

Notes on Diabetes Group meeting 6th July 2023

Present were Brad, John, Jeremy, Maxine, Penny, Marion and Alicia.

Brad read a summary of the previous meeting and then Jeremy kicked off with a talk entitled “**This is an emergency**”.

He said he took the title from an interview with Chris van Tulleken on Channel 4 News¹. He said “In UK there has been near total capture of policy makers themselves, the charities and big organisations that inform policy and particularly the medical professions, by the companies that make the food. The commercial industries that produce most of our food use their financial advantage to influence the dietary guidelines and policy. The food industry is businesses who have obligations to the shareholders. “. Jeremy then reiterated the fact that the NHS Eatwell guide has been produced mostly by representatives of the food and pharmaceutical industries. A study in 2018 said that in the UK 57% of what we eat comes from ultra-processed food, which van Tulleken said is not food but rather an industrial produced edible substance. We’ve started eating substances constructed from novel molecules and using processes never previously encountered in our evolutionary history. For example, white bread is made from finely ground wheat, seeds, soya flour, added sugar, preservatives, emulsifier, and treatment agents. Jeremy showed a photo slice of cake which was probably made up from humectants, emulsifiers, raising agents, preservatives, more emulsifiers, and acidity regulators.

Michael Moss in his book ‘Hooked’ said “It’s not just a matter of poor willpower on the part of the consumer. It is a conscious effort on the part of the food manufacturers to get people hooked on foods that are convenient and inexpensive.” Jeremy pointed out that many diseases have a metabolic origin, including cancer, and most were not usual before the 1900s. He quoted from Ben Bikman’s book ‘Why We Get Sick’² “Contrary to popular beliefs, saturated fat does not cause heart disease. Avoid processed vegetable oils and spreads which are highly processed”.

Jeremy then addressed why are people still eating processed food, despite harmful consequences.

- They may be addicted to processed food. He advised us to take the survey³ on the diabetesthanet.uk website to see how we do.
- Family and peer pressure – Can you comfortably eat a diet of real food, low in carbs, without causing any issues within your family setting?
- Eat to relieve unhappiness, stress or anxiety
- Inconvenience of having to prepare food, cook it and clean up afterwards
- Cost considerations
- Food environment and advertising encourages eating processed food
- Do not know, underestimate, or ignore the potential harms, or don’t really care
- Have no long-term health goals
- Happy to outsource health to the GP
- Trust the standard advice, such as saturated fat is bad, all carbs are good, you can eat anything in moderation and it’s all about eating less calories and doing more exercise. *This advice has been around for decades, while at the same time obesity and diabetes rates have increased significantly. The correlation is clear. The advice doesn’t work.*
- GPs do not offer a low carb diet for reversal of type 2 diabetes. GPs still think a low carb diet is either dangerous or not sustainable
- There is little support or hope provided from medical establishment to reverse type 2 diabetes.

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3U_xd5-SA8&t=1s

² Why We Get Sick: The Hidden Epidemic at the Root of Most Chronic Disease--and How to Fight It. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0735109720356874> and <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36059207/>

³ <http://www.authentic.co.uk/diabetesthanet/surveys/processed-food-addiction-survey/>

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Jeremy concluded by telling us about Dr David Unwin who has reversed diabetes in 50% of his patients through diet and lifestyle changes, and reverses 95% of his prediabetes patients. He also recommends that we watch a video called 'Blind'⁴ by Dr James Muecke. He finished with a quote from the 13th century poet Rumi

It's your road and yours alone
others may give you directions
and walk it with you
but no one can walk it for you

We concluded the meeting with some reflections on Brian's life and his influence on us all, and this segment was made into a video clip for Brian's family.

Next meeting 7th September, possibly at a location in Ramsgate.

Website – <http://diabetesthanet.uk>

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1370586729749214>

Nextdoor - <https://nextdoor.co.uk/events/17592186413264/>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNq8iXg0KgxiGyeEmmz39fQ>

⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_oz6tNaMxTQ&t=571s