The Principles of Food Combining from the Mango Man
(A Special Interview with Dr. Wayne Pickering)

By Dr. Joseph Mercola

DM: Dr. Joseph Mercola

WP: Dr. Wayne Pickering

Introduction:

DM: Hi, this is Dr. Mercola. Today I am joined by Dr. Wayne Pickering, who is an amazing individual. He has an incredible life story, which is very inspiring. He’s 66 years old, and he’s incredibly fit.

WP: Thank you.

DM: Which I think is just an amazing testimony to the benefits of what he’s applying to his life personally, and which is what he’s going to share with us today. He’s going to explain some of that in this interview. He’s a naturopathic physician and does quite a bit of counseling. He lives in the East Coast of Florida at Central Florida.

WP: Oceanside.

DM: Oceanside. He swims several miles a week in addition to extensive biking. He has quite an impressive exercise regimen. But one of the things he’s known for in the nutrition world (we’re going to spend a lot of time on that) is food combining. But before we get there, I think it’s going to be very useful for people to understand somewhat of your journey and how you got from where you were, which is, you know, in many ways, not too different from where the typical American is today – obese, out of shape, and eating the wrong foods – to where you are now. If you can share your journey with us, I think people would be inspired by it.

WP: I’d be glad to. You know, when I was a kid, you could call me chubby but you can’t call me tubby. I hated it. I couldn’t stand being fat. Do you know how I used to get all the women?

DM: So, you were heavy as a child?

WP: Oh, gosh. I’d look at a picture the other day of us, and I was totally shocked to see me along with my two brothers. Both of my brothers were real skinny and I was fat. Now it’s the other way around. They’re both obese and I’m lean. Go figure.

I had rheumatic fever at three different times in my life. Physicians in West Texas told me that I would never make it past 30. I spent three tours in Vietnam and got wounded over there in my third term. Everything happens to us by divine design. All those sickness that I had: I had cancer in my right lip here and they cut some of it out. I had muriatic acid splashed on my face. I could
never see out of this eye again. Sixty percent vision in the left and I was supposed to be totally blind, but I can see perfectly.

Everything happened at the right time in my life to bring me to where I am today. All those setbacks in life really are nothing more than setups to come back. I’d like to give Willie Jolley credit for that title because he came up with that brilliant title, and it’s so true. We have to look at our past as a point of reference and not some place of residence. Let’s move on. We’ve got too much to do in life.

**DM:** What were your challenges right before you were 30?

**WP:** Thirty? The rheumatic fever.

**DM:** Well, you were obese at 30. Was there some critical…

**WP:** Turn around?

**DM:** Turn around at some of the things that you had, which inspired your commitment to this healthy lifestyle?

**WP:** Yes. As I mentioned, things just happen for special reasons. I was in Illinois when I came back from Vietnam. I stayed up there for a year in Rockford. A little lady found me one day in a distraught situation. She owned a health food store. She took me down there after a series of coaching me along and coaxing me along, I should say. I went in there, and I bought a bottle of vitamins and a little book, *How to Be Healthy with Natural Foods*, by Edward E. Marsh. I think it was the first book that I really ever read outside the textbooks in school. I was so moved by that.

I started dabbling here and dabbling there. And then I was getting sick to my stomach. When I was in the war, I can remember I was used to dabbling over all the time. I was so sick to my stomach. I had no idea that it had anything to do with what I was putting in me. I thought it was just an act of fate. My dad had heart disease; I have heart disease. Their family has this, I had… Little did I know, it’s the lifestyle that’s conducive to them. We may have genetic weaknesses but to nurture that weakness along with bad health habits and all that thinking that we’ll get away with it or we’ll take a pill, come on.

All of these different challenges that I’ve had, I look back – gout. I had gout so bad. Give me heart disease; don’t give me gout. That was a bear. I remember I couldn’t walk for three weeks. I couldn’t get out of bed. Little did I know, it was stuff that I was doing on a daily basis. All of those challenges really, I got…

**DM:** You’ve never been challenged with gout since then?

**WP:** Never.

**DM:** Okay.

**WP:** Oh, gosh, no. And [I’ve] never been challenged with indigestion unless I… We’re going to talk about food combining.
DM: Unless you violated the food combining principles.

WP: Exactly. It just so happened that I was in a house this one day. I saw a little food combining chart. It was a postcard size. I asked my friend. I said, “Ralph, what is that all about?” I was always [having] stomach pains constantly. He said, “That will help you wipe out indigestion, you’ll never have heartburn, and you’ll conquer acid reflux.” I said, “Come on, you’re kidding.” I said, “Do you mind if I borrow that?” He said, “I’ve got another one. Here’s another one.” I took it home and put it on my refrigerator. I said, “I’m going to try that.” You know, you’re always daring when you’re in your 20s.

I was shocked. Twenty-four hours, [I was] never bothered with indigestion. I said, “This can’t be true.” A week goes by, and I was like my old self again. I said, “I’m going to go back to my old ways and try this stomach…” Oh, I keeled over. I was shocked. I couldn’t believe it. I said, “Wait, let me try this again.” I was rigid with it and then I went off.

Three times is my signal; I always try things three times. When I say, “Okay, it’s a done deal,” I put it in my computer and I say, “Okay, this did this, so I’m not going to do that anymore.” That’s the only way I can be on top of it. Because we all get little aches. I get a little bit of this. We get a little of that. If you’re running too much or whatever, you might get hurt and what have you. That’s the only way I can do this. I have a barometer. Each one of these little problems that I have had is actually a barometer for making me much more rigid. I’m happy about that because that’s my guide.

DM: Yeah. And you had a heart attack when you were young?

WP: No, I had a rheumatic fever.

DM: No heart attack?

WP: No. Well, I’ve had those kinds of conditions, too, where I would fall, get totally dizzy, and my heart would hurt. I said, “What is going wrong?” But nothing goes wrong; it’s all for divine design. Everything has a specific reason why that’s happening. If we can get on top of that and quit thinking, “Okay, what do I take for this? What do I take for that?” We don’t take this for this or take this for that; we just have to stop causing it. That’s the true science.

As you’ve indicated when you and I were on the beach yesterday and we even briefed on that, it’s all about cause and effect. You know that and I know that. One of the reasons why I relish the camaraderie that we do is the… I mentioned to you the other day that we both speak English, but we both speak the same language. That’s so good. So, hats off to you for bringing the messages to the table. That’s not to stroke you. I want your videos. I read your columns dead on. I love it.

DM: Well, the truth is there are many different ways to approach it. But yeah, I think there’s a morality to that. Because my belief is that if you’re helping people understand basic natural laws that improve their health, that’s a morally righteous thing to do, whereas if you’re not and you’re doing something for the pure motivation of profit with complete ignorance of what that impact
has on human health, I think that tends to be, at least from a moral perspective, something that someone would want to avoid.

**WP:** Yes. I like what you just said a minute ago. In summation to that, beliefs will only be beliefs as long as they have people out there to believe them. But the truth will always be the truth whether we believe it or not. The truth is we’re not garbage cans with hairy lids. This is our corporate headquarters, man. We own a 100 percent stock in a blue-chip corporation here. Too many of us sell our stock cheap. We need to put a high price tag on our stock.

Move on, because there’s more to life than just eating or just running. It’s a whole conglomerate – our career, health, economics, communication, knowledge, emotion, recreation, spiritual, and all of those. They actually form an acronym: CHECKERS. That’s why I can keep that in my mind fresh. There’s more to life than just worrying about our health all the time. We need to be on purpose. Look at what you’re doing. We need to keep the finances together. We have to learn. I have a good little line: the more we learn, the more we earn, and the more we return. Give back. Thank you, man.

**DM:** It’s really an important part of the whole equation. In all your years, or decades really, of educating individuals on how to apply these approaches, what have been some of the most important principles you’ve found that are the most useful ones, which inspire people to appreciate what you just said, so that they can integrate that into their lifestyle and make important changes that they need to do to access the benefits that one receives when one follows these natural laws of health?

**WP:** Good call. I find that people only want what they want when the want is more than the cost. The cost of what’s it going to take. We’ve only got 24 hours. How are we going to divvy that up? Time is what we have; wisdom is what we do with it.

Let’s take our 24 hours. We get three groups of eight. We take eight hours of rest, eight hours of work, and eight hours of free time. Now, what I want to do is add as much to my waking life as I can. It’s known that it’s just as good to sleep six hours at night and one in the day, than it is to sleep eight straight. You’ve actually added one hour to your waking life. I call that my power hour: 20 minutes for fitness, 20 minutes for spiritual, 20 minutes for emotional. Those kinds of things, if we can get our time down… Time is what we have; wisdom is what we do with it.

From 6:00 to 10:00 in the morning, it’s our get-go time. 10:00 to 2:00 is our peak-energy time or peak-performance time. 2:00 to 6:00 is the wind-down time. 6:00 to 11:00 at night is your peak, interestingly enough, creative time. That’s just circadian rhythm, do you see? If somebody is 50 years old and the average lifespan is 80, that gives you 30 years. That’s 360 months. This is if you’re 50.

Well, if you sleep a third of that, you’re down to 240. You use up a third of that with just the daily cares of life: you brush your teeth, shower, go to the bathroom, fix dinner, clean up, and all of those basic things. You’re down to 120 months, if you’re 50. But most people at 50 are working half of that, so they’re down to 60 months. That’s only five years of your life that you have to be productive, to be on purpose, and do what you’re really designed to do here. We don’t have time to be sick.
The average American watches television four to six hours every single day. What a waste of time. You’ve only got so much time left. How am I going to divvy this up? That’s why I take a certain amount of time out of every day for fitness, a certain amount for the food, certain amount for my job – being on purpose.

To summarize all that, and not to be too spiritual, but I think that if a man or a person honors God and creates a service out of what he or she is genuinely passionate about, so that everybody who’s involved in the service has equal opportunity to gain, then we all win.

DM: Well, that’s some useful insight. I’m wondering, though, how do you get someone to fully appreciate that, so that they can integrate that into their life and apply some of these health principles?

WP: Well, it’s kind of a challenge at times because nobody likes change except the wet baby. Until we want it bad enough, then I can help. My question to the clients that I have is, “Are you interested? Or are you committed? If you’re interested, I know somebody that might be able to help you. But if you’re committed, I’m going to show you how to do it.” A lot of times it takes a brick wall to come in front of us before [we say], “I got to do something about this.”

DM: It’s something like an alcoholic who frequently doesn’t get better until they’re in the gutter.

WP: Yes. Well, here’s an answer to that: we are the sum total of the five people we associate with the most. Everything is a thought. You’ve got the two key components about getting older and better and not old and bitter: motion and emotion. Motion is your movement, your thought, your fitness, and all that. Emotion is a thought.

The key: you control your thoughts. I’ve discovered that in life, nothing outside of the body can stress us out. It’s how we perceive it all. That’s the stress right here. Everything is a thought. Our getting together was a thought. Your home, this beautiful place we’re in, this studio, it was a thought. That car I drove was a thought. Everything is a thought.

There are five things that govern our thoughts:

(1) The first and most important is the company we keep. We pick up accents. We pick up styles. You have somebody come from New Jersey down to South Carolina, when they get in here, they talk different after a while. They go back up north and [people will tell them], “You talk differently. You’ve got an accent. You dress like that now? Surely, you don’t eat like that.” We pick up habits. We pick up styles. We pick up everything just from the company we keep.

(2) The second one is what we read and watch (these govern our thoughts more than anything), (3) what we listen to, (4) the words we speak, and (5) what we consume – good water, good air, and good food. When people come up against kind of like a brick wall [and say], “I think we got to do something,” to me, that would hopefully be the answer to what you were driving at there.

DM: Yeah, but sometimes a brick wall isn’t enough.

WP: Yes.

DM: I mean, you share stories of many prominent and wealthy individuals in your community that you know personally who were confronted with a terminal illness…
WP: And they still are.

DM: Typically cancer. And even that wasn’t enough of a brick wall.

WP: It’s amazing.

DM: I think that is a challenge. It is certainly a challenge that we face as educators to help people understand that there are indeed other alternatives, which are more effective, less costly, less toxic, and certainly worth a try or a consideration.

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But that is a challenge because the other side has been so effective. I mean, they really control most of the finances of the world. As a result of that, they’re able to market very creatively and cleverly.

WP: Yes.

DM: They use the media and really essentially brainwash people into this line of thinking that will benefit their corporate profits, but is not in alignment with natural health principles, so they’re not going to get better from it in the long run.

WP: Well, too many people also let age be their cage. They actually think age causes sickness. Age has nothing to do with how old we are. Age is not a matter of years; it’s a matter of condition. You can keep your health up until you die because we have 75 to 90 trillion cells in our body that work symbiotically in our behalf striving towards health. Oh, you cut yourself? It’s going to heal subcortically without a thought. It just does. My three great lessons about being healthy are very simple: first of all, we’re healthy automatically by design.

DM: Yes. That’s an interesting concept but an important one, because many people don’t believe that. They believe that our natural tendency is to be diseased and sick.

WP: Oh, I know, it’s amazing.

DM: That’s the common belief. But if you follow these natural principles, your body immediately tends to obliterate disease and move towards health.

WP: It’s amazing. (1) We’re healthy automatically by design and sick only by default. (2) You don’t catch disease. I’ve never seen anybody catch disease. We earn it. I say it stems from crude in the blood from being drunk with junk. (3) The third one is you get well basically by what comes out of you – people are looking for a pill for this, a pill for that, or this or that – not by what goes into you. We get well by what comes out of us, never by what goes into us.

One of the things that I like about your whole approach to the supplement line… Our bodies are needing certain elements or certain ingredients. The supplement line that you embrace always has those in abundance, so that the body can use more effectively. If people would understand that supplements are not circumvents; they’re there to complement the meal not to take the place of the meal. Get the meal down. Get the nutrition down. Once we get that…
DM: Well just with the term, the actual meaning of the word “supplement” means in addition to; it doesn’t mean in place of.

WP: Thank you. That’s exactly my sentiment. Can we address where nutrition falls into this whole equation?

DM: Sure, absolutely. One of the reasons I embraced your friendship is that you’re so aligned in understanding that nutrition is the foundation, which is really my primary tool also. I mean, there are other tools you can use other than nutrition. We certainly recognize that, but nutrition is sort of at the basics of it. We’re both equally committed to fitness, too, but that’s a relatively small part of the equation when you compare it to nutrition.

WP: Yeah, the nine things that I explained a moment ago: (1) attitude, (2) nutrition, (3) exercise, (4) water, (5) sunshine, (6) tenacity (got to stay with it), (7) air, (8) rest, and (9) temperance in all we do. Temperance is very crucial. So many people get so into it that they’re actually out of it.

Now, let’s address nutrition. Nutrition doesn’t heal. It doesn’t cure. It doesn’t do anything. Actually, here’s all nutrition is: it’s a series of four processes that the body employs to make food materials for the body to use. What are those four processes? It has to break down: it’s digestion. Then it has to get into the bloodstream: it’s called absorption. Basic physiology and anatomy. Then the body will use it: it’s called assimilation. The body gets rid of it: elimination. So, (1) digestion, (2) absorption, (3) assimilation, and (4) elimination. This is just common knowledge.

It doesn’t heal, it doesn’t cure, and it actually doesn’t do much. It doesn’t do anything, it’s a science though and it never changes. It’s how we apply it – the changes. If we understand, that’s nutrition. Now, people will say, “Well, how can I get what I’m supposed to get into my body?” I said, “There are four components. If you embrace these four components into your lifestyle, that will be nutrition.”

First of all, we need to eat the foods in season. We must eat food when they’re in season. Why is that so important? First of all, our Creator has masterfully designed us and certain foods in season for this. I never eat watermelons in the Christmas time. They’re not conducive. Even though the food is good, they’re not conducive for that type of environment. Even though the food is good, it’s not good at that time of the year. We need to eat foods when they’re in season.

How can you tell if they’re in season? Our food combining guide, which you and I have talked about a few times, they have all of the foods in there that we need, how to combine them and all that, and when each one of them is in season. But here’s how you can tell if you don’t have our food combining guide: when they’re the cheapest in the store and when they’re in their most abundant. Eat foods when they’re in season.

DM: Or ideally, if you’re growing them in your backyard.

WP: Oh, please, you’re getting on my nerves. You’ve got this thing down. I love it. Out there in your yard, it’s gorgeous. So, eat them when they’re in season and according to the type of environment that you’re in. Watermelons are good, but you don’t think they would help an Eskimo. Even though it’s a good food, they’re not conducive for that type of environment.
Another point to ponder when eating foods is that they pick everything green to ship it to you. I was shocked to find that over 50 percent, over 50 percent of all of the food grown in this country rots before it ever gets to the consumer. I was shocked. I was watching it on PBS Video one evening. I couldn’t believe it. That’s one of the reasons they pick everything so green.

Now, a lot of fruits will not ripen after they’re picked. I don’t eat apples in the South, because they don’t grow here, other than the Golden Delicious and the Gravenstein. People will bring me apples and they know those are the ones that I enjoy the most. I’ll have them. A bushel will last me a whole year. I make little apple pear sauce and that kind of stuff with them just for once in a while.

So, (1) eat foods when they’re in season, (2) eat foods that grow according to the type of environment that you’re in, (3) and also according to the activity that you’re involved in. It wouldn’t do us any good if you and I were sitting behind our desk all day long and were trying to eat the same thing as a triathlete, a bodybuilder, or whatever would be doing. (4) The fourth one: according to your body’s digestive chemistry. If those four components are in place with your nutrition, you’ve got a good plan. Makes sense?

DM: It makes perfect sense.

WP: Cool. Now, about food combining. Where does that fit in? Food combining is very simple. We’ll walk through that here. I have a chart here for you, which I’ll be sharing in a moment. But food combining all that really is is a sensible, logical, and scientific way to eat your food, so that everything you eat stands the best chance of digesting, getting through you with the least hassle. Because if something is unharmonious, that doesn’t mean it’s halfway harmonious; it’s not harmonious. If something’s insane, that doesn’t mean they’re halfway insane. If something’s not digesting, it’s not digesting.

What’s happening? Our whole body is going through a whole turmoil – gas, burp, not feeling good, heartburn, acid reflux, indigestion, and cramps. There are more remedies for indigestion than you can shake a stick at. It’s amazing. We’ll be talking about that here in a little while when we come back on that subject.

DM: One of the things you’re known for is this food combining. You’ve really brought that to the forefront in nutrition. We’ve got some charts that you brought with you, so that we can go over this in more detail. Hopefully, you’ll be able to help us understand better how to apply these food combining principles, so we can optimize our health.

WP: Yes. As I mentioned, if something is not digesting, brother, it’s just not digesting. How can I take the food from my mouth to the anus? And what is happening here throughout this whole digestive process? We’re going to do that.

We have 10 systems in our body: the muscular system, skeletal system, urinary system, lymphatic system, vascular system, reproductive system, glandular system... There are 10 of them. The one we have the most say-so about is the digestive process. That’s what we’re in control with: what goes in here.
And then our thoughts, you see, help to govern chemistry. The reason I’m going to bring your thoughts back in the play is that’s so important.

When I was a kid, we used to go up… My dad had three sisters. Each Sunday, we will go up to one of the sisters on the farm. The fourth Sunday, we always used to go out to eat once a week as a family at one special place. I can still remember Aunt Jean. Everybody has an Aunt Jean. I got an Aunt Jean. She’s a jewel. I love her to death. She’s still alive today at 88, 89, or something like that. She used to put this big hot apple pie out in the windowsill. We’re talking digestion here. Just the thought of that right now makes my mouth water – not that I would eat it, but it does.

What’s happening there? A thought is initiating the digestive process to get that going. I wonder what a negative thought would do with the digestive process and all the chemistry that is within the body. When we sit down to eat, it’s crucial to not talk about problems at the dinner table; talk about joyous things just because it gives you chance to get together. Eat according to your body’s digestive chemistry, and you’re off to the races. As part of a little side note there…

**DM:** Well, before you go to the side note, I think this is an important point that’s frequently overlooked. There are many people who believe that praying or expressing gratitude before you eat is also aligned with that same principle and that it tends to improve the digestion or even, in fact, in some way purify the food. I’m wondering if you have any comments on that because there are a lot of people who energetically believe that’s very beneficial.

**WP:** Yeah, I do, too actually. I guess I could sum it down to a little saying that what we think about and thank about, we bring about. If I give you a thousand dollars and you just put it in your pocket and walked away, the next day I gave you another thousand, and you do that for three or four different times, chances are I’m not going to be so eager to give you another thousand dollars.

When we give thanks and true appreciation for what we get and what we’re about to receive, we open the door for abundance. Don’t you agree? What we think about and thank about, we bring about. Prayer before meal is very good. It actually helps to set the mindset to that gratitude. I think the digestive process would be, in that regard, enhanced.

So, the digestive process is what we have the most say-so about. Let’s just go over this if you will. A little while ago, I did mention (let me see if I have a pen here in my pocket) that up here in the mouth, the stomach, the duodenum (however you want to pronounce it), and then, of course, the jejunum, this is where the food breaks down. The food eventually has to get into the bloodstream somehow. It gets into the bloodstream down here near the ileum of the digestive process.

And the body will use everything. The fiber and everything that’s held back dumps into the cecum here and you have a valve that’s called the ileocecal valve. That opens like the sphincter. It’s called the sphincter actually, as you know. It opens much like a check valve and will allow food to go through here. The parastolic action will help pull this up like this. This is the elimination process in and out the rectum. Okay?

**DM:** That process is impaired in many, many people.
WP: Very. Oh, it’s amazing. A little thought, by the way, on the wonders of the body: by the time the food leaves the small intestines, it’s about 95 percent water. By the time it leaves the rectum or the anus, it’s only two to three percent water. We have a recycling system within this colon here that’s remarkable. If we didn’t have it, we would have to drink 20 to 25 gallons of water every day just to keep going. So, the marvels of this awesome body that we have. If we can just respect it and not abuse it, we’re all set.

Here’s where the food breaks down. Let’s just talk about step one, two, three, and four and then we get the food combining down. Would that be fair?

DM: Sure.

WP: Okay. There’s one, two, three, and four. Now you get two kinds of digestion: you’ve got mechanical – chewing and churning. It’s called parastolic action. It’s much like when you milk cacao, you see. That’s the way it moves through. And then stage two, stage three, and stage four. We’ve got (1) mechanical and then (2) chemical.

There’s only one food that chemically breaks down in the stomach and it’s called protein. They require pepsin, a very, very highly acidic [enzyme] in conjunction with hydrochloric acid. But the hydrochloric acid doesn’t have the ability to break the food down. What that does basically is just set the medium for the concentration of the amount of pepsin that’s poured into the stomach to digest whatever food that’s in there. The intelligence of this human body is phenomenal.

We got three categories of food: proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Proteins begin their digestion chemically in the stomach. Carbohydrates, you’ve got two kinds: fruit and starches. Starches require three levels of breakdown. If protein is the only food that breaks down in the stomach chemically… We’ve only got four. The very first stage of digestion of starch is in the mouth. That’s why it’s crucial to chew your starches out. Get the salivary amylase going. Get the ptyalin in there. Get all that process going. Then it comes down into the stomach…

DM: Pre-digestion.

WP: What’s that?

DM: Pre-digestion.

WP: Yeah. And then it gets in here and it does a little parastolic action to boost it through this pyloric valve, it’s called. The food can go in here and that valve closes back off to where it doesn’t shoot back into the stomach. Okay, so, you’ve got one, two, three places where your starch is digested, and that’s where they go.

If we can keep this in mind: never eat proteins and starches at the same meal, because it is an all-American diet. Everybody does it. What about the hamburger on a bun, hotdog on a bun, spaghetti and meatballs, macaroni and cheese, meat and potatoes, and pizza? God forbid, pizza.

I did a big seminar down in Trinidad. One of the times when I took the meeting planner, who came up to visit me, back to the airport, we were going and he looked over at me in the car when I was driving him back. He says, “Dr. Pickering…” They speak with a British air that, you know. “Pizza, does not digest.” I go, “Eric, I know that,” I said, “But good call.” Because he was a
colonic irrigationist, and he saw everything that comes out of it. What an occupation. I think I want to be a colonic irrigationist. Now, that’s… Mercy.

We get to the airport. He was walking through the checkout line. I never forgot him doing this. He looked around. I could only go so far. I waved to him. He goes, “Doc, pizza does not digest.” I said, “I know that.” He was getting on the airplane (to conclude on that) and he was waving at me. I couldn’t hear him. He goes “Pizza does not digest.” “I know that!” What a way to say goodbye.

So, it doesn’t. The macaroni and cheese, I mentioned, the chicken and rice, all that is standard American diet. Just because they’re staples of a population doesn’t give it any virtues. Do you agree?

**DM:** Sure.

**WP:** Okay.

**DM:** I just wanted to comment because there seems to be another area where a lot of people have problems that I didn’t recall you’ve mentioned, which is the lower esophageal sphincter right where the esophagus comes into the stomach.

**WP:** Yes.

**DM:** If that’s not functioning properly, that could contribute to gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

**WP:** Absolutely.

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**DM:** It seems to be one of the most common problems that people take medications for, and probably one of the ones that’s easiest to alleviate with this type of approach.

**WP:** Absolutely. Again, nobody likes change except the wet baby. That was a valuable lesson I had to learn. We’re going to look for something to appease the condition much faster than we ever will to make the necessary changes. But who do you believe?

I was always distraught trying this, trying that. I said, “Okay, wait a minute.” I went back to school. I was lifeguarding for four years there. I worked six months on. I took six months and went back to school and learned. I said, “I got to learn how this body works.” Understanding the chemistry of this… I don’t expect everybody to do it. That’s why I made the food combining guide over here, so that way, you know precisely what to do. Here are your proteins. Here are your starches. Here’s how they digest all of that.

I made that piece of work for me. I had so many requests for it. Again, things just don’t happen; they happen justly. My indigestion and my sickness all the time led me in a good direction. I made that piece of work as my guideline. A girlfriend of mine asked me, “Honey, can you make me one of those?” I have to go and get another blue-collar job. That was very expensive. One day, I just went in. I asked the printers how much it would be to make a thousand. I put them out
there in my lifeguard stand. I was shocked at the amount of people who came by saying, “Where can I get one of these?” That’s how I started my business.

Understanding how the body works in the digestive process, that would be great. What about desserts? We know that no proteins and starches… Let’s stay there. I might get ahead of myself. Proteins and starches.

Starches require an alkaline digestive medium to digest. If you put your fist in your stomach while it’s digesting steaks and all that, chances are, you wouldn’t have a hand anymore. The acid is intense. How does that not eat the stomach away? The mucus membranes and everything in the stomach lining is in all that. That helps to curtail that. When you mix them both together – an acid-type of food and an alkaline – basic chemistry shows that, they don’t digest. They neutralize. Then what happens? If the food, as I say, is not digesting, it doesn’t halfway digest. It either does or it doesn’t. It’s going through the body. It’s throwing off all kinds of turmoil.

Let’s go back to the esophagus thing. It’s very well said. You have a cardiac sphincter here and of course, the esophagus area up to here. Notice when you vomit, you would think it would hurt as it was coming out of the mouth, but no, it doesn’t. It hurts here and here. Because the body will do everything it can for the sake of survival and self-preservation and will shoot it out. Because sometimes it becomes so toxic, the body says, “Wait a minute, I got to get rid of this,” and out it comes whether we like it or not.

No proteins and starches at the same meal – crucial.

**DM:** They’re your most basic food principles?

**WP:** Yes, sir. There are three. I have three commandments to eating. There are seven basic food combining principles over here, but there are three commandments you cannot deviate from:

1. No proteins and starches at the same meal. You don’t have to be a vegetarian. You could be. As a matter of fact, I kind of encourage people to go more in that direction. I’ll still eat a little fish from time to time, but that would be the only animal kind of source that I would ever eat. And you know, you and I, we have a great source down here in Florida for some good fish. But there are great places all over the country or wherever you’re living internationally to get that.

I would always have greens with proteins. They have the fiber. The problem with meat, of course, is it has no fiber and has no carbohydrates. Now, you’re going to be kind of low on energy. People will eat protein for breakfast, and now they’ve got to have a cup of coffee to get that up. When we don’t combine our foods properly, a myriad of things happen. I’ll be sharing that in a moment. Okay, so no proteins and starches at the same meal.

2. No fruits and vegetables at the same meal. It’s crucial. Now, why is that? Fruits are a double sugar and a single sugar, whereas the starches are a triple sugar. Just to make this easy: the double sugar, your fruits (some of them), they get past this valve because this is where your fruits digest – not in the stomach. They mechanically break down in the stomach, but chemically, they break down here in stage three and four which is your duodenum (whatever you pronounce it like) and the jejunum. That’s where they digest. That’s why it’s so crucial to never eat dessert after a meal.
DM: Before a meal.

WP: Always before, never after. Because when we eat the dessert after a meal, it stays in the stomach and starts rotting again because that is not where it’s going to digest chemically.

DM: How do you think that practice came to be?

WP: What’s that?

DM: The practice of eating dessert after a meal because it’s pervasive. I mean, it’s universal.

WP: Oh, I know. It’s amazing, man. Well, people actually sit there. They’ll take a drug for this or a drug for that, a drug for this, a drug for that, because that’s what they’re conditioned to do. I mentioned a little while ago that just because they’re staples of a population doesn’t give it any virtues.

DM: But how do you think we got that practice?

WP: That I don’t know.

DM: It’s interesting.

WP: Yeah, wouldn’t it be?

DM: Because it certainly seems to violate the principles of food combining.

WP: Well, and just digestion. Exactly, food combining and digestion. Eat desserts before a meal and wait, at least, 30 minutes or hopefully an hour. Another little commandment…

DM: Would that be the same period of time to wait after eating a fruit before you eat another fruit? The amount of time to wait after eating a fruit, how long should that be?

WP: Always an hour.

DM: An hour.

WP: Yeah. That’s a great question. As a matter of fact, well, let’s say, fruit, starch, protein. After you eat a fruit, wait one hour; starch, two hours; protein, three hours. All right? Very simple. Now, when you’re coming down here, here’s the third commandment you cannot deviate from. I don’t care where you come from, what genetic background you have, or strength. (3) Eat melons alone or leave them alone, or your stomach will moan.

Everybody that comes to me… I was doing a big seminar over there for a bunch of physicians in Orlando this time. A lady was in there. She comes up. She’s from Paraguay or something. “Dr. Pickering, would you tell me again why I should not eat melons with anything else?” I shared it with her. She called me about a week later and said she was shocked. For the first time in 30 years, she said she could eat melons and not be bothered with them. Eat them before because they’re a simple sugar and they get through all of this very quickly.

I did make a little blunder here a moment ago about this pyloric valve and when we eat the desserts before a meal. This valve opens much like a check valve. It allows food to go through
and it’s called a sphincter. It wouldn’t allow that to come back into the stomach. When we eat this – the desserts first – it gets down there and they can’t shoot back in the stomach doing all this parastolic action to where it starts rotting. That’s one of the plusses of that pyloric valve. When you eat the melons first, they get through the stomach very quickly and get down into here. They’ll slowly do their thing, finish off down through here, and then we’ve got it.

The three commandments to food combining are very simple. No proteins and starches at the same meal. That doesn’t mean you can’t eat protein or you can’t eat them. Let’s eat at a proper sequence of the day, the proper sequence of the day that we embrace on our Mango Man Diet. If you go in there, we’ve got 400…

**DM:** “Mango Man” is one of your nicknames.

**WP:** Yes.

**DM:** Because you love mangoes.

**WP:** Well, I love mangoes. When I was in the war, I can remember I had my first mango in the Philippines when I had to take some leave down there from the war in Vietnam. I asked somebody, “What is that?” He said, “Well, that’s a mango.” I said, “A what? A mango. I’ve never heard of one.” I’ve never forgotten them. That’s been, golly, 45 years. We have a source right here that propagates mangoes from all over the world. They named one after us. It’s called the Pickering. I’m elated. I’m ecstatic about it. I can’t wait to give you a few of those when they’re in season next year again.

Anyway, first commandment is: no proteins and starches at the same meal. The second one: no fruits and vegetables at the same meal.

**DM:** Just a quick question there. Many people consider tomatoes a fruit. How would you classify that? Because it’s common to put tomatoes in a salad.

**WP:** That’s a very good question. Tomatoes are a fruit-vegetable. Even though they don’t have the sugar like an orange would, they’re still an acidic fruit-vegetable. Now, here’s the best salad I know of, if you’re going to have tomatoes in it: any kind of a plant, a vegetable that has a seed in it, for example, summer squash, zucchini squash, eggplant, cucumbers, bell peppers (I guess I’ve named them all), and okra, those are all fruit-vegetables. Your tomatoes go well with those.

[----- 50:00 -----]

And since lettuce and celery have a neutral effect, as far as the breakdown of food, the celery and the lettuce combine very well with all of that. You can add avocados. One time you and I are going to come back. We’re going to be preparing a big meal for your audience. I’m going to show them how to make an Avocado Supreme and the Mango Mambo ice cream. Come on now, [those are] very good. Did I answer that question?

**DM:** I think so. How would you classify those other fruit-vegetables like bell peppers? Would that be the same classification as tomatoes, which somewhat ideally should not be included in the salad? Or is it less of an issue than tomatoes because there’s less carbohydrates?
WP: Right, yes. Tomatoes have an effect but it would be good if you can get them from… One of my key components of being healthy: support your local organic farmer.

DM: Or grow your own.

WP: Thank you. I grow. You know, I have compost everywhere in my backyard. I’ll throw things out, and all of a sudden, a tree will grow, and it produces fruit! Thank you very much. I’ve got papaya trees, mango trees, plum trees galore. For the skin, I have all those aloe plants and everything that are just the best I’ve ever had. You can use a little space in your yard. Oh, gosh, man, you can grow any for free. They say when you plant a tree, you eat free if you can get before the squirrels get there.

Getting food combining down, some of the things that I’ve noticed in my life and all of my clients’, they conquer acid reflux [snaps] right away. Indigestion, they’re eliminated out of your life forever. The acid reflux, would they conquer acid reflux, heartburn, and all that? Oh, man, what a recovery that is. There are so many problems.

What is it? Dr. C. Everett Koop was telling me or I was reading something where he said that 16 out of 21 deaths in this country are caused by poor nutrition. That says a lot when you think about it. Look at all of the people who were raped, murdered, shot, accidents, or what have you. That’s 16 out of 21 deaths in our country from bad…

DM: That’s 80 percent.

WP: I am shocked. I mean, those kinds of stats really make you think. I think that if we can get the nutrition down on our lives… We don’t have to sit on a mountain top with a turban on our head, eat mung bean sprouts all day with chopsticks, hum a peculiar chant, fold our legs a certain way, be a deacon or a deaconess in the church of divine deprivation, and think that’s going to make us healthy.

This is the real world here. You go back and forth to Chicago. You’ve got a big business up there. I ran four corporations. I don’t have time to be sick. When I found out that I never have to be sick a day in my life – yes, thank you. I’m truly blessed. All of these setbacks in our lives are really setups to come back. If we can use our past as a point of reference and not a place of residence, we got to win.

DM: Are there any other key principles you want to expand on?

WP: In the food combining? Yeah. Acid fruits will not combine with starches. All right, let me give you a little example:

Somebody in my audience here not too long ago said, “I don’t believe in that food combining.” I said, “Really? Come on up here.” He said, “I ain’t coming up there.” He was sitting around, you know, grumbling and all that. I said, “Neighbor, I want you to try this piece of lemon and I want you to have this banana with it.” He said, “Oh, I don’t think I’d like that.” I said, “Why?” He said, “Oh, I don’t know.” He ate it anyway. Within five minutes, the guy was sick to his stomach. I said, “I thought you didn’t believe in food combining?” That’s a lousy combination right there: sweets and sours or sours with starches.
DM: It’s common in many Asian cultures.

WP: Amazing.

DM: Sweet and sour sauce.

WP: Yup. As I always said, just because they’re staples of a population doesn’t give it any virtues. The true science is the way the body works. That’s what motivated me to move forward with the combinations, the chemistry of the food, and making sure what grows in my type of environment. The best way to find that out is just ask your local farmer. Support your local organic farmer, compost, and recycle. It’s a good rule of thumb. They’ll do a lot not only for the planet but [also] for yourself.

DM: Terrific. Is there anything on your guide that you wanted to point out?

WP: Yeah, actually I have a few notes here that I’ve put together for this. You’ll love this. I had to write this down because there’s no way I could remember all of these different methods of appeasement. We’re so starved for good nutrition, that we’ll do anything and everything just for the “now.” Listen to this; you’ll love it. When we don’t combine our foods properly, we get gas, flatulence, heartburn, upset stomach, and voila! What’s this? Bring on the Rolaid’s, the Tums, the Gelusil, the Pepto-Bismol, the Di-Gel, the Alka-Seltzer, the Bromo-Seltzer, the Gas X, this and that.

DM: The Pepcid.

WP: The Pepcid.

DM: The Zantac, Tagamet.

WP: And the Maalox, the Maalox Plus, the milk of magnesia, the Riopan. I mean, just to stop the acids of the upset stomach. Now, check this out. Excuse me, I have to have these down for notes. There’s no way I could remember all this. For the headaches, we get aspirin, Tylenol, Buferin, Excedrin, Advil, and Aleve just to name a few. Now check out what happens when the smell is coming out of our mouths. We have Listerine, mints, flavored chewing gum, and the list goes on by the thousands.

DM: Which are almost always sweetened with artificial sweeteners.

WP: Yeah, golly, what a joke that is. We use underarm deodorants because the stuff is coming out of our bodies. We use Rinse Away because it’s coming out of our scalps and Absorbine Jr. because it’s coming out of our toes. We got Tegrin for that outbreak of psoriasis. Check this out, Ex-Lax to open the door, [inaudible 57:02] to close it back up, if you will.

And then we have to take tranquilizers and a host of other things just to calm us down. We start the day with caffeine. We get through the day with nicotine. We relax in the evening with alcohol and tranquilizers just to start the next day with something that fizzes. And we start the whole process over and over and over. It’s a foolish process.

Once we adopt the principles of good and sound nutrition… Nutrition is just one part of being healthy. And being healthy is just one part of the nine components of what we’re here to do on
this world. Too many people, I think, get so far into things, that they’re actually out of it. This is the real world here, man. We’ve got a plan for us to be here. What can I do to sustain my health long enough to where I can go ahead and be here for the long haul?

**DM:** Sure.

**WP:** Cool.

**DM:** Do you have any other comments on your food combining guide that you’d like to make?

**WP:** Yes. Actually, that piece of work is now in 37 countries. If people want to get the digestive process down, go to CombineWhenYouDine.com. That’s the food combining guide that will be shipped to you.

Our Mango Man Diet has a 27-day course on how to digest your foods and all about food combining. Here’s Day 1, Day 2, Day 3. We’ve got 400 recipes, 139 articles. There are audio programs on there – six hours of nutrition audio programs and two more hours for the Sad Truth About High-Protein Diets. There’s so much on that.

Those are the two websites that I always encourage people two have in their arsenal to get their health under control, especially when it comes to the digestive process. Now, I know that you are constantly aware of your intake and this and that. What did you notice, if you will, about any of the food combining principles or anything like that that you’d like to share?

**DM:** Well, my health has been pretty good for a long time. Digestion has always been great. I really can’t recall ever having any significant difficulties, at least long-term. I didn’t really notice many things specifically.

**WP:** Yeah.

**DM:** But it’s important to know because the principles make sense. It’s kind of relatively foolish not to…

**WP:** Embrace them.

**DM:** Buy them anyway. It’s not that hard if you’re eating a simple raw food diet for the most part. It’s pretty easy to incorporate.

**WP:** Now, if it’s not fit raw – there’s a great lesson I learned years ago – it’s worse yet cooked. Here’s something else…

[----- 1:00:00 -----]

**DM:** I remember that very clearly when I was in college. A friend of mine who wound up going to medical school worked at a Jewel grocery store locally. He was eating a red pepper. I thought, “How could you eat that?” I almost toppled him and said, “You’re going to get sick.” Because my mother never gave us raw peppers. It was such a foreign concept to me in college to eat raw vegetables.

**WP:** Ain’t that strange?
DM: Yeah. That was in college!

WP: Yeah. Where do we go to learn this?

DM: Yeah.

WP: This is one of the things. Let me compliment the audience here. It’s known that two percent of the people think logically for themselves. Eight percent think when they’re pain and suffering. And 90 percent would rather die than think. The fact that you were watching Dr. Joe Mercola’s video programs and reading his messages suggests to me that you’re in the two percent. And I’m going to qualify that.

Dr. Lester Breslow, the dean of the UCLA Jonathan and Karin Fielding School of Public Health in Los Angeles, California said that if you just change your lifestyle from a bad one to a better one, you can add as much as 14 years to your life. For you to come in here and watch the videos of his different interviews and everything to learn on how to add years to your life, which only takes about 25 to 30 minutes of your time to do that, that’s a good trade off. So, hats off to you for watching this kind of information. Don’t you agree?

DM: Absolutely.

WP: Yeah, I mean, really.

DM: It’s a great opportunity to have to pick the brains of some of the brightest people in health and fitness in the world, and take what typically is taking them years or decades to compile and then condense into a brief format, so that we can benefit from that wisdom.

WP: Thank you. Now, what’s the order of the way we need to eat each day? Eat the least concentrated foods at the beginning of the day, the more complex, I should say, in the middle of the day, and the most concentrated at the last [part] of the day. [Eat] the most abundant in the morning, the least abundant in the noontime, and the least amount in the evening.

But we’ve got that all turned around. The biggest meal of the day is usually the big dinner at night and then we sit around watching television. Our stomach… We say, “Oh, honey, what’d you put in that gravy,” or whatever. They’re not feeling well. Then they go to bed. They start the whole process over again. If we could just get a few little things down, we don’t have to worry about all of that stuff.

Going back to you, with the principles that you live by, I want you. I’ve known you for quite a while now. I watch what you consume. You’re very cognizant of it. You grow what you can. You juice. You eat a lot of raw. I know you eat out. We’ve eaten out a few times. You don’t have to be strange. We could go out and ask for this and ask for that.

I’ve learned a good lesson, too. If we abide and get these principles of combination and the digestive process down, when you go out to eat... You and I went out to eat with Erin this one evening. I gave the lady a little recipe. A classic lesson I learned when I go out to eat: I’m profit; they’re expense. They can chisel away at expense all day but they can’t do without profit. If you ask for what you want in a nice way, they’re going to give it to you as a rule.

DM: It’s possible.
WP: Yeah, exactly. There was one ingredient on there that they didn’t have that I remembered. I forgot what it was.

DM: Artichokes, I think.

WP: I think that was what it was, yeah, for the salad. I’ll order what I’m going to have a little bit later. I’ve learned a lesson that if you ordered a meal too soon, they’ll put it out under a light and it starts drying all that stuff out. Usually, what I try to do is I get the salad first, and then I’ll go ahead and give them the order after I get through the salad. Wait a few more minutes and the food’s there. We can do anything we want when we want it bad enough.

The whole digestive process and the combinations of food: eat your fruit for breakfast, your starch for lunches, your proteins for your evening meal, and you got it down. Get on with life. [Do you have] any final comments?

DM: Well, one of the powerful tools that I found useful not only for myself personally but for many of my friends and relatives was the concept of intermittent fasting.

WP: Oh, yes.

DM: Where we give our bodies a break, not necessarily continuously but on a regular basis. It’s based on the ancestral principle that our ancestors didn’t have access to grocery stores 24/7. It’s highly likely that our digestive systems, our genetics, and our biochemistries are optimized for this surge of food in a rest period where we don’t get any. When we follow that pattern, we’re going to optimize our health specifically with respect to allowing us to burn fat as our primary fuel.

It’s been my experience that the vast majority of the public – well over 95 percent, probably over 99 percent – are burning carbohydrates as their primary fuel as opposed to burning fat. That’s why they have these massive cravings that they can’t go for and these hypoglycemic attacks where they just run out of energy. Their fuel tank is empty and they’ve got to eat, otherwise they’ll collapse because they can’t burn or access the fat. Even though they might be carrying 150 pounds of extra fat, they can’t burn it. I found intermittent fasting as a useful tool to employ for many people to sort of catalyze that whole process.

WP: Oh, I’m so glad you brought that up. I’ve shared this, I think, with you, in one of our previous conversations behind the scenes so to speak, about fasting and my experiences with it. I think that if anybody truly wanted to embrace how to feel really good, stop everything. I used to lay on the floor… For 20 different times I did this. That’s my record: an eight-day fast. I’ve known people who go for a 30-day fast or a 60-day fast and not eat a thing but under supervision only. If people are going to fast over a day or two – [it should be under] supervision only. There are so many places in North America here where you can go on a fasting retreat.

But I embrace fasting. I’m glad you brought that up. That, to me, is the fastest way (no pun intended when you think about it) of getting well safely. That’s part of one of my strategies in helping people turn their health around. Stop everything. I used to lay there on a nice mat on the floor, hands like so, a gallon of water, pen and paper, and boy, the thoughts that come to your mind is phenomenal.
In conclusion to all of this, let’s think like this, everybody: we need to change our philosophy in life. Life is not going to change to suit us. We’re already out of first grade. The reason why they make those seats so small is we can’t fit on them anymore. We need to change our philosophy on what we’re doing with our health. And watch your whole life change dramatically.

This, as I mentioned a little while ago, is not a garbage can with a hairy lid. This is all we got. Our past may be blemished but our future is spotless. You’re special with a non-negotiable self-worth. Don’t self your stock cheap because you’re a 100 percent stock in a blue-chip corporation. Put a high price tag on your stock and move forward in life. Think about this: combine when you dine to get the correct effect, and watch your life just be a joy to be lived and not some problem to be solved.

Thank you for having me.

**DM:** Great. Well, thank you for sharing your wisdom. Just in summary, I’m wondering if you could repeat your sites. If they want to access your food combining guide, is there any sort of abbreviated version that’s available for free? Sort of a condensed version that people can look at and try, and then if they want a more detailed version, they can purchase out?

**WP:** I don’t know if the company has any up there for free right now. But if you’d like, I have food combining articles that we’ve written over the years. If anybody would like that, just go to MangoMan.com. Ask us: as per Dr. Joe Mercola’s interview with you, please send me your food combining article. But neither wise man nor tool can work without the proper tutelage. You got to have tools. I have coaches. I get tools. You name it, I’ll get it if I know it’s going to help me improve. I would encourage people to have this on their kitchen or refrigerator.

When you get to MangoManDiet.com, that’s got all our recipes, articles, and all the nutritional things that we did – six hours’ worth. There’s 700 dollars’ worth of goods on that site that people get for 47 dollars. I mean, that’s a giveaway.

**DM:** Sure.

**WP:** This one is 20 dollars shipped to you. So, CombineWhenYouDine.com and the other is MangoManDiet.com and we’re off to the races.

**DM:** Okay.

**WP:** Thank you.

**DM:** Thank you for all your work. Thank you for sharing your wisdom and for really being an inspiration to so many by applying this in a disciplined way and showing the results.

**WP:** Thank you very much, yes. It’s good to be with you.

**DM:** All right.

[END]