Introduction and Guest Background

Welcome back to the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. I'm your host, doctor Heather Sanderson. I'm so excited to have my dear friend and an expert in the field doctor healer cast with us today.

She is a recognized pioneer in holistic and functional medicine and psychiatry. Doctor Kass is a frequent guest on radio, TV, podcasts and documentaries.

She's written several popular books, including Natural Highs and Eight Weeks to Vibrant Health. She helps people enhance their mind, mood and memory using diet, lifestyle and targeted nutritional supplements.

The latest addition to her toolbox is CBD, which greatly enhances and the effects of the other nutrients. And she's also founded her own line of CBD products.

Her website is Cascades, md.com. Thank you so much for joining us today. It's such a pleasure to have you, and it's such a pleasure to be on the show.

This is great. Thank you. So I just can't wait to learn more about how you're using CBD. You know, I look up to you as a mentor in this field and to hear that you found something new and exciting that you see helping people is I mean, I just can't wait to dive into it.

So how did you how did you discover this was helpful? To begin with, I am a functional medicine psychiatrist, so I'm always using nutritional supplements rather than medications.

And I'm always looking at what's new. So, in terms of dealing with anxiety, depression, withdrawal from meds, addiction, whatever, I've always used amino acids, vitamins, essential fatty acids, you know, the usual.

It's not the usual, but it's usual for for me and those of us who practice as we do. And when CBD came along, actually, when I first came along, I, I, I'm not really a fan of high dose THC.

It's just, not something that ever appeal to me. So when I first heard of it, I thought it was an excuse to get high and said, I'm not. I'm not content with that.

Then I began to read about it. Then I began to use it on my patients, and it was a game changer. It was like, what? This this product does so much, you know, it helps.

And I obviously I was helping people with addiction and getting off meds. It was shortening the time that it took to do it.

Discovering CBD and the Endocannabinoid System

And it was treating their, original problem, which was anxiety, depression, which had to do with their neurotransmitter balance. And inflammation, which is also underlying much of psychiatric conditions.

And it has all these properties. And at first I was wondering, as you might wonder, well, is this a panacea? Is it hype is a placebo effect? Well, the good news is it's not.

It's that it works on something called the endocannabinoid system. And endocannabinoid system is a balancer. It's a metabolic balancer and communicator, or adaptogenic system, which helps all the different systems of the body communicate with each other.

The GI system, with the brain, with hormones, heart, the cardiovascular system, renal system. Everything is

connected through the endocannabinoid system.

So when you are when your endocannabinoid system is low and it's not functioning properly, then you're going to have trouble in some of these areas. And so the good news is that when you bring in CBD and you raise the endocannabinoid system and it becomes more efficient and effective.

So many different symptoms will be handled with it. You and I, you know, I think this is what we get most excited about, right? When you stumble across something that or like you, you're always looking for the newest and the best and the research.

When you find something that really helps to elevate everything, every cell in the body, every signaling system, when you find something that does that.

It's it's so exciting. I think the question then becomes, well, is there does it make you happy? Is there a side effect? Is there something we have to be worried about?

Well, the getting high effect is from THC. Now, both CBD and THC are derived from cannabis. Cannabis is the parent plant. But then there's hemp. Hemp has been bred for centuries to be stalky.

You know, big stalks, big leaves and used for the production of paper, cloth and building materials. So it's a different kind of cannabis. And that is where the CBD comes from.

So it has much less THC. And in fact, by legal definition, if you can sell it over the counter, if it's under 0.3% THC content, over 0.3% THC, then you're into the marijuana department and you're dealing with getting it a dispensary.

I see, and so where at what percentage with someone expected to feel high? That's a really good question. That 0.3% is not going to make you high. Usually you need at least five milligrams of THC.

So the more compounds that that are low to you that's considered low THC five milligrams. So that works synergistically with the CBD. And for some conditions it's preferable.

So you totally dispensary a got it. This idea of synergy is so exciting to me. And certainly it's what I've seen clinically as well, is that CBD tends to enhance the effects of other things.

So curcumin is much more anti-inflammatory when it's mixed with CBD. Any pick a garbage pick, pick something off the shelf. And if you add CBD to it, it seems to make it work better.

And it's so nice to hear you validate that. And I'm curious if you know why. Well, it's a potentiate for it. Whatever. It, for example, is a neurotransmitters that almost acts the same way as an SSRI, which is it blocks the reuptake, so blocks the uptake of the neurotransmitter precursor and the neuro and the neurotransmitter.

The neurotransmitter will make many more hits onto the receptors. So it hits the receptor and there's a signal, and then it goes back into the synapse and it hits again.

And and that's the effect of the CBD. And how are people typically consuming this. So is it topical. Is it oral. It particularly in the case of Alzheimer's if someone is looking to reverse their dementia.

I know you mentioned mechanisms like, certainly inflammation, neurotransmitters are being affected and said that might help the dementia. But if I have either a loved one with dementia or my myself, I'm starting to struggle with cognitive decline.

How would I take it? How would I use this? Well, I actually use combinations because the tincture, which is the oil, it's actually an oil, not a tincture.

But we call it tinctures and CBD for some reason. But it's the liquid and droppers and you take a drop or put it

under your tongue and leave it under your tongue for 30 to 60s and it's absorbed sublingual through the capillaries, and it goes into your bloodstream more quickly and your brain is right close by.

So it's going to go to your brain pretty quickly. On the other hand, you can take capsule.

CBD Forms, Dosing, and Synergy

And the capsule has to go through the digestive system and the liver first pass through the liver and it takes longer to break down and be digested, but then you have it later.

So it starts. It comes on later, and it lasts longer. So I will have people with dementia today, in fact, with a lot of conditions, pain as well. You take it under the tongue and at the same time you take a capsule.

So you have A12 punch. Got it. Okay. And so that to be super clear, no one's talking about something you would smoke or inhale in any way. Well, you actually can vape CBD and vaping is not smoking.

It's kept at a controlled temperature where it's not going to cause a problem. Though there were some vapes that came through. Those were THC vapes that had some toxic ingredients.

That has not been so for the CBD vapes, but you always want to know who your manufacturer is. And do they use good manufacturing practices? You know, this is such a great, this point, I think that a lot of people don't realize is that the supplement industry is not particularly well regulated.

And so there's a really big, discrepancy, maybe we could say a wide spectrum between people who are have high integrity and are creating these products, and then those who may be cutting corners.

And there's not a regulatory agency that's doing a great job identifying who is in which category. So you, you know, kind of the solution. This it sounds like you created your own company.

Can you talk a little bit about how you make sure that those products are really high quality? Well, to begin with, just in general, even aside from mine, I would want to be buying from a company that has a medical person in an important position, a medical director or medical advisor, and it can be.

It doesn't have to be a physician, you know, it could be, well, it could be an MD, ndo, nurse practitioner, but somebody with really good training and can give professional input.

I get a little nervous about them. Are big marketers. You know, they found a product. Oh, this is hot. We're going to sell a ton of it, and they'll say anything.

And by the way, we can't make disease claims. You know, on my website, I absolutely can't say it treats pain or treats anxiety treats depression, treats dementia, GI problems, Crohn's disease, PMS, menopause, inflammation.

I could go on and on. I can say that. So, you know, it's kind of hard to market something when you can't say those things. But when you look at a website that's making all those claims, you know that they haven't had their legal.

They they don't have a lawyer looking at it. And those are the ones that get letters. They do get letters from the FDA telling to cease and desist, to pay a fine, to give restitution to their customers.

It's serious, but also sounds like if they're cutting that corner, it makes you wonder what other corners they're cutting out. Of course, of course. Yeah, yeah.

It's just not a professional approach to things. When you're going against the the FDA, you do want to say so the law of 1994. And I'm saying that because I was around then and I was part of the group that was trying to get that to change, I was going to take supplements off the market.

But there was a compromise made with the FDA that as long as we may or the supplement industry made structure and function claims, but didn't make disease claims, we were okay.

So people are people get upset because why doesn't say on the body I don't what it does. You know, why can't you say it? Why can't you say it like why don't you say it on your website?

Well, we're not allowed to, so we have to do it indirectly and do it in programs like this where I can educate. Yeah. Oh, good. Yeah. So what are what are the mechanisms that we're looking we're looking at with dementia.

Well the same is with anything. It works on the endocannabinoid system. And in, in the brain we have the CB1 receptors and they're throughout the body. And actually what we have are endogenous or internal, cannabinoids, endocannabinoids that we make, we actually make our own CBD anandamide into a G or the best known of them.

And CBD comes along and it boosts our natural endocannabinoids. It acts, it keeps it going longer. Memories of neurotransmitters lasting longer in the synapse.

It does the same with our natural anandamide into a G. So it reinforces it. So if you have a low endocannabinoid system and so you're going to have, you could have inflammation depression, anxiety all of those symptoms any or all.

If you you likely will have you are low in your endocannabinoids. So we can enforce them with phyto or from plant cannabinoids like CBD. So we reinforce reinforcing our own natural.

Quality Control and Regulatory Concerns

So it's a very nice dance between nature, external nature, things that are grown and our nature. And that's what we're meant for. We're meant to have natural solutions and the body runs with it.

We have our best pharmacy inside us. It is not CVS and Walgreens. You know, it's internal. And if we give, if we feed the right things to our body and brain, we get miracles.

They look like miracles. But it's it's nature. It's nature at its best, doing what it does best. Can you talk about any of the miracles that you've seen?

Well, if you want to talk about I've seen them in many different areas. One of them in particular is very interesting. I had a woman, 87 year old woman brought to me by her, daughter and son in law, and they were ready to put her in a home because she wasn't remembering things.

She was lethargic. And she came in and they almost didn't have to bring orange because she didn't talk. She was just like, had kind of her head down and certain one she, oh, I don't, I don't know.

And I don't remember just she wasn't home. And it was really sad to see. And she had been a very vital woman, very smart businesswoman, but was failing at this point.

So, she was also once the medications. And I was concerned that the medications were causing the issues and they were psychiatric medications that I didn't think she needed.

So I gave them a program for, tapering her off of them and added a few supplements neurotransmitter precursors, some amino acids, some, essential fatty acid, mega threes and CBD, which I call hemp oil extract because it's more than just CBD.

CBD, there's a hemp will extract also contains other cannabinoids as well as flavonoids and terpenes. So it's really quite a cocktail. And we call that the entourage effect, where they all work synergistically.

So I prescribed a hemp oil extract in increasing doses and gradually decreasing doses of the medication. Anyway,

they somehow got it wrong. So it, you know, nothing bad happened.

But they took her off the medication over two weeks when I had planned on doing it over a few months. Nonetheless. Nonetheless, things happen. That was unusual.

But what what did happen was she got her brain back. So two weeks later, they contact me and say, this is unbelievable. We have her back. She's remembering things.

We're taking her to restaurants, and she remembers that she's been there. She remembers what her favorite foods are. She's able to talk politics like she always has.

And that was in such contrast to the woman I had seen in my office. And I was like, I was very happy they were back. Yeah. Wow. Yeah, miraculous. So that's miraculous.

And that continued for quite some time. It did turn out that she had mold in her environment, which is something else I uncovered. So this wasn't a typical Alzheimer's, but it was actually due to mold.

And so she had to move and, treat for mold and so on. And that helped as well. But that was down the line. First we had to get her just home, right. And there was medications.

So there were kind of two components here. One was she probably needed to go through a physiologic withdrawal from those medications. And it sounds like perhaps the reason they were able to do it so quickly and successfully was because of the addition of, probably all of what you gave them, certainly the amino acids, the fatty acids and then the CBD.

Yes, yes or no. What happened was, she didn't want to take all those pills. She kind of rebelled, and they were able to use the tincture in the capsule.

That was. I insisted on that. So she was taking the 25 milligram capsule twice daily, and, I don't remember the exact dose of the tincture that she was taking, but they built up probably like 50mg a day over the course of a day, maybe 25 and 25.

And then the capsules at both ends. And so, as I said earlier, the the tincture gets, gets to go in earlier. And then you take the capsules and they start long later, but they last longer.

So that was that was a really good success story. So she didn't have a lot of the amino acids or the fatty acids. She was really getting the CBD primarily as she went through that withdrawal process.

Yeah. And I'm wondering if it helped with the mold because it helps with brain inflammation. You know, how it. Yeah. And one of the effects, negative effects of mold is to cause brain inflammation, of course.

Yeah. And we've I also see a lot of mold patients and clinically. And the number one complaint I would say across the board is brain fog or memory lapses or this kind of fatigue, this brain fatigue, like a lack of motivation and a struggle to find words very, very similar to what Alzheimer's and dementia patients feel.

Right? Yeah. So how exciting. When you talk about so hemp oil, CBD, there's this helps us so many of these underlying causes.

CBD for Dementia and Brain Recovery

So when we treat when we address those root causes, does that mean that people end up getting off of this. Or is it something that you typically recommend using long term?

What's really interesting is it actually has a neuro plastic effect. It affects the brain in a way that it starts to heal itself. It, develops different pathways.

It creates neurogenesis, which means we actually develop new nerve cells. So it's new nerve cells, new pathways. And after a while you can actually reduce it.

And for many people they're able to reduce it. Some people can come off it and then just take it as needed. It's really variable. And I tell people, you know, it's very individual, your doses individual.

And so is how long you should be on it. And the good news is people can titrate that themselves. Yeah. And probably also great to be working with a provider like you who can coach them through that, who has some clinical experience, who understands some of these mechanisms and can make sure that that's all done safely.

Right? Yeah. I'm not practicing clinically now. But I am educating people about the use of CBD. Fantastic. And so needed. So I love, it kind of talking about this neurogenesis and the synaptic genesis.

It has so much to do with dementia and that we must if we're having trouble creating new memories. That is absolutely essential to recovery, that we need to be able to create these new connections, new neurons.

We've got to be sending those signals to create, you know, those useful signals that are associated with good memory, good mood. So dementia is treatable.

You've seen this in your in your office. Can you talk a little bit more about what the other root causes are? We've mentioned mold and then the addition of CBD and how that can be helpful.

What else are you addressing or what else do you do? You coach newer doctors near providers to, to look for? Well, basically there's so many reasons for brain inflammation, TBI, head injury, mold, Lyme, any, any infection.

And, you know, you name it, many, many things affect the brain. And so we have to do a differential diagnosis and treat whatever issue is underlying that.

And by the way, I just want to mention that many people with dementia also have other things that are going on, which is they can't. For example, they have trouble sleeping because their circadian rhythm is really off.

Now there's sundowning they're, up at night, they're sleeping during the day. And one of the things that CBD does is it helps to regulate the circadian rhythm.

So it gets your rhythm back on track and also helps with, regulating the different stages of sleep. You know, there's REM sleep, deep Delta sleep, all these different stages, and you want to have all the stages.

So just it's a it's like it adjusts your internal clock. How amazing. And then you also mentioned when we've chatted before that, it enhances nerve growth factor is, is one of the ways in which it creates this synaptic genesis and neurogenesis.

Yeah. It enhances Bdnf which brain derived growth and nerve growth factor. So it's very, very good for the brain and the nervous system. And then also you mentioned the immune system.

Yeah. It works peripherally on the immune system which is in the periphery and in the gut. And that's primarily through CBD, CB2 receptors. And great for immunity, great for cytokine storm even.

It helps too. It's like it's like an adaptogen. So if your immune system is overreacting as it does in cytokine storm, this will actually mitigate it.

Or it may be autoimmune disease as well. Right? It helps to modulate whatever your immune system is doing. That is not a healthy arrangement. I love that word modulation.

And this comes up great in our world in functional medicine of how do we how do we enhance function. So we're bringing down overactive function like in the case of autoimmune disease or cytokine storms, but bringing up the

good function of the immune system, like in the case of fighting off a cancer or Lyme disease or pigeon giblets or herpes, any of these things that can go to the brain and cause dementia.

So again, like CBD, as I'm learning from you, has so many applications in so many of the different root causes that show up with Alzheimer's, but it has effect on hormones.

And we know that hormones affect the brain. You know, women who, who are menopausal, who are low in estrogen, have a decreasing brain function. And when they add exogenous estrogen, as they start taking estrogen, it enhances their brain function.

And CBD, affects your hormones in a positive way. It helps you work more effectively. Kash, is there any reason everyone shouldn't be taking it? Good point.

You know, some people think, well, I don't really need it. There's nothing wrong. Then they'll take it and they'll say, oh, that's funny, I had this knee pain and I just sort of thought, well, that's just how it is.

You know, a sports injury, blah blah. And the pain goes away there. Oh that's or they're taking it, let's say a woman saying it for PMS and she notices that it helps with headaches.

It actually helps with migraines as well, which is quite remarkable because well, that's a tough one to treat. And I've had people take it. If you take you can take fairly high doses, but it works.

It doesn't work 100% is it works for everyone, but it works for a lot of people that have found no relief from anything else. How incredible. That's wonderful.

So where can people find out more about getting those really high quality CBD products?

Root Causes of Cognitive Decline

We want to have a certificate of analysis available, which means it's been third party tested, that the product is sent away to an independent lab that says what's in it is supposed what's supposed to be in it is in it.

So you get a complete analysis of the content. The other issue is you want to organically grown because hemp is a concentrator, which means any kind of junk that's in the soil is going to be concentrated into the hemp.

By the way, kale is also concentrator. So, people eating a lot of healthy kale, unless you're sure where it's grown and it's really organic. That's my little aside for the day here.

But hemp is a concentrator in that sense of this, pesticides, herbicides, heavy metals, residue from past growing. For whatever reason, it's going to be concentrated into the hemp plant, and you're going to be ingesting it unless you get something that's organically grown that you can rely on.

It's been organically grown. They don't just say it, that it really is. And then third thing, a patient brought it to me that I hadn't really thought about recently was, well, with all these herbs, not only do they need to be organically grown, but then organically processed, right?

Because even after harvesting, you know, it's been grown now it's being processed and harvested in that process there is risk of mold, rate of mold growing.

So are they putting fungicides on it at that point, or what are they doing in the processing where they could be adding additional chemicals or even additives into the capsule, or into the tincture or the oil?

So having that entire process, maintaining that integrity is so important as well. And that's where you have to trust your manufacture. I mean, we use CO2 extraction so that doesn't use chemicals.

It's the most natural form of extraction. It's a little more expensive, but you know that you don't have you're not adding anything. In fact, that's why I like the full spectrum.

That's with THC, because you don't have to pull out the THC, which is an alcohol process. Then you have to pull out the alcohol. So better to get the full spectrum, which is the most natural form, and that amount of THC.

And it 0.3% is not going to make you high, but it may have a little bit of the beneficial effect of. The only downside to the full spectrum is for people who cannot, because of their job, show a positive drug test, and because THC, even in those tiny amounts, can actually accumulate in the fat cells and can actually show up.

And people are totally surprised, but it'll show up in a urine test. So for those people, it's probably best to take the isolate. Okay, so this would be like the hemp process.

The hemp plant is being processed to take the THC out as well. Or is is probably more likely like a different sort of marijuana type cannabis where they're separating the THC and the CBD.

Now I'm talking about just the like our plants, the plants that come from our local farms, the grown in the, heartland of America near Chicago. And, they they're taken. Right.

It's a very short distance from the farms, taken right to the processing plant and processed so they don't hang around in warehouses and get moldy. I mean, they're harvested, they're brought in, they're extracted by CO2 extraction.

And, when you use when you extract at the first time, what you're getting is the full spectrum. You're getting everything. When you start to take out the THC, even though it's a really tiny amount, you may have several damage.

You may actually pull out some of the other good goodies, and you're introducing chemicals of necessity. So, although I started out just having, non thc unconscious product, we've really discovered all this.

And it's a real it's a, it's an evolutionary process here. I learn as I go and as I learn I change how I do things. So now I've introduced, a THC line, which I actually really like.

It's being it's really popular. How exciting.

Immune, Hormonal, and Sleep Benefits

And and yes, you know, it is such a thrilling time to be in this world because we are learning so much more, especially as there are more and more, there's FDA approval, there's more states that are opening up access.

And as things shift away from it just being considered a drug to it being considered more of a medicine, and as understanding the nuances of the different cannabinoids.

There is so much, just to learn and to, to grow on and to add to come to our toolbox. Absolutely. One of the the diagnoses that is CBD and also the ketogenic diet was they was heavily popularized for and research with epilepsy.

And now we're we're kind of seeing that the ketogenic diet as well as CBD is very helpful for dementias. And there must be some sort of overlap in, epilepsy, a sort of almost like a neurodegenerative process, or there is a neurodegenerative process behind it.

And so it's sort of fascinating to watch these interventions work across, different diagnoses. Absolutely. And also for neurodegenerative disease. We all this everything I'm saying is research based.

You know, this is all there's thousands of papers. And so anyone who says there's no research just as an open a peer reviewed journal lately, you know, it's right there.

So Parkinson's Ms. ALS there's been research in all of them. And it's very helpful in all of them. And it's it's I feel it. That's why I'm hosting this summit. Right.

Because we you and I see it every day. That memory can be restored, that we can reverse cognitive decline. And yet still so many people are going to their neurologist even afraid to mention that they're having, struggles with their memory because they're worried that there's nothing that can be done.

Yeah. And they're put on the usual drugs, you know, for the for dementia, the don't really work very well. You know, it's the usual thing. Things like antidepressants, they don't really work very well.

And you're much better off using nature's pharmacy. Now, that doesn't mean, by the way, if anybody's listening and they're on an antidepressant or an anti-anxiety medication, please don't go off it.

All of a sudden, you really need to have a discussion with your doctor and taper off slowly. Many doctors don't know how to do this. And you know, they're really good.

They're taught how to put people on drugs. They are not taught how to take them off properly, and sometimes they'll take them off precipitously. And then the person goes into heavy withdrawal and they're miserable.

It's terrible, terrible symptoms. And the doctor says, so you really needed it. But no, your brain changed. Your brain was changed by the meds. So when you take the the medication away, the brain is totally lopsided and shows up with a lot of symptoms.

But if you do it gradually, with the help. So there's two two sides to it. It's like, you need to go slow and you need to support with nutritional supplements.

And if you do that and then add it and add and CBD in the process, you have a really quick and much easier, safer, effective, tapering process.

Research, Tapering Medications, and Closing Remarks

We see this with the acetylcholinesterase inhibitors as well. We've had a couple patients come to Marana really excited, to get off of Namenda or one of the other medications commonly used for dementia.

And what happens is we get a quick decline if they are doing that without the support of a doctor like you or I, where they get the nutritional supplements and they go really slowly and they're we're kind of braced to know what to expect.

Like, okay, that's a little quick because we're noticing cognitive decline. And I couldn't agree more that it's so important to make sure you're working with a well trained provider if you are going to get off any of these medications that are affecting, these neurotransmitters, because absolutely, your brain is changing and we need to be able to support that process.

Right? Yeah. I'm so glad you are there doing your work. Thank you. It's really I am so deeply grateful for the opportunity to do it. It's so incredible to see people get their brains back, as you mentioned, with your patient.

You know, just watching someone, it's almost like a plant that hasn't been watered. Watching them perk back up and come back into the world of awareness is worth dedicating my life to, that's for sure.

Doctor has it has been an absolute pleasure to have you here. I am so grateful to you to be that you are doing the work to get CBD out to the people who can use it, who might be suffering with pain, dementia, depression, anxiety unnecessarily.

So thank you for doing the work that you were doing, and it's been an absolute pleasure having you here. Well, likewise, the pleasure's mine. And by the way, I have a gift for your listeners.

Fantastic. And it's a discount on their first order of my hemp oil extract using the code D r h ten, which stands for doctor Heather ten. I think there's enough.

So you you'll put that in your shownotes. Absolutely. That'll be in the show notes. There will be a link. So that'll be quick and easy for everyone. And I'm excited for everyone to get the benefit of your complete extract.

Thank you and thanks for having me. Just so appreciate it. I appreciate your work, I appreciate you, thank you. Right back at.