6 Books That Changed How I Think About Health: Part 1 Transcript

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Introduction to Leaky Gut and Brain Health

The people that are really the geniuses in microbiome health know that leaky gut is a real thing. There are tests for leaki gut. We do it all the time.

And it's impossible to have leeki gut without having leki brain at the same time, so every time you eat a food that causes leiki gut, you're gonna have leki brain where these toxins and toxicants will cross the blood brain barrier and start to decay your brain.

Hi and welcome to The Balancing Point. I'm Dr. John Needers and I am here to make traditional Chinese medicine, functional medicine and integrative health simple, practical and fun.

Welcome to The Balancing Point

So you can restore balance, boost vitality and enjoy a healthier life every single day. Hi, this is Dr. John and I'd like to welcome you back to another episode of The Balancing Point.

I love being able to share information out into the world and particularly with you, my listeners. And today we're doing something a little different.

We're starting to head into fall.

Fall Reading List and Seasonal Health

Well, actually we are headed into Fall and then soon Winter and Winter in Chinese medicine and really in all cultures that we're agrarian, is a time to rest, withdraw, go internal, work on your health,…work on relationships, etc., and also the time…to sit around with a good book and catch up on things.

So today I'm going to talk about six books that I think made a huge difference, I don't think, they made…a huge different with me, and I can make a big difference with most of you listening.

Most of them are pretty recent, but so this is our fall into winter reading list. I'm going to break it down into six books and talk a little bit about each one and why I think they're significant.

We'll break this up actually into two podcasts, three books, and then another three. Now, one of the things to remember is the only constant is change.

Chinese medicine has been practiced for 2,000 years very, very effectively. Actually, Southeast Asian medicine's a little better title because it's practiced in slightly different ways in many different countries in Southeast Asia.

And so it has very effective. I mean, extremely effective for over 2 thousand years. The difference now is there are about 50, 000 studies, the last time I looked on PubMed, actually it was 44, 00, but that was many years ago, showing That acupuncture is effective, but more importantly for the Western mind, showing exactly how it's effective.

And life is constantly changing. The methods of acupunture haven't changed, But the understanding has changed tremendously. Adding new things like electroacupuncture for brain health has been a huge, huge breakthrough.

I'll talk more about that at another time. But today I'm going to go through six books. I am going put the cover up here because you don't really need to see me while I talk about the books and so these are books that I feel are great explanations.

They deepen understanding on levels that are very profound for our current living situation.

Chinese Medicine, Acupuncture, and Modern Research

So without further ado, I'm going to go into our first book. First book that I am going talk about is by one of my favorite health authors, David Perlmutter.

Now David has written several, several excellent books. A few years ago, probably 15 years by now, he wrote Grain Brain, which was a great book in the understanding of the problems from eating too many grains and particularly wheat in our country.

Now it's important to remember that other countries in Europe and other places in world still are often using the old einkorn wheat, the ancient wheat which presents far, far fewer problems to the human physiology than does the dwarf winter wheat that we use in the United States, and we us it because you get bigger crops.

And so you can have the wheat be sold at a lower price, but it also has far more gluten, massive amounts more of gluten. In fact, if you take a current recipe, using a bread maker and you try to use the old einkorn wheat in it, you're going to fail because you have to handle it very, very differently because it doesn't have the massive, massive amount of gluten in.

I'm going talk about David Perlmutter's book, The Brain Defenders. And one of the things that David points out is that gut health is the front line of brain defense.

Now, gut help is a front-line of pretty much all immune function and health. That was known by one my great, great grand teachers, Li Dongyan, who in 1249 wrote the treatise of The Spleen and Stomach.

And he said, if you don't focus on the spleen and stomach, and the splen is really the function of the pancreas and the small intestine. It's how you digest your food.

what they call the spleen, which is different from our physiological spleen that we look at in Western medicine. And so the function of the splen is primarily to draw pure elixir from the food and to send the turbid down through your intestines to your bowels.

David Perlmutter's The Brain Defenders

So this was known 1249 that the health of this splen and stomach were massively the most important thing to look. So David goes into this from a very modern perspective, and I think it's easier for the Western mind to understand.

He talks about the blood-brain barrier, which many people speak of as though it is a fixed thing. It is not. it changes all the time. Its dynamic and its diet dependent.

And the people that are really the geniuses in microbiome health know that leaky gut is a real thing. There are tests to test for leeky gut. We do it all the time and it's impossible to have leeki gut without having leaki brain at the same time.

So every time you eat a food that causes leki gut, you're going to have leaky brain where these toxins and toxicants will cross the blood-brain barrier and start to decay your brain.

And he most importantly gives us simple, simple things we can do, actionable interventions that can really set us on the right path. A fascinating study that he points out that was published in Nature Metabolism is that in addition to protein problems, you know, getting misfolded and tangled in the tau proteins, which, by the way, there's now a blood test for that to detect it many years before symptoms.

It's called the p-tau-217. Very, very good advancement in medicine. And so he discovered, though, that it's not just the proteins. It's the hyperglycosylation.

Now that's a big word, but what it means is there's too much sugar stuck to the protein. Most of you have probably had a hemoglobin A1C test done to see if you're becoming insulin resistant and pre-diabetic.

All that test is measuring is the level of glycosylation on your red blood cells. So how much sugar is coating your blood red cells? In this case, in the Nature Metabolism article, they were looking at the brains of Alzheimer's patients who had deceased and normal brains, and they found that the more Glycosylation there was on the brain or in the the higher the rate and the severity of Alzheimer's disease.

So I would say this one is definitely worth taking a look at. You know many doctors for a while have said have called Alzheimer type 3 diabetes and Perlmutter explains in great detail why that's true.

The second book on my list that I think is excellent reading is a little bit older. All the way back in 2020, Dale Bredesen wrote The End of Alzheimer's.

So you notice I'm starting off with a couple of alzheimer's books, and that's on purpose because Alzheimer will be significantly, the rates will significantly higher in the years to come.

And if you read Bledesen's book, You'll understand A, why that's the case, and B, how to help prevent it. Now we've set up Alzheimer's prevention or dementia prevention protocols here where we have a complete plan for people to save their brain.

And Bredesen did one a while back called Recode. And that protocol looks at several different metabolic subtypes and several causes of problems with Alzheimer's buildup.

And at the time that that book was written, they had already reversed or prevented early stage Alzheimer's disease. Just recently, I saw a new article where they had taken a patient who was pretty severely in the state of dementia with Alzheimer.

And what they did, it was use the recode protocol, slightly modified from the original book, and they claim to have completely reversed Alzheimer's. Now, we use something very similar to the recode protocol.

We just do some traditional Chinese medical stuff that actually makes it better. the recode program very, very powerful.

Dale Bredesen's The End of Alzheimer's

But some of the things that Bredesen points out are the number of toxins and toxicants, mostly toxicant, that were affected by and says you should have extensive testing.

One thing was heavy metals. Now, we use an oligo scan in our practice, which is a phenomenal device. It's the only device I trust to test for heavy metals.

So the problem with heavy metal is if you have an exposure that's very recent, then you can find it in the urine. If it's slightly longer, you might be able to find in in blood.

But the problems is most heavy metals have organs that they'd like to hang out in. And so, for example, if you get a high lead exposure, it will affect your bones.

It will get into your bone. If you have high mercury, well, you know that the expression Matt is a hatter. Well, hatters actually went crazy. They had developed dementia because they were working with mercury all the time and it got into their brain.

So, In the not too recent past, dry cleaning services had certain toxicants that would get into their liver and stay there. But you couldn't really test it well in the blood or urine because that's what's not in cells.

It's either what you're urinating out or what is floating around in your bloodstream. So after a very short period of time, you can't find that. We use the Oligoscan, which is actually a device for measuring intracellular heavy metals, vitamins, minerals, and other substances so that we can get a much more clear look at it.

But Bredesen also recommends looking at food allergies and sensitivities. Vitamin deficiencies is huge, huge. Another book that I will talk about at some point.

is Nutrient Power by Walsh, where he kind of continues the work of Abram Hoffer, a Canadian doctor who was successfully treating schizophrenia, ADHD, and a whole range of what are often considered untreatable conditions simply by giving him high dose B vitamins and then some other minerals when he detected that they were out of balance.

And he was getting phenomenal success. Of course, when the new family of drugs came along, those vitamin deficiency issues got shoved to the wayside. But it's definitely worth testing for.

So this book is sort of an oldie but it is still a goodie. Learn how to protect your brain and the brain of your friends and family. Our third book is another book by our old friend David Perlmutter.

And this one is called Drop Acid. Now, in the very beginning of the book and in The Audible, he says, now, you children of 60s may get the wrong idea.

What I'm talking about is lowering your uric acid levels. He gets a little chuckle out of that. I'll tell you, uric acid is the missing metabolic villain in modern chronic disease.

Not just modern, but going back quite a ways. Uric Acid is famous for causing gout and certain types of kidney stones. But the importance of a uic acid goes way, way beyond that.

And most doctors don't test for it. Other than myself, the only times I've seen a URIC acid test run on a patient, by another doctor is when they had gout and even then they often don't run it.

They'll run at once and then just kind of let it go as long as they dont have more symptoms. So there are a whole host of problems that are driven by high uric acid.

And so a uic acid target below 5.5 in men, and a little lower than that in women, is a powerful preventive health lever, right? Now, the problem, of course, as you can see in the books behind me, The Sweet Spot and The Sweetspot 2, is that the ranges that many labs say are normal are absolutely not normal.

And so if you have a 5.5 on a uric acid test, your doctor probably won't pay any attention. If it's at six, they probably wont pay attention and by the time it gets to six there's significant damage happening.

A 2010 study done in Japan found that people with elevated uric acid but still within the lab range that was indicated on the test, but elevated by Perlmutter standards in mind, those people had a four-fold increased risk for dementia, so four times more likely to develop dementia.

David Perlmutter's Drop Acid

He also cited a Johns Hopkins study where even mildly elevated and is still, within what's considered a normal range, considered normal caused many strokes and multiple multiple many stroke and they were each one was damaging the brain so that dementia was absolutely certain to happen.

And then he found a study by the American College of Rheumatology where they indicated that elevated uric acid is the best I want you to hear that. The best indicator and predictor of future diabetes.

Better than a hemoglobin A1C, better than glucose test, absolutely the best predictors. It precedes insulin resistance. It proceeds type 2 diabetes. You'll see high uric acid.

They found a 39% increase in cardiovascular disease. Now that's astonishing in people with higher uic acid, so I have a question for you. What do obesity, diabetes, dementia, coronary artery disease, high blood pressure, painful joints, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease have in common?

You probably guessed by now, they can all be driven by high uric acid. Now the number one factor with high Uric Acid is genetic. people don't process purines, which are present in many foods properly, and it converts to uric acid.

So that one is probably unmodifiable. But if you take all the steps to modify it, you'll still be in good shape. Now the number two preventable factor after genetics is high fructose.

The fruit sugar, the biggest villain is high fructose corn syrup, which we got sold a bill of goods on, and we were told it's the same as table sugar.

Absolutely not true. High frucose corns syrup drives a dozen, well, an uncountable number of illnesses, but in this case, it drives uric acid. And so one of the things that Perlmutter does in the book is he lists the top five supplements four high uric acid, four of them we were already using, but it was nice to find out about the fifth one.

And we also do a few other things with Chinese medicine to keep uic acid down. We have one supplement that is just absolutely directed at that specifically.

Now, it sounds like it's probably a new discovery, right? Wrong. In 1892, a physician from Scotland named Sir Alexander Haig wrote a book on uric acid and listed all the dangers that I've just talked about.

He knew this in 18 92. Well, by 1898, the fourth edition came out. That's a lot of publications and it was picked up by the Journal of the American Medical Association and they printed a summary of book.

I believe it went on to have seven printings. By 1950, everybody had forgotten about it. Uric acid wasn't tested for. People stopped testing for it, and you might think, oh, God, well, it's probably a really expensive test, so they don't want to do it When we run a uric acid test, it costs $3. That's right, $ 3 to run what could be the most important test on a blood test.

So get your uic acid tested, either do it yourself, have me do, do have your doctor do but absolutely get it tested. One thing I forgot to mention, is huge, a huge issue for people that cannot lose weight.

They do everything right. But that gene is specifically, it was a survival gene. You think of the South Pacific Islanders that made those thousands of miles trips.

Well, the ones that didn't have that jean died because they burned up all their fat right away. but the ones that had the gene to create high uric acid survived those voyages.

Very fascinating. And in the scale of things, when people were dying at a much younger age, they didn't develop gout usually or kidney stones, but still all the other factors were increasing.

So that's my suggestion for your third book of this winter and fall season. Thank you. Thank you for joining me on The Balancing Point. If you enjoyed today's episode, please follow the show, share it with a friend, and leave a review.

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