



Trim Healthy Podcast with Serene and Pearl
Episode #319 – 319 Special Guest Esther Allison

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Counting calories is out. All the food groups are in. Becoming trim and healthy doesn't have to be difficult or painstaking anymore. After trying almost every fad diet out there... sisters Serene Allison and Pearl Barrett, authors of the best-selling Trim Healthy Mama book series, took matters into their own hands and the Food Freedom Movement was born. This podcast offers a deeper dive into the world of THM. Listen in as the girls (and their sidekick Danny) tackle a variety of food, fitness, and lifestyle topics with the same quirky attitude and style that has endeared them to an ever-growing audience of women who are changing their lives and the lives of their families. Welcome to the PODdy!

S = Serene · P = Pearl · D = Danny · E = Esther

00:00:00

S This is the PODdy with Serene.

P And Pearl. Get it right, P-O-D-D-Y.

00:00:37

D Hey kids, it's the Trim Healthy Podcast and today is going to be epic because we have Esther Allison with us today who could be cast as Pocahontas in my opinion, but she wrote a great book.

E That's what my daughter said.

D She wrote a great book, it's called.

S Pause.

D Okay, you know what, I'm out.

S No, you get back here, you overconfident man. Listen, I just wanted to just interrupt and that's my job.

P Okay, are you ready to interrupt?

S Guess what, her little girl, when she saw Pocahontas at Walmart...

E Actually it was on a music video.

S She's quite detailed, who cares, right?

00:01:17

D Who cares?

S Let's just be at Walmart on a...

D Listen, this is her podcast.

S On a bathrobe. Anyway, she's like mommy.

P That's precious.

S Yes.

P So I need to get details, just for everyone. So, we have Esther in the building for us, Serene's daughter-in-law, author of Trim Health Indulgence. My niece, Arden's wife, Gwethy's mum. Okay.

S Gwethy? Gethsemane just so you know. She is a good name picker.

P So let me set this straight because this is too good.

D You're like don't worry, it's nothing super unique and the only one name that's ever in the world. It's Gethsemane.

E It's common and most Christians should know what it is. If they don't, I'm more concerned about their...

P Yes, let's judge them.

S But Gwethy is a little strange. There's no pretty lilt.

E Gwethy but Gethsemane.

D But that's way off.

00:02:09

P Can I bring this back to, because this is very important for my mind. So, your daughter had never seen Pocahontas, the movie?

E No, never.

P She sees it on the title cover page of a, what did she see it on?

E It was a music video.

P A music video. And she says Mommy?

E Yes, she did.

P That's amazing because it's so true.

S I know because Esther, you are from China.

P That makes me cry.

00:02:29

S You don't actually look 100% Chinese.

E No, most people guess such random things.

D Native American.

P She could be Native American.

E Most people thought Filipino.

S Yes.

D No.

S I could do also, where's that, Vietnam?

P Yes.

D Or Native American.

S I could do Native American. I could do Pakistani. I could do a little cross with an Indian. Not Indian American, you could have a little.

P But you see, you're too tall for a lot of those places because.

S Are you too tall for Chinese?

P That's true.

E Unless you go up north.

S But you're from the north, right?

E Yes.

S You're from the north though, right?

E Yes, I'm from up north.

00:03:05

S Yes so can we just see, this is her to debut to people here listening and going to read her book briefly.

P A lot of them have it.

S Because her baking is amazing.

D Could it be okay if we acknowledge that my cushion is just more worn?

S He's worried because Esther is taller and sitting next to him.

E If we're being complete honest, my torso is longer.

S Yes, if you guys stand up back-to-back.

00:03:33

D We can't have guests with long torsos.

E I'm shorter than him.

P How tall are you, Esther?

E 5'8.

P 5'8.

D No.

P Danny? How tall are you?

D You're taller than me.

P Danny, your hair gives you two inches.

D Not even counting hair, I'm almost 5'11.

P Stand up.

D I'll say with 5'10.

P That means you're taller than me because I'm 5'9.

D Let's do this, come on.

S Yes, yes, you're way taller.

P You're taller, Dan, you are.

S You've got three or four inches.

P That means your legs, you've got long legs.

S Your torso, I can see that now. It's cute.

00:04:06

D I've a petite torso?

S Yes. No, don't use the word petite with you. You don't need to do that anymore, it's just that you've got nice long legs. Good for you.

D Long legs but small torso.

S Danny long legs. Okay so I wanted to say just quickly if we're debuting her here, your story, you were adopted and your parents came over to adopt, you right? And it took.

E No, not really. They were in China to finish my dad's business degree.

S Okay. And they met you.

00:04:33

E And then they met me. They were planning to stay seven months and then they met me.

P How old were you at the time?

E I was a week old when my mother first met me.

P How did they meet you?

E China had programs where you could feed the brand-new babies who were brought in and so my mother ended up feeding me.

S And fell in love.

E A week old, yes.

P I'm sorry, I'm so emotional, I'm crying.

S They didn't have any of their own children at this point. No biologicals at all.

E No.

P How old was your mum, how long were they married? Excuse me while I cry.

E They were married in June of 96 and so this would've been October of 97.

P So she was a young married woman.

E Yes.

P In China and she went to feed the babies and she fed you.

00:05:11

E Yes.

P And she said she is mine; she is ours?

E Not quite, she thought I was a beautiful baby and then another one of their friends, you were also allowed to foster care temporarily then. And so, another one of our church friends, home schooled friends, took me. I was brought home with them, but they said Hey, to my parents, can you please take care of Esther, or I was called Rose initially, on the weekends because we want to do our own family stuff. So, we'll take care of her during the week, you take care of her for the weekend. So, I was their weekend baby.

S And for how long were you their weekend baby?

E I can't remember

D I want a weekend baby.

E Quite a while.

00:05:51

P But like till one?

E No because no, I think it was only around a month now that I think about that because I know I was with my parents since I was six weeks old.

S Yes.

E So it's probably just around a month because they had to rush back to the States for a family emergency, so they said bring Rose back to the hospital or back to the orphanage and my mom was like no, that's not happening

S They got so attached.

E So that's how they had me.

P And then so how old were you when you got adopted by your parents?

E Nine. Legally nine

P What?

S But you were officially with them, not just a weekend baby.

E Yes, from when I was like a little over a month old. So, that's all I remember.

S Yes and they stayed in China to complete that adoption?

E Yes, them and my brother. For me and my brother Joseph.

P So they had other babies, but they waited there for you to complete.

00:06:33

E Yes, just for that, yes.

P Wow.

E Yes.

P You must feel loved. Wow.

E Yes.

P I know that your parents went on to have lots of children biologically, right?

E Yes, they have six biological children and six adopted children so there are a dozen of us.

P Yes, and you're the first.

E Yes.

S And she knows she's the first too. All those siblings are in fear of Esther, good healthy fear anyway.

00:06:56

E Holy fear.

P Holy fear, oh man that's good

S Yes, it's a good story.

P Danny, we didn't let you finish your introduction so go for it's Dan. Introduce Esther.

D With us today is Esther Allison, talking about her new book ***Trim Healthy Indulgence, The Art of a Masterful Dessert***. Man, that's good. Sometimes people equate healthy dessert with compromise, and I think that is a perfect subtitle because I've had your desserts.

P Shut up.

D And your desserts and your desserts.

S They're not pretty. All of them are not pretty.

D I've had all of them, your desserts, and they're masterful. No, I'm saying they're masterful.

S No, no, no, Esther is a step above Pearl and I. Many steps above.

P No, hold on let's say Esther, let's be real here on this podcast. Esther would probably if she was, because her baking is a whole different thing from Serene and mine. Just slap something in a 9 by 13 and give it a topping and say hey that's pretty good.

00:07:55

S I may not give it a topping.

P Yes, you may not.

D That's your style.

P I did better in the dessert department than you.

S No way.

P I got close.

S But that's Jimmy Biscs.

P Yes and people were happy. I made Trimtastic Cake and that became a favorite but then Esther, it's proper stuff. Let's just put it that way, it's proper stuff. Ours is getting close and good enough but...

D She's like a cooking show.

S And I want to go back to a little bit more of Esther's history too but while we're just going straight to this book, I want to say Esther doesn't cut corners either. Because Pearl and I, we're like okay well we want to make this lighter and then we'll try and even make it lighter the next time we make it because we want to eat it every single day, right? But Esther is like no, don't eat it every single day, but when you eat it enjoy it so I'm not cutting corners. So, in that book there's no corners cut. You're eating the luscious stuff of life.

00:08:57

P Yes and I would call it, I'm going to let you talk Esther, we are, but would you call it, what bake? It's traditional baking would you call it like that?

E Yes, it's more your classic baking. Also, to clarify, I did not title the book. I'm not that full of myself.

P True Healthy Indulgence, yes, The Art of a Masterful Dessert.

S We had the confidence in her.

P No, we knew because a lot of people would come on our groups, and they would say hey I'm a baker, right? I've baked for 30 years, and they would try Serene and my desserts, and they would say you know this is just not what I'm used to. And then so when Esther started baking, she started making desserts for our café, she started making it, we tell the story in our book, and they were just so different to what Serene I made. They were classic. They were the thing. They were the real thing and that's so hard to do when you are using gluten-free flour.

S You could put the real thing next to her stuff and there'd be no way that people could tell.

00:09:57

P And we know it's healthy. And so, we realized we need proper baking in our world, and we need to present this as a way that you don't have to be subpar.

E No.

P And so that's where Esther came in.

S Well, let me tell you where she came into my life okay? So, Esther apparently their parents got the magazine, our Mom's magazine Above Rubies over there in China. So, Esther grew up reading the magazine and watching all of those Hilltop cousins grow up in the magazine. And she had this dream of as a little girl that she would love to go and intern at Above Rubies.

P You had that dream? I did not know that.

E Yes literally you can see in my homework paper, one of my goals for my future.

- P Really?
- S So she comes, and I walk upstairs. I was actually pregnant with Remy, and I walk upstairs. I was so nauseated upstairs to my parents' house, and they were going to host us for dinner. And I was so sick I couldn't even like cook dinners at the time and so Mom was like come over. So, I walked upstairs, and I was just so nauseated all I could do was look at the floor. And then I saw this Pocahontas in the kitchen and I'm like who is this? I immediately was just like wow; this girl is beautiful. And then she was helping my Mum cook. So, she wasn't just doing the office work and interning she was going above and beyond and helping my mum. And that doesn't always happen. And so I was like wow, this girl is really amazing and by the end of that first dinner I had chosen everything.
- P You had an arranged marriage.
- S Yes basically I was like, so I got in the car, and I said to Sam, my husband, I said did you see that girl? And he's like yes. And Arden got in the car, and we said Arden you'll be a fool if you don't chase her down.
- P He'd already decided.
- S And he said don't worry mom and dad my sight's already set so it was like the initial...And so, my son he used to haul water for us, and we'd get it from Nana and Granddad's house because they were closer to the spring and so he came and he would haul water and visit Esther. And then all of a sudden, he had all kinds of jobs that he needed to do for Nana and Granddad. Anyway, back to the, yes so, I just wanted to tell you how she became Esther Allison.
- 00:12:17
- P And so eventually they got married and had a baby, but we need to let you talk Esther. So now a lot of people already have your book because they've pre-ordered and they've been making it right from the digital copy but now the hard copy is available. And I'm a hard copy person of any book.
- E Me too.
- P I don't like digital books. I want something in my hands, I'm just old school.
- D I need it almost like a study guide. The concept of an is great I'm like that's so much more convenient that I always think I want an audio book but when I go to place the order, I get the paperback or hardcover.
- S I like something I can put my prints on and almost make personal and claim it.
- D Yes because you've got to go back and be like wait, what was that? And you memorize where it is in the book.
- P I love touching each page with love. So, Esther we've gone on and on because that's what we do but just you tell us a little bit about you. But for those listening who

may not have it, I know so many people already have ordered it, but we've got new listeners all the time. So yes, what I'm saying is you can talk.

00:13:29

S Tell us maybe why you wanted to write the book because we came to you and said we would love a real baker to pull this off and you said yes so yes.

E Well I.

D Should I take over by the way? Are we good? All right, go ahead, Esther.

E I've always been somewhat familiar with free form baking because as I explained in my book, one of my siblings had a dairy, gluten, egg, and sugar allergy as a child which is difficult needless to say. And so, my mother did a lot of experimenting. Being a child, I helped her along in the kitchen, and did what I could in this and that. And then she grew out of it which is wonderful so that's great we don't have to deal with that anymore because it was really high maintenance.

D She just woke up sneezing.

E My husband has a theory, he's read about it, and he says everything resets after 10 years or so.

P That's interesting.

E And it actually would make sense.

D I can go with that, yes.

00:14:24

E Because that's probably that's around the time when she started between eight to ten years that she could start eating things again.

D I had life-altering medical problems for five years of my life once and now they're gone.

E Yes.

S Now when you say free form, just to get a full understanding, you're saying because you could not follow any normal recipe because there were too many allergens in it. So freeform meant you had to adjust.

E Especially because we were in China so the access you had to your average American products which were even though it wasn't as good of a selection as it is now, in China there was almost none of them. So we would actually, we had some family members in the US that would send over bulk bags of xanthan gum and whatever, some other flours, gluten-free flours.

P So you were familiar with playing with these from a little girl really.

E Yes.

00:15:08

P Probably way before any of us.

E Yes.

P You were doing it.

E So yes, we learned. I grew up on those energy balls and all sorts of things my mom made for my little sister.

P But you then developed severe, not sensitivity or allergy to gluten, right?

E Yes, I was a teenager then I started getting migraines really, really frequently and I couldn't figure out what's going on. My mom said because she's familiar with it, she's like well try taking out gluten and sugar and see what happens. I did and they vanished.

D Like instantly?

E Pretty much.

D Wow.

E Like I stopped getting them. I couldn't pinpoint why I was getting them almost daily and because I also get a visual aura with them it makes it even more miserable.

D What kind of visual aura?

E You can't see. Everything shakes. It's like zigzags.

S I've had that a few times.

00:15:52

E It's almost like shards of glass.

S Yes.

E Yes, it's like from a Marvel movie honestly.

D It's like an allergic reaction?

E It just comes with the migraine. It's a reaction.

D It's a migraine thing.

E Yes.

P So even to this day right, if you gluten yourself you get it?

E Last time I tried, yes. I don't plan to try anytime soon.

D But it'll trigger it.

S But she can have she can have my cultured artisan bread.

00:16:13

- E Ancient grains I don't have a problem with. I can't have sprouted grains, but I can't have your average sprouted wheat or anything.
- S Because the sprouted breads have still got normal wheat.
- E Right but I can have spelt, I can have rye.
- P Kamut?
- E Yes, I can have Kamut so those are all, it's been really nice finding those because at least.
- P So you're not celiac
- E No I'm not celiac.
- P Sensitive to gluten and sugar, right?
- E Yes so between the pain and the aura which easily could knock me out for a full day, I quickly was like nope I'm not doing this anymore which was pretty impressive because I love my carbs with a passion and my sweets.
- S No can I just, I've got to say this, she loves her carbs with a passion capital P. When we go to a restaurant and she sees those white rolls, she at least has to tactile enjoy them. So, she holds them and like squeeze them. Like if I can't taste them in my mouth and the texture in my mouth at least.
- E Those are only the white squishy ones from like O'Charley's or something like that. If it's good Italian bread, I'll just gaze on it lovingly. I won't defile it by squishing it.

00:17:12

- S And when we were in Mexico and Arden and Esther came and joined us, we had the most fabulous time, but she would be like can somebody order the pasta? I'm like nobody wants pasta tonight she goes somebody order it. She just wants to enjoy it vicariously.
- E Yes.
- S She wants to sniff it, she wants to eye it, she wants to.
- D You like the idea of pasta.
- E Oh I love pasta.
- P But you can do other forms.
- E Yes, so I do brown rice pasta. I do in this proper serving size and quantities. It's hard because I could eat three bowls of it all the same but we're limiting it down to what I'm supposed to be eating.

00:17:42

S So when you said proper serving size and blah, blah, blah, blah,so just to make it clear, Esther's book is a book of celebration.

E Yes.

S She doesn't cut corners with any of the calories. But on your day-to-day you eat very lean.

E I try to anyway. It doesn't always work that way, but I definitely try to. As I said, I love my carbs.

P But you eat a lot of healthy meals and crossovers, right?

E Yes very much so. A lot of lean meals I really enjoy.

D Is your main motivation for lean still the allergic stuff you struggled with or it's now? Why now?

E Actually no, it sort of shifted. I am trying to just stay healthy, stay strong, get toned. And it just works more in my lifestyle at this point, especially I work out with my husband, and it's been really fun. But doing that you need to be fuelled and you need carbs for that. So, I actually more started eating carbs after working out.

D Okay.

E And then I tried to raise my step count because I'm the type of girl who's sitting inside all day with a book which is great but sometimes it's also good to go outside and get some vitamin D.

00:18:40

D So you're super conscious of health to working out and how it's affecting you.

E Yes and that is partly my husband's influence due to his journey with cancer which we'll talk about.

D Okay.

E He's definitely pressured, or not pressured but that gentle pressure throne that's good for you, it's like hey come on do this with me. And it's fun to be able to do something together we have very opposite personalities.

D Yes.

E And we don't have a lot of hobbies we enjoy together so here's one of them.

D Yes.

P But I do have to say though, looking at Esther, we have a similar journey in this because I'm the same. I'm that girl too that would just be inside with a book all day. That's the way I grew up I never ever felt the urge to be physical. People would go cycle, why are they even doing that? I never did exercise until I was, yes; my voice is a bit raspy. Serene was like a natural athlete, and she was like competing at

school and running races and things like that. Yes, you were, and you were swimming.

00:19:35

S You were better than me.

P No you did, and you always wanted to run and all this and also my other sister. Not me. I just thought ugh, like ugh, u-g-g-h, exclamation mark.

E I had the same opinion as a child and teenager, even a young adult.

P And so you don't have to be naturally inclined to it because I've watched you Esther and now it's become a part of your life which it became part of mine too and now, I feel like it's a part of my identity. But we weren't like that.

S She walked here today people and I do want to say this, it's not just a part of her life, it's part of her life with a capital P.

D A capital P? Life has an L at the beginning.

S Part. Get with the capitals.

P Hey, you're listening to the Poddy with Serene and Pearl and I'm Pearl and who are you?

S Serene.

00:20:20

S Butcher Box takes the guesswork out of finding high quality meat and seafood you can trust. It's 100% grass-fed beef. Grass-finished too which is a biggie, guys. I know you've heard us say it before, but it is a biggie. Just because something says grass-fed, does not mean it's grass-finished and that's really what counts, as far as the fatty, fatty, fattiness. Anyway, organic chicken, pork raised crate free. And wild caught seafood which is great and my favorite. The salmon is to die for. Butcher Box has it all. It's humanely raised, no antibiotics or added hormones. Get just what you want delivered right to your doorstep which is another thing and reason why we love Butcher Box. We live out in the sticks and when you're out of meat, that's good hour drive. We can't be bothered doing that but Butcher Box comes to your door monthly. It's there when you need it, all packaged, vacuum sealed individually so you don't get that freezer burn. So, this is what I like, you can take out just a meal for yourself if you want to do a chicken breast for your lunch with your brown rice and your veggies. Or you want to make a meal for your family, you take out according to how many servings so it's easy and it's nice and it's quick. And the other thing, Pearl, at the grocery store you just get the regular cuts, right? But Butcher Box has a range of high-quality cuts that are hard to come by at amazing value. Exclusive member deals too we have here. So, you can save big on your favorite cuts. And there's also free shipping for the continental US and no surprise fees.

P Butcher Box is offering our THM listeners one of their best deals yet. Listen up people, 100% grass-fed chuck roast and a whole organic chicken free when you join, plus an additional \$20 off your first box. No stinking way. Are these people like...They want to give. Sign up today at Butcher Box.com forward slash Trim Health and use code TRIMHEALTHY to get that 100% grass-fed chuck roast. Oh, my goodness, my husband is going to love it. His favorite is chuck roast. And a whole organic chicken for free on your first box plus 20 bucks off. Three presents. So that's butcher box dot com forward slash trim healthy and use code TRIMHEALTHY to get the special deal.

S This is the PODdy with Serene and Pearl. Get it right, it's P-O-D-D-Y.

P I've gone on a couple of walks with Esther and it's not the girl that has just got excited about walking. She walks like the place is going to get blown up. She walks faster. She walks with a purpose. It's hard to keep up with her.

E Another capital P.

P But do you love this new part of yourself that you've discovered?

00:23:00

E Yes, I actually really do. I've really started to appreciate my walks as much as I never liked them before. And I did have to get myself to do it. It was a lot of motivation saying no, you have to get over this, get over what you like and don't like. You're going to do it because you know it's good for you. My husband does cold plunges which is where you stay for three minutes in the freezing cold water.

D We know.

E Yes, I'm just mentioning for everyone who doesn't know what cold plunge is. You haven't been there yet.

D Yes.

E You have?

D Yes.

P We did one together, yes.

E You did one with the Hilltoppers?

00:23:27

D No, I wanted to.

S No, he did one remember?

D Tell Arden, he's got my number.

E Yes.

- S Sometimes they stay ten minutes.
- E Actually Arden found out that wasn't what they were supposed to be doing. If they're to gain muscle and so all these guys were ready to kill him because they've been sitting in there 40 minutes a week when they're supposed to only be doing it 10 minutes total.
- D I'm so in.
- E Okay, I'll tell Arden.
- D It's already a yes.
- E Anyway so he's been getting me into that mindset as cold plunges aren't good for women and their bodies. I'm using that same mentality. You don't want to do it, but it doesn't matter. You do it because you know it's good for you and you know it has health benefits so why are you waiting around for it?
- D You're talking cold plunges?
- 00:24:10
- E No in this case for me walking because cold plunges aren't good for women.
- P Can I say that at first there's things that we make ourselves do, right? But I think they'll never last unless you develop a love for them and so I feel like it comes, yes?
- E Yes it does come. I think I also have a lot of self-discipline in that way. But I will say I do love them and even yesterday my husband was watching a movie, the baby was asleep, and I was like you know I could sit here watch the movie or I could go be a good girl and go do my walk. And so, I went out and did my walk and it was like at five o'clock I could have stayed inside, and the day was technically done it was a Sunday no less, might as well relax.
- P And I think love comes in different ways because Serene you always tell me I love to do my workout. Well, I don't feel that way. When I think about going to do the workout, I do not feel any form of love however I love what it does for me. I love it as part of my identity. I love the way my body feels. I love everything it brings me, just apart from doing it
- E Yes exactly it doesn't have to be loving the actual thing itself.

00:25:12

- S Back to Esther's life and book and all of that stuff, so you you've mentioned your husband here and there and you mentioned cancer do you want to share? That is a powerful testimony, Esther.
- E It is yes.

S And I actually do want to say this book is a celebration of life really. Arden was in the midst of a stem cell transplant which only you'll be able to describe. And she was doing that book through that process.

P And we'll let her talk, but I worked with Esther during that book a lot and books don't take a short time. It takes several years.

S True.

P And some of it was during the most grueling times that they went through with Arden, I think. And I watched Esther do this and I watched it and just to me the whole book journey, her pouring her love into this, keeping such an outlook of perseverance with God, of looking at God's love, of looking at his blessing throughout this was amazing. And this book to me it is like the triumph of a soul. I've been brought to tears many times privately I think just knowing what she was going through and knowing what she was giving. And I'm sure it was a distraction too Esther, probably a good outlet but you poured. You didn't just sit there and say I've just got to sit here and worry. Rather you poured out and you let creativity and love flow and blessing to other people during this time. And I think that that book it just represents.

00:26:46

S And I do want to say, and I want to let you talk but just think about the book. The book is a celebration book. It's the things you make when life's going great. It's the things that you make when you want to party. It's the things you make when you want to say I'm on top of the world. So, she wasn't writing a book of bread and soup, like let's just get through the weekbook.

P Right.

S And so I just think it's beautiful because she was going through the valley of death, and she was making celebratory recipes for you guys. And I think that's just a very selfless perspective. And the pictures that you see in that book are when he was recovered. The pictures were done at the end just before we published.

E Yes literally.

S Just so you know if you look at the book and you say well this guy looks like James Bond well that was the miracle of the Lord and that was a full year afterward.

E Actually it wasn't.

00:27:41

E But they weren't even a full year a full year will be in March of this year.

P Wow, wow.

S Okay, you talk, Esther.

E So actually go figure it's my seven-year anniversary today.

P Seven years wow.

E So that's exciting. So, we got married as two young 18-year-old kids who didn't know what they were doing in all honesty let's be honest. And it was wonderful. It was everything. We were happy we were expecting to live a happy life together. I mean we do but I did not expect that five weeks after we got married, he would be diagnosed with cancer. Obviously, it was a devastating blow. I don't think either one of us, at least I know I fully didn't comprehend it and I didn't until honestly, I feel like in the middle of it because the first month or so it was actually relatively easy. They said it was a cancer, it was Hodgkin's Lymphoma and the doctor said well it's the best type to have because it grows slowly it's not likely anyone really dies from it, et cetera, et cetera.

P Treatable they said.

E It's very treatable. So, I was like okay, maybe, maybe we can handle this. Unfortunately, that is not the way it happened. So, we personally this is just our choice, we opted for some natural treatments initially as chemo is a very hard drug.

00:29:02

P And they said you've got lots of time.

E Yes, that's the other thing they did. So, between lots of time, why not try? If we were already in a really bad stage, we would have just gone straight for the chemo, but we weren't. We were in stage one so we're like might as well. So, we tried the natural treatments. They didn't work. They aggravated it and he went from stage one to stage four in about a month.

P And by natural you're talking you went to Mexico and got the very latest of treatments programs.

E Yes.

P Those programs it wasn't just you deciding to take something.

E No, no, no, no, no.

P You were under the care of a cancer doctor.

00:29:33

E Yes, we literally moved in a month.

P And not to say that those places don't work for some people, for some they have.

E Exactly.

P Yes.

E I'm just saying personally that we as newlyweds did move like far away from our home to Mexico. It was not just some sort of trying to pop supplements naturally at

home like you said. Anyway, like I said it didn't work for us personally and it got really bad really fast. And then by August of 2016 we were, let's see we were diagnosed in March of 2016, by August of 2016 he was literally in the process of dying and we went to Vanderbilt.

S And he was skin and bone.

E Yes, he really was, literally.

P I think the hardest people to watch this whole thing was the wife and the mother sitting here in this room.

S I do want to say I have so much love and respect for this woman not only because she's my daughter-in-law, but we have been through a lot together.

E Yes, we have.

S We have wanted to get at each other's throats and hug each other and never let go at the same moment because our story was the two women that loved him the most!

P Yes.

00:30:39

S And because he was 18 to me, I'm like six months ago it'd be me staying there in the hospital but I had to let go because this is his wife and it was her place and it was rightfully her place but it was hard for me to let go.

P And you did do pretty well. I think I think she did pretty well.

E Also I can't imagine how hard it was to watch a completely useless person when it comes to that. But when it comes to health or knowledge or anything you where you were light years ahead of me

S But Esther, I always said to her, and I believe it to this day, Esther in the story in the Bible was you know she was chosen for such a time as this. And I really believe that that's why God had you marry young because I believe you were chosen to walk through this. I think there's nothing like the love of your soul mate to give you confidence and courage. Like a love of a mother is one thing and it's beautiful I know that, but I really believe that you gave him an extra will to live.

00:31:30

P And Serene you couldn't have stayed there 24 hours in the hospital like Esther did sleeping.

E You did have like 10 kids at home.

S Also intimate private stuff that's a wife's job and I just feel like you were chosen.

P Can I talk about when you said it didn't work and you and Serene got glossing over, he was stage three and he was dying, let me talk to you what that looked like from

an Auntie's perspective. He was dying. It was touch and go. I went and saw him in the hospital and there was no really Arden. You couldn't really see Arden left. It was only just skin and bones with these huge tumors that had taken over his face. You couldn't even see his features anymore. And there was Esther just absolutely loving on him.

S She wouldn't leave his bedside and we would be going to see Arden and we were worried for her because she wouldn't sleep. And she didn't sleep on the couch she slept on the foot of his bed staring at the monitor. She didn't leave his side. There has not been one appointment that Arden has gone through that she hasn't gone to, even little appointments. I watch Gweffy so that she can go because she's been by his side through this whole entire thing even to get the port out which is so exciting.

E Yes.

S In how many days are you going to get the port out?

E March 7th.

00:32:40

S Which means he doesn't need any more treatment because he's been a year and no growth coming back.

P Yes so this was supposed to be the...

S She's going with them though. That's so amazing.

S She's going with him because she said we started this together we're going to finish it together.

P It's so amazing though this has been years it was supposed to be this little treatable.

E Yes, seven years later, it's finally almost over.

P It was a difficult journey for you and Arden, wasn't it?

E It definitely was, yes.

S And then talk about Gethsemane and why she's called Gethsemane and just because people will see her all through the book.

00:33:05

E Yes and people will also wonder why she's such a unique name, thank you, Danny. So needless to say, after he initial treatment was over, so the biggest stuff was gone, things were on the upside, and we could start thinking even about having kids again. Even though in all fairness we'd always wanted kids. We're both from large families having a honeymoon baby was sort of our dream which didn't happen in this case.

S And it was hard for you too because you live on the Hilltop with bunny rabbits.

E Yes, literally everybody has babies. Everyone is pregnant every five minutes it feels like.

P That's been a hard journey for you.

E Yes it still is. I have to be honest it's still not easy listening to pregnancy announcements and knowing I'm not. I don't know if I'll be there again.

D I try to keep Lisa away from here because I'm concerned that she'll just spontaneously get pregnant.

P She'll drive up the Hilltop and come back pregnant somehow.

D Bam, you were saying?

E No you're good so after all the treatment obviously our chance of having children was lessened.

00:34:09

S And they told you not to too. They said with all these treatments.

E Well they didn't directly tell us but not directly, but they hinted at it enough. And in all fairness when you're taking chemo, your risk of a child with mental complications and body complications, just physical everything complications is more of a risk simply because the drugs are so powerful. So, we knew that. We also said well if God wants us to have it, we're going to have it whether we want it or not so and God will equip us so let's just take the plunge. So, I don't think there was ever a point where we actively weren't trying. There still is not a point we're actively not trying we just will accept whatever the Lord gives us. And many, many, many pregnancy tests I have taken that were all negative in the dead of night, in the dead of morning all around the day. I took one for some random reason early. Because I never take, I stopped taking them early a long time before January of 2018. I'd stopped taking a long time ago because it was a bad idea. Just don't take them early, you get too excited. But this one I randomly took early, and I don't know why. I guess it was just God and I took it, and it was positive and I don't think either one of us fully knew how to comprehend it because it had been such a hope, such a dream and then it was there especially at the time we weren't we weren't expecting it.

00:35:36

S It's been three years and months of taking the pregnancy tests.

E Pretty much, yes. And so, I told Arden. It was funny because he honestly did not react at all. He was so much in shock. There's no reaction. I was like seriously you could have been more surprised anyway, but he was.

S He used to say he used to go hunting and sit in the deer blinds and just cry out to the lord for a child.

E No, no he definitely wanted. No, no I think it was just literally like he was so much in shock he didn't even know what to say. And this is not like him. You know him, he's very emotional, he's very expressive, he doesn't hide anything so if he literally doesn't know what to say that means there's a lot of shock.

S Yes.

E So I knew from the beginning it'd be a little girl. God had told me before actually I got pregnant. Someone else had a baby here it was a little boy and for some reason, I thought they were going to have a girl so strongly and I just felt the voice of God tell me I'm saving the girl for you. So, this was before I got pregnant. And then so after I got pregnant, I just knew it was a girl and when we had her, it was a wonderful pregnancy it was really easy. I was blessed to have not a difficult pregnancy, not really bad morning sickness, pretty mild. So, 20 weeks after we got our ultrasound they told us it was a girl and we were really, really excited. Now her name is a fascinating story because I've actually always loved the name Gethsemane. I've loved it as a teenager I went in, I had no inkling of anything but after we had gotten married and after the worst of it was over, we of course had thought about children's names and we both liked the name Gethsemane. And then after we went through everything, we realized it was even more fitting because Gethsemane was where the place Jesus felt the deepest grief but also he was the most surrendered so he felt God's love the most at the exact same time. And that's really how we felt during the whole, August 20, 2016 it was our six-month anniversary and we were admitted to the hospital and that's when we went to Vanderbilt for the first time and I thought everything was going to implode literally. I thought my world would literally explode.

S Around your husband and any chance of having children.

E Yes like it was all over just in one night

S There'd be no children.

00:37:46

E Exactly so that was my Gethsemane moment. I had a lot of them up to working up to it and I had them afterward but this was probably the most pivotal one where I just thought everything's going up in smoke. Literally everything around me.

S And just so you know like she's moved to the Hilltop. Her family lives in Canada and so even though we are trying to be around and support, she is not in with the people she's been familiar with her whole life at all.

E Right, we were she's pretty much strangers to each other in that way. We didn't have a super deep, we had a wonderful relationship but it wasn't deep, deep yet because we've never gone through anything yet.

S You're more of a take time to get to know.

E Yes.

S You're not one of those social butterflies.

E No, no I'm not a social I'm very much an introvert.

P I do have to say too this desire to, Serene's talked to me about this desire to have a baby of yours. She would say Pearl I think it's so strong too and it's naturally strong but so strong because you have never touched flesh of your flesh. You have loving, loving parents.

E Yes and they're wonderful.

P But you have never touched someone of your.

E Who shares my DNA.

00:38:58

P Who shares your DNA and to have that now and carry that line I'm sure it was just so precious.

E It really was. It's a really special thing. As anyone adopted knows, you love your adopted family, they're everything to you. They've given everything up for you, 99.9% of the time but you still lost something in order to gain it.

S Yes.

E And it was really special to almost feel like I've got a piece of that back

P Yes. I don't know why I'm crying so much.

E I know, I'm crying too.

P I'm just having a cry fest.

E We might be pregnant, girl.

00:39:38

P Pregnant at 52. Oh my goodness.

S This whole subject is.

E Yes, it's a touchy subject without a doubt. It's not it's not a light one. But so back to Gethsemane, because that was the place of my Gethsemane, where I had to literally pray, you know what I want God, I don't want to everything to explode on me but not my will but yours be done. And I will accept and be content and know that you love me so I will be happy with whatever you choose. And that's what we want to name our daughter. But then there's her second name which is Eliana and Eliana means He's answered our prayers. And so her two names are the complete in two words the story of our marriage. It's not my will but yours be done and then he answered because he did. And not only did he answer with good health like completely restored health, overly restored health really.

S Arden looks like James Bond.

E Yes so much testosterone in him, oh my gosh.

S Arden looks like the healthiest person that was ever born on this world.

P He really does like taking these cold plunges.

E Nobody would guess he had a stem cell transplant less than a year ago.

P When God restored what Job lost, He restored it seven times and Arden is like seven times.

00:40:58

S Remember the prayer meetings that went on for him when he was in the throes of it? And all the little cousins, remember that your cousins have cute prayers, right?

E Yes.

S And the cousins repeat their prayers. If cousins are at a birthday party, get them to do speeches it's always like you're my favorite cousin, the next one you're my favorite cousin. It's not even possible. Anyway, so all the cousins at the prayer meeting Lord make him better than before, stronger than before.

E And it's true it really is.

S They repeated that over and over and the Lord has heard because he's better than before.

E Yes.

P What does the verse say? Keep on asking. es, well God got asked a lot and Arden would be stronger than before.

00:41:34

S And there's been a lot of prayer for your children and I believe there's another one coming. I do believe. I do believe. But Gethsemane is so special.

E She really is there's something special about her. And it's not just me as a mom because I know I'm biased. But I will have, I have had countless random strangers coming up to me go she is so beautiful. Like there's something special about her that I think everyone really can sense.

S My heart like I just see her, and it just melts because she was so. When you guys announced that you were pregnant, you announced it in the middle of church, right? The worship was going, and everyone looks at the screen with all the words of the worship songs. Well in the middle of it she had told a chalice who was running the music and the projector to print out on the computer Arden and Esther expecting a baby blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Everybody in the middle of the hype of the worship

service got that message on the screen. It's the most amazing way. It was this idea. Everybody just blew into almost like cartwheels.

P People were crying.

S Crying and crying but nobody is, the struggle to get there, Esther, I know was so deep, so deep and that Gethsemane moment you had to go through to get there. But as you've told me before, you'll never take it for granted.

E No.

S You have one but the love that you have for this one you're like it's just so huge. You know you appreciate it.

00:43:03

E Yes, so much. And I think even just knowing the knowledge that I might only have one makes me appreciate even the little things more in life. Like the footprints on the sand, the fingerprints on the wall, even the tantrums. She still sleeps in my bed and she's three, but I might not have this again. Some parents, whatever works for them, but I could rush her out of the bed and make her, spank her, make her stay in her bed, say nope that's it you're staying this bed that's it, no, you can't move. But we might not have this again and it goes so fast, so fast and to me it's not worth it.

P Yes and I remember one day, Serene came up to my house she was driving. Arden had put up the play equipment.

S Yes

P You weren't pregnant.

E No.

P He put up play equipment in the yard. Serene, you drove past and said Pearl I don't even have to pray anymore my prayers have stopped I just know they're going to have a baby. You think I'm crazy like I'm just saying faith stuff no Pearl it's not faith stuff anymore I just know.

00:44:01

S there was this time of faith stuff and I remember walking, taking walks, walking by your house and I would speak that baby into being. I'm like Lord, and I would almost carry a stick sometimes and I would be doing ninja movements in the air like doing warfare for this child. Any leftover side effects of the chemo I break it there and I would do this big slashing in the air with the stick.

But then it got to this point where it was like oh, it's done. Now I'm just so excited and it's done, and I just knew she was coming and I had that very similar feeling right now that that you are going to have another.

E Well she keeps telling me she asked God for a baby sister so.

P Hey, you're listing to the PODdy with Serene and Pearl and I'm Pearl and who are you?

S Serene.

00:44:48

A I want to talk to you about EnviroKlenz today. If all home air purifiers are the same, why did the US Department of Defense select EnviroKlenz to protect and purify the air on board our navy ships? Let me tell you, because EnviroKlenz, that's cleanse with a K and a Z at the end, their advanced mineral technology goes beyond ordinary HGPAfilters to destroy airborne illnesses including colds and viruses, even including that C word, that COVID one, yes, destroys it.

EnviroKlenz is the new science in air purification. And now you can order on for your home. This is who you help stop colds and flus from taking your whole family down. This is how you destroy allergy-inflaming toxins and mould from the air your family breathes.

In fact, this hospital-grade technology is so powerful it promises far fewer colds and allergies, and better sleep. Promises visit E-K pure dot come and use code TRIMHEALTHY for 10% off your EnviroKlenz home air purification unit. You'll also receive a free air quality monitor plus fast free shipping. That's a \$100 savings. That's EKpure.com code TRIMHEALTHY. That's E-K-P-U-R-E dot com, code TRIMHEALTHY.

S This is the PODdy with Serene.

P And Pearl. Get it right, it's P-O-D-D-Y.

P Hey before we go and as time's going on of this whole cry fest thing, my eyes are still so red and we've got the video on, but I want to talk about specific recipes in your book, right?

00:46:31

So, what I love about you Esther is you are really on our Trim Healthy Mama groups. You're really active. And you're there and you're right there when people talk about your recipes, and I think that everyone's just loving that because if there's a question you're just there answering. So, what has it felt like watching people make your specific recipes and them come to life?

E It's really special. I love the things that I've enjoyed and because a lot of the recipes are family favorites I've trimmed. I love other people getting to experience them but experience them without the guilt and the worries of what it's doing to your body. Because a wonderful cake is great but if it's the price of diabetes, it's not worth it.

S That's so true.

D Can we get a T-shirt made?

S I know, right?

D Cake is good but diabetes sucks.

E Exactly.

S I know, right?

D It's not worth it.

E No, so that's why I love that they can enjoy it without the worries of negative health consequences. And then they can celebrate, and they can also feel like they're not missing out. Specifically for the men because I feel like the women can always adjust their taste buds, but men just don't know how.

00:47:37

P I know that's what I've seen over and over. And I gave to people who are not used to stevia sweet in cakes or gluten-free cakes, so many people. These people are baking their cakes for events or for parties or for life celebrations because that's what this book is about. And I gave it to my non-THM family members, and they freaked out and so that's what's happening with this. And that's what's exciting because we've had cake, Serene, and our Trim Healthy Mama people love them.

S Yes.

P But not necessarily for everybody who's not used to it.

S Right they love them because they haven't been able to have cakes for a long time. Wow it's sweet, yay, party.

D So do you have a favorite dessert in this book?

00:48:21

E I have several favorites. Probably my top favorite chocolate one is the mocha torte. That is something my mother made for me as a child for birthdays. I requested them multiple times.

D What chapter and verse do we find it in?

E It's in the cheesecake and torte chapter. I don't know what page that is I can help you find it.

P But there's some things that people, of course I think your Cake of Wonders.

S Chapter seven.

D Is that real?

E No.

P So Esther is most famous for her Cake of Wonders.

E Yes.

P Cake of Wonders and I do think that that's what I see made the almost.

E I think so too, and I do love it but after years of making it for the cafe I need a break.

S Yes you need a break.

E Big break.

00:48:58

D These are like cooking show level.

P Yes that's what it is, cooking show.

D This isn't.

E There it is right there.

D The mocha torte?

E Yes, that's probably one of my favorite desserts.

P And I do have to say my precious daughter Autumn who works with us took all these photos.

E That poor girl put aside her life. I'd be like Autumn can you come over like every single day you're free this week? She's like sure. I was like wow you're amazing because oh my goodness.

P But you two have so much in common because Autumn's like a hard worker get stuff done, don't muck around, don't. And Esther, you were like, she would come back to me and say Esther's one of the hardest workers I've ever met. And it was like all praise because Autumn likes that. She doesn't like just dilly dally.

00:49:33

S Yes, there's nothing like Esther or Autumn to get things done and get things done fast and quick and on point.

P Because Autumn has to work with me on my recipes and she's just not as impressed because I don't get things done.

D So you guys are noting in the book too when it's a crossover.

E Yes.

D How this applies to the Trim Healthy Mama plan as well.

E Yes.

S Fantastic.

E Most of them are Esther's obviously because it's a celebration book. There's like a couple in there maybe because it is a dessert book, it's for celebration. It's not for restricting in my opinion. Also, I don't know how you'd make a crème brulee. I don't think it's possible.

S No, no I don't know.

E I literally don't think it's possible.

P No, I think this is for it's a different sort of book. It's for life's special events. You have it on your shelf because you are going to be celebrating moments.

00:50:19

E Yes, and you won't bake from it every day. I know that. It won't be like the other books you guys have had out, but this will be great because if you need a wonderful anything for any sort of occasion because you can find anything. Or it's date night even just a date night with you and your husband alone, you can bake from there and you guys should both be happy. Or at least I hope you'll both be happy.

S And if you know you have any teenage girls.

P Yes.

S Yes, it's true like because I've noticed you know my teenage girls would bring home friends and they would love to look through the dessert chapters of our books. But we're not as impressive as Esther. Especially she has these how-to's, so you know it's not going to fail. I hate it when all my Trim Healthy ingredients are getting used and then it's not. They've missed a step, but this is very.

00:51:01

P Yes, every step is documented and there's pictures. But it was just Valentine's Day recently, right?

E Yes.

P The whole feed of our Trim Healthy Facebook group that day was pretty much pictures of cakes from your book.

E It was really special. They did a great job. We had such a good crowd of people.

P And I can't believe how well they're turning out. I haven't seen a flop have you seen a flop?

E There was one in particular whose husband did it and it was incredible, I was like oh, my gosh my husband couldn't do that.

D Totally shocked.

S Yes, that's amazing.

E It was an incredible cake. I was like this is so beautiful and a guy did it.

S You know why I chose you for a daughter-in-law, it's so I don't have to bake for my husband. I'm just joking.

E But I do remember when I first made a cake for you guys and Dad loved it, and you were like well this is great.

S I know I love it. It was actually the lemon cake in there, go figure.

00:51:51

D Half of me is thinking like we can do stuff too and then I'm like no we can't. You're right to be shocked that men are pulling off fancy desserts.

P Yes but some of the best bakers are men.

E True it's just my experience with Hilltop men.

P Yes Hilltop men. Hilltop men hunt and bring home the meat.

S Yes decorating cakes is not their forte.

P Look at this Mike right here. He's a Hilltop guy, can you bake a cake, Mike? He said no. Would you hunt? He's not a hunter either.

S No, but he's good at IT stuff.

D I can't shoot the baby deer.

E You're not supposed to shoot the baby deer. My husband doesn't do that either.

D I can't shoot it they're all babies to me is what I'm saying.

00:52:27

E Those bucks are bigger than you, trust me

D Yes but they just do little snouts. They just want water is all. Have you ever seen them? They're just like in full like...

E As the deer pants?

D They just want to live and go back to their families and they just like where's the water? And they finally find it and they just have the nerve to like dip their head.

S Or they're just fighting each other for male dominance.

D Maybe. See you got to have a view, right?

P You know the meat that you find all packaged in the in the grocery store, Danny?

D Yes.

P One of those was just a cow or a deer.

D With a little snout.

P He just wanted water.

D He just says ma and his little nose drips.

P But in the end we must eat.

D And he was like mama?

S Oh my gosh. How did we get here?

P I don't know but we're good. I think we're done; it was beautiful.

D We're done because the camera is powering off.

S Are they?

P Thanks Esther, we really appreciate you.

E Thanks for having me.

P I appreciate what you brought to us.

00:54:05