

## Andrew Perlot - 3 Big Mistakes that Derail Long-term Raw foodists!

Today we're going to hear all about the fruit filled, YouTube-inspiring, acro-yogic, adventures of Andrew Perlot, who has been following a low fat, high fruit, raw vegan diet since 2005. And we're also going to hear about the 3 biggest mistakes that derail Long-term raw-foodists, in Andrew's experienced opinion.

Adopting this style of eating and living 9 years ago gave Andrew a whole new lease on life, allowing him to overcome Colitis, drop 62 pounds and arrest his chronic migraine headaches. He found himself eager for physical play and exercise for the first time in his life.

In 2008 he started [Raw-Food-Health.net](http://Raw-Food-Health.net) to share the message that people can overcome most health problems with the right diet and lifestyle upgrades. Since then Andrew has written several books on the topic, and supports people in achieving their own raw food diet and health success.

Hello Andrew!

**Andrew:**

Hey, how are you doing?

**Anthea:**

Great to have you here on the summit with us.

What was your path to raw food and fruit-based eating?

**Andrew:**

Growing up as a child and a teenager, I was really in rough shape physically. I was really overweight. By the time I was 17 years old, I had maxed out at 220 lbs and at 5'11, that makes me obese at that level. I also had poor health. I had chronic bad migraines and intestinal problems; various digestive issues that weren't diagnosed at the time but got diagnosed at college as Colitis, which kept getting worse as I aged.

I didn't feel great and felt poorly about my body. I couldn't be as physically active as I'd like in that overweight body so I gradually started improving things but I had to get on a raw diet when I was in college when I talked to my doctor and he finally diagnosed me as having colitis. It's where the intestines are basically bleeding and omitting pus, you suffer from constipation and/or diarrhoea in really bad bouts. It's a life ruining disease.

I had done a lot of food logs and had kept track of what I was eating and I was convinced that there was a key that if I could just find out what it was - if I eat these

foods, the symptoms weren't as bad, if I ate these ones, it got worse. I presented that to my doctor and he dismissed the idea. He told me there was no link between diet and colitis and that I was just imagining there was a connection when there wasn't one - he told me it was all genetics.

I didn't believe him and I was really angry and I came across a little pamphlet by Doug Graham at that time - 2004 - Grain Damage was that little pamphlet and it said that the reason you are having so much problems is because you're eating grains and starches instead of fruit. I was already eating a cooked vegan diet by that point and so I just tried it and I went 60 days eating bananas because with colitis, you can't take in a wide variety of foods - a lot of things irritate you. I couldn't eat greens and the selection of fruit I could actually eat was really limited and so I just ate fruit for 60 days. I went 30 days and my symptoms were getting a lot better and by the end of 60, I could eat a wide variety of fruits again and I could eat green leafy vegetables again and I was feeling amazing.

I started running again which was great. When I had colitis, I really couldn't eat that much without being in pain and I ended up being low on energy - I couldn't run or play any more. That's how I got to raw foods. For a while, I tried eating some cooked food from 2005 - 2007 but it just didn't work. I didn't feel great when I ate cooked food and so I've been doing all raw since then.

Doug graham pamphlet 2004 - grain damage - already on cooked vegan

**Anthea:**

Instantly your health started to improve and obviously digestion and energy levels too. How else has eating a diet of raw fruits and veggies benefited you? In what areas of your life have you seen the most dramatic improvements by eating raw?

**Andrew:**

In the physical realm there are skin improvements. I don't have acne outbreaks any more - I used to be on drugs for those. I have way more energy for play and I tend to excel physically. I just turned 30 years old and I can't tell you how many of my friends that I grew up with, when I talk to them, they are like 'you know, I'm really starting to feel my age. I don't have the same body I used to. It's harder to keep weight off. I don't have the energy for running or exercise'. I feel like I'm getting younger at 30. I feel like I'm still making improvements. It's nice to have all that energy and I never get sick.

Mentally, I'm a lot happier. There are some studies that point to this as well - the better you eat, the less animal foods and acid you have in your diet, the more steady your emotional state, the more happy and positive emotions that you have. I feel like my whole life really improved and all my physical problems went away so I just feel great.

**Anthea:**

What factors were most influential in your choices about dietary refinements -- teachers, personal experiments, scientific research or helping coaching clients work through their issues, etc?

**Andrew:**

No question, Doug Graham was my initial inspiration and I think I owe a depth of gratitude to him for showing me the way but I feel that it is a slightly incomplete picture.

It has become more apparent to me as I worked with coaching clients. Some of the people that come to work with me are just starting off - they have no experience with a raw diet and so just starting from step one. But a lot of them have tried it and they fail or they're just having problems and I knew I had to address this. If we approach it with the normal dogmatic approach to raw foods, a lot of times a lot of people don't get fixed. I've done a lot of research on deficiencies and really having to go back to research done in the 1800s and 1900s on what exactly these symptoms were of the population before food really started being supplemented and looking into that information and being able to figure out - if my coaching client is experiencing this, what does it mean? Over and over you see the same issues popping up and often it's the same fix.

Taking a very sceptical view of the raw food dogma out there and just be willing to address every coaching client as they are instead of how I would really like them to be fixed ideologically and really just addressing it that way.

**Anthea:**

So, Andrew, let's get to the big topic of your interview. You've coached a lot of individuals, walking alongside them through the ups and downs of their raw food journey. In your opinion, what ARE the three big mistakes that de-rail long-term raw foodists?

**Andrew:**

In the short term, it's failure to take in enough calories from low fat fruit and they don't understand the volume necessary to take in enough calories; they under eat and they crave unhealthy foods and then they go on a binge.

The next one is mineral insufficiency - brought about by insufficient intake of leafy green vegetables. I usually tell people to aim for a pound. If you're short on that, you might not be getting enough sodium or a wide number of other minerals and that can lead to your diet backfiring.

And the other one is just eating way too much fat. People tell me they eat a lot fat diet, but when I tally up the information, they are eating 30-40% fat, which is easy to do if you are eating a lots of nuts and seeds and avocados.

They will derail you on the short term. You're not going to make it if you don't have those things buttoned down.

When it comes to long term success, the people that I set on a pretty good path when I have them as an initial coaching client and they come back to me 2 years later and they have an issue, or people who I was never interacting with and they're on someone else's routine - I figure out what exactly this person needs and they tend to be the same things that crop up.

Number 1 is dental problems. People fall into one of two camps, they are super concerned because they think sugar rots their teeth or they bought into the dogmatic raw food view that my teeth are indestructible because I eat a raw food diet. I look at chimpanzees, they're not brushing or flossing their teeth, so why should I?

Inevitably, the people who fall into the latter category who are really not careful about their dental hygiene actually run into problems pretty frequently. I don't think I got any cavities growing up but I got my first cavity when I was in college as a Freshman because I had classes from 7.30 in the morning until 4 or 5 at night with non-stop breaks so I ate breakfast in the morning but then the only thing I had with me were 2 apples and a bag of trail mix - dried fruit and nuts and seeds. It would eat away at my teeth. I see that same problem with raw foodists. If you are eating dates or dried fruit or nuts and seeds and you are not being super careful about taking them off, it tends to backfire.

Another issue is that people will go on these binge diets of just oranges or super acidic fruit and will just eat way too much of it and it tends to be often, not very ripe acidic fruit, it's really acidic in other words and they don't wash their mouth out with water afterwards, they just let it sit on their teeth. You can avoid this just by swishing water afterwards.

Then there is the deficiency angle of teeth. A lot of people are not careful about their vitamin D intake and are short on that and end up having teeth problems because their bones are not in good shape and neither are their teeth. The teeth are often the first manifestation of this. There can be some other issues. Sometimes it's minerals but for the most part, failure to do the common sense thing.

Number two is an obsession with organic foods. People have told me that they can't afford to eat a raw food diet and what they're doing instead is they are buying some organic produce, a small amount and then they are buying a whole bunch of processed junk food or whatever it ends up being - rice - and their health never gets better despite them eating organic food instead of conventionally grown fruits and vegetables.

People have told me that they are really worried about eating fruits and vegetables because they think the chemicals on there are going to kill them - it's going to cause cancer. So I will be the first to admit that it's never ideal to consume chemicals when you don't have to but inevitably when a raw foodist decides they're only going to eat organic produce, for most of us, unless you live in an organic paradise, that means that you are going to have to significantly restrict the variety of fruits and vegetables that you are able to eat.

I live in Austin, Texas and there's actually some decent selection of fruit here but if I demand it be organic, I'm going to have my selection cut by probably somewhere around 60-70%. Variety over time is one of the keys to success. Not only for nutritional sufficiency but also just to prevent monotony in your diet and just getting tired of everything.

It's when people are really focusing on this and losing sight of that they tend to have problems. I had a coaching client years ago and he was having some problems and he was having trouble staying on the diet and I asked him what he was eating. His diet was pretty much cases of organic bananas, cases of citrus and cases of organic romaine lettuce and that was his diet for months. I told him he had to eat a bit more than that in a wider variety and he said 'well, I can't find any more organic foods' and I told him 'it's really not nearly as important as what you're going to get from staying raw and eating a variety of foods'.

One of the things that I work with, and I have 3-4 videos on my YouTube channel talking about this subject in depth, all of the available data that we have, would indicate that organic foods are no safer than conventional foods and that is because a lot of people think organic foods have no pesticides on them, when in fact they have pesticides that are deemed natural which have nothing to do with their natural toxicity. For instance, a common organic fungicide is called copper sulphate and all pesticides are rated by something that is called acute oral toxicity - the government mandates that they undergo this testing.

Basically, they take a mammal with similarities to us and they start feeding this in various doses and they do huge tests - they cost millions of dollars for these companies to develop these chemicals. There are tonnes of mice being subjected to various levels of these chemicals and with the case with copper sulphate, the acute oral toxicity level - the level at which these mice start to have problems, they start to have organ failure, they start to have cancers, they start to get generally messed up by these chemicals is considerably lower with the organic ones than with the synthetic ones and the reason is with synthetic chemicals have made huge advances in the past 20-30 years and have become safer and safer as environmental regulations get tougher and tougher.

Organic has more or less stood still because there aren't that many options. Just because something is natural, it doesn't mean that it is less damaging to us. Organic is also not really more nutritious despite what you may have heard and even with

considering the damage that may be coming from the chemicals that you may take in from a conventionally grown produce, the benefit will be far higher.

So I always tell people that this is the last thing you should be worrying about. If you can get produce that honestly had no chemicals, organic or synthetic added to it, sure go for it, they are the better option. But no one has come up with any significant data indicating that you are going to live longer - in fact when it comes to organic, in England there was an interesting study following women where 3-4% of them only ate organic produce, then there was more that tried to eat organic most of the time and some didn't care and they found that there was no difference in the amount of disease they were getting. They followed these women for about a decade and they were all just as sick as each other.

Don't buy into the dogma here - look for the evidence. There isn't any really convincing stuff that you're hurting yourself with buying conventional produce. Save yourself some money, save your sanity, get more variety in your diet and consider just going with the conventional. If you can find non-sprayed stuff, go ahead - enjoy it.

The third one that I've really come to see is nutrient deficiency. This is for a wide variety of reasons, people end up not taking in a sufficient number of the nutrients their body needs and again, this usually comes down to the dogma that a raw diet is infallible, it is perfect, it is our natural way of eating therefore it is impossible that I could possibly become deficient in a nutrient.

What most people don't understand is that they buy into this argument but there is more nutrients in my raw food diet than the SAD diet I was coming from had very few vitamins and minerals and phyto-chemicals and so how could I possibly be deficient coming to a raw diet? But they don't understand that the unhealthy SAD diet that they were eating is propped up to keep the most overt signs of deficiency at bay through supplementation. They may not even be aware of it.

For instance, if you are consuming orange juice or milk or soymilk, you have had vitamin D added to your diet, which is one of the biggest things the government did to keep rickets at bay, which was once a huge issue. If you consumed table salt, you're getting iodine and iodine was added to our food because a lot of people were developing rickets. If you ate tofu, tofu usually had calcium added to it. If you eat rice in a box with one of those flavour mixes, then you probably have extra minerals added to your diet and our government mandates most of this stuff. Some of it, the industries do willingly but when you stop eating processed foods of all kinds, you're opening yourself up to some specific problems that were done away with or at least greatly reduced in their notice-ability when the government starting mandating that this supplementation goes into place.

We talk about vitamin D and it's one of the ones I see very commonly. People don't get nearly enough vitamin D and I actually am guilty of this myself. I would consider myself to have very smartly managed my diet and nutrient intake over the years and

I've never had any major physical problems. I've always done really well on a raw diet but this is the one area where I feel I really let myself go because when I first went raw, I was really conscious about getting out into the sun despite living in the northeast which is cloudy and very hard to get but I was really conscious about my sun exposure and I may be went somewhere warm during the winter and got some sun there. And for years I had no problems with vitamin D but actually started to get lazy and wasn't making sun exposure as much a part of my routine as I would have liked.

I started to become vitamin D deficient and that is the only time I've had an issue with my teeth on a raw diet. When I first went raw, the doctors were commenting on how great my teeth looked and how there wasn't a lot of plaque build up but then after a while, I started to have issues with plaque build up because the enamel in my teeth started to wear away because I wasn't getting enough vitamin D. I've been taking vitamin D supplements despite getting a lot of sun.

If you go back and see what was written through the 1700-1900s about vitamin D deficiency, you realise that rickets were rampant, even where people were living very outdoor lifestyles. Everyone north of the Mason/Dixie line in the United States tended to get rickets or at least a large part of the population and even south of there, it often happened with dark skinned individuals or people who were living in cities who were not getting much sunlight. So we're worse off today because people go outside less than they ever have back in the 1800s and so we really need to be conscious about stuff like that.

There are other issues where they've come up regularly enough where I think this is an issue for the raw food population and they shouldn't be taking these things so lightly. They should really consider it and double down on their vigilance about these issues because they might not be getting enough.

There are also ones that are really hard to figure out. A couple of years back, one of my coaching clients, a 60+ year old woman and she basically had been sedentary for the last 40 years and she started eating a raw diet and she started losing weight and she felt great and for months she was doing well but she called me back for another coaching session after 6 months and said "I'm still losing weight but now my hair is not looking so great" and I'd been telling her all along, "you can't sit on the couch all day, you've got to get up and move" but she didn't want to. She might go out for a walk once or twice per week and it just wasn't doing it.

What happens in those cases, where you have small people usually who are not willing to put in the effort to do exercise, it means that they're taking in less calories and therefore they're taking in less nutrients because they are just not burning off the energy. The consequence is that they usually develop deficiencies. In this case, I eventually tracked it down to what I believed to be an amino acid deficiency and I was able to suggest some dietary modifications and her hair and nails started to be nice again.

Our current situation of living a sedentary life and how most people live their lives, they're just not being active enough to get in enough nutrients in order to thrive at their highest level.

The reason why most long-term raw foodists tend to be very athletic - running marathons is because you burn off enough calories, you take in way more nutrients and the chance of a deficiency is greatly reduced. Those three things I see cropping up again and again. They are not the only issues for long-term raw foodists but they happen enough where I really think caution is warranted. You have to really be careful.

**Anthea:**

So dental problems, binge dieting, organics and nutrient deficiencies are your top 3 and obviously you've come to see what's really important on this diet. Do you ever see people concentrating too much on unimportant things and ignoring what's really important?

**Andrew:**

I was really tempted when I was giving you the three things I wanted to talk about to include four but one of the things I see, that I think is an unimportant thing that people obsess about is actually shoving calories down their throat.

I got this email about a month ago:

"Thank you Andrew, it was great to speak with you as well. I appreciate your advice, insights and experience. I think I was closer to my ideal body when I started this health journey six years ago. However, I wasn't healthy.

I now know from first hand experience that overeating on fruit is not health promoting. Thanks for helping with getting me back on track"

This woman started eating a raw diet because she had colitis and the raw diet made her colitis go away. That sounds really great but she also went from 115 lbs to 135 lbs and she didn't want to. She stuck with it for six years because her colitis had gone away but she was really unhappy with her body. When I analysed her diet, I realised that she was just eating tons of dates. She didn't feel good, didn't feel like exercising, eating that energy dense diet - it was way too many calories than her body needed.

I've been working with her, addressing her issues nutritionally and suggesting that she eat fewer calories and so when I last talked to her a while back, she was at 123 so is making considerable progress on her weight. I just see this so often. I can't tell you the dozens and dozens of people who have emailed me, who have gotten fat on a raw diet. On my YouTube channel, I did my overfeeding experiment to show just how much you can get fat on fruit. It's unfortunate that people have become obsessed with



pounding calories and carb up, usually with an expletive thrown in there and I think that this is really bad.

Not only does it stop people from really thriving, but it makes them not want to eat a raw diet any more. I can't believe that this coaching client actually stuck with it for 3 years. I wouldn't have stayed with all that weight gain for that long. Just putting up with weight gain is unnecessary so I would really emphasize eat the amount of calories it takes to support a healthy body weight and to support your athletic endeavors and your physical activity and don't try to stuff yourself with calories - I see that as a huge issue that so many people make mistakes with.

**Anthea:**

I can understand that advice for newbies coming to this lifestyle who really don't have any idea how much you do need to eat to sustain you but I think there is definitely a limit to our bodies needs and I've certainly experienced that.

We're not talking about obese - if you're coming from carrying 200-300 lbs on your body, you're going to lose weight eating even a lot of fruit but if you want to refine your body weight, I really hear you on eating to your body's requirements - would you say?

**Andrew:**

Yes. From my personal experience I used to be obese and I just did this overfeeding experiment. I've essentially lost weight twice on this diet and I would say that when I eat to what I would refer to as 'reasonable satiation' feeling like I'm not really hungry any more but I'm not stuffed, at that point, my body weight always just stays the same and granted, if you're more overweight, that level of consumption is more likely to cause weight loss but personally, I find that if I want to actually lose body fat, I need to run at a calorie deficit. I'm not saying that you should track your calories, but just doing something simple like going to bed the slightest bit hungry and that's worked for a lot of my coaching clients. It's worked for me and my girlfriend. I'm about to put up a weightloss interview with her and she did the same thing more or less.

If you're trying to lose weight and it's just not happening, the answer is most likely you are just eating too much. There are examples - sometimes people can have thyroid issues and their metabolism has slowed down but for the most part, people are just eating too many calories.

**Anthea:**

Make sure to be active, too, so you can eat enough to avoid deficiencies. Do you think that people can have nutritional deficiencies if they're eating the healthy low fat raw food diet you endorse?

Do you recommend supplementation?

**Andrew:**

In a lot of cases with nutrients, there are basically two responsible paths. One is to regularly - once per year - get an appropriate blood test done to check for that deficiency. Vitamin D would fall into that category and B12, and the other option is to just go ahead and supplement.

Blood tests are expensive. It's often cheaper to just supplement. If you're ideologically just against supplementation, then you want to go with the blood test route. If you want to be on the safe side and you don't want to put the effort into testing, then you want to go on the supplementation route.

I would say that it is probably a good idea to do it, if there's no good test to prove it and I would put iodine in that category. I know Don is a huge fan of the large dosing supplementation of that and I'm not necessarily against that, I've recommended that to some coaching clients who I felt needed it but I remember years ago, I had a coaching client who was just stumping me because he remained constipated despite doing everything right as far as I could tell. The key was having him take 150mcg of iodine. All of a sudden he was fixed after having constipation for 3 years - and 150mcg is the RDA.

There are discussions about the appropriate dose of iodine - it's actually a highly controversial subject with very strident and enthusiastic supporters on each side of the issue. For instance, if you wanted to do the bare minimum to probably prevent the worse kinds of iodine deficiency, which, in my opinion, a lot of people tend to do, taking 150mcg dose of iodine is probably a good idea.

There are rare people I've worked with who really didn't fit into the mold. I worked with one guy who was in his 30s and he had started off on a vegan diet and he was really into long distance running and he wanted to go raw but he said 'my teeth have not been in great shape since I've been on a vegan diet' and at first I thought it was probably vitamin D and then went through and looked at minerals and amino acids and we were trying to find the best answer for him and none of it was really working.

The answer for him was actually vitamin K2. There are some rare people who don't seem to be able to convert vitamin K to K2. I wouldn't suggest people supplement with that just out of concern, I would probably wait until you have actual issues with that because it is a very rare issue.

It's not a blanket answer - there are a million supplements and I'm no longer naive enough to believe that by default we should be good in all categories because clearly I've had too many coaching clients that have run into issues, even though I haven't and I just have learned to be really cautious about my recommendations.

I'm not willing to err on the side of 'you'll probably be fine' anymore.

**Anthea:**

Why do you choose to stay raw, rather than including cooked foods?

**Andrew:**

It basically comes down to several things. I just don't feel great when I eat cooked food and I think if you're very perceptive, most people would agree.

If you go six months eating a raw diet and then eat some cooked food, some people I've heard argue 'if you don't feel well, it's not used to digesting that food', but there are some very clear science that there would be something of an immune reaction going on. In many cases, you have a swelling at the back of your throat or swollen tonsils. That's what I notice - almost like I'm getting cold. The cold symptoms that I never get any more, those are what I've always experienced with cooked food. Just noticing that I don't have the athletic performance anymore and I'm not ideologically very strident. If someone wants to eat cooked food for whatever reason, it's not like I'm telling them that they can't do it, you're not going to get as good a result. Your body is not going to be as happy. You're not going to feel as good. You're not going to have the greatest athletic performance.

I would say that by all means if eating a cooked meal per month is going to keep you raw, go for it but I find in most cases, it's a matter of pulling the band aid. Telling people they can eat one cooked meal per day degenerates into well I ate some fruit for breakfast but then I follow up with cooked food for breakfast and then I follow with cooked food for lunch and dinner. It's actually pretty rare to get someone to stick with it like that. I find that I'd rather just have them pull the band-aid and go all the way. It usually works better for me and a lot of my coaching clients. They can't have a little bit coming in; it's better to be 100% than 75%.

**Question from Lachlan:**

I've been following you for a couple of years and have a question about your nightshade sensitivity experience. Do you find that there is any amount of tomato you can tolerate without getting an inflammatory response? Also do you plan on doing more podcasts in the future? I really miss them.

What are good dressings you can use if you can't use nightshades because everything is based on tomatoes?

**Andrew:**

I'm giving away a free copy of Savory Raw Dressings and Sauces to anyone who signs up to my email list. When you do that, you're going to get a first email and it will say

'welcome to the family.' if you reply to that and say in the subject matter 'Conference Call' and I'll give you a free copy - it's normally \$10 for the eBook version or more for the print version. There are some recipes in there without tomatoes. Some good corn based ones and mango based ones and you can use avocado and different options.

If you get creative, there are actually quite a few tasty things you can use besides tomatoes.

I love tomatoes and I've experimented with every way I can think of to get around this problem. I have grown them myself in my organic garden and I've let them ripen and everything I've tried, I'm just allergic to them. I break out in hives and rashes and I get acne on my face. It's rough for a raw foodist because plenty of awesome recipes are based around tomatoes. Often I'll eat them and I just say 'as a special occasion, I'll eat some' but I have never found an amount I can eat and not have some issue.

I will just feel like my skin is getting itchy and starts to burn. I have just never found a good way to do it. I've been eating clean for going on 8 years on an all raw diet and fasted for 26 days, if there's any solution to this problem; I've never found it. I have worked with coaching clients that have lost their tomato issue but I haven't - it's a possibility that you can get over it, but I've never found a way.

**Anthea:**

Tell us about your fitness journey over the years. You used to be a runner, and now you are doing something really different—acro yoga. How has this change come about? Can you tell us more about acro yoga, and why you love it so much?

**Andrew:**

When I started to improve my health, running was one of the first things I did. When I was 17, I started doing Ju Jitsu and then around that time, I started doing yoga, but running became the dominant thing once I went vegan in college and I discovered how great it was to run and it was one of the most glorious things. I stuck with that for many years and, particularly towards the end when I stopped, I was down to 158 pounds and I was running more than 30 miles at a time and two things happened - I was getting bored with it - I can run faster or I can run further and neither sounds all the fun and the other element was that I had got scrawny because I had just let running and a little bit of yoga be my fitness routine and I had just withered away and gotten weak.

I wanted to do something about that, so late 2011, I started switching to strength training and lots of body weight exercises but also some gymnastics and weight lifting and way more strenuous muscle intensive stuff than I had ever done before and I really like it. I liked it more than running. It was a lot of fun and I put on about 20 pounds of muscle and I really liked how I looked a lot better as well.

Acro-yoga is something that has manifested out of that, particularly because it is something fun that I can do with my girlfriend so I do it a lot now and I love it because it's play in an adult form. I think so many people take their exercise seriously, 'I've got to go out and do my 10 miles run' and some people generally enjoy it and I still occasionally run and still enjoy it when I do it but I think that nothing has been as close to play as acro-yoga is for me. Anytime you can be doing an activity and love it so much that you don't realise time is going by and you're exercising, I think that that is really indicative that you have found something amazing and I feel that way about acro.

I had such a blast doing it with my girlfriend and I get stronger. I'm lifting a human weight that's 115 pounds to 200 pounds so you can get really strong doing acro and it's just fun and opens up whole new abilities that most people never develop.

**Anthea:**

I got to experience some acro-yoga at Woodstock in Doug Graham's class, and it was funny because the description of the class didn't say anything about acro-yoga, all it said was 'he ain't heavy, he's my brother' or something like that and I'm thinking 'it's something to do with partner work and strength training' and then I got there and they are doing all these crazy things. I think your girlfriend, Brittany, might have been there and I was thinking 'OMG, I'm over 40' but I got up into these amazing positions I never would have dreamed of and left feeling like I accomplished something. People should try it.

Okay, let's get into the juicy stuff. I'm sure we've got a lot of listeners interested in finding a partner who is on the same lifestyle path. Can you tell us how you went from being a bachelor to being connected with a beautiful woman who eats the same way you do, and "plays" with you, as your amazing acro yoga partner? We want to hear your love story!

**Andrew:**

I had been single for many years - I had dated people but nothing serious, they were just failing to really hit all those categories of what I was looking for - 4 star connection - I often call it. I met a lot of people who were attractive but they were just not there on the other categories or they were on really unhealthy habits or they weren't into personal growth or spiritually weren't really connecting - I'd almost written off finding someone because I thought I was really picky. I've always had a very firm grasp of what I wanted in a partner and I wasn't willing to settle because I realised that settling never works out and then a little over a year ago at the 2013 Woodstock, I met Brittany and I invited her to do acro with me and that's how that got started. I drove her to Newhaven to catch a train after, and some how I managed to convince her to run away from her life in California and come on a road trip with me down the eastern seaboard of the United States and we ended up in Austin and we've been here since and it worked out really well.

I guess if other people are interested in finding their partner who is going to match up, first I would say clarify exactly what you want. I meet a lot of people who don't really know exactly what they want and often they don't really know what they themselves want for themselves in their own life. If you want to find someone who fits into certain categories that have certain interests that match yours, the best place to go is to places where people like you go. I think they've already had a few marriages at Woodstock and a lot of couples have got together that met at Woodstock because they tend to be interested in the same things with similar goals in life.

**Question from Anna:**

When I person is just beginning, what are the best fruits to start getting into as a habit of going into raw that will help with inflammation?

**Andrew:**

It's true that some fruits fight inflammation but in order to attack this issue, you need to remove the cause of inflammation. Removing the things that are causing that from your diet and removing the lifestyle elements and things like alcohol and all these things that cause inflammation will be more powerful than concentrating on a superfood. A lot of people are trying to clean up the mess that they have when they realise that it's like a faucet that's turned on and it's just leaking onto the floor. People think if they eat this food, it will be like mopping the water up off the floor but actually the smarter strategy would be to turn the faucet off.

Start thinking about cleaning up your diet. Do you have meat, dairy and eggs in your diet? Those are the big ones. Do you have processed foods in your diet? Those are the next ones to go. Do you have alcohol? Those are the big ones and then gradually clean up your diet. Start thinking about taking out the grains and the starches and the beans out of your diet and more and more step it up with more fruits and vegetables and eventually just build up on that until you are eating all raw or do what I find to be more effective and just rip the band aid off and experience what really healthy living is like on a good raw food diet.

One of my books, *Raw Food Weight Loss and Vitality* really covers what you need to do and why a lot of those foods that we were just talking about are not appropriate for someone who is really looking to reduce inflammation and just be healthier and what to eat instead - and the strategies to use.

**Question from Samantha:**

I was wondering if you could give me some tips on how to cure digestive issues. I have been on a high raw food diet for a good few years but I notice that my body does not seem to absorb fruit and veg the way it should do at times. I have also been on medication for a while now but I don't think my digestive issues have anything to do

with the meds. I would like to come off my meds, but I'm wondering if you could give some advice to cure digestive problems?

**Andrew:**

When it comes to coming off meds, it really depends what they are for. If they are for high blood pressure or high cholesterol, which a lot of adults in the developed world are on, coming off those is a matter of fixing your diet. You are going to find that your blood pressure is going to plunge and your other issues are going to plunge. If you have acne, I used to be on minocycline and that's a drug that you use to address acne and it did work - it got rid of my acne but a lot of people develop stomach issues after taking it. If you're taking drugs, depending on what it is, there can be ramifications for your digestive system.

It sounds like you are eating a high raw diet - it can be the rest of the stuff. Are you eating grains? Grains are often the biggest issue. Without knowing your specific problem, it's hard to give specific advice. Say for IBS, which is a pretty common diagnosis, there have been studies into IBS and what triggers IBS - often people are told they should be eating insoluble fiber but there have been several studies out of the UK indicating that people with IBS actually do really poorly on insoluble fiber but quite well on soluble fiber. Most fruits are quite low in insoluble and quite high in soluble fiber.

Leafy green vegetables tend to go pretty well in that area as well. Grains and starches tend to be quite high and beans in insoluble fiber and they can wreak havoc. I have a book called the Raw Food Digestive Tune Up - it talks about what foods are causing digestive issues for people and how to address them with a raw food diet. I give two strategies for overcoming your digestive issues. Several approaches that I found that have worked really well for my coaching clients.

**Anthea:**

You've done some travelling as a raw foodist...you've taken some road trips and lived in a few different places, including Thailand. We'd love to hear your fruit-eating travel tips, as well as your thoughts on the best places to live as a raw foodist?

**Andrew:**

I used to be a journalist and I quit my job in 2010 to do what I'm doing now full time and at the time I wondered why I was staying in the North East, I don't have to be anywhere, I can go anywhere that they have an internet connection. I spent two years wandering around South East Asia - I was in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Burma and I just wandered around. If you go to South East Asia, there is a market everywhere so it's extremely easy; tropical fruit is abundant. Obviously a lot of people won't necessarily be able to move there. I've been to Europe, all around the United States, South America and I find it's really not that challenging.

Every place has a grocery store and if you have a car with you, you can ripen fruit in the back of your car and that's what I did when we took that road trip - had a big box of bananas and watermelon and we stocked up periodically and it was like having a mobile kitchen. I personally didn't find it to be a big issue if you are willing to stay on top of the food situation. Is it as convenient as being able to stop at the McDonald's road side stand at every stop? It certainly isn't but it's also completely doable.

In terms of the best place to live, the reason I left South East Asia was, I found that I missed a lot of the elements of the American culture, which I didn't find there. The Thai people are really friendly and they'll welcome you but they are never going to accept you as a Thai and that goes for a lot of the countries out there. I felt like I was always an outsider, even as I got to speak the language a little bit better. Maybe people who speak it really well have better luck but my experience talking to people is that's not really the case.

I now live in Austin, Texas and it's not the warmest place. You could go to Florida and get warmer - but it's got a good mix of several things I find really important. It's fairly warm for most of the year - it gets really hot with lots of sun in the summer, it's beautiful here - they have a fantastic park system. I live in an apartment on Ladybird Lake, which is the big lake with a running and biking trail going out through the city, and it's really bike friendly to stay here. They have persimmons - amazing stuff. It gets cold in the winter but you just learn to deal with it - it's not nearly as bad as the northeast where I used to live - Connecticut, New York.

I would say that the thing that makes Austin amazing is that they have almost any interest you could possibly have whether it's writing or communicating with other people or static dance or doing what I love to do - acro-yoga. There are a group here doing it and they are having a great time. It's usually free and I feel that every interest is catered for and it's also just a weird city. A lot of the weird things that people are hung up about in the rest of the United States don't seem to exist here. Also great music.

If you really want the tropics, you can go down to Florida or fly to South America or South East Asia but they're not necessary. People tell you that you can only succeed on a raw food diet living in the tropics. I did it in New England for many years and I had no problems there. Granted, it would have been nice to have had warmer weather but we live in warm houses - it's no different. You let your fruit get warm and it's doable.

**Question from Zac:**

I'm a thin college kid experimenting with raw. How can I add healthy weight on the raw on a collegiate budget?

**Andrew:**



I started eating raw when I was in college as well and had to do it on a constrained budget and I was different to you - I was fat, I never had issues in that regard. But a lot of people can stuff themselves with calories and not gain weight - and those goes for raw eating but on any diet. I have an older brother who can eat anything he wants and he's chowing on McDonalds and some people are like that. We could have an hour-long discussion about the variables involved with that.

How to put on mass? If you are skinny, that needs to be fixed, not by getting you fatter. Getting you fatter is not going to get you healthier. On my YouTube channel, there is a video I put up a couple of weeks ago about 'should really skinny people be eating a raw diet?' so you can check that out for more details.

The short answer is you really need to put muscle onto your body. You have to eat a sufficient amount of calories to do it but you don't need to stuff yourself. Start working on your body weight exercises. You could put on a lot of muscle mass by doing six exercises that more or less work every muscle in the body. They are all progressive. Even if you're weak, you can work on them. A good book to read is called *Convict Conditioning* - it's got exercises for people who are in jails can do because they don't have any equipment - they just have themselves, so push ups and bridges and hanging leg raises and pull ups etc.

You've got to put on muscle mass. Forget about getting fat. You can get fatter but that's not really a long-term sustainable strategy.

**Anthea:**

You've shared so many informative videos and articles, and written some really helpful books. I often link people to your website, because it is such a great resource! What are some of your favorite articles or videos, that seem to have really made an impact on people?

**Andrew:**

The ones that have been viewed most are ones that I knew would be controversial. There's one called *What 26 Days of Fasting Did To Me*. One side of it was a podcast which is still up talking about the changes my body went through but also the visual changes I did in the YouTube video and just talking about that. A lot of people said 'you're crazy'. There were so many insults that came out of that and a lot of people said 'you've damaged your metabolism'. That was really funny.

I've got another one and it's almost linked to that - I made a mistake after my fast because by 3-4 months had gone by, I had returned to 175 pounds and I was weight stable - there were no issues. Then I decided to do an overfeeding experiment which I also had multiple YouTube videos about just to prove a point that you can get fat while eating fruit, I just started doing it not realising that there was this weird thing out there that people thought I was damaging my metabolism for good if you fast - so

I did this overfeeding experiment and put on a whole bunch of fat to show people and people were like 'this doesn't count, he fasted months ago - it's destroyed his metabolism' so that's a really popular video as well.

I've got some interesting articles on supplements and craving control and also why people go through what is often termed 'detox' and is really more an addiction to cooked food. You can go to my website at [raw-food-health.net](http://raw-food-health.net) and you can search around for 100s of articles that are there. Over the next year, I'm going to spend some time updating the website to make it a little more user friendly to find stuff because people often say that it's a little bit complicated. I'll get to that.

**Question from Andy:**

What is vitamin B12 good for - can you get it over the counter?

How can you test homegrown unwashed organic produce to see if there's enough B12 on it?

**Andrew:**

You would have to have access to a nice lab to be able to do those kinds of testing to see if there's B12 on it, however I wouldn't try to rely on the small amount of B12 just on unwashed fruit. It can be a source but really you are making enough intestinally or you are probably going to be deficient. It's a really complicated issue. There are so many factors; we don't even really know all the sources. We don't all about our internal production and how it's used. We don't know the factors that are limiting that internal production. A lot of people get B12 deficient and we don't really know all the reasons. We're not even sure how we are supposed to get it because it doesn't even make sense from a meat eater's perspective - meat eaters get deficient all the time too.

It's really a cloudy subject. B12 - it's not what it's good for, it's what it's going to prevent in terms of deficiency if you don't have it. B12 induced anemia is a big issue that people can run into, brain and nervous system damage can be big issues down the line so you definitely wouldn't want to go low in B12. This is one of those issues where people are just really dogmatic about their approach to B12 and they're determined that they're never going to have to take it and that's fine if they're willing to test themselves. A lot of people will start running into problems. One of my friends that I've known since 2009 on eating a raw diet and recently his B12 levels started going low and he was asking me - and he's a really inspiring guy. A great example of how to age well on a raw food diet and it shouldn't have come to that position - it shouldn't have come down to where you couldn't get great answers about B12 - don't let yourself become B12 deficient - get yourself tested or just supplement.

I'm not even going to recommend a specific source of B12 - you can probably find some great articles online. There's a wide variety of different options.

**Anthea:**

It can take a couple of years on a vegan diet to reach that B12 deficiency so even if you're not in the beginning, it's definitely worth testing 1-3 years down the track to see what your levels are.

How do you work with people, Andrew? Tell us about some of the ways you offer support and how can people find you if they're looking for support and inspiration on this lifestyle?

**Andrew:**

I try to give people as much information through free resources as I can - there are hundreds of articles on my website and you can read those. I've got books: Raw Food Weightloss and Vitality, that's the basic how to book for how to eat raw and be able to stay on track and not run into problems. I've got Savory Raw Dressings and Sauces, which has some of my favorite dressing recipes that don't include garlic and onion and salt. Then I've got Raw Food Digestive Tune Up, which is how to fix your digestive problems - pretty straightforward. Finally, we have the Raw Food Lifestyle which talks about some of the lifestyle issues outside of diet that come into play for a lot of people that can cause problems in the social aspects etc.

I do offer coaching as well. I'm trying to wind down my coaching program and do it less and less but I find that I can't. A lot of people want me to do it. I'm trying to come up with a more foolproof way to present the information about deficiencies because a lot of people come to me for deficiency or health problems. You can contact me for coaching through my website. Check out my YouTube channel - just put in Andrew Perlot and you will find it.

**Anthea:**

You mentioned your Savory Raw Dressings and Sauces book which you very generously want to give away to people today - where would people go to find that?

**Andrew:**

If you want a free copy, if you go to Raw-Food-Health.net and in the upper left corner there is a link called 'free subscription' and you put in your name and email and you've joined my email list where you can stay up to date with what I'm doing and you'll get an email sent to you once you've confirmed that says 'welcome to the family, please read.' , reply to that email and say 'Savory Raw Sauces and Dressings' in the subject line and I'll send it to them.

**Anthea:**

It's been so great talking with you today, Andrew. / Thank you/ from all of us.

**Andrew:**

It was really great being here - thanks for having me on.