Mastering Menopause with an Embodied Compassion Approach Transcript

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Welcome and Guest Introduction

Hi, everyone. Welcome back to the Mastering the Menopause Transition Summit. I am your host, doctor Sharon Stills, and we have a good one for you right now.

So get ready. My guest today is back to cure a bar. And she is a mindfulness mentor. She's an embodiment coach. She's a dual board certified integrative dermatologist.

She's a certified trauma informed life coach. She's written a bestselling book called The Skin Whisperer Whisperer. We're going to ask her about that. I love that title.

And so she just really ties together mindfulness, which is such an important piece for me, and the skin. And we all want to know about our skin and what we can do to keep it looking healthy.

And so I am super excited to have you here today and share all your wisdom and knowledge with us. So welcome, welcome. Thank you. I'm excited for this conversation.

Lisa. And like I said, I love, I love how are you? You were rising. I know, I thought it was you, but I'm on an island. I don't know if my internet is.

Hi, everyone. So good to see you here again. Welcome to the Mastering the Menopause Transition Summit. I'm your host, doctor Sharon Stills. It's always a joy and an honor to be here with you.

Sharing all this amazing information. Today is going to be another good one. I am so looking forward to the conversation we're going to have with my special guest to share a bar.

From Dermatology to Mindfulness and Healing

She's a mindfulness mentor. She's an embodiment coach. She's a dual board certified dermatologist. She's written a bestselling book called The Skin Whisperer, which I think is such a cool title.

And so we are just going to talk about your skin inside, outside mindfulness, all my favorite topics. So thank you so much for being here. Welcome, welcome. Thank you. Thank you.

So I guess just for starters, you have such a vast and interesting resume of all that you do. So how did you go from being a dermatologist to getting into natural healing and mindfulness and all of these other things?

Yeah, I'd like to say it was some lovely story, but I think for many of us it's like when poop hits the fan, things, you know, like stuff changes, right?

Your mess becomes your mission. And so about a decade ago, you know, the focus of my practice in dermatology was skin cancer and melanoma. And I was running ultramarathons at the time that I was the peak of health and my skin was changing.

I was developing new moles, pigment deletions. They were darker. I was having biopsies every couple of months. They were more and more atypical until I found the one on my arm that I had a diagnosis, early melanoma.

And that really was my wake up call. That how I was living wasn't necessarily serving me. And from there it was more gut issues and hormone issues, and my health just really spiraled out of control.

Going to my traditional Western trained colleagues. I was just getting pills and other things that weren't helping me.

And that's what led me to integrative functional medicine and really understanding connecting the dots for myself, that all of the issues that I was having, the underpinning was stress and that our mind, our body and our skin are so intimately connected and that when we don't feel comfortable in our skin.

And for decades, I wasn't I'm still not at times. But when we don't feel comfortable in our skin, it shows up in so many ways, including what we see on the surface.

And so that really has led me to shifting the focus of the work that I do with embodiment. And mindfulness is really helping people use what they see on their skin as the greatest source of information to what's happening beneath the surface, so that they can be empowered to take control of the things they can control, like taking care of our health.

And especially as we navigate through menopause, when a lot of things are changing. I love that just sitting here thinking about feeling comfortable in our skin, because I think as we're going through perimenopause and then because it can be such a time where we don't feel comfortable in our skin, things are changing.

And so I think that's such an important thing to think of. So what would you what would you advise? What would you share for? How do you learn to become comfortable in your skin?

Yeah, it is not a one and done that is for certain. And I think it's understanding especially that what is showing up, especially in menopause, hair may be thinning, skin may be dry.

There's more fine lines, wrinkles and dark spots are that, you know, skin is dry everywhere, including our intimate bits. Right. It's information. Use your skin and what's showing up on it as your greatest source of information for and clues as to what your body may be asking from you, what your body may need.

And so then you can begin the process of offering it right.

How Skin Reflects Stress and Menopause

You may not know exactly what that is, but we know that there's such a connection between our brain and our skin derived from the same neurologic tissue that they're just there's so much information that we can glean the gut skin connection.

So breakouts and other things. So, it's really just I would say instead of listening to the beauty and cosmetic industry that we should be covering up nip, tucking, Botox and filling to camouflage these changes that we're seeing, I say embrace them and see what we can learn from them to help us again be empowered to live our best lives at this stage of life.

I love that. I love the embracing rather than suppressing. And because aging, it's it's inevitable. We all do it, and it's actually a privilege to age, and it's a blessing to get to be alive, to go through those processes.

So what are some of the things? And as you were talking, I was thinking, is there is there anything in the body, any organ that really isn't connected to the skin just seems like it's all connected to the skin.

Yeah. As our largest organ, I mean, your skin truly is a window to and reflection of our overall health and well-being. And there is a direct correlation between our brain and our skin, as I mentioned, derived from the same embryological tissue.

So there's a bi directional communication. So especially when we're talking about stress right. So this is how it really played out for me and for so many clients.

Acne used to be something that we thought only teenagers got, but especially like there was a statistic someone was just saying it used to be many years ago, like in the teens, adults with acne.

Now it's in 4,050% of adults and women who are in the perimenopausal menopausal phase of life are struggling with breakouts. Stress is is one of the contributing factors to stimulating those oil glands, which is one of the four pillars of what creates acne eruptions.

And when you then you have an asthma eruption, then you're looking in the mirror and then you're feeling stressed or shamed or, you know, feeling terrible and it creates this vicious loop.

Because when we are stressed, our body produces primary stress hormones cortisol, adrenaline, cortisol and cortisol releasing hormone. Directly stimulates the oil glands.

Most people don't know this. And so we always think of when we think about stress, we think of a top down process that it's the brain activity in that hypothalamic pituitary adrenal axis.

And this and the sympathetic adrenal medullary axis. And then that's send signals and neurotransmitters and hormones all throughout the body. But what most people may not appreciate is that your skin has the exact same mechanism that your skin produces stress hormones.

So your skin becomes both a target and, perceiver of stress. So it's just it's a two way street. So, so it's very fascinating, very fascinating that our skin, is connected to every organ, but especially with regards to stress, it really shows up in so many different ways.

Stress is kind of, I think, one of the biggest enemies of our skin because, especially as we're maturing, we're always many women are concerned about fine lines and wrinkles.

Well, cortisol, your primary stress hormone, contributes to breakdown of that collagen. And the elastin, which gives our skin that youthful plump appearance.

And it also prevents its repair. And it's always olive roads home always lead to stress. I've said this in other interviews, but I always say stress is 99.9999999% of all imbalances we have, and it's always about getting a handle on stress.

And so it I love that you're tying it to the skin because so often we don't think about that. We don't even as you said the skin is our largest organ.

But a lot of times we even forget that the skin is actually an organ. We just think of it as something we see and a better looking we cover with clothes or with makeup or what have you. Totally.

We just ignore it. But to your point, the statistics do show that upwards of 90% of all doctor's visits are for stress related ailments, and skin issues are among the number one reasons people go to the doctors.

So there is no denying that stress and skin are intimately connected. We know it on a practical level. We know it on a physiological level because of that connection with the helmet.

You know, there the skin and the brain are derived from the same, embryological tissue. So our skin isn't just something that we adorn with clothes or makeup.

It actually is your barrier between you and the external world. It is your greatest protector, your greatest ally in helping you take control of your health.

Yeah. So that that's really interesting. I didn't know that there was such a high percentage of visits are because of skin. Although it makes sense because we are so driven by what we see, and so we can't really see our liver or the inflammation in our gut, and so we can kind of ignore it.

But when you have something on your skin, you're like, ooh, what is that? And why is it there? And how do I get rid of it exactly?

Hormonal Changes, Hair, and Skin Symptoms

And what's showing up on your skin can be clues about what may be happening with your liver and what may be happening in your gut. Right. Because we know there's a direct correlation between the gut and the skin, and there's literature showing, you know, acne, eczema, psoriasis, among a few.

And what's happening with our immune system and autoimmune conditions like hair loss, alopecia or vitiligo, loss of skin pigmentation. Your skin is this amazing.

It can give you so much information if we're willing to actually look at what we're seeing and be be really curious from, you know, not from a place of judgment, truly, from a place of curiosity and not be so quick just to seek, you know, cover it up or camouflage it thinking that there's something wrong.

Nothing has gone wrong. In fact, this is a gift. I know it's a very, not the party line and not what people think. And and it can be challenging because if you're looking in the mirror and you're like, what is going on?

I've got a big data, I've got physical, you know, I'm already it's making me feel awful about myself and affecting my self-image and my self-esteem. And that may be true, and I'm not trying to diminish any of that.

And yet, what you're seeing, if you're willing to really look, can offer you vital information that will help boost your confidence, your self-image, because you're able to take control of the things that you can control.

There's lots of we can control, that's for sure. So is there anything we can kind of take the ladies through now? Anything they could be looking at or looking at to kind of get some some information by looking at their skin while we're listening to this.

Yeah. So I mean, when it comes to menopause, right. We're talking about the decline of our sex hormones. And so the one that we think of most commonly is estrogen.

And estrogen plays a significant role in the health of our hair and our skin. So starting with our hair, some women may notice that as they're going through menopause, that their hair may be a little thinner or finer, less dense.

They might have a widening of their part. And it's akin to, male pattern baldness. So we call it female pattern, baldness. Andrew. Genetic alopecia. And a lot of this has to do with the fact that estrogen plays a role in the hair growth cycle.

So your hair grows in three phases a growing phase, arresting phase, and a falling out phase. And estrogen is responsible for the growth phase or prolonging that growth phase.

That's why when for those who have been pregnant, they may have noticed during pregnancy that their hair was more full and lush as estrogen levels were elevated.

Once they had baby and hormone levels were starting to come down kind of precipitously, they might have noticed a dramatic shedding and they're like, oh my God, I'm losing my hair. I'm going to go bald.

Those women do not, cobalt. But it can be quite disconcerting. And that's because when estrogen levels go down, it shifts the the phase that your cycle is in to that resting and then falling out phase.

So you may notice because you have less estrogen on board, that the growth phase isn't as prolonged. The other thing that estrogen does is it plays a significant role in production of highly chronic acid.

So what? So many of us are paying thousands of dollars to get injected into our things. Estrogen produces naturally. So as we are going through, the menopause transition and estrogen levels are declining, some women may notice that their skin is in as supple and full that they're noticing more fine lines and wrinkles and skin sag because of decreased production of of hyaluronic acid coupled with estrogen also plays a role in collagen

production.

So it's kind of like a double whammy there. So you don't have the, the fullness, of that moisture from the highly ironic acid, which draws basically a thousand times more water.

So, so, so ironic. Acid is very, hydrophilic. And then you're not producing as much collagen. So the fine lines and wrinkles, we notice that dryness again estrogen plays a significant role in skin hydration and helping maintain the integrity of your skin barrier.

So you might notice you've been able to you've been using the same cosmetics for years. And all of a sudden now your skin is a little bit more irritated and dry and red, and you can't tolerate the same products because the pH of your skin has changed a little bit as the hydration status and the and the texture and trigger of your skin has changed as well.

Vaginal dryness, sex, being uncomfortable. Well, your vaginal tissue, it's it's skin. And without the highly ironic acid and the moisture and then the collagen, not the production being down.

Sex may be uncomfortable. There may be more friction. There can be atrophy in that area because of lack of collagen. So women may experience more urgency, frequency and discomfort.

So again, yes, everything is connected to the skin and the transitions in our hormones. It makes a lot of sense if you're experiencing these things all of a sudden you're not losing your mind.

It's because your body is naturally the production is naturally going down. Because I just do you have any questions? I just want I'm babbling a lot, but I just want to circle back to here for just one second.

Circle, circle. Okay, okay. So I mentioned that you might notice that there is some hair shedding or hair thinning, but I but with regards to the widening of the part and more women feel like they're going bald.

There's a reason for that too. So as our hormones, are declining, the first hormone to decline is progesterone. And then there's estrogen and your androgen.

So there's a relative imbalance. And even though you might not have too much testosterone or androgens on board, relatively speaking, compared to the progesterone, it seems elevated.

So what happens is testosterone comes in two forms, essentially testosterone and dihydrotestosterone. Dihydrotestosterone is the more potent form, and that affects hair follicles.

Simple Skincare Routine and Sun Protection

Progesterone plays a role in blocking the conversion from testosterone to its more potent form, which is a good thing, because without that inhibition, without progesterone on board, what happens is on your scalp, dihydrotestosterone can cause the hair follicles to shrink, what we call miniaturization.

So the hair is more fine or thin. It doesn't grow as much. So you might notice that the part is widening that you have what looks like bald patches. The hair follicles are not scarred down.

They're capable of growing hair. It's just that more potent form of testosterone is causing a change in the texture and trigger of the hair on the face.

It has the exact opposite. So women might be experienced like, I'm going balls, I'm growing a beard. That's right. And that's because on the face, the dihydrotestosterone has the exact opposite effect.

It stimulates hair, hair growth. So if you've noticed that those dark, coarse hairs, that's part of it. It's the relative imbalance between your androgens and the progesterone and the estrogen I love.

They brought that up and that you brought up DHT because that's such an important one. I I've had women come in who have been on hormones and maybe overdosed on testosterone, and no one was watching their DHT and their hair is falling out.

And so that's such an important marker. Make sure that you have your physician tracking that so that you know how you're converting. Your testosterone is not causing all of these issues you were talking about.

You know, acne breakouts from testosterone and all of these. I think it's just such a when I talk about hormone replacement, there's it's so vast. And we, we so think of it for relief of symptoms, which is great.

And so this is a way that you can really know by looking. And it can be motivating if your skin or your hair we you know, the truth is we're women. We want to look in the mirror and feel good about what we see.

And so this can be a really good, as you're saying, feedback mechanism to know if you're on the right hormones, if you need a change, if you on too much, too little. And so I love that.

And I'm thinking, I have to ask you because I'm sure women are curious and I'm curious, what do you what's your skincare routine? What do you recommend?

Are there things to stay away from? Things to look for, how to how to wear? How do we get our skin to look like yours, isn't it? Yeah. Well, I am not a skincare junkie, so I.

When I was practicing dermatology, I was skin cancer, melanoma, and then I was behind the microscope. So I am not up on all the latest, greatest things because it's too overwhelming.

I like to keep it really simple. Really the key to glowing skin? It starts from the inside out. It absolutely does. It begins with how we nourish ourselves, not just with food, but with quality sleep.

I think we underestimate if I were to give a prescription, it would be for, sleep and and and learning how to manage our minds and our stress. Because it's the two things that Jack up, you know, hormonal imbalance between cortisol and and melatonin.

Cortisol primary stress hormone. Like I had mentioned, it breaks down the collagen and it prevents new collagen from forming. Melatonin is one of the most potent antioxidants our body can produce to repair the DNA damage that has been done from the sun exposure, which causes 90% of visible signs of aging.

So, so sleep is so vital, right? And so how we eat, how we move over exercising is, I think, for a lot of women, it's a way of life because we're trying to make ourselves smaller, to fit into some beauty ideal.

But learning how to move your body in a way that feels really good. Listen, I fell victim to that. I was running ultramarathons and ran myself right into the ground, tore my hip and wound up with melanoma and hormone imbalances.

So I don't say this to judge, and I'm just saying, listen, move your listen to your body. You move your body, move your body in a way that feels really good.

I have a talk on here with Deb Atkinson, who is the exercise queen, and she gave us permission. Less is more. And so checked out that target. You're going to want to check it out because I love that you brought that up.

And we are conditioned to think oh we got gotta pound, pound, pound. So after I talked to her I took the day off from exercising. It was awesome. Yeah, yeah.

Because the more we pound and again it's a stress on the body. Eating can be a stress on the body. And we're doing it multiple times a day. So you know it's not just what we eat but it's the why and how we're eating as well.

And what are we really hungry for and giving ourselves permission to give that to ourselves. Right. That's part of how we manage the stress and stress response in our body.

Because again, that will show up on your skin. Dark circles, fine lines. You know, it'll one hormone imbalance. You know it's a cascade effect. Is that cortisol you know causing you know insulin and and blood sugar dysregulation can show up on your skin in so many different ways too, from weight gain to to patches of thickening, darkening of skin called acanthus.

It's not appropriate. I mean, we could go on. Your skin is your greatest ally, your greatest asset, and and your feedback mechanism of how you're taking care of yourself in many ways.

So my personal skincare routine, if we're just talking three steps. So it's the foundational stuff. And I know in all your other talks you probably dive deep into that.

And I second all of it in skincare from within. Absolutely. And that's really what the premise of my book, The Skin Whispers about. Because again, I named it that because your skin and your body are sending you messages all of the time, and it's our opportunity to listen to those messages when they are just a whisper rather than a shout.

Because unfortunately, my skin was shouting at me with all the changing muscles and then the melanoma. I was deaf to it. I don't want that for anybody else.

So if we can pay attention, use what you see to your advantage and not, you know, approach our our skin from a place of appreciation for what it does and what it can tell us, rather than contempt and criticism.

Game changer to take care of your skin from the outside in 90% of visible signs of aging are from sun exposure. So sun protection, sun protection, sun protection, sun protection is really, really important.

And not just with SPF it people say SPF is your BFF. I say it's one of your inner circle friends you need to wear. Like, you know, protective clothing actually is, the number one way to protect yourself.

Wide brimmed hat, sunglasses. Covering your skin as much as you can. But three step skincare routine in the morning. Cleanse your face. Gentle cleanser antioxidant serum to prepare your skin for the exposure you're going to get from the sun.

From blue light sitting in front of your computer, and from environmental exposure. Air pollution is right behind you. The exposure for causing hyperpigmentation, and and damaging damaging your skin.

So you want to protect the skin with an antioxidant serum, vitamin C and E at the very least. But there are other, antioxidants and ingredients that can be in there as well, like niacinamide and, others.

And it got a color, but but vitamin C and ear are your primary ones and together they work the best. So it's a synergistic effect of vitamin C together. Then tinted moisturizer that has sunscreen, SPF or 30 or about every single day.

And here's what most people don't know or appreciate UVA rays. The sun is, comprised of UVA, UVB, and UVA. UVB doesn't get to there, so you don't have to worry about that.

But UVB are the burning rays, UVA are the aging rays. They they are longer than UVB rays. They don't fluctuate throughout the year. And they penetrate your window glass.

So if you're like me and you have your computer on your desk and you're sitting in front of a window, you're getting pounded by the sun all day long, whether you realize it or not.

And 80% of UV rays come through clouds. So I live in the Pacific Northwest. It is cloudy all the dang time here. I'm still getting sun exposure, so you need to protect yourself every day.

Then sitting in front of the computer, you're getting blue light exposure, and studies have been showing that blue light from your devices, from your computer, from your phone, can break down your collagen and elastin and contribute to hyperpigmentation.

So it's the tint, the iron oxide tint in your moisturize hair with sunscreen that is offering you protection from the blue light. So rain or shine, inside or outside, there are wonderful products that you can use that almost act as like your foundation so you don't have to double duty.

Botox, Fillers, and the Why Behind Self-Care

I use one that I love, that it's very sheer, but it's tinted and you know, so three steps cleanser, antioxidant serum, sunscreen in the morning. In the nighttime, it's kind of rinse and repeat.

You definitely. Let's just say you woke up late. You didn't wash your face. You smeared on your antioxidant serum, and you only did two steps into action serum sunscreen in the morning. Great.

Go in the evening, wash your face. Because of that air pollution and the smog that's getting in the pores, that's going to potentially contribute to hyperpigmentation and skin irritation.

Things you definitely want to wash your face at night. Step two you can smear some more antioxidants serum on. And then step three would be using a product like a topical retinoid, a vitamin A derivative that helps with skin cell turnover.

Because our skin as we are maturing the magic number skin cells, migrate from the bottom of your epidermis, which is the very top layer of your skin, and are seven layers of your epidermis from the bottom layer to the top.

And they shed when we're younger. That happens every 28 to 30 days. As we are maturing, that cell cycle slows down, which is why you may notice that your your appearance is more sallow, more dull.

So a product like a topical retinoid, will help facilitate that process. Topical retinoids can be a little bit irritating and drying for some people. They also can make you more sensitive to the sun the next day.

Again, why you need sun protection every day. But if you can't tolerate a topical retinoid, products like Bakuchiol are nice alternatives, and they've also been found to be safe in pregnancy.

Whereas vitamin A, even though the amount you're using on your skin is so small when taken by mouth. Vitamin E derivatives are category X, so we always say when if you're pregnant, you know, don't use it.

Although we're all going through menopause and pregnancy really isn't on the table at the moment. I know is that that one when events have sex are going to be cont.

And you can use topical reddening, you know, any kind of use whenever you want. So there are some advantages to s we making a list of all the amazing things when menopause is awesome.

So you just say yes for it and ones to it I love it. I want to switch gears, but before we do, I just have a few more skin questions. I'm curious as to what your thoughts are on Botox and facials and just some of these fillers.

And I'd love to hear your thoughts on that. Yeah. Listen, I'm all for them. If the intention. It's all about intentionality, right? How we see ourselves, the why behind why we're doing it.

Because this stuff ain't cheap and it's not a one and done Botox is every 3 to 4 months. Filler is, you know, six, nine months a year, sometimes longer if you're lucky, if it lasts.

That one. It's expensive stuff. And so for me, it's always about why, if I'm getting these things injected or these procedures done because I think if I do them, then I'll feel good about myself, then I'll feel worthy, then I'll feel

attractive.

The return on your investment is going to be so small. You might feel good for a short period of time, and then you're right back to where you were. But if you decide to do these procedures because you have been nourishing yourself, you have asked yourself what you really need and you've given it yourself.

You've learned how to manage your stress. You are doing those things from a place of true self-care and self-love that you feel really good, and you want your outside to mirror your inside.

Hell yes, all day, every day. That money so well spent. And the studies. I support this too, because there are studies on Botox and depression. And listen, there's nothing magic about Botox with depression.

However, when you look in the mirror, if every time you look in the mirror you're scowling and it when you're scowling, you just are saying nasty things to yourself and you're beating yourself up and you're that inner critic is just, oh, she's just having her way with you.

With Botox. You paralyze those muscles. And when you look in the mirror, even if you're, you know, you want to scowl, you can't. And it softens the gaze.

And it really does open up an opportunity to maybe have a kinder, gentler conversation with yourself. And so I, from that perspective, I do think that it can be valuable.

I love the way you. I love the way you think. It's because it's the way I think, too. And I'm just like, I love what she's saying. So it's not just, listen, I know this because, like, I don't think beat the shit out of myself like I am not I don't I don't see any of this stuff because I'm like, I'm up here and like, this is what you should do.

It's like, let me tell you, I over dieted over exercise, beat the crap out of myself and was miserable. Got skinny, did this, and I'm like, why is nothing different?

Because nothing changes if nothing changes and we have to change and be willing, just really be willing to look, really look at ourselves and see what's there.

Yeah. And the awkward and accept it, you know. Yeah. I'll share a personal tidbit here. Not skin, but breasts. And I, I'm a natural Catholic physician.

I'm all about natural. And, you know, I can I can swing sometimes. And then I remember to come back to balance and I've always had huge breasts. I breastfed and they always bothered me and they were always kind exercise without a bouncing up.

And and I had a patient come in. This is years ago and she had just had a breast reduction and she was so happy. And I was like, I want to be happy like her.

And so I actually did. I went, even though surgery is not like something I typically recommend, it was because of the why. It wasn't because I needed to get a breast reduction to feel good about myself, but it was like, I want to feel good.

I don't want to have my back pain and hunched over. I want to be able to go out and not wear a bra if I don't want to. And so I went and did it. And so it just reminded me, as you were talking, it's like it's because of the why I didn't do it.

So I would have perky boobs and feel sexy. I already felt sexy. I just wanted to feel more comfortable in my skin. Exactly, exactly. And so I feel like there's so much judgment.

First of all, we are. We judge ourselves harsher than anybody. But with the social media messaging and as we are maturing, going transitioning through menopause, I'm so grateful for Covid, I have to say, because it was during

Covid, with the with the embracing the gray, and there's so many more.

It seems like menopause companies are like popping up all over the place. And really fostering this conversation. Prior to this, women were invisible and beauty products and personal care products and in the media, we were we were made to feel that we had past our prime and we needed to be quiet.

And I am so grateful that we are now shifting that paradigm that it's it's it doesn't have to be that way, right? It doesn't. And so, I'm grateful for you having a summit like this so we can have these conversations, and really illuminate that there is so much to celebrate as shitty as it may feel with the hot flashes and the sleepless nights and maybe the weight gain and and and and the mood swings and and some of the things like that.

Embodiment, Movement, and Nervous System Regulation

But but on the other side, there is like, there is a light. Right. And it's getting brighter. And when our moms went through menopause like that just wasn't the case.

So yes, it is. I call it the sacred second act because it is a it is a good one. So I have one more skin question and this better embodied in practice.

I keep saying that, but I keep going. I have another one. I'm just curious if there's something you see more commonly in women this around this time. Do more women end up with psoriasis or melasma or eczema?

Is there anything you've been? I don't know if there is. I'm just curious. Is there anything you've correlated with as women, as they're aging and going through the hormonal journey that they end up manifesting on their skin more often?

Yeah. I have to say, you know, I stepped away from clinical practice, so I'm not, managing women's skin as much, but as because I, had alluded to the role that, Asian plays on skin hydration.

A lot of dry skin and itchy, irritated skin are very common, in women who are going through menopause, hair changes and then the fine lines, the wrinkles and the the discoloration and skins.

I think those are probably among the more common. Some women do experience acne because they're like, what is going on? I am not a teenager, I am, but I am breaking out.

And again, that's where really stress can play a significant role, in learning how to manage that. Because again, that that cortisol it's stimulate helps to stimulate this oil glands contributing to acne.

So it is kind of a gamut, but I would say dry, itchy, irritated skin is is among one of the biggest complaints. Makes sense. So let's take a little turn here.

Now embodiment codes tell us what that means. I love that word. Yeah. So it really is about being connected to your body. We we talked about it earlier that that we don't think about our skin as like an organ.

We're just something to cover up. But it's a matter of like being in your skin. Who are you being? How are you showing up in the world? So many of us, we I mean, we we use skin as a metaphor for everything getting under my skin.

My skin is crawling and uncomfortable in my skin. And so the process is really that experience of what is it like to live in my skin and through mindfulness, through meditation, through movement, really teaching women different skills of how to live more comfortably and confidently in this skin, especially as things are changing, especially as they may be juggling, you know, rate raising, teens or kids leaving the home, but taking care of aging parents, of career transitions, of what is their relationship with their partner like as their body is changing?

Maybe they they are experiencing vaginal dryness and they don't. Their libido is not where it was. How does that

make you feel in this body of yours? Because that that, that, that cognitive dissonance of what's happening, what we think should be happening.

But what's really happening does activate that stress response, making us feel even more uncomfortable in our skin, which can have that outward manifestation in so many different ways that I was describing.

So teaching women practices, really learning how to be with the experience of what is is uncomfortable as it may be sometimes, is essentially embodiment, because, you know, they're very like formal definitions.

But that's how I would explain it. I was going to say, for someone who's listening, who has hasn't, you know, who is learning all about what she can do in hormones and is going to find a doctor who understands all of this and so forth, who doesn't feel good, who feels fat or feels gray or feels dry.

What what could you share for her now? What is something she can learn to embody to, to start to shift that? I think first and foremost, I always talk about the five days of the skinny dipping process, and the first is just bringing your awareness, right?

How are you feeling? What is what is happening, looking to see, like, visually seeing, but also checking in with right? How am I feeling about this? Most of us think that something has gone wrong.

If we're feeling sad or frustrated or angry or irritable, but I would say allow for that, right? Life is is 5050. It's not rainbows and daisies. And just because you go into menopause, like all of a sudden, you know, it's somehow it's supposed to be different or better than it was, and life was always this way.

And I think we fight against the reality. So allowing for all the discomfort and knowing that you're not broken, that nothing has gone wrong, and accepting that there is change that's happening again, we can't fight against it, but we can accept where we are and be able to take stock of of what we see and how we're feeling and be able to take empowered action from that place.

Right. Yeah. You're feeling you may be gaining some weight. Why is that right? What's happening? Is it sleep? Right. We know that not sleeping well can add you know, it affects the your ghrelin in your leptin and cortisol in your insulin and all those hormones that can add some weight around the middle.

Right. So it's an again, it's an opportunity to really just increase our self-awareness, allow for what's here without trying to judge it or wanting it to be different, and accepting where we are as not something to be changed or fixed or nipped or tucked or cover up just to feel a certain way.

But you know, to help us move into this sacred second stage of life. So that's a lot of it. But most of us are, you know, we don't know what's happening.

We just feel tired and overwhelmed and stressed, and we think that there's no other way. But honestly, I, I in this past, during Covid, over the last couple years, I dove into menopause medicine, prescribing bioidentical hormones.

And I have to tell you, I'm a big fan, by the way. I take them myself. I think that there's a place for them. But what I found first and foremost is I was giving hormones, and women's hormones are balanced on paper, and they still so many of my clients felt stressed out, overwhelmed, weren't sleeping, fighting with their partner, fighting with their kids that when I was able to really bring their attention to what was happening, breathe with them, lead them through a meditation.

Help them reconnect to their body. That's when the trans transformation happened. That's when they started feeling well. Hey men, we all of it, but I yeah, no hormones is the easy part.

It's easy to give someone hormones and balance their hormones. And what you bring up is such a. It sounds so simple, but it can be challenging. But the wisdom is in us.

We we, we possess the brilliance, and we possess the opportunity to really check in and know what's going on with us. We just have to make space for it and remember the priority of how important that is.

So thank you so much for bringing that to our attention. And you mentioned movement. So I'm just going to bring that up. Is there anything that's not something you hear so so commonly.

So I'm just curious if there's something you can share. Just what just to educate us a little bit more on that. Well I think, you know, it ties a little bit back to what we were talking about with moving our body.

Not in it. Not like the pushing hard way, but movement can be medicine and there's so much literature. I am not a yoga teacher. I enjoy yoga, but that's not even necessary.

But there are studies linking, yoga and and and the power that it has for healing trauma and. Yeah, the stress response and and for your skin, actually, there's a really great study for yoga and decreasing the markers of inflammation and they actually found that yoga decreased wrinkles.

So plug for you for that for your skin. And again it's because of the the decrease in that stress response. So movement part of when we are feeling stressed and anxious and overwhelmed, we may feel like we can't a lump in our throat, a pit in our stomach, you know, energy in our chest.

And it feels stuck and it feels stagnant and wellness has become more of a trend and everyone's meditating and you should just breathe. But sometimes that's not getting the job done.

And I have so many clients who tell me, listen, if you tell me to just sit down, meditate, I'm gonna punch you in the face. I'm like, I that's not the right tool that we need in your toolbox right now.

So we need to mobilize that energy and really come into our body and it can be as simple as just like a gentle rocking. But it's, again, just like you said, it's tuning into what our body innately knows, that inner knowing because we're so used to being told what to do, that someone knows better than us.

The media is telling us that we must do X, Y, or z, but when we actually give ourselves permission to just tap in, where am I feeling this energy? What?

Skin Whispering, Skinny Dipping, and Free Mindset Reset

What does it have a texture? Does it have a color? What does it actually what is this energy want to do. And sometimes like I did. So I'm Laura I, I'm not even consciously rocking like it's just happening.

My energy just wants to me and I'm like, oh, it's so soothing. But sometimes the energy is going to be like, I want to, you know, and I'll, I'll lead clients through sessions where we have pillows and, you know, we're throwing things.

And first rule is you can't hurt yourself. You can't hurt the room. But, sometimes you need to just let it out or cry because we hold it in. We think we have to be strong or hide our emotion.

But it's such a release in a way that sometimes meditate like it's quiet sitting. Meditation just can't do and cry for our body when we cry. It's like nature.

We have cortisol releasing it in our tears and I love I'm. I'm like when I feel myself at my desk and I feel like, oh, I'm getting a little anxious or tense, or I'll just throw on a song and I have my own personal dance party.

I have a disco ball, and my kids would always get so irritated like friends that I'm like, oh yeah, I have my own dance party. Shake my booty. It's like the best it is.

That is an instant reset. Instant reset. So yeah, you got to have your your playlists and shake your groove thing and yeah, that's good. Listen. But I'm going to play with the, the rocking because that as you said it, I started doing I

was like oh it's a soothing it's like rocking a baby and just rocking yourself and nurturing and loving your own little inner chuck and then adding, like a soothing, soft touch hand to your heart.

But I everyone is going to be different. I noticed that I oftentimes do put my hand to my heart, and it it's a little bit of containment. You know, I can secure myself give myself that, that, that and the insecurity.

But I also find that I'm I rub my hands against my thighs as a soothing, my daughter, since she was little, I never picked up on it, but she tugs at her ears.

So again, it's all about getting curious, getting to know your self. You are automatically doing all of these things right? Your skin and your body are whispering to all the time.

It's our opportunity to clue in to what our body is designed to, to keep us safe and alive. And we can leverage that if we actually pay attention. Like I, I noticed this like I do this when I'm stressed out so that when you're stressed out, you're like, let me try that.

Let me see if it actually helps you do it on purpose. Right? You do it by design, not by default. I love that, I love that, what a beautiful invitation on and before we finish, because unfortunately, we are winding down, I'm like, I can have this conversation.

I have to ask, let's go skinny dipping, taking off our clothes and jumping in the water. Is there something with skin in that? What is that about? Because I love it.

Yeah. So, the whole premise behind that is when I was practicing dermatology, I had to get people naked physically in order to examine what was on the surface and teach them to look for what was on the surface in order to help them save their own life.

Because skin cancer and melanoma, the most prevalent cancer in our country and in places around the world. So we had to be willing to get naked physically to save our own life.

This applies to getting naked mentally, emotionally, and spiritually as well. So we have to if we want to truly thrive and live as the fullest expression of ourselves, that's what's required in love that I want, I want to let's go to the finish line behind me.

Okay? Wow. It's not easy and it's uncomfortable and it's messy and all of that. And admittedly, I get naked and then I put all my layers back on and that's just part of the process.

Nothing has gone wrong. But it's it's that awareness, right? Bringing our attention to what we're doing helps us, you know, stop putting all the layers and just be okay.

Nothing has gone wrong. And then again, just gently, maybe you just like it. Maybe it's a finger, maybe just showing up just a little bit. A little bit at a time.

You don't have to go all in all at once. Biggest gift, right? Is paying attention moment by moment on purpose to to your life. Happen to it. So this has been a joy.

And I think you have a free gift for everyone. Yeah. So when we were talking about paying attention with intention without, judging and and I because stress plays such a key role in creating havoc in all areas of our life, but especially for our skin.

I created a five day, mindset reset experience where in less than ten minutes a day, you can be guided through meditations to help you feel more ease, more calm, and more comfortable in your skin.

So I wanted to make sure that everyone had a few tools in their toolkit to get started. Oh thank you, thank you! That sounds fantastic. So thank you for for coming on and just sharing your beauty and your message and your wisdom

with all the ladies.

I my heart just feels open after talking to you so I'm sure you're feeling the glow. I'm feeling the the inner glow. You know we don't. Yeah. It's like the natural.

The glow from the inside out doesn't cost a thing. Yeah, yeah, that's the thing I wanted to emphasize. The average American woman spends upwards of $250,000 on her appearance in her lifetime.

That's a shit ton of money. We just did it. We just did it for free in our glow. Thank you. Thank you everyone. This is going to be one. You're going to want to listen to time again and just get into your heart and get into your rocking.

So we'll be back with another great talk soon. Be well. Till then.