# How Toxins, Metabolism, and Relationships Shape Brain Health Transcript

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## Introduction and Speaker Background

Hello and welcome back to the Reversing Alzheimer's 2.0 summit. I'm one of your host, James Maskell, and I'm super excited to have Doctor Molly Maloof as one of our new presenters.

Doctor Maloof is a longevity physician and has, lectures all over the country, actually all over the world on topics very near and dear to the hearts of anyone listening, and has some incredible information to share with you today, not only about her own journey, but also about the psychosocial aspects of health and what it takes to avoid and prevent and reverse cognitive decline.

So, Doctor Maloof, welcome to the summit. Thanks for having me. So before we get into what you lecture on, I'd love for you to share a little bit about your actual personal experience, because the people who are listening to this are caregivers or people with cognitive decline are people looking to avoid cognitive decline.

And I think you have a pretty interesting story to, to share about your own experience with understanding the root causes of your own, brain fog. Sure. Well, I would I wouldn't call it really.

Brain fog was what I was experiencing. I was actually experiencing memory loss and I, was really excited when I heard about this company called True Neuro, because I was able to learn about which labs I needed to order to check and find out what was actually going wrong with my health.

And the craziest thing about this journey is that I feel like if it can happen to me, then it can happen to anybody, because I literally, am a doctor that focus on concierge medicine and health optimization for a living.

So when I get sick, it's pretty scary because I take really, really good care of my body. And one of the things that I realized I was doing to be healthy, which was eat dark chocolate and get fish from the farmer's market.

## Personal Toxicity and Memory Loss

It turns out that these were giving me cadmium and mercury toxicity, and I wasn't excreting these effectively, because I also had mold exposure and the washing machine that I was using in the house, I was living in developed a ton of mold and saw all the all the clothing and, and sheets and towels were coming out smelling bad.

And this can happen to anyone if you're wearing these things, if you're sleeping on these things, if you're toweling off with these things, you're getting exposed to mold toxins.

So I basically discovered all of these things on labs. The biggest things that were that were abnormal were low lithium, high metals and high mold toxicity.

And so I was able to at least create a plan for healing myself. And, I did a round of 40 days of free release and which made a major difference in my brain function.

I changed my diet. I'm now collaborating with the company C topia to focus on promoting mercury tested fish for people that you can get high quality fish, but it's just going to take some effort to source it properly.

So I've gotten really smart about sourcing. I figured out I need to get, you know, chocolate from sources that are tested for heavy metals. And it just made me realize, like how hard it is to be healthy in this world we're living in.

And as a person with a family history of Alzheimer's, my grandfather had Alzheimer's. I don't want to get that. And so catching these things early is really, really crucial for your health.

Absolutely. I mean, ultimately, you know, with levels like that, had you not discovered this, what would the journey of pathology look like over the next five years say?

Well, I mean, I, I think, the scary thing is, is things kind of continue to decline. I mean, you've heard of the Mad Hatter syndrome, right? Like you can literally lose your mind if you're not careful with mercury toxicity.

It does cause brain fog. My boyfriend was experiencing brain fog and discovered he was high in mercury. We were eating the same things. So without detoxification, which a lot of people don't in mainstream medicine don't even take seriously, I probably would have continued to notice a decline in my mental functioning, but also my kidneys were I was starting to worry that I was having kidney issues because I was having loss of protein, which I thought was due to the fact that I have celiac disease.

But it's very possible I was losing protein in my urine. So, you know, it's it's of it's kind of a systemic problem to have toxicity in general, any toxins in your body.

And we live in a very toxic world. So, you know, I'm really grateful for this new knowledge. And I don't think I would have tested it if I hadn't have heard about, essentially, the approach that true neuro takes, which is a very functional approach to healing, which I think can be applied to a lot of different conditions besides cognitive decline.

But, you know, anybody with a family history of Alzheimer's has to be extra careful, and taking care of their brain. And I think brain span is just as important as housebound.

So it's it's our cognition as we age is crucial. Fortunately, I was able to maintain my work and maintain, you know, enough functioning. But genuinely noticing a memory issue.

And it's been it's been really helpful to start the detox process because I've noticed my memory is getting better. Wonderful. Well, look, great lessons here.

And throughout this summit you're going to learn from leaders in, in, toxins and bio toxins and here at trainer as well. Like, Doctor Burke has been at the forefront of making it easy for clinicians to practice this type of medicine.

So we're grateful for the opportunity to, you know, to, to support and like you said, if it can happen to you, it's happening to people around the country and around the world.

And this is a huge and growing problem, and that's why we're here. I'm so glad that you are championing everywhere you go, because I feel like we're on the same wavelength here.

When I wrote my book, The Community Cure, it was really an understanding that, you know, that the community had to be part of the cure in medicine. Right?

And ultimately, you gave an amazing lecture last year that really showcased your deep dive into understanding the role of, dare I say, like love and health, belonging and mitochondrial health.

So take us through, like how you ended up learning about all of this. And what are the takeaways for someone who is looking to avoid cognitive decline, looking to live a long and healthy life, looking to extend that brain span?

## Social Connection and Longevity

Well, it turns out that researchers at Northwestern University were examining a group of people known as super agers, and they were people 80 and older who had the same memory ability as someone 20 to 30 years younger than than their age.

And they found that it wasn't a magic diet, it wasn't an exercise regimen. It was literally how they viewed the importance of social connection. So this is from Sandra Weintraub.

Her research and basically the key finding was that robust social engagement is a key product factor against age related cognitive decline. And this is a very powerful non-pharmacological strategy that anyone can employ.

Unfortunately, a lot of people are not aware of the importance of social connection. And since the pandemic, we've become increasingly more isolated. And I think this is why we're seeing so many diseases of despair and just these skyrocketing mental illness rates.

It's because we're not designed to be isolated animals. We evolved to be pack animals. We evolved to have a tribe around us. And so by living alone and by being alone, we're actually doing our brains a major disservice.

And our brains learn through interaction with other people. We are constantly exchanging information. We're exchanging, you know, so much is going on and an interaction with a person.

You're exchanging energy, you're exchanging oxytocin. When you get a hug from someone that you really care about. Oxytocin is known as the bonding hormone.

It's known as the hormone of attachment. It's also known as a hormone of longevity because it is very much linked to lower levels of inflammation in the body, lower oxidative stress in the body, longer telomeres.

And it's just very protective to mitochondria and very protective to heart health, which we know if you have mitochondrial dysfunction or heart disease, those are some of the biggest killers.

And so I basically decided I was going to go really deep on this topic because I wanted to understand what what is love? How do you measure it? How do you improve it?

And that led me to this woman, Sue Carter and Helen Fisher, these luminaries. Unfortunately, Helen Fisher passed away, but they were two of the most cited women on the science of love.

And I realized that this was the missing link in the longevity conversation. We're so focused on. Supplements, were so focused on fitness, we're so focused on all the things that we're doing to our bodies, and we're forgetting the thing that actually gives us life.

And it's it's human connection and it's crucial. And you can also get connection from like, having pets. Pets are a great source of oxytocin. They're a really great, substitute.

I think it's really, really important for people who are isolated to have pets, because pets are a great way to get a certain amount of oxytocin naturally, but I think there's really no substitute for having a strong social network and a community around you.

And I think it gets harder as people age to make friends. But it's very like much a matter of learning to get a little uncomfortable with discomfort. Because if you're especially if you're out of shape of building a community, it can be really overwhelming to make friends.

But it really comes down to establishing a sense of safety and trust with those that you care about. And when you are hyper isolated over many days, two months, two years, what it does to your brain is actually creates a heightened sense of maladaptive.

It's called maladaptive social cognition. And so it's a heightened sense of criticism. So it would have been heightened pain signals for danger in primitive times if you were on the outskirts of your community and were sensing that you were isolated.

But in modern times, it's unfortunately a backfiring condition, because if you are isolated and then you go experience a negative social interaction, you're more sensitive to future negative social interactions just by the nature of being isolated.

So we have to understand that our brains can work other. It's all it's all in an effort of adaptation. But we live in new societies we live in. We don't live in tribes anymore the way that we didn't.

And, you know, primitive times. So we just have to understand how our brains work so we can overcome these challenges and rebuild our communities and rebuild our health.

Yeah. That's wonderful. I think that's so critical. What would be your recommendations? Because obviously, you know, one of the things about any chronic illness is it can be isolating, right?

Because you eat differently than other people. You have to live differently. And then particularly with cognitive decline, it can make it more tricky.

And ultimately a lot of times, you know, if you look at the patients that are able to reverse that cognitive decline, typically there is a key relationship like a spouse or a child, that is like helping them, that this patient get over the hump because it's hard for but to do all this new stuff.

Modeling. What are some of your recommendations in that space? Because ultimately it actually seems like, you know, in the study, that doctor back just recently published on but they were able to reverse pretty consistently cognitive decline.

One of the things that you had to have in order to be in the study was a key, you know, connected like a child or a spouse who's going to support you through the journey.

And so I wonder, to what degree is that supported or to what degree is that actually the psychosocial element kicking in? Well, I think healing is all healing is relational and is really, really, really, really, really hard to heal if you're alone.

I have to say it. It's just you need help. I mean, it's hard to have chronic illness. So the reality is, is this is why we have an entire industry of caregivers, right?

Like there's there's a need for this. But I mean, for those for those people who don't have support, you know, reaching out to family and friends is something that maybe they haven't tried.

You really should first and foremost, reach out to the people that you already know in your community, but also finding people who are also similarly going through your same challenges can be really helpful.

There's online support groups. The key thing being you want to be in a support group that doesn't that basically is is focused on getting out of the cycle of chronic illness versus staying in the cycle of chronic illness.

So a lot of these communities get you stuck in that cycle because you now identify as a person who's sick. But, I actually signed up for a program called the Gupta program, which was really game changing.

And you can find a Gupta coach for very affordably. I found a coach for like 100 and $100 an hour. And the Gupta program was really useful for me because it was able to help me, basically realize when my brain is going into, the path of I am sick versus the path that I am well and you literally have to actively shift your brain when you have a symptom.

## Trust, Community, and Support Systems

And a thought that's negative is to actively, like, retrain your brain to have an awareness that you know how to heal. And that takes practice. And I had to learn that with my coach.

So hiring a health coach that is, well, is there not that expensive? Health coaching is not that expensive. Like I might be a very expensive version of one, but there are way more affordable versions of health coaches out there.

And if I can benefit from a health coach being a health coach, that means there's something to it. There's something to having a person that you can talk to that will keep you motor and keep you focused on your healing path, even if it's not your family or your child.

And so I would highly recommend joining one of these communities like Primal Trust, like, you know, the Gupta program where, Diana trusts a program that has a community component where you can interact with people that are decidedly moving towards health because if you just join some random online community for people who are sick, you might end up in the spiral of like, we're all sick, we're never going to get well.

So that's one of the big pieces of advice I would I would make is like, part of this is that is is a a way of thinking, and part of this is all the things that you do for your health physically.

Yeah. Well, one of the things that I think is that if you get that right community, not only does it solve that, that connection piece, but actually it's the structure by which you actually execute on the things that you know that you have to do outside of that, like doing the health.

Yeah, maybe, as you mentioned, trust earlier. What, what are some of the key things that you think help accelerate trust creation in relationships so that it can really soothe and value to someone's health?

I think being a person of your word, having integrity, those are really crucial. So when you say you're going to do something, you should do it. Otherwise people will learn that your word doesn't mean anything.

And that's unfortunately going to lead people not to trust you. So being a person that can be trustworthy is something that is worth examining. And then I would also say, you know, one of the things that I think built trust that in my career was when I was just like, really helpful to people.

So the more helpful you are to others, the more they want to help you, and the more they trust that you're the kind of person who will show up for them, the more likely they're going to show up for you.

So there's a lot of reciprocity in relationships. There's a lot of mirror neurons in relationships. So when you're with the person and you're like in person with them, mirroring their body language is actually going to send the signals that they are like, you're responding to their to their presentation and you're like, you're picking up on their signals.

They're picking up on your signals. So it is definitely something to be thinking about in terms of like how you're how you're holding yourself in conversation matters.

If you're like this, you're like going to look physically like you're closed off. But if you're open and you're like your body language says, I'm open and I'm here to trust and to talk and to be available.

That changes the conversation, right? So just the way that you carry yourself physically can change your body language can actually change the way a person feels around you and then matching your tone to another person.

If I'm a very loud, but if someone is very quiet, then I will quiet down, right? And it helps to like just recognize that we're all just looking for signals of is this person trustworthy?

Is this person safe? And so a lot of it comes down to actions, comes down to words, comes down to body language, comes down to communication. I would say not judging people based on their electronic communication and spending more time in person because like electronic communication, we're all overwhelmed by we're all overwhelmed by the number of emails and text messages.

And and, you know, the level of online communication is really hard to track. But there's but like, if you really want to get Ahold of someone, like, call them up and just like, keep trying, don't prejudge a person's lack of response to that.

They don't want to be your friend or be available because I think everybody is overwhelmed by electronic

communication these days. So the more that you can set up in-person time to meet with people, the better off you're going to be for building trust in your community.

Wonderful. Well, I've certainly found that from our relationship and getting spend more time together more recently, it's been wonderful to, you know, to be able to be, whether it be at the functional forum or when.

See you in, different conferences. I feel like, you know, that's that's affecting me in the way that, we connect and I so I fertilize that directly. And.

Yeah, I think that's really critical. I mean, I guess final thoughts on just reversing Alzheimer's and what it takes to actually do this, given that, like, there are these, what would you say there are these biochemical elements that you've experienced now, the psychosocial literature that you're familiar with, what are your your thoughts for people who are listening to this, who are like, this is overwhelming.

I just need someone to tell me what to do. What should I focus on? I mean, the number one thing I will tell all people to focus on, aside from obviously the thing I just mentioned, which is relationships, because that will determine how you eat, how you sleep, how you exercise, how you how you manage stress is how how you manage your metabolism.

So a lot of Alzheimer's disease is a metabolic disease, right? And a lot of what's underneath heart disease, cancer, diabetes and dementia is insulin resistance.

So one of the key hallmarks of aging is nutrient, sense, the dysregulation of nutrient sensing. So what does that mean. That means the inability to gearshift between fat and carb metabolism.

So I train I train all of my patients on how to properly manage their blood sugar. So that's a lot of like lifestyle related optimization. But there's some new things that I've just learned about that I guess some things I have learned about, some things that are not new to me, but, you know, you can managed insulin resistance to lifestyle.

You can also manage it through keys. And I think don't underestimate the power of GLP is for preventing Alzheimer's disease, especially for me. From the microdosing perspective, I think they are demonized a lot in the functional world, and they're extraordinary medicines.

And if you use them properly and safely, they can be game changing. For someone with insulin resistance on top of that, I recently started learning about novel ways of drug delivery, and there's some research being done from a company called Curve Therapeutics.

## Metabolic Health and Reversing Cognitive Decline

Q RV and they have been working with doctors on atomization with their device of insulin for people with cognitive decline. So what they're finding is that there's a lot of insulin resistance in the brain.

So what they do is they're atomizing the insulin into the brain and discovering it's actually improving cognition for these individuals. So I'm I'm just like kind of learning about that.

That's kind of cutting edge. But I would say it's very, very important to majorly, majorly optimize your blood sugar, which means your metabolic health.

So I wrote a book called Spark Factor, and it's all about optimizing metabolic health. It's really branded as a book for biohacking for women, but anybody can read it because a lot of the core principles and the metabolism chapters are literally applicable to everyone.

And there's also a really good book by Ben Beckman called Why We Get Sick. But one of the problems I have with a lot of these modern books on insulin resistance is they almost, almost always recommend ketosis, which I think is a fantastic diet, but not necessarily going to work for everybody.

And so one of the kind of dietary strategies I like to employ is carb cycling and metabolic flexibility training, which isn't nearly as restrictive as ketosis.

I think ketosis is really important. If someone's already experienced pretty rapid cognitive decline and they need to make a major reversal, if you're like young and healthy ish or starting to discover that you have some insulin issues, you may not need to go straight into ketosis.

There's some, you know, challenges with ketogenic diets for some people. So there's a company called The Faster Way to Fat Loss. And I really like Amanda Truss's work.

One of the first things you need to do to optimize insulin sensitivity is weight loss and fat loss and metabolic flexibility. Training is hard to learn.

She's really made it easy to learn. It's very cheap program. I'm out a rep there. I just like it. And I tell people about it and it's it's actually where I learned a lot about the nutritional strategies which can be taught.

But learning how to cook that way, you know, they give you all these recipes, they give you lots of things to learn. And then also fitness is really crucial because your muscles are essentially the sinks for glucose.

So I'm watching family members lose their muscle mass over time. And I'm really concerned about their blood sugar going up because I'm seeing a direct link with muscle mass loss over, over, you know, aging and then the loss of glycemic control.

So you really have to build muscle. It's crucial. It's difficult. It takes effort. You have to eat a lot of protein. You have to lift weights. You have to send the signal and provide the substrate to build.

And that's something you got to do when you're young, because it gets really gets harder and harder as you get older. Once you hit 65, you need 1.6g/kg of protein to maintain muscle.

If not, build it, which is very difficult to eat that much food. So, I would just say prevention is the key here, but there are ways to reverse cognitive decline when you're older, and it's a multifactorial process.

The last thing I'll say is cell membrane health. You know, like if you want optimal metabolic health, you have to know optimal cell membrane health. So I do get most of my clients now, I have the measure of their cell membranes and their mitochondrial function from companies like program and me screen.

And those are really new cool tests that you can do that can give you an idea if your fatty acids are imbalanced, if your metabolism is is out of whack.

And then from there you can do a lot about fixing it. Beautiful. Doctor Miller, thank you so much for sharing your wisdom here. I know that everyone who is, tuned in is now really understanding some of the root causes of cognitive decline, understanding what to do about it, and really understanding what I think is the key issue, which is getting a group of people together that are going to help you on that journey.

And ultimately, one of the things I'm excited about is to see these kind of ideas roll out in places where community already exists, because I think that's a great way to supercharge that.

So if you're listening to this and you live in senior living, or if you're in a place where you can, you're part of a church, you know, those are the kind of communities where this can be, like really potentiated because the community still exist.

So share it with, share it with people in your community. Share this. Invite them to this session with Doctor Maloof. I'm sure everyone would learn a lot from it.

Thank you so much for sharing. Please go out and check out Doctor Willows Books and our practice. And thanks

so much for being part of the Reversing Alzheimer's Summit.

Thank you.