Introduction to Empaths and Trauma

Empaths actually experienced more trauma than other people. I'm your host, Dr. Aimie, for this summit. We are at the Biology of Trauma Summit 3.0. Welcome.

We are talking about the trauma disease connection and especially when we talk about empaths and highly sensitive people. It's so important to bring in the biology piece.

So many people who come into the 21 day journey and then continue on into the other biology of trauma modules, even those who are professionals. In my training program, the Biology of Trauma Professional Certificate Training Program.

They are identified, many of them as empaths and highly sensitive people. What does this mean? Well, it actually means that we have new tools. We have more tools than what we have had.

So there's good news in that. And I want to share a window into that with you. And as we look into this biology of empaths, we see that we really do need to have a new definition of trauma because we're not just looking for events.

If we're just looking for events, we're going to miss all the trauma that impacts and highly sensitive people experience, sometimes on a daily basis just by going through life because they don't have the filters that other people have.

All this sensory information is flooding them and their system gets overwhelmed. And so if you're still looking for events and a checklist of events, you're going to miss this.

So what is the definition of trauma that we need to have, especially as it relates to impasse and highly sensitive people? It's not only to them. This is the the definition of trauma.

It's anything that for any reason at that time overwhelmed us. And I want to share with you the graph that I've created for the trauma response in the body so that you can understand this and see that there is there are two triggers for things that overwhelm us.

There's two ways in which our body can be overwhelmed. Let me pull up this graph right now and share this with you. This is the trauma response and it's how our body goes into the trauma response.

And we have three states of our nervous system. We have the parasympathetic, which is here in the middle. We have the stress response, which is up on the highest level of energy.

And then we have the overwhelm. And there are two triggers for that overwhelm. Too much, too fast and too little for too long. And what do you relate to?

Which one kind of resonates for you? I guarantee you that if you are an adult and you are noticing patterns of trauma and overwhelm as you're watching this summit that you have a combination of both of those, it has now become both too much, too fast and too little for too long.

And this is often the daily experience of empaths and highly sensitive people before they learn the tools that they can apply. Too much. Too fast. Too little for too long.

Imagine if I were going to toss a ball to you. You would be able to catch it. But what if, before you even caught that ball? I tossed you another one, and then another one.

And then another one. And then another one. You would be overwhelmed, like your body wouldn't be able to react fast enough. Respond fast enough. That's the same thing that happens in a trauma response.

Life can happen too much, too fast. Or what if you've just become too tired to exhausted your division out in nutrients and so your reaction times are slower?

That would be a reason for too little for too long. And that would be the reason for your body. Not being able to respond and react as fast to catch all of these balls that I'm tossing at you.

And as long as we're catching all the balls, this is the stress response. But as soon as we start dropping balls, as soon as we get overwhelmed with our ability to keep up with it all, our body goes into overwhelm.

And that overwhelm is the trauma response. And this is why empaths actually experience more trauma than those who are not empaths.

Trauma Response and Nervous System Overwhelm

Now, the window into the biology of empaths, there are a couple of things that have been the most important for empaths is I've looked at them and and been one, and there are three biochemical imbalances that are common in those who are empaths and highly sensitive people common so that when I'm seeing anyone or now a one of my biology from my health coaches is seeing someone who identifies as an impasse.

We're doing this testing so that we're looking for one or all of these biochemical imbalances. And if you like that information, I actually have that on my website.

So let me pull that up and show that to you so you can know where to go find those on my website. If you come here to TraumaHealingaccelerated.com and you scroll down, you will find a section that says Resources.

And here, right in the middle, you have the three most common biochemical imbalances. Those are the most common in those who are impasse. And so scroll down here.

You would want the essential sequence guide if you want to go over the trauma response and our way out of the trauma response. But these three most common biochemical imbalances, you will need to know if you are an empath or a highly sensitive person.

The other thing that is important, when we look at the biology of an impasse is their neurodevelopment. And many of them have gaps in their neurodevelopment, meaning that whole sequence of movements and patterns and crawling and walking, all of the things that happened in our early childhood, we didn't have any control over and the midbrain, the midbrain stage of neurodevelopment, the midbrain in our brainstem, if that has gaps, if we didn't get enough of that hands and knees crawling for long enough, or maybe when we were doing it, we didn't feel safe.

And so it got wired wrong. Some of the neural pathways are just not as organized that will make us not have the filters for all the sensory information coming at us.

And so when we look at the biology of an impasse and highly sensitive person, we definitely need to also look at attachment and neurodevelopment to see what neural pathways can we come back now, even as an adult and rewire those neural networks that formed during early childhood and development?

So I'm sharing this with you so that if you are an empath or if you work with impasse, that you will have additional tools that's been missing some of this biology stuff that's been missing.

And with that, let's jump into the interview, because with this interview, I've invited Dr. Judith Orloff, and I'm so excited to have her here for this interview.

She is a psychiatrist. She is a New York Times bestselling author of The Impasse Survival Guide and Thriving as

an Impact. She is at the UCLA psych psychiatric clinical faculty.

And what she does is that she synthesizes the pros of traditional medicine with cutting edge knowledge of intuition, energy and spirituality, and so specializes in treating highly sensitive people in her private practice.

I'm so excited to share this information with you. And so enjoy. And let's jump into this interview. Dr. Orloff, it seems that those people who are impassioned, highly sensitive people, they they actually experience more trauma throughout their lifetime.

And that doesn't seem fair. So what's going on in there internally, like in their nervous system that actually seems to make them experience more more trauma in their lifetime?

Well, you know, I'm just in terms of my background, I'm a psychiatrist and I'm an impasse. Like, combine both my psychiatric knowledge and U. S. medical training and UCLA psychiatric residency training and via internship training with my empath abilities.

And so I grew up as an only child, and I was an empath child and had very open sensitivities. Empaths don't have the usual filters that other people have, so they tend to process more information like I feel more than, let's say my partner feels because he doesn't feel certain things.

It's just not an impact. But I feel now, I feel everything that's going on in my body. I feel the energies going on outside it. And so in terms of the question about trauma, empaths aren't just open to trauma, they're open to everything and it can feel traumatic when you're young, especially if you're a child, because you don't have as you don't have any guidance.

No children need guidance in terms of how to deal with this super feeler state. Now, how do you deal with it? I believe in having children educated from a very beginning, know, just they don't even need to talk.

And you could kind of show them now how to deal with the world is oftentimes children empower, children put their hands up like this because they feel the world that early through their hands is just so interesting.

Or you see, a baby is born, yet sometimes you can see like some remorse, sensitive and others are just, you know, ready to come into this this planning to, you know, do whatever they're going to do.

But the empaths children are very open. And so what we're defining as trauma or unrest or dysfunction is that we don't know how for a very young age to process all the sensory and energetic input that's coming at us.

And so in that sense, we're more open. So do we experience more traumatic events than other people? I don't think so necessarily.

Biology of Empaths: Biochemical and Developmental Factors

I think it's how we process the world which can be traumatic if it isn't given the proper guidance. And so once you can educate and empower, that's your joy.

You know, as we're doing together, the impact parents could learn how to help their sensitive children so they don't perceive overstimulation as a trauma.

Now, if you say, okay, I'm over it, I'm sure I can handle it, I'm having a you know, if they have a temper tantrum, let's take them away, put them in a quiet spot, you know, let them play with their imaginary companions, let them process and replenish is they're very empaths.

Children are very different than non empath children. Not better or worse, just with particular sensitivities. So the trauma aspects it can be interpreted as the world is so coarse, it's so overwhelming.

And why are these people yelling? Why is my toe hurting me? Why is these crowds of people, you know, overwhelming me? Why can't I stop thinking about what's going on in that person in the cashier's?

Like, as I'm tuning into their information and I'm overwhelmed. Now all of that overwhelm, symptoms of an impact and and the survival guide and it all my teachings and books I stress how essential it is to learn how to manage being an impasse so you can get to the good part.

Now we tend to skew our perceptions of being an impasse to the more difficult aspects of it, because they're really intense. Sensory overload is painful.

It's intense, and you don't want to be there. And if you get there, you want to get out of it really quickly. But I just want to say impasse. I love being in know I mean, yes, it has its challenges, but so what everything has its different challenges.

Whatever you're given in life, it has its own challenges that you get to feel everything. I get to feel the flowers, I get to feel nature and to feel deep love and connection with people.

I get to be in touch with the mystery and, you know, the the gorgeousness of life on such a deep level. And so I like that. I like personally, I like being an empath and I love being in love, counselor, therapist and psychiatrist.

And now it's just so beautiful to combine the linear mind and everything we learn in our medical training. We have our knowledge of being an impasse and helping people to blossom into a world so they don't feel like fragile flowers.

But at the same time, there is some healing to be done. If you haven't had a childhood that supported your empath nature, which most people have it now, if you were raised by a narcissistic parent, if you were raised by an abusive parent, if you were neglected or left on your own without supervision.

I know some dear friends of mine and a couple of them like that. They never their parents never watched over that. No. And they were so sensitive. It's just it's it's it's difficult when you don't have the education.

So what we're giving now, you know, is the education to make life easier for empathic children. And if you're an empathic adult listening, you can start now.

You know, any age is the age to start. I worked with a woman in my private practice who was 90. She came to me. I just discovered I'm an amateur. Go, go, go. Is is to lay?

No, never. So the challenge is, is that we feel we feel more of everything around us. But that's also the gift, is what I'm hearing you say. And when we have the education, we understand why our system is responding the way it is.

And we can support it. We're able to step into the gift and not have it just be the challenge. Exactly. Exactly. You have to learn how to work with being an empath.

It requires a relatively deep healing and for your own self, you know, for instance, empaths, because they don't have the same filters. It's like you're holding something with 50 hands, 50 fingers instead of five.

It's the experience of you for those who are not empaths. Listen to this. You need to know this about your loved ones and your children so that you can support it.

It's a beautiful thing, but it's a lot. And it's different. It's different than you. And I prefer being with an empath partner who doesn't go through all this because it's grounded.

It's Earth. I'm not feeling I'm not feeling anything good. Perfect. So that's that's how I feel because it grounds me. But, yeah, you do need to deal with what we're labeling as trauma early on because the world can be traumatic.

Being born into this world can be traumatic given all the birthing procedures. No. And those horrible, you know, the delivery rooms with the bright lights.

And so if you really look at it and you go back to where the so-called trauma starts, it could be just a chaotic environment. If you were an empathic child, it could beaches and that's enough to throw an empathic child off.

It's always having to process more than what they're capable of because empaths need longer processing time. Like after our talk, I'm not just going to go on to something else.

I have to be alone. I have to let it settle. I have to be quiet with myself for me to add on something which I do during book tours because it's the nature of the beast, but I don't prefer it.

I prefer processing and enjoying our interactions. I have a friend who's an account doctor. She has friends over for dinner. She washes her dishes and just, you know, very slowly feels you know, the love and the energy of the person that was sitting at the table and just relishing the moments of the dinner.

And now you say, oh, you want to slow life down so you can really enjoy it. I mean, that will give an empath a lot of pleasure if you can open yourself up to love and loving.

But that entails dealing with any trauma or blocks that you might have experienced as well.

Interview with Dr. Judith Orloff Begins

So you can feel freer and safer and not just hypervigilant all the time. Checking out your environment. Is it safe? Is it safe? Can I go here? I mean, I do that, you know, I check out, but it's like a natural computer inside of me and it's an intuitive thing, but it's can get obsessive with certain people. It can get too much.

So again, it's a matter of degree. And through the lens of the biology of trauma, we talk about the definition of trauma being anything that for any reason overwhelmed our system at that time.

And so when we look at, well, what are the possible traumas then for impasse and highly sensitive people, we're talking even about just crowds of people can can be overwhelming for an empath.

Talk to us about that talk to us about what are the different types of of overwhelming situations or experiences that an impasse might have, that they can learn to start to support their system, knowing that this is actually what's happening, being able to just recognize what's happening inside of them.

Yeah, that's a it's a beautiful thing. It can be overwhelming, though, once you begin to feel what's inside of you, you have to do a little by little.

But it's good. In the survival guide, I suggest people make an inventory of different areas of life that might feel overwhelming are where you absorb the energy of others.

You know, four, maybe five. Top, top five places are top five situations. So you can be aware and prepare yourself for going in those situations. Know, for instance, go to the market shopping.

Depending on how crowded the store is going into Costco. Are you able to do that? You know, a lot of impasse can go into these big Home Depot and Costco places.

It just starts swirling. There are too many things, got too much input going on. Loudspeakers people do you know and and so. Noise is like everything.

All all the sensory input. Loss of sensory input and then the line, you know, because you if you get close, you can feel it. You can feel everything. But you don't want to be the princess and the P either.

But what we're talking about is just identify like causes of trauma. Now we're not talking about healing, so just look at your life. Where is it with your children?

Because you don't have a break now you can have a break or you're not getting adequate help for whatever reason. No. With your kids, you know, is it when you have yelling, you know, I might trigger is yelling loud voices probably because I you know, as a child and it's important for you to look at your childhood patterns and patterns know I was an older child and my parents told me, never mention your intuitions or dreams again in our house, which is how my empathy express themselves, because they didn't want to hear about it.

So I grew up believing there was something wrong with me. But sometimes I would drive in the car and they would bicker in the car and they would bite at each other like this.

And it was just horrible. You know, I was just to to process that as a child. It was just you don't want to yell around your children if you can help it.

You don't want to have them in your in their bedroom, listening to your parents yelling and arguing. You know, this will have a huge is that they will remember it don't think that they're not hearing it impacts children hear everything so that's just an example from what from my life where I don't like being trapped in a small place with people talking because I was conditioned that trauma for me if you want to call it that, was not knowing how to process them, arguing in a car and all the feelings that came up.

So that's just one example. You can look in your life. You know, what was the most overwhelming? You know that the triggers for you, you want to find the triggers for your trauma and gently and sensitively deal with those so you can take care of yourself.

You know, like is self-care is so essential for impulse. I was in a situation recently with a group and this woman was trying to make a point and she got very Austrian and loud and bullying and bossy.

It was on a zoom call and I was supposed to be part of this meeting and I'm feeling I'm, I'm, I'm leaving.

Sensory Overload, Boundaries, and Self-Care

This is unacceptable to me. And so I just told everyone has to leave. This is how I vote. I had to vote on something. The cycle. Bye bye. No. And I just remove myself from the situation where this woman was dumping anger.

So for me, that's a form of self-care that I was able to do it without creating a conflict without. I wasn't interested in confronting her. I wasn't she was just way off base.

I was not going to subject myself to the energy of her rage at us, which was totally inappropriate. So, you know, you have to think not to her life. I'm thinking of empaths who also shamed themselves into staying in those types of situations because of all the narratives that go into their mind of what would people think?

This is a responsibility. This is an obligation. And so they they override that message from their body of get out of here. This is my version of self-care.

Like, I need to remove myself and they force themselves to stay in that. What is the cost to them as an impasse that their pain when they override those messages?

Well, it's part of the learning process with them past know that yes you have to you know observe be mindful that you override those messages. All the impasses may be very gentle on yourself as you learn these things.

Now, if you're in a situation where you feel shamed or you feel people pleaser, you don't want to hurt this one or that one or or there's the very real reality.

In some situations, you could be fired for leaving. You know, this this is was not a situation like that. This is a group

I belong to that was trying to reach a consensus.

But I'm not saying if you are at work and your boss is a narcissist, that you should just walk out on your boss. I don't want you to to go there with it.

You have to use discernment. But in situations where you have the option to set limits or leave, you can begin to practice setting boundaries and setting limits so you can free yourself from certain situations.

And you could do it in a non-confrontational way. You know, I wasn't blaming anyone. I just was having the conversation in myself saying, this is enough.

I don't need to stay here and take this. I'm unmuted her for a while, you know, and I'm trying to figure out what to do. What's the I've got to leave, you know, just vote both in and out so I don't take on people, you know, impasse.

And I need to work this out for themselves. So what do you do when you're in a situation where someone's inappropriately dumping anger and you're there?

Is it a situation that you could gracefully exit? Can you at least go to the bathroom and get some breathing room and figure out what to do now? But what I would like you to do and what I teach my patients and workshop participants is be aware.

How can I practice self-care in this situation? You list your top five situations where you go into sensory overload. All right, so here you are in one.

All right. You want to ideally have a plan to deal with it. You know, if this happens, if somebody starts yelling at me in a car, what am I going to do know? So have a plan.

You don't want to invent the wheel as your you know, in this situation, you just say, okay, if I'm with a narcissist and they're not being accountable for their behavior at work, a narcissistic team member, what do I do?

You know, and you know, one of the great things is realizing that full blown narcissist have empathy, deficient disorder and aren't capable of having empathy for you.

Who are you know, you have huge empathy and you have to see the person differently. So once you're able instead of trying to fix them with your love, which many loving empaths try and do that I've met over the years and I would love to see it works. But really, in rare cases, I mean, you can ever say everything about, you know, that it doesn't really work most of the time.

So I wouldn't do it. It doesn't work. And so you could practice self-care and say, okay, I have identified this person as a narcissist. I think they're a narcissist, so I can't expect them to care about.

What I'm saying is it takes a lot of acceptance of who people are to be able to adjust how you respond to them. So all of this I want to stress is extremely healing.

This is all how to heal yourself as an empath. These are just practical situations I'm talking about that you need to have skills to heal yourself. And if you had trauma, whether it's the chaos of an alcoholic family, whether it's just loving parents who didn't know what to do and some didn't support you or outright abuse.

I mean, you could go up the whole spectrum of abuse and and trauma that can happen. But you want to deal with what's appropriate for you and you don't want to deal with it too fast.

You want to deal with it, slow it now you have to let it percolate. So I know sometimes patients come in, you know, and they say, oh, now I know what it is, let's get into it, you know, let's just go slow.

Yeah, I talk about jumping off the the cliffs of emotions, right? And it's like, no, we don't we don't jump off cliffs here.

Like, some people get excited to do the work and I want to go all the way in and I'm like, Oh, we don't jump off emotional cliffs here.

Like, we, we baby step it. We've got to be gentle with our nervous system that has lived for so long this way. And it just takes time. Like you say, it takes time to just redirect it into a new direction.

And going too much, too fast can still be overwhelming. And I'm wondering, Dr. Orloff, do you think that people are only born as empaths or do you think that there are some family of origin dynamics that will make someone become an empath?

I think, yes, there are both born and family dynamic and also world changes I've seen with the pandemic and all of the stress in the world that people who never are identified as empath adults are coming out as empaths because their defense system was stripped away in this situation that nobody knew how to handle.

And the isolation or the overwhelm from being with family members in the same house. I mean, the stress levels for our house sometimes went up. Other empaths loved it.

You know, they just said, this is my ideal life. I like staying in the house with my animals and seeing people on Zoom. So it depends. But you know, even those people, you know, like myself, I'm more of an introvert, much more of an introvert.

So you can be an extrovert as an empath. Even me and I had, you know, I'm here with my partner and I was longing for people again. You know, I missed them.

I missed the hugs. I missed just the ordinary gatherings and those. So it's an it was an interesting teaching, the whole thing for empaths, anonymous.

But whatever you are, if you're an empath or you're not empath, you experience trauma. It's really important to address it. And so you can heal and have a happier life, you know, and less careful and less scrutinized life in the sense that it could be more spontaneous and more like a child.

Again, without having to keep up your defenses all the time. And what you had brought up before about impasses are thought of as aloof and maybe snobby or and I guess, you know, I could see that because when I'm in my bubble, if I go out shopping, I go in my bubble.

I'm not interested in the people there. All right? It's not because I'm snobby, it's because I'm in my bubble. It is. But people interpret it as that can interpret as it is.

And if I smile at them, it's a whole different thing because then they feel acknowledged people. Most people feel less than you know, and some capacity.

And they're terribly afraid of rejection. Everybody, no matter how together they look, they have a clear rejection. And so if I'm in my bubble, not even interacting in any way with them, they might feel I'm being snobby.

And it's usually that empaths are trying to protect themselves as it's such a priority to protect your energy so you don't get sapped by the world that it can be misinterpreted.

And it sounds like what you're saying is so much of the experience of an empathy, whether as a child or, as you mentioned, adults discovering during the pandemic, that they're empaths.

It's it's this inability or difficulty in knowing what to do in knowing how to process all of this sensory information coming at them.

Empath Traits, Health Symptoms, and Medical Validation

And without that knowledge, without those tools, it sounds like that's part of the overwhelming experience for them is not just the sensory information, but I don't even know what to do with this.

And there's the sense of being lost, being confused, probably being alone in that overwhelm of their internal experience and how important it is then for the work that you're doing is to bring that education piece to them so that they at least know what it is and, and have the tools know, know what to do and take that element out of the experience of the sensory information that they're getting.

Yeah. That they're not, you're not just a victim of sensory overload, but one of the key places for me and I haven't traveled on airplanes recently, but I used to be in airports all the time.

That was like a real trigger spot for me, especially if my flight was late and I had to sit there and sit there with all those people. It was really hard for me and I usually try and go to my little corner.

That's the way I take care of myself. And I put my purse next to me and I create a little circle. But you can't do that these days because there's so many people, you know, they want to sit right next to you.

So, you know, I'll sit on the floor somewhere, you know, God help me. Then I'll sit next to a column and just get myself away from the people. Because not that I don't like the people, I just don't want to be around their energy. I want to I need more space around me.

I need space and a lot of emphasis need more space. That doesn't mean I don't love hugging people. I love what I do, but I don't always love hugging strangers.

And I oh, you know, this might be an empath thing where I don't like shaking hands with people. I never like that because I pick up too much energy and people, you know, each of you, if you listen to me, you decide in your own life what are some weird things you don't like to do and make it okay?

All right. But I remember there was this one woman coming at me. We were outside and sidewalk. Oh, Judith, she's coming at me with her hand. I see your hand coming.

So I know she's wanting to shake my hand and take my hand. And I just looked at her and I just said, Oh, nice to see you. I don't shake hands. Oh. Oh, okay. So she was like, What?

And then she just. Oh, okay, I understand. So, yeah, you know, what's so funny about all this for me is you have to be prepared to say weird things, but say it in a nice way so it doesn't seem like you're apologizing or making excuses.

I just know it's just a little intense for me to shake hands with some people. I don't want that information because the hand energetic really is sensitive.

So you have to have impulses sensitive about touch or impulse. Don't always like to be hugged by everybody. You and let's say you go to a conference and oh, hi, you know, and they all want to hug you and you just say, No, I don't hug.

Let's do a knuckle bump or something. So you want to be prepared and also can be overly polite and people pleasers and co-dependence, which is important.

So look, got to this. You'd give up your own knees and never think of saying anything like that because people will think you're so weird or you they won't like you anymore or they think you will reject them.

And so in my life, so much of being an empath is educating people who might not understand and doing it in a really loving way. And I'm just saying, this is me and more and more people are empaths, so I guarantee you you're not alone.

I have, I don't know, thousands. I don't even know much more than thousands. People constantly emailing me over the years, Oh, I'm so happy. Finally know what I am.

So I thought there's something wrong with me and there isn't. But there's a lot of issues to be dealt with around trauma, around learning how to process energy.

It's a whole new world, really. It's exciting that you need to be and it guided. I guidance. I had a lot of guides in my life which I appreciate. You know, the guidance is good.

You get somebody who's been down this path a little bit, you know, then they can help you. They go, Oh, okay, I know how to help you get used to it. Mean all of your clinical years, what have you started to see as patterns of maybe physical health symptoms that empaths are more vulnerable to getting.

Everything from in terms of an emotional anxiety disorder, depression, chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, mystery symptoms get the million dollar work up and they never find anything wrong.

First say, and then they're shamed out of the doctor's office and sent to someone like a psychiatrist to be put on meds, which is not the appropriate treatment for empaths usually.

And I don't say that as a blanket statement. It depends. Depends. But I just want to say if you do need to go on meds sometimes in my experience I've seen them pass.

Just require a sliver. Like if you need to go on a little anti-depressant and I'm not promoting or not promoting antidepressants. I'm just saying if you're in that situation, just a little sliver can work.

You don't have to take the normal dose because your system might be too sensitive for it. So, you know, for me in my life, I've always a sliver of this is liver or that.

And, you know, the doctors said, I never work, but it does, you know, I know I could feel in my body if I take something, if it's working or not. It's not a mystery thing to me.

But most people I've talked to my chiropractor about this, that they are not this intense. They don't know what's going on inside. But I know everything.

I take something I feel. What happens to me is I'm super in touch with my body is just how I'm wired and it's just how many impacts or where you feel it.

And people will say, you can't be feeling that. What do you mean that that can happen? I've had that all my life. I thought, well, sorry, but it's happening.

So just for you empaths out there, even if you're the only one who's experiencing a symptom of some sort, it's legitimate. Don't question yourself as crazy making when they say no, you can't be experiencing it.

That's not what's in the the DSM five or the PDR. It's just not there I go. So, you know, relevance does that have I'm experiencing is my life now I'm not making it up but the.

Crazy thing is, is that even as a physician, I have gone into other physicians for medical appointments. I have told them like, this is what I'm feeling inside from this.

And they're like, You can't be feeling that. And I'm like, I am your colleague. Like, if you don't trust me and you're shaming me as a fellow physician, I can only imagine how you're treating other people, your other patients who aren't physicians, and they come in telling you like, No, I can feel this and I can feel that it's not having a good effect on my body and I want it changed.

And which brings me to my last point, Dr. Orloff, which I am so excited about the work that you're doing to bring this

into the medical system. Can you share a little bit about what you're doing?

Because I think this is such a big advancement for for medicine. And I'm excited that you're kind of on the front edge of that. Yeah, I am, too. I've been on the clinical staff at the Department of Psychiatry at UCLA, and I have the honor of where I do my training or the honor of supervising residents who go through their four year program to help them incorporate their empath nature or empathy, or at least have them understand their empath patients more by supervising them with their own patients and showing them how it works.

So I love supervision because they bring their patients to me and I help them see it in a bit of a different way. So that's really exciting. And I'm giving empathy training programs to corporations, to hospitals, medical systems where I go in for various amounts of time and just train the staff.

Now what is empathy? Why can it help? Why can increase productivity? How can you deal with difficult people? Empathically rather than shutting down, getting overloaded or or attacking them?

How do you deal with people and how do you deal with your own triggers and heal yourself so you're not so triggered by everybody's bad behavior? People have terrible behavior now we see terrible behavior at times.

We're not perfect, you know?

Training Clinicians and Preventing Burnout

And do you deal with how do you not be in that dance as an empath, know how to say a positive yes, a short positive yes or positive no and get in and out.

You know, empaths often take too long to describe something. They're very apologetic after setting boundaries, almost as if they've done something wrong and my suggestion is just to do it very short and sweet.

No more than 15 seconds with a boundary like really quick say, you know, I know that's important you but I'm just not able to do that right now. I'm so sorry.

Maybe another time. And how long was maybe 5 seconds. But the way I train people in terms of their tone of voice as the tone of voice, and you don't want to be blaming or critical with people, they still feel like you out.

They won't be able to hear your point. All right. So we have to have a lot of compassion for people's blindspots in why they believe what they believe and why how you can kind of graciously and elegantly express yourself to the point.

I mean, you're making your point. Nobody's going to misconstrue what you're going to say, but you're in and out. You're not dawdling with them or engaging them in some kind of dysfunctional conversation that empaths get in because they they get real into these things as opposed to setting limits and boundaries.

One in of people please. Now, I'm very a fan of the short, quick boundary setting approach which I talk about in this this book as a thriving as an empath for self-care.

And this book was the first book, The Empath Survival Guide, which is a 20 questions self-assessment test. Are you an empath? In the beginning of the book that I suggest that people look at.

There are biology or trauma professionals while they're in training to become a biology of trauma professional. And many of them recognize that they are in empath.

As our wrap up for today, what words would you have for them specifically knowing that they're working with people who have a dysregulated, nervous system or that are coming to them for trauma work, and here they are, a biology of trauma professional in that capacity, stepping out of their capacity as an empath, what would be your final words to someone like that?

Empaths are working with empaths. Impacts are working with people who need trauma work. Okay, don't overbook yourself. Have big spaces between each person so you could meditate and center yourself to clear whatever stress you've taken on notice.

If you're overriding a fire with a person's plight, you know, if they just went through a divorce and you just went through a divorce, so your triggered, you know, notice that and say, okay, I'll I'll deal with that separately.

I have to deal with my own issues, but I can help them deal with their issues too. So notice when you get triggered, go home, take a bath, baths are wonderful because water helps to clear off the day who's working with trauma is intense and so you don't want to jam one patient next to the other is just a problem.

It will be a problem for you. You'll get burned. I've seen people get burned out and they never want to see patients again. They go open a restaurant somewhere, you know, they're just burnt out and you don't want to burn out because we need you.

So you have to practice this self-care and you have to know that you can't do. The healing for these people, you know, if somebody is going through something, including yourself, if you're in the reverse situation, somebody can't do the healing for you, your boyfriend, your husband, your wife.

They can't do it. Therapists can't do it. Nobody can do it. They can be a guide for you and you can do it. And so empaths who are therapists get into trouble because they feel that they have to work too hard.

They have to do it for their patients. And that's not what this is about. This is about healing. It's not about you healing them or getting involved with your ego.

It's about providing the guidance and the proper energy and the space to help them find ahas with what you're saying. When you say something, they're going to go, Wow, I can identify with that.

Either that or they're going to sit there and look at you a blink and you'll know you're off. You know, they say, Oh, I'll think about that. Or maybe I don't know.

That's not that's not. You didn't get their hearts there. You didn't get get in. But people do respond. They light up when they said, oh, my God, I never thought someone would understand this.

You can see when you get the right interpretation for anything that's there. Thank you. Oh, yes. Now, as opposed to. So just notice people's responses because you'll you don't want to intellectualize too much.

You want to you want to create a heart space. So people who have gone through a trauma can feel safe to do whatever. They need to do. And you have every right to slow somebody down who is going too fast and give them permission to slow down.

There's no rush. The healing will happen. And sometimes the the something has to come up in the session. Then they go home and the healing continues as they're at home, as they're in the car, as they're walking down the street, they're getting ahas, they're getting more pain or whatever they're experiencing that comes up.

So you want to tell them that and have them keep a journal so they don't forget or get overwhelmed. And for you, you have to have a life in addition to your trauma work.

You have to have a beautiful life and gift yourself with that. Go hiking. No, go do whatever you love to do. Buy water. Don't just work. Because I've seen so many amazing healers burn out because they overwork or see too many patients.

And as impasse, you can't do that without paying a price. Isn't it so wonderful to gain a deeper understanding of ourselves? I even had more insights about my own behaviors and things that I've avoided over the years, or things that have drained my energy.

And I didn't understand it and I gained that during this interview. I hope that you gain something as well. Now, as we finish up this interview, please remember that you do have the ability to purchase all of these recordings so that you can rewatch them as many times as you want long after the summit.

And you don't need to rush. You don't need to try to be writing everything down. You can just have all of the resources, information at your fingertips.

And with that, I look forward to seeing you later. I will be teaching a number of master classes after this summit, so I will for sure see you there as well as in the next interview.

And so I'm your host for this summit, The Biology of Trauma Summit 3.0. Trauma Disease Connection. And I will see you at the next interview.