Introduction to Mickey Truscott and Autoimmune Wellness

Welcome back, ladies and gentlemen. Today I'm so excited to introduce Mickey Truscott. INTp she pride yourself in finding creative solutions to preparing, cooking, and succeeding on allergen free diets.

It's really critical these days. A person is a functional nutritional therapy practitioner and author of the bestselling guide to the autoimmune protocol, The Autoimmune Paleo Cookbook.

With the partner NGO, she coauthored The Immune Wellness Handbook, and that's an award winning guide that teaches a whole lifestyle approach to healing from autoimmune disease.

Her newest release, The Nutrient Dense Kitchen, focuses on nutrient density, critical, of course. It's also an often overlooked aspect to deep dealing with food.

Now, in 2012, McKee founded the Oil Immune wellness.com. That's a website and social media channels serving millions of readers annually with recipes and resources for living well with chronic illness and with the NGO again, and Sarah Ballantyne, who we know pretty well.

She co-created and teaches the FIP certified coach Practitioner training program. So she's going to tell us all about that. It's an advanced training for practitioners across the spectrum of both natural and conventional health care.

And I am really, really excited to bring you on. McKee, thanks for being here and munching. Tell us a little bit about your background and of things. I love the thanks I want to read.

I'm really excited to be here. Anything health coaching? I'm all in. If anyone's familiar with me, you guys know how much I am really trying to be supportive of the movement of health coaches to bridge the gap right now, and health help solve our health care crisis.

We're in a lot of trouble. So. Yeah, thanks so much for having me. I have a lot of personal experience with autoimmune disease. So the short story is that's how I got in here.

Like a lot of healers, our personal, our personal journeys kind of get us interested in helping others, walk a similar path. So about a decade ago, I was diagnosed with two autoimmune diseases.

After suffering for about a year with a lot of unexplained symptoms. So this is really common with this specific autoimmune disease I have, which is Hashimoto's thyroiditis.

It is the most common autoimmune disease. It is critically underdiagnosed in young women such as myself. I was 26 at the time and dismissed by doctor after doctor took me six doctors to actually get that antibody test.

And then when it came back positive, I was told that, there was no treatment for me since my thyroid normal levels were normal. So through that journey, I also got diagnosed with celiac disease, and even after both diagnosis, I continued to have a health crisis that left me bedridden.

Without my job, without any tools, with the conventional system. Had nothing for me. I was out of money and really depressed and exhausted. So I started to do my own research.

I had a background as a personal chef. I had been vegan for a very long time, and I had a little idea that maybe the way that I was eating was not supporting my best health.

And so that's kind of the foundation of of where I came at, learning for myself to, to figure out maybe some pieces to the puzzle to see how I could get.

Well, because, I didn't have anyone helping me out. So through that, I discovered the autoimmune protocol. And back then it was not well known. There were a few other people that I found on the internet who were trying it themselves for their own autoimmune diseases.

So, Sarah Valentine was one of them. She was home with her kids, and I connected with her through her blog, and she was sharing her experiences. And Angie Ault, my now partner at Autoimmune Wellness and with a certified coach with Sarah, was also trying IPE for complications due to her celiac.

So all of us connected and were experimenting on ourselves because to that point we didn't know anybody. There were no stories yet of people who had tried this.

And my experience healing from a pretty serious health crisis, gave me the curiosity to maybe totally shift my career. So I was really interested in cooking.

But then I started eating completely different.

Personal Autoimmune Diagnosis and Healing Journey

And so I was thinking, how could I combine these passions of cooking and healing together to help other people? And that's kind of where this all began for me.

That's remarkable. You know, you really get hit with the double whammy there with the Hashimoto's and see. Yeah, I can yeah, I know this is actually pretty common.

So, and then you must have worked very hard and probably took you a while. You didn't say along with this, things like this don't generally happen overnight.

Tell us, tell us more. Feel free to share as much information as you want. We want to know what is the autoimmune protocol or IP? And, how did you come about like how that evolved?

Oh, yeah. So the autoimmune protocol, I noticed it first in Rob Wolfe's book where he just mentioned, you know, people will do paleo for all of these reasons that he was outlining in his book.

But then he said, if you have an autoimmune disease, here's a bunch of other foods. And he just listed, a list of foods that were additional things like eggs and dairy and tomatoes that maybe some people, including like a paleo or primal approach.

And a light bulb went off for me because I had been researching diet and autoimmune disease. What, what, nutrients in the immune system need kind of getting into that.

And I thought, That's interesting. So, I connected with Sara. Sara has a background in medical biophysics, a physics. She's, PhD level researcher, and she was, picking up the same phone.

Right? She was kind of like, I wonder why this works. And so Sara really refined the autoimmune protocol from those string of words that, you know, there were a few people around the same time who who were putting out the idea that maybe they were clinicians or researchers and saying, hey, there's something here in the literature that indicates that maybe these foods are not right for people that are having an inflammatory reaction in the gut.

And so Sara took that and formed it into a protocol that we know it has today. So she wrote a book called The Paleo Approach. And in the book she references over 2000 scientific papers detailing each food and its merits on including or excluding from an elimination diet, specifically looking at, nutrient density and also the gut, because, as we know, the gut is mostly, where the immune system is.

And it's a kind of a first line for people with autoimmune disease. Now, you know, especially in functional medicine community, this is like not a new idea.

But about ten years ago, it was a pretty radical idea that people were thinking, maybe there are specific foods that are not right. So the autoimmune protocol calls for eliminating foods like grains, beans, legumes, dairy, eggs, nuts, seeds and nightshades, as well as food, chemicals and stabilizers and non-nutritive sweeteners.

So basically, that's a very broad category, but it includes any food or ingredient that is derived from one of those categories. So coffee is eliminated not because of the caffeine but because it is a seed.

Spices, even things like cracked pepper. You know, a lot of people wonder, is anyone sensitive to that? And I can tell you, in my seven years of being a health coach, I have found people that are in fact sensitive to tougher.

So, things, that could potentially cause a reaction, are eliminated. But just as important as the eliminations are the additions. And I think this is where the autoimmune protocol is very different from a lot of other elimination diets, in that it places an equal importance in the things that replace all of the elimination.

So these are going to be things that, support nutrient density and increase nutrient density and heal the gut. So they're going to be things like bone broth, which is going to have lots of collagen and gelatin and all of that great stuff, for healing the gut in the skin.

It's going to have probiotic foods. So it's going to be, rich in fermented foods and things like kombucha. It's going to be rich in things like organ meats and cold water, fatty fish, things that a lot of people don't really eat.

And they think that they can do the autoimmune protocol, perhaps without eating meat or seafood. And it doesn't really work as effectively when we're not increasing the intake of cold water, fatty fish and shellfish that have a rich supply of nutrients that are critically important for the immune system.

Same things with those organ meats. You know, for me, as a celiac and with Hashimoto's, I mean, I've got problems with iron. I need to I need to have eat some really iron rich foods my body is going to absorb.

So that was really impactful for me. And then there are also lifestyle components. So it's not just about food. A lot of people get in and they start the diet and they start with food, but then they open it up to expand, to start thinking about sleep, stress management, movement and connection, which there is research showing how this impacts our immune systems and why making some shifts in our lifestyle can actually help us live well with autoimmune disease.

So, that's kind of the big picture of the autoimmune protocol. You know, it's remarkable, that you've done so much work and, you know, so much and, you know, health could just want to know, too, because you're going to have clients come to them and have tried this and try that, and you start talking about like, eliminating foods and the oh, I've done that before and shows already what's the science behind it?

Is there some kind of testing or what would you say is, I know it's science based, but how would you explain that? Like, yeah. So originally, you know, now we actually have efficacy studies for the autoimmune protocol in specific populations with specific autoimmune diseases, which we didn't have.

When I was in its infancy 7 or 8 years ago. But at that time, the research was showing specific foods, how they affect the gut lining, how they affect the microbial diversity in the gut, and how different nutrients support the immune system, how these, lifestyle factors.

So that's really where Sarah's work in laying the foundation of this protocol and really making it a science based protocol, not picking things out of a hat or just going by, things that are anecdotally supportive because we know from in natural health care and functional medicine, a lot of things haven't been proven by science, but we know they work because you've had clients or patients that have tried something and it's effective.

So you want to keep using that with your clients, right? You want to help people get well. Sarah really wanted to make the foundation of the autoimmune protocol really based in science.

And I think the explosion in popularity not only among health care practitioners, but even the conventional practitioners, and the collaboration between doctors has come out of that because a lot of doctors who are conventionally trained or even just starting to think about holistic or functional medicine, are really wary of something that is not grounded in science.

So, I think that's where we were able to partner with doctors to get these studies off the ground, because they saw the scientific validity or merit of at least looking into it.

What the Autoimmune Protocol Is and How It Works

And, yeah. So so it's out there. But we have a lot to learn. And that's what I'm really excited about for all of these studies moving forward, is just, all the different layers and things that we're going to learn.

And the IP is a living thing. It's not set in stone. So there have been updates to the protocol, especially the reintroduction protocol, as, you know, Angie and I have had our program just kind of all the experience that we're having coaching now, thousands of people through a we've learned a lot of different things.

And then also in the research side, the research is always changing. And, the merits of different foods can always be updated. And so we continue to do that as time goes on.

It's amazing. Again, that you have such great answers to questions, you know, because the audience, you know, they are kind of nerdy. Some of them, you know, they all want to help people.

A lot of them are working on their own problems. Let me see. Besides the, the Hashimoto's, what other research has been any research on any of the other kind of, is it for any autoimmune condition or if you didn't, studies on specific types.

Other than that, most, yeah. So about four years ago now, Angie and I were contacted through the contact form on our blog, Our Immune Wellness. By a researcher at Scripps San Diego.

And she's a gastroenterologist, researcher, MD, who had a patient that came to her wanting to use the autoimmune protocol. They had some pretty serious IBD, and they were wondering if there was anything they could do before they resorted to the normal treatment of drugs and surgery.

And this doctor had never heard of it. But she said, sure, you can have a month, then we'll check in, we'll do a colonoscopy. And so this patient did it on their own.

From the information on our website, they weren't coached by anyone, but they saw a complete turnaround in their symptoms. When they went back to the doctor, she saw no sign of disease in their colon and was kind of like, hey, what did you do?

Like, I want to know more about this because, you know, has anybody looked into this? And so they sent the doctor to our website. She contacted us and she said, hey, I'd love to run a study through Scripps to test the efficacy of this autoimmune protocol.

Will you guys collaborate with us to provide health coaching and consultation and how to do this? Because obviously you guys have been coaching people on how to do this.

And, we'd like to put together a study. And of course, we were like, yes, just tell us what you want us to do. We are like, fantastically thrilled that she even reached out to us.

So this was the first, IBD study they ended up doing, in 2017. And then there have been two sub studies that have come out since. And, I mean, the results were astonishing.

They took people that had, active IBD for an average of 19 years. So these were not newly diagnosed, barely sick

people. These were people who had been suffering for a very long time.

Many of them had been failed, on biologic treatments. Some of them had had surgery and other complications. And within six weeks. So the way the study was designed, there was a six week transition where every week they took out two categories of food.

And then there was a six week elimination, fully compliant, with all the foods removed. And so after the first six weeks, they saw 73%, rate of clinical remission.

And then every patient that had reached remission, maintained it through the, the autoimmune protocol phase. So, it was great, you know, and we were not surprised by the results because we coach people with this every day.

We've seen especially specifically with IBD and, autoimmune diseases that affect the gut are the quickest, to respond to this type of treatment. It it may seem obvious to, people who think, yes, you know, you're you're putting food in your system.

Of course that works. But it was great to see that, show in the study. And then since then, we've partnered with another doctor to run a study on Hashimoto's thyroiditis.

Of course, Hashimoto's is a completely different can of worms from IBD, and with this study, we were able to bring in some functional medicine testing.

So some stool testing, some nutritive value. That was really interesting. And then also trying to see what things change across, across the course of, you know, changing someone's diet and lifestyle.

The shifts were different, you know, because you're dealing with, a disease that is much more subtle. It's much more, difficult to assess the types of symptoms people are having.

And, and so the results from that study were along the lines of, of what we see in our practices, which is, Hashimoto's takes a little bit longer and is a little bit trickier.

But over time, the hormone levels improved and people needed less medication and the quality of life went up and symptom burden went down. And so that was really cool.

And then we've also done an eczema and psoriasis study. So looking at the manifestation on the skin, in our practices, we've seen people with skin conditions take the longest to show signs.

I don't know if this is something you've noticed in your practice read, but, you know, the skin is something that is, lower priority organ for the body, right?

It's a nutrient hog. And it I think it really needs time. And so that was a study that we completed last year. And the results will be published this year.

So it'll be really interesting to kind of see the official write up of that one. And then hopefully we'll be doing more in the future. So we've got RA on the books.

That's always a really popular with our audience and huge. And, you know, if there are any other doctors out there that want to try this, you know, we're still on the efficacy study phase.

So for for people listening that are science nerds, you know, these are not clinical trials, but they are the start. This is how you get the attention and the funding for clinical trials.

And you figure out how to compare different research. And we can look at like what Doctor Terry Walls is doing now, these seeds she planted ten years ago, you know, so that's what we're trying to do now is continue to build this body of research and, and learn the different intricacies of the different diseases and, and how we can help as

many people as possible.

Yeah. I'm glad you mentioned Teri. You know, she's another guest. She's a co guest, on this event. And people will be looking forward to hearing her story.

You know, she had her own like you, she started with basically trying to conquer her own problem. That's actually what gets a lot of people into coaching.

I think, you know, said to most health coaches had a point in their room, you know. Yeah. And I think specifically, you know, with autoimmune disease, it takes us an average of five years to get diagnosed, which is like that statistic is a disaster.

But this that's the state of the medical system right now. And so a lot of people with autoimmune disease suffer going from doctor to doctor, not truly being heard, being dismissed, told that perhaps they're depressed.

And when a coach has that personal experience, you know how to navigate that emotionally. You know how to navigate that system and really how to support your clients in a way that a lot of them have never truly had someone listen, even family members that we don't really have, a accepted toolbox or a way of dealing with someone in our life, even if it's a loved one that has a chronic illness.

Right. So this explosion of people getting into health coaching and wanting to help other people, most of the time it's just saying, hey, I have hard won this experience and this, all of this background that I have in healing, and I want to share that with other people.

And even if that just means listening and validating their experience and saying, like, yeah, I went through that too. It's just transformative because then people go, I'm not alone.

I can I can, you know, advocate for myself and I can actually figure these things out and I can have some hope. That's really cool, I love it. Yeah, I love it, too, you know?

And that's what health coaches do. They seem to, resonate with people and attract people that have similar type of problems or, you know, they're similar to them in some way.

Usually it's a condition, but not always. You know, and it's another part, of the interview that I wanted to touch base with you on is the sort of the professional, what separates us from the, the hobby and these kind of things.

But, before I do that, give us some ideas what it's like to work with a person. Are you running a lot of labs for, something or, What?

Science, Research, and Clinical Evidence for AIP

What is coaching a client or patient through the autoimmune protocol, like. Yeah. So the autoimmune protocol is really, really clarifying for a lot of issues that people have.

And because of that, we actually recommend and we teach for people to try diet and lifestyle before they move on to advanced testing. And this is for a lot of reasons, but mostly because so many things are resolved just with diet and lifestyle that if you start to go looking for things too soon, you're going to find everything, right?

If you have a client walk into you in the street and you're a functional medicine practitioner and you, you run labs. I'm not a licensed practitioner, so I don't run labs.

But I have worked with and partnership collaboration with people who, and especially researchers who say they have people come in that have not done any dietary change, and they do all these tests and everything comes back as a problem.

They've got all these gut issues, they've got all these adrenal renal issues. They've got their thyroid hormones all out of whack. And so if they go to work treating all of those issues at the same time that the person is changing their diet, maybe changing their lifestyle, it is just going to be a really confusing process that, that doesn't have a lot of direction.

So when someone comes to the autoimmune protocol, especially when they come to a coach, the app is pretty complex and it's very customizable. So there is kind of a by the book way that people can do themselves.

Hundreds of thousands, if not millions of people have tried to do this on their cell themselves. And it's part of the reason why we have a website devoted to putting the information out there for free, because we want everyone to access it, but also they'll take one, read through what the protocol entails, and they'll recognize this is hard if you're going to do it yourself, you need to have a lot of time.

You've got a lot to do, a lot of research. You got to find all these new foods. You got to learn how to cook a bunch of things you've never cooked before.

You've got to research, the answers to troubleshooting problems or figure out how to get your spouse or kids on board. And solving these complex problems is specifically what a coach does.

So, when you transition to the Artemis Protocol with a coach, the coach can can take your health history and they can listen to your family situation, and they can help you identify the ways to customize that might accelerate your healing journey.

They might help you identify some lifestyle things, like maybe actually the diet isn't the biggest trigger in your life. Maybe it's actually, a sleep issue or a stress management issue or a job that you're working 60 hours a week and you're not managing your stress.

I can't tell you how many times I've seen people come to me, wanting to work on the diet, but then actually learning that there's something in their life that's bigger than what they're eating.

And if that doesn't get addressed, nothing they eat is going to help them. So, so coaches are really critical in the customization, in the personalization, and then in the implementation because implementing is hard.

Especially with all the comp comp flex factors. So, you know, some people might have the budget to go to Whole Foods and buy all the organic food. Most people don't. Most people have to figure out how to source high quality foods for a good price.

That's what a coach can do. A lot of people don't know how to cook a sweet potato. That's what a coach can do. So when they come to a chip, they clarify.

They weed out all of those, you know, maybe the seemingly little things that can really add up. You know, the slightly high blood pressure, you know, the sleep disturbances, the fatigue, and then the things that are left over, that's for the doctor.

So then they can go to a doctor and they can say, hey, I'm having this specific problem. And the doctor is no longer looking for a needle in the haystack.

The doctor says, oh, we need to run an organic acids because, you know, this looks like it could be X, Y, or Z. And then they treat that, and then the person knows which diet and lifestyle is most supportive of their health from working with a health coach.

And then they go to the doctor or, you know, a functional medicine practitioner, whoever is, able to test and treat for whatever issue they have, they get that treatment.

And I'll tell you what read the doctor is happy to know because the doctor is not getting calls about how do I cook

the sweet potato? Hey, doctor, you told me to do this diet.

And like, I don't know how to cook this or I don't know where to buy this food. That's how health coaches job, you know. And so I think that that bridging that gap, is specifically really helpful, in helping people navigate this chronic illness epidemic that we have.

You know, you're right on target. And, first of all, I had a hard time with sweet potatoes myself. The way. I had to learn to use that part of the kitchen that there was a door with knobs over it, you know, and I wasn't sure what the thing was for all these years, but it's really good for us.

So we've been, you know, I'm a grill man. I'm a I'm a grill, okay? And I can use the stove top really good. I can saute, I can, yeah, but but yeah, the oven that was there was a challenge.

But, that's what health coaches do. You know, we learn to walk and talk and live a certain lifestyle. And we, you know, we start to budget our own, budgets and money so that we can afford the better foods, you know, and and I'm eating as much organic as possible now because I think there's so much more nutrients in it, but because it's at least free of most of the, you know, insecticides, rodenticides and herbicides and things, at least getting fairly clean food.

And of course, you can supplement with this and stuff, but I love that you mentioned, working with physicians because part of this, part of this event, the key is, is defining our backyard, you know, and, and realizing when is collaboration important, like what you said was pretty cool.

Look, you're the health coach. Do what a good health coach does. And some of the more medical procedures or or diagnosing diagnosis in place, that's how we should actually be working together.

Did you want to address a little bit about collaboration? Yeah, yeah, and I love talking about collaboration because having now taught close to 500 people in IP certified coach, it's been really beautiful to see the differences.

You know, we opened up this program not just to health coaches. So we do have a lot of health coaches, but we also have had doctors. So medical doctors, naturopathic doctors, we've had physical therapists, we've had fitness professionals, we've had yoga teachers, we've had, social workers, we've had mental health providers.

We've had acupuncturists and herbalists. So we have this really diverse group that basically what we're teaching them is this is not how a one size fits all way, how to be a health coach.

This is a way that you can incorporate this science based information in whatever you do. So a physical therapist is going to have an understanding of how an autoimmune body, is operating, maybe how this body is operating differently from a healthy person and how their tissue might be a little different, and how they can actually coach that person effectively.

For a doctor, honestly, the best education that they're getting is, whoa, this implementation stuff is a lot of work. I might need a health coach on my team and actually, most of the doctors that we've had come through are taking the program with health coaches, and nutritionists.

We've even had our DS and different types of nutritionists in our program, because the doctors recognize that, in order to do their work most effectively and actually, most accurately, you know, when they when they have a client that has the one thing that needs to be treated and they can treat it successfully, I mean, that feels great to them, right?

And then they have someone on their staff that can help walk that person through whatever implementation. I mean, everybody wins. So seeing the collaboration has been really beautiful, seeing the collaboration through the worldwide network.

So we've got translations going in Spanish and French, and there are groups of practitioners in other countries who

are building their practices, through connections that they've made in the group and putting out resources.

It's just it's really, really cool. And so as a health coach, I encourage other health coaches not to try and be doctors, to really respect the expertise and the authority and what doctors have learned.

So one criticism I have from some of the natural health movement is people who criticize all doctors. And, you know, there are a lot of bad doctors and there's a lot of problems in medicine, but there also are a lot of great doctors who are waking up to this stuff and who want to partner and collaborate and be a part of a solution.

And so I really believe especially, you know, through in collaboration with these studies, you know, the first study that IBD study was with a conventional doctor, from Scripps, and she had no idea about the world of functional medicine.

She had no idea about things like bone broth. But through, you know, being open and and gentle and fostering a relationship with her, a lot of her colleagues are now interested.

And so that's how we build a movement, not by cutting these ties and saying we know better, even though we don't have the legal authority to do what you do.

Coaching Clients Through Diet, Lifestyle, and Labs

It's by building the bridge and by listening to to them and seeing, you know, what their struggles are in the medical system and how we can best support them.

And then in between there are so many layers. You know, there are naturopath doctors who are operating completely different. There are and these who have functional medicine training, you know, there are those who are able to practice and prescribe in certain states and paths.

And, you know, they're layering things with functional medicine, and it's all very cool. But seeing it all come together in a group of people who really believe in accessing, the healing potential of diet and lifestyle as a foundation of whatever they do, is is great.

So, I would encourage everyone to just think, you know, ten years ago, it was so different. I was never told by anyone, oh, my doctor, you know, told me about this protocol, but now just in the public side of what I do on Instagram or Facebook or through the email on the blog, people are writing us saying, hey, my conventional doctor saw the IBD study and they told me to do this diet.

Like, this is how they're hearing about it. So what we're doing and the collaboration, the relationships we're building are filtering through to, practitioners who maybe never would have even considered had had there not be, some evidence and so much awareness about it.

So, so yeah, I love the collaboration and, you know, we welcome any type of practitioner who wants to work with us and learn more. Yeah. I'm so glad that we're defining this, because I think that's one of the things people in coaching, the health coaching leadership area, we need to be helping to define the backyard of a health coach and be able to work, you know, up to that point where it is a medical diagnosis personally.

And all my health coaches, they don't want any parts of medical diagnosis, treatment of a specific thing. You know, that's the realm of of medicine. And, we give physicians, licensed physicians who are licensed to do these things a complete monopoly.

And yet we are often the sort of senior partner in, in, because the person, the client often comes to us first, like the. Should we do it asking should I do it.

My doctor said they take this medication. It's that I hate to be putting this but but I always have to say look in this situation you know I you're I'm your go to person for anything lifestyle.

If you want to know more about diet and rest and exercise and reducing stress and even taking supplements, you know, I'm I'm your guy. I can I can help build health.

I'm here to build health and help you build health, you know, but when it comes to treating a disease, if you really have one, that is the backyard of a physician.

And so there's an intelligent way to, to navigate that space. But there is a clear line. I don't practice medicine by any stretch. Yeah. And I think it's something that a lot of health coaches I know in my early days, you get really excited because you see the potential of what can be done and how people can reverse a lot of things that they normally would go to a doctor or and take a bunch of medication.

So it can be tempting to say we have all the tools we need, but we don't. You know, sometimes we get a client as far as we can and then we say, you know what?

That issue looks to me like Sibo. I keep up on the research. I like to know how to interpret the tests, but I'm not practicing medicine. I'm helping my client advocate for themselves, understand the different issues, the symptoms, how it may be linked to something going on in their body, and coach them on how to talk to their doctor, who may or may not know what they're dealing with.

But, they can have an educated discussion when they go into that doctor's office. I've had conventional providers, order tests for my clients that they knew nothing about, but because the client gave them a presentation or presented a good case about, you know, hey, doc, I'm experiencing X, Y, and Z.

Here's some information on Sibo. And, you know, because of insurance, I mean, we're not even going to talk about the medical system, but because of insurance.

Some people, that's the only way they have access to treatment is through a conventional doctor. And so, you know, I've had them convene, convinced doctors to do tests and to ask them about treatments that maybe they'd never prescribe before.

But proved effective for their situation just because they open that line of communication and because the coaching. So I'm with you. You know, a lot of our clients are going to come to us because we are the ones that spend all the time.

We're the ones that are truly listening. When they go to the doctor, they get 5 or 10 minutes and, you know, if they go in there educated, that 5 to 10 minutes can be so much more productive.

You know, if you're going to see an endocrinologist and, and they need to explain to you what your thyroid does, you're not going to get anything out of that appointment.

But if you go in there and you say, hey, doc, I think I have autoimmune disease, can you test my antibodies? Like that's a very different appointment.

And that's like how I got diagnosed. Six doctors in I went, I think there's an autoimmune disease going on. And I went into my doctor and I point blank said, hey, I want antibodies to be tested, you know.

And so sometimes that advocacy is really important. Yeah, absolutely. I'm with you. You know, we started this I started in 1999, you know, over 20 years ago doing this.

And back then, physicians did poo poo just just totally flat across the board, you know, like, that's all a bunch of garbage, you know, the things you were talking about, building health and looking upstream for what's really wrong and not just treating the symptoms and and not just managing disease, but actually repairing, rebuilding, restoring normal function, bringing homeostasis back and getting people to live differently.

I was in a chiropractic office back then, and I realized really quickly that, you know, nutritional therapist and

personal trainer, and I just would tell people, look, it's not what you do in the doctor's office that matters.

It's what you do in between visits. And hopefully one day you won't need any visits. You know, that was always my goal. It's like, you know, you know, we can sort of, you know, get you through this.

As I said, we're building that bridge up to where the medical backyard starts. But we on that bridge itself, coaching and, I actually created, I created a direct to consumer, lab testing program just for my graduates.

So my graduates are so well trained in the lab work, the anatomy, the physiology, the biochemistry, how to interpret the labs and how to apply it to a person not to treat the paper.

Hello. There's another thing we have to watch out for is, oh, you get a lab test, you treat the paper, not the person that you have to really know that.

That there's something on that paper that that, physicians might not be looking at, and we call it a healing opportunity. But just so you know, we do a lot of lab work in my world.

And, and, it doesn't have to be a physician like, you see, unless they've got some really some financial consideration, like I have to. I can only do what my my insurance company pays for.

That's a pretty lousy spot to be in. We'll probably want to open up that can of worms, but, but yeah, it's tough. So but but yeah. Any any health coach. You run labs enough.

They just get to get with the right program. And so yeah, I'd be I'd like to have a chat with you. So sometime in the future about what labs you'd like to see run and, and, assure you that it can all be done by health coaches through our program.

And then, it might empower your coaches even more. So let's talk a bit about professionalism in health coaching, because, you know, you and I both know we need, you know, few hundred thousand health coaches in this country.

There's probably more. Well, you know, I'm saying, you know, yeah. Yeah. Like yeah. And not and they can be independent business people. You've alluded a bit to working with physicians maybe in even in their office, which would be a good job, you know.

But if you want to really live a lifestyle where you can pursue health and you kind of work when you want and you can you can charge what you want and you can live a certain way and set that example for your clients.

There's independent health coaching as well, which requires you to have a, an additional point. It's not just a job. You go there at 8:00 and you go on route four, and you pretty much instruct clients to, your doctors, patients to do what he says, you know, diet, exercise, lifestyle, take the medication, whether they're sick.

I don't know if you know, the only study being done right now, by government studies.com, if you go there is for health coaching. The only study I know being done in health schools is where they can help.

Medication compliance in irritable bowel disease cases. And that's not good health coaching. Somebody may figure I'm kind of disappointed to see health system being appropriated by state or medicine.

As if it's just some, some little thing.

Collaboration Between Coaches and Medical Practitioners

That. Oh, yeah, we've got one in our office too. That could be somebody just trained to teach you how to take your medication on time. So. So we can't let that happen.

I don't think we need to sort of, like, with your program, I'm sure these are independent people. These are people who who just go out there and have their own business and, you know, work.

Those who want to charge the prices they want, you know, because they know it's very valuable. You can work with the doctor to get some of the tests that maybe, but but or not if you don't want to.

But, you see what I'm saying? Like, how do we keep it professional? Yeah. So I think every coach has to figure out, what set up is most attractive to them.

So I love coaching. I love working one on one with people. And I'm at a point in my career when I have all these other things that I do. I speak at conferences, I, write books, and I teach people how to cook online.

And you know, I don't need to coach, but I do it because I love having that one on one interactions with people's health journeys. And I learn so much about what the greater public and what the autoimmune community needs by specifically zeroing in on the experiences of a few people that have some difficult situations.

So I continue to coach, but for me, coaching is very depleting. And, so I recognize that I need some other things in my, in my life that are all related, you know, and, and as a health coach, you're not limited to one on one work.

So I would encourage people like, I have people in my program that just crush it with their practice and they've got, you know, their schedule lined out.

One thing to know is that if you practice virtually, you get to make your own schedule, but also you might be working with people in Dubai or the Philippines, which happened to me, when I started my practice and, and learning how to make your schedule not only to fit your lifestyle, but also people all over the world, it's a really cool opportunity, but takes a little bit of learning to, to figure out, you know, how do I connect with those people in Australia?

Maybe I need to have my Australian clients first thing in the morning. You know, on, you know, Mondays or whatever. You, you figure out a schedule. So for somebody that likes that flexibility and maybe you know, you want to work a few days in a row and you want to take a few days off.

I mean, virtual coaching is like there's nothing else like it. But also recognizing how you want to put together your business. And if you want to make your business mostly on one on one coaching, which is, you know, I think what a lot of people primarily think they're going to do when they become a health coach, but also you could do group coaching.

So all these studies that that we've run are based on my business partner, Angie Ault. She has a group coaching program where she takes 20 people at the same time through the transition, and they all support each other.

So there's multiple health coaches, there's an online platform, they get sent different, exercises, and they get cooking instruction and they get, coaching on troubleshooting and everything in their group.

But they do it as a group together. And this is a different way where, you know, you can help more people for a lower cost and, certain amount of time investment for you as the coach.

And then you could also make money, writing and speaking and teaching and doing classes and meals. I mean, of course, right now we can't do anything in person.

But, you know, there will be a time when when you can get in front of, you know, ten people or 100 people or a thousand people and teach them what you know, and, and do public lectures and online.

You know, there's blogs and books. So there's just so many opportunities for health coaches to share their knowledge. And I bring this up not to say that, you know, one on one coaching isn't the way to do it.

I love doing it. I still do it. But for some personality types it is really draining. I wake up in the middle of the night thinking about my clients often, and you know, it's why I can only have a certain amount because I feel very invested in their journeys and I know people who are just have a very, seamless approach in their lifestyle and in their businesses, and they can have a lot of clients and they can be effective coaches and walk a lot of people through some really challenging times at the same time.

So assessing yourself and what type of business you want to run. For me, it's a little bit ironic that I run my own business, but I love kind of a 9 to 5 schedule, so I kind of keep that.

Even though I make my own schedule, I make my own hours. I like to have kind of a traditional schedule, but I know other people who do things other ways.

And, you know, when you coach, especially virtually, you get to kind of make the rules, which is really fun. It's it's, truly emancipating to know you can write your own paycheck and live the style you want, but, you know, and you can go anywhere to do it.

This Covid thing barely affected any of our, let's say, more successful health coaches, the ones who already worked from home. We already worked from home.

I've been working from home since 2008, when I started teaching the course. And, it's just been remarkable. Think of all the money you saved do in commuting.

You don't even have to have pants on if you don't want. And you can, you know, get up at three in the morning and I go to bed. Really early. So. So I often get up, before the sun almost every day, and I can work.

And by noon I've got a whole day's work done by noon, and I can take. That's my backyard behind me. That's a picture of it in the in the landscape. That's literally from my poor my back porch in Southern California.

And, so, you know, I like to play outside and and you can do that. My, I have hobbies like gardening and motorcycle riding and things and, you get to spend the time with your family and do that.

But you mentioned an important part of health coaching. Being a professional, is to sit your hours. You know, you have certain appointment time. These are the hours that see my clients.

You know, it might be Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday or Monday. Wednesday three that you make it up from 1 to 5, you know, and that's your hours. You can tell clients it's the last thing you ever want to do is tell a potential client, call me any time.

Say no. Here's my card. My hours from one. Yeah yeah. Yep yep. You Brett that is such a big that is such a big thing that we have to address in our coaching program because I think a lot of coaches think are so eager for work that they are like giving away everything.

They are like here's my cell phone number. Text me when you're at the grocery store. And I, I'm like, no, you need to set boundaries with your clients.

When you take on a client, you need to tell them how and when to contact you. What type of communication is okay. Because really, like, we're not meant to be, you know, holding people's hands at whatever level they think they're getting.

So your job as a coach is to really outline the way you work and how you want to be communicated with. And, you know, like, personally, I do not want clients calling or texting me, like, I don't offer that, you know, I know some people do.

And if that's the way that you want to work and that's the way you want to live your life, fine. But that's not okay. In my business, I have office hours.

And if I have clients email me. I have a certain turnaround time that I let them know. You're welcome to email me. Please don't email me more than X amount of times, you know, because I don't want to be waking up every day to an email from the same client saying they didn't have, what, purple sweet potato?

So can I get white ones? Or, you know, I just want to let you know that I slept great last night. Like that's not appropriate communication. Or sometimes clients will try to email things that they really need to be talking, about in a session.

So identifying when like a reaction to a food or a supplement or something that is important to communicate to your coach and what can wait, like an observation and something that we can go through in coaching.

So those are all really important skills to learn as coaches is just identifying and setting those rules. Because as a coach that runs your own business, you get to do that.

You know? Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Same thing with the pricing. You know you see well here's how I work. And you give you hours. You can give some of those it's the services you do provide.

Like I don't mind telling people I don't do endless emails back and forth. I'm going to give you some assignments. We're going to agree on what you're going to accomplish, your goals and then we're going to meet in two weeks.

And you can just keep notes. You know, some things in an emergency, obviously I'm here, but like if they don't know how to pee in the cup to pour in the, to the for the test, you know, the, like in Google, I mean, you know.

Yeah. Well, the other thing is that you have to have done this all on yourself, you know, and if you're if you're living a, an organized, successful life in business, they start to get the idea because a lot of your clients are scattered, you know, at first because they're reading things, it's neurotoxins.

Professionalism, Boundaries, and Building a Coaching Practice

They really are in a sympathetic mode most more, way more often than they need to be. And if they start to get rid of the brain fog and and they start to get their lives more manageable to that, there's more, the better with their kids and with their spouses.

Yeah, yeah, but you have to model it first. Yeah. So. Yeah. And and also not ask too much. You know, I think in the early days I felt like I had learned so much that I wanted to share everything at every appointment.

I just wanted to like I was overloading them with, information and things to do. And now my approach is really scaled back. It's we're making really big basic changes.

So, you know, it might be just like, let's try gluten free. You know, instead of saying, let's do the elimination diet tomorrow, we might go at it in a stepwise fashion, learn how to cook some new things, have a chat with the husband and be like, hey, this is why you need to support me.

Because you know, if I'm a healthier person, then I'm, you know, a nicer person to be around. And I get to be with my kids and, you know, those kind of things take time and if you overload them with too many things, you're just going to get lots of questions and no compliance.

And, and yeah, there's there's a real art and skill to coaching that, you know, everyone, every coach does it a little different too. You know, I'm pretty hands off, and, that's okay.

I screen clients, I let them know how I work, and it's up to them if they want to work with me or not. You know? And if I'm not the right person, I'll refer them to a bunch of other people that I have identified as particularly skilled at the style of coaching that maybe might work better for them, you know.

Right. And so if you're not the right person, you have to recognize that. And if they're not the right person for you,

you got to recognize. Yeah. And you got to be brave enough to tell them.

So before we let you go, I want to ask you about your, course like that. What's your target audience? You know, who would be best suited to do that? Yeah.

So, we take any kind of practitioner that is licensed or certified to work one on one with people. So our training is an advanced training. So it's just information.

You get no skill practice, you don't get to do anything that you don't already have a certification or license to do before you took the program, but basically, it's for practitioners who want to integrate the autoimmune protocol into whatever they're doing.

So, you know, if you're a rheumatologist and you're a doctor and you treat people with rheumatoid arthritis, you might take the program so that you can familiarize yourself with autoimmune protocol and recommend it to your patients.

If your patients say, hey, does diet work? A rheumatologist might be like, yes, here's this autoimmune protocol. Or if they're really savvy, they might have a health coach or a nutritionist on their staff that they've also put through the program.

We've had that happen in a few situations, and all the way down to like, you know, I mentioned physical therapists or fitness instructors. Fitness is one of those areas that people with autoimmune disease and autoimmune bodies have a very hard time finding people that really understand some of the intricacies and complexities of how to move with an autoimmune body.

So they might not be coaching with nutrition, they might not be certified to do that, but they might actually be able to create workouts and, and help their clients that, that have autoimmune disease and then like health coaches, obviously, we're going to be we're going to be working with people on coaching with their diet and their lifestyle, advocating for themselves through the medical stuff.

So we have a lot of health coaches, but then we've had some really interesting practitioners, like we've had herbalist. We actually end up learning a lot from the herbalist because they teach us, about all these different plant medicines.

The naturopathy doctors also have a lot, a lot to share. So part of being in the program is learning from us implementation and kind of what we've learned from not only coaching all these people through, one on one in our practices and our groups and then through our, work with the blog, but then also learning from all of these practitioners and seeing how they're working with their autoimmune populations, learning about different treatments that might be available through an acupuncturist or, you know, it's just a beautiful network of collaboration.

And, and it's really cool. So, we are enrolling August 26th for our next group that starts in September, and we run the program twice a year. Angie and I teach it live, so we have, enrollment cap.

So all I would say is, if you guys are interested, get on our practitioner list. It's at AP certified.com. The enrollments usually sell out in a few days, so you got to be on it.

I wish we could scale and do more, but we really want to make sure that we get that one on one time with all of the students and that everyone has an environment where they can learn from each other.

Because I think that's, the way that we're going to build this movement really sustainably. Yeah. Fantastic. If you're not sold up for the next session, let me know, because I know certainly a lot of our graduates would love to get that.

Is that because you said it was advanced training? And it's it's like if you have some kind of health coaching certificate, if, you know, most of our people have like a bachelors degree and then then they've got some kind of training, maybe even 2 or 3 certificates and some experience, you know, but they're looking for that sort of special

thing.

I think that program could be just perfect for some. Cool. So let me know if you got any open spots before. Yeah, before the listing. And, we'll say thanks so much for being here.

It's been a real pleasure and great to get to know you better. And, we'll be talking again in the future. And, did you have any final words you wanted to say to the folks?

Now, just thank you so much for, addressing the topic of health coaching. You know, I, I think that, like, there's a lot of organizations that are talking about health coaching, and I really believe that a rising tide floats all boats.

This chronic illness epidemic is huge. And if you're listening and you're thinking there are so many health coaches out there, why would I do this? Honestly, just look at the state of health care in this country.

Like, look at how many people are sick. We need everybody. We need we need everyone. So even if you see a lot of people like me who you're like, oh, they already have a career doing that, there's no room for me.

There's room for you, like, get on board, you know, can you say it better than that? Thanks again. Mickey. Really appreciate it. Yeah.