Resonance: The Art and Science of Human Connection Transcript

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Opening on Resonance and the Podcast Reunion

What is the more that is possible? Because I believe that there's a more, that wants to live both through us and in the space between us. And the fundamental question I ask in a book is how do we become instruments for that song?

So a warm welcome back to the Evolution of Medicine podcast. Here we are with Michael Treanor. Welcome, Michael. Thank you, James. It's an honor to be here.

Great to see you. And for those of you who've been following along for a long time and you have an amazing memory, you will know that Michael's been on the platform before.

So actually, what ended up being a pretty salient and important moment in my whole career was the pre-party to the 2017 IFM conference. I was living in Venice then.

You also lived in Venezuela. We were just becoming friends. And that event was all about the brain. That was the first time that Dale Bredesen was really sort of cross pollinating with all of the functional medicine community.

So many things happened at that party in that week. One of which is that, you know, Dr. Christine Burke and many others from the functional medicine space took on the challenge of proving the methodology for the reversal of cognitive decline.

And so, that moment was really powerful, but you came on and gave a talk that night. So it's really cool to be here nine years on, and to able to talk about something that I think is like aligned and tangential.

It's one of the reasons why I wanted to have you on to come and talk to about your new book, Resonance. Thank you, James. Yeah, it was an honor. I actually still have both fond memories and just some incredible connections from that time with the forum and wanted to meet Terry Walls.

Dale Bredesen, obviously pretty legendary. As you know, I went through a pretty challenging journey with my father who had dementia. And so it's been a deep passion of mine with resonance.

I've made the journey for my, which we knew each other during my peak mind days, but made a journey more into the context of the social aspect of medicine.

From Peak Mind to Relational Health

As you know, the greatest corollary to our long-term health and happiness is the quality of our And I think it's an area that is deeply needed in the discussion right now.

And obviously there's a, which many of them are in your community, there are a great many doctors who can speak to a lot of the other tenants of wellbeing and wellness.

But I feel like on the social side, that's in area, I had some experience and credibility. That's really the essence of where I've been going with Resonance.

Yeah, I remember a few years ago, you would share that you were sort of hard pivoting on your book idea, because I know this book's been a long time in the offing.

Maybe you could just share a little bit about it. What was it about the term resonance that ended up here? And why did it feel like a more authentic expression of who you are and what you're here to do?

Yeah, beautiful question. Well, my last company was called Peak Mines, and it was a beautiful journey. A lot of it, was born out of my desire to help my father, who was literally a genius.

He was very humble, but he, so he would never say that. It'd probably be uncomfortable if I said that, But he was, literally, a, genius and, had dementia.

he first had cancer. And then when he actually, cancer went into remission and he diagnosed with dementia, that was when I was building Global Citizen, A music festival based in New York City.

Um, and something about dementia hit me harder than cancer, obviously, neither of them are, are diseases you want to, uh, come into contact with or, or to deal with with a loved one.

But dementia, hit harder because it was incurable, right? And so I took, I decided to take my father. I told him I'd take him on a trip anywhere in the world.

Uh, he was too humble to ask for, for me to him anywhere. And I, took him to South Africa and it, was on that trip, which was. Honestly, probably the best thing I've ever done in my life, to take that time in 10 days and create memories with the man I love the most on the planet.

It's an experience I'll never forget. And it was one where, even where he was kind of losing sight of the shore, where his cognitive, you know, faculties were diminishing and he, he had the awareness to realize it.

it, it a memory. He would create these books and I gave him a long walk to freedom, Nelson Mandela's biography. He read it and reread it so many times and he regifted it to me for Christmas.

And it was one of the, it's probably the material possession I prize the most. But I actually write about that in the book. I read about something called the relational bucket list, which is this idea of how can we actually orient our life?

You know, many people have heard about the idea a bucket lists as an, as, an organizational principle to have kind of epic experiences in your life. and I think it is a beautiful idea.

Some of our shared friends have been pioneers, Ben Nemton and others in that field. But for me, the piece that, that I think is most integral is the idea of how we can use experiences to deepen our relationships.

And when I started this book journey, The book that actually was was, I guess, given a contract to write or, or you know, giving a book offer for was called Magnetic.

And it was really based off the idea of creating experiences, which is still something I believe deeply in, but the publisher, because of the Global Citizen wanted I think more of how do you hosts Beyonce on stage, and how did you wind up getting to host His Holiness the Dalai Lama?

And those, of course, are deeply meaningful experiences in my life, but I didn't feel that they were the things that, while they, were probably noteworthy and could catch an audience in terms of the marketability, it didn' feel like the essence and the heart of really what I wanted to share, a bit more like what i'm sharing in regards to my journey with my father.

But I think the other piece is, which I think is true for all of us as we evolve, right? And so I wrote and then rewrote this book three times. Um, and it's been a six year journey.

And at first it was a very head heavy orientation, hence, you know, peak mind. It was very much oriented towards some of the cognitive tools that we can use to improve our relationships.

Father, Dementia, and the Birth of Resonance

But what I landed on was a much more holistic notion of relational health and relational intelligence, and really went deep into both the research and the science around, for example, co-regulation of our nervous systems, reached out to Lieberman, the head of neuroscience at UCLA.

Went deep on both, but also, you know, some of the, If you will, the musical elements of relationship building, which was also near and dear to my heart.

So much more around coherence and how we actually. orient ourselves, our own lives, but also our relational lives around that which is meant for us and using our feeling actually as a GPS.

So both the hard science, as well as, a bit more intuitive orientation in terms of the thermostat of knowing who is mean for and who's not meant us. I'll give a cogen example so it doesn't seem soft.

So basically one of the things I talk about, and we talk this notion relationally of givers and takers, right? And I think it's an incomplete though helpful distinction.

And what I talked about is something called batteries and black holes, so someone could be, for example, a taker in your life, they might be broke, or they may be a broke friend and you pick up the bill more often than not for dinner.

But they'd be the first person to show up for you if, God forbid, you're in the hospital. Or they make you laugh all the time. You need your kids picked up.

They're the First to Volunteer. To me, that's a battery. That's someone who still is generative. It's really based on how you feel when you are with them and when leave their presence.

Whereas someone who is a giver, you know, someone, who's always picking up the tab, they could be potentially utilizing their giving to manipulate you, right?

To kind of hook you in to that subtle desire for reciprocity and then drain you energetically. So what I'm getting at there is I think the common denominator is how do you actually feel around someone and what kind of feelings do they evoke?

And a lot of that goes to the deeper science and the emerging science around our nervous systems and how we actually co-regulate each other. And we become both psychologically and biologically more similar to people we spend the most time with.

So that journey and depth into what I would say is a more holistic orientation around relational health is what ultimately led to The Birth of Resonance.

Is this something that you can get better at? Is there something you that can improve or is there's something like you're born with a certain affect? Maybe there are certain interactions you have within your life.

There could be ACEs and there could toxins and other environmental things that will affect your ability to be co-resonant safety with others. Is that something where you could change and improve?

Or are you pretty much set from whatever happened in childhood? Yeah, I think that's a beautiful question. I'll use a kind of a functional medicine metaphor that just occurred to me as you were talking, which is, as, you know, and one of the things I went deep into as it relates to dementia is you can have a genetic predisposition, right?

Like you could have an APOE4 allele. And if you have one those genes, your three times more likely to get dementia. If you two, they say you're upwards of 10, 10 times, more like.

But as. Just because you have a, forgive the analogy, a loaded gun doesn't mean you to pull the trigger, right? So through epigenetics, through diet lifestyle, you can manage down that risk significantly and never actually have the

onset of dementia.

I would say in the context of relationships. I think there are orientations. I would say, for example, I will call myself now an Ambervert. So I'm deeply extroverted, but I need to go recharge by myself.

If I don't have time to recharge the battery that is me, The metaphor I use in the book is out of tune, but, as a child, to answer your question directly, I was an incredible introvert.

I would not associate myself as being an extrovert at all. Not only that, and I share this story in this book, When I was 12, my first experience abroad, I actually jumped by a gang.

About 20, 30 guys violently beat me. And so as a young person, 12 years old, developed what medicine would call an obsessive-compulsive disorder. In essence, ritualized my behavior to try to bring about a sense of safety in what now occurred to me to be an unsafe world or an insecure world.

So imagine introvert plus trauma was not a combination for relational intelligence. In fact, I just wanted to retreat into the nest of my home. But when, when college came around, so when I hit 18, that's when the OCD really flared up.

You know, conventional traditional Western medicine, you know recommended basically antidepressants to, to manage down the symptoms that were, that we're showing.

And I asked a deeper question of, okay, if I don't want to just treat the symptom and I actually want get to the root of this. fear-based dis-ease or disorder, what would you recommend?

And they said, well, basically, the only thing you can do is what they call exposure therapy. So, you know, if you're arachnophobic, slowly get closer to a spider, each day, maybe you get an inch closer kind of thing.

And not being one for half measures, I was like, okay, so basically I've got to go as deep into my fear as possible. And so my, my approach was I went to the other side of the world as far from my comfort zone as possible.

So I grew up in Chicago in the city and I wound up moving and studying abroad in Sri Lanka, which is literally, you know, the opposite side. In a country amidst civil war, where I stood out like a sore thumb as a six foot four white man and lived in a village where, we woke up at four in morning to sounds of monks chanting.

And it was about as for my frame and reality as humanly possible, And I share that to say, I wound up, which is a much longer story going into detail in the book, but I wind up getting invited to study with a seventh generation healer who had learned a form of Ayurvedic sort of shamanism.

It's called Bahutavidya, it's basically an occult form Ayuveda. Because in Sri Lanka, unlike the United States, part of the essence of what I get to in a book.

You know, in Sri Lanka, it's a very collectivist oriented culture, which we see in a lot of indigenous cultures, right? So the notion of individuality, Which has been exalted in the Western societies, It wasn't exalted in that same way.

So in sri lanka, if I were to say, James, can you pass me your book? I would say James Bukit Kakdena Puluwanda, is there unto you a book that can be passed?

It's passive and directional. You don't own anything. And so the way that that influences your consciousness is you become much more oriented towards the more of the collective rather than your individual center.

Trauma, Sri Lanka, and Finding the Heart Rhythm

Like your center of gravity isn't you and your, you know, the exalted individuality that we see in the West. And, so, when someone in that culture, as my teacher told me, When someone, in a culture has really lost their way, right?

Which we, see, I think in The West, we a ton of, Right? I was with an indigenous tribe in Venice, our former home. which is besieged by homeless populations, many of whom are on some type of drug.

And in those traditional cultures, there wasn't homelessness, right? No one could fall through the net because they recognized their interdependence. And so they said, there are people here where their spirits are living outside of their body.

That's how the indigenous shared to me what was happening with the homeless population. And that mirrored what I saw with my teacher in Sri Lanka. He said basically there's all kinds of homeopathic.

traditional oleopathic remedies for most ills. We see that with Chinese medicine, various holistic traditions, Ayurveda, very advanced scientific way of looking at medical traditions.

But he said, when people get really lost, which in the West might be someone who winds up in an insane asylum or winds a heavily drug addicted and it seems impossible to cure, their solution was an incredibly elaborate mechanism for bringing someone back into what he called the heart rhythm.

And the Heart Rhythm, as we all know, but maybe don't consciously think about, we, all for the first nine months of our life, were oriented and had our nervous systems evolve with the rhythm of our mother's heart, right?

We were in the ambiotic fluids, in darkness, the waters, and the only thing that we had to orient ourselves towards was the Rhythm of the Heart, our Mother's Heart.

And so what he said is health is the heart rhythm. Health is the beating of that drum, that balance. And when someone falls out of balance, they've lost that rhythm.

They've forgotten the rhythm of the heart. It's like they're lost in the woods and they can no longer hear that. Rhythm. And so from sunset to sunrise, they would ritually recreate, They would put that person in the middle of the circle and create over over two weeks.

They will build an elaborate palm fraud city with flower altar offerings and fire dancing. And they will basically create this elaborate offering to bring that Person back into a sense of being seen and heard by the collective.

and they bring them back into, it's what I call the seal team six. Like they brought in the heavy hitters ostensibly to bring that person back into balance because in that culture, there is no word for privacy.

There is not word possession. So if someone's out of balance, we're all out balance. And so the beauty of my exposure to that cultural was in witnessing and in participating in rebalancing of the collective, ironically on the other side of world, I brought myself back into balance and I transcended the need for drugs.

I was no longer obsessive compulsive when I. Irrationally ritualizing, right? Like I would check the doors. Check the stove. Do these traditional OCD behaviors.

Realized I always just trying to assuage my anxiety through ritual. But I didn't grow up in a culture where there was a socio-religious traffic that made sense.

So I created my own rituals, these neuroses, like checking the stove. And when I went into a cultural where was embodied in authentic religiosity and ritual behavior, I was reminded of.

my heart's rhythm and brought back into balance and, and therefore transcended my fear of other people. And as you know me, James, like have sensed, you travel.

Travel is one of my great passions and people are my passion. I think that's part of the journey with this book is how do we take our deep traumas or our fears and actually turn them into the gold of what is actually uniquely us.

You know, oftentimes those, my father, which is a story I share in the book, when he was 16 was burned horrifically, like third degree burns down to the, you know, down the bone and was told he would never walk again.

And so his whole life he, was afraid of fire. Years later when, he shepherded me through the men's work that I've shared with you personally, but I did the sort of the mankind project when I was in my dark night of The Soul, my dad sponsored my trip and he one of 150 men, he was the only father that showed up to walk me through, not far from your hometown there in a place in the central coast of California in 2004. And that marked a sea change for me.

It was an incredible instance where he showed up for me in a way that very few people had showed, up from me, in the past, which is part of why we developed the depth of the relationship that we did.

But during that process, we also did a sweat and we, did council fires. And I saw that he had, the thing that, he, had once deeply feared the fire had become, become something that.

He deeply loved, you know, and it became. You know, it became the symbol for our deep connection together. And so I share that to say, I think that there's, you know there, there is tremendous power in the things that we're afraid of.

Many of us are afraid other people, legitimately so. We're also in a brave new world now, obviously with the advent of AI and other tools that can also perpetuate that fear.

But what I shared in this book. is a seven principle, kind of like a Stephen Covey seven habits, but mine is more of a 7 principles that I used to help me basically come into a beautiful relationship with other people.

And I think that are tools that others can use to do the same. So the long story oriented answer to your question is I, think even if you're oriented towards being a deep introvert or do not find yourself, do you not hold yourself as relationally intelligent?

I absolutely think just like epigenetics, you can transcend the confines that hold you back and become much more relationally attuned. Oh, interesting. Well, there's so many pieces I want to pick up from what you just shared.

One very brief story I'll sell is that when I lived in Venice, we had homeless people who lived behind our house. It made my wife really uncomfortable because they would essentially have to move for us to get our car in every time.

But I found out, I spoke to one of them, this guy, Greg, who live behind me, that he had actually grown up in the house that I was living in at that moment.

And so it sent me differently. Because I had grown in community, I did feel a different way of trying to interact with him. My wife, Rachel, has got this photo of me, my daughter, who was four years old, wearing an Elsa outfit, and Greg, the homeless guy, all washing the car in the back of the house.

Because my first flush of feeling was to engage and connect because ultimately I felt like we live here, he has history from the House. And if you think in that community way being, that's just the natural way to be.

So Rachel wasn't necessarily in that same viewpoint and actually felt like reasonably afraid because he would know whether I was there or not if I traveling.

And I understand that too, young child, single woman by herself at that point. So that's a common thing. But I guess more broadly, I've been speaking for the last six months about a new way of thinking about functional medicine and in actually it's because of Dale Bredesen who coined this.

But now that I wrote a book on group visits and community as well, he talks about network sufficiency. And ultimately, if you look at it through the biological level, you reduce your biological network efficiency and you have disease.

You reduce you biological networks efficiency, and have the kind of issues that you're talking about. It's so interesting in that So many of the interventions that you're talking about are created in a culture where community is just the norm and the way that, you've described it so that it would be only obvious that interventions, that build network sufficiency would end up with the full solution of what you want.

Whereas in America, we see this little problem as it's pushed out. You know, Michael's OCD, he needs this antidepressant. Ultimately that's not really a solution for everything because the issue was the lack of the network.

I think there's a lot of parallels and insight into that, but that's what's really got me fired up at this moment.

Community, Loneliness, and the Role of Music

It's part of the reason why I wanted to do this interview is because I just see that your journey has taken you on a very similar path to understand a similar thing maybe from a different angle.

Just wanted to take a moment to thank our mission partners for helping bring this podcast to you. As you know, we are in the business of building a network of clinics that can reverse cognitive decline and our partners in that are organizations.

You can find out more if you go to goevomed.com and look at the mission But first and foremost, Truenura, if you go to truenura.com, you can get a demo.

This is the underlying software that will connect this network of clinics, and we have an incredible mastermind session, a lot of cool stuff coming out of that company.

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And then please also check out Freedom Practice Coaching, built and scaled a very successful brain health practice and has been instrumental in helping practitioners with the non-clinical aspects of running a practice doing this.

These are our mission partners. these are people that I know well, these people are top of their sphere and really excited to bring you the rest of the podcast.

Enjoy. Having as beautifully said, James, and I think that's so, it's, so astute, right? I Oftentimes I remember talking to Ben Greenfield and it was right after he had published this tome on biohacking.

And I was like, okay, if you could distill it all down to one thing that you would say is your core recommendation, what would it be? And he was basically like get back into nature.

Community, nature, these things that seem simple and You know, we've been, as you know we have been biologically wired through thousands of years of evolution.

And Terrence McKenna said the world has changed more since 1992 than it did in the previous thousand years. Right? And we're kind of in this brave new world where we don't know.

Like we are in a vast experiment. I think food, as you know, food used to be food. It wasn't ingredients. That was the ingredient. Now we have food-like substances that are forming the basis for biology and obviously causing a great many diseases and inputs we've never explored before in terms of technologies.

I mean, I'm old enough now. I lived pre-internet. And so we've had the advent of the personal computer, the cell phone, and now artificial intelligence in a very short period of time.

We don't necessarily know all of all the ways those are going to affect us as biologically and also socially, but I think In my view, the antidote to a lot of the challenges, no matter what we face, is in exactly what you're talking about, who is our network?

Who are the people that have our back? And where do we have people we can lean on and rely on? As you know, statistics are staggering in terms of loneliness right now.

Surgeon General just declared it an epidemic. I think that's the true epidemic of our time. And loneliness, by the way, isn't just people who are alone.

It's people, who identify as lonely, even and especially when they're with other people. The tragedy is many married people identify it as alone and lonely.

So I To me, we need to remind ourselves of a new kind of GPS into how we can, you know, the book I talk, I call it basically being in tune. So I use the metaphor of music because music is so powerful.

I don't know if we ever talked about this before, James, but did you ever see a live inside? Okay, so based on your interest and Bredesen's interest, One of the coolest things I've ever seen, and this is a true story, it's a film called The Lime Side.

I recommend anyone listening, watches it. It won Sundance. That was probably eight years ago. And what it was was there was a man who found out that he was going into the research around music and the medicinal value of music, which we're just scratching the surface of now in the scientific community.

But basically, he went into nursing homes. And I write about an experience similar to this. When my father was diagnosed with dementia, I was deeply afraid of putting the person I loved the most into a memory care facility.

And so I did something, what I call the flower blessing, where I actually bought a bunch of bouquets of flowers and went to a memory care center and just faced my fear and walked around and handed flowers out to people I didn't know, but just listened to their stories.

Somewhat similar, probably, to what you're talking about with the homeless gentleman that lived behind your house. And it was deeply medicinal for me.

This gentleman offered flowers in his own way, which is he actually took the time to learn what people's favorite songs were when they were children. And there's a scene which you can Google where there is a man who's kind of been left basically, which is unfortunately all too common in a nursing care facility.

He's an elder African-American man and he's sort of in the back of a room and his non-verbal, his head is down, he is in wheelchair and and has been basically left, ostensibly left to die.

You know, just in back there kind you know, very much alone. And this man took the time to find out his favorite songs when he was a kid. You can watch the scene.

It's one of the most powerful things I've ever seen. He takes this playlist and they place it on this mans ears. and I kid you not James, he goes, I remember 1939, Chet Baker, and literally in a way that no pharmaceutical intervention has ever done, music turned this Man's brain back on.

He was communicative, he was coherent. And I can tell you as someone who lived with someone with dementia, the moments where they actually get into lucidity are so precious.

It's like a gift from God. This man, through music, found the cheat code. He did it with multiple people. And, and this

was actually part of the Genesis for my interest in, in resonance in moving more towards what is the more that is possible.

Cause I, I believe that there's a more, that wants to live both through us and in the space between us. And the fundamental question I ask in a book is how do we become instruments for that song?

And what I witnessed. in this incredible scene is here was something that was he was a man who was basically given up on and yet they found the more that activated his deep memory and brought him back to life and I feel like this is such a powerful instance because I think just like our fingertips, we all have these unique notes, it's my particular belief that all of us are on this planet for a reason and we have this unique note that we're here to offer to the symphony of life and the world is waiting for us to offers that note to this symphony.

I talk in the book about, I use musical interludes to illuminate the principles, you know, think about the Beatles just because that's a band that everyone knows.

And it's like John Paul Ringo, they were all incredible musicians in and of their own right. But somehow the more of them together was exponential, right?

It was the Beatles, it was, the music that lives on for all of us. It's my belief that all us have a more that wants to live through us And the question is, how do we tune our instruments such that we can be available for that?

And oftentimes it's our relational intelligence. It's the people we relate to through which that more is born. I'd love to double down on that because you mentioned AI a couple of times.

I think a lot of practitioners are realizing that AI is extremely powerful and will be a part of medicine or is already a medicine. Part of what we've been talking about is really that in order to really maintain one's relevance and to improve one value as a health professional, doubling down into the human element because that all the things that I could do is going to get better.

And so what is it about the sort of co-creation of health with another human that you can get and better at? And I'm just wondering if you have some like tips for like a doctor or a healthcare professional who's feeling like, hey, I am not the only one that can interpret these labs, right?

But maybe I AM the one who can co create a healing process inside someone else and inspire and support them in their journey towards health. And I'm just wondering, what does it look like to tune an instrument for a health professional?

A beautiful question. So I'll give a very cogent example from a conversation I had yesterday for an hour with my cousin whose son has been suffering from chronic migraines for nine months.

Now, your audience probably has more insight into what would help them than I do, right?

AI, Functional Medicine, and Human Co-Creation

But she was asking me about several of the folks we know in our community. you know, Mark Hyman and Dr. Amon and, you, know and I suggested I, I do do function.

I'm, no relationship, but absolutely would I recommend getting labs? 100%. You know I am absolutely for some of the scientific tools and it's incredible the degree to which I think AI will be a supportive tool.

Now the existential threat, if you will, or the elephant in the room is, does it become a rep? Does it replace those practitioners? Right? I that's the question on all of our minds, no matter who we are, right?

Because so much of are our professional identity, so many of purpose is rooted in that identity. And what I would share is my belief is the antidote to that particular existential challenge is relationally based, because the one thing

AI cannot do is the relational intelligence piece, right?

Can it analyze labs and look for algorithmically for, you know, incredible synchronicities and compare that with all the different research papers that are currently published?

Yes. Can I do that potentially better in five years than most humans? Yeah. Is that an existential threat? yes. Like, let's all, like, keep it real. And the one piece it cannot do is, the interpersonal work, interpersonal dynamic.

You know I talked with my cousin yesterday and I said, well, It sounds like you're going to a lot of doctors that are quoting you solutions commensurate with their frame, right?

It's a little bit like, you are a nail looking for a hammer, but you haven't actually done the basic work, and you have found the practitioner. Most doctors, obviously this is very well known, they're just like systematically, like eight minutes, or maybe if you got like 20 minutes just because that's the nature the system has kind of put together.

And as you know, nutrition is not part of most medical school trainings. And she said, well, the one thing we haven't done is the food piece. She's like, but she's talking about doing advanced brain scans with Dr.

Amon's clinic. I was like look, I'm not saying don't do the advanced scan. You got to get the Holy Trinity sleep. food, exercise, you gotta dial in the majors before you major in minors.

And I feel like what I said was, find a practitioner that takes more than eight minutes to understand, what's the family history? When did the migrants start?

Your listeners will know way more about how to do this with excellence. But it is to say, I think there's gonna be a profound need profound need for kind of what I just shared about with the guy who found out and just took the time to know what the other person's favorite music is, right?

I think the degree to which you're willing to get into the interpersonal and to really become a specialist into, the relational intelligence that is so yearned for by people, you know, I would argue, I'm just making this up off the top of my head.

I don't have a research basis for this, but I will guess that a lot of people who go to therapy, yes, they have traumas. Yes, there are things they're working through, But sometimes they just want someone who's actually going to listen to them for an hour.

You know what I mean? Because they they haven't avoid, you know, They have avoid in their life of People who don' t have friends. Friendship is massively on the decline.

And so To me, I would say to practitioners, you know, and this is just my own, no orientation and intuition is can you become, how can your major in the areas that AI cannot replicate?

And for me that is in, the relational aspects, right. And then of course, utilize the AI in a way that it's excellent. I do think we should continue using tools that are helpful.

Do my labs, do wear an aura ring, but. I also recognize that, that health is obviously way beyond those numbers. And the things that I've found in my life that have thrown me off the most are when I feel relationally out of tune, you know, like you can, your life can be singing on all cylinders.

You could have an amazing job, be financially abundant, everything's going your way. But if you have a core relationship, Your spouse, or your child where you're not speaking or, You know, there's discord that is always on your mind.

That is affecting your nervous system. My HRV, when that happens, my HRB is dropping, right? Because that coherence is broken. And so I talk in the book about that, that notion of dissonance and how do we, because it's a

very human thing, we move through disonance.

How do we move through dissonance and get back into resonance? How did we actually use the tools that we have at our disposal to create coherence relationally?

And I think from a medical point of view, you know, how can we both take our specialties, which is I, think what, what the West does very well, right?

You get to be an expert in a particular aspect of the medical field. What I love about functional medicine is it's a much more holistic. So that doesn't mean you can't be a specialist, but it is a more wholistic approach.

And to me, I would add to that holistic approach, a relational frame. And cause I think, especially in the age of AI, that will become the antidote to the ills that plague us because unfortunately more and more people will, if we continue in direction we're going, will be besieged by loneliness and addiction to, you know, the devices that probably are not just outside our body will soon be implanted inside our bodies.

I mean, it's going to be a brave new world. So how do we get back to things that make us human? And to me that's rooted in relation. Yeah, I love that.

Well, look, we're definitely on the same wavelength. And I see, you know, having written the book on group visits in medicine and encouraging practitioners to really focus in on their psychosocial elements with people, I think it's more important than ever.

But I also think, You know I'm ready to, see that anyone can really implement into that. It's not really just about healthcare and about the transformation of chronic disease care.

it is really about rebuilding the social fabric, right? Which has been sort of gnawed away for a few few generations and then with COVID just to take it away from us and we see what a big impact it made.

I guess I'd love to ask you, since we've known each other, you've lived in many places. You're all around the world and different areas. What do you think about like physical stability?

I mean, I had that life for a while too, lived in New York and Venice and LA and moving around. I've been in one county here for like six years and, you know, just recognize that like it wasn't sustainable for me, especially with children, to live the kind of life that I grew up in, which was actually a lot of travel, moving, around South Africa, England, America, whatever.

And I guess I'd just love to understand your own thoughts on you know, place as it relates to community building. I think it's an incredible question plate.

Place, Family, and Building a Rooted Life

It's, it, honestly, the question on the top of my mind and on top my heart, you know, placemaking, I was journaling about it this morning in terms of, You know I deeply want a home.

I'm staying currently in a beautiful ranch that a friend of mine is graciously, he moved to Mexico city and, but you now I feel very gracially gifted with this space to create from, especially during this critical kind of book launch window, which as you, know having been through the journey is, can be destabilizing.

Can also be incredibly beautiful. But for me, I and many of your listeners have what I deeply yearn for, which I write about as well in the book. It is that notion of family, right?

And so partnership, family. Those are, those are the pieces. As I think about one of the things I asked in the book and one is what's your true North.

And for me, you know, it's a question I ask myself every year, but especially every decade, I, to speak honorably, we were friends at that time. But when I did the event with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which at the time I didn't kind of make my dad proud, that was 2016. You know that I hit the 10 year anniversary of that this year 2026. And to be totally frank, 10 years ago, I thought my life would look very different.

And I'm not complaining by any stretch, but I haven't created the kind of partnership and family and stability, for example, that you have in your life that is something I deeply yearn for in my live.

So I said, okay, over the course of the next 10 year, what am I optimizing for? I've had the good fortune of building some professional platforms that did very well and I am still ambitious.

But I wouldn't say that if all of a sudden I had a billion dollar business in 10 years, that that would bring anywhere near the satisfaction or fulfillment as say having a profound loving relationship and family.

By the way, I'm not naive to saying that's all bliss and utopia, obviously the challenges and the mirroring that affords and brings. But I just recognize that like what I'm optimizing for, what my true north is and what, I tune myself back when I get out of tune, when, When I lose signal is much more in tune with that.

Like I would like to find a place where I can call home. And to me that that's rooted in the context of partnership and family. I feel very graced and blessed.

And I know my, for example, the grass is always green on the other side, right? When I talk to my cousin who got married, you know, whatever, 20 years ago and lived in the same place for 20. She probably sees me in Indonesia or Mexico and has a little bit of like, Oh, wow, that looks great.

And to be fair, as you know, having lived in a lot of places, I do think it is great. And, you, know humans were nomadic for a great deal of time, but they were no matter, oftentimes in the context of family, partnership and children.

I think one of the great challenges we face, which is probably a podcast for another time is the research now around relating and relationship and how we get into a relationship.

Unfortunately, one the fastest growing populations are For example, my demographic, single men who are unpartnered without children. And the statistics now around young men are crazy.

I mean, I saw Scott Galloway's work, but like the amount of men, who have never been on a date, would never even had a sexual experience into like their mid-twenties.

Now, unfortunately, with these digital approximations, people aren't even getting into the messiness of relating. To me, that's not a personal issue. I still prioritize relationship.

But I'm just looking to call in my person and doing the work to do so. Not a, it's, not just a fantasy. That's a reality I am living into. but I do think that one of the great intentions personally, but also I think it goes to your previous question professionally is.

we are moving into a world approximation, where digital entities are calling for our attention. And if we're not conscientious and structured and oriented around building our true relationships, our human relationships.

Unfortunately, I think potential and possibility can be lost. And so that's something I'm really conscientious of and I think I still, per the point I made earlier around my youth, like travel and meeting people and being in Mexico and connecting with a grandmother that I never would have met otherwise, to me is deep medicine.

So that will always be a part of my life. But I really want to create a home, a rooted place in nature where I can build family. And then when an appropriate travel out together, as I know you do with your family, when the opportunity presents itself.

So that's the journey I'm moving towards in the next decade. But yeah, thanks for asking the question. That's definitely something I think about. Well, I appreciate that.

You know, the other thing, you know just, before we wrap is that, that feeling that you had in Sri Lanka where you saw a different way, having from growing up in community and seeing how, if nothing else, just damn right efficient it is.

To do their own thing. and the collective to be more valuable. And coming back, I see there's a huge pushback in nature. There's so many memes online of people, yeah, when I've gone buy some land and have all my friends live on there.

I live in that too. You know, been thinking about living communally. One of the things that's interesting is that as resources get stripped away from society, we go into sort of like a more bleak economic future Community is the only answer.

Ultimately, it's community or death. And so it actually like pushing American society, I think, where it needs to go, not just on a human level, but also on health level because of network sufficiency, psychosocial sufficency, and all of those kind of areas.

You don't need as many resources when you're supporting each other. So I think this is, you know, we're going to get some of the medicine and I just want to share my appreciation for you diving into the book and rewriting it three times and coming back to Share message.

Community as the Future of Health

I know the journey that it is and, I love the word resonance and as people read it, they will be attuned to what's necessary for them for where we are all heading.

And I'm really grateful that you're taking your chance to, share your voice with those who need to hear it. Thanks, James. You've always been, yeah, I think an incredible leader in the field and pushing it forward in regards to, you know, holistic medicine, holistic health, functional medicine.

Uh, we've known each other, think now almost a decade. So really grateful that you reached out. to invite me onto the platform. I know you have a tremendous number of incredible listeners that are in the functional medicine space.

And yeah, and so anyone who's interested, if you want to learn more, you'll probably link below, but resonance.biz has everything. and I'm going to look to do more community center to your very point.

The piece that I am most excited to build beyond the book is getting into that community activation. updates at Resonance.biz on that. But I've got some really fun ideas about exactly that, like experiences that we can create together to further, I think this, what I believe to be this very important work.

And it's an area, you know, not a medical doctor, and I'm medically trained. I have done a lot of research, but on the social side, feel like I put in my 10,000 hours.

So I really want to continue to being the listening and hopefully add value to those who are oriented towards relational intelligence. About that? All right, well, this is the Evolution of Medicine podcast.

We've been with Michael Traynor. Check out his book, Resonance. If you go to resonance.biz, you can get all the details on getting the book. Hearing the Book, downloading the books.

Buying the Books. And Michael, thanks for your contribution and thanks so much for tuning in. I'm the host, James Maskell and we'll see you next time.

So that was the podcast, what an epic session. Thank you so for much tuning into the evolution of medicine podcast we will be back again next week and thank you for so tuning.

and we'll see you next time.