

In My Head This Month October 2025

Stories, clarity, and hacks from a health-tech founder
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-  SEPTEMBER REFLECTION
-  SUPPORTING INFLAMMATION
-  TRAVELING WITH PURPOSE
-  MT SPROUT LESSONS
-  GANBATTE IRU



Kids, lunches, groceries, cooking, washing clothes, app sprints, website delays. Life just keeps moving. And yet every single day I still find myself in disbelief. Peter is gone.

People keep telling us it will “take time to process.” But what does that even mean? Process. In Dutch, “*verwerken*.” It sounds so final. As if there’s a moment where you close the book and say, done. But grief isn’t something you finish. It’s something you carry.

I’ve decided not to “process” it, but to sit with it. To give it space when it asks for it, and then keep moving. Life doesn’t wait. But it’s still surreal, the way his absence shows up in small daily moments.

And then there’s work. I had a conversation with a colleague the other day, reflecting on what we’ve done this past year. I admitted that I haven’t really been telling the story of my app the way I could. Because honestly, it still feels unfinished. Too many bugs, too many features still in progress, too much still to build. But maybe that’s just my perfectionism talking. When I used to make music, I struggled with the same thing. A song was never really done. There was always another harmony I could add, another ad-lib, another tweak. Eventually I had to force myself to say, enough, it’s finished.

The app is the same. It will never be “done.” And that’s okay.

So this month, **I’m breaking through my own nonsense**. I’m choosing to show more of myself, more of the app, and most of all, the messy but amazing process of building it.

And of course, September was also about preparing for yet another trip! My sixth this year. (WTH?!) New York this time. Another new city, another mission, another chance to push the vision further.



Creating technology for impact

MAKING MY PAST STRUGGLES MAKE SENSE

Sometimes I ask myself: why are we alive, if it's not to make impact?

I don't believe life is just about getting through the days. For me, it's about making sense of the struggles we've had, and using them to light the way for others. If I had to walk through years of illness, doubt, and uncertainty... then at least it wasn't for nothing. That's why I share. That's why I build..

That's why I keep pushing OrthoFoodie forward even when it feels impossible.

Impact doesn't always look big and shiny. Sometimes it's the quiet knowing that you made a small difference for someone else. And that's enough to keep going.

So this month's topic will be Inflammation. The thing that used to be the absolute center of my life for many years. It literally shaped my days, goals, dreams and I had to do something about it. Or it would have killed me.



This Month's Lesson: Inflammation

Inflammation is your body's fire alarm.

When you cut your finger, catch a virus, or twist your ankle, inflammation calls in the troops: swelling, heat, redness, pain. It's the body saying, "I'm here, I'm fixing it. And no worries. I got this" Without it, we wouldn't heal.

But imagine if that fire alarm never stopped ringing. Even worse, imagine if the fire department kept pouring water on your house long after the flames were out. That's what happens with chronic, low-grade inflammation.

It's not loud. It's literally whispering to you.

Fatigue. Brain fog. Painful joints. Bloating. Trouble sleeping and even mood swings. Over time, it lays the groundwork for almost every major chronic illness, from heart disease and diabetes to autoimmune disorders.



I Know this fire from the inside.

Years ago, when I was severely underweight and battling an autoimmune disease, my entire system was inflamed.

My joints were stiff, my body weak, my brain foggy. And yet, inside the same hospital, I was told two very different things:

- By my internist and rheumatologist: “We need to calm down the inflammation.”
- By my dietician: “Drink ‘Ensure’ to get stronger.”

I trusted them. Of course! I thought I was doing the right thing. But Ensure? It’s basically sugar and processed oils in a bottle. Calories without nourishment. They were delivered to my house by the dozens. Here’s the cruel paradox: sugar and processed oils don’t build a body under attack. They feed the very fire that was breaking me down.

I was following the rules, but the rules didn’t make sense.

If someone sat my ass down and explained in plain language what inflammation was, and how food affects it, my road might have been shorter.

It’s only years later, when I began studying functional medicine, that I understood just how much I was setting myself back. It’s bittersweet to think about.

And yet, that’s exactly what brings me back to the previous part, to my “why.”

Why are we here, if not to use what we’ve learned to make someone else’s road a little easier?

That’s why I share this now. Because maybe someone, sitting where I once sat, can make a different choice today and spare themselves some of that pain.

Every Bite Shapes Inflammation, BUT NOT EVERY BITE CALMS IT

What doesn't help

~~“Ultra-processed foods & sugars.”~~ Cookies, sodas and white bread fuel inflammation like gasoline on a fire.

~~Refined oils.~~ Sunflower, corn, soybean oils keep the body's “inflammatory switch” turned on.

~~Too much alcohol.~~ It irritates the gut, taxes the liver, and amplifies inflammation.

~~Constant stress & late nights.~~ Skipping rest and running on adrenaline keeps inflammatory pathways active.

~~Raw, cold, hard-to-digest meals.~~ Big raw salads, heavy smoothies, or iced drinks can stress digestion and leave the body more reactive.

What does help

Cooked, warm foods. and stews. Soups, stews, roasted vegetables. Easy on digestion, calming to the gut.

Healthy fats. Olive oil, avocado, omega-3s from fish or flax help lower inflammatory signals.

Gentle proteins. Eggs, chicken, fish, beans, or collagen give the body tools to repair and calm inflammation.

Colorful vegetables & spices. Pumpkin, carrots, zucchini, spinach, turmeric, ginger — nutrient-dense, soothing, anti-inflammatory.

Rest, rhythm & recovery. Deep sleep, short breaks, and even light movement like walking signal the body to switch off the fire.

Traveling with purpose.

September closed with my 7th trip this year. This time to New York.

Every trip takes preparation, but once I land in a place like this, I'm reminded why I do it. I walk into rooms full of energy, founders, mentors, and potential partners, and I feel that spark over and over again. The impact we're building with OrthoFoodie makes every ounce of effort worth it.

Still, I'll admit: there are moments I feel insecure as a founder. You walk into a room in NYC and everyone seems sharper, richer, more polished, more "ready." And in those moments, I hear the little voice: Do I belong here? Am I enough?

And then I remind myself: in the Netherlands, people sometimes say my pitch sounds '*belerend*', which means a bit preachy. Maybe that's true, with Dutch ears. But here's the thing: we're in America, baby. It's a different ballgame.

Here, people expect you to show up boldly, to stand behind your vision, and to spark curiosity. Especially when you're introducing a way of looking at nutrition that's still relatively new, you need the courage to say: Here's the missing link. Here's what nobody is talking about yet.

I've decided: I'd rather be the one who dares to say it too directly than the one who stayed quiet and missed the chance to change something.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS
WITH ME VIA A DM!



Sometimes, you need to step out of the daily grind and listen to people who've been in the game much longer than you. Not because they have the magic answers, but because their scars and successes can save you a few of your own.

This month I was invited to attend a MT Sprout 'How I did it' session with **Mathijs Welle**, and a few things he said stuck with me, not because they were brand new, but because they cut right to the core of what building really takes:

- Feedback from an investor is useful, but if you keep shifting your vision to please everyone, you'll lose the very thing that makes you unique.
- Grit matters more than perfection.
- It's okay to be different and do things your way.
- Consistency compounds. Mathijs posts on LinkedIn three times a week, every week, for twelve years. That's not luck! That's discipline that turns into impact.
- Keep a growth mindset. The moment you stop learning, you stop leading.



There's a Japanese phrase that has stayed with me: **Ganbatte iru.**

**It means doing your best, earnestly and wholeheartedly,
in the moment you're in. And that is enough.**

This month, I've been thinking about how that translates into daily life. For me, it's not about pushing harder, or striving for perfect, or proving myself. It's about presence. About showing up fully with the energy and resources I have right now, even if it's messy, even if it's incomplete. Because the truth is, life is always unfinished. The app is unfinished. Healing is unfinished. Even grief is unfinished. But showing up anyway, with honesty, with effort and with care, that's where the meaning is.

So here's my reminder to myself, and to you:

Do your best with what you have, today.
Tomorrow will ask for something new.

Love, MischuFaika!