How Mental Health Influences Fertility Transcript

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Introduction: Mental Health and Fertility

Okay, this Mini Talk is unlike anything that you've ever heard before. And at first, a surface level may rub you the wrong way. But if it is rubbing you the wrong way, instead of getting angry and which I don't blame you for, I want you to just stay centered and try to get curious because I, I think if if you feel any kind of activation or alert with what I'm about to share, then this may be an important thing for you to hear as opposed to something to run away from or to kind of block off from, because you you given to being angry.

I know that's easier said than done, and yet I'm here to help you find the fastest path to your super baby and the fastest path to the solutions you crave.

And you need to live the life of your dreams. And so I'm going to give you the answers, even when it's uncomfortable and even when you might like me less.

That's okay. It's it's not important that you like me. It's important that I help you. So let's talk about this. Let's talk about whether your mental health present and past and or aspects of your personality could be impacting your ability to get pregnant and stay pregnant and have your healthiest baby.

Let me start with the mental health part of it first, and then I'll talk about the personality part and the mental health part. I think is not as prickly as the personality part, but they're equally important.

How Stress and Emotional History Affect Reproduction

So we know from the scientific data that people who experience fertility challenges people who have experienced pregnancy loss, people who are going through IVF, and especially those who've experienced failed IVF, which is a large majority of the people who go through IVF experience IVF failures because success rates are very low, and people who have had pregnancy complications and who have had children with health problems are much more likely to be anxious, anxious, depressed and to experience PTSD, that doesn't really come as a surprise.

I don't think it makes sense to when someone goes through these challenges to have an increased risk of emotional unrest and specifically in the form of depression, anxiety, and post traumatic stress disorder.

Now the question is whether the reverse is also true. Meaning do people who have a history of or a tendency toward mental and emotional health challenges such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, disordered eating, body dysmorphia, and other things have a greater likelihood of having fertility challenges.

Pregnancy complications, and adverse pregnancy outcomes. We don't know the answer to this definitively, but a lot of the observational data that we have at the Fertility and Pregnancy Institute now, over my three decades long career and some studies that we have started to do, some empirical studies suggest that that is true.

And it makes a lot of sense because these emotional and mental health challenges have a very strong impact on the central nervous system and on the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal cortical axis, which is the body's stress response system, which affects directly the thyroid function.

The ovarian function, the same is true, by the way, in males testicular function. And so it's not surprising that people with, tendency toward and history of mental and emotional health challenges would be more likely to have fertility and pregnancy challenges because they have a dysregulated stress response system, which is intimately tied to sex hormones and other aspects of the fertility and pregnancy system.

We believe that that is the case, that people with a tendency toward these mental and physical health challenges also have a tendency toward difficulty getting pregnant and being pregnant, and having a healthy baby.

We have seen this time and time again, so that's the mental health part.

Personality Traits, Stress, and Fertility Risk

So if you've struggled with anxiety or depression or you have symptoms of PTSD from from any number of points in your life span, any number of reasons, then it's, it's, you know, I, I work a lot with academic women.

There are a lot of academic women and lawyers and doctors who have PTSD from their careers and their training, and it could be something like that, or it could be from childhood abuse, so many things.

So if you are someone who has that tendency or that history, that's a really important thing to address before even starting to try to get pregnant. Or if you've been trying and it's not happening, let's pause and address those things.

And by the way, we address these things in tremendous detail in the Primemester Protocol. And also, again, let's talk about our super baby nutraceuticals, because your nutrient status has in your and your microbiome, which is your second genome and your second epigenome, have such a critical impact on your emotional and mental health and balance.

Now let's talk about personality. This is, like I said, the more prickly part of the topic. It's controversial. And but there there are scientific data and we have lots of observational data as well that women with specific personality characteristics seem to be either greater risk for having fertility challenges and pregnancy complications.

A few examples of these personality characteristics include elements of type A personality, especially the anger and hostility and negativity and tendency to see very clearly all that is wrong in the world.

These parts of type A personality specifically seem to be even more correlated, but also the time pressure, aspect of type A personality, because the body's in overdrive, the body's in a state of chronic stress, but anger and hostility also keep the body in an incredible amount of chronic stress.

Related to that, it's very difficult to live in a state of gratitude, in a state of forgiveness. And these two aspects of personality or characteristics tend to be really nurturing and supportive of fertility.

So I already talked to you about type A personality and specific elements of type A personality that seem to increase risk for fertility challenges and and also things like diminished ovarian reserve, low AMH level before it would be expected.

For example. Now another aspect of personality that seems to be linked to accelerated biological aging. Let me say that differently. Another aspect of personality that is seems to be linked to a greater likelihood of fertility challenges and pregnancy complications, and adverse pregnancy and intergenerational health outcomes. And operates through accelerated biological aging is the opposite of optimism.

So someone who's has a mystic, or even someone who might consider themselves just a very realistic person. So the scientific data show us that people who are optimistic are in some ways less realistic than people who are thought of as being pessimistic and and even people who are depressed.

In some cases. And here's here's a feature of the optimistic personality. The optimistic person they view wins as part of their enduring. Characteristics, the thing that the things attributable to them and attributable to aspects of them that are enduring.

And by contrast, they view losses as attributable to things outside of them and things to things that are short term in nature.

Optimism, Biological Aging, and Reproductive Span

So that the reason why this is important because is because it allows the optimistic person to remain optimistic that

the next time will go well, that the next time will be different, or that if things went well this time, that they can expect the next time to be the same or to be even better.

I know because I'm an optimistic person. So this is how an optimistic person sees the world. pessimistic or realistic person sees the world in in the opposite way that wins are short term and outside of them, and losses are enduring and because of who they are in a stable way.

And so therefore can be expected again. And we know that people who are optimistic and who experience joy and positive emotion and accept press a lot of positive emotion, age biologically at a much slower level, and still are living much longer than their realistic or pessimistic counterparts.

And so we think that this slower biological aging is likely to encounter abuse to better fertility. It's shown to be directly related to the likelihood of being married and having a happy marriage.

But more than likely it's related to fertility and pregnancy outcomes as well. And let me give you an example of how this biological aging common denominator impacts both lifespan and fertility.

A study of centenarians showed that women who lived to 100 or older were four times as likely to have had children in their 40s than women who did not live that long.

That just shows you that there is an underlying common denominator of slower biological aging that contributes to both lifespan and reproductive span, or how long someone is able to reproduce naturally.

So just to recap here, if you have a history of mental and or emotional health challenges, or you have aspect of type A personality, or you, have a hard time being optimistic, you tend to be more pessimistic, more realistic.

You don't, experience as much positive emotion or express as much positive emotion, whether it's in your writing on a daily basis, in your speaking, etc., that may be a signal that you have a personality style that is more stressful in the body and more chronically stressful in the body, thereby contributing to faster biological aging, which may increase risk of fertility challenges and pregnancy complications.

And so here's what I want you to know. If that's you and you don't want that to be you, you can change that. You can cultivate optimism. You can cultivate positive emotion, you can cultivate tranquility, and you can cultivate joy.

Changing Habits and Closing Thoughts

And you can do that on a moment to moment basis. And those moments add up over the course of a day, a week, and a life. To make your life and to make your biological age and to make your family.

And we can help you with that if that's something that you want. So again, I know that this topic may have shocked you. Number 1st May have rubbed you the wrong way, but I want you to know if you saw yourself in this talk and you want to see yourself differently, you want to be different in the world for yourself and your family.

That's possible too. So just take stock of what's really there and decide what you want your next step to be and who you want to be. Because I bet that you have a woman of your dreams in your mind, and you can still be her.

All right, I'll see you in the next Mini Talk where we are going to talk about how do I know if I need help getting pregnant? That's a big question. And nobody tells us how to answer that question and when to answer that question.

Or maybe there are some people telling us when, but it's not the right answer. Come in, I'll teach you what it is.