Podcast Introductions and Opening Themes

So as I observe in other women, there is a catharsis in both the witnessing of someone's story and in the telling of a story. And I feel like that's medicine on its own merits.

And and so but, but it's true. As you think about articulating something, giving something voice gives it energy and launches it into the world and makes it.

It takes on a life of its own and it makes it possible. Which is why, if you think about it, when people are even sick or when they're struggling with something mentally, the power of our words, I mean, sacred texts have said this forever.

The power of our words can make or break us. It's like the time that the tongue is like a rudder on a ship, and it moves an entire ship. One little rudder.

That is the power of our tongue. Welcome to Doctor Talks, the podcast where every episode leads to a healthier you. Join us as we navigate the world of optimal health, uncovering groundbreaking strategies to conquer chronic disease.

In each episode, we'll bring you the latest insights from leading health experts, medical innovators, and wellness warriors. If you're seeking to transform your health journey, or if you're looking for answers to burning questions, you've come to the right place.

Get ready to unlock the secrets of lifelong health and vitality. This is Doctor Talks, real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most.

Welcome to the two curious MDS podcast. My name is Doctor Soraya Rahman and I'm here with Doctor Alya Ahmed. And we're the two curious MDS. Hi. And you know, I'm going to give a little introduction about our podcast, Curiosity Fuels Discovery.

And in medicine, it's the key to transformation. Two curious MDS explores the frontiers of healing through narrative medicine, integrative therapies, psychedelics, and patients centered care.

Hosted by Doctor Alia Amir, the doctor Soraya Rahman. This podcast challenges the boundaries of traditional medicine, uncovering the untold stories, ethical dilemmas, and groundbreaking research shaping the future of health care.

Join the journey. Because medicine is more than science. It's a story. All right. And today on our podcast, we have Doctor Jen Oliver, the real Jen Oliver.

And I'm so delighted to meet you today and have you on the podcast. And I'll go ahead and just throw it out to you to give us your introduction. Because it's quite expansive and beautiful.

So thank you so much for being here, Jen, today. Thank you both for having me. And I wish I carried the illustrious title of doctor. So I'll just receive that spiritually, metaphorically, figuratively.

But I am a speaker, coaching and communications consultant, and I work primarily with women to help them speak with greater impact.

Jen Oliveru2019s Background and Voice Work

I help my clients leverage their real story, their mission, and use embodiment to honestly exert a more powerful influence when they speak, whether it's behind closed doors or from a large stage.

So a little bit about me. I coach people for Ted talks, and I'm the executive producer and speaker coach for Ted Folsom. I also have my own podcast called listen for real, and I'm about to launch a second one with my mentor in this work, Casey Baker.

And we also have a internationally recognized body of work called Women Speak, where we help women in the art and soul of public speaking. So all of my work is around helping women to find their truest voice, and whether it is to further their meaningful work, whether it's to further their advocacy, their activism, their mission, or their own relationships and their families and their community.

I want them to speak with their truest voice so that they have greater impact, and they feel good in their skin when they're doing it. So I'm really happy to be here, and I am honored to have you here.

Jen, you really I know you here in Folsom. You've done. You're an amazing advocate for so many things for women, for women in business. And you've gotten there and recent award in that field.

You are, a leader and I see you as a healer as well. And so the title really goes well with you because you are a healer and you have done, a lot of work with women in the healing spaces, but also heal them through a lot of the things that come up right with voice and with that protection of who they are, that identity.

And I think that really that empowerment that comes in has, has, you know, I've, I've attended your workshops and have seen the evolution of what it has done for me in my awareness of my myself and my voice and where it's held and where it went, where it emerges from as well.

And and doing in a way, in the group. I think the work that you do really is, is so positively empowering, you know, and sometimes I want to I want that critique to come on, I'm always listening to my critic and I want to say, well, what do I do wrong in the workshops?

Nothing like that comes up. It's it's the power of the work really comes from the positive, safe space to kind of explore and really be playful, and without having to criticize ourselves.

And I think that's kind of the lesson that I'm learning through the work with women speak that positive things can be a way to heal. Right? And this is where I would like to kind of just intro this idea of what I really speak to.

More so in the healing space of is as a physician, is that we can heal the wellness in us. What's good in us. We don't have to pathologize our bodies and say, we need to get rid of this, or we need to cut this out or subjugate our symptoms so that they're not important.

But what's even more important is listening in to what the message of that symptom is, but also acknowledging the organs system that is healthy and really empowering that part of the body of the heart.

Right. The heart is responding, listening to the message that the heart is giving in terms of why it's beating this way and why is it tense and why does it become hypertensive.

But really, looking at the molecular positive things that the heart is doing already and empowering that system more than saying something's wrong with it?

And I think that's kind of the idea of what I see comes in, even in women speak, in what we recognize in our society as women. Women can connect, women can recognize each other, see each other for who they are and the goodness of their their role as a mother, as a as a daughter, as a wife, and really empowering that role even more.

And it comes in many, many different versions, right? Women are multifaceted and multi aware. So I really feel that that see what you did to me, you already got me going on and that empowering skill that you have really she has

that effect on you as well.

It's lovely to have you Jen, and welcome to the show. Thank you. Tell us a little bit about what drew you to this work. What drew me to this work was actually this notion that often the universe calls you to the very work you need.

It's that classic. When the student is ready, the teacher appears. So I was called to the work I needed so desperately myself because while I was very extroverted and very comfortable speaking from a stage and a microphone in front of hundreds or thousands, that mattered nothing to me.

But if you looked at how I communicated in my relationships, I was not in a place where I could speak what was true. I was the classic people pleaser.

Or say, what's palatable, see what will be pleasing, but what is not necessarily true or accurate. And as we all know, in the absence of good communication and good information, we then create a fiction in the minds of the people around us.

That's far worse than reality. And so I was called to this work. Yeah, called to it. And then to see other women and see the difference of a woman who is rooted in who she is and, and finds her truest voice, which I believe is in her body.

I believe the body is the voice of spirit and soul, but the mind is the voice of ego and personality and culture and context and social media and our mother and our auntie and all the things.

Right? It's not necessarily our true voice. You have all this noise and chatter, and if that is the constant chatter in your head, how do you get quiet enough to hear your truest voice and then ask for what you need or what you desire in this life?

And I think that makes women very unhappy and very sick. And so I just felt really called to this work and saw the power of a woman when she feels liberated and good in her skin to speak what's true.

My God, we would be leaving their wisdom, their understanding, their stories, their experiences on the table if they were not able to give those things voice.

And I just know that's powerful. So that's why I feel called to it. Well, I'm powerful and I know I was going to bring up and the Ted stage is the perfect platform for us, so I'm excited to hear about that part of it too, and what you bring to it.

But yeah. Go ahead. Oh yeah. Well, and that's where I want to see more of you all on things like Ted stages, because the ethos there is, it's ideas worth spreading.

It's the notion that you have knowledge, wisdom, research, ideas that the world needs to hear more about. And the good thing about Ted is it's a platform that has incredible worldwide reach.

So yeah. Go ahead. I'll yes, I would like to know a little bit more about I know you talked your, you know, storyteller. You believe in the idea of story and really the sharing of story and what unfolds in story.

There is a little bit of an alchemy of ideas. There's an alchemy of change. But first comes that pivotal point, right? If there is a pivotal point in your life that brought you to this place of where you are now, what would that point be for you?

Where was that point in your life? Or was it several pivotal points that now looking back, makes sense? It, you know, it's definitely and this is this is where our relationship deepened because I was going through a season of very profound depression.

I was in a second marriage that I hastily entered because I was sorry to give, you know, a divorce to my children. And I thought I must restore legacy for them.

So I rushed into a marriage.

From People-Pleasing to Speaking Truth

I rushed into essentially more decisions like decades before, where I just checked the boxes, which led to some depression in addition to menopausal. My hormones were shifting and there was a change in my medication.

There was there was like a trifecta of circumstances that triggered a pretty profound season of depression. And I was so desperate to feel better, as you've probably seen with so many clients.

And I ended up actually at your office and availing myself of your work, and that was a really big turning point because I didn't I didn't see a way out.

So when you're as a lot of people know, when you're depressed, you're just your view is so myopic, it's so limited. And I felt like my perspective was broadened.

And there was a sense of hope restored, even though I had a ways to go and there was work to be done. It's as though a door opened and I saw, oh, I can live a very different way, but I can't live the way I was before.

And so it awakened me to the way I was living in authentically. And I felt like the depression was actually a gift, and finding a way out of it was another gift.

So I would say that was the shift in perspective is like little by little, there were there were stages and seasons in my life and changes. But the most profound change that has put me on the path I am now, which is so radically different, was definitely that season of depression.

There's no question. Well, we can definitely relate as women, you know, checking the boxes, as you said. You know what? I'm curious to know, what were those boxes that you were trying to check?

Was this something that you kind of knew that you needed to do? Because that's culturally what you know what, as women, we are told that role that we have to kind of fulfill.

We have a timeline and a body clock. Yeah, to accommodate at all times. And that's the checklist or what was that checklist for you? My checklist was that I was living according to my roles.

So being a wife, being a mother, being a person of faith who follows a spiritual practice, all of those can be beautiful things. The challenge with me was I wasn't necessarily and I am grateful for all of those roles in my life.

I have no regrets for my marriages, for the children. I've had none of that. I'm grateful for them. But what I think I was doing was I craved certainty.

And so I found certainty in if I check this box and do what's socially approved, for example, marry a man and make sure I stay married for the rest of my life, then that's socially approved.

Check. If, in my faith practice, it informs that I see life this way. Check if, as a mother, this is the role I adhere to. Check. And and so I was never really even checking in with myself.

I was simply filling boxes that I knew were going to be approved by everybody around me. I didn't even occur to me to take the time to ask what I felt about those things, or what I wanted, or how I was showing up.

So I think at one point a therapist asked me if I knew who I was, and I answered and all of my answers were my roles. They said, well, I'm a wife, I'm a mom.

And he said, but who is Jen? Who is Jen in her soul? And I had no answer. I only knew me in my roles. And so when those roles change, whether you ask for them or not to change, many people don't ask for motherhood being stripped away or a marriage being taken away, etc.

so then those roles are gone. And where is your identity? And I think that was at play there. Wow. When you speak about approval and social approval and seeking that, how does that that change for you when you weren't checking the boxes and not needing approval?

Where does that now live for you, that direction or that impetus for what you want for yourself and your life now? Yeah, that that's been a really beautiful awakening.

I, I remember when I told my second husband, who is a wonderful man, who I rushed into marriage very quickly because I thought I was restoring legacy.

Right. And I remember saying, I am so sorry. I made a mistake and I thought, this is where I belonged for the rest of my life. And I don't know when I could get honest.

But before that, I was doing the song and the dance and the sugarcoating and the give him a safe place to land and don't really say what really is going on, just, well, I don't know.

And I just wish it was there and there was never direct communication when I did that, suddenly we were no longer dealing with a fiction. We were dealing with reality.

I could give him the dignity of his response and show him that generosity and respect. I could be truthful, and I've seen ever since then the friendship we have now, the rich things that have come as a result, that I was so sure was going to ruin my children, ruined him, ruined the extended families.

You think that if you tell the truth, instead of just burying it and go, well, I'll sacrifice myself for the many, that that'll be okay. And I realized, no, no, this is the truer, better way is what's honest.

And and now I have now seen take that out two and a half years since that conversation. And over and over I am learning to say the truest thing. Listen deeply to myself first.

Listen deeply to the divine within me. Slow down and then come with the truth and everyone is better served. You think it's going to be so harmful, you're going to hurt someone in it.

And I have just found over and over that it actually serves people, because then they know what they're dealing with. They're dealing with the reality, not the fiction in their mind.

And everyone is better for it. And we get closer and we connect and our relationships are better. So I would say that's the pivot for me. Own. I love the framing of this as I'd like to jump in a little bit, like when you said that when, you know, everybody is forced into a fiction, right?

I just love that idea. And I just want to linger on that for a little bit, because in kind of taking the time to kind of say, okay, I'm not going to support that fiction, what we're giving the other person the opportunity to do what you did to your second husband was to also drop his fiction.

Yes. If there's kind of like, this is like coming together moment of like we can deal with reality now and reality then kind of opens up as into its richness instead of the kind of paucity of our projections.

Right. Reality is so much more juicy and vibrant and alive and honest. Right? It's like, why would I want to put up that fiction? That fiction is boring.

So there's even a little bit of just like, I love how you said that, that it was kind of like give like a big shudder kind of falling away, almost like there's a, there's a lens, there's a some kind of medium between you and reality.

And as long as we can just kind of penetrate that and remember that actually, you we all have the ability to, when we speak truth, hold that for each other and that dignify the experience.

We're dignifying that intersubjective experience. It's like, oh no, this is real. This is what and I mean, it's true. And think about it. As physicians, how often think about it from this standpoint, if a patient is not giving you accurate information, they're trying to keep something from you.

You are now suddenly going down a rabbit hole that has nothing to do with the potential diagnosis. If there is need, if or course of action. And I'm sure you've dealt with it so suddenly you're dealing with this fiction, all of this energy, time wasted care that could be happening is being missed.

So the analogy is the same because you simply aren't dealing with what's true. And if you just had the truth, you could you could go in a completely different course of action. Absolutely.

And I think that's the beauty of this like work that we're all three doing, is that every patient I think and I think I'll you you agree with this like every patient is this beautiful kind of fiction that they've written for themselves.

It's beautiful. It's a life story. Right. But sometimes we can see somewhere in that story that they're telling themselves where it's kind of not true, or somewhere where the words are just really kind of dark and they're kind of criticizing themselves, you know?

So you're going to see the lie in the fiction. I'm going to highlight that point you just made about the lingering. Right? When you linger in this idea, something doesn't feel right about what I'm doing with myself, and you linger in it and I don't know how that lingering frame work worked for you. Jen.

I'm curious about that, what that lingering space was and how did that really unfold for you? Because it requires so much. One is this the courage right to to to really speak to what is true for you?

And first then comes the knowledge of what is true, like what is really true for you. Some people don't even know that what is true for them. I mean, I bet half the planet or maybe more are living lives like that.

They've been told a story and they kind of follow that checklist of of yeah, that that course of their life and never really spend time in lingering. Right. What doesn't feel right?

The angst of a of a condition or a situation or relationship. The other thing that I will say is when as a physician, and this is where narrative medicine comes in, as physicians, we are trained in a way to really focus on a disease and say, you have a heart condition.

What are the checklist of things that you have? And let's fit that into a box that we can say, is this condition based on the criteria? Okay, this basically is just a formula and pattern recognition.

And it's really how we are trained.

Depression, Identity, and the Turning Point

And I don't want to discount medicine in to that broadly. But I think it's important to highlight this idea of why is it not working? Why is it that physician patients aren't even able to connect to what is really the condition, and really what's showing up and why the patient is really there, and what's the effect that has even on the healer.

So there's that discussion, but there's this way of bringing in. And when I now talk to patients, it's really about, you know, asking the questions and focusing on the narrative of what is said.

You know, the words people choose, the voices that how they use and where they how they and how they really kind of what's the word disclose there themselves.

Right. It's subtle. And having that awareness of just observing and just watching and just letting somebody just kind of tell them, tell them, tell them their own story to you.

And just starting with a simple prompt. And sometimes I'll just say, well, you know, what is your struggle that you're having in your life right now? And that's it.

And stopping and then letting that person to speak to and they themselves, as they share to that struggle of the experience that they're having right now, will tell you the answer.

Yeah. And in that conversation, there is a reveal to both the patient and the provider. There's no there's no force. And this has to fit into this box, or the patient has to tell the story that the doctor needs to hear.

How do I love how this is also an evolving process, like going to what Jen, what you were saying is, you know, the fiction and the reality. We're always kind of in relationship to that.

Like it's a moment by moment relationship, right? I love how Alia kind of brings it all together and brings us into the room, but it's also, you know, patients telling doctors what they want to hear or they think they should say to get the care they need.

There's just so many fictions built into our relational dealings right in life. Where do you think? And I'm just going to kind of pivot a little bit. Where do you think this tool or this perspective that you've developed has helped you to grow the most?

Like, what has that really kind of supercharged in you that may have been kind of dormant before, but now is getting a chance to kind of really flourish, because that's kind of one of the things that we see when we when we see people step into the transformation, is that some sort of hidden part of themselves that they may not have been aware of or went under, developed, really just kind of took off.

Would you be able to kind of locate that and then give us the story? Yeah. It it's I see it is the power of getting still looking at all of the stories that I would linger to use the word brought up earlier or clinging to and then asking the question of their source, are they true?

I'm reminded of the work of Byron Katie. She has something called the work, and it's for questions. And and they're beautiful. It's a beautiful spirit of inquiry that you take to your beliefs, your narratives, and the stories that you have always held dear and in a gentle, gracious way.

You can call those into question. Be curious about them, and then perhaps unravel a few, or let a few go that really didn't belong to you in the first place.

So what I'm realizing, and the shift for me has been doing that getting quiet long enough, not clinging to the stories because that's where my certainty and safety seem to lie.

I was surrendered, and nothing could get quiet enough to ask questions of all of those stories and then dismiss or just lovingly release the ones that no longer serve you.

Love that lovingly release the ones that no longer serve. I can, I can just see how the unraveling right and allowing that unraveling, having the trust to know that that is actually a process that you are supported in, right by the people around you and kind of the experience itself.

But I feel like there's an element of spirituality here that that, comes in when you, brought in Byron Katie. Right. Like it's just this it's a it's a, it's an affirmation of of the core purpose that this is who I am.

And I really want to know who I am. And I commit to knowing who I am. Yeah. That's beautiful. Let's this talk now into kind of how we work together. Right. You showed up.

And how would you describe your experience in ketamine treatments as you experienced and know the the intention? We always talk about intention and, in the work.

How did that initiate your treatment and how did that change or evolve in the course of your treatment? Initially I just wanted to feel better and feel relief and return to me what I perceived was normal me.

What I realized was that I was never meant to return to normal. Me and exactly who I was prior, and that this was one more aspect of my growth and my journey, and that I was really meant to learn at the feet of this scenario and situation that I was in.

So once I realized a okay, I can come here and something is going to come of this, and I let go of expectation because, you know, that's a lot to come in to a setting and expect you as physicians to go fix me, fix me.

I'm so desperate. Fix me. Which I get why people would feel that way and beg for it. But I also just surrendered enough to go, okay, I feel safe here.

I trust this process. I'm going to see how it unfolds. I know I will be better for it. I don't know where it will lead and that's okay. It also, I think what it did was it created a little bit of enough of a piece and you could probably speak to it from a physiological standpoint, whether it was a relaxation, a peace, less of a frenetic, scared energy, and I was less scared, so I could just calm down enough to do some of the work and the thinking and the processing that needed to be done.

I felt like that's what happened. I gained a bit of a spaciousness that allowed me, instead of to be terrified and just pray for it to be over and put my head down and just hope it'll pass.

I had enough spaciousness to just sit with a few things and go, this won't be the end of me. This emotion won't take me over because I remember thinking, especially when you feel that way.

If I feel this, if I go here again, oh God, here's another wave of it. You wake up in the morning and suddenly the darkness is over you, and you feel the heavy cloak and you go, oh God, oh God, I thought I was doing better.

I remember having a week like that many weeks after I'd started the therapy with you, and then I just went, okay, what if you could just sit through this and move through this and move this energy?

And I remember I thought of, I think I told you this, but if I didn't, I remembered the law of thermodynamics. Energy cannot be created nor destroyed.

It simply changes form. And I thought, oh, okay, then I need to let this depressed energy move through my body. And I remember I was laying in my bed sobbing, and I took a vase of water and I thought, well, it's got to go somewhere.

And I was sobbing into this vase of water, snot, tears, crying, dry heaving, whatever. But I had to move it. And then I remember later. Then I finally just rested and I fell asleep.

And later I woke up and I. I was exhausted, but I felt just a tiny bit more buoyant, like an, oh, I'm coming out. And I took that water outside and I poured it on a plant.

And I remember I said, God, all the universe, all that I live and move and have my being. Will you please make something beautiful out of this? Because energy cannot be created nor destroyed.

It simply changes form. But so that that's kind of a story to explain what was happening. In my mind. There was just a broadening to, okay, there's more that's possible here, and this will not kill me.

I will make it through. But I have to sort of process this energy and move these feelings through my body. And they were stuck. I just clearly knew things were stuck and I was at capacity.

I had absorbed enough grief and pain and sadness for everyone around me all of my life, and I was at capacity. There was no more. There was nowhere else to go.

It had to move out of me. And I think the spaciousness that I gain there is what opened that door so I could see that a little bit and begin that process.

Yeah. If I had to recall, do we have any experience with ketamine before? I mean, I know we had talked about it and you had done your homework testing the process of something that would alter you or that would change you, or even has that spiritual uncertainty.

How did you come to this idea of ketamine, even with not, you know, even I mean, initially and then, yeah, I'd never heard of it. I mean, I knew of it, of course, in a, from an EMT standpoint or an O. R.

and but I didn't know it had any psychedelic, components to it, or it could be used in such a way. And so it was purely out of learning of your work and hearing about it and going, oh my gosh, this is this is so amazing and this feels so much.

I like the idea that it was a controlled setting as opposed to there's many journeys that people will do with things like plant medicine all over the world.

I just didn't feel I was in a in a space or even had the capacity to navigate that.

Ketamine Treatment and Inner Spaciousness

Let alone manage it, because I was already in such a fragile state. I knew you both and I went. I trust them implicitly with my life. And so I know this will be okay.

So that's why once I did a little bit of research and understood the applications and how it has been used and used successfully, I thought then of course I'm going to try it.

And and it made it easy because it was you both and I trusted you. It's beautiful. Can I bring up can I take us back to what happened in the energy thing?

Because I think that is so aligned with also the work that you do in coaching and in women speaks. And with Ted, it's just all aligning. It's like that purge, right.

In ayahuasca they talk about this purge, some energetic blockage being moved. I mean, that is what happens when we regain the relationship with our voices.

Women. Right? I mean, that's there's such a parallel there. So that must have been and I know the other piece of that that occurred. Can you speak to that?

Yeah. Both. Yes, definitely. For me, finding my voice and being able to express myself. But there is also a catharsis. So as I observe in other women, there is a catharsis in both the witnessing of someone's story and in the telling of a story.

And I feel like that's medicine on its own merits and and so but you're but it's true. As you think about articulating something, giving something voice gives it energy and launches it into the world and makes it.

It takes on a life of its own and it makes it possible. Which is why, if you think about it, when people are even sick or when they're struggling with something mentally, the power of our words, I mean, sacred texts have said this forever.

The power of our words can make or break us. It's like the the the tongue is like a rudder on a ship and it moves an entire ship. One little rudder. That is the power of our tongue.

That is the power of our words. And and that's incredibly powerful. And so when we can also look at what, what am I focusing on? When you said, oh, yeah, you said what if we focused on what the heart was doing, right?

As opposed to what do we have to cut out of this body? What do we have to pathologize what can we focus on that's actually going right? I think so it is also with our words.

What if we gave voice to what is going right, what is good, what is beautiful so that that blossoms doesn't mean. And I don't believe in this notion that many of us were taught, well, if you don't have something positive, say, don't say anything at all.

Keep your quiet, keep quiet. I don't think that's healthy, and I'm not advocating that. I think there are some things that need to be given voice, but many of us linger in the stories that are so negative and harmful, and we we attach our entire identities to them, and it manifests things in us that may not have even been there, but because we've spoken them, we've practically spoken them into existence.

So there's just so much here you could unpack. Yeah. So I, I love the kind of image I'm getting of the words you use to even refer to yourself. Right. This whole idea of the inner critic. Right.

When we go into psychedelic ketamine spaces, your relationship to just recognizing that power changes, all of a sudden your words are important because you feel the connection to your body.

And I know when we started, you mentioned that we're always in the mind. We're always talking all the ideas, everything. You know, that ego and and we know that in ketamine, what we're doing is kind of relaxing that chatter.

Right. The chatter that social media and everything kind of revolves on. And by relaxing and hearing the voice of the body. And that seems like that was a pivotal point.

Can you speak to that? What that kind of became? Yeah. You know what you just reminded me of and this is, is adjacent to what you're asking, but you just reminded me of some wisdom that was shared to me a couple of years ago when I adopted it.

And it was this. The moment you wake up in the morning, do not pick up your phone and start scrolling. And it's one of the worst things you can do, because any original creative thought you had upon waking before the ego wakes up is hijacked immediately by the rest of the world.

It's it's gone. It's been crawled. Okay, say that again, because I need that to, like, be engraved somewhere in my brain. I'm telling you, it changed my whole life.

It's part of what also has healed my mental health is I don't spend a bunch of time on social media. I don't watch the news. I have means of finding out what's going on, but I don't.

I simply refuse. It's my mental space and my piece is too valuable to me, so I. But I love that morning. My phone. I don't look at my phone in the morning.

I don't ever scroll social. I don't even look at my emails. I won't do it. First, I might glance to make sure there's no emerge because I keep my phone on Do Not Disturb.

I might glance to make sure there's no urgent text, but I will not. I don't want to read them. I don't want to look at them because again, I want to stay present and then I'll journal.

I'll do those three, stream of consciousness morning pages that I learned from Julia Cameron. It's called The Artist's Way. And you literally just put pen to paper, preferably within the first 40 minutes of your day.

You just write whatever comes to mind for three pages without stopping and just let it go. And she says, the ego wakes up at about 45 minutes after waking up much sooner.

If you bring in social media and you bring in the world, turn on the news, etc. so for me that you're reminding me of that and that's that's huge. I'm going to highlight now what you just said, because I talk about the dream state as a psychedelic state.

I tell every patient we all do psychedelics naturally every single night when you dream and have a good dream and you wake up from that dream, you know you've been somewhere.

Your body's emotions, your thoughts, your spirituality, your sense of self has traveled and has experienced something right away. And when you have a good dream and there is a there is a practice that has helped me in my life is when I've had a difficult time in my life and I don't know the answer.

I spend my night praying and I focus on an intention I say I'm going to have. I'm going to pray, pray, pray, and I'm going to practice this meditation and pray and then I'll make an intention before I sleep, that whatever intention I have at that very moment, I will I will formulate that intention in my thought, in my mind and write it down.

And then I'll go to sleep. Whatever I wake up with. That is the answer to whatever my intention is. And it's a psychedelic experience. This is exactly what we do when we use ketamine.

Ketamine is our catalyst tool that gets us to that state, that meditative state. It gets us to that dream state physiologically, it's very similar. The brain brainwaves are doing very similar things.

We're in that deep state, that deep subconscious state. And what we wake up with is the answer. And it's not the answer that it comes from within you.

Our comes from, you know, the secret. So consciousness or whatever it is for that person in that I think this is a technology that's actually in Islam, if I recall, I forget the name for it is that there's like, yeah, this is kind of like a, like asking the divine for, you know, an answer to your questions.

But I love how you put it together with the science of it and how the brain waves are. And it's, you know, and it's fascinating. You can the clarity that it comes with because it comes with your intention has to be pure, right?

Your intention has to be real, authentic. It has to be something you're really it's not like I want to be happier. Oh, God, help me figure this out for me.

No, it has to be like, what is the source of my pain right now? Where does this pain lie? And and really contemplating and thinking about it. And this is exactly the work we do with patients.

We tell them this reintegration in, bring in. You know, I tell them, focus on intention. Your intention is very, very important. It formulates that pathway of thinking.

You're actually activating and priming the system. Essentially, you're priming that thought process. And then when the medicine comes, it knows where to go.

The priming system, the roadmap has already been kind of laid down. And so it flows better. And then when you come out of it and you're able to verbalize that experience or express that in whatever creative way your mind and body feels to share, it'll unfold.

For you will know what you're what you're seeking. And that's the knowing, right? The noetic part of that. But I think it's something that we, as I said before in medicine, if we could do this as a practice of really my job as a as a provider in ketamine, it's very easy.

And it gets easier as patients continue sessions, because all I do is just sit there and facilitate a process that is natural and will happen for that person, for their unique state and their condition that they're in.

It will naturally happen for them. When it when it when they allow it for themselves and when they trust the process

and they. Yeah, I love how you brought in the noetic part, the knowingness.

Right. Jen. Do do you recall that, like, you know, everybody when they have their first psychedelic journey, you know, you never forget it. There's just this kind of like awestruck kind of moment.

And can you describe what that was like for you? Because, you know, we all have our own spirituality. We all have our own ideas. But that is a moment of where the worldview kind of shimmers and starts to kind of break down a little bit or, or get confirmed, whichever one.

Yeah, it for me was makes me interested to go back to my journals from that, from those days, because it's been about two years, I guess. But what I recall is it was, always so positive.

It was a little bit like a surrender or falling into deep space, deep liquid, but held. But you're held. You're both free and held. And then there was a sense that all of the sudden you saw everything was mixed together.

It would be like if you saw little bits of things, and then they blend together. Almost like when you go to make a smoothie and you see the blueberries spinning around, and then you see the banana and you see the green stuff, and then it starts to blend together in what was very distinct colors starts to blend together.

I remember having that sense like, oh, all of this is just blending together and all is working together here, and I'm a part of that. I remember having that sense and just to profound peace and relaxation was was what it was.

And I remember at one point going, I understand. In fact, I remember talking audibly at one point and one of the wonderful nurses says, oh, don't worry, I'm taking notes for you.

Because I said, why are we not doing this for everyone at End of Life in hospice? And and this is so beautiful. What a gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful gift.

We could give people make notes. And she was like, okay, I think it was Lorna's. Okay, I'm taking notes. You know, don't worry. She didn't want me to stress out because I'm always like, I don't want to forget this.

I don't want to forget this. You know? Oh, that's so lovely. And yeah, that's such a I love it when when we recognize that. Right? Like, is when we feel held and we feel safe and we fall into trust.

The first instinct for most people is, I wish other people could feel this. I just love how every human being, when they feel safe, you can rely on them to really when the heart opens, it feels so much.

And that's when people have really shown you how much they care. And I love that because that's so not allowed in our in our environments. Right? To let let that in to to let down our guard, to be open to feeling for others.

There's such a kind of like armoring up happening and being forced upon us. Right. Well, I'm going to ask this question now to both of you. And as a provider, as a physician doing the work and treating patients in medicine, see me in working now for over two years and show you the thousands of sessions and held thousands of hands and worked with many, many hundreds, hundreds.

And you feel you are learning now as a physician analysis and question to you then. Thank you. Speaker.

Voice, Story, and Healing Through Expression

As somebody who also supports women and their voice, what do you feel you're learning now from the work that you're doing? Yeah. Go ahead see me doctor.

Yeah I'm it always with the with the question the the the just the perfect question. I love this question because everything everything just as transformative as, as Jen described her inner experience to be.

There's a kind of corresponding outer experience shift. Right. And so as a pediatrician, I'm, you know, as a mother, as a person of color, like just like so many different layers of me realized and like, that we could do this differently, then we can do this differently.

I think a lot of us get to this realization that if we would just approach with love, not be so defended, not be so caught up in our fictions, right? Get real with ourselves, get real with our relationships that life could be so much sweeter, more enjoyable than if I could get out of my way, right?

Like, wake up in the morning and don't go to your phone is a beautiful way of preserving your true inner self before the world takes you. I love that metaphor because it really does.

Like the phone just like takes us over. And once we're in the grip, we're in the group. But there is a way. And I love how the dream state and sleep you earlier.

You just centered it because so many of us don't, right. We think sleep is just, you know, I'll sleep with I'm dead. There's like this whole thing in our culture.

And I did that to myself, you know? So as a physician, we did night shifts. We, you know, cut corners. We really I think, you know, what I would do differently and what I'm learning is I wish I could just turn back time and I think I would be a different person, like different physician, different healer.

I think I would not have stressed so much. I would not have been so self-conscious, so wrapped up in the wrong things. There's a lot of clarification and clarity that we ourselves get from doing this work with our patients, because we just see so much that all of us are holding onto, that we don't need to hold on to that.

We're doing it as like a self punishment, because we've been told by the over arching over culture that we've lived in for 2000 years, right. Religion.

You know, that's one of the ways Riley and the patriarchy that's told us the reality is this one way. And here we are at the turn of the 21st century, going, no, women have equal rights, equal voice, equal sovereignty over their bodies.

And for all of human history, you know, I just loved when you were talking about elevating women's voices. How long has it been since women's voices have been elevated?

Like not even 100 years? Can we, like, just take and just talk about that in percentages? Right. Like Susan B Anthony was literally only 100 years ago.

Like so we have not had threatened enfranchisement enough. And to do this work, I think, is to bring history in to like, really think of ourselves as in time and of this time.

And I think it really clarifies the work for women when we do this, like empowerment work like you said, you know, my mind, body and my spirit are aligned.

It's a trifecta. It's all here. And how powerfully. And you live your life every day listening to evidence of what happens when people get empowerment.

So I think for me, like every day when I and I speak enthusiastically about this because of the years and years I spent where I couldn't see this part, you know, years and years just kind of like out in the desert, right?

Like Mary Oliver tells us, like you don't have to be crawling on your knees 100 miles through the desert repenting. You know, that was the poem that cracked me open.

Because, you know, when we're like, you realize, like, we don't have to live like this. We can live in balance with ourselves, with nature, with each other, and where we have that capability and everybody who goes through this

opening experience of psychedelics really, I think connects with that, remembers that.

I think it's of remembering. So, yeah. Well, I'll I'll add to that. And Alicia, I'm going to ask you the same question. You answer your question, but I want to hear your answer to your question also.

But what just struck me, too, is the power of doing this healing work in ourselves. And I say this constantly, that when we do this, we offer permission and invitation for others to do the same, to speak, to do the work, to get quiet, to let go of their stories, whatever it is.

And I really do believe, as you were saying, that you were talking about patriarchy and different things that have oppressed. And I believe it's actually a moral imperative that we get quiet, listen deeply, learn our own truths, give voice to them because there are many.

The quickest way to oppress any society, any culture is you. Silence women and girls and we must, as a collective, continue to use our voices so that our liberated voices also offer freedom to those in our collective sisters on the planet.

And that, to me, is really. I feel like you just teed that up for me so beautifully, and I couldn't not see that. And so it's doing our own work. And so you asked one of my I think you said, what am I learning in working with people?

What I'm learning is I have to go on my own journey and do this work for myself and offer permission and invitation and be a guide. I must do this work myself.

I can't, I have nothing to offer my clients or I take it back. I can, I can talk a pretty good game and I can offer a few things to my clients, but it's nothing compared to myself doing the work.

Going on this journey of sharing the stories that don't serve me to to listening deeply to myself and then speaking truth, or voicing a boundary or practicing a difficult conversation.

I have to do it. And that that was made very clear to me in my quiet writing yesterday morning. I wrote that out. When there's nothing more important I can do, no marketing, no coaching certificate, no degree.

I need to do my work and as I do my work, I will be far more potent as a as a guide to others who who want my help. What about you? What are you learning?

Yeah. What am I learning? I'm learning. Well, as you said, I'm learning a lot about myself through other people's stories too. I've seen and witnessed I.

I've spoken about this before. I feel like in my life, in my life experience, I've had every kind of trauma. Every kind is not a label of trauma that I have personally not experienced, and I don't.

And I say this I don't mean to, you know, put myself on any kind of pedestal. What I mean by that is that and I see this in every person that I meet, that we are all kind of in this.

I call it the bus stop of trauma. Right? The trauma. And we're all just sitting there and we have an opportunity, to really witness each other in that bus stop and look at each other and be curious about each other and really trust each other in this bus stop.

We're all strangers. And this opportunity is what our life is all about. You know, every every conversation I say should feel like therapy. I've said this every conversation, my that my conversation as a doctor to my patient should be like therapy for me and for therapy for the for the patient.

My conversation with my son, who is 14 years old and is testing, you know, his boundaries. It should be therapy for me as well as for him. And it's an opportunity.

Even conflict is an opportunity, even anger. A patient said this to me, and I've learned everything when I say today and with confidence, I learn from patients.

And I have a board now on the back by the bathroom. It's a big board. It's called. And I want patients to write down their insight, their one thing that they can speak to because they they speak with eloquence after they come out of their experience.

There's the eloquence of what is said without the encasement of what holds us from speaking our truth. And when we speak and when I've witnessed this over and over and I see this, I said, wow, that just is profound.

And they say, does that make any sense? And I said, no, probably made more sense than anything else anybody else would say, you know, that is that makes perfect sense.

And it's got clarity in it and it's it. So I learn every single day, every single conversation. I'm, I'm what I'm learning is I'm continuing to learn and I'm continuing to gain a sense of humility, about this work.

And I think that's very important. I have to check in with myself a lot. And because people do put the doctor on on the pedestal and say, doctor, this is because of you and thank you.

No, no, I have to step back and say, no, this is you. This is you speaking. You say that to self. Thank yourself for what you've just had to experience.

And it was difficult and it was hard and it was emotional, but you trusted yourself to do it. And that's why you're here. And that's what I speak to and that's what I'm learning.

And this whole idea of curiosity is really the the point of my has been the point in my life, you know, I've been a curious child since forever and now, and I've always been told computers to curious and just me, you guys, too many questions.

You know, you never sit still. You're always asking. You know, I was told it's all my life. But I didn't stop. And I remained curious quietly. Sometimes observant me.

And now I can say, I'm going to be curious and I'm going to be curious about you as a human being. As you come to me. You trust this process. I'm going to be curious for you, with you and what will result from that is that, you know, the healing part will show up.

It will. It's natural. It will. It's not a prescription that will fix that. And sometimes it's not even ketamine. It's just the fact that they had an opportunity to have that conversation.

Yeah, I love this. I love how we've blended together, this beautiful little smoothie of these ideas that really kind of it's kind of delicious. I really am just loving how the interconnections and the ways that I think following your authentic authenticity opens up the path.

Curiosity, Deep Listening, and Closing Reflections

You know, it's like you trust the universe, that when you take that first step, the path will appear. And it does. And it's just trusting, and recognizing.

Yeah, as you beautifully said, it's like, even if it's a conflict, even if it's a discomfort, you know, uncomfortable, places that's where the the answers lie.

And if we can just build that tolerance and build that resilience, hold each other. I mean, this is the work we're really in the midst of this great work and and speaking truth.

Right now I just want to also say, like the just as I have progressed in this conversation, the constriction in my

throat has opened up. And I just want to call the fact that we are taping this in the middle of March in 2025.

And there is there is this sense that speaking your truth is dangerous. And so I just want to name the two. Is that the courage it takes for people in this world to speak their truth?

Is now exponentially that much more, you know, and I really want to offer that to people I know it's not always safe to speak your truth, right? But speak it to yourself.

Speak it in your heart, you know? Yeah. You know, it's it's in knowing that there is something there and that it's it's greater than ourselves, you know, that we can trust that life resides within us.

There's just some something spiritual about that because we're feeling so much grief and loss and, and, you know, so I just want to bring that in that, you know, there's this where we're trying to hold everything.

And yes, we're developing these capacities almost to kind of open ourselves up to not just the beauty, but also the discomfort. And I feel like that's what psychedelics really kind of help us to do is to realize both of those things.

We held, you know, our shadow sides need to come out right. A lot of times, most of us mask because we're so ashamed or so guilty or, you know, that it's I'm going to get rejected.

The fear of there's so many reasons not to tell the truth that telling the truth becomes like this courageous act. And, you know, just the evidence here of what it means and how it how your path becomes open to you as you continue to do that courageous act every single day, and that it is a daily, you know, ritual.

It is a daily practice. It is it is a falling off and coming back, that there's no one linear way to do this. It's yours to make is such an empowering kind of moment that I feel like we're in all three of us together here.

And I think you're really speaking to what truth is. When truth is told, it can be. It can be painful. It can be. You can speak to painful things. You can even that fear that you might hurt somebody.

I mean, you know, there is a risk that one takes with that. And that's also the truth. Right? Then I'm going to speak something that is, you could put myself at risk or put somebody else at risk, or could hurt somebody, but it's still the truth that needs to be told.

And and when it's told, of course, you know, holding that truth and saying, yes, it was it was necessary at this time and whatever that time is, isn't.

Yeah. Given permission to Jen, would you like to we at the end of our, recordings and thank you so much. I know we're kind of heading into, the last little bit.

Anything that, comes to your mind right now, what you're sitting with as to what you're curious about as a as a result of our conversation today. Like what?

What is become something that. Yeah. What am I curious about? Of so many things, I actually think curiosity is so beautiful, and it's so interesting that we sometimes shut it down in children.

To your point, all year I feel really compelled by anyone who feels stuck or unexpressed or voiceless. And it really is. It's a very sacred thing to be able to express yourself and to express your truth.

And my heart aches for those who feel they cannot. And to your point, even if it's just uttering something, even though you can't say it aloud to other people remaining silent.

I just think there's so many repercussions to that, I believe. Silence is so vital and important, and listening deeply to first ourselves, to perhaps our spiritual guides, and then to others.

We use a phrase in woman speak. And Alice has heard me say it many times, but it's one of my favorites, and it's that we listen so deeply for another woman in our circles that she cannot help but blossom in our presence.

And so I think that's what's coming to be now, as you asked. That is how can we listen more deeply to ourselves, to all that is around us, to source, to creator, to the earth, to nature, to our bodies?

And then that muscle grows stronger, that ability to listen deeply. And we get to offer that to other people as well. And it just feels to me like such a huge answer to so many of the things that Alice is this deep listening.

So that's what comes to my mind as you asked that, I love that. That's so beautiful. Thank you so much. You and we. That is a great segue for our next episode, I think.

How can we listen to those before our first. Yeah. What are all the ways we listen to each other and that that's that's a huge topic. Thank you so, so much, Jen.

This is amazing because that's what we're going to move forward with because curiosity breeds curiosity. And you know another way of seeing things, you know, are asking those questions asking those and ask questions as we saying into curious and podcast.

We talk about the unasked question. Yeah. What are the next and ask questions. That is going to be our next. And we're going to bring this up in one of our our podcast is how can we.

It's so disarming. It's so disarming. And it opens a door, it opens to possibility and it's disarming. Takes the fences down. I think it's beautiful. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks.

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