The Hero Who Beat Heart Disease Without Surgery Transcript

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Introduction and Paul's Heart Disease Story

Well. Hello, everybody. Welcome. This is a really, really great and huge privilege for me to, bring to you for the reversing heart disease. Naturally, some had somebody who has reversed heart disease naturally.

And, you know, you can hear all these academic lectures and we have all the greats from Doctor Esselstyn, the doctor Bernard, the doctor Furman. But, a friend of all those people is Paul Chatman, who shares, Detroit suburban life and Florida life in the winter with me.

We, cycled back and forth, and I wanted to bring a real life, example of somebody who was told, of all kinds of cardiac procedures they were going to need to have quite a while ago.

I think it's 11 years ago. But I let Paul tell us and how, you know, 11 years later, there's no zipper on his chest, and we're going to try and work hard to keep a zipper away from his chest.

And that's a term we use in cardiology care for people who have had bypass or transplant or valve replacement. So, Paul, gentlemen, thank you for taking time from your incredibly busy life.

Well, I'm. Honored and anytime I can spend with one of my most favorite people on the planet, you, I. I volunteer every time. And it's a bromance for sure, as people say.

So I want to. You know, I've had the honor of reading and hearing your story, but I want to take people quickly to, what am I correct to say, fall of 2013?

Yes. And you started to feel poorly with kind of classic cardiac symptoms and shortness of breath and chest burning. I know you didn't realize it all the time, but just tell us all of a sudden you're in the Cleveland Clinic and they've examined your heart with cardiac catheterization.

Your lifestyle wasn't perfect, your diet wasn't perfect, your cholesterol wasn't perfect. And what were some of the procedures they were talking to you about that you might need to correct your very advanced heart disease in 2013.

Well, any time they say, you may, you might need either immediate bypass or a heart transplant. I think heart transplant was the trigger for wow. Like, oh my God, this this is really serious.

So that was the the findings, that they did up to the heart catheter after they had done every single test on me. And you were, you know, 55 or so. 54.

And, you know, married and a father and a businessman and, you know, you weren't exactly planning a heart transplant in 2013 when you made out your wish list for, you.

2013 Diagnosis and Lifestyle Change

Know, I you know, it's funny, I played pretty competitive tennis. So I was working my way playing tennis at a pretty good level. Up until the one moment I was in a meeting and I started sweating like crazy.

And I walked outside and could not take seven steps without. I did not have the honor of knowing you in 2013, but we went out to breakfast in the summer of 2013.

What would have been on your plate? What? I hope everyone, could appreciate and not laugh at me, but I probably would have had two orders of rye toast.

I would have had three eggs. A meat bouquet with hashbrowns done. Well, and, yeah, that's probably what I was with. An orange juice for health. Now. Lunch.

Ham and cheese. Turkey sandwich. All the above. All the above. And dinner. That was where the fun began. So, you know, I but I, I lived a very active life.

I was, lifting weights. I was playing tennis. I was on the move all the time. Bike ride, doing things. So I always thought that, hey, if I'm working out, you know, I'm going to be okay with what I eat.

Even though the underpinning of my life is every male chaplain died in their 50s. And now I was 54 at that time. Wow, wow. And, you know, that's why we got the sad the standard American diet.

And, you know, I speak to patients every day. Well, it's breakfast, lunch and dinner. And I hear the same exact menu that you're describing a lot. You know, we've got a lot of work to do.

And we'll talk about how you're working to educate people. So tell us, just that amazing moment at the Cleveland Clinic when you were offered an opportunity other than emergency bypass or even a transplant, how did that all happen?

Because some people don't know that. Right? Well, for me it was, you know, I go there and, you know, first of all, I got very lucky to get into the Cleveland Clinic the day before, I was going to have the heart catheter, heart biopsy at the local Beaumont hospital.

So I went to the Cleveland Clinic. They did the full battery of tests, and then I got ready for the heart catheter, not knowing was there going to be a heart transplant or, a bypass.

And I can remember, during the heart catheter where I'm in twilight, so kind of could hear everybody but can't function personally. And I hear the doctor, they're going, yes, yes, yes.

I'm like, why is he happy? So he said, good news and bad is good news is no heart transplant. But you do need bypass surgery. So that's that. That's when things change.

Because I was all prepped up for surgery and I'm being wheeled in for the bypass surgery. I'm thinking about my dad and his three brothers who passed in their 50s.

And I'm thinking, you know, hey, God, you know, like, you know how everyone does it. You get me out of this mess, I promise I will serve the rest of my life.

It was just that simple. I get to the surgical door and the doctor looks at me, says, I've only offered this to one other patient in 20 years, but would you be willing to make a lifestyle change and maybe we don't need to have bypass surgery today, even though my right arm was 100% blocked.

Immediately I looked at him. I said yes now. I didn't know what lifestyle change was. I just said yes or something. I had no idea what it really meant.

And he says okay. So he pulls me back from the gurney and gets me in kind of a, a room so I could recover and I get a phone handed to me who's on the other side?

Doctor Caldwell said, well, it turns out my cardiologist is mentor in med school was Doctor Caldwell Esselstyn. Now, I didn't know who he was. I just knew some guy was saying, well, just recover and go on home and I'll give you a call the morning.

And thus began my plant based life. I mean, you know, you really have to believe some angels, some providence, some somebody was watching over you because, you know, five minutes one way or another, different cardiologist, you know, in some other situation.

It's such a thin thread that that happens.

Recovery, Plant-Based Eating, and Sharing His Story

So you actually didn't volunteer to have bypass that day, and doctors then did call you the next morning? Well, the next morning he called me bright and early at eight, gave me the rundown immediately that day, got his book right.

It wasn't really a, you know, huge long book. And then, the next thing I did is I went to a local grocery store and learned how to a label read. And, you know, you got to remember back 13 years ago, 12, 13 years ago, there might have been 2 or 3 cookbooks on plant based, recipes.

It was a whole lot to choose from. But I also, as you know, I had an enlarged heart, leaky valves, scar, lordosis, the right side of the, aorta. I also had a left bundle block and a heart murmur.

So I was a hot mess. And what they decided to do is give me, to sleep. So for the next 45 to 6 days, they gave me enough pills. So I slept 16 hours a day to shrink the heart so the valves weren't bleeding out, and I'd wake up and all I would do is cook.

I would just try to find meals like. And, you know, I was not a vegetable lover. I did, in fact, I was a vegetable hater. Okay? Really didn't like vegetables.

But I said to myself, I could do anything for 60 days. So here I was eating broccoli and peas, Lima beans, and I'm like, oh, I don't really like this.

But something really cool happened in 14 to 20 days. My taste buds started changing, so I went from hating vegetables to, they're not so bad. I could get through it.

The most important thing was the angina that I lived with for months went away, so all of a sudden the weight started dropping. I was about 230 pounds.

And, you know, the weight started dropping off. The engine went away. I can't say even to this day, I love plant based food. I tolerate it, but what I, what I don't have to tolerate anymore is a surgery major, major surgery.

And that's my motivation every day. And July, I would say that the one thing I did I'm proud of is I made a promise to serve. I wouldn't say I'm a church serving the Lord, but just serve people the rest of my life.

And, learning that it's the food that causes so many illnesses. So thus, you know, initially I thought I was going to go after Blue Cross Blue Shield to change their pay code.

It was funny. I took a class, I expensed it, and they turned me down to Blue Cross Blue Shield and they said, you need a pay code. I said, oh, there's my gurney, promise.

I said I was going to give something back. I'll go. After changing their pay code. But then I thought I'd have to do what the Michigan legislature in Michigan, being the second biggest dairy producer, didn't really want to do that.

It's about an hour and 40 minutes from my house. So I thought, well, maybe I'll what I'll do is I'll just open up my house. I put a little $10 at $20 and the paper said, hey, I was able to stop heart disease, maybe reverse it.

Didn't know, but maybe. And if anybody would like to come to my house, I'll tell you my story. So we had 20 people over at my house in one month. The following month put the same at another 20 people.

I said, oh my God, this is it. I need to be able to expand that. But the problem was, and this is where my brother Joel comes in, I knew that I was I'm not a doctor, you know, I know a lot about nutrition, a lot more today than I ever have.

But I was asking people were asking me medical questions, so I knew I needed to have some, doctor by my side. So I called the head of, the three major hospitals.

I said, give me, three names of kind of a lifestyle. Dial a cardiologist. Each one gave me three names, but each one gave me the same name, repeated three times, Doctor Joel Kahn.

So people don't know this because they, you know, they know how we're connected. I didn't know who Joel Kahn was 12 years ago. Never heard of them. Sorry, Jill.

Never heard of them. Didn't know where he was. So I thought, well, I'll call him first. And that's when our friendship started. And he and you invited me over.

We spent four hours. I never called any of the other doctors. You and I became my patient nutrition support group. Let's get there in a minute. But I want to just stick to your medical history for a moment.

Here we are talking, you know, all those years after 2013. And I just want everybody listening to know you still, thank goodness never had a bypass. You don't have a zipper on your chest.

You never had a transplant, but you did find out along the way that it wasn't just the standard American diet. You found out you inherited a genetic cholesterol that we talk a lot about.

And some in this summit light bulb protein, little a and you really, been a test case because tell us about the research study you're in right now since there's no FDA approved drug for lipoproteins, but your contributing to the science and tell us what you're doing.

Well, about a year and it's well, it's been two years. I woke up one day and I started having the angina again. And I'm thinking to myself, tell me, how can this be plant Plant-Based?

I mean, how can it be? But got worse and worse. And I had to go back to the Cleveland Clinic and they said, you need to get a either a bypass again or a stent.

And, you know, everybody understands that when you get to a point where you say, I'm in so much pain, whatever you got to do.

Lp(a) Research and Stent Treatment

So sure of this, again, I got lucky. I had to get a stent. It's funny you say get lucky to get a stent, but I didn't need bypass. But I was angry till I was angry that I.

It changed the course of my family and myself 12 years ago, thinking I was part of that proof. Well, people that know about lipoprotein little. Hey. So I did my deep dive on it and found out it's genetic and it's kind of a secondary plaque.

Plaque factory for, human beings that they're just learning about. You were very helpful. And we were able to get into a phase three study that I go every three months.

I take about 20 gallons of blood out of me. I get a shot, and I'm part of 6000 people around the United States for this one study. There are two other studies going on at the same time.

So clearly the drug company knows they got to get to market because it's, you know, there's a way that they do medicine, thank God that they can reduce the number.

The number I have for lipoprotein the way was 350. It should be underneath 50. Right. So it's no wonder why I needed a stent. Right. So for what it's worth, just so I want to just I'll just fill in this last piece before I got into the study.

And right now, I don't know whether I bought the placebo placebo group or not. Let's hope I am. But, I was able to, through the connections that the organization found out that if I took a whole, a list of, like, 18 different little supplements, I was able to lower my lipoprotein away from 350 down to 200 in about a year.

So you could lower it, but still 200 should be under 50. It's not enough. So the good news for anybody is first, get your LP, test it immediately. If you got heart issues or what's amazing too is that the number you have at two years old is somewhat the number you have work.

However old you are, it doesn't change. Yeah. And then lastly, help is on the way. But we're still two, three, four years away from becoming a market.

So it's very important to know your number. Yeah. So there is some chance in 2025 the experimental drug you're taking will be approved. The study you're in will be the first one to complete the appropriate follow up.

And everybody's very eager to find out, the results and then see who qualifies for the drug and find out the side effects, too. It's not going to be a perfect ride.

I have some other people in the same study, and a few of them had minor side effects. That major, so you've contributed to science and you've also proven the point.

Whole food plant based doctor. Assistant eating is an amazing therapy, but there are genetic bumps in the road. And you. So now you after 1314 years of being a known heart patient, you have one stent.

You still don't have a bypass. You're still working on reversing your heart disease. Actually, just out of curiosity, what's your breakfast look like now after all these years of being a student in nutrition.

To anybody who's making a lifestyle change, I now recommend they go see, get some psychologists just just to kind of help you get through it. This lifestyle change, as I look back, very difficult.

The world's not set up for it. There's no restaurants that very few restaurants to go to. The support that you get from families always next. But today's breakfast, because I basically devalue the food I know I got to eat to live.

So now I will have a little salad for breakfast or, I don't know, with a bunch of vegetables, and then I just flip flop it for lunch and then for dinner.

It's what I do too. I batch cook now, there's maybe 7 or 8 meals that are okay. So I batch for the BSU or stew or whatever it might be. I got a brand new meatball recipe that was pretty darn good.

That kind of done. So I batch cook it and then I just rotate, rotate. But I just look at food so totally different than I used to. I used to wait, talked about food all day long growing up.

Now it's like, okay, I got here, okay, I'm done. Now I can go enjoy my day. Okay. I'll praise God those angels are watching over you still. And then in the last few minutes.

And don't be shy. You know, you talked about dedicating your life to helping others.

Daily Diet, PBNSG, and Sage Circle Alliance

So we got together in 2014. And really, your energy maybe a little bit. My credentials, but your energy. You created PB, NSG, dot org and everybody listening.

When this is over, go to your computer and look up p, b and as G or plant based nutrition support group.org, because you're going to want to see the recipes and the lectures and everything going on, you can join as a member wherever you live in the United States.

And you grow to thousands of participants learning basically how to do what you did. Maybe they did it for weight loss or diabetes or, the environment or the animals or their heart disease, thank God.

And then tell us about the newest thing you've added on your very busy life, Sage Circle Alliance. Tell us about that. Your your vision. All right, all right.

Let me just say that if you want to join PDC, it's a whopping $10 a month. And we're I'm proud to say that in two days we're changing our platform. So it's going to be state of the art, easy to work and walk through.

And you'll be connected to, we have 250,000 connections, so you'll be able to be part of a much larger family. But along the way, what I started realizing is, you know, I love the people, the frontiersmen who started plant based education, the Campbell's, the assistants, the Gregor's, and, you know, Doctor John McDougall, you know, and it's all these funny, they've talked to Joel Furman, Neil Bernard, everyone knows who they are, and they're all doing just fine.

They're all doing just fine. And I know they give their time freely to so many people. But what I realized was there's another section underneath that which I'm part of, of maybe another hundred different people who are trying to educate their communities.

But the benefits of nutrition before pills are procedures. So they could be speakers, nutritionists, doctors, really event people. It could be a variety, you know, it could be travel agents, whatever it is.

But each one of these people are working independently and alone. It and I started thinking about how you never hear anything from the Dairy Association.

There's so I have to be rich. It's unbelievable. You don't hear anything from the Meat Packing Association. Why? Because they're doing so well financially.

That's not what we need to do is create a plant based alliance or a union. Now, this has always been a pipe dream of mine, but I do open letters, kind of telling people what I think of the day and what I've learned from the day.

And I send it out every couple weeks. And then one of the letters, I said, I want to create a plant based union or alliance or association. If you're interested, let me know.

And all of a sudden, I got a call from Merrill Fury out of Chicago. And one of the things she does is child nutrition. Think about it. Children eat what their parents tell them that they tell them to eat that foods.

That's what they eat. And there's a reason why that generation is not living as long as our generation. So she said, come on, I want to join in and accept more open letters to all the connections I had.

And within about three months we had like 50 different organizations, like a union joining us, but they were closer to 57 different businesses and the idea is we want support leaders, we want change makers, we want to share resources.

We want to be able to, help each other with one voice. And I'm proud to say it's it's doing quite well and we're growing. So that's, Where can people go to to read more about it?

If you go under one long word sage Circle alliance.org. You'll see sage like the Erb right? Or sage like the wise person. Sage like wise. Person. Exactly.

Say GE Alliance dot or sage circle. Alliance.org. Yeah. Well, very very good. Your middle name isn't Herbert, by any chance? Now, by any chance? No. Okay. No, I did.

Well, this is exciting. So, you know, we had to take a little break during the pandemic and move live huge meetings for PB and as G dawg to virtual, and they're still virtual.

But you've brought back live meetings. And don't you have a, meeting coming up in early 2025? Yeah, a little flavor. What that's going to be. We had our very first meeting, a live meeting because, you know, when, you know, for years now, we hadn't had a meeting in four years.

All the members say, come on, do it like me do. Well, I think we're virtual. And, I said, okay, we're going to do it. So in Doctor Neil Bernard, brace the stage along with yourself and a few other people.

And, we had about 400 people show up, which is great, in the sweet spot of what we used to do every month. So we're going to have two events next year.

One is going to be you might want to market down May 22nd. And it's the headache is going to be doctors teaching, teaching patients.

Upcoming Events and Closing Remarks

And it will be at the Birmingham Groves Little Theater. More information will be following as we get a little bit closer. And then we're going to have Doctor Joel Furman headline us in October next year.

I haven't got the data. Think it's the 9th or 10th of October. It will be a two day event. We've never done that before. So we're probably going to have a big meeting one day.

The next day we'll follow it up with a lunch and learn, and we're going to talk about cancer and cancer prevention. Okay. And then we're going to expand out.

We're going to have a in September. We're going to have a publicity event. The Sage Circle at Vietnam Plant-Based Nutrition Movement will be sponsoring in Chicago DuPage College.

And then we'll also have one in Charlotte, North Carolina, and possibly Nashville, Tennessee. And there's a good chance, if you're listening to this and you're not living in suburban Detroit, where Paul and I spend most of our months, you can still join PBN discord because these things get recorded and you can watch the event if you're not there live.

So don't be put off if you're listening and saying it doesn't apply to me. Who wouldn't want to hear Doctor Joel Furman for a day and a half? You know, one of the most brilliant, brilliant people, to learn from.

And he's still going strong. I just talked to him the other day, and I know you talked to him quite a bit. Well, Mr. Paul Challen, thank you for your time.

Busy life. You really are like a prophet. You're not carrying two tablets like Moses, but perhaps two stocks of broccoli. But the world is a better place because of you, right?

Right. That's very kind. And I feel the same way. And what I could share with people is for, like I said, a whopping $10 a month. But one thing I'm very proud we've got 15 activities every single month with strategic support groups inside the plant based nutrition support group, and the one thing we did from day one is we recorded every single event we've ever done, and that's the most extensive library.

And there's the wild thing, the science hasn't changed. Day one that I started to this morning eat plants, fresh fruit, vegetables, beans, whole grains and you'll live a happier, longer life.

So all these greats that we had on the stage, we haven't recorded. So if you join us, you get you're privy to the entire library of great speakers. All right.

Well, thank you again. You, did a great job tonight. Today, educating, inspiring. And, hopefully everybody will join PBN. Asg.org is one more resource to keep themselves away from the hospital, away from the transplant, away.