Top questions from the session:

1. **What about people with additional conditions to MS. How does that affect the OMS program? Especially diet, allergens, exercise.**

   If there are specific concerns such as coeliac that it is worth consulting with a dietician, but it is important to say that you don't have to give up gluten as part of following the OMS diet suggestions. There are many inframammary conditions where there is evidence to say that a plant-based diet is very beneficial. If you have any doubt, consult your doctor or speak to a dietician.

2. **What is the advice in relation to taking supplements within the OMS program?**

   The only two supplements that we recommend are flaxseed oil for omega-3 and vitamin D. For those who are completely plant-based and don't consume any seafood, a B-12 supplement is suggested. There is little evidence or incomplete evidence for other supplements.

3. **Do we know what proportion of Swank’s research subjects had a diagnosis of RRMS and what proportion had Progressive MS? Did he include this data?**

   The patients weren't separated by MS sub-type, but rather by levels of disability at the outset of the study. Regardless of level of disability at the start of the study, those that followed the "good" diet had the same trajectory of progression over the 34 years - that is very little or none in. Again, regardless of starting disability level, those that didn't follow the diet had the same trajectory of decline. The implication is that the diet is beneficial regardless of disability or type of MS.

4. **Do you have to follow the whole program religiously to reduce chance of relapse?**

   Yes, the best outcomes come from engaging fully with the program. There is no data separating one aspect of the program over another, and how that might influence outcomes. It is therefore extremely important to follow all the guidance as closely as you can. As mentioned below though, it can often be daunting at the beginning to completely
change your lifestyle, so it can be helpful to break down the recommendations to begin with.

5. **What are the benefits of the program and how do they last for?**

   From the data that we have, we know that on average it takes around 3-5 years to see the full effect of the program. You should expect to feel some benefits much sooner than that. A suggestion is to keep a diary of your symptoms or how you feel, so you know what you were experiencing when you first start the program and rate them on a scale of 1-10. Over time these high scoring symptoms should begin to reduce or go all together.

   Advice is that if it keeps you well, keep doing it to ensure your symptoms or progression of your MS stays low.

6. **Where would you recommend a good place to start?**

   It can feel totally overwhelming, so perhaps try starting with one element of the program and increase the lifestyle changes a bit at a time. Some people prefer to go all in, but this approach might not work for all. A suggestion is to clear out all the old foods in your cupboards which are not recommended on the OMS program, to remove temptation. Refill the cupboards with foods which are suggested, create meal plans and find recipe books which have OMS compliant recipes.

7. **Is there any specific fish you would recommend 3 times a week?**

   Oily fish can be enjoyed in moderation on the OMS program. Aim for approximately three servings a week. The Holism study showed greater benefits in terms of relapse rate reduction, disability levels and quality of life for those who include oily fish three times a week in their diet. Oily fish can include: salmon, sardines, mackerel, trout, herring, anchovy, fresh tuna.

   White fish and other seafoods have a significantly lower fat content whilst still being a good source of protein and can be consumed more often as part of a varied and balanced diet.