Chat Log (Abridged)

00:18:15  Olivia Ford: Good morning/afternoon/evening!! Welcome, all!

00:19:03  María Mejia: hello everyone ❤

00:27:01  The Well Project: Hi everyone!

00:28:43  Olivia Ford: Maya Feller: Registered dietitian, based in Brooklyn - used to see patients for medical nutrition therapy pre-COVID - in an office at the Mark Morris Dance Center in Fort Greene (gorgeous building! - Olivia)

00:29:36  Olivia Ford: Maya: Space for all types of bodies and abilities to come in for wellness - specializes in metabolic conditions - prevention and management through lifestyle

00:30:47  Olivia Ford: Maya: Used to run a nutrition program in Flatbush where the population was people living with HIV - wanted to work somewhere where clients "look like me and can see themselves in me" - nutrition programs, meals, food pantry, farm trips - get hands in the earth! Miss that!

00:31:40  Olivia Ford: Maya: Why do I do it? I love food, I love nutrition, I love *people* - especially in the world of health and wellness we see kind of just cisgender slender white women/men - want to be there to be that alternative view!

00:33:58  Olivia Ford: Maya: there was a time when fast food became synonymous with Black food - but we go back a bit in history, we ate food that came from the ground - what is happening and how we eat now has to do with socioeconomics and basically being prescribed really limited poor diet by repressive conditions

00:34:46  The Well Project: Hi Bose and Debbie! Welcome!

00:34:46  Olivia Ford: Maya: gut health and microbiome is a hot topic right now - how to support gut health?
Olivia Ford: Maya: Gut is largest immune mediator in the body - what we see with any metabolic condition or infectious disease is it changes the way the gut interacts and works in our body

The Well Project: Welcome Miesha! Everyone is welcome to come on camera--or not!

Olivia Ford: Maya: Our gut starts to colonize when we are in the womb!

Olivia Ford: Maya: Pro-inflammatory foods are those ones at the front of the grocery store, in packages, shelf-stable, more processed, more fast-processed oils - those basically tell our body "You have permission to go haywire"

Olivia Ford: Maya: Anti-inflammatory foods are the ones that are not processed and act as protectors surrounding your cells so they can better function - and put out fire made by pro-inflammatory foods

Olivia Ford: Maya: The gut is the signal that talks to the whole body!

Olivia Ford: Porchia asks: How can diet choices help in times of stress? Maya: De-stressing is mental but also physical - inflammation stresses your body, those fruits and veggies and whole grains keep us balanced, including blood sugar

Olivia Ford: Porchia: COVID has had me on my toes, taking elderberry, wanting to do new things for health and immune strength - follow Yada Awakening, promotes a raw alkaline vegan diet

Olivia Ford: Maya: Important to find a pattern of nourishment that fits you, feels good, feels sustainable, and supports best health outcomes

Olivia Ford: Maya: Health exists on a spectrum - having HIV, as you know, is a diagnosis not an identity - especially, from a nutrition and healing standpoint, there are ways for food to be supportive - also, give yourself a significant amount of grace <3 <3 <3

The Well Project: Q for Maya: Are there things someone needs to look out for when following a 30-day challenge like that? or cleanses?

The Well Project: Thanks, Mom, for joining us and learning along with us! Love you! <3

María Mejia: ❤

Olivia Ford: Porchia: What do you say to people who say they want to eat more healthily? Maya: I ask (in person, now on camera) - what is your background, how often are you engaging with care providers, several questions that help to know how food shows up for every particular person
Olivia Ford: Maya: It's about adding things that can be sustained over time so you can move to your goal

Olivia Ford: Maya: If you start eating at 7am and finish at 8pm, your overnight fast is a form of fasting - talking about fasting is tricky ... usually challenges come up in how people come in and out of fasts

Olivia Ford: Maya: When fasting, what you eat in a fed state is very important - saturated fats can raise your lipid profile even more if you are taking some HIV meds

The Well Project: That's important point--Ieshia--Olivia can ask Maya that question!

Ieshia Scott: thank you!

Olivia Ford: I am collecting the questions and will ask as soon as possible! <3

Ieshia Scott: me too Porsha, I feel terrible right now realizing

Olivia Ford: Maya: Your labs are a measure - your healthy behavior may not necessarily be reflected in this first set of labs - our body systems take time to register

The Well Project: This is a good fact sheet on reading labs: https://www.thewellproject.org/hiv-information/understanding-lab-tests-i-complete-blood-count-and-blood-chemistry

Olivia Ford: Porchia: What labs do you look at as a nutritionist working with PLHIV? Maya: def CD4 and viral load; lipids; complete blood count; C-reactive protein which is for inflammation; blood sugars - glucose, A1C, etc; also ask re blood pressure over time - I actually rarely look at BMI (body mass index) - insurance wants us to but I don't think it is helpful - what presents physically is more important!

Olivia Ford: Maya: I ask questions about appetite and how much food they are consuming

The Well Project: Agree!

Olivia Ford: And kids!!!!!!!!

The Well Project: Yes!!

Ieshia Scott: lol thank you!!

Ieshia Scott: I cook almost everyday, just no appetite

Porchia Dees: @ieshia scott ❤❤❤❤❤

Porchia Dees: I make a 🍝❤❤❤❤❤ veggie pasta that lasts all week

Ieshia Scott: good idea, I can eat salads etc.. fried foods and heavy foods, not really. I'm going to try your suggestions! thank you
Bose Olotu: Very interesting topic and lots of information. thank you so much.

The Well Project: Anyone/everyone who wants to come on camera--feel free - and ask a question if you'd like!

Olivia Ford: Maya: One thing I always ask with the 30-day challenges is What Is your Why for doing this? And are you getting enough micro- and macro-nutrients? Also what is your "Day 31" look like? What can you take with you that is not restrictive?

Olivia Ford: Maya to Mel: Such a good question! For people who go through menopause there is rarely a discussion of metabolic management beforehand - you mentioned a bit of weight cycling - can mean positive energy balance - during menopause we lose some of the protection of estrogen including in managing metabolic conditions - fat tissue can actually be a hormone disruptor, sending funky messages through our bodies like gremlins, what your body used to do in terms of weight is different - really thinking about physical activity, balance of foods, increasing anti-inflammatory foods, decreasing sweets etc - will take longer to see an effect than before menopause.

The Well Project: Hear so many mixed messages about vitamins and dietary supplements - any advice on this?

Olivia Ford: Maya: In women's health, we do not get good information!

Bose Olotu: I love this discussion 😍 thanks 😊

The Well Project: So glad you're here, Bose! <3

The Well Project: Feel free to come on camera!

Gina Brown: I have a question about BMI…

The Well Project: Definitely Masonia!

Olivia Ford: Maya: PubMed, Medline, Ovid - that is where the studies are - esp considering lymph nodes, that needs a bigger look - would be careful of using anecdotal experiences to make judgments around lymphatic system - it is so individualized, significant shifts with hormone levels - do your research!

Olivia Ford: Maya: some providers talk about dry brushing, oil pulling, are about removing toxins from body - but it is largely anecdotal - I value personal experience and teach others to do the same - *and* sometimes we can get pulled into an area that isn't sound and not necessarily applicable

Olivia Ford: Maya: there IS evidence that massage and acupuncture can help with lymphatic drainage - use the tools that are there - and GOOD FOR YOU for advocating for yourself for your provider to send you to an endocrinologist! <3

Gina Brown: I am so sorry but I have to drop off. Ja’Juan is homeschooled and it’s lunchtime!

Olivia Ford: Bye Ms Gina! Hi to Ja’Juan! <3
The Well Project: No problem, Gina!! Thanks for being here! Know we are running over! <3

Olivia Ford: Maya on vitamins/supplements: I believe there is a place for them (disclosure: have consulted in the past for a supplement company) - sometimes indicated, sometimes absolutely not - look with clients on individual pattern of eating - no one size fits all!

Maya Feller: Thank you all!