Eat The Rainbow, Feel The Shift: The Science and Soul Of Colorful Living Transcript

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Introduction and Guest Bio

Hello. Hello. Welcome back to Mastering the Menopause Transition Summit 4.0. I am still your host, doctor Sharon Stills, and I'm all I'm all giddy because I like so excited for our next guest because she's someone I've been fan girling and I love her work.

I love all the dimensions she goes into. And she said yes to be here with us today. And so I am super excited. We're going to have a really important conversation.

This is the kind of conversation, if you can turn off external dings and dongs and maybe grab a cup of tea, get cozy and just like, let yourself exhale and take in this important information.

So Deanna minnick is a PhD. She's a nutrition scientist. She's an international lecturer. She's an educator. She's an author. She has over 20 years of experience in academia and the food and dietary supplement industries.

She's the chief science officer at Symphony Natural Health. She's been active as a functional medicine clinician in clinical trials and in her own practice. Food and spirit.

She's the author of seven consumer books and wellness topics for book chapters and over 50 scientific publications. She's wonderfully lady. Through her talks, workshops, groups, and in-person retreats, she helps people to transform their lives practically and artfully through nutrition and lifestyle.

And you can visit her at Deanna Mint.com. But for now, we are so blessed to have you here. I'm so excited. I'm excited to have this conversation with you.

We're going to go into some interesting terrain, it sounds like, which, yes, this is some of my favorite stuff that I don't usually get to talk about on summit.

So thank you for being really open. Oh yeah. Well, well, the ladies know that I am like, you know, I'm about the hormones. I'm about all the things, but I'm really about the spirit and the energy and the emotions and how that is really the foundation of how we heal.

Because if we're not regulated, if we're not exhaling, if we're not in touch with the unseen. Yeah. And it's hard to heal and so all the things, whether it's the piece of salmon or the organic blueberries or the melatonin or whatever it is we're taking, doesn't land in a place as well in our bodies.

And so I have been I have been stalking and watching you, and I see you in a good way. And I see that you are, you know, really into like the colors and their relationship to the organs.

And I thought you could just take us on a journey through colors and how they relate and the chakra system and just all the beautiful work you've been doing.

Wow, what an invitation.

Menopause, Spirituality, and Color

Well, you know, I love that you've been doing these summits and supporting women as you have, because to me, menopause is probably one of the most spiritual times of life.

It's really relevant to have this conversation about the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual because in the second half of life is when she releases herself from the veil of hormones and hormones are connected into our moods, our behaviors, our actions.

So now we clear a lot of that, and we are truly present in our inherent wisdom. You know, it's kind of like we're we're bare bones in our spiritual selves at that time of life.

And I feel for some women, they fear menopause because they feel like, oh, you know, I don't know what to expect. And, you know, maybe like you alluded to, they are coming from a place of overdrive, a lot of nervous system upregulation.

And so it just feels like their whole life is just quaking and just trembling and there's uncertainty. And now that I have become post-menopausal, I feel like, oh my gosh, I'm on the other side.

This is so great, I love it. I like the fact that I am in my true, authentic self without kind of the flux of all of these hormonal waves. I mean, it was good while it lasted, and it led me to a lot of creative expression, no doubt.

But now I feel like women in this time of life with me, it's like we are into our meaning, our purpose. We're going deep and from the chakra system we move from the lower chakras which connect to the physical aspect of who we are.

So the root, the sacral, the solar plexus. Right? A lot of the lower body physical chakras and by the way chakras, chakras, depending on how we say it, it just refers to these ancient centers that were acknowledged in like Ayurvedic medicine and Vedic texts and even yogic literature.

But really, the way that I see them as a scientist is that these are the points of the endocrine system. So for a menopausal woman, she is shifting from that.

She's shifting from adrenals, ovaries and the gut into now her heart space, her speaking throat space, her intuitive third eye hypothalamus pituitary space, and her pineal light enlightenment space.

So she's moving from physical and that physical sense of creativity into the more spiritual, I would say, metaphysical, creative side of life. And one is not better than the other.

But I would say that the first half of your life is really preparing you for this spiritual endeavor. And this is where color and this is where that understanding of the fuller picture of who we are really comes into the forefront.

I love that I, I often think that to myself sometimes that red lights like I'm just so grateful I'm not a hormonal crazy person anymore. Like I, it's so nice to feel like calm and you know I was like such a drama queen in my I know it, I know.

Good. So and I love how you talk about that because that is such a good point that one is not better than the other, they're just different. And it's kind of like you're saying it's like this uprising and this emerging of who we're here to be and what we're here to experience, which goes so much more beyond the physical.

Yeah. It does. So let's start with color. Color.

Red and Orange: Energy, Heat, and Creativity

And maybe we get into creativity and rhythm and we'll try to tie these things together because they all really are the bedrock of everything I do. But let's start with color.

So let me just ask you a personal question. Do you feel like you connect to a certain color specifically? Well, definitely red. My my brand. My brand is red.

I'm very red. And I guess of all shades of red, whether it be like pink or even orange. But I would say red. It red is my jam, right? It's your jam. Okay, so each of the colors, the way I see it, I kind of have this operating system and I see these colors in the way of physically doing something for us through food, through the colors we wear, through the environment, psychologically color, as you know, because you use color therapy, it has a lot of impact on our state of well-being, or it can change our mood.

And then vibrationally colors, I would say they're doing more than we actually realize. And there's probably more to uncover with that and more beyond this talk.

But Red, if we just start with red, red to me is the color of it's kind of like, there are many sides to each color, right? Every color is a spectrum.

Red is the color of action. It is the color of, we could say emergencies, urgencies, stop signs, ambulances, fire hydrants. It can also be passion. It could be vigor, it could be vitality.

Red is bubbly and it's it's like it's life force. It is blood oxygenated blood. Right. So, we can use red to wake us up. Red, to me is an adrenal color.

So sometimes we have too much red in our lives. And that could present is inflammation. And so if we're thinking about menopause, one of the things that we start to think about is the the decline in estradiol.

And the up tick of inflammation. So if we are drawn to red, you know, I always think it's really important to go with the color that you're most drawn to because I feel like color is medicine.

Color is healing on its own, whether it's the colors of foods, the phytochemicals, or it's the colors that we're wearing. Even right before this, I was like, what is the feeling I get?

You know, I had a green shirt on, but then I changed it to this purple violet. I don't know why sometimes, but I have my wardrobe in a rainbow and I see, wow, I'm like, okay, I'm going in this color, Sharon, what do I feel?

Right? And I use color as a vehicle. Because we're always saying something with certain colors. The color of the car we drive, the color of the room that we, prepare food in.

You know, all of that color means something. So red can be a vehicle of giving us a revving of energy. It can also be something that we need to maybe have less of if we feel like, I feel like I have a lot of inflammation or a lot of heat swelling.

You know, red is an important color that comes up during menopause because of hot flashes, right? So we think of like the young rising. We think of the heat, which what does he do.

Heat rises. So then we get that flushing feeling right the red. So what I would say is what does red connect to. You know start looking at if we have hot flashes or temperature changes.

Is there a connection to heat the fire element in the body? Can we bring in more of the red foods like cherry is and raspberries and watermelon like cooling high polyphenol vitamin C rich foods, even making a swamp from a red bell pepper, to or from a yellow or green or even orange bell pepper to a red one will give you more lycopene, which is also an important phytochemical for things like our skin.

So red urgency, vigor, lots of lots of different signals there. And we can be creative with these colors, too. You know, I usually focus on the colors that people are eating, but it can be the colors that you're wearing could even be in your your home space.

All of that is informing you psychologically. So if you feel like you need some toning down, you know, I used to have a home where I had every room with a color.

So you do. It's like, where do you want the red? I had the red in my home office because I knew I wanted to be active and stimulated to be thinking, and I wanted physically to be stimulated by everything I needed to do.

So again, it's a it's a strong doing color. Yeah. My my kids said to me because I had my kitchen painted yellow and the bedroom living, you know, purple for me too.

And my kids were like, are you in kindergarten? Like, what's with all the color? And I was like, no, I'm using I'm using the energy of the colors for each room.

And they were laughing me. Yes. I love how you're talking. I hope everyone who's listening because we're not taught to think this way like we are. I always say not all medicine comes in a bottle every.

You know, I take a ton of supplements and so forth. But like the way you're talking, like, I hope you're listening to how she's talking about color and utilizing it through the food, through what you're surrounding yourself with, how how you're dressing.

I have to uplevel. I do not have my my closet is not color. That is a rainy day project. I can see me taking on. I even did this is crazy. Call me a nerd, but on my refrigerator I rainbow it.

I had like at the base I had like the tubers, like the reds and the browns. And then I worked my way up into the oranges. I mean, that was more like a fun project, but it was like, I just like to see life in a spectrum, right?

Because every color is just amazing. Now, the one for women specifically. And I was just asked about this because I did make a social media post on it.

Green and the Heart Center

Maybe you saw this one as well. I call it the sacral heart access. So I do think that of these seven main key centers of our body, we have interrelationship shifts.

So one of the interrelationships is our female, I would say physical reproductive site, which we know as the uterus and the ovaries, fallopian tubes, vagina, the whole thing.

Right. It's a physical creative incubator. So that is usually connected to the color orange like that pinkish oranges, orangish kind of melon color. It's, the way I see it, any way.

And it's connected to watery flow and, you know, fats and oils, it's connected to the adipose tissue because that's a reservoir of hormones. As well. When we take in plant foods that are orange, we help to inform the ovaries through the carotenoids.

So the orange foods like oranges, tangerines, persimmons, mangoes, they actually contain certain phytochemicals that help with things like reducing ovarian decline.

So it's really important. They're orange. They're circular. So that to me is like a raw emotional site. And it's in the low body. And then in the upper part of the body we have an emotional creative incubator, the heart space.

So the heart has its blood vessels. We have arms. We have hands to hug and to hold. And so this is again the evolution that I see that women take through lives.

So they, they come into their physical, creative selves, right? They go through puberty, they start having secondary sex characteristics. You know, they are fertile, creative in their physical way.

And then we transition in a away from that in midlife into more of a heart centered emotional. It's almost like, you know, think of the throat as the birth canal for the heart.

Right. So it's not that we lose creativity as women, it's that we transmute it. We all come creativity from the physical sense into the more I would say heartfelt emotional sense.

Maybe that's a memoir. Maybe it's, you know, just having different creative passions and pursuits in the menopausal time of life. Right? So those two centers of creativity, they almost mirror each other, even how they look.

Right? You know, you think of the ovaries and the fallopian tube. They're like arms and hands and like, up here we have the arms and the hands, the heart.

Right. So it's just different forms of expression. One is more physically anchored in creativity and one is more emotionally connected to creativity with some overlap of the two, of course.

That's such a beautiful way to I love that the birth canal of the heart. And so yeah, when I think of the heart, I think of like the color green. Yes.

And so what would I want to hear your, your take on green. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I didn't even get to that. You're right. So orange and green. Orange and green. So orange.

Like I mentioned the carotenoids, the lower, the ovaries and the skin, the adipose tissue and then leafy greens. So if we think of, like what? What makes the heart expand?

Yes. Joy? Yes. Emotion. Yes. Passion. But then also leafy greens that are filled with folate, that are filled with magnesium, that are filled with vitamin K, one which is called low quinone.

Right. Vitamin K is like I would say, the next vitamin D. It helps with coagulation. It helps with blood vessel health. Then we also have nitrates. The healthy nitrates that come from plants are in these green leafy foods.

So even if you look close up to a leaf you're going to see like the vasculature, right. It's beautiful. And so those leaves they feed us. They feed good healthy blood vessel health and heart health.

Overall. And that is so important for menopausal women because as women go through menopause, their their risk for things like cardiovascular disease goes up.

Creativity, Healing, and Personal Story

So we need to be attentive to those greens. We need to be attentive to expansion in the heart and in the blood vessels. As we make our way through. Again, such a beautiful perspective.

Rather than, you know, I'm eating my greens, I'm getting my, my serving them to like, think about I'm expanding my heart as I chew and that just shifts everything.

It shifts your nervous system. It shifts your perspective. I would love to eat, like a ten course meal with you and have you, like, no talk about like you.

You would be and seeing the meal. And now we're going into our lungs and we're exhaling and the food is I think, that I love that. Right. Because so many of us have been raised with analysis paralysis of everything, you know, every little thing about our bodies, everything about our foods.

And in fact, I kind of grew up with that. I grew up with a lot of rigor, discipline, rigidity around food and eating. My mother was one of those, I would say, health nuts in the 1970s.

And there was a lot of don't eat this, we can only eat this instead. And so there was a lot of withdrawal. And I think for me, I kind of entered into this space of nutrition with that place of like, good and bad and then I realized that that wasn't helping me or the people I was working with.

And I needed to come from an artful space. I needed to come from a soulful, creative space. And the more creativity I had about it, it was like people were released from the drudgery and the rigidity of it.

In fact, I even in my late 20s, just a little bit of background. Sharon, I had endometriosis really bad. I have a paternal family history of a lot of different, I would say female reproductive disorders.

I had a blocked fallopian tube on my left side, and the left side corresponds to our feminine healer side. So things on the left side of me were just blocked, including my fallopian tube.

And I also had some structural abnormalities with my uterus. So I was always on this quest to make my periods easier, lighter, less painful. And I think I also struggled a lot with being a woman.

I was a woman in science, and that just was kind of a sticky wicket. It was difficult. And one of the ways I found healing was to start painting. And I started painting.

I was in I was finishing, my PhD, and it was really stressful. I was in my late 20s and as I was trying to finish get to the finish line, I just felt like I needed to start painting.

And I started to see shapes. I started to see people as color. You know, I would connect with somebody and I kind of like would tap into them as a color.

And so then I started painting these shapes and putting them around my space. And it was only later in life that my then boyfriend, who became my husband said, Deanna, I think you're painting your ovaries in your uterus and you're putting them all over.

And I didn't even see it. But they were. He was right because they were the same shapes, same colors, and it was almost like I was healing myself through shape and color.

But I didn't have like an intellectual process around it. It was almost like he had to see it and witness it and give that feedback to see it. Long story short, my endometriosis resolved.

Ultimately the fallopian. It's called the hydro cell. Pinks. For everybody listening that resolved. Normally that doesn't typically resolve that ends up needing laparoscopic surgery.

So by the end of this whole and I can't say it was because of art, I did a lot of things. But I have to say that I think that the creative aspects, because I did not have children, because I had a lot of these issues.

Right. And I just felt like you know, it just felt like physical creativity was not something I was going to be suited for. So I needed to create in other ways.

And once I did that, it was like I unleashed something. So I bring that up because I feel like creativity. And when we see food in a creative way, when we see our lives in a creative way, it's like it catapults us into a whole other way of thinking out of that rigidity, out of the rut that many of us are in.

Right? Yeah. Now, it definitely sounds like you painted your way to, I mean, you know, endometrium like that's inflammation, that's congestion, that's the lack of flow.

And so when you and then that that's good medicine to me. And I kept painting orange and pink which would be the color to that area. Right. And I and I did other things too, like I had my own abdominal massage.

I had a lot of adhesions, which is why my fallopian tube got blocked off. It was started to swell with fluid. So yeah, it was like, wow. And then everything kind of cleared up in my 40s.

And then I was thinking, oh, now I'm going through menopause. Like I didn't go through menopause until just two years ago when I was 52. It almost as I was turning 53.

So, but it's like, I don't know, I, I seem to have found a good place, but creativity really helped me. And I wanted to mention that to your audience because creativity is a healing force.

We kind of forget about it. We kind of feel like, oh, there's no time to be creative, no time for quilting or sewing or dancing or singing or poetry. You know, that's just all a waste of time.

That's like icing on the cake. That's not the cake. But I do think that before we had medicine, we had the healing arts. You know, healing is an art. There's a creative, curious component that we miss, right?

And so bringing that back into the menopause, how can we be more creative about our lives now? Because now we have this second half of our lives where anything can emerge.

And this is when women really go through a shakeup in the way of like, okay, maybe this job doesn't suit me anymore. Maybe this relationship, I need to think creatively.

I'm I'm growing out of this relationship. Right? So we start to create in a whole array of different ways, like the world just opens up and expands back to the heart space.

Yeah. That's why I always write menopause with the parentheses around the pause. Because that pause, that exhale to really stop and go, you know what is Mary Oliver say.

You know we have this one precious life. And what are you going to do with it. And it it really does go quicker.

Thyroid, Throat Chakra, and Minerals

Like I remember being young and my mother saying, you know, as you get older, time goes quicker. And I'm like, But now that I'm 57, I'm like, oh yeah, time like it's going.

And if we don't kind of stop and figure out what it is we want to create, and it doesn't have to be some big giant thing, it could be how we express our how we get dressed in the morning or how we cook our meals, or what we think when we're cooking our meals.

And it could be great big glorious things, you know, it can be whatever it needs to be for you, but it's so important to give ourselves that space to do that and not just keep steamrolling and, you know, hopefully at this point we are wiser.

We are maybe not so responsible for so many people, and we can kind of carve out a little creative cavity for ourselves. So I'd love to hear you. I mean, I'd love to hear you talk about a lot of things, but I I'd love to hear you talk about the thyroid, because that is a epidemic issue, especially for women in menopause.

Often their thyroid, as their ovaries are winding down. The thyroid seems to think that's a good idea as well and follows suit. And I'd love to just hear your beautiful view on the thyroid.

Well, much like we have this sacral heart access, we also have the sacral thyroid or throat access. And I, as I mentioned, I see the throat area is a loaded area.

It's a lot of integration. We're swallowing, we're breathing, we're chewing. We are you know, we've got the thyroid gland, the butterfly shaped gland that is responsible for fueling our metabolism.

So integrating metabolism. So I think of this as some of the key themes come out in the way of integration authenticity choice and voice. And so this is I would say menopause is the time of life when women start to find their voice before it.

And they may have had, issues with their thyroid. To me, I look at thyroid in not just scientific terms, but also symbolic terms like why? Why the thyroid?

The thyroid is a very, I would say sensitive organ. So it's often referred to as the Sentinel as the sentinel organ. So it's going to be like one of the first responders of the endocrine system.

It's right there. It's front and center. You're, you know, it's it's very susceptible to toxic exposures. And so it's doing a lot of different things, and it's relatively exposed.

So here is where I think about, obviously there are nutritional aspects. So when I think of the color of this chakra, I think of blue green like an aquamarine, kind of like the, the ocean behind you.

Right. And so I think of, when I'm thinking of blue green foods, I'm thinking of green plants that grow in the blue ocean. So things like sea plants. Nori walker may dots a lot of these sea plans.

Some people call them seaweeds. I like to call them. See, plants are rich in minerals and minerals help our thyroid gland to do its work. Whether it's the iodine, the selenium, which we can also get from Brazil nuts, by the way.

But we need a lot of the the minerals to help with thyroid hormone production. And so, you know, from a nutrition standpoint, there's getting all of the right nutrients trying to avoid endocrine disruptors.

And I think as we come into menopause, we really need to do an inventory of what are all of the disruptors in our environment. But not just things might also be people might also be spaces.

It might be we need to be expansive about that. So I, I feel that when women go through menopause, there is this release of her own sense of authenticity.

Many times she comes further into her truth, right? So it becomes easier to speak forward. And, so I opt for women who have thyroid issues, weather, autoimmune conditions, or maybe their thyroid is less and its function hypothyroidism in some way.

You know, just to look at like how you are presenting yourself in the world through your voice, through your own sense of being unique and authentic. So there's kind of like that symbolic aspect that I like to look at.

I also think that the adrenals, the root chakra and the the thyroid have that connection as well. You know, when we're stressed, you know, a very sensitive organ, our adrenals, and it's going to impact our thyroid.

Yeah. I always say they play the the adrenals in the thyroid, go to the playground and get on the seesaw together. And they're in their relationship that each other and you very good point.

Yeah. And I was just thinking as you were saying too, like we don't eat. See, I like that. See plants. That's not like a real staple in our diets. No. And, the thing is that we have so many toxic metals in our environment, they suppress the activity of a lot of these minerals.

So it's not only that we're not getting them in because we're not taking in sea plants or foods that come from mineral rich soil. It's also because we have a higher toxic load and minerals and metals compete.

So things like iron and arsenic compete. Things like mercury and selenium compete. So that's why it's so important to have enough minerals to effectively keep our toxic metal.

I would say our exposure and activity low. So more on minerals I think again, the thyroid is kind of like that first, first line of receiving those minerals, taking them in.

I kind of feel like minerals are the bedrock of so many biochemical reactions. You know, that's like one of the very basic things that a menopausal woman can do.

Many times we hear about magnesium, but nutrition is a relationship, right? Like you can't just do a lot of magnesium and not be thinking about everything else.

So that's why I like to do more complex multi mineral kind of combinations so that you get the whole host, the whole spectrum of different ones coming in and to rotate foods.

Here's another way that women can be creative. Sometimes when we're in our ruts we're concentrating certain nutrients and we're missing out on getting more of a fuller spectrum of nutrition.

Rhythm, Simplicity, and Closing Thoughts

So if we rotate our foods every 2 to 3 days and we get more diverse foods, we'll have a theoretically a better nutritional status and a lower toxic load.

Yes. I mean, when I'm seeing a patient and I go, what's your diet? And it's every morning I have a blueberries with mayo like, we need to not eat the same foods every day for we don't want to keep getting the same toxins.

We don't want to miss out, like you're saying on certain minerals. That's really good. So it's easy to fall into that rut. And so maybe that's where you start with your creativity is just adding in new foods.

And I feel like, you know, we talk so much about eating the rainbow. I feel like you are you have really taken eating the rainbow to like this elevated beautiful.

Multidimensional place. I love that that you're really, you know and that is it's really important that we get all these colors on all these different different realms.

So. Oh God, this time has flown so quick. So, last words of wisdom for the ladies listening. And of course, where can they learn more about you and what you're doing?

Sure. I would say last words of wisdom would be, again, I would bring back color, creativity and rhythm, kind of finally finding her new rhythm. Right.

And how important diversity is as it connects to creativity. So keeping it simple, you know, I think that that's important. So those are the, the principles that I talk a lot about in my teaching as far as finding stuff that I do, they can look at my website, which is my name, Deanna Minecon.

I have a whole bunch of downloads on there, like I have a food and mood tracker that people could use. I have an eating the rainbow toolkit. I even have a menopause sheet of certain things that I like with respect to nutrition and lifestyle, so they can take that to their practitioner and talk with them about it and see what would work for them.

So yeah, my website and then you can get all of my social media information from that. Yeah, I highly recommend following. I follow her and I'm always, you know, when you have like your favorite post you're seeing, you screenshot them and like so I have a whole lot of all these screenshots of your your posts in my phone.

And I'm like these, I love making the posts. I mean, I really like as many times I'm in a shower, a warm shower, and I'll get the idea for the post that I'll just come to me.

I'm like, I have to make that. It's like some of them like, it's like I just feel like I'm the messenger for the information. They're a very good messenger.

And yeah, rhythm. We didn't really get to talk a lot about rhythm, but finding your rhythm and finding where I, I think some of the best things I have learned and implement and teach my patients is like, I have no alarm clock waking me up.

I have I have white space in my in my calendar, in my life, and I don't overbook anymore. Right? Oh my gosh. Yeah. It's just and it's so funny. I'm on my way to, to an event.

And this event is like from like seven in the morning to like 10:00 at night, every night. And I'm like, normally I miss

anything. I've got to be there and be there.

Like, that was in the old, like, now I'm like, I'll get there when I wake up. And it's good for me and I probably am not going to stay at all like it's honoring your rhythm and what.

Yeah. And just trusting. Like, I don't have to have stage for FOMO anymore. I can just trust, like, what's meant for me will energetically come in. And if I wasn't there, then it was okay.

And so I think the more we can learn to live in a more relaxed rhythm as we age, yeah, the more empowering it is for ourselves to just be in our feminine energy and be, like you said, that messenger.

So you said it beautifully and I am exactly the same. I used to be like you describe, and that now it's like, yeah, I'm going to pay attention to how I feel and where I'm at and go with the yin of being receptive rather than the yang of constantly driving things forward.

You just assimilate and you bring things together better when you're in a more present form. Right? This is true self-care. Well thank you so much. This is definitely one of my favorite talks of the whole summit.

So I'm so thank you for having me. It's been fun. Yeah. So please go check her out. Everyone needs a little dynamic in their lives. And we'll be back with another topic.

So see you soon. Thank you.