Introduction and guest background

Hello, I'm Doctor Sharon Stills, your co-host of the Hormones and Mental Health Overcoming Anxiety, depression and ADHD summit. It's a pleasure and my honor to be here with you all and we are in for a treat because I have Doctor Kathleen King here with me.

She is the founder and CEO of Primal Trust Academy and Community, and she weaves together brain training, retraining it. I can talk, she leads together.

Brain retraining, vagus nerve toning, somatic movement and trauma informed attachment repair techniques in her online worldwide platform. And so, as a physician, I love when I got to meet Doctor Kathleen and be able to share her work with patients, because you can have anxiety, you can have depression, and yes, maybe your hormones are off, or maybe your thyroid is low, or maybe you're nutrient deficient.

But if you don't do the real work of rewiring and regulating your nervous system, you're cutting yourself short. You're not really giving yourself the whole healing gestalt.

And so I'm thrilled to have you here. This is such an important topic and there's no one better than I would want to have this conversation with and share with everyone watching the summit.

So welcome to the summit. Thank you. I'm so happy to be here with you. Yeah, I'm happy you're here too. And I just have to. It's like when I, when I think about you and I think about when we first met, which was only a year ago, and I had a patient who had really bad anxiety and we had bounced.

Her hormones or hormones were great. It helped, but she was still anxious. And I didn't see her for a couple of months. And she came back to me and I said, she said, oh my anxiety is gone.

And I was like, awesome. Did the hormones finally kick in? And she was like, no, I'm doing Primal trust. And I was like, what is primal trust? And that's what we're going to learn today.

And she told me and I jotted it down because whenever patients tell me cool things, I jot it down. And then I go research and find out. But I was leaving to go to a retreat as part of a group that I'm part of, and I get to this retreat in Mexico last year, and the first person I meet there is Kathleen, and I say, hi, how are you?

Nice to meet you. What do you do? And she says, I founded Primal Trust. I was like, right, my to do list. I just wrote you down. And so I love when the universe just kind of cuts to the chase and makes it easy for us up.

Yeah. So cool man, to be. So tell us, first of all, just who you are, how you got involved in this work. You have such an interesting background and story.

Yeah, well, I was somebody who was both chronically ill and had a lot of chronic trauma patterns, including raging anxiety and panic disorder for many, many, many, many years.

And I was somebody who went from doctor to doctor. And, you know, I was diagnosed with Lyme disease, mold toxicity, you know, hormone imbalances, co-infections, all of that.

And I, you know, kept trying things. And I just wasn't getting better. In fact, I would often respond adversely to most treatments. I was hypersensitive, you know, and just somebody, I felt like I was just crazy, you know, I had two little kids, I wasn't sleeping, I was in anxiety and panic all day long, I felt exhausted.

I could hardly function, and it just got worse and worse. And, I felt more and more out of control.

Nervous system dysregulation and paradoxical reactions

So I really had to go on a journey of learning how to self-manage anxiety, insomnia, panic, and illness because treatments weren't working for me. I wasn't it just wasn't my path, and it was my path to learn how to self-regulate my biology.

And that's what I did. And now I have a whole protocol of teaching people how to consciously hack their limbic system. That's producing the anxiety and panic, how to how to resolve the trauma inside, and how to ultimately allow their cellular health to come back into homeostasis.

Through targeting the brain and the nervous system. And so he said something that I just want to circle back to because I think it's so important that you were reacting.

And when we see patients, they have paradoxical reactions. And so you give, say, valerian root, which is supposed to relax someone to make them sleep and it makes them awake, or you give B12 and that's supposed to give you energy and it makes them tired or they can't tolerate.

Can you speak to that a little bit? Because I'm sure there are a lot of women listening who are on this situation. And how how is that? Because it's not just going right. We're going to give you a different herb.

We're going to give you a different vitamin. Yeah. Yeah. I think it comes back to what's happening on a cellular level when we're stuck in something known as cell danger response and limbic system impairment that the body for some people will interpret almost anything as a threat.

And, you know, something that's supposed to maybe help to calm or something to help you detox. The body's like, I can't handle that input as well. And it goes into even more of a severe reaction.

And that was the case for me, where my cells and the the signaling between my cells was interpreting everything as a threat. And that you know, that you're not it's not just about one thing.

It's not just the diet or the hormones or the infection or the toxins. It's a systemic community location, issue that has gone offline because there isn't a sense of safety circulating through the body to be able to appropriately, interpret what you're taking or what you're feeling or what you're sensing.

So it's like your interpretation has gone haywire, and you need to teach the brain in the body how to come in to, communication and more accurate interpretation.

Now, I can take anything. I mean, I wasn't able to take homeopathic and now, you know, I could I I've had to take antibiotics. I've had to take herbs for different things.

I don't have those reactions anymore. So it's not that I was, you know, like my body was intolerant. My system wasn't able to appropriately decide how to utilize those substances.

And the good news is, you can absolutely change those responses. So I want to ask you to jot down two things from what you said. And then I want to dive specifically to anxiety, depression ADHD.

But you said a sense of safety. And so I guess I have a two part makes me think so did we, did we learn this to not have a sense of safety. Is this all coming from childhood and adverse childhood experiences, and is there anything you can recommend for the ladies listening that they can do to to start to invite that sense of safety?

Yeah, there's two main factors that I think have affected our sense of safety a yes, childhood trauma, adverse childhood experiences for sure. Those people tend to have a body that overreacts under reacts, is immune confused because the set up of your nervous system, your neural biological development was, influenced with a lot of stress.

And so the way that your body learned how to stay in a harmony and homeostasis was, it wasn't appropriately developed. So those people, as they grow up, their cellular interpretation of the world tends to be a little wonky. Yes.

Or is that the second thing that's caused us to not feel safe on a deep level is the medical programing. In my opinion, where you're given a lot of diagnoses and lab tests and made to feel like you need something outside of you always in order to get better.

We aren't taught about the innate healing mechanisms of our body.

Safety, trauma, and medical conditioning

We aren't taught by the practitioner when we first see them. What do you think your body is asking you with these symptoms? You're taught, oh, you've got this, this and this.

You need this pill, this thing, this, that. You're not actually being pointed back inside to discern what the body is trying to give you a message of.

And so whenever control is put outside of us, that's going to make us feel unsafe. It's going to make us feel out of control. So those two things together, a childhood, upbringing of childhood chaos or trauma or whatever, plus being highly programed by authority figures that you're body is not wise creates a real set point of I'm not safe.

My body is, unwise. My body is, broken, and I need something or someone outside of me to fix it. Now, this doesn't mean that we don't use, protocols and and tools from physicians who understand how to work with the body.

It can really be a win win to learn how to calm down the body and use certain tools to continue to influence the body of receiving signals of safety. But it really needs to be a collaborative effort between the patient and the practitioner, where the patient is working on their nervous system, their belief system, their worldview processing emotion.

Dealing with trauma. And a practitioner who understands the nervous system is a big part of this and knows how to carefully, influence the body in a way where the nervous system doesn't freak out.

That, I think, makes the best outcome for somebody who's dealing with these issues. Yeah. I've never met a patient who's been chronically ill that came in with a regulated nervous system that when we check the nervous system, it's always sympathetic, is off the chart.

There's no parasympathetic tone. Time and time we still check, but I'm never surprised. It's always that's what I see. And I think what you were saying, it made me think of one of my favorite, I don't know if it's a Zen saying, but wherever you go, there you are.

And so it's like if you come to the holistic doctor, but you come with a dysregulated nervous system, or you come just thinking, yes, you're going to get the magic potion, but you know, you want it to be an herb, not a pharmaceutical step in the right direction.

But if you don't change the things that you're talking about and I think we all right, we all have to work on this because I don't know very many people that didn't have trauma in their childhood.

Right. And I don't know very many people who didn't grow up influenced by society and thinking our answers to everything, and especially our health, lie outside of us.

So these are two, really. So don't beat yourself up if you're listening, right. This is just an opportunity to go, oh, I can do some work here and I can I can reregulate and I can actually feel better on all levels.

And so how does this apply to anxiety? What is your lens of iodine? I know that journey well. I know what it's like to

be crippled, not for months but for years by anxiety and insomnia.

So first of all, my heart goes. It was one of the hardest journeys I've I've had to take, and I'm so grateful that I'm on the other side of it. And I want to say that I'm somebody who literally went almost 20 years on tons of medications addicted to benzodiazepines, doctors to doctors, therapists at therapists, all sorts of diagnoses ranging from anxiety to borderline pain to panic disorder to, PTSD.

And I am on the other side of it. I don't even it's been many years since I've had a panic attack. Now I experience the emotion of anxiety because it's a normal human emotion, but it doesn't get trapped and it doesn't limit anything that I do.

So I want you to know that this is what's possible, how did I get here? Well, I got here because everything else wasn't working. And it got so bad that it was hard to be alive, to be honest.

And I had to start taking radical responsibility for what was happening inside of me and learn how to feel the feels and not revolve my life around the anxiety.

I used to revolve everything like I was afraid to do things because I didn't want to have a panic attack. You know, there's a therapy called acceptance and commitment therapy.

I didn't take that method, but I basically did that where I decided anxiety got to live with me as a companion, as a scared little child within me. I literally personified it and said, you belong in my family.

You get to be here with me as I go to the grocery store and have to breathe through and have to leave the grocery store halfway through and calm back down and go back in to get what I need.

Healing anxiety by meeting it

It became a companion that I allowed to be with me, and that shifted everything. It shifted everything because I included it instead of avoided it from there.

I didn't need the the medications and things to suppress it because I my psyche learned that I wasn't afraid of it anymore. I wasn't afraid of insomnia anymore.

I learned to enjoy the sleepless nights and find my favorite books and be like, oh good, I get to read my book at two in the morning. I'm not kidding.

That was my response and it retrained the the stress response to it. So you've got two things. You've got your first reaction, which is the anxiety or you can't sleep.

You have the second reaction, which is your resistance to it. You have control over your second reaction as you allow the first reaction to be there the anxiety, the panic, the sleeplessness as you allow it to be there with your second reaction, which is your response, the first reaction over time will calm down.

It will become integrated, and eventually you will no longer be a slave to those emotions in those situations. And you'll be free. It's so beautiful. And it just just to remind, like when you're saying that, I'm thinking it's really rewarding.

And I love hormones and I love neurotransmitters, and I love all the things, and it's, yeah, rewarding to give someone hormones and see things change.

And that's fantastic. Yeah. But what we're talking about here is like, such a deeper level of who we are as women, as human beings, as souls on a journey.

And we we do ourself a disservice. And I know it can be scary or time consuming, right? It's easier to just pop some

gab, than it is. But the, the payoff at the end, I think, like you said, you're free and we're not managing.

We're really embracing. And I think that's such, mindfulness. I've been teaching mindfulness forever, and I think it's about I learned about it in medical school, and I was a student, and I always said, this is good medicine.

This is medicine, and it is it's just about embracing, saying hello and letting it flow through you and not letting it get trapped. And yes, at first it can be I don't want to do that.

That's scary. That's uncomfortable. But when you when you do the work and and I'm thinking of myself. You said 20 years and I'm like you look like you're 30s.

Just 50. We're going to do the math. You know, I'm almost 50. So you also I think it also it shows up and how you look and you just have this young, youthful appearance, you know.

It's the zoom filter. That wrinkles. Okay. So so it really is it's so multifactorial. And this is such an important piece that I think is getting talked about more often now than it was, but it's still it I believe it should be the it should be leading the way.

It should be the head of the train, not the caboose. Yeah. So what about ADHD? What is your your lens on ADHD. May be a bit controversial of a lens, but I believe it's a separation conflict.

I believe that what I mean by that is I think that based on research I've done, based on my own experiences and talking to a lot of people, it's a trauma response to a lack of connection and a seeking of connection that you can't get from a human because you don't trust it's going to be there.

So the brain is looking frantically to connect with anything else so that it doesn't have to feel a deep sense of aloneness and isolation that probably was there very young.

And I think that there might be genetic factors that sort of lead the brain to doing that. But again, this is controversial. So I see people heal from this when they find the ability to deeply connect within with the present moment not being something they need to get away from, the ability to go through the experience of having to sit with all sorts of discomfort and not need anything outside of themselves to pull the mind outside of one's own awareness of the present moment.

I that makes sense to me. That doesn't sound controversial. And so what about depression? Those are like the three main. Yeah. Hitting depressed. Depressed emotion.

Depressed emotion would be a good relabeling of the word. I think that when we haven't been given the emotional skill set of processing emotion, sometimes our family line doesn't teach us the neurobiology of feeling the feelings that it's okay to feel feelings and it's okay to process.

I think we developed neurobiological habits of depressing emotion and the the amount of of autonomic tone that it takes to keep our emotions depressed, I think, can throw us into that deep dorsal vagal of depression all the way through.

ADHD, depression, and emotional processing

When I see people heal as they have to go through this like sympathetic activation stage, which doesn't feel good, it can feel like anxiety, insomnia, rage, all sorts of things.

As that emotion starts to break through the basement doors in through the body. So it is the willingness to feel. And it also means that I think you need to have the resourcing, the nervous system capacity, the willingness to sit with those parts of you in it.

And that can be a journey in and of itself to develop the nervous system capacity, to start feeling the floodgates of

what might be there. And it can be overwhelming and sometimes you can shut back down because you're like, well, I can't function with this.

This is I've seen people move from extreme depression into freedom, but they had to go through a period of a lot of anxiety, a lot of insomnia, feeling like they're losing their shit.

Frankly, to get there now, that's not everybody's journey might be more incremental, but I do see that as a, pattern of those who do come out of depression is that it can be, intense to start feeling those depressed emotions and allowing them to move through.

And I think we spend right. We spend a lot of time being told not to feel our emotions. Not. I remember growing up in my house. We dealt with a lot of death, and it was like I was young and we just never talked about it.

And then you never said the person's name again. And it's just that was how we were raised, right? We don't talk about things. I think our generation now that is raising we're more open and more verbal.

But it was that was just the generational. We don't talk about things. And so we're we're afraid to sit with the emotions. We're not comfortable. And then we never really get to heal if we're just doctor hopping or looking for the next magic pill.

And so it's it healing when we teach, I teach the eight week mindfulness based stress reduction course by John Kabat-Zinn. His work, and we always say taking the stress reduction course is very stressful.

Right. And it's this kind of work is not a skip in the park, but when you do it, then you get to skip. The end result is you do get to skip in the park and play with puppies.

And so, I'm curious what you think about community and connection. I always go back and forth, right? Like we are here on zoom. We're reaching all these women and having a summit.

It's such a great way we get to impact and change lives and open minds. But what about that? We are. We are. So on our. I went to my chiropractor this morning.

He goes, what's wrong with your neck? I was like, I think I'm just like always like this. Lately I'm like, oh my God, I'm looking down too much at my phone, at my computer.

So what do you see? What is the impact of the the dark and the light of technology, I guess. Gosh, I feel this. I was just writing about this in my journal this morning how I every morning this is kind of a practice.

You check into your body like body. What do you need? What do you need? And I felt a strong need. It said, I want an alive container of women to just be in person with and feel their energy.

I crave that, Sharon. I crave it so much you'd think you know, I'm online all the time connecting with women. But there's something special about being together, dancing together, hugging each other, holding each other a transmission that we get from each other, from physical contact that isn't replaced, very well by technology, you know?

So, you know, technology has its place and I am starving. I am starving for those circles. And, And it's my intention to find ways to create that or to, to get involved.

It's literally my intention right now as we speak. And, so I encourage you guys that are listening. Same thing. Like, how can you get outside your comfort zone and invite a handful of women over for lunch and whatever, how can we start doing this again?

Because we've kind of lost it. It's needed. It's part of our health. It's part of our healing. And, community.

Community, connection, and technology

Yeah. It's just it's not. I run a worldwide community of thousands, and I am starving for connection. So it tells you technology cannot replace that in person experience.

You know, if I we're opening a big clinic. I mean, I've been virtual for the last 13 years, and I'm. I'm stepping out of my comfort zone and taking on a lot more responsibility for it.

I'm so excited to have patients in person and community. And because it is, it's not it's not the same like we're connecting now. But if you were sitting here next to me, it'd be it'd be a little more meaningful, a little more, a little more of the juicy stuff.

I know so and so, I guess just as we're wrapping up, could you just explain a little bit about this worldwide community, about primal trust, about what it is you offer?

So the women I'm hoping by now or like, I want what she's having. Sure. Well, first of all, maybe a link below that. The book through that I wrote will help them understand it's free.

It's called How Healing Happens. And explains my whole approach for our community called Primal Trust, as well as several practices and all of that. You can download that for free on my website, maybe through an A link.

I. Don't know if we're going to put we often don't put links in the websites. Okay. Sure. It's primal trust.org. Primal trust org. And it's under the free resources section.

So that's one easy way just to learn what I'm doing. But yeah, we have a worldwide community where we have live zoom classes every single day, sometimes multiple times a day, where we meet together, we regulate our nervous system together.

We learn how to take radical responsibility for our relationships, for our boundaries, for our health. We learn the art of brain retraining, vagus nerve toning, somatic movement, trauma processing, inner attachment repair.

And it's, it's a process that I developed based on my own journey of what I, what tools I use to walk myself out of the hell that I was in. And it's spread worldwide.

And I would love to have you involved. So beautiful. I mean, I can just say, as a physician that, like, I stamp of approval. I just think it's I'm seriously thinking of making it mandatory for patients who come to my clinic.

Like, you have to be doing this work because it's going to make the work we do on your physical body so much easier, so much kinder, so much gentler, so much more effective.

And really, when we say the mind body, I think a lot of times we're giving it lip service and this is a way to reach really embrace it. And and you only get healing and benefit and deeper connection to yourself and others.

It's just so, so important at the end of the day off. And what's that saying? Like at the end of the day when you slide in and you're done living your life, you want to look back and say, whoa, whoa, whoa, that was a cool ride or whatever.

Primal Trust and closing reflections

And I think from this perspective, it's like you want to look back and say, I did it. I was curious, I dove in, I learned, I stretched myself, I grew, and and this is a vehicle to get you there.

So I just I just adore you. I, I'm, I love the work you're doing. I just think it's so, so powerful. So. And thank you for giving us a, a different perspective than just you need to take some five HTP because you're depressed or you need to take something in because you're anxious.

And yeah, those are things that I, I do say right. But but in the combination with this and using this as the foundation, that's how you're really going to soar and really, truly heal.

There's a difference between getting rid of a symptom or suppressing a symptom or truly healing and regulating. And that's what Doctor Kathleen's work is all about.

So thank you so much. Just say your website again. It's private sector primal trust.org. Yep. Primal trust org. Thank you I'm going to go download the free ebook.

Yeah I'm very excited that that's that's very kind of you. Yeah I loved being able to share this. I just want to say that overcoming anxiety through meeting it is one of the proudest things I've ever done.

And it's available to each of you. It's there's a quantum leap moment of bringing that feeling along with you in your life, and it is it's the most freeing thing I think I've done.

I've done a lot of overcome a lot of things. But the anxiety panic piece, it really is freedom because, yeah, we have things happen, but it it won't limit your choices anymore.

And I think that the work you're doing, like of course, like taking things can be helpful in that process. But ultimately it's a deep decision to include it into your life versus fear. It.

Yeah, I love that. Makes me think of I love the Rumi poem is a room is Rumi right. The guest house. Do you know that poem where you guys can all Google Infinity?

Like you know, it's like inviting, inviting depression in for a cup of tea. He says, don't, don't sweep it under the rug. Like, come sit in him. And that's what you're talking about here. So.

Right. So let's all have a tea party and maybe it's pretty with the you're you're making me think, oh, I'm going to start another woman's circle at my new clinic.

So lots of lots of just beauty in here. So thank you so much for being a part of such a meaningful part of this summit. It's truly appreciated. And thank you all for being here.

So go check her out. Primal trust dawg. She also I follow you on Instagram. She only says my screenshotting and saving her Instagram post is that great stuff there.

So be sure to follow her and check out her work. All right. Thank you. Thank you for being here and going to have another episode interview conversation coming your way right.