How Functional Medicine Helped One Doctor Love Medicine Again Transcript

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Burnout and Returning to Medicine

So the cure to burnout is listening to your heart. And when you do what your hear tells you to do, I love medicine again. I know that I went into the field that was meant to go into.

This is my passion. Welcome to the Integrative Medicine Roundtable, where practitioners lead, brought to you by the North Carolina Integrated Medical Society, join integrative health care leaders, clinicians and innovators as they share practical insights, emerging research, and the conversations shaping the future of patient care.

Hi, I'm Dr. Amy Duffy. I am the president of the North Carolina Integrative Medical Society and we are launching the Integrate of Medicine Roundtable podcast here at the Synergy Conference in Asheville.

And I super excited to welcome Dr Lisa Broyles. She is a board member here with North Caroline Integrated Medical society and local to this side of North Carolinas.

So I really excited hear her story. Tell us a little bit about Just go way back to like, what even started you thinking I wanted to be a doctor? Oh my goodness.

Well, I'm originally from Asheville, North Carolina. My family, my great-grandfather built a lot of downtown Ashevill. So the Jackson building with the gargoyles hanging off, that was my Great-Grandfather.

He helped build the Grove Arcade. We've got a long history here in AsheVille. But I come from a line of builders and developers. I was the first doctor, although my first cousin, he's also a family doctor now.

I just, as soon as I figured out when I was a kid that I wasn't good at math, I wanted to be an astronaut, but astronauts had to good math.

Early Life and Path to Becoming a Doctor

So I switched to doctor. And that was it. Yeah. I went into medicine, like most of us do, where we truly want to heal. We want make people better. And then you actually get into medicine and you discover that administration and charting take up more time than the time you had with your patient and all of the pressures to to do a certain protocol and prescribe a certainly ways and and then, you don't get enough time with their patients and I think that over time after 7 to 10 years, I started getting burned out and we all went through covid and i think, that accelerated our burnout.

going through wearing that mask all got burn out we all did absolutely and so I kind of hit up a crisis in my career in 2021 where I remember telling my husband, I'm either going to have to get out of medicine and figure out a new career or I have 2 do medicine in a way that for me fulfills my Hippocratic and Yeah and is ethical and moral because I just felt like the pressure to see patients every 5 to 10 minutes and that pressure wasn't coming from my employer so much as the insurance companies that don't pay for primary care to actually see their patients, right?

Right. And so I left traditional primary in 2021 and launched my own business and way to health MD and I just went full on functional medicine. I'd gotten my jump in the deep end.

Yeah. Right. And I, you know, after four years of trying to practice functional, medicine in, the insurance setting, I realized I can't do functional in five minutes.

Now I need an hour with my patients. Two hours to really get to the root of what's going on. What contributes to burnout with physicians is we don't have enough time with our patients, right?

Burnout in Primary Care and Leaving Insurance Medicine

I think you. That's the frustration is there's so much more that I could do. Right. And I'm stuck in these walls and I can't do them. You become just a referral referring to all these different doctors because you don't have time to address what you couldn't handle if they just gave you more time.

that was my frustrations like you know what I'm going to have to just do my own thing I had never been to business school scared to death coming. Okay, I just got to go for it.

Yeah, and I started off just doing home visits and zoom and then I partnered with a nurse anesthetist Maria Pellegrino and she has a business fortify wellness.

So I now see patients at her clinic and have partnered with her as her medical director and it's worked out amazingly. And I can tell you the cure to burnout is listening to your heart and when you do what your hear tells you to do, I love medicine again and I know that I went into the field that was meant to go into.

This is my passion, this is calling. I loved every encounter. And even patients that in the old setting were difficult for me because they were complicated.

Now I see that, well, I have lots of time, so I can spend as much time with you as you have. So I think functional medicine helps us as doctors get to the root of what's really going on with our patients.

And I love how functional is grounded in science. I've always told my patients when they've asked me, what is functional? I'm like, it's applied biochemistry.

So I always loved biochemistry and I thought in medical school this magic was going to happen where they were going take this bio chemistry from year one and apply it to how we practice.

And honestly I didn't see that happen. I agree with that. Instead, we went from, We memorized our biochemistry. We memorize our anatomy and our neuro and how everything works, pathophysiology.

And then we got into residency where we followed people around them. They're like, this is how we do it. This is what the studies say.

Functional Medicine and Root-Cause Care

this Is what? The drug reps are offering us. How we're going to do things. Well, This Is the surgery that, you know, surgery needs to happen. Yeah, they're, these are all the band aids, you know, to sort of interestingly like bypass the biochemistry right or like manipulate it or mess with it instead of staying in what your own body naturally should flow.

Right. We're in here like You know putting dams up in places and rerouting, you know You give it fertilizer and so that's what functional medicine has taught me to do to take that biochemistry from my first year of medical school and say hey What is the thyroid need to thrive?

What toxins are affecting thyroid function, right? What does this 48 year old woman that's starting to have her life fall apart? You have to look at her stressors.

Is she taking care of herself? She's probably taking of aging parents and young kids and not exercising, not eating right. She needs hormone therapy. So now we have time to address all of that, and to adress it for ourselves.

One of my pet peeves too was Physicians that someone goes to their doctor and their doctors tells them to quit smoking and the doctor reeks of cigarettes.

Right? Right. The doctor is clearly not exercising themselves. And so functional medicine also teaches us, I live

what I preach. You know, the self-care is important.

you have to have time to exercise and to sleep enough. Sleep is when, of course, we were taught that our bodies are repairing and healing. So you can't push your body to excess and expect your to stay healthy.

Stress literally can kill us, right? Well, and what happens, residency, like we are working on call every other night. When I was in residency we were probably around the same time was the 80-hour work week actually came out.

My first year was before the eight hour work. Exactly, I like third year during that time. So it was like they finally put this limit that could only work 80 hours, so again, that's the pressure that that you get put on it.

So, you know, when you're thinking about how we take care of our patients, and that's exactly what I was going to say is like, You know when, look at the practitioners that are that, are in this room and in, this space that that.

Are holding on to this functional integrative whatever it is, like you can tell that You, know we got to take, care, of ourselves first and and part of that is right, what good of a doctor are you if you are burnt out.

Right. You're not going to be able to really take care of your patient. And that's what happens is we get in that burnout from so many different reasons.

But then, you know, your brain can't function. So you're just doing the minimal amount that you have to do to get to the next patient and the Next patient, so they're Not getting your time and attention.

Self-Care, Family, and Physician Wellbeing

so you know you have a family right and you actually take care of yourself and then you're happy and not screaming at your kids and frustrated with your husband we all get a little bit but it's definitely better when you've had your time yeah yeah absolutely so.

You know I think that's what we see so often is that we're We're not only doing this to be better doctors for our patients, we're doing it to better humans for ourselves and for families, our friends, colleagues, right?

It allows us time to actually have fun. Children sometimes speak it like it is. A few years ago, my daughter said to me, Mom, your sign is perfect for you.

My sign, the crab, is cancer. And my daughters like, you're a crab! It's perfect! And it's just like wow. How am I behaving? How I am treating my children?

It really made me re-examine what's coming out of my mouth, how am i portraying, and what comes out the heart the mouth speaks, right? So a real introspective time followed that.

Well, tell me a little bit. You were telling me now that we have more time with our patients, you have time for yourself, more for your family, and you somehow have found time to do some new things.

So you're launching something new that I'm sure speaks to your heart and your passion and whatnot. Tell us a bit about that. I launched Way Too Health MD back in 2021. and I'm still seeing patients consulting with functional medicine through that.

So last year I launched Doc BMD. My patients, when I was in primary care, often called me Doc B, so it just kind of stuck in my heart. Yeah, that's fun.

And it was a necessity as the mother of invention kind of thing.

Launching New Wellness Products

I ride horses, I run long distance, and I do this crazy sport no one's heard of called ride and tie where you have two people and one horse and you alternate running and riding for about 30 miles.

Wow. And, it's really fun for crazy people that like trail running, horseback riding, right? And so last summer, I was competing in the World Riding Tide, which was three days of doing this in a row.

And I got to two days in, about 50 miles in of running and riding horses. My skin was just chafed to shreds. I couldn't walk, much less compete the third day.

and I had to drop out of the competition for the 3rd day and i was so upset. i had tried every sports balm and tried to do everything right and still just my skin shredded.

So I came up with my own anti chaffing sport cream. So I've named it way too active sport and it works great. I wish I'd had it last year. Uh, I have also come up with way to active restore, which is for perian postmenopausal women.

So you can apply this balm vaginally two nights per week and restores the vaginal tissue back to the way it was like twenties, pre-kids. Everything gets younger again.

There's none of the itchy, burny stretchiness, this chafiness. That's really been Wonderful. And then the third thing, and you're going to laugh at this, but I was really unhappy with the intimate lubricants available on the market.

As a married woman, I wanted something that I could use just to make things more comfortable because as women go through menopause, things get drier, right?

And so I came up with what I'm calling Summit Foreplay Gel. And it's for men and women, just to make things more comfortable and pleasurable during intimacy.

One of the things I realized, I've been in practice a little over 20 years now, and as people age, they still want to be intimate, but there become these physical barriers to intimacy, a lot of them are on the woman's side, some on man's sides.

So I have come up these products to try to restore intimacy again. That's awesome. So again, we're bringing that connectedness, togetherness. But in the space of let's not add more crazy chemicals, because when you're thinking about the products that you just mentioned, you go to the drugstore and it is just a wreck of not being able to find something that really supports I made every single ingredient be something good for our bodies down to the preservative.

Cause I realized, well, I have to have a preservatives. So I chose silver because silver is naturally anti-fungal, antibacterial, perfect, right?

Where to Find the Products and Closing Remarks

Still good. For us. I'm putting all of my products in glass bottles so that you don't get any plastics absorbing into your product and therefore into our skin.

Definitely pledging that my product is safe and everything I put in it is good and safe for the environment and infinitely recyclable. Pretty excited about it.

So how do we find out more about these products like you've launched? Are they ready to go? This fall so coming soon. I have a website launching docbmd.com We'll be launching this fall right now.

There's just a little hold the site and I'll have Facebook page I will be selling on Facebook and Instagram. We will see you here next year. And then I do have my website for my my current business, which is my way to health.

And that's waytohealthmd.com. The two is the number two. So thank you for your time. I love it, Lisa. Thank you so

much. Thanks for joining us on the Integrative Medicine Roundtable, where practitioners lead.

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We'll see you at the next roundtable.