

1. Tell us a little about yourself including your name, your family, and where you live?

My name is Kristen Blake. I have 3 boys, ages 6, 8, and 10, and have been married to my awesome husband for 12 years. We have FINALLY settled down in beautiful West Linn, Oregon after moving around the country for the past 14 years while my husband played in the NBA and I must say, it feels good to be settled!

2. I saw that you studied at IIN, awesome! Tell us about that experience and some of your biggest takeaways.

I have absolutely loved my education from IIN. The topics we've covered have been so incredibly diverse that I feel ready and willing to tackle any challenge a client might present. There's so much goodness that has come out of my experience with IIN it's hard to pick just a few of my favorites but I think my two biggest takeaways are bioindividuality and the mind body connection.

Bioindividuality is the belief that every body is different and just because MY body does better on a grain free paleo diet doesn't mean that YOURS won't do better on a vegan grain rich diet. There are just too many differentiating factors in an individual's body like heritage, genetic shifts in single nucleotide polymorphisms, intestinal permeability, whole blood histamine and more. Although we studied over 100 dietary theories at IIN, I love that they don't preach strictly following one or the other, it's really important to find what works for YOU and to listen to your body as it guides you.

The mind body connection is something I hesitantly avoided for years. Deep breathing and yoga seemed way too far out there for me. I'm a total science nerd and it all seemed far too "woo woo". I'm so thankful IIN brought these two worlds together though and helped me to see the science behind the breathing and yoga and more. I feel so much more tuned in to this vitally important aspect of health and wellness thanks to IIN.

3. What's a typical day of eating like for you, from sun up to sun down.

First of all, my life is busy, frantic and hectic at times so meal prepping and keeping it simple are vital for me! You won't see me creating beautiful artisanal acai or veggie bowls to instagram any time soon. Don't get me wrong, I adore looking at them on other people's feeds and love eating them....if someone else takes the time to prepare it for me! But I just don't have time for a lot of extra steps. What you'll see on my IG feed are practical, easy, simple meals.

I always start my day with a Bulletproof coffee, if you're not familiar with it make sure you subscribe to my blog, I have a post coming up with the ins and outs of the perfect bulletproof coffee (perfect for YOU of course with lots of customizable

options to fit your bioindividuality!). I use Brain Octane oil and a splash of coconut milk in my Bulletproof beans coffee. This gives me energy to get the kids up, dressed, fed and off to school and gets me through an early morning workout too! This is part of my intermittent fasting routine.

Next up, after my workout, I almost always have a smoothie, it's just so fast and easy and I can drink it on the go. I use almond or coconut milk most often as a base and throw in whatever fruits and veggies I have on hand at the time from blueberries, avocados and strawberries, to kale, spinach and cauliflower.

Lunch is usually a giant salad of some sort. I always go for the darkest leafy greens I can find, you won't see iceberg lettuce on my plate, and I pile it high with whatever veggies I have on hand. Sometimes that's leftover roasted veggies from the night before, a glob of fermented cabbage sauerkraut I've made, anything really! Of course I add healthy fats too like olive oil, olives, nuts, and avocado to keep me full until dinner.

Dinner is usually a giant pile of steamed veggies, covered with grass fed butter or homemade healthy salad dressing and a small amount of fish, chicken, beef, eggs, or some other kind of protein. I love to play around with fresh herbs and spices to really add flavor as well as add phytonutrients!

4. You're married to a professional athlete, does that affect how you feed your family? How you exercise?

About half way through my husband's career we started to see guys around his age dropping like flies. It was sad and horrifying to see how rapidly their bodies were breaking down, rendering them unable to continue doing what they loved, and losing their jobs at the same time. I knew we needed to really kick it up a notch with the fuel we put in his body and luckily around that same time Dr Cate Shanahan was hired by the Lakers to overhaul their nutrition program. I was able to work with her on implementing her nutrition practices in my only family's lives and also helped to introduce it to the other wives as well. We gathered around the island in my kitchen in LA and had cooking lessons and meal planning sessions. She is an incredibly smart and talented doctor and I learned so much from her. Some of the key points from her work are to avoid inflammatory oils and processed foods and keep nutrients high from a variety of plants and healthy animals.

My husband had several freak injuries that year (one of them his arm got stuck in someone's jersey and it ripped the ULC off the bone in his elbow) but he recovered at an incredibly rapid pace thanks to the nutrition program he was on (hint: bone broth was crucial in the recover!) so we knew we were on to something.

All of the principals that work for fueling an athlete's body apply to fueling the body of growing children so it was comforting knowing we were feeding the whole family the best way possible.

5. You gave me the best TIP I have ever received: using frozen zucchini instead of frozen banana in my morning green smoothies. Insane. I have been doing this ever since and feel like I have lightened my load! Do you have any other quick tips or tricks up your sleeve?

Try fresh or frozen cauliflower next - it'll blow your mind too! And if you don't do this already, load that smoothie up with spinach. It looks super green and creepy but you honestly won't even taste it. Spinach is shockingly mild! I used to make spinach filled smoothies for my kids when they were tiny and called it "monster juice", they thought it was so fun!

6. You have THREE kids, amazing. I have an eight month old who is just about perfect but I cannot imagine having two more running around. You're my mama hero! How do you keep your kids on track with all the temptations to eat processed junk around every corner? What do you pack for them for lunch? Any special ways to get them their veggies?

It is no small task keeping our kids eating healthy, I won't lie. All kids today are so pressured by marketing and their peers to eat junk, it's certainly an uphill battle. For starters we keep no junk in our house, so that temptation is gone. Second of all I think education is key. I teach my kids that if something is florescent orange (like cheetos and gatorade!) that means it's full of chemicals. We talk about how that color doesn't exist in nature and what God made is perfect for our bodies, and chemicals harm our bodies. I've also taught them how to read labels and again we discuss that if it's a word we can't pronounce, it's a chemical and if you know what it is, it's good. For example although I'm not a fan of any processed food I do occasionally let them have things like potato chips - but only the healthier version. I've found Honest Jackson brand has potatoes, coconut oil, and sea salt as their only ingredients. You can't get a cleaner chip than that. For us one of the keys to keeping them on track is to occasionally give them treats like this...but a healthier version so they don't go crazy and try to eat the dreaded cheetos their friends have at lunch!

7. Do you cook at home most nights? If so what are some dishes you prepare. When you dine out, what do you usually order to keep it clean?

Yes. I cook 99% of my family's food. We very rarely go out to eat because it's just too hard to find anything healthy out there! The biggest reason why is most restaurants cook with dangerous inflammatory oils (like canola oil). We certainly keep it simple around here but some of my family's favorites are things you'd see on the kids menu at a restaurant, but made in a healthy way like grass fed burgers cooked in bacon fat,

homemade french fries cooked in coconut oil, and my little one's favorite is roasted broccoli.

8. YOU look fantastic! What's your workout routine?

You're too kind, thank you. I absolutely love working out, it's my "me" time and my stress relief all rolled in to one and if I miss a day, it's quite obvious. My husband's been known to say "why don't I take the kids to the park so you can go to spin class...you seem a little....stressed today" ha! I like to switch it up to ensure I'm not bored, and I'm hitting all the areas of my body. No one needs giant biceps and weak back muscles right?? I like spinning, running, pilates, kick boxing, barre and hot yoga. I work out 6 mornings a week, Monday through Friday I squeeze it in right after the kids go to school and before I sit down to get to work and Saturdays sometimes involve waking up insanely early to get it in before the kids wake up and we start our day of sports! My kids do basketball, baseball, soccer, track and karate so we're always involved in some kind of sports on a weekend!

9. I have read a lot about you and know you're a pretty awesome human. You find time to give back, think of others, and still be busy a wife and mom. Do you believe there's a way to balance everything or are some weeks just better than others?

Thank you again - you're very kind to say that! Giving back is a crucial non negotiable in my life. I've been incredibly blessed with this beautiful life and I adore giving back however I can. One of my favorite ways was when my husband and I traveled to Guatemala to build a well for a small village wracked with disease from drinking dirty water from puddles. It was so gratifying to be able to help and super fun to operate a drill rig!

I think my answer to that question though is yes and yes. You absolutely need to find a balance for things and find what works for you and what doesn't but also some weeks that works and some it doesn't! You have to give yourself the grace to say "you know what, I didn't rock it this week, but that's life, and that's ok!"

Being a former gymnast myself I love what Jen Hatmaker said in her book "For the Love" about the balancing beam. You can't balance EVERYTHING on the beam and you need to find out what you can carry while walking across that beam and what you can't! Some things just plain ol need to come OFF the beam. If you try to juggle and balance everything, you'll fall down and if you fall down, it all comes crashing down with you. She goes on to explain how social media has made it hard for us to figure out what to put down. We might follow one mom on Facebook that sews amazingly and one on instagram that cooks perfect meals and one on twitter that is a huge philanthropist and we TOTALLY FORGET that this is 3 different women and we try to be all three ourselves! It's totally unrealistic. I try to follow that principal and realize where my strengths lie and where there don't. And areas where I'm not

as strong, or not feeling empowered or served by something, I just take that thing right off the beam!

10. Anything else you would like us to know?

My website is JUST finally now ready to go and launching so I'd love it if your readers could go check it out and subscribe to my newsletter and blog and stay in touch with me. I love to hear from people out there about what they want to learn more about so I can write specific blog posts to help them out!

They can follow this link to do just that! <http://kristenblakewellness.com/blog/>

Thank you!