Feeling Stuck in Your Healing? How Naturopathic Medicine Can Turn Things Around with David Wikenheiser Transcript

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Root-Cause Healing Philosophy

So if you explain why they developed the problem, not just do these three things and goodbye, and I'm not going to explain anything. Let's talk about how you got into trouble.

So it gives them control back into their life when they understand that there were steps that they went sideways. Now there's steps to unsideways. It didn't just magically happen and that some magical intervention, some magical drug will get you out of it.

Now there are magical drugs. I know there are drugs that act like magic, but a full assessment in giving them control of their life. style, give them some hope, and then with a plan, feed, clean, balance the energy, get regeneration back into their body, do it in the lowest risk way possible, and give them control along the way.

This is Doctor Talks. All right, welcome to the Functional Edge podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Julia Ward, and today I'm thrilled to welcome Dr. Wickenheiser, a trailblazer in the field of naturopathic and regenerative medicine.

With a deep commitment to root cause healing, Dr. Wickenheiser combines advanced therapies like PRP, prolotherapy, ozone, and ultrasound-guided injections with a personalized whole-body approach to complex conditions like chronic pain, Lyme disease, and mold illness.

His clinic is known for fusing traditional naturopathic wisdom and cutting-edge regenerative tools that help patients heal deeply and sustainably.

How Naturopathic Medicine Drew Him In

In this conversation, we'll explore what makes his approach so effective and how he supports immune health and structural integrity and where he sees the future of integrative medicine headed.

So whether you're a patient or a practitioner, this episode is full of insight and inspiration. So let's dive in. Okay, let's start at the beginning. What originally drew you to naturopathic medicine?

Well, I was going to an herbalist. So this is in my mid 20s. I'd been through college and technical school and I was working different jobs. And I'm going to a herbalist and reflexologist.

So a folk healer in our town. And I'm full of questions. I think in questions. And I was good in sciences in high school and partway through college before I went into business stuff.

And then I'm asking so many questions and I'm frustrating him because he's just saying, well, read this book, read this book. and at some point he said well you've got to talk to this fellow in town he is one of two naturopathic doctors why don't you just go talk to him so i got so excited about the possibility of applying rational thought now i know mainstream medicine has got rational thought too but then it steps off and that it's so specialized in drugs and surgery which is wonderful we need it but to go more into what many people call functional medicine and how the body actually works.

In other words, are you broken or just out of gas? These are critical questions. Now, even if you're broken with more gas, you can heal and regenerate.

And I'm fascinated by that. Went through school, have got quite a checkered past with education. When I was 31, I went back to school, redid biology, chemistry, physics, 11 and 12, got a science degree, four-year naturopathic

degree, and did a bunch of board certifications and chased around, did a lot of training.

I got really excited in the possibility of making a difference. Now I know that motivates almost all doctors. We don't do the effort of all the schooling, all the effort of long hours, any of that, without being guided by wanting to help people.

But this was just the style that I was introduced to and I really like it. That's awesome. That's really great. So you've built a strong reputation around PRP, prolo therapy and ultrasound guided injections.

Can you walk us through what makes your approach unique and why it's so effective for chronic pain or musculoskeletal injuries?

PRP, Prolotherapy, and Ultrasound-Guided Assessment

Okay, so the big deal here is knowing what is really the problem. There's a whole concept of booms and echoes. What's the primary problem and what's the resulting other problems?

For example, people may fall on ice or down the stairs, maybe slip and fall. They'll land on their elbow. Now they've got pain up at the top. Now is that a boom or an echo?

So if your shoulder is like this and it's jamming at the top, it's because it tore at the bottom. So if you tear at the bottom, then you'll get pain at the top.

Everybody's treating up here, but until you treat the boom, you're not gonna get full results. So this is what I love, assessment. Now, sure, we do physical exams, we all do.

We've all been trained at, you put your hands on, you see what works and what doesn't. Then the next level is do x-rays, of course, that shows you bones and that's relationships.

but it's not complete. Ultrasound, you can move the joint and see why it's clicking. You can see what's torn. Now, not completely, because until you put a needle in and treat it, you can't see if the tissue just opens up or if it opens up.

And that's really important. So I really like looking whenever possible, especially for shoulders, but hips and elbows and fingers all over the place.

Because if it's not really torn, then you control other factors like inflammation. But looking and knowing where to put the needle, I think that that's really innovative.

Now, I know that's kind of mainstream, but it is pretty cool. Yeah, that's very effective. Super, super effective. So, your clinic also offers ozone therapy, including 10-pass ozone and ultraviolet blood irradiation.

What are some of the top conditions you're treating with these tools, and how do you tailor the approach to each patient? Okay, so again, knowing what we're looking at.

So there's a lot of different tests that you can run and knowing if someone's actually got an infection or is it autoimmune? Is it allergic? What's actually going on?

So doing lab testing is always critical for me because we're not just chasing phantoms again, chasing echoes if you want to use that analogy again. So looking at why are they infected?

because a lot of autoimmune problems are because of deep-seated infections misdirecting your immune system, your immune response. So whether you're looking at, and I know you're familiar with all the ozone concepts, and you know how important it is to really get targeted, because these are great therapies for someone, and it's not if they're good, but when.

So with me, what's the hierarchy of cure? Well, we want to remove limitations to the healing process. So of course, there's lifestyle choices. Stop overdoing it.

Then there's nutrition. Too many people don't have enough nutritional support to actually get healing. So supporting that is really useful. There's a number of different supplements that work.

And then stimulating it through injections, through different types of treatments, like even the hyperbaric oxygen, which as you know, does a whole system-wide support.

So that's pretty cool. So feed, get the toxins out, feed, clean, balance the energy. So part of that energy can be just simply putting in the right stimulation to move ahead, because ozone, of course, is delivering energy.

Ozone Therapy and Immune Support

So you put that in to stimulate. There's other approaches that can be appropriate. There's electrical therapies and other things. It's really important to load the nutrients first.

Too many people are starving. I mean, I know that you're very familiar with oxygen. That's a basic nutrient that, oh my goodness, no one has enough of.

Right. Right. I mean, how many patients do you know walk through the door, because I find myself daydreaming at lunch. I leave the office for lunch. I like to get out of the office.

And I'm daydreaming and watching people and assessing them. It's really quite, I catch myself. But I'm sure you do it too. You're watching and going, not enough oxygen.

They're dehydrated. And so getting nutrients in is the first removal of blockage to healing. People don't realize how important our just day-to-day diet is in making us feel.

You're feeling run down and no energy. It's like, well, are you eating enough protein? Are you getting enough good nutrition? Yes. Well, you've got to put in more than what you take out.

That's a basic concept of good health. Too many people take out more. Now, maybe they're taking it out in stress. Maybe they're taking out in long hours.

But if you're not putting in more than what you take out, you're going to get in trouble. Now, here's another one for you. You remember scurvy. Yes. Scurvy is so fascinating for me.

I know it's been, you know, hundreds of years since it was around. Yeah. Mostly. But the cool thing with scurvy, it was exquisite. It's not just vitamin C depletion, although it certainly was, but it was exquisite starvation.

So what was happening was that these ships at sea didn't have ports of call, so if they went ashore to get fresh fruit and vegetables and water, someone would steal the boat.

So no, can't do that. So they were being starved. So if you had a mariner who was 25 when he got scurvy, but at 20 he broke his leg, when he gets a scurvy, the leg re-breaks.

because they reabsorb the healing when they were starved. Now, if we turn that around and think, okay, in a modern world where we're not getting great food and we're kind of starving with proteins and lots of other essential nutrients, when you load it into a person who appears to be healthy, but they're not.

See, when you eat garbage food, not being too judgmental, but there's a lot of food out there that is not supplying good nutrients, it actually robs you of nutrients to process it.

Yeah. So you start by loading up with people with nutrition. Now, one of the things I like for joint repair is something

called DMSO, dimethyl sulfoxide.

There's a white powder that's one chemical change away from it and it's called MSM, methyl sulfonomethane. So that white powder or the DMSO helps healing and rebuilds elasticity into us because a lot of people are tearing.

If you've got a bone, you've got a ligament, anchored into it and you get shin splints or whatever you're getting, it's because you're not elastic anymore and so you're tearing.

So nutritionally supporting the body, bone broth, there's a whole bunch of ways of doing it, but actually feeding your body, you'll have more elasticity.

So instead of tearing, you start actually bouncing. You see the average five-year-old mean they're bouncing all over the place. They've got great elasticity.

So you work with complex immune related conditions like Lyme disease, mold illness, chronic inflammation. How do regenerative therapies like ozone or LDI fit into your broader immune support protocols?

Low dose immunotherapy is a form of homeopathic medicine. and it helps to rebalance electrical conditions within the body. Now, I got into homeopathy in naturopathic school, of course, but I'm applying it in different ways.

And this is a trick for people who practice hormone medicine, as you do, because what I found with a number of patients early on was you get a woman whose menopausal, okay, we have to evaluate her hormone levels.

And I'm sure this has happened to you as well. You get confused because they've got a list of symptoms, but their hormone levels are okay. So now would they be healthier with high normal levels?

Maybe. But sometimes see hormones act at receptor sites and these are what are known as ionic bonds. So they're electrically mediated and homeopathics come into play.

So people can be supported with homeopathic remedies that help the hormones they've got to respond. And low dose immunotherapy helps to do that for not just hormones bonding, but also are you immune compromised because you're overreacting to a food, a chemical in your environment, something.

So balancing it out so that you're being more reasonable in your body. You're not being extreme. That's really important. Now, cytokines are the chemicals of healing, whether you're infected or whether you're in trauma.

And they often get hung up. So there's a number of steps between where they are emitted through trauma or infection to where they actually work. So if you tear your ankle, there's eight steps where they actually do the work.

They often get hung up at three, four. So this is where you take energized oxygen, ozone, inject it, get the cytokines to move and actually finish the job.

Nutrition, Energy, and Regeneration

So what we're looking at doing with all these different therapies is finding out why the person isn't working well. Where are they hung up? Now, certainly there's spiritual issues.

I'm not going to get into that. I endorse it. I support it. You need to go to your spiritual people for that support. But then there's emotional reasons, all these different things.

And then always comes down to nutrition. People are often in our modern world, eating too much of the wrong food. I mean, there's so, what is it Southern California out of three meals in a day, one and a half to two are handed through a drive-through window.

I know this is not good because they ain't handing out salads. I'm just saying. So at what point are you going to get

the good food that you needed? Now, if you're taking in a capsule because you've got a greens product, Wayne, that helps, but it's not a salad.

No, correct, correct. So you wonder why you're driving in the ditch waiting to hit a post. I mean, come on, get back on the road. Eat what you're supposed to eat.

Yes. So for all those people who aren't doing that and their immune systems are sideways, you get them fed, you get them stimulated so that they start using up these good chemicals that they're now making in their body and their healing comes back into line because that's the natural part of life anyway.

Most of us will heal when we get out of our own way. Yeah, yeah, that's great. Kind of simple, right? Yeah, absolutely. Well, naturopathic medicine is inherently personalized.

So when a new patient comes in, how do you determine whether they need structural support like prolotherapy, immune therapy, nervous system regulation, or all of the above?

Usually it's all the above, and it's not really, again, if it's when. And that depends on their history. How did they get into trouble? What was the progression?

And this can't be done in five minutes. And I'm sure you notice this too, because you take more time with your patients. There's a magical point where they start trusting you with deeper history.

And for me, that's often at 50 minutes. Just before the end of a first visit, they'll come out with some piece of information that's very personal that puts color on the rest of the entire discussion.

They'll come up, oh, now that I think of it, I'll tell you that I've had lymphoma or something like that. And it's like, what the heck, you didn't tell me this before?

This changes everything. When was that? So you try not to overreact. I try not to. But still, it's like you're waiting for these gems to come out. So a full assessment.

Now, if it's orthopedic, sure, we've got to touch them. I go to these different conferences on orthopedic injection therapies, and it's surprising how many doctors were never trained to touch their patients.

And it's just like, I can't wait. If you've got a sore knee, there's eight things there. I want to put my hands on and see what's going on. So physical exam, of course, see where they're at with that.

And depending on the joint, we'll look with ultrasound. I certainly want no x-rays. I want as much information as possible. When we've got that, we then go back to the basics again.

At what point do we feed them? If they're well fed, covered. Then the next one is do some interventions to turn back on healing, to use those building blocks, and then monitoring.

Again, if it's a mold issue, if it's some type of autoimmune or allergic circumstance, do we have to balance out their energy? I've got some electronic equipment from Germany that's electronic homeopathics, and there's some programs there to assess imbalances and get Now, the joke, I was talking to the German doctor this morning, early, because it's late there of course, and we're talking about the different types of equipment in the world.

And being German, and I'm not just saying that because the name is like Wickenheiser, but German stuff, the government, they can't operate in Germany unless they prove that their equipment works.

There's a requirement of the government. So you can't just say it kind of works. They have to prove it. And so I really like that equipment, because I've had all kinds of different equipment over the years.

And some of it, you're using it because someone got good results. But I'm not sure if it was just the intention.

Sometimes you pay attention to a patient and they improve.

But I want real change. I want lasting change. Yeah, yeah. So to actually get in there. No, it's no different from you. You're supplementing where they need things like hormones, stimulating with the ozone, assessing flow of blood.

Personalized Intake and Full-Body Evaluation

I'm big in blood. That's what this thing's for, to look at blood under the microscope, fresh sample. What's happening? How thick is the blood? Can that blood deliver oxygen?

Kind of important. And how sticky is it? Because if you're sticky, you're not able to… No, here's a good one for you. I don't know if you're familiar.

We've talked before about zeta potential. Now, did you know that you can treat kidney stones with chelation? No, I did not know that. Yes. T. C. McDaniels was an osteopathic physician, did a lot of IVs.

He had a heart attack at 52, lived to 102. His daughter still sells minerals, magnesium and potassium are very important, but she sells a form of potassium that unclumps blood.

So clumping blood, clumping proteins and other structures, minerals in the blood will create kidney stones. And I've treated kidney stones using guidance from that family where we do chelation and the EDTA, common with chelation, actually disperses the buildup of kidney stones.

Wow. Really cool. So these are overlaps for what you're doing now that can get people out of trouble. In your practice, how do you help patients who feel discouraged or who haven't responded to conventional care kind of rediscover hope and momentum in their healing journey?

Well, it's pretty common in older people because modern medicine is very good for younger people because they respond so much quicker. Whereas you age, your cellular energy's down, your circulation's down, you're just not going to respond as well.

And so giving them some hope by explaining, because I take time and I like to explain stuff. So if you explain why they developed the problem, not just do these three things and goodbye, and I'm not going to explain anything.

Let's talk about how you got into trouble. So it gives them control back into their life when they understand that there were steps that they went sideways.

Now there's steps to unsideways. It didn't just magically happen and that some magical intervention, some magical drug will get you out of it. Now there are magical drugs.

I know there are drugs that act like magic. But a full assessment in giving them control of their lifestyle, give them some hope, and then with a plan, feed, clean, balance the energy, get regeneration back into their body, do it in the lowest risk way possible and give them control along the way because mostly I deal with adults and so you really have to appeal to the adults in my opinion to give them a little bit more information so that they really understand what's going on.

I'm not that complex with patients, so I make it more simple, of course. But there's some really cool things that you can just explain and they understand.

Why do they need to drink more water? Why do they have to eat good food? There's absolute reasons why. Yeah. So your clinic blends traditional naturopathic modalities with high-tech diagnostics and regenerative tools.

How do you keep that balance so that you're offering cutting-edge care without overwhelming the body or the patient? you have to assess where they're coming from and who they are.

And it's just through interviewing them, what they've done before, offer different approaches. You can tell in a moment if they're warm to it. I don't know, have you ever used NAD as an injectable?

Okay, so we've been using it subcutaneous and it's working really cool, but some people will not do a needle. Fine, we've got pills. So it's just really being approachable, listening, ask a question and stand back and let them have room.

It takes time. But hey, we've got time because I need to know what their real emotions are. And it's you can tell more from body language than words almost always.

Yes. Yes. A needle's involved. OK. OK. We're not doing a needle today. Yeah, yeah. We're not threatening you. So are there any objective tests or patient metrics that you found especially useful in tracking progress with regenerative therapies?

And how do you measure success beyond pain reduction? Beyond pain reduction? OK, so are there tests? Well, we start with standard medical tests. We want to know the extent to which enzymes, minerals, fats, sugars, all those standard blood tests, is the person broken or just on a gas?

Now, if they're just out of gas, we will do the reasonable things. And unlike your clinic where you're measuring thickness of blood vessels down to the capillary level, that's pretty cool.

Hope, Patient Education, and Recovery

Looking forward to possibly adding that to my office, we'll see. The issue is we're really looking at lifestyle and what their experience is, their reported experience.

Because symptoms are the last to come and the first to leave. So it could take 10 years before a symptom comes out and it could take two weeks and it goes but you didn't do all the healing because you've still got 10 years of recovery to do.

So we're aware of their Increase in comfort, energy, function in life, range of motion in a joint. Is their shoulder now moving without pain? It's no longer clicking.

Those are simple things, but really it's now they're walking for two hours a day and they don't have any problem. Now they can cough and they don't have pain in their chest.

Now they can stand up and not get dizzy. Simple things like that tell us that we're working. Yeah. So what new technologies or therapies are you most excited about integrating into your practice in the next few years?

Probably more of the same. Some of the German homeopathics is pretty cool, but the peptide stuff is really encouraging. I'm taking different courses on that and looking at, we're starting to prescribe that, and getting something that's like body protection compound BPC157, looking at some of those results.

I mean, there's some pretty cool tissue regeneration stuff with that. And watching the research, cause I'm really into the research. I know there isn't a lot of human research with all of those substances, but I've gotten into writing more literature reviews for myself and I'm really interested in the peptide stuff.

That's probably the cell to cell messaging is probably the biggest thing that'll happen in the next two years in our office. Yeah, that's great. So burnout is a real issue amongst practitioners, especially those doing this kind of like deep patient centered work.

What practices help keep you grounded, energized and resilient as a clinician and a business owner? Family. Yeah, because family who will just say are unfiltered.

You can't shine on family. You really have to be honest with them. And if you're not being honest with yourself, my

parents are still alive. They're older.

Different family members talked to one of my brothers yesterday, and they don't mix words. They just tune you right back in. So having social support that are realistic, supportive, but realistic.

So they don't let you live in some idealistic world. You have to be focused. Family's critical. Good diet, exercise, getting out in fresh air, all that kind of interesting stuff.

I do have some weird habits. I cultivate willow trees. About second week of February, I cut pussy willows and I've got like nine foot pussy willows because I water the trees throughout the year.

So that's my water therapy.

Tracking Progress and Emerging Therapies

That's kind of weird, but I'm out watering my plants every day. Okay, that's awesome. That's awesome. That's not very module, I know, but hey, we just do it.

Oh, that sounds beautiful. What's one of the most rewarding transformations you've witnessed in a patient using integrative and regenerative tools and what made it work?

So there's a really cool thing that I was able to do and I was trained in and that's nerve hydro dissection. So when I was going through ultrasound training, we were working a lot with injecting joints and different tissue.

But then I was taking courses from Dr. Thomas Clark. And one of the concepts that he actually coined the phrase was nerve hydro dissection. So we're taking dextrose, 5% water, D5W, which is a neutral substance, low sugar that can reset nerves.

With trauma, which could be emotional trauma, could even be PTSD, you leak. fluids into the wrong space so fascia surrounds different bundles of muscles different things in between the groups of fascia the major blood vessels and nerves travel now with the trauma even emotional that they call that somaticization soma is the physical body somaticization emotions going into the physical body so ptsd is an example So I'll look after different patients who tend to be bigger and you can't just massage them and their nerves are stuck.

So using ultrasound and dextrose 5% water, large needle, watch it on the screen, you can take a nerve, this is the nerve, you put the needle in under ultrasound guidance, inflate it and the nerve calms down.

Now a nerve exquisitely irritated will swell as much as three times normal diameter. So a lot of nerves pinch themselves in where they're coming out of bony structures or where they're moving through the body.

And if it's stuck because of trauma or emotional trauma even, then that stickiness, then they're not moving because nerves are not elastic. They have to move within elastic tissue.

So by liberating that up and getting people to reset has been emotionally responding, but also We had one woman, she's now 76, but when she was about 54, she came off her horse and banged into the gate post at the barn.

She had to have a plate in her right arm and she pinched nerves at a certain area of her spine, chest, and that was elevating her blood pressure and her heart rate.

Wow. So we went in, ultrasound guidance, and inflated the area around that nerve, relieved the pressure, and within the time it took to inject and then have her sit up and take her blood pressure again, it went from 210 over 110 down to 160 over 85. Wow, that's amazing.

Giant freaking wow, because that's like, okay, that was the real problem. It was pinching, not just heart disease.

Burnout, Family, and Clinician Resilience

So things like that where you can actually do a relief, and that's physical, that wasn't emotional, getting that to relieve, that's pretty gratifying.

Yeah, that's amazing. It's really great. So looking ahead, what is your vision for where naturopathic and regenerative medicine is headed, and what role do you hope to play in the future?

I think that it has to become more accepted and more available. I mean, this is your world as well. How many people, and I'm not being rough, but how many people even know you exist?

Much less what you do, right? This is a challenge for all of us to do things like this where we're discussing what we do and people know that we're real people and can be approached.

That's really the big deal. I'm not sure if we really need more developments. I think we need more refinement and more accessibility. And what's my part in it, just day to day looking after patients, talking to people like yourself, getting opinions shared and getting communication out so that people know their options.

Too many people don't even know what's available. I've done things for 30 years now, literally. Well, coming up in September, it'll be 30 years. And I've done things like vitamin injections.

People say, oh, I didn't even know this was possible. It's like, hey, I've done talks and I've done presentations. And you weren't talking to the right people.

I guess I should have done podcasts sooner, I guess. just to let them know what's even possible. And then they're going to process it and say, OK, I don't know if it's true.

Nerve Hydrodissection and Future of Integrative Medicine

OK, it's true. Is it for me? They've got to get into that decision track. And then once they get in, you know this, people are so excited. That is awesome.

Well, thank you so much for your time today. And it was super interesting. And thanks, everyone, for joining me on The Functional Edge. I hope today's episode gave you fresh insights and practical tools to level up your life.

If you found value in what you heard, don't forget to hit subscribe, share the podcast with someone who needs it, and leave a review. It's the best way to support our mission of bringing powerful health solutions to more people.

For more resources, updates, and behind-the-scenes content, visit drjuliaward.com. Until next time, stay strong, stay healthy, and keep living on the functional edge.

And I forgot to ask, Dr. Wickenheiser, where do people go to find out more information about you and your practice? So my podcast is the THENATURALFACTS.com.

THENATURALFACTS. COM for more information. Thank you for having me on. Thank you. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health.

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