

Your Brain & Coffee

Heather Sandison, ND
with **Andrew Salisbury**



Heather Sandison, ND

Welcome to this episode of the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. I'm your host Dr. Heather Sandison. And I can not wait to introduce you to Purity Coffee and Andrew Salisbury, the founder, and CEO of Purity Coffee. He began his unique relationship with Coffee when his wife Amber was suffering with her health condition. She had generally diminished vitality and energy. And they spent much of their time improving their lifestyle through a clean diet and daily exercise. So you can see how aligned he is with our entire message here at the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. But today, we are going to dive into why caffeine and coffee, and particularly Purity Coffee can be so helpful for cognitive decline. Andrew, welcome.

Andrew Salisbury

Thank you. Thanks for having me.

Heather Sandison, ND

So let us get into a little bit more of why you guys started Purity Coffee and how it is different from other coffee brands.

Andrew Salisbury

Yeah. So I mean, basically the story of how Purity started is that my wife was having some health issues and it really sort of manifested in low energy, difficulty to get out of bed in the morning. I would be in a very, very different business before, which I sold. It was a software company in Latin America, and could not be more different. And we spent some time traveling and I think that was stressful for her for a couple of reasons. But to cut a long story short, when she got back, she was getting some real health issues, low energy. And she was like, a lot of us do drink a lot of coffee, and as you can probably tell my accent I am English, I was a tea drinker. I was never really a big fan of coffee. And so we would have plenty of arguments where I was trying to persuade her to give up coffee. Because I felt like she was putting one foot on the accelerator, one foot on the brake like her body was not capable of getting that level of energy that the coffee made her feel like she had. So to cut a long story short, we had a few arguments about this and I started to get educated about coffee and health. And what I found out was actually that my wife was right. I had to eat some buy on that one. But coffee's incredibly good for you if it is done right. And so I met two professors at the Institute of Coffee Studies at Vanderbilt University and they gave me a

long shopping list of things that you are probably aware of like that coffee can help with the prevention of type two diabetes, Alzheimer's, dementia, some various heart diseases, six forms of cancer, liver health. So there was just a long shopping list of the health benefits of coffee. But at the time I asked them who is doing the very best job. Who is making all of those decisions based on health? And they could tell me all the things that were the difference that make the difference. In other words, they could tell me what you look for in a coffee but they could not tell me where to buy that coffee. So I just started a research project with Professor Adriana Farah, who is a doctor from the University of Brazil, and she heads the lab for nutrition at the University of Brazil, which is obviously one of the biggest coffee producers in the country. And we started working on a project which is, if we made every decision based on health without compromise to money, to taste, to anything else what would the coffee look like at the end of the project? And so we worked on that for about 18 months. And that was really just the start of purely.

Heather Sandison, ND

Wow, how exciting. Let us go into some of those health benefits. I certainly see my patients, they are more cognitively engaged. They have more energy when they are exposed to a little bit of caffeine. And now of course, as you mentioned, tea, there are multiple ways to get to that and there is a nootropic formula that I use with almost all of my cognitive decline patients, which is oral caffeine. It contains some oral caffeine. So we know that there is a connection between cognitive function and caffeine. And tell me a little bit more specifically about antioxidants and why maybe we should deliver that caffeine as coffee.

Andrew Salisbury

And there is been lots of interesting studies done using caffeine and even using caffeine that came from, let us say, Swiss water that was generated from coffee by itself to see if it had the same impact as caffeine from coffee, and it does not. That is a really interesting thing. The way I would describe coffee is I think it is almost like an orchestra. There are multiple things playing at the same time. There is no one instrument that you could say causes all of the benefits. And so one of the things that we focus on is the thing called chlorogenic acids which are the Polyphenol. Coffee is one of the richest sources of polyphenols and antioxidants in the American diet. But what is really interesting is the amount of antioxidants that you get in your cup depends on a lot of factors. It depends on soil conditions, the variety of the coffee that you are using, the cultivar of the coffee you are using, sunlight, rainfall, the way that the coffee is processed, and the way that it is stored. And all these things impact the amount of CGAs that are in your cup in the end. So what we try to do is make every decision based on health without any compromise to maximize the antioxidants in the coffee but then also make sure that we do not have any of the negative things that occur in coffee that can happen with poor processing.

Heather Sandison, ND

Fascinating. So I was sharing with you before we jumped on this call that I am not a coffee drinker, although I am a proponent because I see the benefits for my patients. My mom has been drinking Purity Coffee whenever she is at my house, thanks to you guys. And she had said

to me multiple times that she is here. She takes her first sip in the morning and she says, "Oh, this is so better, so much better than the consistently mediocre or sober, below-average thing that I can get anywhere else in the world. I love coming to your house and having coffee here," So what makes that difference? It tastes different. Like you can taste the difference but also you were explaining to me why maybe I should reconsider my resistance to coffee and why maybe your coffee would not give me the jitters that other coffee has in the past.

Andrew Salisbury

So this was one of the unintended consequences of making every decision based on health. We did not actually know the end of it if the coffee that we delivered would be sort of like fish oil. In other words, you trust the vendor, and you think they are doing a really good job but you really can not tell the difference between one capsule or another. You just have a level of confidence. And then we found within about a year or so people were reporting just things that we did not expect. They were reporting, a lack of the side effects that typically come from coffee. Which means like acid reflux or nervousness. We all know that feeling when you have drunk just a little bit too much coffee and you are like, okay, I have got to stop coffee. Often that is a result of poor-quality coffee.

And the way the coffee is farmed, there is a lot of motivation in the financial areas to cut corners because it is been paid as a commodity. And because it is been paid as a commodity people are saying or farmers and also importers are saying, look, if we cut the corners, we make higher margins and the customers do not really know. So I think we were the first company, I know we were the first company to make every decision based on health without compromise, and that led to things that we were actually surprised to find out.

Heather Sandison, ND

That is incredible. And then the taste, can you comment on why the taste is so different?

Andrew Salisbury

It shouldn't be. I mean, it should not be in the sense that in other words, the cultivars of coffee that we use are the same as the cultivars of coffee that other people use. But what we care about is we care about the way that the coffee is farmed. So first it is avoiding the bad stuff. So it is avoiding things like pesticide residue, it has to be organic, it has to be specialty grade. So some of the problems with the taste of coffee come from the fact that you have a coffee that is sub-standardized. Especially grade is the highest grade of coffee. And what that means is there is actually a measurement of especially grade, which is that you look at the green coffee and you look for things called primary and secondary defects in the coffee. So you are looking for things that show the coffee was damaged in the process. So in other words there are things like they are overripe beans. So if you take a coffee tree and you pick overripe cherries or if you have industrial farming, that picks all the cherries at the same time, then it is like putting a moldy strawberry in a vat of fresh strawberries. I mean, you are going to get mold very quickly. So there are a lot of things that potentially could impact the flavor but typically it is quality related.

Heather Sandison, ND

Got it. And so let us talk you mentioned mold. Mold is something that I have seen over and over again. Mold exposure, particularly mycotoxins exposure in my patients leads to cognitive decline very quickly. And foods and coffee in particular are one of the things that come up over and over again as a potential exposure source if it is not in your environment. So I know you guys have been very thoughtful about how you think about harvesting the beans and whether or not there is mold in there and just having a really high standard. Can you talk through the process of avoiding that in Purity Coffee?

Andrew Salisbury

And avoiding is the keyword. Once the mold is developed on the coffee it is very difficult to sort it. So in other words, avoiding the first place is crucial. So there are a lot of places where molds can form on coffee. All the way from, you have these pickers who are taking the coffee cherries and they are putting them in a big burlap bag and they are putting it by the side of the road to be picked up by a truck. If it is not picked up within an hour or two hours you have got rotting fruit, which is sometimes left for days on the side of the road until they pick them up. And so you have created this mold inside of coffee right from day one. In processing the coffee the moisture level makes a big difference. I remember once being at a big farm, a big industrial farm in Brazil and I saw this mound of green coffee, unroasted green coffee.

And there was a farm worker who was just spraying the coffee with water. And I'm like, well, that is interesting. What is the cleaning stage, or what is the final stage? And they said, "Well, that is not really. We allowed a certain amount of humidity into the coffee so the more we can make it close to that humidity level, the more we can actually charge for the coffee because it is by weight as a commodity. Of course, what they are doing is they are spraying it with water, then putting it in bags and they are shipping it overseas. So there are lots of examples, unfortunately, way mold can develop. One example, and this is from the same very large industrial farm. The way coffee is picked in an industrial way is they have these big sort of tractors that almost have this sort of U-shaped sort of cradle that goes between the trees. And what it is doing is it shakes the coffee trees.

So all of the cherries that are ripe, unripe, and ready to be picked are shaken to the ground and then picked up automatically and then it is sorted. The problem is if something is overripe like cherries on a tree ripen at different degrees. If you handpick and hand-selected, you are going to pick the ones that are just red and perfectly ripe. But if you have a machine sorter it is basically sorting them all and then you trying to figure out how to avoid the ones that were moldy, contaminating all the other ones. And the very last thing I would say, though, quickly about this, which is the misconception about coffee and mold, it is not the mold that really creates the problem, it is the mold that is the food for the mycotoxins that create the problem. You may not see it in your coffee. You are not going to see coffee that looks moldy. And you are going to see coffee that looks normal to the naked eye. But the reality is that mold that has been on the

coffee in the early stage is sort of like additive mycotoxins and ochratoxin and mycotoxins like that.

Heather Sandison, ND

Got it. So you referenced some research and some people who you have worked with, both in Brazil and in the United States who are researchers, and medical professionals. Tell me what you have learned from them and how you have incorporated this into creating your products.

Andrew Salisbury

I think one of the big advantages that I had is just sort of like a position of ignorance. When I first came to coffee I really had no idea whatsoever and I had a blank sheet of paper. I could look at it with expert help and say, what happens if we made every decision based on health, and we got some really good guides. Dr. Adriana Farrah, we have had doctor Sanjiv Chopra, who is the last dean of admissions for Harvard Med School. A lot of these people collaborate with us. We work with three universities now. What we are trying to do is we try to sort of push the limits of where coffee can be in terms of healthy food. So a lot of it is just been guidance from them where they started off, and Adriana started off explaining to me, look, it is a compromise of two things.,

You want to avoid the bad stuff but the bad stuff is not the thing that makes it healthy. In other words, my cigar could be an organic cigar but it is not necessarily good for me. What's good for me is all the positive compounds in coffee. So avoid the bad stuff, the mold, the mycotoxins, and the heavy metals. In the roasting, you can create a thing called acrylamide and you can create a thing called PAHs, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons when you over-roast coffee. So in other words we can create bad stuff in the coffee all the way through the process if we are not paying attention to it. But what really matters is the CGAs and the antioxidants in the coffee, and that is based on soil conditions., that is based on farming practices that are very close to being farmed and its natural habitat.

Heather Sandison, ND

Okay, so take us through the life of a bean that ends up in a bag in my house or someone else's house.

Andrew Salisbury

Yeah, well, it starts the very first step is it has to start with lab testing. Coffee from around the world, there is the highest in antioxidants. So that is one step no other coffee company does. So the first thing we do is we know that the amount of CGAs in coffee will vary from crop to crop, harvest to harvest. The only way to find out which is higher in antioxidants is to lab test the coffee. So we pick so almost like king of the castle. We look for the very best, highest CGAs in the green coffee. Then as a criterion and even before we lab test, the coffee has to be organic., it has to be specially graded and it has to be. We look for certain labels, like hand-picked, hand-selected, shade-grown Smithsonian bird-friendly. So all of those things you would think like, is that just about taste? Is it about quality? The labels that allow us to know that the coffee

was grown in its natural condition. So for example, if it says Smithsonian bird friendly, it means that migratory birds land on those coffee trees. They would not land on those coffee trees if they are industrially farmed and just rows the trees, they would not want to put their nest there. So we are looking for monikers like Smithsonian bird friendly because it shows us where the coffee is grown in its natural environments. And the reason why that matters is coffee that is grown in its natural environment has better soil conditions and therefore the coffee is higher in CGA. So the bottom line is organic, specialty grade, has to be hand-picked, hand-selected.

And then what we do is we design. When we pick that particular coffee, we buy pretty much all of their harvests for two to three years. So unlike other coffee companies, we are not sort of saying, let us give variety to our customers and have 50 different coffees. We find the highest and the very best quality coffee for health, and we buy up all of the coffee that we can that reaches that standard. So that is the very first step. And then afterward, when the coffee is then transported to us, we design a roast curve with the University of Brazil to maximize the antioxidants and not create any negative compounds. And then finally, freshness is important in the coffee. So our coffee or your coffee is sent maybe two days after roasting. Three days after roasting. So it is still the gas in. It is very fresh and is going to be higher, higher in antioxidants but also the lipids on the coffee would not be stale, which is some of the problems that the oils on coffee like cafestol and kahweol. And what they do in unfortunately in coffee that there is more than 15 days old, start to turn rancid. and that is sort of obviously one of the reasons why people have stomach issues.

Heather Sandison, ND

Okay, so I got the coffee bean to my house. Now that it is here, how do I make it into the perfect cup of coffee?

Andrew Salisbury

We have actually been struggling with that final model question for a while. Which is that we can do everything right. We can make every decision based on health. But then if the final mile, let us say you use boiling water, you can actually impact the coffee. If you are doing things that the in terms of processing make. Espresso is a very good way of making coffee, paper filters are a good way. But if you use a paper filter you trap the cafestol and kahweol in the paper filter. So that is weird, if you use espresso, you do not. If you are concerned about lipids or oils or cholesterol levels, you may want to use a paper filter. So I guess the bottom line for me is that we do not focus much on the way that you make the coffee because people can have their own preferences. But talk about what you are ahead of the pack here. We have just come out with this thing, which is our coffee in a soluble and it is going to be released in about two months and that allows us to start doing single serves where we can say, look our coffee in a soluble, you can take one package, you can put it in, the best cup of coffee you have ever had. And we'll be at a comparative calin, to blueberries and all these other things that are high in antioxidants.

Heather Sandison, ND

And this would be very practical for travel and things like that, right?. Okay. And would that be a just add water sort of situation?

Andrew Salisbury

That is the crazy thing. It has taken us two years to develop this and it really just adds water and you will be amazed. It will be as good as a pour-over coffee because we cold brew the coffee first and then we create the soluble coffee. So you are fully extracting all the positive compounds in the coffee and the flavors.

Heather Sandison, ND

Okay, so does that mean you are a fan of cold brew? Is that something you would recommend doing?

Andrew Salisbury

Yeah.

Heather Sandison, ND

And then what about creamers? Do you have opinions about the creamers that people add to their coffees?

Andrew Salisbury

I think if you drink really good quality coffee you do not need a creamer or sugar. I think that is one of the problems with the big chains of coffee, coffee companies. Their coffee is really horrible. And the reason it is horrible is because they overroast the coffee because they want coffee wherever you tried in the world. Singapore and Seattle, they want it to taste the same. So they have got a challenge, which is that coffee is a natural food product, How do you make it uniform? You burn the hell out of it and it is going to taste the same.

Heather Sandison, ND

Maybe that is the difference in taste. And so you had sort of a range of different, are their flavors, are their tapes, what are the differences in the products that you have?

Andrew Salisbury

We would not make a decision to take on another coffee or to have another product unless there are direct health benefits to the product we take on, it has nothing to do with flavor. Even though, I think honestly I'm biased, we have one of the best-tasting coffees in the world. It is not about the flavor, it is about every decision based on health. And so, all of our SKUs of coffee have a health reason. So we started with the flow, and we went to then calm. Flow is a very high-antioxidant coffee. Then we went to Calm for a decaf version. And then it was about two to three years before we released Ease. And that is because science sort of started to develop

around a thing called chlorogenic lactone. So chlorogenic acids are the antioxidants in coffee. And as you roast the coffee a little bit darker, it creates a thing called chlorogenic lactones, which is very good for stomach health and also the blood-brain barrier. And so it is been shown to have very positive effects and one of the sorts of contributors for things like Alzheimer's, and dementia, in the reduction of that risk. So that was one of the reasons why we introduced Ease. And then over about a year and a half ago we introduced Protect with the help of Sanjiv Chopra, which is to sort of bring awareness to coffee and liver disease and the impact coffee has on healthy liver.

Heather Sandison, ND

Okay. So let us talk about that. Because toxins come up a lot in the world of Alzheimer's. My mentor Dr. Bredeson also a co-host of the summit. He describes the six kinds of different types of Alzheimer's and the different pathways you can take to get there. And one of them is the toxic type. So liver support is really beneficial if that is your path, so to speak, that you took to getting dementia. Now, I also want you to speak a little bit more, like. If you were someone who was struggling with cognitive decline, which one would you pick just for cognition? It sounds like this hope version is really if you have that type three Alzheimer's might really support the liver and maybe you go back and forth each day.

Andrew Salisbury

I think what is important to understand here is that we want to encourage people to drink more better quality coffee, whether it is Purity or another brand, it doesn't really matter. I mean what matters is that the studies on coffee that really been done since the fifties. Over 25,000 studies on coffee and health show that coffee has a really profound impact on the liver. And one study just recently came out that shows that for every cup of coffee from the baseline.

So let us say you drink one cup of coffee and you move to two that have a 20% increase in or a lower risk of developing fatty liver, liver cirrhosis, or end-stage liver disease, for every cup of coffee you consume. So, why I think it matters is people should pay attention to the quality of coffee that they drink and just look for coffee that is high in antioxidants. And they can find it in a lot of different places. I mean, I am biased. I think that we do the best job, but it is really drinking more coffee.

Heather Sandison, ND

Certainly sounds like you are committed to doing the best job. So talk a little bit more about how Purity Coffee is working with supporting Alzheimer's research and advocacy.

Andrew Salisbury

Well, originally this came about for me as my awareness came about because my wife's father died from Alzheimer's and complications. And it was just awful for my wife, obviously. But beyond that, one of the frustrations that she had is that I remember the conversations where she was saying, why do people not know about this? Why do they not know the things that they do

every single day? And in a lot of cases are trying to give up. I mean, I'm still I'm so frustrated when I hear people want to give up on coffee and you are like, do not give up. Just improve the quality of your coffee because it has so many profound effects on health and is probably one of the healthiest things you can drink. So there is a twofold focus on this. One is awareness. We were trying to increase awareness about coffee and Alzheimer's, and coffee and liver, and coffee and hearts, and just sort of that that it can be a very effective health food.

One is awareness and the other is following the science to do the best practices that we think are published about. What's the difference that makes the difference, what should we be focused on? And part of the problem is this. We will I do not know if we will ever know but it is a very, very difficult, it is very difficult to do sort of in vivo studies on coffee and health. To take 500 people and say you are never going to drink coffee and you are only going to drink this coffee, and then you are going to drink it in this method and then track the results. So a lot of them are observational studies but they are so well-supported, and they are such large studies in the case of the nurses study, millions of people have been tracked over 25, 30 years. We may not know exactly the difference between our best practices, but a lot of it is anecdotal. People who are who report to us that they have different outcomes than they would normally.

Heather Sandison, ND

They would even offer. A lot of it is common sense or experiential kind of what you are describing. Because people report that they have better cognition, better focus, better mental clarity, and better mood after having some caffeine or a little bit of coffee. There is not always a risk to that, right? And I think that is part of your message, is that this can be a really healthy ritual. And I certainly encourage people to tie that morning cup of coffee or even tea to a meditation practice or to some of the gratitude practice, an act of kindness, maybe even a prayer practice, something that feels really nourishing not only in terms of calories or taking something in through your mouth but spiritually and in terms of community and mental health. So I think just having something. Especially to sip that and feel like you are taking in something really healthy for you, having that mindset. That it is almost like medicine, food is medicine.

Andrew Salisbury

That is our tagline. We have let it, food is crossed out. It says Let coffee be their medicine and then Purity Coffee underneath. And that is exactly it. I mean, that is my position as well. And I think your point is a really good one. One is the food we ingest and the other is the manner that we ingested. And, it is sort of like to have that moment, that calm in the storm when you just first thing in the morning you are having a sort of like what my wife and I call the purity huddle, which is just sort of like that. The first hour in the morning you talk about your day. I mean, it is a very important ritual. And I think that has a real impact, you know?

Heather Sandison, ND

Yeah, it really does. Well, Andrew, this is just such an exciting thing to discuss. Because as I mentioned people are so attached to their coffee and so reframing it in a way that this can be

really healthy, really pure, Purity Coffee. And then also kind of attached to these other healthy rituals and community or relationship, I think is a really exciting thing to just sort to put the bug in people's ear that this is something that can be super, super positive and healthy.

Andrew Salisbury

Especially because if you think that 64 million Americans will wake up tomorrow morning and have a cup of coffee. Some of them might be considering quitting and others are not drinking the best quality coffee in the world. A two degrees shift where you just pay a little bit of attention to something you do every single day is going to have more of an impact than trying to introduce wheatgrass into your diet or doing something. With the best of intentions, we can do all that. But we sort of joke that coffee is the supplement that you never forget to take.

Heather Sandison, ND

Right. That makes a ton of sense. And I have said this over and over. People will remember this from other talks at the summit. But it is really those decisions that we make every day. Those decisions about what we put in our mouth, what time we go to sleep, and how we prioritize movement. These are the things that change the trajectory of our health over decades. These decisions that we make, are the habits that we form. Those are the things that really have an impact. It is not that blockbuster drug that we are waiting for, it is these small decisions we make every day that adds up over a lifetime and determines the outcome of our health and our brain. And security. And Purity Coffee feels like a no-brainer. Plan fully intended.

Andrew Salisbury

I agree with you completely. I think we prioritize vertical time over horizontal time. Meaning, what can we do in 24 hours? We are going to go to the gym for the first time in the last couple of months or what we could do in the next week or two weeks rather than what can we do over the next two years? What's the one behavior that we are going to change today that is going to be a consistent change that it will reflect in two to three years? I think that is much more powerful.

Heather Sandison, ND

It really is. Those are the small changes that lead to a big change over time. But this has been an absolute pleasure, Andrew. Please tell everyone where they can find out more about you and Purity Coffee.

Andrew Salisbury

Go to puritycoffee.com. And it is a pretty deep site in terms of the blog posts and the studies that are available. We have an amazing team in customer service. If there is any area of interest that you want to dig down into, we have got all the resources to do that. Because education is a big part of what we are focused on. And there is an education gap, I think, about coffee and health. And the more we can bridge that gap, I think the more impact we can have on health because people do coffee every single day.

Heather Sandison, ND

And I'm just so curious, where does the coffee typically come from? Is it Central America? You mentioned Brazil is all of it from Brazil?

Andrew Salisbury

So what is interesting is we buy coffee from Brazil, Colombia, from Honduras. All of them are based on the highest anti-oxidants. But what we have just done about a year and a half ago is we bought our first farm in Colombia. And we did that because one of the problems with coffee is, as is the commodity people do not do all the things necessary to look at coffee and health. And one because no one is buying coffee based on health. No one on the farm level is making the decisions. So we bought this farm in Colombia so we could make decisions on the soil level with additives, with different things that we can do with cultivars of coffee so that we can start sort of like pushing that envelope of coffee and health. And we will have our first harvest in a couple of months. So it is going to be really interesting when we do all the lab testing to see the results of the things that we were doing.

Heather Sandison, ND

How exciting. Congratulations to make that move and just have control. Have full control of the soil and all of its components. That sounds like a super exciting move. And I hope that that is just the beginning of a shift in that direction of taking over more and more coffee. Because I'm sure you mentioned the birds and the soil. It is not just the coffee, right? They are taking care of an entire ecosystem. And so having less of that kind of monocropping, pesticides, and herbicides sprayed would not just support the people drinking the coffee but probably the people in those communities where the coffee is grown as well.

Andrew Salisbury

And I know this is not the topic of conversation but I would leave you with one thing, I think is really interesting. Which is that coffee that is farmed in the right way is good for the environment. In other words, it sequesters carbon from the atmosphere. If it is regeneratively organically farmed and we use things like the concept of biochar which is activated charcoal you put on the ground and actually pulls carbon from the atmosphere and puts it in the soil. But industrial farming releases carbon into the atmosphere. I mean there really is that should be more of an awareness that the coffee that is good for your health is also good for the environment.

Heather Sandison, ND

That is what we see over and over again. And when we consume things that are good for us they typically are things that are good for the environment. When we are exposed to things that are not so good for us they typically are not good for other living creatures either, right?

Andrew Salisbury

That is right.

Heather Sandison, ND

Andrew, it is just such a pleasure getting to know you and I'm so excited to be trying more Purity Coffee. My mom is a fan. The people in my life who drink coffee are fans and I think that this conversation might have just tipped the scales. So thank you so much for your time and your support. it is been an absolute pleasure.

Andrew Salisbury

For me too, this is great.

