green

pulaos and the yellow raitas are shouldn't cost our children their emotional well-being in the future okay uh another thing you mentioned is that kids should not be you know taken out too much on holidays and travels and you know right right mama's house or a nanny's house or whatever but do you feel like when you're traveling less and and like i love to run with my kids i feel like if they don't explore different cultures especially now when boundaries are just

yeah yeah yeah yeah they never get to taste and then you will always be carrying your food along with you wherever you travel no see the whole thing is that you carry a few snacky items like maybe a chocolate and nuts and yeah yes but for rest of the main meals you have to dig into the local culture of wherever you are whether

you're in the meditation no that is what i would recommend because when you eat local food is when you

understand local histories when you understand local people is when you understand local climate um without that there's no uh and then yeah okay uh a lot of parents whose kids are playing competitive sports say i have particularly asked this question that they're moving towards a more protein and uh you know a heavy nutritional diet and i know you've written about that in the book but she's like they're like and i'm sorry come back to she i should not say that

because she's concerned but i have to right of course it's mostly mommy's yeah change the name you know the narrative yeah yeah um so how do what's the typical meal that they should look before and after sport before an important match game especially some of them are playing international levels i think banana is excellent especially the ones who travel outside of the country for international sports

you know something like a sukeri which is like a dried banana which belongs to our region is excellent because it can last you for seven to ten days and it is a mineral rich resource it's electrolyte rich resource and a lot of times when athletes travel out they don't they may not exactly love the food that they're eating you know so this is also an energy then source that they could carry that's something that you can eat both before

and after game and after a game i always suggest that you eat something wholesome you know even if it is dal chawal or even like a well made sandwich or even roti jaggery and ghee is a good idea you know but eat something the minute you're done with your game don't wait forever to start eating you know finish cool down do your stretches eat they always feel that the international athletes are always eating a lot of and that's how they say right

that especially people from china hong kong other asian economies they're they're eating far more this less carb uh sort of diet well you know that's the reason of their success their body is their agility well that's not quite uh true because olympic associations across the globe are now ensuring that their menus are fairly vegetarian you know it's not that they're going off meat but it's not surely exclusively meat that's one secondly if you look at the indian athletes including himadas

you know who won us a gold medal then there is smriti mandana who's such a big hitter of sixes and stuff they are purely vegetarian you know so you don't have to change your food culture to become an athlete who has um made it right but in fact you have to just be more away from all kinds of processed food whether they are vegetarian in nature or they are not vegetarian in nature you know the more

you are away from processed food and the more you are connected to fresh food the better your chances of performances uh performance are used so much on ghee roti good because it is it's like getting an immunity booster shot for me it's favorite food like yeah it's an easy uh meal it's something that you can just it's a quick go-to meal it's you can carry it in your tiffin box

it's a no-fuss meal i have i'm yet to meet a kid who doesn't love this meal so okay right utensils to cook for kids um ion kadai yeah fair um you know this uh kadais that is ideal you could even use steel but you should surely not be using teflon and plastic and aluminium right you're also very anti-formula milk which yeah i know isn't that true yeah

but a lot of uh moms who could not breastfeed for various reasons have been very vamping about it's all wrong and like what could we do we've we've just done that correct you know you know at that stage you know when you figure that you're not lactating enough um i can understand that it's an easy alternative and which is exactly why that do you feel like there is a concept of not lactating enough and lactating

enough um i mean you know it all depends on the fitness of the mother the circumstances under which the child is born and whether we've actually been patient enough to allow the child to latch onto the breast because for the first two or three days you literally need to help the child latch on and suckle and not give up in those first two or three days along with that you also need a you know a family

unit which is completely geared towards looking after the mother because if she's not going to get her rest if she's not going to eat right if she's not going to have her time um you know to herself especially in the first uh 40 50 days she is just going to be exhausted with um you know with the feeding and with everything it can get quite overwhelming uh a lot of indians who live abroad have asked this

question they find it very hard to cook every day and rely on frozen foods or food prepared over the weekend how can we make it easier for our kids well i think instead of cooking two times a week even if we cook up to three or four times a week that is something which will help and i say this even like at all my talks abroad that what happens is that um you know our men especially ones

because uh you know they're living abroad need to be that much more uh contributing in the kitchen because you're in india we still get help but people abroad don't quite get that help and then all that men limit themselves to mostly is uh grocery buying and taking out the garbage but there is more that they can do so they should start doing that more so that it's not just up to the woman to cook because how much are you also going

to cook there is going to be a limitation to that okay now the grandmom who's asked the question she says

it is like taking them to a multi-cuisine restaurant you know which is like a poor grade multi cuisine restaurant we have to teach our children to value the labor that goes into the kitchen to have every meal ready and they are sensitive enough to respect that if we as a household begin to respect that you know so we should learn from our grandmother surely okay last all these are from the kids and you need to answer

you know yeah yeah okay um did the auntie always eat healthy yes what was or is your favorite spot uh cycling and skiing okay favorite food that you always eat one more off okay which was your favorite subject in school history okay how do you get all the mamas to listen to you i also want to know

i don't know i i try i try okay everyone has a subject of fruit that they hate which one is yours ah bang gun she does have something that she hates okay i hate fruits why should i eat them if you hate fruits you don't need to eat them at all the mothers are going to eat that mothers are going to hate me food industry is going to hate me without listen no formula you're like but see

the kids love me i think that's more than enough don't you think yeah i love candy floss why can't i eat it oh candy and floss why can't you eat it because the only reason why you like it is because it's being marketed and targeted towards you and you are only liking it because your favorite cartoon character is eating it and it's also on your toothpaste and if we manage to remove which is what as adults we need

to do if we regulate uh the way junk food gets marketed to children most children will be off junk food because if you taste it it's terrible you know i mean you really don't feel like eating it okay i love ghee and my mom says i will become like a football if i eat it very good become the footballer no no no no but you will become as sporty as a footballer okay i always carry my water bottles to all

birthday parties so i don't spoil mother earth i tell my friends to not use those small display bottles even my teachers use it in school a lead by example and tell them that you know we don't have the ability to recycle plastic so we must we must reduce the usage of these plastic bottles okay okay and the last one is why do bad things taste so good if they're bad for you a lot of things bad a lot of times bad

things taste good only because they are marketed in a very good way so same thing again if we manage to remove the marketing bad things will just taste as bad things you know like chocolates should never come with a toy for example but they do which is the reason why we buy the chocolate so you remove the toy and no one's interested in that chocolate anymore that's so true thank you so much it has been an

absolute pleasure thank you all gonna be very happy with all the questions being answered hi i'm rujuta dewekar and you're watching me on kidstoppress.com