

Transcript; Issues with Jane Velez-Mitchell, HLN

Interview with Mark Serrano, President, ProActive Communications

January 17, 2012, 7:00 PM ET

Jane: [The] Food Network is saying “as part of Food Network’s family our only concern is for Paula’s health. We will continue to support Paula as she confronts this new challenge taking her lead on what future episodes will offer her fans.” Mark Serrano, President [of] ProActive Communications, I think the Food Network is making a mistake here. They’re saying their only concern is for Paula’s health, what about the health of their viewers. Does the Food Network have any concern for the health of their viewers?

Mark: Well, I think the Food Network does and I think Paula Deen does. I think she’s demonstrated through her programs by talking about moderation. The hypocrisy police have been in force today on line today, Jane, and they’ve been trying to plaster Paula Deen as a hypocrite and as a poster child for unhealthy living. The truth is I think she’s a poster child for personal responsibility, for enjoying life you know within moderation, and also for free enterprise.

Jane: Wait a second, are you her publicist?

Mark: No I am not. No.

Jane: You’re saying to me that hiding the diagnosis of diabetes for three years while continuing to encourage people to eat the way very likely she contracted diabetes is her being a poster child for...what? What did you say, poster child for – what?

Mark: Personal responsibility. She’s preached moderation all along.

Jane: No. No. No. Okay.

Mark: Absolutely.

Jane: Mr. Serrano.

Mark: She’s no more responsible for people getting diabetes than she would be me eating these donuts tonight.

Jane: Okay.

Mark: It’s about consumer choice and personal responsibility, Jane.

Jane: Alright, I wrote a book called “Addictnation” – maybe you could find that one and put that one up. Addictnation is about the fact that when you’re an addict you have no choice. In other words, I’m a recovering alcoholic and I had no choice. I was a zombie to alcohol. I could say I’m not going to drink tonight and I’d be drinking by the end of the night. I also became addicted to sugar, that’s why I don’t eat processed sugar, because I had no choice when it came to sugar. I couldn’t stop eating it so I gave up all sugar, because I couldn’t stop eating it. Rory Friedman, We’re living in a culture where two-thirds of American’s are overweight or obese. The personal choice issue is a nice phrase, it’s a nice catch phrase, but really when we’re being bombarded with images to eat things that are going to make us obese, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of images on a daily, weekly basis, can we really just say “Oh, it’s a personal choice?”