Feeling Stuck in Your Healing? How Naturopathic Medicine Can Turn Things Around. Transcript

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Introduction to Functional Edge

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Drug will get you out of it. There are magical drugs. I know there are drugs that act like magic, but a full assessment and giving them controlled to their lives.

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, I'm Dr.

Julia Ward and this is where science meets real-world strategies for living healthier, sharper, and stronger. From uncovering hidden environmental toxins to unlocking peak performance and mental clarity, we cover it all.

Ready to take control of your health and thrive? Let's dive in. All right, welcome to the Functional Edge podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Julia Ward, and today I am thrilled to welcome Dr Wickenheiser, a trailblazer in the field of naturopathic and regenerative medicine.

Dr. Wickenheiser's Path to Naturopathic Medicine

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

His clinic is known for fusing traditional naturopathic wisdom and cutting-edge regenerative tools that help patients heal deeply and sustainably. 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. 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 working different jobs. And I'm going a herbalists 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 am asking so many questions, and frustrating him because he's just saying, well, 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 him? So I got so excited about the possibility of applying rational thought. Now I know mainstream medicine has got rational though 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 lot of training.

But 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 of the efforts 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? 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 resulting other problems?

Finding the Root Cause of Pain

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

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

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

We've all been trained it. You put your hands on, and 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 is clicking. You can see what's torn. Now not completely because until you put a needle in and treat it, You cant see if the tissue just opens up or if it opens.

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 its 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 it's kind of mainstream, but it is pretty cool. Yeah, that is very effective. 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 actual going on?

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

because a lot of autoimmune problems are because of deep-seated infections misdirecting your immune system, your response. So whether you're looking at, and I know you are familiar with all the ozone concepts, 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. Of course, there's lifestyle choices.

Stop overdoing it. Then there is 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. Feed, get the toxins out, feed, clean, balance the energy. Part of that energy can be just simply putting in the right stimulation to move ahead, because ozone, of course, is delivering energy, so you put that in to stimulate.

There's other approaches that can appropriate. You know there's electrical therapies and other things, but 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. How many patients do you know walk through the door, because I find myself daydreaming at lunch. I'd leave the office for lunch, I like to get out of the offices, and I'm day dreaming and watching people and assessing them.

It's really quite… I catch myself. But I am 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.

Ozone, Nutrition, and Immune Support

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 it out more.

Now, maybe they're taking it in stress. Maybe they are taking out in long hours. But if you're not putting in mordant what to take, out you are going to get in trouble.

Here's another one for you. You remember scurvy. Yes. Scurvey 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 scurry was exquisite. It's not just vitamin C depletion, although it certainly was, but it exquisit 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. They were being starved. If you had a mariner who was 25 when he got scurvy, but at 20 he broke his leg. When he gets a scurry, 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 are 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 are not.

See, you eat garbage food, not being too judgmental, there is 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. That white power or the DmsO helps healing and rebuilds elasticity into us because a lot of people are tearing.

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

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.

I am sure this has happened to you as well. You get confused because they've got a list of symptoms, 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 homeopathy 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 are being more reasonable in you body. You're not being extreme. That's really important. Now, cytokines are the chemicals of healing, whether you're infected or whether 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 the actually work. If you tear your ankle, there are eight steps where you actually do the work, they get hang 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. 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 are spiritual issues. I'm not going to get into that. If 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 it always comes down to nutrition. People are often in our modern world eating too much of the wrong food.

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. This is not good, because they ain't handing out salads.

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 were 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.

Low Dose Immunotherapy and Healing Blockages

So for all those people who aren't doing that and their immune systems are sideways, you get them fed, get stimulated so that they start using up these good chemicals that their now making in their body and there 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 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 know, if you try not to overreact, i try, not you. But still, it is 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 orthopaedic injection therapies, and it is surprising how many doctors were never trained to talk to their patients.

It's just like, I can't wait. If you've 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 to know x-rays. 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 are well fed, covered. Then the next one is do some interventions to turn back on healing, to use those building blocks and then monitoring, you know, again, if it's a mold issue, If it is 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 Reestablished 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 name 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.

In 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 wanted lasting change, 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.

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, you know, how sticky is it? Because if you're sticky, here's a good one for you. I don't know if your familiar. We've talked before about zeta potential.

Now, did you 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.

Wow. So clumping blood, clumping proteins and other structures, minerals in the blood will create kidney stones.

Personalized Assessments and Patient Trust

And I've treated kidney stone using guidance from that family where we do chelation and the EDTA, common with chelasion, actually disperses the buildup of kidney 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, you're circulations 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 gonna 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 magic drug will get you out of it. There are magical drugs.

I know there are drugs that act like magic. But a full assessment in giving them the 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 a little bit more information so that they really understand what's going on.

I'm not that complex with patients. 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 did 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 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 is working really cool, but some people will not do a needle. Fine, we got pills. So it 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. 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 and reduction, OK, so are their 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 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.

Looking forward to possibly adding that to my office, will 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 can take two weeks and then it goes but you didn't do all the healing because you've still got 10 year 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 then they have pain in their chest.

Measuring Progress and Emerging Therapies

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 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 like Body Protection Compound BPC 157, looking 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. 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 really interested in the peptide stuff. That's probably the cell to cell messaging is probably biggest thing that'll happen in 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 pussywillows because I water the trees throughout the year. That's my water therapy. That's kindof weird, but I'm out watering my plants every day.

Okay, that's awesome. That's not very module, I know, but hey, we just do it. Oh, it 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 trained in, and that's nerve hydro dissection. So when I going through ultrasound training, we were working a lot with injecting joints and different tissue, but then I 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 fasci, the major blood vessels and nerves travel. Now with the trauma, even emotional, they call that somaticization. Soma is the physical body, somatization, emotions going into physical bodies.

PTSD is an example.

Burnout, Family, and Clinician Resilience

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 nerves calms down. Now a 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 their moving through the body. And if it's stuck because of trauma or emotional trauma even, then that stickiness, they are not moving because nerves are no elastic.

They have to move within elastic tissue. 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 was the real problem. It was pinching, not just heart disease. Wow. 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 is amazing. It's really great. 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?

Nerve Hydrodissection and Remarkable Outcomes

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 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 are real people and can be, you know, approached.

That's really the big deal. I am not sure if we really need more developments. 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 is available. I've done things for 30 years now, literally. Well, coming up in September, it'll be 30-years. And I have done like vitamin injections.

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

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

Okay, it is true, is it for me? They've got to get into that decision track. Yeah. Then once they get in, you know this, people are so excited.

The Future of Regenerative Medicine

That is awesome. Well, thank you so much for your time today and it was super interesting. 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, behind-the-scenes content, visit drjuliaward.com. Until next time, stay strong, staying 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, F-A-C-T-S dot com.

TheNaturalFacts.com for more Thank you for joining me on the functional edge. I hope today's episode gave you fresh insights and practical tools to level up your life.

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