## Brain-First Healing Philosophy

If there was one misconception about brain health, you wish you could permanently retire, what would it be and what should replace it? Yeah, so misconception, I would say that your brain can't heal, that it doesn't drive everything or we have to start with the gut first.

So I feel like your is primary, everything stems out of it. And so I really feel that we need to address the neurology in our body first, Welcome to Take Back My Brain with Lori Hammer, where real healing starts in the brain.

I'm Lori, a functional nutritionist and mom who's walked the path from anxiety and burnout to clarity and calm. Each week, we're going to dive into brain-based tools like amino acid therapy, gut health, fasting and faith to help you reclaim your energy, emotions and sense of self.

Hey, what if your anxiety isn't a mental health problem, but a missing nutrient? Today, I'm sharing a powerful conversation I had with Dr. Rob Silverman on the proven health alternatives.

We break down what's really driving anxiety, brain fog, and overwhelm and why so many people stay stuck. Because the truth is, you can't medicate away a nutrient deficiency, so let's get into the podcast.

Dr Rob, thanks for having me. I really appreciate it. I'm happy you're here. So you are known as the brain first person. Tell me a little bit about that.

Well, I believe that if we calm the brains first, then everything below the neck gets easier to deal with. It's hard to heal digestion if you've stuck in fight or flight, if have anxious thoughts, ruminating thoughts.

All those kind of things. If we can calm all that down, everything else below that gets better. So there's a gut-to-brain axis, and you're talking about the downward spiral.

## Podcast Introduction and Guest Welcome

We're taking about brain-gut axis. Brain-Gut access, yes. Outstanding. So what's the why behind taking back the brain? My why? Is that what you are asking?

Yeah, give me a why. Well, my why is because I struggled with anxiety, depression, eating disorder for over a decade when I was younger. calming the brain saved my life.

So amino acid therapy literally saved me life so without that I don't know that i would be here so that's what makes me really passionate and then I get to see thousands of clients over the years, the same thing happened to them.

And it just fires me up all the time. That's great. Now, that really caught my eye when you talked about amino acids. I mean, you talk about a bevy of amino acid.s I usually look at taurine as the amino-acid.

Taurine does decrease excitotoxicity. It closes down the synaptic cleft, and all that follows with that. So I want to go into a little bit of detail. Tell us about the amino- acids that you like.

Amino acids are building blocks of protein. and what do you like them for, and how you came about that. Yeah. So when I'm talking about amino acids, I mainly work with emotional pieces.

We're talking what neurotransmitters dictates, how we're feeling, our functioning, those kinds of things. I am looking at serotonin, GABA, your endorphins, you're catecholamines, then really that all bounces on glucose regulation.

figuring out which amino acids you're deficient in in those five different areas. So if we're talking about serotonin, could be 5-HTP, it could tryptophan.

I like to lean towards trypophane because that converts into so many different things, right? Where 5HDP only converts it converts in to seratonin but sometimes people don't respond to trypsophanes, so we need that 5 HTP.

When we were talking your endorphins, I'm going for D-phenylalanine. Because it just really calms that nervous system, makes you just feel like you're super joyful inside.

So your endorphins are like your inner joy. And so DPA really helps with that. When we're going with the catecholamines, it could be LPA, L-phenylalanine, D-L- phenyl alanine.

Could be tyrosine, which is a lot of my go-to for supporting that catecholamine process.

## Amino Acids for Mood and Neurotransmitters

So that helps you to focus your ADD, ADHD, kind of that apathetic depression, maybe you're craving things for focus, you know, for energy. It's helpful for your thyroid, all those kinds of things.

GABA, I love taurine. You know the GABAPathway tauring is amazing for that. Gaba itself, L-theanine There's lots of different things we could use there.

And then glutamine is amazing for that glucose regulation. So those are my basics. When I'm working with people, we kind of start with nine different amino acids, try them, and then see which one your body responds to.

Yeah, well, there's eight essential amino acids. I like to throw in lithium orotate in there because it's super brain protective. So when I'm sending out my sample kits to all my clients, you know, that we're going to trial them, because I do sublingual testing, so you get a kit in the mail from me, lithium-orotates always included in their too.

Great add, great add. Now glutamine, the most abundant amino acid in the body. Great for mucosal lining healing. Wonderful for muscle development. Leucine, The Signaler of Health, a gold medal winner.

I believe that leucin, because it stimulates the mTOR pathway in protein synthesis, is a longevity amino Absolutely. Absolutely, yeah. I love leucine.

You know, valine, isoleucin, all those. Those are amazing. The only challenge I have with some of those sometimes because I don't… I had so many people that come to me like on branched chain amino acids, right?

but they're still anxious, they are still depressed. So I actually have them stop that for just a little bit because they compete at the same receptor sites like of L-tryptophan, so it can drive that L tryptophane down.

And so if we've got anxiety, depression, OCD, I really want to build that pathway first and then we can add those back in. So those are the branch chain amino acids you mentioned before, leucine, isoleucin, and valine.

Valine? Yep. Excellent. Those, to me, they under the branches of essential amino acid are your core amino. Yeah, absolutely. Now, you are unique in that I don't hear a lot of people talk about amino-acids.

I hear them talk neurotransmitters. So that's fabulous. Let's segue that into brain health is not just about the brain. No, I mean, we were just talking about the gut-to-brain access.

We have to heal the guts in order for the brain to function well. There's so much communication. But I still feel if we call that support the brain with the amino acids, that helps the gut as well.

So I talk about brain first therapy, but let's honestly, you know, there's so much tryptophan, so there is so serotonin going on in the guy. You know?

So when you're taking these specific amino acid for those specific neurotransmitters, it's working in both aspects. Yeah, I wrote a couple of things down when I was thinking of you last night, you know, and coming on the podcast.

Number one, we don't lose cognition overnight. We lose signaling integrity first. That is true. Two, brain health is no longer a neurological issue. It's a systems biology issue, that's why it's got the brain, the super high way to health.

So what kind of tests do you recommend to enable you to know which amino acids to prescribe? So the amino acid testing I do is super simple. I send you the kit of amino acids in the mail, and then we actually open up the capsules, put them underneath our tongues, stare at each other awkwardly for like two minutes, And see what your body and your brain does with the Amino Acid.

You'll notice a difference. something will shift, whether it's you feel calmer or the weight has lifted off your chest. Maybe your shoulders feel better.

Or maybe your stomach doesn't have the knot in it anymore. The green is greener, the blue is bluer. That happens that fast with amino acids. And so I don't rely on blood or urine testing for any of that.

I go off a symptom-based questionnaire in those five categories that we talked about, and I just keep it super simple because then people are like, oh my gosh, I actually feel a difference with this supplement, right?

And then they know that that's going to help them in the long run. So it also helps with the psychology of it all, the emotional component of at all. People are so used to taking supplements, they're like I don't know if it's helping or not.

But when you do the sublingual testing with amino acids and your anxiety goes down right away, then you know Another thing that I really like about the fact that you incorporate amino acids is we look at muscle recovery and muscle mass.

You know, muscle, mass, the longevity organ, Gabriella line, et cetera. And most people don't look the aminos like that. They look them as an adjunct.

We look a protein. But protein's not going to function well without proper amino acid profiles and ratios. Exactly. It's foundational to every single thing in your body, whether it's your hair, skin, or nails, muscles, to your hormones, It's everything.

Let's talk a little bit about something called neuroplasticity or brain neurogenesis. So those amino acids are having a positive effect on the brain, so they enable you to rewire your brain neurons so you can refire them.

Correct.

## Testing Amino Acid Deficiencies

That's the idea of neuro plasticity. Take me through which amino acid you like to utilize for that. I'm just going to stick with those five categories, to be honest, and then tryptophan is huge for So when you get that brain calmed down, you don't have those OCD thoughts anymore, because that's going to convert into so many different things.

Eventually, it's gonna convert in to NAD, and everybody's talking about NID, right? Right. So it is huge for brain health. you know, sometimes we'll use like a full spectrum amino acid, not just the essentials, but the full-spectrum.

So I like the Total Amino Solutions by Genesa, and I liked to use that because people are deficient in all of the amino acids, it's not those essential eight.

And so like you were saying, if you don't have that beautiful profile, It's hard for your body, hard, for you brain to regenerate and, you for that neuroplasticity piece.

I think all them are essential. Neurodegenerative disease is on the rise without question. Alzheimer's through the roof, Parkinson's coming up close, we've got ALS.

We've had a lot of autoimmune conditions that will be perceived as neurodegeneral disease. How are you finding your prescription of amino acids, those nine essential amino acid, help to attenuate a of the symptomology of neuro-digeneral diseases?

And Dr. Rob, I see it helping so many people all the time. It's always part of my protocol. So there's never not a time that I don't use the amino acids.

Whether you have MS, you've ALS, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's. We're always using the mean acids, that's my first line of defense I like to say. Because when you nourish the nervous system, because that's what we're doing with amino acids, then things can heal.

If you don't nourished the foundation of, I mean, when we created in the womb, what is it, our spinal cord, everything comes out of that. So if we don' go back to the nerve system and we dont feed it which is really what you're dealing with the amino acid because it's food for the body, you dont' feed you can't regenerate.

You can detox without the proper amino acid protocol. So there's just so many components there. Anxiety, top of everybody's list right now, unfortunately.

Why do so people suffer from anxiety when they're doing all the right things? I think it's multifactorial. One, you're probably deficient in amino acids.

That's what I see all of the time. Even though you are eating good food, food is still deficient, so I feel like we need to take that supplemental amino acids.

We get caught up in society, we were just talking a little bit about politics before that. we're listening to the wrong things, We focus our brain, and we focus on our emotions on things that we don't really have control over.

And so that makes us anxious and then when our emotional system is anxious, then our physical system suffers, right? So it's always mentally, emotional, physical.

I think we just forget who we are, who God created us to be, and that makes us anxious. You know, when you talk about amino acid supplementation and many people talk of supplementations, how does this amino-acid supplementing differ from the supplement you may just get in a health food store?

## Neuroplasticity, Neurodegeneration, and Anxiety

Hey, friend, just a quick break to remind you if calming your brain is the missing piece in your practice or in you home, my Mind Thrive certification course teaches you exactly how to do that with targeted amino acid therapy.

So it's real science, real results, no band-aids. Enrollment is now open. Link is in the show notes. Back to the Show. This is targeted. Therapeutic doses, very targeted towards what's going on in could go take a random amino acid supplement and it's not going to give you the results that the targeted therapeutic doses will give.

Great. So here's one for you. You're going love this. Since you and I both believe in not just root cause resolution, root causes resolution. Why don't medications fix the root caused causes of anxiety and depression for so many people?

Well, because it's not nourishing the brain. So it is just masking the symptoms and it shutting down your body's own mechanisms. Well let's use serotonin as an example because SSRIs are an epidemic and I hate them.

SSRIs will stop your body's recycling process. So tryptophan, like we talked before, recycles into lots of different things. Your body uses it as it needs it.

And so an SSR stops that whole process right? And it falsely inflates serotonin in between the two synapses. And that's why over time, it just doesn't work anymore because it's not creating new seratonin.

It's giving your body the nutrients to create it itself, right. So when you're using the amino acids, we're saying, hey, wake up, seretonin, because here's some nutrition for you.

start making your own stuff again, and it will, right? And then it recycles it. And it has such a profound effect, not just on your mood, but it affects your muscles, it effects your heart, how your digestion works.

Where medication just kind of hinders all of that. It's basically a long-term antibiotic in your gut. it kills your microbiome. So there's lots of factors there.

Yeah, the drugs are pointed at diminishing the symptoms, which have that place, but not really pointed out root cause in many instances. You mentioned serotonin.

Serotonins, 93% of seratonin comes from the gut. So we've got that gut to brain, brain to gut access. Whatever you do to your gut, you duty brain. Whenever you're duty your brain you are dutying your got.

The biggest nerve is that critical nerve that communicates the brain and the got, You talk a lot about calming the brain first. What does that really mean in practice?

Well, it's just nourishing your whole system. Because when you have enough protein, you're having enough amino acids, your having the fats, that's going to calm that whole neurology.

And so we're kind of, we are top down creatures, right? We eat here first, We think here, first. We're top-down. So when we calm this down, then everything else gets better.

Let's look at anxiety. I'm afraid of heights. It's fine if I don't know it, but once I see it it's, I am a different person. And I have shaking, and I want to sit on the ground.

and my wife will say, it is a small hill. But to me, It is Mount Everest. Right. So how quick can I turn that around with supplementation? Really, really fast, to be honest.

I'll tell you my fear. Great. And so when I know I'm going to driving on a long bridge, I take some extra tryptophan, or if there's just water on both sides of the road.

But when I have enough tryptophan, my serotonin is good. There might still be that thought process there because it is a fear, but I'm not going to have that physical response anymore.

And then I can logically tell myself, you're fine. This is small hill. this is not a big bridge. It's not gonna collapse. You know what I mean? So when your neurology is nourished, when you have amino acids, your thought process becomes more logical.

So essentially, because I'm not taking those amino acids, I admit it. And I am afraid of bridges myself. I hate to tell you that. You can drive over a bridge, and I'll go with you.

But if I have to drive a over bridge I will stop just as I come to the bridge and say, uh-uh, back it up. Let's go get a bicycle and go across the walkway.

That must be causing some stress and trauma and inflaming the brain. Yeah, definitely. Can we address that other than taking the tryptophan? You could take a full spectrum amino acid.

I really feel like there's a deficiency issue going on there with you, Dr. Rob, so I would make sure. You're not the only one who thinks there is deficiency with me.

So I would just encourage you to take that. I mean, you can try to talk yourself out of it, but we don't have to white knuckle through everything. Sometimes it's just a deficiency.

And then when we fix the deficiency, support that deficiency then we can let go so we're not white-knuckling. Then we tell ourselves like, this is okay.

We can drive across the bridge, we walk across a bridge. The bridge is stable, all those kinds of things. What are the most common deficiencies you see in high-functioning women?

Because women are making a move. The gender of 2026, if I can say that, is without question of females, growing in all businesses. We're watching female basketball more.

They're great to watch on the basketball guy. So let's address that because everything's always been based on dosage on men, not females. women very deficient in serotonin, so that's why they're stuck on SSRIs and they are stuck in ADHD medications.

So their catecholamines are low. Those would be the two biggest areas I would say, but most people are going to be low in the GABA area as well. I don't know, you have to assess all five different areas.

But I would say anxiety is on the rise in women because there's kind of, we're shining more now because people are noticing and those kinds of things, but there is also that extra pressure.

And so we are not taking care of ourselves as well as we could.

## Womenu2019s Brain Health and Fasting

We're not resting as much. All women who come to me are undernourished. Nobody's eating enough protein or enough healthy fats, skipping so many meals.

I love fasting, but not on a daily basis. You know, so there's lots of disruption that's going on there. So I think as the women are rising, we also need to talk more about how do we nourish ourselves better and amino acids as part of that conversation.

You know, it's funny you mentioned and you just segue into intermittent fasting. There's an article that just came out that said it may not be as effective as we thought.

Having lectured on intermittent fasting, women have to intermittent fast differently than men. Absolutely. So I'm a push button because I am a male. 12, 12. 14 and 10. 16 and 8. It doesn't really matter.

But women, especially of the age of menstruation, poses an issue because when progesterone goes up, That's a common effect in the last two weeks of that traditional cycle.

However, stress, and intermittent fasting is a little bit of a stress decreases progesterone. You're putting women into a tailspin. So you're really highlighting probably a conversation that we should talk about and have a whole intermittent fast.

Women have to intermittent and fast different than men. Here's my suggestion. I suggest that if women start the first two weeks of their cycle 16 and 8, so 16 hours of a fast, 8 hours are feeding, perfect.

Week 3, take it down to 14 and 10. And week 4, when progesterone really spikes and you don't want to knock it out and go into PMS, which is a real thing, Men, it's a real thing.

It's not a made up term. Get them down to 12 and 12. If you cycle them like that, intermittent fasting will be much more effective. Men you can stay at 14 and 10 and 16 and eight, like I said.

So I got a call today and I put somebody on a new protocol. And they said, why do I feel worse on a new protocol than better initially? Help me, Laurie, please.

Oh, well, maybe your body's detoxing. Your body is trying to heal. It's kind of like when you break your leg. Once they set it, it doesn't feel better.

it still hurts. And you're going to go through ups and downs as that leg is healing. whatever health protocol you might be on, there's going to be ups and down as your body heals.

That's just nature. Let's talk a little bit about some non-pharmaceutical pathways to brain optimization, something that I've seen you talk about. in a lot of different podcasts, because you are without question, you're a hot topic on podcasts.

You're all over the place. Nobody talks about amino acids for the brain. When I'm talking with my guys and my gals and team, and I say amino acid for brain, they look at me and go, we haven't heard that.

I said, well, haven heard it because I haven' said it, Because we're in our little… In a little bubble. Yeah, that's it. Help me out, Laurie. We're talking amino-acids, right?

So we can continue talking about that, But just even going outside and grounding yourself, like putting your toes on the ground. So, you know, just shift the ions in your body.

That helps with your brain health. You know walking out in the sunshine. I teach all my clients to get out and that early morning sunlight, go for a walk that boosts your serotonin, boost your dopamine, your endorphins.

you need the sun shining your eyeballs. Go out midday. go out again at, you know, sunset so that your body gets in rhythm with nature. And so we can take all the amino acids we want, but if you're not doing the practical things, too, whether it's eating enough protein, getting out in the sunshine, grounding, swimming in water that's not chlorinated, all those kind of things.

We still have to change the lifestyle that we're living to in order for our brain health to shape, to changing how you think. So many of us live in fear and we've got these negative thoughts going on.

Well, God didn't create our brain to live that way. He gave us a beautiful brains.

## Lifestyle, Detox, and Brain Health Prevention

We should live empower love in a sound mind, right? So it's changing our thought patterns. It's change the way that we speak. Life and death is in the power of the tongue.

So there's lots of components there outside of just those basic nutritional supplements that I agree with you. I think it's lifestyle, and we don't talk about brain health enough.

We take it for granted. And we think that it is just an organ that's going to function for the 70 to 100 years that we live. So where is brain-health headed in the next five to 10 years?

I want you to look in your crystal ball. Yeah, I think that's going to be a hot topic because there is so much neurological degeneration going on. So it has to a topic if we want to still survive and thrive as a society.

You can live to 80 or 90 with dementia, but that is not aging well. How do we prevent that dementia? How we do prevent Parkinson's? I live in Iowa. It's like glyphosate central here.

We're so toxic here, there's so many Parkinson. and dementia, thyroid cancer, all those kinds of things. So we have to have those conversations. Otherwise, we're going to end up with, you know, on every corner, We're gonna have a new nursing home.

Or, so I think we need to know how to detox the body, detox, the brain properly, So that we can reverse these things that are happening in our society.

So you really talk about prevention for brain health like decades before, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's. ALS, interesting. Alzheimer is more common to women.

Parkinson is common with men. Autoimmune, much more commonly with women, you can make a case and we can have a discussion that this is all based on our exposure, like you said, to chemicals.

Absolutely. Look what we put on our bodies as women that you don't put your bodies on as men. Well, you'd be surprised what I do. I'm a little metro when it comes to that, but I know what you mean.

My husband uses nothing. And I have to tell him, honey, please put some lotion on your head. It's dry. Right? You know, because you just don't, most men dont do a lot of extra body care.

Well, we've got makeup, lotion, the conditioner, you know weve got everything as women, spray tans, women are doing Botox, where most of the time men do not do Botax.

We've all these things that we're putting in our body that are toxic. So we have to have that conversation. How can we get clean makeup? How do we do clean lotion?

Why is Botocs toxic? All those kinds of things. So, yeah, the conversation definitely needs to be had because definitely women suffer from more autoimmune and neurodegeneration than men do.

Yeah, to speak about chemicals, glyphosate, you and I both hate glyphasate. It just came across my desk last week, believe it or not. Obviously, I always eat gluten-free oatmeal, but there's a glyophosates- free gluten free oatmeal now.

That comes from one degree. I didn't know that. Yes, it was a patient. You learn so much from your patients. So why don't you share one thing to ensure cognitive health over the next 10 years?

Eat enough protein and make sure it's clean. Make sure its from animals that haven't been vaccinated, that have been eating glyphosate sprayed hay and grass.

I think that is key because if we don t have enough proteins, we do not have amino acids in our body. So I got a quote, what they call a closing reflection on the brain right now.

Number one is brain health is not about perfection. It's about adaptability, resilience, and informed self leadership. I know you'll like that self-leadership thing.

Self leadership, you are responsible for your own health. A thousand percent. Yeah. So where do you see yourself in your practice go in the next five or 10 years?

I always like to ask the guests, like, where, do we see ourselves? Where do we see ourselves? I see myself being the leading authority in brain health and amino acids for sure.

And I've been training practitioners probably for the last 10 years in amino acid therapy. I have my own course set and certification that I trained. So I see that growing so that this gets more mainstream.

When you ask your staff, what do you know about amino acids? They'll be like, oh yeah, I heard that because not just Laurie's talking about it. We have a hundred other practitioners that are implementing this amino-acid therapy every single time.

How did you get so precise with the amino acids? Like I said, what you're doing is unique. It shouldn't be, but it is without question cutting edge, maybe even leading edge.

Which is so funny, because it's been around for decades, right? So when I first learned about amino acid therapy, it was my own struggle with an eating disorder, anxiety, depression.

And I went to a clinic that used amino-acid therapy. Julia Ross is one of the pioneers in aminoacet therapy And so I learned a lot of stuff from her and it's been around and so we just need to keep talking about it.

So I wrote this down yesterday. I told you I had a couple for you in the back. If there was one misconception about brain health, you wish you could permanently retire.

What would it be and what should replace it?

## Foundations, Rapid Fire, and Closing Takeaways

So it is two questions. Yeah. So misconception, I would say that your brain can't heal, that it doesn't drive everything, or we have to start with the gut first.

I feel like your is primary. Everything stems out of it. And so I really feel that we need to address the neurology in our body first, and then what was the second part of the question?

And what would you replace it with? I would just make sure everybody's taking their amino acids every single day instead of going down the rabbit trail of…

And this is not that you shouldn't talk about these things, but the MTHFR or the genetics, let's just go back to foundations, right? So I really want people to go to back foundations.

Fats, proteins, minerals, those are all foundation. If you have those covered, then you can go down your rabbit trail. But if those aren't covered let not deviate from the foundational pieces that God gave us to live well.

So amino acids, your foundation. So let's do some rapid fire. I'll hit you with some other supplements. Tell me what you think about it. Why not? Pre and probiotics?

Those are good. Omega-3 fatty acids fish oils? I'm not a fan. Okay. Vitamin D3 with K2? Um, I would say mid-range. Multi-vitamin, multi-mineral? It depends on the quality.

How about creatine with amino acid? I am not opposed to creatine, but I'm not the craze on the creatinine. I never use it in my practice. But if somebody wants to use and they feel a difference with it, I think it's great, But I don't use that as a mainstream brain health supplement.

NADH. Mm, that's good. So amino acids before. Amino acids is before, i don' really ever need to recommend it but i know some people use to get good results with that.

after a meal. If we're using it therapeutically, I would say before a meals on an empty stomach. Okay. Um, if you're just using as like a supplement, just to kind of maintain things, go ahead and take it with a me.

So amino acids good for mental health, gut health muscle. muscle recovery hormones hormones okay great yeah i always like to end my friend listens from geneva and he's like rob you do you know i'm really happy with your podcast you've got some great guests as you have been illuminating give him one thing to do differently on Monday because he's on his, he is my age, 60, on this health trail now.

Awesome. So double your protein. There you go. Well, it's been a pleasure. I mean, we did this rapid fire, but I knew that was going to happen. You've got that New York style, even though you live in Iowa, I'll tell you that.

Thank you. Love to see you do it again. And I'm going add amino acids into my practice armamentarium. Thanks, Dr. Rob. It's a been pleasure Thanks Lori.

See you soon. Proven Health Alternatives. Thanks for listening to Take Back My Brain. If today's episode helped you connect with hope or direction, I want you to follow the show, leave us a review, and share it with someone who needs it.

And if you're ready to start your own healing journey, explore our courses and our coaching programs at lorihammer.com backslash store. So until next time, remember you cannot medicate away a nutrient deficiency and healing your brain isn't just possible, it's Powerful.