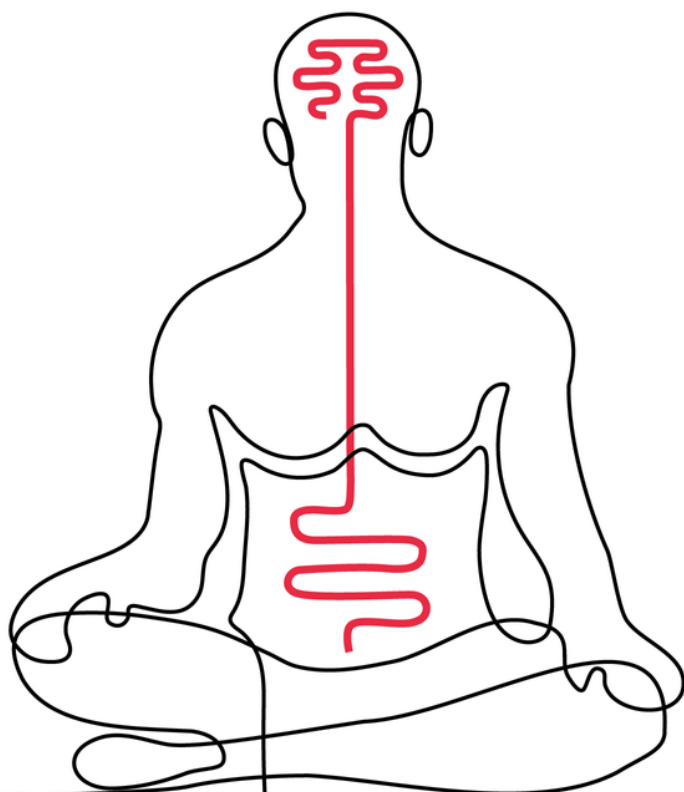


FOLLOW UP TO THE AWARD-WINNING BOOK, UNSTOPPABLE

MIND CONTROL

BIOHACK YOUR MIND, WEIGHT & IMMUNE
SYSTEM THROUGH NUTRITIONAL
PSYCHOLOGY & YOUR GUT MICROBIOME



ben angel

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ARE YOU READY TO THRIVE?

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY

While on my journey to biohack my way back to health I had the pleasure of speaking with Thyrve founder, Richard Lin and learning about his own inspiring story of biohacking his gut health.

Since then I've been a big advocate of Thyrve who offers something unique. Through their gut health test, after sending them a 'sample', they provide you with a customized probiotic blend and other recommendations to improve your gut health, unique to you.

So naturally, when it came to writing Mind Control, having a sponsor like Thyrve was the most logical choice. Richard provided unfettered access to their own doctors and introduced us to specialists from MIT, Perdue, Stanford, University of Maryland, The Gut Institute, and many more who are at the leading edge of gut microbiome research and were up for the challenge of answering our tough questions as you'll read about in this book.

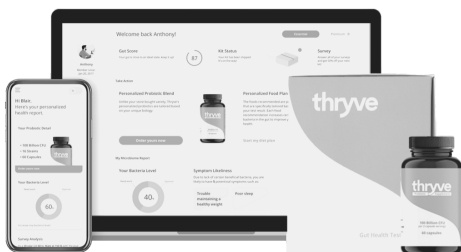
FIND OUT WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON...

Forget off-the-shelf probiotics that aren't personalized to your specific gut health needs, get one's that are unique to you.

STEP 1: Go to www.areyouunstoppable.com/thyrve-inside

STEP 2: Order your Thyrve Gut Health Test Kit. Be sure to enter the coupon code MINDCONTROL when you check out to receive 10% OFF your order, just for grabbing your copy of this book.

STEP 3: Once you receive your kit follow the instructions to send off your sample for the team at Thyrve to analyze & map your microbiome.



You'll then receive a complete analysis of your gut's microbiome showing which strains of bacteria you have too much or too little of, food choices & diet recommendations as well as a personalized blend of probiotics specifically designed to target your unique microbiome and get your gut health back on track.



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Introduction

Unstoppable was my story, now this book is your story. Over 70,000 copies of *Unstoppable* sold internationally, telling me my story was resonating with you. I received thousands of personal testimonies over the past years from those who read my book or took my course. I knew I had uncovered a paradigm shift with *Unstoppable: A 90 Day Plan To Biohack Your Mind and Body For Success* by exploring how much our primal brain short circuits our logic and rationale when our physical body can't support the onslaught of stress, poor diet, poor sleep, or trauma.

Thousands of you learned how our brain goes into a fight-or-flight mode, affecting our personality, mood, and identity that can fluctuate throughout the day. Many of you shared that you could not focus on your higher priorities when you were in this primal state, and your mind was operating only in survival mode.

Thousands of you were drawn to *Unstoppable* because you innately knew that you could no longer accept the way your mind and body was betraying you. You'd tried it all, but nothing had stuck! You thought a new diet would fix your problem, since those 'before and after' pictures were so convincing. So you did what all of us did; you jumped onto the proverbial bandwagon of self-help. It may have been one of those fad diets hoping it would be a "cure-all", only to be wildly disappointed, or seeing spectacular results, only to revert back to your old behaviors.

So, what causes our bodies to revolt when we're trying to do something right? What caused your mind to cheat on your efforts? You didn't consider how the diet could affect your psychology and affect your motivation. Suddenly, you felt an invisible anchor dragging down your results, and the weight crept back on. Please understand this wasn't your fault. How can we know the innate workings of our bodies when we aren't taught personalization when it comes to our health?

Many of you realized before *Unstoppable* that you needed to start first with a proper diet, so you went to the store and bought into the food industry's marketing ploy that if it's marked 'healthy,' it must be good for you. People have gone crazy for foods like the *Impossible Burger™*, understanding that it was a 'divine gift from the food gods', but in actuality, it's more akin to a trojan horse waiting to attack your endeavors; a genetically created nightmare waiting silently to wreak havoc on your already stressed body and mind.

Many of you knew that supplements were what you needed, and *Unstoppable* showed you some to help boost your stressed systems. However, what you will learn in *Mind Control* is that if your body is not properly able to absorb them, you are throwing money down the toilet.

So many people go directly to their thought patterns and beliefs that are causing them issues and never think that their diet may be affecting their choices and behaviors. They follow the thought gurus

that drum into us to “Change our minds, change our reality”. And while this has its place, when there is something deeply integrated into your body controlling what you thought, felt, and in charge of your emotions, you would see that none of this self-talk could change a broken system. Psychology alone is not enough and can be dangerous since you could be misdiagnosed, leaving the real problem unaddressed. You fall into a deeper hole of desperation.

And, thousands are taking random chances with their health and wellbeing jumping on the latest fad therapies, diets, supplements, and devices without knowing they could lead to an altered state of being which your body didn’t need in the first place. It’s like banging a nail with a shoe, it might do something, but is it the right tool for the job.

But it’s not all doom and gloom. When I wrote my book, *Unstoppable*, I knew I had to get to the root causation of why doctors were unable to help me find the answers to my brain fog, depression, fatigue, and anxiety. This was when I dove into the world of biohacking. Biohacking is akin to a do-it-yourself approach to your biology. It is a lifestyle that consists of making small, incremental lifestyle changes to make improvements in your health and wellbeing. This could be by changing your diet, testing for deficiencies, working on exercise and movement, and much, much more. The best biohacking results come from being well-informed and cautious about what works for your body.

From a survey of over 50,000 I uncovered four *Success Identity Types*, and after speaking with neuroscientists, doctors, biohackers, psychologists, and clinical social workers, their insights helped me determine where those surveyed sat on a continuum of wellness. These *Identities* are not fixed, meaning they can evolve as we learn and grow, much like the meta-studies that have proven neuroplasticity and how our brain can change at any age when we learn new concepts and skills.¹ However, just as our physical minds can change, our identity can sway depending on the balance of our energy levels, our ability to focus, and our physical health. I labeled the *Success Identities* as the following; The Defender, The Guardian, The Synergist, and The Catalyst. Each has their own unique weaknesses and strengths, and each identity is capable of moving up and down the continuum of wellness between Defender and

Catalyst. For those of you familiar with the *Success Identity Types* in my first book, *Unstoppable*, this will be a good refresher for you, and for others, a new awakening on how you can control your destiny to health. I'll share more about the *Success Identity Types* as they relate to your gut in the next chapter and if you haven't taken the free quiz to uncover yours, then I'd recommend you do that now.

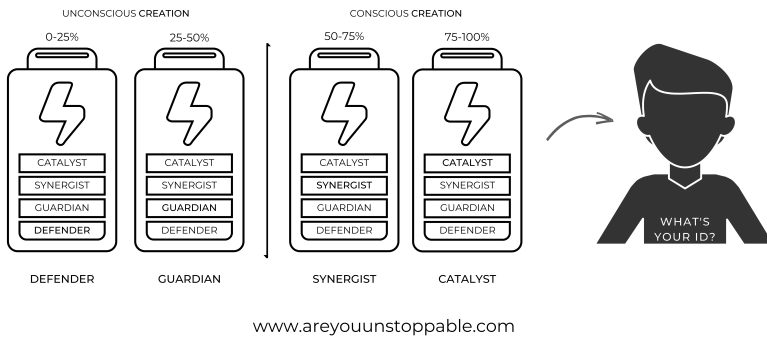


Figure i.i Success Identity Types. Source: *Unstoppable*, Entrepreneur Press, 2018

In *Unstoppable*, I used a battery's charge to represent these *Success Identity Types* and the power they have to achieve their goals. The aim is to ensure both our physical and psychological energy is fully charged, and achieving the level of Catalyst. This is a state in which we are conscious creators who are motivated, focused, and driven. Just like our mobile phones turn on battery saving mode when they're running low to preserve energy, our body switches on self-preservation mode when we run out of physical and emotional energy. This is where our fight/flight response is triggered, and our brain prioritizes vital bodily functions, rest, and recovery over personal and career goals. In this state, you're more likely to procrastinate and make excuses. You may even find yourself acting out of character or making rash decisions because you are no longer operating in your prefrontal cortex, which controls personality, rational thinking, and emotional control. Using the weekly "Are You

Unstoppable” Quiz many of you learned why you kept snapping back to your old behaviors despite trying to do all the right things.

Millions worldwide are suffering from depression, anxiety, fatigue, and crippling brain fog that’s stopping them from living their life to the fullest. Over 50,000 of you took my free *Success Identity Types* quiz, equating to over 1.5 million pieces of data that painted a comprehensive picture of what life is like for you. From all walks of life, demographics, and socioeconomic standings, thousands of brave people answered 30 questions based on their success, habits, mental and physical health, allowing us to uncover links between their psychological symptoms and their physical and digestive health. Now, with the explosion of research into nutritional psychology and the gut/brain axis, we can now uncover solutions that weren’t accessible to us before.

The observations and interactions I made with the tens of thousands of Unstoppable members, all the private messages, and people who took our survey couldn’t have validated this movement any better. They shared their most personal and vulnerable concerns about their weight, mental health, and chronic illnesses. They were willing to take the first step by taking their personalized recommendations to heart, in order to become unstoppable.

You also shared your successes stories with me and how you went from Defender to Catalyst and feeling on top of the world, which allowed me to share in your wins. I also felt every one of your struggles, heartaches, and tribulations, understanding your vulnerability intimately because I lived it with you, and for that, I am grateful.

When the reviews began coming in, I knew it wasn’t a fluke that it worked for me. I saw it in real-time affect thousands of other people:

“This book was life-changing for me. I have been in a rut of depression and anxiety for years, looking for more energetic and happy solutions. Seminars, self-help books, workshops, hiring mentors... all telling me it was possible to live the life of my dreams. I just needed to be more positive. I tried declarations, meditations, working out, eating better, etc., always to snap back into my comfort

zone and get sucked into the same cycle of wondering what's wrong with me. The book filled me with hope and made me feel not so crazy about why my success wasn't happening. It provided me with real solutions and lit a fire in me that I have never experienced with any other self-development I've encountered. Within a week of taking the recommended supplements and using [Ben's] visualization techniques, my energy is through the roof, and I finally feel like I'm on the path my life was intended to be on." -**Dizatt**

When you take on a theory and turn it into an actual practical guide, the validation comes in droves!

"Your book has really helped me understand what was going on, and the changes I've made in the last two weeks have seen a lifting of brain fog, 3.5kg weight loss, less instability, and much more level energy. I would say a must-read for anyone wanting to improve their lives!" ~ **Mark Robinson**

But this one shocked me! I had received endorsements from doctors, psychologists, and neuroscientists, but would anyone in their respective fields ever apply what I had created into practice!?

"Hi, Ben! I'm not sure if this will reach you, but I just wanted to drop a line and let you know I'm only halfway through your book and absolutely loving it!! I'm a psychologist here in Australia and have essentially been 'biohacking' my mind and body through various books and research over the last couple of years. The way you have compiled the information into one simple book has confirmed and validated so many thoughts I've had about this area. It is changing the way I work with clients now too. I'm no longer interested in just the psychological aspects of my clients. Now I'm finding it so much more helpful to start with their biological and physiological functioning before delving into mental health issues - having that

data is gold for me to understand the full picture and tailoring individual treatment plans accordingly. Thank you for your hard work in bringing all of this together so beautifully.”

And another in the field of Clinical Psychology:

“This is fantastic! I’m a Clinical Psychologist, and I am so pleased you have been working so hard to get all this kind of information out there because medications are not the answer. Just as you said, “We need to get to the ‘root cause.” Depression is the body’s way of telling you that there is an ‘imbalance,’ so you need to find the imbalance and resolve it. [That] can be toxins in the gut or brain, deficiencies, etc. The body likes to work in perfect harmony with nature. And when it isn’t, it gets out of balance. No synthetic medication that suppresses symptoms is going to resolve the imbalance. If you have low serotonin, then what’s causing that to happen in the first place? An imbalance! ~ Ashley E., Clinical Psychologist

These testimonies became the genesis of *Mind Control*. Being approached by doctors and psychologists to use *Unstoppable* in their practice told me what was missing in our healthcare. I lived the nightmare of trying to get answers after seeing countless doctors and specialists who couldn’t connect the dots for me. I relied on their knowledge and expertise when I realized I was one of the millions with an individual problem that wouldn’t be cured by giving me a blanket response and taking a pill or getting a better attitude.

We rely on our doctors to help make us well, but it’s unfair to say that they will cure us. They are not in the business of fixing their patients, only to alleviate their symptoms. This is said with the utmost respect for our general practitioners who spent countless hours in medical school learning the profession. However, you must know that there is a significant disparity in what doctors learn about nutrition in their medical training and how little they know about

the intricacies of the gut-brain axis and nutrition, something I seek to explore further into our journey together.

Mind Control will begin to open the forensic files holding your most pressing concerns as we discover:

- ▶ Why you're always catching colds or flu
- ▶ The reasons for your unexplained fatigue and sluggishness
- ▶ Understand the impact of antibiotics on your mental health
- ▶ The the truth behind your digestive issues like constipation, bloating, IBS and heartburn
- ▶ What's behind your unexplained mood disorders, such as anxiety/depression
- ▶ The factors causing unexpected weight gain/struggling to lose weight
- ▶ Why you struggle to focus, have scattered thinking, and forgetful

Mind Control is about finding the balance and sustainability in a plan that is entirely individual in its approach. You'll learn how the gut microbiome's hidden world may be dictating everything you think and feel on a psychological and biological level. You'll discover how this secret world of billions of lifeforms desperately fights for their survival, with or without you!

When working with Unstoppable members, it became increasingly clear that both those who struggled and those who were optimizers had almost the same approach to their health; they wanted a quick fix. They were not applying the necessary fundamentals of how we must first start with a step by step plan using their data, test results, and personal health surveys to devise a plan, preferably with a Functional Medicine or Integrative Medicine doctor.

I discovered those that struggled were looking for a silver bullet, one thing that would help them get past the years of built-up stress, trauma, and a wrecked mindset. They wanted a quick answer to apply immediately since their desperation to return to a better life felt like life or death, a legitimate fear. Their concerns about controlling their emotions, increasing energy, biohacking their health, and fixing digestive and mental health issues were legitimate.

However, their approach was like panning for gold. They grab at a pile of problems, swirl their built-up concerns, worries and fears all in one lump, not taking the time to slow down, let the mud settle, and look at each piece presented and where each issue arose. This haphazard behavior happens due to bodily discourse, which impacts emotional control and cognitive reasoning skills—a side effect of a body in disarray.

The golden nugget is hiding, ready to be revealed when they decide to take one step to begin. This first step could have been finding an appropriate doctor to order a deficiency test or begin a better eating plan designed for their body and needs. The answers are right there in front of them if they would simply breathe and take it one step at a time.

At the other end of the spectrum were the Optimizers wanting to up their game from an already highly competitive pace. They strive to be the best and try the latest trends. They go at such a fast pace that they may not realize that following this trend, taking these supplements, eating this way, or breathing like that can come at a cost. They were willing to try the latest craze without being aware they could add adverse side effects if they chose the wrong path.

There can be unhealthy obsessions when not taking the time to take a step back to see if it's making a positive difference. Taking time for gratitude when things are going well, and appreciating that you have overcome a lot, might be a great way to acknowledge that change can happen. Sometimes just sitting in your garden of accomplishments reflecting on how far you've come is where you might want to stay for a while to reap the harvest.

Another unexpected observation was the interaction between the Strugglers and the Optimizers. The Strugglers would share their difficulties, grappling with the direction they should go. The Optimizers, understanding the Strugglers' concerns since they lived it, will naturally give what worked for them, inadvertently engulfing the Struggler, who already feel overwhelmed, with a deluge of advice. We all can relate to this when we've asked for advice from the well-meaning, only to walk away overburdened with information.

A great example of finding answers for yourself with a plan is in the next testimony. There are so many ah-ha moments that Unstoppable members had when they decided to take the necessary

tests to put an adequately curated protocol into action. I cannot stress the importance of starting your program with testing, for those who can afford to. Learning that you have a deficiency in an essential vitamin or mineral or discovering you have a low functioning organ helps you get the answers you need faster than jumping from diet to diet, supplement to supplement, not knowing if they are making an impact.

“It has taken me years to feel better again. Not complete, but a whole lot better. I came across Unstoppable when I was at my lowest point. It is hard to be your own advocate. I knew it was more than getting off my butt. Anxiety, depression, and exhaustion were an everyday thing. I just looked lazy to those around me. I even had to close my own office because I couldn’t see clients anymore, that was over a year ago. The doctors couldn’t find anything except low iron, but that wasn’t my problem. Six months ago, I realized that I mattered enough to be taken care of and sought out a Naturopath. I mattered enough to invest in my health and well-being! Within the first month, I was getting better! I finally found my primary source of the problem was Adrenal Fatigue. More to be figured out, but I wake up happy, less stressed, more clarity, and energy. I still have bad days, but they are not the norm. As I read Unstoppable, I felt like I was reading about myself! And I explain it to those going through similar situations. I have now taken another course and started another business and loving it! I am Becoming Unstoppable!” – Lori K.

I also discovered there are many egos in the biohacking industry. They all have similar stories as mine, needing to answer their physical or mental concerns and then find solutions. But what is not being shared is that there should be a medical disclaimer shouted from the rooftops that what worked for them, might not work for you. Yes, they may say it in passing, but to give examples of what worked for them could cause someone else a lot of grief and headache without the proper context provided.

I'll admit it, before I wrote *Unstoppable*, I had drank some of the proverbial KoolAid. I tried some of the latest crazes of supplements or superfoods, thinking this would boost my game. Only to find out weeks or maybe even months later that their 'golden ticket' was causing me heart palpitations, dizziness, or even depression! I had no idea that some of what is being touted as the new 'super-whatever' could actually cause more harm. I shared my experience using coconut oil in my coffee, thinking that would give me the necessary boost in energy as it claims. However, months later, after taking a food sensitivity test, coconut scored very high as a food sensitivity trigger, and after removing it from my diet, I began to feel so much better.

Deborah, my medical research writer, had been following a clean eating diet working on unusual weight gain and Thyroid issues, eating this way for about two years. When she finally buckled down and took a food sensitivity test, her clean eating diet had many trigger foods causing her intestinal stress, although she wasn't experiencing any real discomfort.

"I never would have thought eggs, avocados, beef, and even kale were on my trigger foods list. I didn't feel crappy after eating them, so why should I stop. All the lights went on when my Functional doctor explained that many 'Superfoods' like kale contain oxalates that can attack your joints, Thyroid, and other sensitive organs. It was an eye-opener for sure! I know I'll eventually be able to bring back foods I enjoy and that are good for me, as long as my body accepts them again." - Deborah H.

Following the self-help industry is like sifting through a patchwork quilt of diets, supplements, wearables, lab tests, with no one teaching you how to find out what works for you, how to assess each option, what's worth your time, and what's a waste of time, money and energy. We try to piece it together as best as possible, but the fundamentals of personalization are missing.

I observed this happen several times with *Unstoppable* members grasping at a new nootropic or even psychedelics without getting the proper consensus from an adequately credentialed doctor. Testing

out something like psychedelics, for instance should be done in a certified medical clinic setting. You may feel like you can take on the world as an Optimizer, however dipping your toes into something that can bring you into a shocking and traumatic experience on your own may not be what you planned and may have dire results. Biohacking your health also doesn't mean to test anything and everything without weighing up the pros and cons or if it's actual science. Biohacking takes time, and having a certified doctor in the appropriate fields helps to know if you're barking up the wrong tree.

Through this journey, I was shocked by the lack of female representation within the biohacking world as it is represented at the biohacking conventions. I would attend many consortiums wanting to interview and pick the brains of some of the tops in the field. I distinctly remember asking a public relations manager at one conference if there were some women in the domain that I could also interview. Their response was always, "Oh, good question!"

However, I've still come to learn a lot about what women face as individuals in the world of biohacking. Women face far more issues regarding their health and mental well-being since they have many systems in their bodies that don't react the same way as men. Deborah and Cynthia Henry Thurlow, a Functional nurse and TEDx star with over 7 million views, have helped me learn what our female members have to deal with when it comes to biohacking the female body. From figuring out their hormonal imbalances, perimenopause, and menopause wreaking havoc on their physical and mental health, to specific tests and protocols that should be created for their very particular needs, there is still so much to learn about how to address the gaps in what they need most.

According to an article by Lauren Smiley, interviewing women in Silicon Valley and their underrepresentation in the field, she spoke to biologist Megan Klimen. The latter says, "There is a misunderstanding men are doing it for health optimization. Women are doing it for aesthetics and dieting. I think there's a lot more stigma, and it's dismissed a lot more."² This disparity leads me to take on a more in-depth understanding of the complexities of biohacking and the information you need to know. Biohacking is about personalized health and optimization.

Optimizing our health is like trying to tune into a radio station without knowing the right frequency. You'll flip through countless stations and white noise (doctors, medications, supplements, diets, psychologists) until you find one that sings in harmony with your body, brain, and life. My goal, in consultation with countless experts, is to help you find your frequency.

Surveying 50,000, we found only 6% of people have found their station. Even then, the Optimizers keep playing with the dial to see if they can find something better in a never-ending quest to beat their personal best. The problem, they may get stuck in white noise again. Strugglers may flip between diets, doctors, medications, and self-help endlessly because they don't know where to get their answers. *Mind Control* will help you narrow your options so you can find the station that sings with you and help you find your way back when your life gets thrown into disarray.

Expansion versus Contraction

Unstoppable was an expansion of thought for me. It was entering into a vast world of innovation and growth in the knowledge that we can truly heal ourselves through a systematic approach when applied individually. First, to regain your biological sanity. I introduced you to a new shift in the mindset of not basing your ability to change on the strength of your will power alone. Secondly, I gave you a week-by-week plan to help you understand how our psychology reflects our biology's quality and how our psychology can positively or negatively affect your biology; one is synonymous with the other.

Like building a bridge, you have to start with your foundation to cross into a better place. It's impossible to start at the top of the bridge suspended in the air. You could try, but then you could be missing out on critical features and proper measurements. You have to have quality materials for your structure to withstand the stressors that life will bring. Without the proper tools (proper testing, individualized plans, etc.), what you built will go unfinished, and you're back at square one. But looking at the schematics, testing out your tools, and taking small steps, your body will bridge into a better connection with your brain. Countless testimonies told me

the same, that if you skipped a stage, you'd have to go back and reassess what you may have overlooked.

"...At the time, I was suffering from the horrendous side effects of medication and was undergoing tests for all sorts of different things. After discovering I had a severe nutritional deficiency, I gave my life a complete overhaul. I followed guidance from a doctor who specializes in holistic approaches to health and your program's advice. I'm now a good few months down the line, and I'm starting to feel the benefits. It's been pretty amazing!" ~jqpersonaldevelopment

She was spinning her wheels to find answers until she found the proper toolkit to get her there. It shouldn't be so hard for us to find the answers. It should come to you like a lightbulb finally turned on to full power when you connect the dots of what you must do to heal.

"... Your book finally arrived, and I have tears streaming down my face as I read. Finally, I understand what is going on in my body for the past four years and why I've struggled to accomplish anything I have strived for. This battle in my head had been enormous and exhausting. I can finally breathe, relieve the pressure on myself, and understand where I am right now and enjoy this journey of healing my heart, soul, mind, and body." ~Angela B

"...I discovered that many of my health problems [digestive problems, lack of energy, and more] were associated with low serotonin levels- the biggest ah-ha of the month. I dealt with it, and I already know what to eat, what to avoid, and what not to feel good about. Ben Angel, once again, a Big Thank You for the book!"

Remember, it can be your imbalanced psychology, affecting the rest of your body, motivation, and drive. You can't have a balanced body without a balanced brain.

Unstoppable helped me expand my horizons to seek answers I would never have found if I hadn't dug deeper. And, now, with *Mind Control*, I developed a systematic and revolutionary approach to our brain and body optimization using the latest frontier in science; Nutritional Psychology and the Gut Microbiome.

If *Unstoppable* was the young Knight embarking on a crusade, *Mind Control* is the returning General, ready to share his wisdom, and secrets to mastering the realm of your body and mind.

Unstoppable opened up a world of possibilities to heal yourself, getting you prepped and prepared for a deeper dive. It provided the necessary tools to find answers to your burning questions, and feel the change within. *Mind Control* begins to dial in the focus, as we take a closer look at one of the most critical components of Nutritional Psychology and the impact our Gut Microbiome has on our mental health into a world that has the potential to change the way you go about healing yourself completely.

Why is *Mind Control* any different from the thousands of diet programs, health influencers, and the latest food or supplement trends?

It's a guide toward your own personalized program based on the most revolutionary and pioneering fields in biological sciences; Nutritional Psychology, Genomics and Metabolomics. We'll be combining the latest innovation and studies in the Human Gut Microbiome Project and what we now understand as the Gut-Brain-Body Axis. *Mind Control* is a powerful program that will help you comprehend entirely where the pieces may have fallen or broken for you with your mental health, weight, and immunity, and help you gather them back together. You'll discover how nutrition impacts not only your mental wellness, you'll learn how your body can rebel if you ignore its warnings.

You'll hear from leading scientists and experts in microbiome & gut/brain axis research from MIT, Perdue, Stanford, Harvard Lifestyle Medicine, UT Austin, University of Maryland, University of Western States, Dalhousie University, as well as the founders of Thryve & The Gut Institute.

You'll learn how the science of psychology was missing a crucial piece in healing the mind through the body. Decades of research focused on healing mental disorders through psychological

therapies, ignoring what was triggered in the body. It's time to take a revolutionary approach with chronic illnesses on the rise. Gut health issues, hormonal imbalances, immunodeficiency disorders, mental health conditions, and obesity are skyrocketing, and we can't keep treating them with the same approach. We need to utilize the latest innovations in nutritional psychology to bridge the gap of total mind and body wellness.

I'll share how you may be inadvertently altering your gut microbiome with things in your environment you didn't know could harm your gut. You'll learn what to look for in your medicine cabinet that could be causing them to revolt, as well as the triggers in foods you may be eating every day.

Mind Control will demonstrate how your lifestyle choices like environmental toxins, a stressful workplace, sleep disorders, alcohol and substance overuse can each declare an all-out war in your body, and sadly, it's our body and mind that loses.

I'll take you into the secret halls of the Food Industry to help you discern why Genetically Modified foods, food additives, and food chemicals are banned in many countries around the world. You'll learn how it affects the quality of your gut microbiome and how to guard yourself against this industry whose bottom line is not your health.

You'll discover how your gut bacteria came to be, and the history of your birth, infant feeding and adolescent influences, and the aging process that created the gut you have today. You'll also piece together how choices you made and traumas that may have occurred, also affect your gut in ways you never knew, and what you can do to change it for the better.

Mind Control explores the latest scientific links between our gut, food, and mood in ways that haven't been investigated before. You'll finally get the answers you need as a starting point you can present to your doctor or nutritionist based on what we understand to date. We will provide you a detailed plan that is easy to understand and follow with the latest scientifically backed research and protocols.

I want you to remember this, whenever you feel like someone doesn't believe you, you're all alone, and there's no hope, you'll find me in these pages rooting for you. Whenever you feel like it's just too much and you can't take anymore, pick up this book because I was

you, I get you, and I am here for you. It's time to finally claim what is rightfully yours, a deep sense of wellbeing and purpose that energizes you to go out and go after what you want. One thing, I do ask of you though is that, once you get there, you make yourself available to help lift up someone else who is walking in the same shoes that you once did because together, we are unstoppable.

- Ben Angel



Who's Controlling Who?

The Next Frontier In Human Biohacking

“

Hey, Deb, I need your help! I've got to track someone down in another country. I think they are going to commit suicide!”

A woman had contacted me, and her words spelled utter desperation. I feared she would take her life. She shared her fear of having to go to the hospital and possibly losing her children and family. Her depression had become so overwhelming she felt she could no longer depend on the doctors for help.

Unfortunately, that's now become a frequent message we've heard from people in the last year since sharing my story in *Unstoppable*, in which I revealed my own battle with suicidal thoughts, crippling fatigue, and self-loathing. My team and I do not take these situations lightly. It's moments like these I can relate to anyone who has hit their endpoint; that feeling takes you almost out of your body. You no longer want to care about yourself, and the disconnect is deafening. Messages from parents concerned about their children's emotional struggles and partners needing a way to help their spouse were all telling us the paradigm shift was happening. People needed a new approach to their physical and emotional health that got them answers.

There is always a catalyst for depression that leads to desperation. It's a sense of overwhelm when you've turned over every stone to get answers, and none seem to exist. It's an engulfing feeling that you can't explain. I hope, in these pages, you can begin to put your own story together and pen a new ending for yourself, whether you're looking to address a struggle or optimize your health.

Many stories like this keep me going on this quest to help you get the answers you need to get to the other side of desperation. I want you to know I am walking this path with you because I want to unearth the real issues disrupting your life. No one is exempt from life-altering events like a pandemic or financial concerns. Even athletes and Optimizers face new challenges in their performance standards, so a fresh pair of eyes helps show you what may be missing.

There is now unrivaled science behind why you do what you do. The answers are revealing themselves in the newest frontier of biological sciences. Nutritional Psychology, Metabolomics, and the Gut Microbiome are unfolding the mysteries of how our gut microbiome affects every process in our bodies, directly affecting the quality of our choices, moods, emotions, and body.

I think we'd all like to believe we are in total control of our destiny, but as you'll learn, it takes a team of billions of cells to help you get the results you want, and they all have to be in balance. However, most people start their life unaware of this symbiotic system and are determined to believe they are the problem. That they are the cause of their own anxiety and depression. They feel

they are the reason they can't shed the extra pounds, or have low resilience to stress, can't beat brain fog, or reach our goals. They were born that way.

However, blaming ourselves isn't going to fix it. Childhood deficiencies can impair development as well as cognitive function. You didn't have control of how you were fed when you were in the womb or as a young child. That's like saying you can control when the sun rises and sets. Many things are out of our control. Even using common antibiotics as a child for ear infections or tonsillitis can cause havoc on a young gut microbiome. Although while you may have been impacted by things that you couldn't take charge of, there are ways to help your body recover and heal.

We're going to connect the dots of your medical and emotional history, your birth, and your life choices that lead you here where we are today. This moment, right now, I am standing with you to guide you through the steps to start feeling like you can take control of your life. Many questions will surface for you, as they did for me, and it's time you get the answers.

Do We Have Free Will?

When it comes to our thoughts, behaviors, health, and wellbeing, who's really in control? Are we destined to fall prey to the DNA we were born with, or can we change what fate has dealt us? Will I turn out like my parents, or can I create a new path for myself and my future?

All of us find ourselves at one point in our lives in a situation that causes us to stop and think, "How did I get here?" "How did this happen to me?" This could have been the loss of a job or productivity in your business. You may be experiencing loss of income or see your relationships suffering. That feeling of loss of emotional control and watching your health decline is like being buckled into a rollercoaster, and you're not allowed off until you've screamed your head off, and you're left feeling completely spent. No one stopped the ride to say, "It's okay, it's just stress making a mess of your gut, and here are some things you can do to make it feel better." Or, "This ride will release too much adrenaline for your already stressed body. Maybe it's best to ride the tea-cups today." We

need to become our best advocate, but it takes knowledge of these things to learn what you can do next time.

All of these situations would have explanations if someone asked you why they occurred. If we are honest with ourselves, it could have been complacency, stubbornness, ignorance, no motivation or energy, or lack of training or skills. But what caused ourselves to allow these things to happen? Where did the complacency or lack of energy begin? Have you always felt that way? Was your brain not in a healthy state to learn that new skill to grow and succeed in your career?

Our Defenders, the lowest of the *Success Identity Types*, are the ones that are operating at less than 25% of their energy capacity just to stay alive. In Unstoppable, I realized that they were literally in self-preservation mode, protecting what little psychological and physical energy they had left. They were utterly depleted and at high risk of becoming depressed without help from a proper doctor. Asking a Defender to guard the castle would be like giving them the proverbial white flag to ward off further attacks. They have nothing left to give, no energy to fight back, and it's time they got the answers and help they desperately need. When you don't address these basic fundamental behaviors of success, you'll be on a downward spiral with no net to catch you. You'll be paying the ultimate price of what you get out of life.

It doesn't have to be external changes either. What if it's something physical? Maybe you were in an unexpected accident or trauma. The injury first slowed you down, and although you may have recovered, some after-effects

As Socrates once said, "An unexamined life is not worth living."

seem to have created a new reality for you. Maybe you were traumatized by another person. You may not carry physical scars, but your body may be telling you differently with joint pain, weight gain, sleeplessness, or other signs it hasn't dealt with the issues on a deeper level. Your body will tell you whether you are ready to listen or not.

It could also be you've seen your body change in ways that it's not recognizable anymore. Weight gain, sluggishness, loss of desires, lack of mental clarity seems to have crept up on you. You might have even gone to the doctor to hear them say, "You're just getting older." Is ageing the cause of why things are changing? Again, your body is telling you something is out of whack, and it needs your attention. If left ignored, you could be stacking on other issues until it becomes the straw that broke the camel's back. You won't know how much your physical changes affect all areas of your life; your relationships, your job performance, and your desires until it all comes tumbling down.

Many Unstoppable members shared their stories of being on top of the world in their careers, relationships, or physical state to have a sudden injury or trauma like a death or divorce careen them into an unknown world. They developed acute illnesses or emotional issues that they never had before, and they had to find ways to rebalance their mind and body in ways they never tried before.

One member had no idea that her much-needed divorce would cause her to lose teeth. She wasn't prepared for the stress that came during and after her divorce became final. Although she tried old ways of dealing with stressors, this new stress brought about unique struggles.

"I was so relieved to get out of the abusive marriage. However, I wasn't expecting to see my body revolt, especially my teeth. Running and weight training were no longer beneficial to me. I had to find other ways to cope with stress, even though I felt much happier. If it wasn't for Unstoppable, I had no idea my adrenals were crashing. They couldn't support me anymore even though I was trying to exercise even harder. It wasn't until I had tests done by a functional medicine doctor that I had to change every aspect of how I took care of myself."

Our bodies are in perfect cadence when we are born. It knows what to do to keep us breathing, warm, processing food, and moving. It's a well-oiled machine. We can see examples of this in the

world of nature as well. An acorn grows into a mighty oak, just like all of the other oaks. However, when something internal or external affects that balance, it alters the systems keeping that tree alive. Blight, insects, or polluted groundwater could affect how that oak will survive and its quality of life afterward. It's the same with you. It all boils down to our environment, nutrition, genetics, and the genes of billions of other passengers in and around your body, too! Their DNA affects yours in ways you likely never considered.

You're born with 23 pairs of chromosomes inside each of your billions of cells, each chromosome carrying a specific information code inside it. Of course, some of us could be born with this code out of sequence. About 1 in 200,000 people in the United States are born with a genetic mutation.¹ Their gene mutation may not affect them until a lifestyle choice, environmental cause, or mutation within the cell itself occurs. According to the National Human Genome Research Institute, almost all diseases have some sort of genetic factor to them.²

Although your family may have a propensity for diabetes, heart disease, cancer, or other chronic conditions, it doesn't have to be your fate to trigger those genes to deregulate and create the same storyline. You've been put at this fork in the road for a reason. You can choose the path well-trodden by your inherited genes, or you can try a new path toward change and a new legacy for your family's health.

This is important to understand since you also have special guests residing inside you that also carry their own genes. They also want to survive and send millions of messages to your body and brain to let their needs be known.

Have you ever gotten angry with someone and lashed out, which surprised the other person and even you? Have you been at a gathering that had tons of food offered, and you literally couldn't keep yourself away from it, or the sight of all that food repelled you? And, of course, the infamous 'hangry' behavior you may have felt when you needed food now! Everything we do, all the choices we make are internally influenced. It's like an internal puppet master pulling strings, and now you are desperate to find out if they are a friend or foe.

Hormonal imbalance, disturbances in the gut, poor nutrition, toxins, pollutants, and poor sleep are just a few of the things that influence our moods, emotions, and physical state. These influences are either created in your gut microbiome or a byproduct of a microbiome that is unhappy.

Before we break down these disorders into portions you can digest easily, let's get started answering some of those burning questions.

The Chicken or the Egg?

It's a question almost as old as time itself, which came first? Does your body betray you first and then develop symptoms like depression, lack of motivation, weight gain, fatigue, and anxiety? Or, did the repetitive thoughts such as, "I'm not good at my job," "I'm so fat and ugly," or "I'm not worthy" cause your body to create a firestorm of unhappy cells reacting to those thoughts? It seems simple enough, but you'll be surprised to find out what is responsible for it all!

The latest research shows that a balanced gut microbiome, and its trillions of bacteria living within our body, have a lot to do with whether they activate our genes for wellness or deregulate our genes to create diseases like cancer or heart disease. This is why you may feel your body 'betrays' you. The good news is that it may be more under your control than you think unless you disrupt your gut bacteria's instinct for survival.

Nutritional psychology is the study of how cognitive choices, such as meal decisions, can influence nutrition, psychological health, and overall health. But it also demonstrates how our food choices affect our moods, emotions, and intentions. Nutritional psychology seeks to understand the relationship between nutritional behavior and mental health/well-being. Nutritional psychology and the gut microbiome have to work together. If the gut is distressed, nutritional psychology won't have the impact we desire.

Since 2017, we've surveyed over 50,000 people that revealed a lot and uncovered a naked truth; we are now in a health crisis, and our medical community is not prepared for its onslaught.

Our grave concern was that 94% of them had to find a way to get through each day as a successful and contributing member of society while feeling tired, unfocused, unmotivated, and downright sick. This crisis is evident in the numbers reflected in the latest facts, according to the World Health Organization there's been a global tenfold increase in childhood and adolescent obesity in the last forty years. Over 264 million adults suffer from depression, and both of these illnesses have effective treatments, if not cures.³

This was a massive paradigm shift I uncovered in my book, *Unstoppable*. I realized how much our primal brain short circuits our logic and rationale when our physical body can't support the onslaught of stress, poor diet, and sleep, or trauma. Our mind goes into a fight-or-flight mode, causing our personality, mood, and identity to fluctuate throughout the day. In this primal state, you're unable to focus on your higher priorities, and your mind is only in survival mode. You grab the Snickers, coffee, or pizza just to get through the day. That is your gut telling you it needs better support since it is careening out of control. Your brain starts screaming for help to aid emotional regulation, better fuel, or to distress. A whirlwind of events can occur now that you fed your body a sub-par fuel. It's like putting water or salt into your fuel tank. You will begin to sputter and damage your fine-tuned machine if you continue feeding it fuel that ends up eroding you from the inside out.

Here are just a few of the initial findings of the 50,000 surveyed to help you understand the crisis that is occurring:

- ▶ 46.85% suffer from any of the following two or more times per week, constipation, diarrhea, indigestion, bloating
- ▶ 69.60% experience brain fog two or more times per week, or lose their train of thought, head feels cloudy, forgetful
- ▶ 69.99% procrastinate often
- ▶ 58.81% feel tired most of the time
- ▶ 64.12% have felt depressed lately
- ▶ 70.95% have felt anxious lately
- ▶ 48.17% crash after consuming a meal/snack more than 5 x per week (i.e., feel sleepy, unfocused)

How did these things happen to us? How did we get so far removed from our body's natural ebb and flow from being healthy and vibrant to sick, tired, and overwhelmed? This just didn't start for you when the pandemic hit. The pandemic caused us to see just how depleted many of us were, and it amplified the symptoms that were just under the surface.

It strikes at the heart of what is happening to millions of people struggling to maintain a semblance of normalcy and a healthy mindset. We are sabotaging our best efforts. We've always innately known that what we eat, life choices we make, and our environment impacts our mental and physical health, and now science is backing that up.

I didn't want to be another statistic by just following my general practitioner's guidelines. I wanted to know why this was happening to me and to make it never come back, or at least have the tools to manage it if it did.

The four *Success Identities* can help you bridge your gap to the person you know you are meant to become.

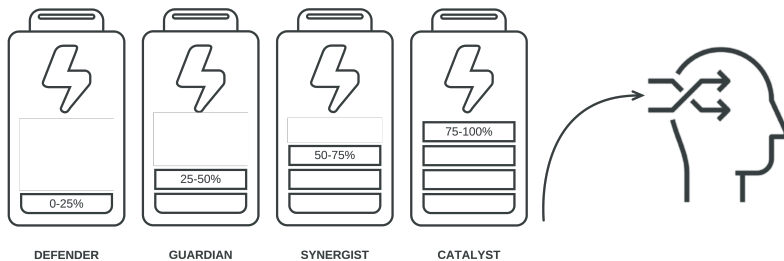


Figure 1.1 Success Identity Types Source: *The Unstoppable Journal*, Entrepreneur Press, 2020

I learned that even if you have the farthest to go on this continuum, you can achieve the most significant change. The Defender is doing just that, trying to defend what little energy output they have without the benefits of healthy biological functions to support their efforts. They already likely have a chronic illness, whether it is Type 2 Diabetes, obesity, depression, fatigue, or

other overwhelming ailment. Defenders most likely went from being unaware of the effects of food, poor environment, weak emotional state, poor sleep, and lack of exercise to noticing surprising results from a simple change in any one of those concerns. Guardians, Synergists, and Catalysts all have their strengths and weaknesses that can also be biohacked for optimization. But, I'll dive into more detail on this in Chapter 2.

The more Defenders started to learn about themselves, what worked, and what didn't, the more they realized how important it was to have that awareness of what you put in your body will affect how you feel. However, don't be fooled by the plethora of trending diets out there to fix what ails you. Your biochemistry is as unique as a fingerprint, and for me, I had to make tons of trials and errors to figure out which foods made the most significant difference or triggers for me and my mental and physical health. However, this isn't just about food and its impact on our gut and mental state. We have to first dive into what determines your mental state.

Determinants of Mental Health: The Who, What, Where, When & Why

So how does the correlation to what we eat ultimately affect how we feel and what we think? What controls our cravings, satiety, moods, and emotions?

We've all experienced a time when you regretted taking a bite of decadent food or devouring a plate of pizza or pasta that made you feel terrible either moments or hours later. You can argue that it was due to the way you felt that day, maybe moody or anxious, and eating the foods you craved caused you to feel temporarily satisfied and calm. But scientists are learning it might not be the "which came first"- the chicken or the egg approach.

- ▶ Was it your poor mental state that caused you to choose poor foods?
- ▶ Or, was it a physical response to stress that caused your body to want those foods?
- ▶ Were any of these decisions under your control?

► Is your gut microbiome determined to take control of its host-YOU- to benefit its needs?

To answer this, we must first determine the factors that caused your mental health to wane and to determine if you need to dig further to find out which came first in your situation.

We often ask what influences our moods and why some people are always in a relatively good mood, while others seem to be under a perpetual cloud of negativity.

Before the '70s, most psychiatrists, trained as medical doctors, took the biomedical approach. Just as a doctor would naturally blame the brain for mental health conditions, their treatment would be concerned with drugs, surgeries, and other physical means to eradicate the issue. If the problem is someone's thinking, then it must be fixed within the realm of the brain itself through either talk therapies, or behavior modifications, and psychiatric drugs.

In 1977, Dr. George Engel challenged the whole way we approached mental health and determined that sociological and psychological determinants were just as important as biological ones. He coined the term the '*biopsychosocial model*'.⁴ It was a radical new approach working holistically with all of the influences in a patient's life; their biology, social impacts, and psychological perspectives.

- Biological influences like genetics, brain chemistry, as well as brain trauma or damage.
- Social aspects like early life experiences, life events, and stressors, as well as relationships and family
- Psychological perspectives of how a person perceives something as adverse or detrimental

I'm sure you're piecing together many personal experiences that most likely shaped the way you feel about yourself. You may recall a time as a child when you might have felt neglect or unloved, which changed your perception of the people that caused you that pain. You might recall a time of trauma or illness that influenced your beliefs later on as an adult. Maybe it was mistrust of an adult or sibling that caused you to create a belief system that is still

influencing you today. It could also be an environment you experienced that affected your overall well being, and its impact persists. Lastly, you may be aware of some family genetics that seems to come into play at one point with a family member, and you're worried it may happen to you.

These are things we must consider when looking closely at our mental health. We believe that these perceptions can be changed with proper treatment and learning about the causation rather than becoming a victim.

However, studies show that more is going on biologically in our bodies when these factors created our first impressions about ourselves. Resetting our beliefs may involve changing ourselves on the cellular level.⁵ Your beliefs matter and there are so many stories you can find on people that have changed their biology by changing their thoughts.

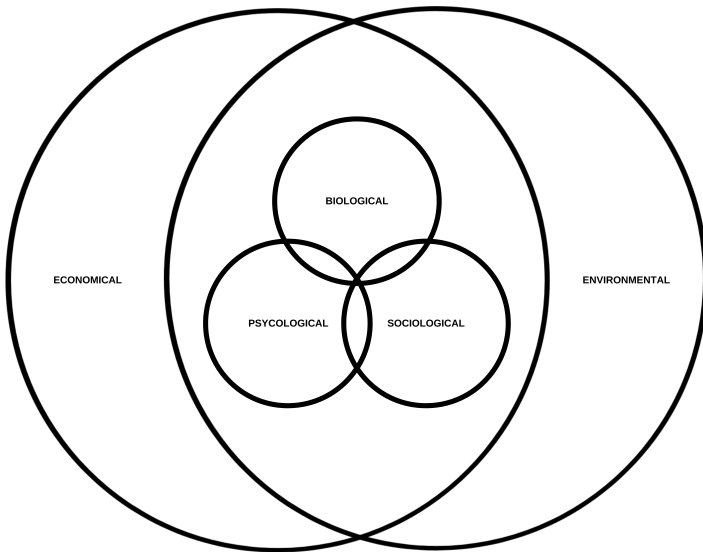


Figure 1.2 The Eco-Environmental Biopsychological Approach

Subsequently, there have been further additions to Engel's model that creates an even larger multifaceted approach to peeling away

the mental health continuum. We must look at our environment, as well. Our parents' mental health is so vital to how we perceived the world at an early age with trauma, violence, abuse all impact a person's life-long wellbeing. Studies now show the effects of the mother's perinatal mental state significantly affect an infant's adverse emotional, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes that may point to adolescent mental disorders.⁶

Our environment also includes being exposed to pollutants, toxins, and heavy metals, all of which can take a toll over time. Studies have concluded that children exposed to these toxins, such as lead, pesticides, and pollutants, have a higher risk of impaired cognitive development than at any other developmental time.

Although you may feel with all of these factors seemingly against your ability to have a long and healthy life, many of these factors are modifiable. You can change the cards you were dealt, with a little knowledge of how it all plays together!

How We Got To Where We Are: The Brain & Body Are Tightly Connected

Our first exposure to connecting our diet to our physical body was most likely in primary school when our teachers taught us all about the food pyramid. Parents would push vegetables, then were aptly swayed by food advertisements promoting the latest 'healthy' snack or heart-friendly meal. Meanwhile, our obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease rates climbed substantially. So what happened?

If you were born before the '80s, you most likely remember your mother keeping you away from snacking since "it would ruin your dinner." Your parents also most likely had sit-down dinners with a complete homemade meal waiting for you after your homework.

Fast-forward to 21st-century households, and a much different picture has unfolded. Complete dinner-time routines have segued into meals-in-a-bag, shakes-on-the-go, and various food groups demonized by the newest dietary trend. If you did have a health condition arise, you most likely went to the doctors, and they gave you a prescription to help with the symptoms. I'm not trying to oversimplify what doctors do, they are necessary as the first line of

defense to help you understand how to treat the symptoms. However, general practitioners aren't prepared to look at the whole-body system due to time restraints and training. And, notice I used the word 'defense.' Doctors are there to help you deter an attack or protect you from outward harm. They may not know the intricacies of why something occurred without further testing and getting other specialists involved, and they are at the mercy of time restraints and insurance companies.

In the past ten years, we've begun to understand how tightly connected our minds, bodies, and mental health are in determining our overall well being. We used to think our physical body and mind were separate and treated them as such. However, we now realize our diet's relationship with our physical, brain, and mental health. It's all connected. Although this is considered the next frontier in biological sciences, our technology has helped advance these studies to give us the latest findings in optimizing our health to live longer with our cognitive faculties firmly intact.

Our exceptional scientists were hard at work mapping out the human genome and taking epigenetics, the study of gene regulation, to a new level. The Human Genome Project (HGP) in 1999 was a global collaboration of scientists on a quest to map out the whole human DNA, which consisted of approximately 20,000-25,000 human genes.⁷ This way, scientists could determine the genesis of disease and how each gene worked functionally and physically.

It's been 67 years since Watson and Crick's model of the basic structure of DNA was created, and we are now learning that there is still so much more to learn about human DNA. Ironically, scientists discovered something they weren't expecting. They found out there were anywhere from two million to twenty million microscopic inhabitants living in and on our bodies! These microorganisms consist of bacteria, fungi, pathogens, viruses, and archaea- once misclassified as a type of bacteria. The majority of these live in our intestinal tract. And, no, you can't wash them away without impacting the whole ecosystem. They live in a symbiotic relationship with our cells on our bodies, and we need to be proper hosts! These discoveries lead the National Institute of Health (NIH) to go a step further in their research.

In 2007, the NIH created the Human Microbiome Project to extend the HGP studies. Since then, we have learned that our supraorganism is a synergistic family of human and nonhuman cells. We have about ten times as many microbial cells as human cells.⁸

What does all this discovery mean for the average person who wants to have their mind and body feel the way they were meant to feel? Taking what we know now and applying this information to your daily life can significantly impact how well your body heals.

Who Really Is Controlling Who?

According to the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, over 22% of adolescents have a severe mental impairment, with over 50% occurring before age 14.⁹ Of course, there are many causes for cognitive impairment, like abuse, neglect, or trauma. However, we are now learning that early treatment of mental illness can stop a waterfall effect of issues that can turn into chronic diseases.

First, you have to learn who the key players are in your body and how your choices can determine how much control you have. Don't skip this information since it's very much like creating a garden. You may want to jump in and plant the seeds and hope to watch flowers bloom. But there are steps that you would need to take to ensure you're giving yourself the best shot at developing a healthier mind, brain, and body that will take you to where you want to go. And, just as a farmer has to design where he will place his garden, map out the pattern of the sun and the length of sunlight on his various crops, he needs to know what each plant needs explicitly to get the most bountiful harvest. Skipping a step of understanding can cause you a lot of unnecessary grief. So let's dig into what scientists are now considering the most cutting-edge research involving the gut-brain axis.

Introducing the Vagus Nerve, the most significant bi-directional information highway between your gut and brain. We call this the Gut-Brain Axis (GBA). This nerve is responsible for your stress levels, digestion, heart rate, immune response, and even your moods. If this nerve isn't functioning correctly, you can expect inflammation to occur and chronic illnesses to develop. There are two Vagus nerves,

the left, and the right, but they are often considered one entity.¹⁰ And, yes, there are ways to stimulate the Vagus nerve to help it reconnect, but more on that later.

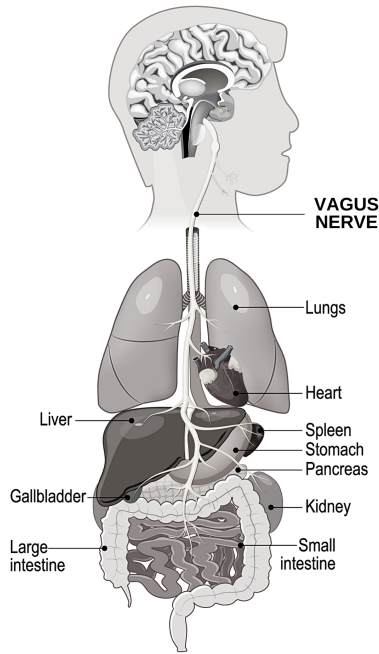


Figure 1.2 The Vagus Nerve Source: Shutterstock

Vagus is aptly named ‘wanderer’ since it wanders throughout the body, from the spleen and kidneys to the liver and digestive tract, on to the stomach, then heart, and lungs¹¹ It sends sensory information from your five senses; taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing back to the brain at lightning speeds, helping control your motor functions. This is important because how you walk, speak, stand, and sit can tell a professionally trained clinician if you’re suffering from any various forms of acute or chronic conditions. While there’s much more to this point it should help you realize the importance of what this nerve does, and if there is an imbalance in it, it will be reflected somewhere in your body.

One other important fact to understand is how it works within the parasympathetic system of our body, which is a fancy word for our rest and digest system. It's the involuntary part of our body's mechanics that helps your heart beat, lungs breathe, helps you sneeze, and even gag. It keeps our digestive tract working, our heart resting, and our internal organs functioning.

Remember how we used to think the body and the brain were two separate entities—each doing their own thing. If we had a psychiatric issue, we were treated with psychotropic drugs. If we had a stomach ache, we were treated with medications to calm the stomach regions. Well now scientists realize that the gut is the leading player in our brains' proper functioning.

These studies discovered that the gut communicates with the brain through chemical messengers. These chemical signals begin in the Endocrine system of glands in our body.¹² From the Pineal gland, Thyroid, Adrenal, Ovaries, Testes, Pituitary gland, and others, these glands are directed by our Central Nervous System. When we go through a stressful situation, depending on the type of trauma, our body's response will send out signals to help regulate the neurotransmitters' amount of hormones needed for the proper response. If that stress is not relieved, those hormones can affect our adrenal systems, causing a release of other hormones like norepinephrine, catecholamines, serotonin (5-HT), and cytokines. This influx of hormones is quickly cycled through our system, dumping into our gut microbiome, where they will negatively affect their function.

Depending on the length of stress you're experiencing, you may inadvertently kill off a beneficial bacteria colony that keeps your stool at a good consistency. Once that bacteria dies off, you could be finding yourself running to the bathroom with a bad case of diarrhea!

Let's look at an example of my medical research writer, Deborah, and how a vicious cycle begins when stress enters the scene. Deb worked at the top of her field in academia and managed many clients before we met. At 47, she felt fit and energetic, as well as pleased with her weight. Her exercise included swimming, Pilates and walking, though she didn't have to worry too much about weight-gain since her diet was healthy, chock full of whole-foods.

Unexpectedly, Deb went through several stressful events when she first noticed brain-fog. She remembers clearly the day it happened when she couldn't recall a word she had at the tip of her tongue. "It was eerie," she recalled. "It was like I was having a part of my brain shut down, and I was so frustrated knowing what I wanted to say, but the words weren't there."

Brain-fog is one of the first symptoms that occur when our body is depleted from essential minerals like magnesium. Deb's adrenals were running on hyper-drive, keeping her stress-hormones like cortisol pumping through her system. When cortisol, or adrenaline, is present, our magnesium stores are quickly depleted. It's one of the first minerals essential in regulating our stress, and magnesium deficiency can cause depression, behavioral disturbances, headaches, irritability, muscle cramps, seizures, and psychosis. All of these symptoms are reversible with magnesium repletion.¹³

Deb didn't only suffer from brain-fog; she recalls how within six-months, her weight began to climb on her petite 5'2" frame. "I went from 117 pounds to 136 pounds in six months. I was beyond shocked since I hadn't changed anything with my diet and was eating well. However, I noticed the brain-fog and fatigue had hit hard, and I could no longer exercise without becoming extremely exhausted and short of breath. I was scared for my health for the first time."

Sadly, many people suffer from dietary deficiencies. I shared in my book, *Unstoppable*, the story of a clinical social worker working with a patient of hers. The discovery of a vitamin D deficiency was mimicking depression and anxiety. Once her patient began taking the vitamin supplement in the correct dosage, she could continue her fast-paced career and do the things she had desired, lifting all sense of depression and anxiety.

Which Comes First? Mental Illness Causing Disease, or Dis-ease Causing Mental Illness

When our Gut-Brain-Microbiome miscommunicates, this three-way system can bring about numerous health conditions such as depression, anxiety, IBS, Crohn's disease, diabetes, obesity, and more.

Let's pretend Deb didn't look for the answers to her brain-fog and muscle fatigue. A doctor would do a preliminary blood test and tell her everything looked fine. She could have started taking the antidepressants he suggested to get a boost in serotonin possibly; however, would this have addressed the causation of Deb's symptoms?

Let's go down the rabbit hole and into a possible scary scenario for anyone who just follows the road well paved. Although taking antidepressants might have given them a slightly elevated mood, they would most likely have noticed more weight gain, sleeplessness, and other common side effects from taking the widely prescribed drug. Losing precious sleep causes a spike in the waking hormone, cortisol, which is the hormone that started the whole cycle of dysregulation in their body. This vicious cycle would have continued if they stuck with their first doctor's advice.

Deb talks about her mood swings, as well. "I was so emotional during that time. I was seeing my body turn on me. I could no longer exercise to lose the extra weight, which caused emotional turmoil when I could no longer fit into my clothes. My sleep was also affected, which made me feel sluggish during the day."

She reflects now, five years later, all that she had to learn about the causation of her illness. "I can now empathize with people that get depression or have anxiety, especially if they have no idea what is happening inside their bodies. I now look at other women with the same symptoms and want to tell them all there is to know about taking care of your gut through proper diet and exercise, saving so many years of sadness and stress. That's why I'm glad you're sharing this book for those that want real answers."

Of course, genetics can play a role in how our bodies express or activate the genes that may cause cancer or bipolar disease, schizophrenia, and other disorders. Still, it only means we have a propensity for the disease to activate in us. It doesn't mean a death sentence if we recognize that when we put the right protocols in place, we can cause a cascade effect of health benefits.

Underpinning The Role of Nutrition & Our Mental Health

How many times have you heard or used the term ‘trust your gut’? It’s a phrase that usually conjures up the symbolic meaning of intuition rather than your gut’s physiology. However, studies are now showing that ‘trusting your gut’ may be more beneficial than you think.

Studies from the National Institute of Health are now stating that “The lining of the intestine forms a crucial barrier to containing gut microbes. If the lining is breached and a gut microbe can get into the bloodstream and nearby organs, it can cause disease. Even though the body has many ways to prevent the breach, microbes sometimes get through.”¹⁴

When this break occurs, your body will demonstrate it through skin rashes, eczema, eruptions, dizziness, bad breath, joint pain, intestinal bloating and irritability, nausea, migraines, fevers, constipation, and/or diarrhea. Many people have these initial symptoms, not understanding that their bodies just put up their first line of defense, and it’s beginning to fail. At this point, the body starts to get overwhelmed with chronic conditions like autoimmune disorders, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, and Crohn’s disease, to name a few.

This is where nutrition is so crucial. Intestinal permeability is hard to diagnose for general practitioners. According to the Department of Nutrition at the University of North Carolina, a medical student receives an average of 23.9 contact hours of nutrition instruction during medical school. Only 40 schools required the minimum 25 hours recommended by the National Academy of Sciences. Most instructors (88%) expressed the need for additional nutrition instruction at their institutions.¹⁵ Their training in nutritional sciences might only be 23 hours in total of their medical practice, and that’s if they went to a medical school that didn’t make those courses an elective.

We need to realize that we need to be our own crusader for our medical health and wellness to get the best treatment and protocols that impact us. This couldn’t be better told than in the inspiring account of CEO and co-founder of Thryve, Richard Lin. If it wasn’t

for his natural tenacity to determine the root cause of a severe gut infection from standard cold treatments with antibiotics, he might not be here today. What resonated with me about Richard's story was that he worked in Silicon Valley as a software developer and had no connection to the healthcare industry. This gave him a great perspective on how the average person goes into a health scare, not knowing their options or where to turn when things begin to feel hopeless.

When Richard was 24 years old, he suddenly developed a common cold that wasn't getting better, so he went to his doctor for help.

"Unfortunately, I was misdiagnosed for bronchitis, even though I had a viral infection that was just a cold, and through taking this specific antibiotic, I ended up with something called *C. diff* bug that tends to proliferate after you've wiped out all the good bacteria."

According to the CDC, *Clostridium Difficile*, or *C. diff*, causes almost half a million infections among patients in the United States in a single year. An estimated 15,000 deaths are directly attributable to these infections, making it a substantial cause of infectious disease death.¹⁶

Richard had no idea how bad things would get. "So I had *C. diff* for almost two months not realizing it and went to three different doctors telling them I don't feel well, you know, something's wrong in my body and my stomach hurts all the time, and I have other digestive symptoms I never had before."

"I remember very vividly that each of the doctors said, 'You're too young and healthy-looking to be so sick. You're probably just depressed or a hypochondriac.' I was shocked at this point that this was their generalization of what I was feeling." - Richard Lin

Richard was spurred on to find other people dealing with chronic health problems online, in Facebook groups and other forums dealing with the gut microbiome. And through reaching out to these groups, they concluded he most likely had *C. diff*. Many of

them shared their stories about how most of them had chronic health problems because they were put on a series of antibiotics that destroyed their healthy gut microbiome. They advised him to get tested, but ironically it wasn't as easy as that.

When he met his next doctor, the doctor felt Richard originally had Irritable Bowel Syndrome, or IBS, so at least they were looking closer to the causation. However, IBS has no cure, and antidepressants were used as a therapy for him. Although antidepressants slow the motility of the gut, they would at least reduce the discomfort he felt.

“I felt so dazed and out of it from taking those pills. I kept researching and working closely with different online groups about the microbiome and gut-specific groups when I finally took the *C. diff* test. Ironically, it came back as a false-negative the first time. I refused to believe the results and dove into the methods and integrity of performing these tests. I had learned that many doctors don't know how the procedures are done. They know how to read the test results, whether it says positive or negative. Also, they used a testing lab like Quest or Labcorp. I learned to have integrity with the *C. diff* test the sample needs to be tested within two hours after receiving the fecal sample. Apparently, after a few hours, *C. diff* degrades, and I saw that my testing hadn't occurred until four hours later.”

Understanding that each testing company and lab has different standards of protocol and doctors not understanding there may be a gap in testing procedures and sample retrieval, a misdiagnosis becomes highly likely.

Richard decided to go to Stanford Healthcare and approached a gastrointestinal doctor about getting his PCR DNA tested. Richard knew he had to go in armed with the appropriate information. Through his research Richard knew he had to get a specific test that allowed the identification of pathogenic organisms that are difficult to culture, by detecting their DNA or RNA either with a blood test, throat swab, or nose swab. He was lucky he met an open-minded GI doctor willing to run the tests, that shows any remnant DNA of the active virus.

The PCR DNA test returned positive for *C. diff*, and Richard was quarantined since it's highly contagious. To his surprise, he was put

on more antibiotics since *C. diff* is a type of spore bacteria that gets housed in your gut, and it can be difficult to kill since they sometimes can be encapsulated and can come back. Richard had over a year of recurring symptoms.

“I felt like I was spinning my wheels. I knew there had to be something more I could do, and that’s when I discovered the research being done with fecal transplants.”

Again, Richard’s tenacity paid off. His GI doctor at Stanford Healthcare was willing to do the procedure after much exchange of information. The doctor read the studies and learned about the procedure, and Richard received the implant. Fecal transplants work by reintroducing a donor’s healthy stool that has been processed into the colon of a patient to repopulate the gut microbiome with beneficial and viable bacteria. It took a while, but Richard was slowly beginning the healing process.

Necessity Is The Mother Of Invention

Biohacking is the next frontier in personalized health. People are taking control of their own health by studying, learning, and validating what they knew all along; their body was telling them to listen. Richard states,

“Being a part of this whole process and listening to thousands of people in the online groups made me realize there wasn’t a good product out there for consumers. There are millions of people out there with autoimmune diseases, depression, and skin related problems. There are so many studies showing the relationship between the gut microbiome and these chronic illnesses. I think that’s when I knew that with my software development background and learning about the various fields that deal with the gut microbiome, it seemed like a natural progression. I saw where the holes were in getting all that I learned to the general population.”

The incredible innovation that is coming out of the biological sciences is beyond exciting. From the way we assess mental illness to discovering the origins of a person’s depression or sickness is creating new fields in science, combining the technology and advancements in genomics.

Personalized nutrition involving the human or microbial genome is still in its developing stages. However, current research suggests that several personalized nutrition branches based on these genomic studies may provide some valuable additions for tailored nutritional advice. The next frontier in biological studies can be found in these new fields of science:

- ▶ Epigenomics -the study of the functioning of our genes
- ▶ Metabolomics -the study of our metabolism and metabolites in the cells
- ▶ Nutrigenetics -the study of genetic susceptibility to diseases and the effects of nutrient intake on the genome

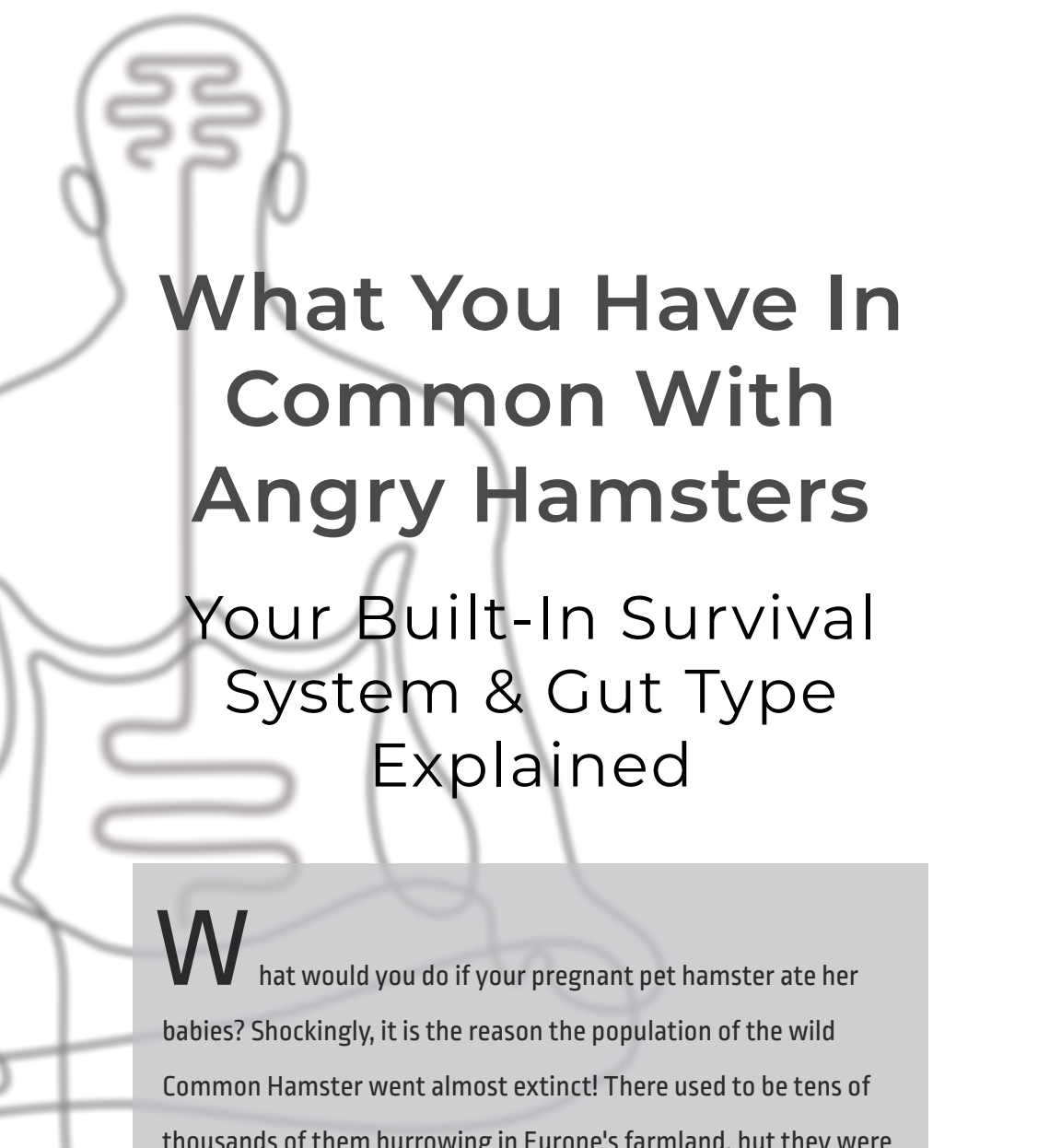
Even now, we have devices that can check for biomarkers, such as assessments of blood glucose levels before and after food consumption. You're most likely aware of the genetic tests that help you find long lost family members and discover your possible genetic susceptibility to diseases. SelfDecode is an example of a company that can help you assess your Raw DNA to let you know if you have a propensity for diseases and actually give you recommendations. We also have gut microbiota assessments that explore its composition and functionality, as you learned in Richard's story.

Richard's company, Thryve, is now riding the tidal wave of disruptive technology that will change the way we do healthcare. The company's gut health program analyzes stool samples to identify the good and bad bacteria in your gut to treat the root cause of your symptoms. Once analyzed, you receive a health report, customized probiotics, and personalized food plan. In the coming year, Thryve will be coming out with a vaginal microbiome test, an infant/child microbiome test, a skin microbiome test, an oral microbiome test, and a personalized probiotic powder. The power of gathering data to determine your personalized health care is the next frontier in health care. Thryve also plans on utilizing genomic testing and exosomes testing, an assessment of exposure to high priority environmental pollutants.

Let's find out where you sit on the continuum of health by taking a free quiz to determine where you are and what you need to do to get your health back at an optimum level. Visit www.areyouunstoppable.com/gut-score to get your personal Gut Health Report for your unique Success Identity Type.

Summary - Chapter One

- There is always a catalyst for depression and illness that leads to desperation, and that is why it is so important to start digging for the cause, so you can begin to put your own story together and pen a new ending for yourself, whether you're looking to address a struggle or optimize your health.
- There is a team of billions of bacteria to help you stay healthy unless something causes them to die-off or go into dysbiosis.
- Our bodies are in perfect cadence when we are born. However, when something internal or external affects that balance, it alters the systems keeping you well and alive. It boils down to our environment, nutrition, genetics, and the genes of billions of other passengers in and around your body, too.
- Your family may have a propensity for diabetes, heart disease, cancer, or other chronic conditions, but it doesn't have to be your fate to trigger those genes to deregulate and create the same storyline. You can choose the path well-trodden by your inherited genes, or you can try a new path toward change and a new legacy for your family's health.
- You have special guests residing inside you that also carry their own genes. They want to survive and send millions of messages to your body and brain to let their needs be known.
- Scientists realize that the gut is the leading player in our brains' proper functioning through its super-highway called the Vagus Nerve.
- When our Gut-Brain-Microbiome miscommunicates, this three-way system can bring about numerous health conditions such as depression, anxiety, IBS, Crohn's disease, diabetes, obesity, and much, much more.
- Biohacking is the next frontier in personalized health. People are taking control of their own health by studying, learning, and validating what they knew all along; their body was telling them to listen.



What You Have In Common With Angry Hamsters

Your Built-In Survival
System & Gut Type
Explained

What would you do if your pregnant pet hamster ate her babies? Shockingly, it is the reason the population of the wild Common Hamster went almost extinct! There used to be tens of thousands of them burrowing in Europe's farmland, but they were becoming extinct for a bizarre reason.

With only 206 burrows left in 2012, a scientist discovered how a corn-fed diet negatively affected the hamster colony compared to the diverse diet of vegetables that European farmers used to grow. It discouraged the hamster mothers from wanting to raise their young in a deprived nutrient environment.

Mathilde Tissier, a doctoral candidate in biology at the University of Strasbourg, discovered that their corn diet created a nutrient deficiency that affects the normal brain and digestive functioning. Corn binds vitamin B3, or niacin so that the body cannot absorb it during digestion.¹ Luckily, for this cute little rodent, European farmers are diversifying their crops to help bring the hamster population back.

How does this little critter's almost-demise relate to humans? For the first three decades of the 19th century, the Forgotten Plague killed hundreds of thousands of people in the American South. They were dying from an incurable and unknown disease that caused the three D's; dermatitis, diarrhea, and dementia. The victims were shunned like Lepers with their skin scaling and falling off in pieces, and they were lethargic and often succumbed to depression and madness. Despite nobody believing him, one brave and determined doctor, Dr. Joseph Goldberger, discovered the cure when he stumbled upon a treatment working with orphans and prisoners.

Pellagra, as it is called, was associated with diets of corn like polenta, grits, and cornpone, staples in the poor stricken American South. Vitamin research was in its infancy, and society was ripe with blaming it on poverty, politics, and everything other than a simple vitamin deficiency of Niacin.

You can search the history of medical journals annotating remote tribes with 'monster-like' men devouring each other wreaking havoc in the minds of local villagers, to the glee of moviemakers and writers. But all of these stories are eventually weeded out with conclusions based on scientific facts. The atrocities noted in the journals of medicine all suffered a form of deficiency and gut abnormality.

This same effect is happening to millions of people worldwide, and not just from eating corn but eating diets that lack proper nutrients and diversity of foods. Of course, we hope we don't start eating our children, but we see chronic mental conditions on the

rise. This is why our food choices directly correlate to our brain and gut functions.

The relationship between our dietary intake patterns and our resulting thoughts, emotions, and interoceptive experiences, or our ability to respond appropriately to internal signals, influences our behaviors, reactions, and choices. Like the hamster, what we eat, or don't eat, can increase reactive behavior, as we see in children who eat rocks or suck on pennies. They aren't even aware they are doing it until their stunned parent grabs the offense from their mouth. The children's bodies were craving something their diet was not offering.

Nutritional deficiencies in children cause behavioral problems and can carry on into adulthood if gone unchecked.² Changing dietary behavior patterns can be done through testing for deficiencies and introducing, through supplementing, the missing mineral or vitamin, then changing the person's diet to include more of that missing nutrient.

Throughout your *Mind Control* journey, you'll become aware of how food makes you feel, even more so if it affects your moods and emotional responses to stimuli around you. Many people have this intuitive ability to know when a food is good or bad for them, but what if you feel you're not able to intuit how food makes you feel mentally or physically? Or if a craving overwhelms your ability to say no.

Grabbing a food journal can help you begin to relate how food affects your moods, how you interact with people, and even how your performance levels are in your daily interactions. But not all Food Journals are created equal. Just listing what you eat isn't enough. More times than not, it's a loved one or someone close to you that identifies a particular food or drink as an offender before you do. They may see how something made you react, so this would be critical in annotating. Keeping a food journal with emotional and behavioral checklists can help you identify the offending foods.

Based on the survey and feedback from *Unstoppable*, I decided to develop a daily journal that helped to highlight critical triggers daily. There are 16 triggers, food being one of them that I utilized in helping to find the culprits. I have included at the end of this book 7-days of the Daily Planning Pages from *The Unstoppable Journal*, that

include a checklist for these triggers, so you can make a start on your food forensics.

The relationship between our dietary-nutrient intake patterns and our psychological moods and emotions, such as creativity, flourishing, negativity, and resiliency, is directly written into our cells. It's like our food has a secret code that our cells read, and if the code is a dangerous one, it can harm the cells. If the code is a good one, our cells will thrive. This causes a chain reaction in our moods and wellbeing.

Eating foods that do not have any proper nutrients or are highly inflammatory, like donuts or store-bought cookies, signals your body to store the foreign invaders. Guess where it is stored? It's held in your fat, letting them take up residence, disrupting your body's natural function. Unbeknownst to you, you are sabotaging your efforts toward wellbeing and happiness. You'll learn more about these invaders and where they hide in our food sources in Chapter 3.

We've been duped by the very industries that are supposed to keep us healthy, so you'll want to know what you may be ingesting and exposed to so you can get rid of them in your diet and environment for good.

However, there are not only physical entities that affect our cells but psychological factors that silently impact our body on a cellular level that influences and changes us genetically to our detriment. You'll learn how you change your gut microbiome through negative thoughts, affecting how well your body can absorb nutrients. This tangled web will throw us out of balance quickly if we don't recognize what we may be doing physically and mentally.

Epigenetics: How Crappy Thoughts Can Lead To Crappy Genes

You wake up feeling the weight of the day ahead of you. You shuffle to your coffee maker and pour over your social media accounts with disdain. However, many of you can bounce into the day ready to make it great. So why do some of us wake up and feel crappy about what lies ahead? Sure, you have obligations and responsibilities, but when was the last time you woke up feeling joy and happiness?

Were you just meant to be unhappy or feel stressed even when you had a good night's rest? Some Unstoppable members couldn't put their finger on why things just seemed overwhelming to them, so I asked them, what are the first three things you think about after you wake up?

These repetitive thoughts might reveal more than you know and how you're creating your reality. Is it your family, a friend, or your job that's on your mind? Could it be an upcoming event you are not looking forward to or the numbers in your bank account?

Now, catch your thoughts throughout the day. Was it a berating comment you just made to yourself about your weight as you passed the mirror, or when you put on your jeans? Could it be about what you plan to eat or not eat? Or, maybe you think about how alone you are, or your life has no purpose. It could also be a word spoken to you in anger or disgust. These thoughts keep reverberating in your mind like the droning of a fan in the background; you eventually get used to it.

Every thought we create is an electrochemical event that occurs in our nerve cells, causing a physiological response. Thoughts create action, right? Within nanoseconds, a gymnast must move their body to land on the beam correctly or to catch the bar at the correct velocity. We are always thinking, and each thought elicits a feeling or mood.

To help you understand, every cell in your body has receptors on them; each reacting to a specific peptide or protein. When you have a thought, a flurry of neuropeptides are released to be received by those receptors.

If you're mad, angry, sad, happy, guilty, or excited, these emotions send out specific peptides and attach to those receptors that change the cell structurally. This cell can now divide itself into a 'new' cell with receptors that want that same peptide, unlike its older version. The more you feel or think, in the same manner, your brain creates more peptides the receptors want to connect to.³

I reached out to Dr. Kelly F. Donahue, a holistic health psychologist, health coach, and expert in mind-body health research, to demonstrate why our thoughts are critical to our health and wellness. She shares how important it is to examine your thoughts around your chronic illness and what that label means to you.

“I had one client experience extreme relief when he stopped thinking about himself as a person with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and started thinking about himself as someone who has a well-practiced response to anxiety. Technically, both were true, but 95% of his symptoms disappeared with that shift in mindset. The same can be said for ‘physical illnesses’. Once a person understands that they have thoughts about what that label means to them and about them, they can then decide if that’s the way they want to think about themselves. Research estimates that 95% of our thoughts occur at the subconscious and unconscious levels. If we can increase the awareness around what we are telling ourselves about the illness at those levels (i.e. “People with Hashimoto’s Disease aren’t able to x, y, z...”) and consciously change that thought (i.e. “People with symptoms like mine have healed and can live healthy, productive lives”), our perspective on treatment and our willingness to make lifestyle changes will be enhanced. Once we change the thought, we need to consider creating and maintaining the environment (i.e., the information, self-talk, thoughts, people, food, lifestyle, etc.) that support that thought. From there, anything is possible!”⁴

Dr. Donahue’s insight was an incredible way to describe how we impact our bodies through our thoughts. I’ll share how you can create a shift in your thinking through the use of *The Unstoppable Journal*.

At the back of this book you have 7-days worth of the Daily Planning Pages taken straight from *The Unstoppable Journal* that you can use for this self-check on your thoughts. If you need more you can order your own physical copy from www.areyouunstoppable.com/unstoppablejournal

If you’ve been bombarding your body with thoughts of hatred for yourself or unworthiness, you are reprogramming yourself to receive more ‘negatively’ created peptides. What’s even scarier is that the

more you think and feel like this, the more inclined you will be to be more negative.

Of course, the same is true for the opposite. Positive affirmations and speaking gratitudes cause happy chemicals or endorphins to course through your veins, making you feel happy. Different neuropeptides correspond to different thoughts, which then give you a specific feeling. Hopefully, this will provide you with new meaning to how your thoughts can ultimately change who you are. Every two months, your cells regenerate, so you can reprogram your negative cells to create more positive peptides to attach to happy receptors.

The incredible science discovered in the growing field of epigenetics and the study of cell regulation helps us understand why we are the way we are, and how we can change if need be. The idea of 'fake it until you make it' seems almost believable as you become your own feedback loop. What you deposit will be your return on investment. Negative in, negative out. Positive in, positive out. Healthy in, healthy out.

So, you decide to work on your thought patterns, and you may see your world get a little brighter. You think this really works, but then life throws you a curveball, and you seem to revert to old patterns and beliefs. Did you give yourself enough time to rebuild your positive cells? Is there something else controlling your mind and actions?

The Bug-Brain Personality Paradox

Researchers have learned in the past decade that our gut microbiome is a little drug factory creating 90% of our serotonin, a neurotransmitter that modulates our mood, cognition, reward, learning, memory, and other physiological factors. Our intestines are where we also create our motivation neurotransmitter called dopamine.

Scientists have now determined which bacteria you must have in your body to make these neurotransmitters' that have a psychological effect on the brain.⁴

- ▶ **Mood stabilizing Serotonin** - *Candida, Streptococcus, Escherichia, Enterococcus*
- ▶ **Motivating Dopamine** - *Bacillus, Serratia*
- ▶ **Relaxing, anti-anxiety effects GABA** - *Lactobacillus, Bifidobacterium*

The latest Oxford studies show that the abundance of specific bacteria is prevalent in certain personality traits. People with more extensive social networks have more social interactions, which creates more gut diversity. Those that were more adventurous eaters and ate naturally occurring probiotics like fermented foods, kimchi, kefir, and prebiotic fibers, also have a more diverse gut community. In contrast, people that are stressed and have smaller social groups have less diversity in their gut.⁵ This supports the findings that people with psychiatric illnesses have more gastrointestinal disorders. The downward spiral of gut dysbiosis might lead to imbalances in creating our neurotransmitters (hormones) that regulate our moods.⁶

The recent COVID-19 pandemic has also created a maelstrom of events leading to our gut bugs' unhappiness. This most recent study reflected upon social distancing as a critical component of the expert-recommended strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, it may have repercussions on a person's gut microbiome, impacting our physical and mental health.⁷

The newest and latest studies show us that our gut is more in control of what our body does, and how we react to the world, than we used to know. For decades, our pharmaceutical companies have neglected to create a drug that helps to resolve many neurological disorders. Still, there are now gut microbiome companies with growing evidence from epidemiological and animal studies that link gut bacteria to conditions as diverse as autism, anxiety, and Alzheimer's disease, as well as depression, IBS, insomnia, constipation, and more.⁸ Psychobiotics, or live bacteria (probiotics), which, when ingested, provide mental health benefits through interactions with commensal gut bacteria. This is like the relationship between the remoras and the shark, or the cattle egret with livestock. It's a symbiotic relationship that benefits both organisms. Psychobiotics are anxiety-reducing and have

antidepressant effects by way of changes in emotional, cognitive, systemic, and neural indices. Bacteria-brain communication channels through which psychobiotics exert effects include the enteric nervous system and the immune system.

However, don't think getting some random yogurt or trendy Kombucha at the store can alleviate your mental state and conditions if you're not looking at your whole diet and how you are coping with stress. There is a lot of work to do in this part of the field where manipulating our microbiota through adding specific gut strains of bacteria into a supplement or food can have proven physiological effects. There is something called quality control you'll discover soon.

Falling prey to the marketing schemes of the food industry can cause more issues than not. Shopping with healthy food choices in mind will give you an edge toward healing your gut and learning about hallmark health and wellness companies creating high-quality probiotics can help rebalance the gut's dysbiosis affecting your mental outlook and moods.

Which Gut Identity Are You?

It's time to start putting the pieces of the puzzle together. I'm going to share with you insights into your physical and mental health and that of your gut microbiome, based on your current *Success Identity Type* from your recent quiz results, and what you can do to change it.

We're going to explore some of the potential triggers for these symptoms, their effect on your physical and mental well being as well as steps you can take to address these concerns to start you on a path to a healthier gut and a happier you.

The *Success Identities* I discovered as part of *Unstoppable* help to not only understand our ability to reach our goals, our likelihood for success, and how much of a peak performer you are. Based on the data from over 50,000 people who have taken our survey, we began to notice even more trends & links between the *Success Identities*, their mental health, and the health of their gut. Knowing this, we've been able to create a new quiz to not only provide you with your *Success Identity Type* but insights into the health of your gut, including tips

& recommendations to help you heal your gut, and in turn, heal your mind.

Below, I'll show you where you most likely sit on the health continuum according to your Success Identity and why you got there. Your honest answers gave us 1.5 million data points on your psychological and biological factors that impact your overall health. We can then surmise the health of your gut microbiome and the factors that may be affecting it.

You can discover your unique Success Identity and get the 'Your Gut & You Report' from www.areyouunstoppable.com/gut-score.

The Defender

The Defender has the furthest to go but the most to gain. In our survey, Defenders have the lowest battery charge, from 0- 25%, and cannot maintain the energy to drive themselves forward. It's no wonder their gut microbiome is at its worst. As a Defender, your likelihood for the following increases:

- ▶ 83% more likely to have constipation/bloating/diarrhea
- ▶ 68% more likely to be overweight
- ▶ 89.5% more likely to crave carbohydrates and sugars
- ▶ 86% more likely to crash after eating
- ▶ 73% more likely to be reliant on caffeine
- ▶ 14% likelihood of eating healthy 90% of the time

Defenders are more likely to be on medications for several ailments and have mental concerns like depression, anxiety, stress, brain fog, and procrastination. Any mental discourse is the causation of physical disorders, as well as psychological stress. They have daily bouts of bloating and gastrointestinal issues and rely on medications to help dampen the symptoms. They also have chronic inflammation making it difficult to exercise or move daily.

The Guardian

The Guardian's battery runs at 25- 50% energy levels, causing self-doubt to attain their goals. They most likely are suffering from nutritional deficiencies and chronic stress that are beginning to show the signs of their effects. They feel like they are slipping into bouts of depression and desperately use willpower to overcome it, only to fail.

- ▶ 59% are likely to have constipation/bloating/diarrhea
- ▶ 27% are likely to be overweight
- ▶ 76% are likely to crave carbohydrates and sugars
- ▶ 64% are likely to crash after eating
- ▶ 54% are likely to be reliant on caffeine
- ▶ 29% are likely to eating healthy 90% of the time

Guardians find exercise difficult since they can't always maintain the energy required, causing a cascade effect. They most likely crave sugars/carbohydrates and rely on caffeine to keep them going through the day and suffer from digestive issues, poor skin and sleep patterns, as well as inflammation in the body. Very few Guardians feel like they have a clear purpose, which also means they cannot reflect on why their self-care is lacking.

The Synergist

At this level of identity, the Synergist is just beginning to notice a decrease in physiological symptoms with intermittent brain fog, digestive issues, waning energy levels, and beginning to crash in the afternoon or evenings. One of the most prominent psychological effects is the red-flags, letting Synergists know something is not right. Their battery levels are between 50-75%, and when they dip into the 50-60%, they must take a stance to change something to get answers.

- ▶ 26% are likely to have constipation/bloating/diarrhea
- ▶ 27% are likely to be overweight
- ▶ 49% are likely to crave carbohydrates and sugars

- ▶ 29% are likely to crash after eating
- ▶ 30% are likely reliant on caffeine
- ▶ 47% are likely to eat healthy 90% of the time

As you can see, this is the beginning of the fork in the road for the Synergist. They have a choice at this point; to either get help and find answers to these new ailments or ignore them until the progression of illnesses begins to worsen. At this point, the Synergist can heal faster than a Guardian or Defender since they have the energy and willpower to find answers. However, their clarity and focus to get organized, finding a doctor, begin reading about their symptoms, and biohacking their health and wellness back may lack the cognitive capacity and fall prey to their cravings and food choices.

The Catalyst

These Optimizers create their destiny. They've been successful in balancing their psychology since their biology is at optimum levels. They are very aware of downturns in their health, typically due to stressors, but can typically biohack their health back in order. Only 6.4% of those 50,000 surveyed were a Catalyst, and can easily dip into being a Synergist if they overdo it or feel anxious and don't find the causation.

- ▶ 6% experience constipation/bloating/diarrhea
- ▶ 12% are likely to be overweight
- ▶ 16% crave carbohydrates and sugars
- ▶ 5% are likely to crash after eating
- ▶ 10% are likely to be reliant on caffeine
- ▶ 77% eat healthy 90% of the time

The Catalysts that seem to find themselves in the lower end of their *Success Identity* are losing touch with listening innately to what their body needs from them. The Catalyst loves to learn new ways to optimize their health and mental fortitude but can overdo it by trying the wrong latest trend diet, nootropic, or supplement.

So where do you go from here?

You now have an idea where you sit on the health continuum when it concerns your gut. You can see that your ailments are a culmination of biological and psychological discourse, all contributing factors that slow down mental cognition, mood, and such, which can be corrected. So how is it the gut can get so sideways and injured?

At this point, you should understand, any kind of illness, surgery, medications, and toxins can damage how your bacteria can assist in keeping you healthy and vibrant. Keeping inflammation coursing through your body will not only aggravate your microbes, but it can also cause chronic illness, as well as mental disorders to arise.

To help you understand that although you think you are doing everything right, there may be something hidden undermining all of your hard work. If your gut was developed during a traumatic time or illness, it's no wonder you've been struggling for years to correct it.

Many Optimizers also want to boost their gut bugs' performance and jump on the latest craze of supplements or superfoods to increase efficacy, not realizing that they could be creating an unwanted response. Cutting back on a specific food source like carbohydrates or increasing another type of food may impact you months later by losing the crucial diversity in your gut, something we'll explore more very soon.

Hippocrates said it best in 460bc, and it still stands today.
"Just as food causes chronic disease, it can be the most powerful cure."

How We Frankenstein'd our Food Source

Over the past 100 years, the agricultural industry has grown into a multi-billion dollar corporate complex run by stakeholders rallying their food chemists and marketers to find the next food trend of the 21st century. Sadly, this capitalistic venture has not only put tens of

thousands of new products onto our store shelves; it has expanded the waistline of millions of people in the Western world.

You would think being able to bring more food to the masses would be almost philanthropic. However, it is causing an extinction we haven't seen since the Cretaceous-Tertiary period and the dinosaurs' die-off. We have now entered into the Anthropocene epoch, the time of the human, although not formally an epoch period yet. Humans have now made their mark on the Earth, just like the dinosaurs and ancient fossils. So what does this have to do with our tiniest of microbe friends? The impact that humans have had on our agricultural methods are making our gut microbiome almost extinct. This agricultural apocalypse is impacting us more than we know on a daily basis.

Scientists are now concerned that this die-off of our gut microbiome may be causing the substantial growth of our mental and physical disorders.

According to Michael Gillings of Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, speaking to the American Society for Microbiology;

“Diversity of gut bacteria is declining with civilization. Cultural practices, including agriculture, diet, sanitation, and the widespread use of antibiotics, are responsible for the low diversity of microorganisms in the guts of people living in rich nations.”

He suggests this loss of diversity began 350,000 years ago when we learned to use fire.⁹ When humans developed agriculture 10,000 years ago, our diet's diversity narrowed, limiting the diversity of our gut microbes. This reduction of bacteria in our bodies was also reduced in the animals we raised and ate. This inadvertently reduced the gene pool that helped create protective and valuable bacterial strains that develop a robust immune system.

Then, as we entered the industrial revolution, our sanitary conditions, food processing, cesarean deliveries, and living conditions changed yet again. Now we were given less of a chance to be naturally inoculated with bacteria. Scientists note we are now having a wide range of health problems, including asthma, inflammatory bowel disease, obesity, psoriasis, and even psychological conditions.¹⁰ Our gut microbiome is crucial for our neural development, cognitive function and a direct mediator to mental disorders.

This means you are the one in charge of diversifying your gut bacteria with nutritious and diverse types of foods. Think of your produce section as a great science experiment, each week choosing one or two new fruits or vegetables to try. Give your bugs a chance to develop new strains and strengthen the ones you have.

Your Results Won't Lie

Let's break down this information for you. I want you to be sure you understand the connection that all you do can have a significant impact on your gut microbiome. Wanting to get started now without all the information is like grabbing a football expecting to make a goal without looking at the game plan first.

Throughout this book, I will share various testing protocols that can give you essential data on why your body is doing what it is and I highly recommend working with a Functional Medicine Doctor that can properly read the results of any tests to determine the best protocol for you.

You're going to want to find someone to help you sift through this information that knows how to read the signs. Functional Medicine Doctors, Naturopaths, as well as Integrative Medicine Doctors, won't just give you a script for a pill to pop. They will take apart, piece by piece, the history of you. Your physical and mental concerns didn't just happen. It took years to develop, and your regular doctor wasn't given that type of training.

In addition to that caveat, there seems to be a misconception about Functional Medicine that needs to be addressed. I reached out to Clinical Researcher and Functional Medicine Nutritionist Kimberly Griffith, MS., about why there are misconceptions about Functional Medicine. Griffith states,

“When it comes to Functional Medicine, one misconception the general public commonly holds is the assumption that Functional Medicine is not rooted in science and that it is contradictory to mainstream medicine. Functional Medicine is a deeply evidence-based medicine that is strongly founded on validated studies. The Functional Medicine approach looks for the root causes of disease by systems biology and recognizes the biochemical individuality of each person.”

We need to understand that general medicine is just that; general. It's a way to get relief from a symptom while hopefully finding out the cause. We shouldn't stop our search for answers when a prescription from our General Practitioner is given for comfort.

Griffith doesn't believe general medicine doctors lack the desire to heal their patients fully.

"I believe they lack the time it takes to fully dive into all areas of a patient's life that may be affecting their health. Additionally, it's not fair to expect GP doctors to address issues that their education failed to present. The medical education system provides the critical information needed to provide crisis care, not necessarily health care accurately."

So although you may feel you trust your doctor, it's like asking a helicopter pilot to fly an airplane or vice versa. They understand the general mechanics but would lack the specialization to fly it properly.

One controversy within Functional Medicine is isolated around the idea that Functional Medicine providers can't work alongside conventional doctors. Griffith shared how many times Functional Medicine practitioners and general practice physicians can work hand in hand to best support the patient. Many traditional doctors desire alternative treatments for their patients due to the ever-growing concerns regarding long-standing pharmaceutical use. Functional Medicine practitioners have had extensive education within all lifestyle medicine areas and can successfully help patients resolve imbalances to achieve their best health and overall wellness.

This leads us to what we must know about what is happening inside our bodies. We can't guess here. It's crucial to get the data to help us determine the pathways that may have failed us.

Testing, Testing, 1,2,3

One area that should be in your initial arsenal of tools is a gut microbiome test to determine if you're missing critical bacteria to help you process your foods. This was huge for me since it was the first time I initiated a test that could help me understand what my gut was suffering from and get the answers I needed instead of shooting blindly into the dark.

1. Gut Health Testing

After much research, I decided to use the Thryve Gut Health Test that was mailed to me. The sample was straightforward to collect and mail off. I set up my account online, activated my test kit and the results came back within four weeks.

My test results were fascinating and explained why I wasn't absorbing certain nutrients and was deficient in certain bacteria strains that aid in absorption and digestion. I now had some answers to my ailments. I then began to take a personalized probiotic and prebiotic that helped feed my good bacteria and help introduce, or reintroduce, new bacteria my body needed. We'll go into more detail about the benefits probiotics and prebiotics can do for you with regards to weight loss and emotional wellbeing a little later, but for now let me say I was able to feel the effects within the first seven days. I also received a list that helped me see which foods my gut would appreciate and foods that could trigger more distress. Some of the avoid list foods surprised me and made me want to learn more about how my food choices could be causing my symptoms.

2. Food Sensitivity: Building A Wall or Tearing It Down

You most likely are aware of food allergies if you've ever had an allergic reaction that occurred suddenly without warning. This could have been from food like shrimp or a nut that may have caused severe symptoms like tongue or throat swelling, immediate rash, or hives. Even nausea and vomiting can tell you something you ingested was an unwanted guest in your stomach or intestines. So, I will assume you already know to avoid those foods, should you experience these reactions.

But this brings me to my next action to take, and it's a food elimination plan. I could tell you to get a food intolerance or sensitivity test; however, there is still much controversy in what the tests tell us. I shared in *Unstoppable* how, although you may show an intolerance according to the test, it does not guarantee that the food was an actual offender, but your gut permeability is most likely at fault. Anything and everything you eat could cause a trigger. I did

like how a food sensitivity test did show me two offenders I wasn't aware of, so I then became vigilant looking for those ingredients in the foods I ate. Still, ultimately, I kept a journal that genuinely helped me regain control of what was on my fork.

It is best to start identifying foods in your diet that could potentially be causing the inflammation in your gut wall and causing undigested proteins, bacterial fragments, and endotoxins to enter into your bloodstream and cause a reaction somewhere else in the body.

Remember, you are just their host, and they will be sure to let you know, one way or another, if you're being a lousy one! Although we think of our gut bacteria as our guests, they will stop at nothing to let you know they are there. If you feed them scraps and give them inadequate provisions, they will revolt, leading you to run to the bathroom unprepared for the deluge to come. These fussy guests can also run for the high hills and disappear, leaving you with a pathogen or virus that will take up residence instead.

However, these guests may be passive-aggressive and not let you know right away that something has offended them. You may not feel any adverse physical changes in your stomach or gut, but watch out for your mood, emotions, and even achy joints. These are indicators of a trigger that can take some time to develop the inflammatory response. Many people are shocked when they find out gluten was dictating their moods and emotions, but it makes sense since our gut creates our mood-altering neurotransmitters and hormones.

Your doctor will let you know which foods to avoid and for how long. Some foods can be reintroduced once your immune system has healed. Other foods just may have to pack their bags for good.

70% of your body's entire immune system is created within the walls of our intestines, protecting your body from unwanted bacteria, viruses, toxins, and unfriendly organisms like parasites and fungus. This is one of your first lines of defence to ward off a potential attack, and leaving it without the proper fortification is like putting up straw walls around your castle and expecting to be safe, inevitably some nasty enemy will come along to invade you.

As part of a functional medicine workup, your doctor will want to determine if there are permeability issues with your intestinal lining,

as we mentioned earlier. Then they will most likely have you take a simple test panel for food sensitivities that can help determine if you have such a problem. However, understand that the science is lacking when it comes to the test specifically identifying what your trigger foods are. In fact, you may take a food sensitivity test only to find out if your body triggers an immune response to almost every food you eat, but this is good to know since it might mean your intestinal wall may have broken down or that you're unable to absorb nutrients properly.

If you're an Optimizer, eating all of the great superfoods like avocado, kale, and grass-fed beef can still show an odd response on a gut microbiome test. Let's also say you are avoiding carbohydrates since you feel they can cause weight gain, and you prefer healthy fats to fuel your brain. In these instances, the test results may come back stating you don't have certain bacteria in your gut. You could be creating a lack of gut diversity, creating a dysbiosis or imbalance in your gut.

Imbalances aren't always harmful. If you eat a clean diet, staying away from simple sugars and carbs, you may only have a certain amount of bacteria in your body. This lack of diversity only becomes detrimental if your body needs a nutrient, but you're no longer able to ingest them due to your gut not absorbing the nutrients in the first place. This is like hiring only chefs for your restaurant, and no one is there to take the orders, serve the food, and clean up the tables afterward. You've inadvertently left out a whole crew of bacteria that have important jobs.

Science is still evolving and growing in this field. Again, you are trying to determine which came first; did an outside source cause the mental or physical response, or was it a mental or emotional response causing the physical reaction. We are all bio individuals, so this will be determined by you doing a deep dive into your past and present conditions.

We see this with the yo-yo dieting trends and people feeling on top of the world when they hit a certain goal weight, then it all comes crashing down when the weight slowly piles back on. It has to do with the inhabitants currently living in your gut and intestines and your emotional state that could be sabotaging your hard work, but we'll get into that more in a later chapter.

3. OATS Testing: *It Ain't Porridge*

Organic Acid Testing (OAT) is similar to conducting an emissions test on a car. The exhaust fumes from the tailpipe are byproducts of fuel combustion, and the composition can tell us how efficiently the engine burns fuel.

In mammals, organic acids in our urine are byproducts of our metabolism. This can give us crucial information about how efficiently our body systems are performing. Your doctor can order an easy and simple urine test to see if any of these systems may be compromised. Be sure your doctor is familiar with reading the results of this test to give you the best protocol to heal.

What An OATS Test Can Reveal

- ▶ Poor Metabolism
- ▶ B-Vitamin Deficiencies
- ▶ Gut Dysbiosis
- ▶ Impaired Fatty Acid Metabolism
- ▶ Ketosis or Poor Carbohydrate Metabolism
- ▶ Neurotransmitter Metabolism
- ▶ Oxidative Stress
- ▶ Poor Detoxification
- ▶ Inflammation

Factors that influence organic acid production within the body include:

- ▶ Diet
- ▶ Environmental toxins
- ▶ Gut microbes
- ▶ Genetics
- ▶ Kidney and liver function
- ▶ Medications
- ▶ Nutrient status
- ▶ Oxidative stress

Depending on your results, you and your doctor can create a plan that can help alleviate, if not cure, the causation of your ailments.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Therapy

I'd love to think that the majority of our Unstoppable members didn't suffer from childhood traumas, but I'd be lying. We receive messages every week from people that suffered under the hands of caregivers, family, or strangers in dysfunctional households, and that trauma ushers PTSD symptoms into adulthood. If these traumas aren't adequately dealt with, children with ACE have such high risks of developing social, emotional, and chronic health issues that can't be ignored.¹¹ Finding a therapist that works with ACE patients can be an initial step in healing your mind, heart, and body. If you don't have a certified ACE therapist in your area, many of these therapists use telemedicine to provide sessions from the comfort of your own home.

While testing maybe out of reach for some due to economic reasons, that isn't a reason to give-up, it's a reason to push forward. And, we're going to show you how as we traverse this journey together.

In the next chapter, I'm going to show you the ways your gut bugs came into existence and how your upbringing may have affected you early on. You'll read about triggers you may never have considered that could be the catalyst of your issues, as well as lifestyle choices you may be making that are causing you negative consequences. You're going to learn how to identify internal and emotional factors that may be holding you back from taking back control of your mind and body. I'll also give you immediate actions you can take to begin your healing journey.

For more information on the Success Identity Types mentioned in his chapter be sure to check out the various videos I've created to discuss these over on my YouTube channel www.youtube.com/benangel

Summary - Chapter Two

- Millions of people worldwide eat diets that lack proper nutrients and diversity of foods. With chronic mental conditions on the rise, our food choices directly correlate to our brain and gut functions.
- The relationship between our dietary intake patterns and our resulting thoughts, emotions, and interoceptive experiences, or our ability to respond appropriately to internal signals, influences our behaviors, reactions, and choices.
- Changing dietary behavior patterns can be done through testing for deficiencies and introducing the missing mineral or vitamin, then changing the person's diet to include more of that missing nutrient.
- Positive affirmations and speaking gratitudes cause happy chemicals or endorphins to course through your veins, making you feel happy. Different neuropeptides correspond to different thoughts, which then give you a specific feeling. Your thoughts can ultimately change who you are.
- Our gut is more in control of what our body does and how we react to the world.
- Psychobiotics are probiotics that when ingested, provide mental health benefits through interactions with commensal gut bacteria.
- Learning about your medical history can help you peel away the mysteries of your gut microbes' beginnings in your body.
- Scientists are concerned that the die-off of our gut microbiome may be causing the substantial growth of mental and physical disorders.
- You are in charge of diversifying your gut bacteria with nutritious and diverse types of foods. Choosing one or two new fruits or vegetables to try gives your bugs a chance to develop new bacterial strains and strengthen those you already have.
- Various testing protocols can give you essential data on why your body is doing what it is doing. It is best to work with a Functional Medicine doctor that can properly read the results of your tests to determine the best protocol for you.



The Riddle To Your Gut Microbiome

How It Got Here & Why It Might Not Be Well

He slammed his hands down on the table in disgust and got up and left! You would have never guessed that it was going to be the result of your careful planning. Flashback two hours prior, and you've got a dinner party arriving, you've perfected the menu, but some guests just arrived unannounced!

You do your best to accommodate them, but some guests are unruly and cause problems, and some are just too fussy and leave.

You throw up your hands, not knowing what else to do to make them happy. They slam their hands down on the dinner table, get up, and leave! You can't believe after all you did to make your dinner party go well, that's the thanks you get?

You What went wrong here? You thought you did everything right by knowing what foods to eat, exercising, and trying to get the right amount of sleep, but you still feel like hell. Just as we move throughout our day and life, we can't predict when things will hit us side-ways. Your gut microbes are your guests, you are their gracious host, and they will demand things of you that you may not expect. You also won't know when you've received unwanted guests like a virus, pathogen, or parasite until they've taken residence.

You struggle to know what is 'right' to eat or not to eat. You read labels, exercise more, and still feel like crap. It's like an invisible entity holding you back until you learn their language and their secret code to take back control of your life.

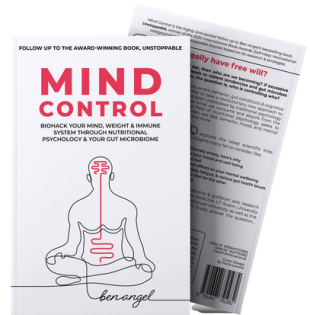
Just as your colored iris pattern in your eye is unique only to you,

LIKE WHAT YOU'VE SEEN?

WANNA KEEP READING...

Continue your discovery of the hidden world of the gut microbiome, nutritional psychology, and more.

GET YOUR COPY OF MIND CONTROL NOW!



MIND CONTROL

WHO'S CONTROLLING WHO?