Transcript Episode 3

Caregiving in America — the Dignity Gap

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BRIGID SCHULTE: Robots can already do a pretty good job vacuuming a shag carpet. They are vital to e-commerce warehouses. And not so far in the future, drones might even deliver, carry out pizza or prescription drug refills to your front door. But there's some work no robot should ever do.

AI-JEN POO: It's the most fundamental and valuable work that makes everything else possible in our economy and in our society.

BRIGID SCHULTE: And that work is care work. I'm Brigid Schulte. You're listening to Better Life Lab. Home care jobs are among the fastest growing jobs in America. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the number of these jobs will grow 33% by the end of the decade. That's four times faster than most other jobs. As our population ages, the U.S. government expects, more than two thirds of seniors will require long term care. And yet the pay and benefits of these jobs are flat out dismal. Half of all care workers in America earn so little that even working 40 hours a week or more, they qualify for public benefits.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: We're talking about people who maintain life, but yet they're not seen as essential for the work that we're doing.

BRIGID SCHULTE: This season on Better Life Lab, we're taking on the future of work and well-being in America. In this episode, we'll look at the huge dignity gap in care work. We'll hear from a mother-daughter duo working as home health care providers. They do similar jobs in different states, yet there's a dramatic contrast in how much they each earn. We'll look at why. And we'll hear from a MacArthur Genius Award winner with ideas on how to fix our broken care system. That's right after this on Better Life Lab.

It's Better Life Lab. I'm Brigid Schulte. This episode we're looking at one of the fastest growing job sectors in America: care work. It is truly essential work caring for loved ones who cannot fully take care of themselves, helping raise our children. Yet care work pays poverty wages. So how did our system get so deeply broken? And more importantly, how could we begin the urgent work of fixing it? To help us with those questions, I'm joined this episode by Ai-jen Poo. She's executive director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance, and she's a MacArthur Genius Award winner. Time has named Ai-jen as one of the 100 most influential people in the world, and Fortune has listed her among the world's 50 greatest leaders. For so many care workers, the job is a calling. And Ai-jen says that in America, that calling is far too often accompanied by a vast dignity gap.

AI-JEN POO: Every care worker that I know has a tremendous amount of dignity, and they bring that to their role of enabling the dignity of others. And that really is their job. If you think about what a home care provider does, she - her job - I'm saying she because most are women, majority women of color in fact. You know, they go to work every day and their job is to support and enable the human dignity of older people, of people with disabilities, so that they can live full and whole lives for as long as possible. So what they produce as care workers, if workers produce things, what they produce is dignity itself. And you have to understand that the jobs are poverty-wage jobs that don't have benefits, don't have health care. You are doing a job that is about caring for others and ensuring the well-being, the safety, the health, the dignity of others. But you struggle on poverty wages without any paid time off, paid sick days, paid family medical leave, health insurance or benefits to take care of yourself and your own family. And that is a huge dignity gap. And yet, still, they do the work.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, there's a lot of meaning that people find in care work, and yet it's incredibly stressful. It's a lot of emotional labor, financial precarity, an awful lot of stress. And, you know, these are some of the fastest growing jobs. So when we think about what's going to happen in the future, five, ten, 15 years down the road, so many of the projections are care work is going to be among the fastest growing of all jobs. When you think about the future of work, which is that bode, then, for this profession?

AI-JEN POO: It's so interesting because when the conversation about the future of work had a lot of momentum and buzz in Washington a few years ago, it was.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Robots!

AI-JEN POO: It was about the robots coming, and about how artificial intelligence is going to displace millions of workers across sectors and how we need to teach all of our kids to code.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Right.

AI-JEN POO: And I think that the reality is, when you look at it, care jobs, that the work, especially in an environment where you have a growing aging population, where 10,000 baby boomers turn 65 every day, and people are living longer than ever before because of advances in technology and health care, you have the largest older population we've ever had, and it's only going to grow, such that by the year 2050, an estimated 27 million people will need some form of long term care just to support activities of daily living. And we are in no way prepared for that as a country. But it's already upon us. And so there's a huge demand for home care workers, which is why consistently you'll see in the data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics that home health aides, personal care aides, these are among the fastest growing occupations. And it is that demand. And the demand is not going to go away any time soon. There will be parts of these jobs, I believe, that will become automated. But at the end of the day, I think we are going to need human beings to take care of the people that we love for the foreseeable future.

And they're poverty wage jobs. I was just thinking about our member in Georgia, Deborah, who earned $8 an hour as a home health aide. And she loved the work so much, really saw it as a calling and as a tribute to her ancestors and her elders that she would continue to take care of the people who needed support to age with dignity. And on $8 an hour, she was constantly having to make decisions, impossible choices between - do I put enough gas in my car to be able to get from client to client? Or do I put do I buy groceries for the week?

BRIGID SCHULTE: Yeah.

AI-JEN POO: And when you have to make impossible choices like that, the stress, the emotional, spiritual and financial burden of what that does to you is really significant and it also creates physical stress in the end. And so she had to decide to leave the profession and get a job in manufacturing because she couldn't, because the stress was actually too much to bear. How you live and navigate even getting to work on $8 an hour is a real question no matter where you live in this country. So I think we have to ask ourselves if care jobs are going

to be a huge share of the jobs of the future, how can we not do everything in our power to make them good jobs?

BRIGID SCHULTE: So Ai-jen, I want to share with you two stories of two different caregivers, Brittany Williams and her mother, Danielle. They love their jobs. They are devoted to their clients, but they live in different parts of the country. And for that reason, the income and the support that they receive for this vital and stressful work is remarkably different. So let's first hear from Brittany Williams. She's the daughter. She lives in Washington State. And I connected with Brittany as she was in her car with a client.

So I imagine, do you become pretty close with the families that you that you work with?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. You become very intimate with them because you're literally coming into their domain and you're having to see the inner workings of their family home. And sometimes you have to even help with bathing and peri-care and stuff like that. And so, it's one of those jobs that you can't help but become almost like family.

May I take a pause for a minute guys?

BRIGID SCHULTE: Sure, sure. Of course, Yeah.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: That's the thing about being a caregiver. You have to be able to multitask.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Yeah. So who's in the car with you?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Oh, my client.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Oh, okay. But they're okay with you talking to us in the in the car like this.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: They're not even paying attention.

BRIGID SCHULTE: All right, well, we'll try not to keep you too much longer. We know that you're on the job.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Okay then

BRIGID SCHULTE: Well, so, you know, is it a good job?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: I really do like my job. I've been doing this job for over seven years now. I'm a single mom of two amazing children. I'm actually a third generation home care provider. I'm also a proud member of SEIU 775 with my union. They give us that sense of stability where we won first in the nation retirement. We won health care insurance. We won dental coverage for our dependents. Knowing that it's not just me, but you got over 45,000 caregivers across the state that are fighting on my behalf. They're saying, you know, we understand that for my age group, millennials, Social Security isn't a guarantee anymore. And so let's make sure you guys have a retirement, something to to lean on once you guys are finished. Let's make sure that while you're doing this, you have protection on the job, that you're not slipping because your shoes don't have a no grips on them. So let's make sure we provide you with a free pair tennis shoes every year.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So how much how, how much are you making right now, if you don't mind my asking?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Right now I'm almost at $20 an hour with the hazard pay.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, you say that you're a third generation home caregiver. I'm wondering, you know, where is your mom?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: She's still in Arkansas.

BRIGID SCHULTE: What kind of wages does she earn?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: She's she's at that $11 an hour wages still.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Does she have access to retirement benefits?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: No, she still don't.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You get training, right? You said that you get some free training. Does she.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: No. She actually, she still has her books. And so she'll refresh herself from our books that were from when she was here in Washington State.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Oh, wow. So she basically trains herself.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Yeah.

BRIGID SCHULTE: And, you know, you were saying that you get a free pair of shoes to make sure that you don't slip every year. Does she?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Oh, no, not in Arkansas. And I laugh about it just to keep from getting mad, because we're talking about people who maintain life, but yet they're not seen as essential for the work that we're doing.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, I guess can you talk a little bit about that work, stress that that comes with being a home care worker?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: So we have we have an app that you can go on and talk with counselors.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So someone, if you've had kind of a tough day or a traumatic experience, someone who can help you process that?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Yes. It's a very stressful job. I can talk about a past client I just had. Sweet as pie. I was literally his only access to the outside world outside of his therapist and his doctor because of his disabilities, he couldn't be around crowds of people. And so because of the location where he was living, I could no longer work with him. It was just it was too much. I couldn't get to my children in time. I was having a hard time getting to him on time. And then the condition of the building that he resided in, the owners of the building wasn't taking proper care. It was just, it's heartbreaking. But I had to do what was. That's for me and my family. I had to not allow myself to go to a place of guilt. And sometimes I watch a lot of caregivers find themselves in that place of guilt when they have to put their selves before a client. You know, especially our older caregivers, when they get hurt or when they're not feeling 100 and they have to put their selves before their client and they can't go into work or they can't do this, you know, guilt is a big thing that can overtake a caregiver.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, if you're the only connection that they have to the outside world, you know that that's got to be a real drain emotionally as well. You know?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: Hold on just a minute. I'm right here. They couldn't find me.

BRIGID SCHULTE: In the car?

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: No, I'm on the side of the house now. I'm sorry. I was trying to regather my emotions and take my self and my emotions from what I was saying earlier. Oh. Because I run into that situation a lot, and I watched my mom as a caregiver over the years take emotional beatings because she'll go in her own pocket. She'd work off the clock to make sure her clients are taken care of, and her heart is for the client. And I'd be like, Mom, you're not supposed to be working like that. 'Well, if they don't if I don't do it, then that person's going to be wet when I come in in the morning, or they won't be fed if I don't feed them something.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So she feels this real dedication to her, to her clients. But then, you know, who's dedicated to her.

BRITTANY WILLIAMS: She represents so many caregivers that at the end of the day, they're so drained they can barely stand up because they've poured out every ounce of their being into their jobs and into their clients.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Brittany Williams, a caregiver in Washington state. Let's take a quick break. When we return, we'll talk about Brittany's story with Ai-jen Poo. Stay with us.

I'm Brigid Schulte. You're listening to Better Life Lab. I'm talking with Ai-jen Poo. She's executive director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. Before the break, we listened together to a story told by Brittany Williams, a caregiver in Washington state.

AI-JEN POO: It is really heartbreaking, but. We, the people that we are counting on to care for us and the people we love are really struggling in this way. To survive, literally to survive, let alone take care of themselves and their family members. And I mean, nowhere else can you see more clearly how we need to

reorganize our economy around humans and people and what we need as human beings if we are the heart and soul of the economy.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So Ai-jen, how did we get here? How did we get to the to the point where, as you say, caregivers earn poverty wages, where there's this intense stress, where people feel drained and have to make decisions between putting gas in their car to get to their clients or putting food on their table? Why is this not a dignified and good job?

AI-JEN POO: There's so many reasons that are deep, deep, deep, deep in our culture and our policies and in the way that our society is organized. We have these deeply held beliefs and that care is a personal responsibility to be managed inside of our in the privacy of our homes, mostly by women. And women are in that constant struggle of guilt and stress and never feeling like we do enough to both care for the people that we love and hold all the other responsibilities that we have. And so the assumption is, and always has been, that women will just woman up and.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Woman up.

AI-JEN POO: And manage the care that we need as a society, and will do it quietly, invisibly behind closed doors and not talk about it as something that needs support. And that belief is layered on top of the fact that women have not had political power, compounded by a legacy of racism and slavery in our country, where some of the first domestic workers who provided care for families were enslaved African women and were not even recognized as human beings. They were property. That legacy has really shaped how this work has been treated in our law and policy. In the 1930s, when we started to build our foundation for labor laws and our framework for employment in this country.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Minimum wage laws and hour protections. Overtime.

AI-JEN POO: Minimum wage. The right to unionize Social Security. Over and over again, Southern Dixiecrats refused to support laws if they included equal protections for domestic workers and farm workers, agricultural workers who were Black workers at the time, largely. And that racial exclusion really was reinforced over and over again in our laws and our culture that still calls this work "help," as opposed to the full-time profession that is for millions of women. And it's still a profession that, for example, home health care workers are overwhelmingly women, majority women of color, 30% African-American

women, a third are also foreign born immigrants. So this is a profession where women of color and immigrant women are concentrated still to this day. And all of that reinforces the devaluing of the work in a way that is so outdated, so unsustainable, and is precisely what we've been trying to change in my organization.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Well, I want to talk to you about how we change that and where we go. But earlier we heard from Brittany Williams, a caregiver in Washington State. Brittany loves her work despite its stresses. But she is one of the few who actually belongs to a union. And so that makes her caregiving work sustainable and supportive for her. She has access to. She has retirement. She has health care. She has training. She's able to support herself and her family. But now let's hear from her mother, Danielle Williams. Danielle holds more credentials than Brittany does, her daughter. Danielle formerly worked as a caregiver in Washington state as well. But a few years ago, she returned home to Arkansas, which is a right to work state and where there is no caregiver union.

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I live in Little Rock, Arkansas. I am a caregiver. And I'm also seeing CNA. A CNA is a certified nurse's assistant.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So what is it that you love about it so much?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I love helping people, no matter race, gender, age. I'm a people person. I love taking care of people, no matter income, It don't matter. I love taking care of people. The majority of the people that I work with is Alzheimer's. I have two different clients, and they both have it.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Alzheimer's.

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: Disabled in two different ways. One has a stroke, one is mobile, and one is not.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So do you. How many days a week do you do your work?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I work seven days a week.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You work seven days a week?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: Well, for one client I work seven days a week, but for the other client, I'm off on Saturday. But I work the other six days.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Do you ever you don't have time for a break for yourself?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: Off and on I do. We'll go visit a relative, and I'll be able to take a lunch break there, while they're visiting.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Mm hmm. Can you share sort of how much you make and if that's. If that's enough to survive on?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I make $11 an hour. And. It's really not. It's almost like living from paycheck to paycheck. That basically is what it is.

BRIGID SCHULTE: I was reading how, you being in Arkansas, it used to be $9 an hour, and then there was a ballot initiative that passed to raise the the minimum wage. And that's one of the reasons why you got $11 an hour. But is that enough to support yourself?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: No, it's not. It's a really hard. Like they would say, sometimes you have to borrow from Paul to pay Peter. Sometimes, yeah, that's true. But yeah, it's hard because, you know, my job didn't have health insurance, so I end up having to get on Medicaid. So if something breaks down, I had to do a little a savings account where I put back some money so I would have some money for hard times.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, we've been talking with Brittany, your daughter, who lives in Washington State and is in a really different situation. She earns more money per hour. She has retirement. She has access to paid sick days and paid family leave and free training. What about you? Do you have any of those?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: No. The only thing I have is paid vacation.

BRIGID SCHULTE: What about retirement? Do you have any retirement?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: No, I don't have anything like that. I probably will have to get all of that on my own.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Well, do you mind if I ask how old you are?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I'm 52 years old.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Do you think that you'll be able to retire at some point?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: One day, I hope so. But as of right now, I don't think so.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Danielle, you used to work in Washington State where your daughter Brittany works, you know. What was it like working there? Is it, you know, was it different?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I was able to just have different clients, but I also was a traveling caregiver going to different clients every day in different parts of the north or the south, east or west. I also was a mentor, when I was in Seattle for caregivers.

BRIGID SCHULTE: And how much were you making there?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: I went to different cities, so one city I made like 15. And then the other city I made close to 17.

BRIGID SCHULTE: And this was this was ten years ago, right? Over ten years ago that you were making that, did you have more of a sense that you that it was more kind of professional in Washington?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, that there were that there was you know, there was somebody on the other end throwing you a lifeline where you didn't feel that in the deep end in Arkansas?

DANIELLE WILLIAMS: In Washington, it was you you do have your other sisters and brothers, you know, that's in the union. And if something weren't going right, you can always depend on them or you can call them. A lot of people ask the same question, why you come back to Arkansas? And I was telling them it wasn't about the pay, because at the end of the day, somebody's got to take care of the Baby Boomers. Somebody's got to take care of us. I want to be able to be one of them people that they say. Well, Danielle came back from Washington State or Danielle poured out her heart because she's a very caring person. And that's that's why I look at myself. I pour out my heart regardless.

BRIGID SCHULTE: So Ai-jen, how do we as a society make sure that it not only is this dignified work, but that people like Danielle have dignified jobs?

AI-JEN POO: It is completely and entirely within our power to make every care job a good job in this country with living wages, benefits. If we can do it in Washington state, we can do it anywhere. And this is a country where we have so much in the way of resources, creativity, brilliance, caring. My God. Danielle and Brittany. I mean, if there any indication, there's a lot of heart in our country. And what we've lacked so far is the political will to make these jobs good jobs. And one hopeful note is that I actually believe that that's started to change, and that COVID has catalyzed a national awakening about the need to value and invest in care and caregivers in a whole new way. I think as everybody was kind of dealing with their own mini or great care crisis in the context of COVID, whether it is because their parents were in lockdown in a nursing home or kids home from school and day care. I think that we as a country have awakened to the fact that as individuals, we can be doing everything right. And it's still not sufficient because care and caregiving is not just a responsibility that we should expect women in our households to shoulder on their own, but in fact, is a national responsibility that requires public policy and investment. Just like bridges and tunnels need maintenance and investment. And why we passed this big infrastructure bill. Care needs the same. Some people need a bridge to get to work, and other people need care to get to work. And we should be investing as a nation in people like Danielle and Brittany so that we can have the care that we need. I think we are recognizing that now in a different way. We have the potential, we can do this. It is possible to invest in care and caregivers for the 21st century to make these jobs good jobs. We have the models. We just need to invest in them. That's what the Build Back Better Agenda does, is it invests in making childcare affordable and raising wages for childcare workers. It invests in expanding access to home care for older people, people with disabilities. All those Boomers that Danielle talked about.. Making sure that they can have access to supports and services in their homes and communities and not have to go into a nursing home. And that every worker responsible for that care can earn a living wage and have basic benefits, and imagine a time when they can retire.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Can you imagine, Danielle can't you know.

AI-JEN POO: She can't.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Can you imagine what life feels like if you can't even imagine that work would ever end.

AI-JEN POO: That's right. And I know so many caregivers in that position who are themselves in their seventies and eighties and still working because they can't afford to retire.

BRIGID SCHULTE: You know, when you talk about we have the models and we know what to do, you know, how much of it is some of the answer in Washington state where one of the things that they found is that enabling caregivers to unionize and collectively ask for better conditions has actually not only made care better, has enabled people to stay in their homes rather than go into nursing homes, which is what they prefer. The care is better, but that's actually saves money in the long run. People talk about these investments being expensive, but they pay for themselves. How much of that is required to make this transition to decent and dignified work for caregivers?

AI-JEN POO: It's absolutely fundamental. I mean, Washington State is among the most, if not the most prepared for the growing aging population in their state. And they have what I call a care infrastructure, which includes a strong care workforce that can support people with disabilities and older adults to receive services and care in their homes and communities. This workforce is well trained. It's sustainable in their work. They have career pathways. They have benefits. Actually, the Washington State Home Care Training Fund is the second largest educational institution in the state after the University of Washington. They trained 40,000 home care workers per year in 12 different languages to provide culturally appropriate and relevant care and services to the older population. Washington State is ready for one of the biggest shifts in demographics that our nation has ever experienced. And it is because there is a union. The Service Employees International Union Local 775 that represents Brittany. It has built that training institution. Negotiated for the pay. Engaged lawmakers around the essential need to invest in the training so that the quality of care and the quality of work could both improve. It is a win win, and because they are now ready, the state will have to spend much less money on nursing home care, which is three times as expensive as home based care. So they're winning. It's I'm sure it's not perfect

BRIGID SCHULTE: What is, right?

AI-JEN POO: But they are definitely winning in our country. And and I think it's literally would not be possible were it not for the union. And the fact that workers have come together and have a voice and are able to express that voice in

politics and policy and in their workplaces in a way that allows them to care better for themselves and the clients that they serve.

BRIGID SCHULTE: One of the things you talk about is we haven't had the political will to do this until recently. And Covid's really shown people who hadn't been looking. Things that so many people like you have seen so clearly for so long. But how how do we get from here to there? You know, you mentioned Build Back Better. At this point and not a single Republican is in support of it. How do we move from from here to there to build that political will to make the case for why this investment benefits all of us?

AI-JEN POO: We have to collectively move the experience of caregiving out from being hidden inside our, the privacy of our homes, into the public square and into American politics, into the center of American politics. Because all of us have someone in our lives who needs care, who we worry about. We are all going to be touched by this issue if we aren't already. At a time in our country when we are polarized, where we are living in these separate bubbles and universes. This is an issue that unites people across race, across geography, across class, across age. And it's gold. I mean, literally Republicans, Independents and Democrats alike, these issues poll through the roof in terms of popularity on the part of voters, because at the end of the day, this is fundamental to life for all of us. And if we can just figure out how to get beyond the noise, and actually think about what it is and its value in our everyday lives and bring that forward into the public square. I think that's what changes the conversation and changes the politics.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Ai-jen Poo. She's a MacArthur Award winner who has been named by Time as one of the most influential people in the world. Ai-jen is executive director of the National Domestic Workers Alliance. We also heard this episode from Brittany Williams and from her mother, Danielle Williams. They both work as caregivers. Brittany in Washington State. Danielle in Arkansas. This season on Better Life Lab, we're looking at the future of work and well-being in America. Next time we consider a workforce radically reconfigured by the COVID pandemic. We ask, 'Where have all the women gone?'

KARI MCCRACKEN: I enjoy working. I'm almost a workaholic at times.

BRIGID SCHULTE: I hear you.

KARI MCCRACKEN: But I was almost what you would call supermom. I was able to have a successful career and then also be a parent as well. I've worked in a male-dominated industry, and I never felt at any point in time that I was any different than anyone else.

BRIGID SCHULTE: Were there others who were furloughed who were able to come back because they did not have those same kind of care responsibilities?

KARI MCCRACKEN: Yes. Yes.

BRIGID SCHULTE: And were they mostly men?

KARI MCCRACKEN: Yes.

BRIGID SCHULTE: What do you think about that?

KARI MCCRACKEN: It tells a story.

BRIGID SCHULTE: We've got work to do. I hope you'll join us next time on Better Life Lab.

For more resources on fairer, healthier work, go to New America.org. Click the link for Better Life Lab. On behalf of myself and my producer, David Schulman, many thanks for joining us for our new season. Please review us on Apple Podcasts if you like the show. Better Life Lab is produced by New America in partnership with Slate. Special thanks to Alicia Montgomery at Slate for all her work with us. Our podcast is sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which is committed to improving health and health equity in the United States. In partnership with others. RWJF is working to develop a culture of health rooted in equity that provides every individual with a fair and just opportunity to thrive no matter who they are, where they live or how much money they have. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org.

For Better Life Lab, I'm Brigid Schulte.