Mind-Body Medicine: How Trauma Physically Affects the Body and Brain Transcript

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Introduction to trauma and healing

Today we're going to talk about my favorite topic of all time for the brain. And it's stuff that people avoid talking about because there's a stigma to it.

And that's how experiences and trauma actually shape our physical brain and our physical body. And the person who really introduced me into that world is who I'm interviewing today.

It's Jenny Marino. I'm going to have her introduce herself in a second. But before we go, before I introduce yourself, I kind of want to. I just want to put it out there.

How? This trauma, this this experience of trauma, really, dictates our basic being. So whenever I started, looking into integrative health and functional medicine and lifestyle medicine, there was always a lot of discussion around diet and nutrition and supplementation.

Right. This, this deficiency, this deficiency, that. Right. And, and after practicing medicine for a few years, I realized that's really not the way that we should really reduce diseases to just deficiencies.

It doesn't matter what book you're in, because even after those deficiencies are corrected, healing may not occur at all. In fact, that's true for more than half the cases.

And so, you know, and that's really concerning. And so, Jenny here, started, with me at Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine to the 2019 Jenny through 19 as a 1990.

Yeah. And all of a sudden, we were seeing transformations like we've never seen before in the practice because, we, we started talking about this thing called mind body medicine, which is a really foreign concept to me at that time.

But now is the foundation of, of our practice here at Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine. And, and we I started really digging into what made people heal is that a specific diet is a vegan, is a paleo is it a combination?

Is what is it right. Is it a specific supplements, a B vitamins? Is it ashwagandha or some fancy herbs? Or is a CBD like what is? And so we just took a look at all the data across the board, especially the ones that we collect outside of Texas Center for Lifestyle Medicine.

The biggest factor in people healing was the recognition of experience. And that experience come from trauma. So we we, we have in our lives. And by the way, every person has trauma.

It's not like, oh, I have an ax from we are we're actually built upon trauma. Trauma is actually not necessarily a bad thing. It could be a good thing.

And so when people sort of recognizing that, there's a lot of things that we realize that we've never dealt with in our lives because we're taught to just keep going, go, go, go, go, go, and then have blinders on, you know.

And that's exactly that's exactly my story, really, in the healthcare industry, just like blinders just go, you know, and then and then you just kind of poof out after a while. Yes.

And so when we looked at that data in 2019, we noticed that the biggest factors for people improving or worsening in their health is not food. And it's not lifestyle, it's events, a marriage or a divorce or death of a member.

Right. Something that was really outside of our clinical control. And then we're seeing like miraculous thing happen, even though it came from quote unquote, a bad event.

Maybe someone passing away all of a sudden there was healing on top of that. Right? So something allowed the person to change from a fundamental existence and the identity of a person actually changed.

So someone was taking care of their parents, for example. Their identity as a caregiver can start going away. They can finally start focusing on themselves.

And then all of a sudden, you see, we see these labs are improving. Cholesterol start coming down, autoimmune antibody starts coming down. Thyroid medicines are no longer needed.

And I'm not saying these are the typical cases, but I'm saying that these are really common factors in disease states that move the most within our organization.

And so when we switch the order around of addressing trauma first, that's where things starts healing. And it doesn't matter if someone has, you know, chronic sinus issues or dental infections or, or anything like that.

Because whenever we treat with antibiotics and medications, there's still long term effects. But the way that we actually scales through our immune system, our immune system is controlled by our mind.

Our mind is controlled by our belief systems. Our belief systems are controlled by our subconscious state. And then when I tie all that together, it becomes something beautiful.

So this is the reason I have Jenny on here. And I'm excited to talk to you, Jenny. And we talk pretty much every day, but, I'm excited to talk to you and really share with the public on our discoveries and as well as the world on what healing can really mean.

Ready, Jenny? Yes. I am so excited to talk about this with you too, doctor. Thank you so, I want you to talk about your background for a second, like now.

You didn't you didn't start doing my body medicine. You did something really different and really cool, in my view. Yeah. So let's talk about what you did before and how you transitioned to mind body medicine.

So my original profession, I was an aerospace engineer. I was working for NASA for 14 years. That in itself right there, I've seen so much in this world when I was there for 14 years, which really is the catalyst for why I became an FDA practitioner.

You know, I started going into nutrition, but that world shaped my thinking. I saw a lot of my colleagues get taken by metabolic metabolic disease states like cancer, diabetes, pretty common in my industry, you know, lots of fight or flight.

So for 14 years, I was basically a software engineer and I use that tool and that skill in understanding the brain and the human anatomy and all of the neurochemical connections that we have.

Okay. And, I have my own story that led me to, eventually go into functional nutrition because I have my own health conditions, too. Doctor one, you know, I grew up in the Philippines.

I, my onset of autoimmune condition known as vitiligo, started when I was 13, 14. I was in the Philippines. And it's all about fight or flight in my country.

Jenny's background at NASA and functional nutrition

And I know we're sister countries and I know you understand, and we talk about this a lot. It's all about fight or flight survivability in my country.

And my family is all about, alert, being alert. Okay. And part of my experience back home is, you know, seeing things in my environment that scared me, that put a lot of fear and not being able to talk to somebody about that and how to regulate back and how do I return to a state of, you know, calm and peace?

You know, I remember seeing someone got shot in the head and I just it's not just me. The whole family saw that and we didn't talk about it. Nobody addressed that situation.

And I recall that affected my sleep. I had nightmares for two weeks, and one of my symptoms as well is digestive. I was not able to use the bathroom for two weeks, so this incorporating all of these experiences that I have growing up led me into really my love and fascination for helping people heal from suffering.

You know, here from their trauma. Because that is a huge chunk of my story today. How did I heal? Right. Because I became a functional version after I decided in 2014 that I'm going to go ahead and leave engineering and become, a health coach, a functional diagnostic nutrition coaching, which is mainly just hitting on diet and exercise, which is great.

We still need that very important component in, in healing, right? But I have noticed too, as soon as I got into that world of health coaching, I started getting clients in their healing to some point, their healing to a degree.

But something is missing. Yeah, there's a blog, there's black, and I couldn't understand where that block is right now. I stuck with me being an engineer.

I gotta geek out on that. I got to know more. I got to figure out more. Well, well. So the universe started putting me in this path. I had my own trauma when I came here.

How I got into my body medicine is because of my own marital trauma. You know, I was in that situation. Divorce, separation. And I recall not being able to adjust and adapt to that situation.

I didn't, I felt stuck, which is what a lot of our patients feel, you know, and I really it scared the heck out of me because I did not know how to cope.

And so that in 2016 led me to study Mind-Body medicine. This is where there is enough, you know, intelligence inside of me that told me you need to stop going to the gym.

I was going to the gym about 6 or 7 days out of the week. I was pumping some iron, lifting heavy, but I wasn't happy. Doctor on, you know, I was I was actually having a lot of pain.

But at the same time, also with my minimal thinking about health, at that time, I didn't know enough what really makes a person healthy. My sleep was lacking.

I was only sleeping 2 to 3 hours each night because of my situation at home, who was highly volatile. There's a lot of abuse in physical and mental abuse that's going on in my home life at that time.

So it was it was affecting my health. It was affecting my brain because I can't sleep. I was worried awake at night. So my circadian rhythm is off. Was off at that time.

And when I'm not able to sleep, I found it very hard to focus, you know? So I decided that. Okay, I'm going to take away my membership, my gym membership.

I stopped that and I started looking for some mind body medicine tools. I just happened to be looking online on how to really get some peace. My whole body was was just, you know, hard.

I was carrying a lot of tension in the body. And so I decided at this point, by this point, you already studied functional nutrition, right? You've done that already, right?

That's right guys, you've done the nutrition priority. And now I was like, well, what the hell was missing? Right? Yes. And so going back to your original story about how you know, received some trauma in the Philippines, watching someone pass away or get shot in the head, there's always this idea of somebody got shot in the head.

Yeah. So, you know, there's there's no sense of safety there. So you developed basically not being able to move your bowels for two weeks. That's what you said, right? Yes.

Now this is important because, a lot of people have that memory and they suppress it. And some people don't remember it. And then they asked for like 20 constipation, and then they get diagnosed with all sorts of things.

They get diagnosed of Sibo, which is small intestinal bacterial overgrowth. They get diagnosed with fungal overgrowth or Candida in the gut. And they're told that all you got to do is go on this elimination diet, and then get some exercise, get some hydration, do some detoxes, and you'll be good.

But in reality that's, that's that you'll never get to the 100% if you don't understand, like what caused the situation in the first place, a lot of people have it locked away in a subconscious.

And so how now the how to let's talk about how the brain actually stocked your bowels. And this is interesting. And we're going to get into this the poly vagal theory.

Yeah. Yes. The system. So just real quick and I'll let you kind of finish your, your story. And then we can dive into the next next chapter. Yeah. But real simple for people who are listening.

The brain is so powerful. It creates symptoms. It creates symptoms very easily. And I'll tell you how. So you perceive a trauma. Your sense of safety and security is completely ripped away from you.

You're conscious mind was blocked at events. Okay? And then your subconscious mind will come. Will, will basically create tension in your neck. You read a lot shallower.

The blood flow to your brain literally decreases the blood brain barrier. Starts being more permeable. We call this leaky brain phenomenon. That's, that's another part of the summit, doctor Titus to, function neurologists.

And then what happens is that our muscles here get so tense. We're always like this, and then our neck barely move. Our breathing is less or oxygenation is less.

So what happens is the body naturally adapts because the body's thinks, hey, you, you're in fight or flight. And therefore we must create systems that are in fight or flight.

Your your stress hormone goes up and the blood flow goes away from your organs of healing, like your gut in your liver, and it gets pumped towards cysts, to allow fight or flight like your adrenal glands and then your, your brain stem, all these things that are necessary there.

And it gets away from other parts of the brain that retain memory, that retain attention because you don't need that. That's a fight or flight. And like forget long term memory, right?

Forget even short term memory. All you know is that you either take somebody or need to run away. That's sort of that fight or flight. And then the so the gut doesn't get enough blood flow.

Right. And so even if you clean up all your diet and if you have conscious or subconscious trauma that's there, which most of us do, then it's impossible for the gut to heal.

Now, nowadays, a lot of you go to doctors like, hey, you know what? I was diagnosed with bacterial overgrowth or what's the bacterial overgrowth? Is a pathologic sort of not really.

Bacterial overgrowth is the bacteria is trying to protect you. There's bacteria that come. It's recruited into the small

bowel that's not supposed to be there.

And that your body uses it to stun. So these bacteria can produce gas such as methane. And the man's job is to stun your gut to keep it in freezing and hibernation mode.

So all the blood flow can divert away to your to your persistent fight or flight. Right. And when that happens, of course, we're going to be constipated.

And we call constipation something that's pathologic. But in reality it's a manifestation. What's going on. So that traumatic event has a huge physiologic effect on the body right.

Sometimes. And sometimes that causes nighttime urination. You can actually urinate the bed. Kids urinate the bed after traumatic events. Right. Because your body's just trying to like give it a fluid so they can fight.

Right. And so that really occurs as well. And so all these different things that we're talking about in mind body medicine, we can't consider a psychological or versus physical.

It's all one system. Yes. So I'll have you kind of continue your story after that. And where you left off was really discover a lot. So you did your PhD, which is, functional.

Was it functional diagnostic nutritionist. Actual diagnostic nutrition. Yes. And I graduated in 2015. You graduate graduated. You were super smart. You knew all the whole elimination diet.

Got it? I tell people, do like the back of your hand or something was still missing. Right? So now you you just scratch the surface of mind body medicine.

So what did you do to that? So after that, like I said, I went through my own traumatic experience and coming to the US, you know, relationships. And I encountered some more trauma from that.

Personal trauma and the turn to mind-body medicine

And this is when I decided, you know, I'm going to jump into my body medicine. I didn't even know it was called that. I was just looking for something that will help me relax.

Doctor. So type in qigong. I tried to look for those classes in Houston, and one of them is also breathing. Breathing is necessary in order to move the body, and very important in teaching qigong.

In fact, that is one of the pillars in tai chi and mind body exercises. So a little by little I geeked out on this. This is what I did every single day while I was going through that traumatic event, and the effects of that trauma, even after I extract extracted myself from the situation.

So the separation and eventually the my, my divorce. So I'm being vulnerable here. But in order for you, Carnival. Thank you for that. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

So it's my pleasure. And, when I, when this was all happening in my life, I made a commitment that year. And that is, I'm going to reflect back to that.

I'm committed to basically reaching every single person that needed help or probably suffering in the same way that I was, you know, one way or another.

I don't know how to do that, but that's what I intended to do. And so in order for me to refocus my attention to that, that is my big mission in life.

That's my vision. This is this is my purpose. I had to have a purpose. I wanted to have meaning in my life. I need to be able to train myself to refocus because a lot of my unhealthy patterns from childhood was coming up all of that

was challenged, you know, in in trauma state got to run when something like that happens, divorce or whatnot, separation loss or death of a loved one, it challenges and it shatters our belief systems.

It challenges our identity. It challenged our construct of what we know and what we believe in. That's what I was challenged. I was challenged that year.

Everything that I was hanging on to about who I am, right? It shattered in front of me. So now I have to assume, know a different identity. Who is Jenny now without her former husband?

Right. I was living my life through him. But what does Jenny want now? So I had to assume a new identity. And in order for me to do that, I had to constantly train my brain to refocus.

How did I do that? Through take she and she goes on meditation, basically mind body medicine tools that will help me regulate my body down, meaning relax the body, come out of fighter flight, help my body feel safe and secure again.

And that's a consistent thing that I've got to do because my mind is there. My mind keeps talking to me. You're good enough, Jenny. How are you going to do this on your own without your ex-husband?

Right? All of these things, you're being challenged by your mind. But we have a brilliant mind. We do. We have this incredible mind. But we cannot. We cannot believe everything that our mind tells us, right?

Because that emotion is going to be triggered when we believe, when we interpret things of, of, the event that impacted us. Okay. So I have to consciously take an interruption.

I have to consciously be aware of where my mind is going. And the only way to do that is to slow down. So how do we slow down right now that we understand our anatomy, our physiology?

The breathing becomes fast when we go into fight or flight. It becomes short and rapid. Right? And you may also notice that your thinking goes along with that thinking fast, right?

We're very impulsive and reactive. That's the sympathetic state, you know, fight or flight. So I've got to be able to slow and train my nervous system to slow down.

Why? Because I need to be able to communicate better. I need to refocus. I need to go back on my path. I need to make sure that I'm in alignment with my vision and my goals at that time, no matter what the situation was, resiliency is basically what I'm talking about.

You know, this reminds me, of a book, Atomic Habits, one of the best books I've ever read. I always go back to the book and really don't read books more than twice.

But this one, as I always goes back and I utilize a lot of these, especially in medical practice. And the most impactful thing that James Clear was the author of Atomic Habits, wrote and demonstrated in his book, is basically we have three elements to us.

So if you imagine us like a, like a sphere in the inner core, we have our identity. And right outside of that we have the our processes. And right outside of that, we have our outcomes.

Now, most people, even doctors, they start with the outcomes get your cholesterol down, get your blood sugars down. You can detox the liver. You can, you know, going on elimination diet and clear the Candida or whatever it is. Right.

So these are these are outcomes. So the outcomes could be feeling better sort of. Or it could be a number or it could be some objective outcome that's there. Now the the real medicine is not an outcomes that go deeper.

So just be just below your outcomes. You have the process series right. So you know, one of my favorite questions to ask people to know their process is and to know them is what are the first three things you do when you out of bed?

And then let me say, okay, I brush my teeth. I go downstairs and I check. I checked, my, my emails, the internet and stuff like that. And maybe I play on the phone for a couple minutes.

I'm like, okay, well, what are the last three things you do before you go to sleep? Well, what's on TV? I eat some food and I get a snack here and there, do some water and and go to bed.

Now, this is someone's process, right? Their process of brushing their teeth. Like, why would someone brush their teeth? Because not everyone wants their teeth.

And why would someone. Where did they learn that behavior? Yes. Right. Why would someone, why would someone watch TV? Because that's not genetics. We didn't have TV generations ago, right?

These are sort of learned behaviors. We learned values. So, for example, some people say, I make sure all the doors are locked, all my windows are locked before I go to bed.

I was like, oh, okay, that's a process. No, I don't do that. Why why would you do that? Did something happen when you were younger? I was like, no, maybe I just saw my parents do it and okay, let's talk about that.

Right. And so all different things are processes and these are the and what happens that they seem so benign. But they actually show us a lot about our values and what we do.

So this person who lost their doors and windows to make sure everything's safe, safety is like the number one thing before bed, because perhaps they don't feel they didn't feel safe at that time somewhere before.

Right. And so another person may be like, you know what, Sunday, I like I make sure that, all my, all the things I wear throughout the week are nice and nice and hung up so I could be, like, really quick and just just leave it. I just get get up door right.

And so what did you learn that from? A lot of these processes are the construct of what we do. Correct. But the processes aren't enough to know. We have to know the very inner circle which is the identity.

So another, another sort of processing may be like, oh, you know, I'm vegan or paleo and this is what I eat. You know, I've seen, I've seen, you know, read books.

So this is, this is great for me. And so. Okay, well, that's a process. But what about your identity like, like what about that makes you go towards that direction? Like, what books did you read?

You know, so I read X, Y and Z book and this person seems to, to know what they're talking about. And I'm going to adhere to this specific set of structures.

Okay. And so the part of the identity is the value of someone with a structure with perhaps have some sort of solution. Right. But this solution may not necessarily be the best for the person at the time.

It's really for practitioners to figure out, but the identity is the person who's always looking for for something. And one of the things that I ask people is, what is the one question you ask yourself every day for me is, how can I make this better?

You know, for some other people is how can I be loved? Actually, that's for a lot of people, right? For some people is like, how do I how do I, I deserve today?

Most people ask that question, how do I deserve today? And that question is part of that identity. And what

happens is this this lets us know very fully into that identity, turn into processes that create a disease state, whether that be Alzheimer's and Parkinson's or cancer or autoimmune disorders or leaky gut or whatever it is.

Right. And so and so this is where all the diagnosis, diagnostic states kind of go out the window and kind of go deeper into the mind body maps. And so this practicing this type of medicine has allowed us to get through the patients, as you know, because we see these same patients every day to get to a place where I never thought they could really, really get to before.

Yeah. But now I realize everyone has unlimited potential. Once you honor the mind body portion of the disease thing. Yeah. And honoring those life experiences and, and one of the things that I actually encourage our patients at the clinic to ask a question after they get up in the morning and for actually after they wake up from their restful state.

Doctor run is what is one kind thing you can do to take care of yourself today is a very good intention because a lot of them are caregivers. A lot of our patients are caregivers, and they're tied to someone else's schedule.

They're giving a lot of their energy on other people except for themselves. And again, this goes back to their belief system. You know, they have been probably it's mostly female patients.

How trauma affects the nervous system and gut

A lot of our female patients taught to be altruistic, you know, sacrificial giving all of their all of their all for other people in the name of love, you know, but they're not taught we're not trained to actually say, I'm going to love myself enough that I got to fill my cup as well.

You see, that's not part of our language, right? It's not part of our communication growing up, you know? And so this is this is me slowing down. And even though it takes time, sometimes whenever I get into a session with someone for the first time, this is where I really spend a lot of time talking about and having conversation with our patients.

You know, with your mind go intentions of your day. What is your belief about these? Okay. And a lot of the the male patients we're taught, just like myself, never to speak up about emotions because this is a sign of weakness.

Yes, but reality is it's a sign of strength. Right. But, but, you know, I come from the Chinese culture, so it's definitely a sign of weakness. And there's nothing wrong with that thought process during war time.

Right. And so, you know, my family, my one generation of my parents came from the generation of the Cultural Revolution, where there's a lot of discrimination against higher educated people like my grandfather, and a lot of like, time feathering was going on and torture was going on with my, within my family, the sort of stoicism there and then the, the execution and then, you know, don't do anything because we will not survive.

We speak up. We have to keep our head low and get through. That's what my parents experienced, you know, and that's what a lot of refugees experience in Southeast Asia.

That's where, the, the, the, the Holocaust survivors. And right now we have Ukraine and Russia, right. And send Argentina right. And, and, and Somalia, and we have all these different places.

And the idea that these feelings are so sequestered because if you show your feelings, like someone will enjoy life. Right. But that no longer serves, non war time when you're at peace.

But but the thing is, like the speakers were, were raised by people going through these traumas. They want us to survive to. And they're, they have a belief that we show emotions we don't survive.

But in modern day, that's not necessarily the case anymore. The world has changed quite a bit right. Yeah. It we have war at some point, because in the Philippines too, we went through some war in World War two, the, the

Bataan Death March.

This is mostly men that were taken away from our families and the women were left behind. And so the men were taught, you know, do not show emotions when you're in this March.

You know, that's absolutely necessary for your survival. See that you can go back home to your family. And this is generational trauma. If we actually take a look at it right now, generational trauma, it's those belief systems and habits that have traveled down from one generation to the next, and it has affected us.

And I'm a descendant of that. You know, I had a great, great great grandfather who was lost in the war during World War Two, and this has affected my mom's side of the family as well as my dad's side of the family as well, you know?

So, we're not here to place judgment on the people who raised us, but we're here to really gain a better understanding of what happened to us so that we can do something about it.

Today. Right. And like you said, doctor, run. Change those things. We don't have to, you know, be in that survival mode anymore because the world has changed.

And if we really look around, we're safe. And this is a constant thing that I encourage all of our patients to do, because we're often, you know, being in that head.

Right? A lot of our patients live in the brain. And when I was going through my own trauma, I was in my head a lot. I was living in my brain a lot because I was trying to fix things.

I was worried a lot. I was ruminating on a lot of thoughts, that rumination of thoughts. Right. So I tell everyone, you know, activate your senses of the body.

This is part of my body medicine. Come back home, move from being from brain to body and feel you. Feel where your attention and your stress is in the body.

Have that connection just by simply actually standing up gently with your shoulders away from your ears and gently rotating your shoulders back and having the hands down on the side, and then your chin is leveled up like this.

When you create a T, g and then just breathing slowly in through the nose for a count of four and then breathing now for eight is basically bringing the body to a state of safety, you know, and then activating your senses in the body.

This is where we need to be conscious of those things. This is one way we can tell the brain, hey, I'm safe, calm down. It actually deactivates the amygdala. Okay?

The the amygdala is part of the fight or flight state that basically it's a pre detective system. It's constantly looking and scanning your environment for potential trauma.

And it has no sense of time. It did not know that you're not a child anymore. That got hurt from a long time ago. It has no sense of location. It just knows that there is this feedback loop happening in your brain.

Okay. And so that simply by doing that activation and being grounded is what I call a pattern interrupt. That's not to interrupt. Yeah. Don't interrupt.

You're disrupting that cycle. That vicious cycle. Right. We have the power to do that. But you have to be consciously aware that you're doing it in the first place, because those reactions and impulses are default assumptions coming from our subconscious is happening fast.

Okay. So these are some of the different techniques. And being present just simply by being present in our bodies

in this, in this space and time is going to allow you to really calm and soothe that nervous system.

And then you're releasing different hormones. Now we have seen that over where inflammatory cytokines go down, and then we're stimulating the prefrontal cortex again just by simply slowing your breathing down and then stimulating the vagus nerve.

Right. You're releasing some feel good hormones. Oxytocin. Serotonin is resumed again. Now you're really interrupting that pattern of trauma. Trauma cycle.

Yeah, yeah. And, you know, most people, don't necessarily have an identifiable trauma. And they're like, oh, you know, I had a great childhood. I, you know, we weren't poor or we didn't really have you have any struggles.

And on the outside, everything seemed great. Right? So what's missing in those people? Because I have family members that that are those people. So what do you think are missing in those people?

Yeah. So what's missing is mind body connection. Often in that go go go go go because they've been taught that and we normalize going with worthy and production.

Working endlessly means that you have worse. So this again is going back to what you heard growing up. Right. We had patients like this actually, you know that we're taught to always be productive, always be working for your family you know.

And that puts you in that fight or flight state. You just didn't realize. So how do we determine that? Right. It's in the way their body is, is moving.

A lot of them are inflexible. You can even see in the facial muscles smiling a lot when they come on zoom, you know, often stoic like you were talking about earlier.

Oh, and also, the shoulders are kind of up. There's a lot of tension. They can't break joints a lot. Okay, so this is how I know that something have happened, but they're not identifying with it.

And so we can start asking self-check checking questions. This is where I have everybody identifying a lot of their core beliefs, how they're relating to food, how they're relating to stress.

How did you see your parents deal with stress or did they deal? They communicate. And so this is all part of my group visits in my body medicine. Well, I encourage everybody to identify a lot of those core beliefs.

What did they hear and what did they see growing up? You know, because a lot of it is showing up in the trauma, is showing up in your decision making.

Your food choices. It's showing up in your relationships with yourself, and it's showing up in your relationships with your significant other, your friends and family, your children.

It's showing up at work. Right. And so this is this is how we know that there's a missing piece. We've got to look at those different aspects because they're expressions that still activating the nervous system.

Right. And that ultimately turns into disease states as well. As we see this so much in caregivers of people going through brain health disorders. So we know, statistically speaking, those people who are primary caregivers of those people with dementia has a much higher likelihood of developing dementia early, earlier on as well.

So we know that right. And those people who are actually health care provider professions like doctors and nurses tend to have developed a lot more, that effects when it comes to mental health as well as brain health.

Right. And all of a sudden these things really start manifesting, in a time where, where we really have to question the things that that we're, that we're doing, you know, when if you if we look at the data and as you said earlier,

that's okay.

We know that chronic stress increases blood sugars, significant increases the chance of the type two diabetes. Right. Worsens autoimmune disease like Hashimoto's disease worsens, lupus.

Right. And it worsens chronic allergies and histamine intolerance. So people who are chronically stressed tend to create more food intolerances and allergies.

Environmental allergies as well cause mast cell activation. Yes. And, and our body body does this really well. And so the trauma doesn't necessarily have to come from, you know, something that's super dramatic, like a major trauma.

It can come from a little trauma, you know, the big T versus the little T we call the big T is accused. Traumatic events. Like seeing someone shot in the head.

Yes, but most people just have little T's and that little T's maybe, you know, growing up with caregivers that made you feel that you're conditional love and and that you have to be there for them.

Maybe you had to grow up too much as an adult. When you're younger, be there for your caregivers. And your parents didn't have enough time to go to the child play stage right?

And because people were saying, oh, you're so grown for your age and you're so mature for your age, I had such a pretty traumatic, you know, and so, you know, in, in Chinese, we have this expression, quite y, which means like y technically means obedience.

And so, so it's used as the phrase to, to label good kids, you know. Yes, yes. And so that's a Chinese term, but. Right, so but what's, what's messed up about it is that the value of, of someone there, is very fast forwarded to, hey, you are behaving like a grown up.

You're so mature for your age. You're taking leadership on that creates a lot of internal struggles. Because if you ever feel like you can't do that, you don't know how to express, you don't know how to express this.

This is let go, right? You don't know how to press pause. And that can create issues as well. So early we talked about how that connects to like chronic constipation.

The gut it connects to diarrhea as well.

Identity, beliefs, and generational trauma

Now in America we call this irritable bowel syndrome right. Estimated one two humans have irritable bowel syndrome. Well it's the canals that's irritated.

It's the brain that's irritated and the bowels are reacting. It's doing the best it can. It's given that the blood flow and the hormones that it's got right and so on.

What about other diseases? Well, migraines. Right. Migraines are very similar. The path of physiology of of starting a migraine and having to continue debilitating rests upon the flow of them.

Fabrics and your fashion, which is the outer covering of muscle and stuff like that. Fibromyalgia. Right. Well, fibromyalgia diagnostic criteria is different tender points along these areas.

Well, these areas are also in Chinese medicine. They're the anchor points, a trigger points. Right. Well, for us that connects because someone's always up here.

Right. So that's what a huge association of fibromyalgia and PTSD. And and then you can develop other disorders

such as Hashimoto's thyroid disorder. Right.

Or poor sleep and traumatic experiences decreases the lymphatic shunting away from the thyroid decreases blood flow. So our body starts making antibodies towards it. Why?

To do you a favor, your body's like, hey, you're in this fight or flight. Your thyroid determines your metabolism. But because I want to preserve your life, I'm going to make you antibodies towards your thyroid.

Because I want to preserve your life. I want to make antibodies against your joints. That's why we start making antibodies against our own DNA. Entire DNA, antibodies or.

Or against our own nucleus or cells. Antinuclear antibodies. So we we know that the biggest factor for reducing autoimmune destruction and and calming the immune system is through the channel of mind body medicine, you know, and and this is the biggest takeaway here is that the, the expression of our genes that we're given right is determined by not just our past, but what happened in utero that our parents have stressful time in utero. Right.

But it also determined by multiple generations of this is where generational trauma can can really big be, be a huge thing. And so knowing all this, and knowing the physiology behind this really made the way I really looked at medicine quite differently.

And, and from a not just holistically, I've always been holistic, but through holistic, healing, you know, starts with a thought process, you know, and this thought that, hey, this, this phrase, it's all in your head.

I'm like, yeah, thank God it's in my head because there's something I can do about it. So it doesn't matter what the disease states are. So all these sort of miraculous healing and of different disease states and going from stage four cancer to stage zero and remission, we see that every day in practice.

This is no longer miraculous to us, because all all depends on who is the first to accept that there's a mind body component to the to the disease state, right.

Because it is very much rooted in science. My body mass is very much rooted in science. We know exactly how things connect with thoughts which are supporting this person.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. So we have our immune system. We have our we have, our air balance being oxygen and carbon dioxide, nitric oxide, the three gas exchange.

Right. We have the nervous system where like the vagus nerve as well as other nerves and moderates that we have the lymphatic system, we have a brand new system called the extracellular matrix, which is basically, the outer protein of cells that is the foundation of actually Chinese acupuncture.

This system was found 5000 years ago, but it's not really talked about in Western literature until a publication in 2012. And and then we have now another new work called the lymphatic System, which is basically the immune system of the brain or channels and aqueducts within the brain that detox the brain.

That's that gets decreased, that gets messed up. But whenever we hold our attention in our chest and we don't breathe as much right in the end up, and it doesn't flow when there's sleep, so all these things are very much rooted, in, in medicine.

And we really have to, to honor that, you know. Yeah. And also honoring that the patient needs to participate. There's an active participation in mind body medicine, right?

Yeah. It starts with their thoughts, with their day thinking, how the mindset, how they're approaching their health. You know, if, if, if it also stems from what they believe, what they can they heal.

Can they believe that they're healing from the inside out. Right. So all of this is is really triggered first by our

thoughts. It really starts there.

Our healing starts from our thoughts and then it transfers through our behaviors. So mind body medicine is really engaging the person to be aware of all of these aspects of his or her life, you know, and really living in the present, living in the body as opposed to just staying in the brain.

You know, you can read so many self-help books, right? But until you can actually embody those knowledge and apply them into your life, you know, then the nervous system is going to stretch because you're, you're you're applying those tools.

So this is something that I encourage everybody to do at our, at our clinic. You know, every patient that I have met with and are working with me currently, it's all about being present in your body.

There's so many mind body medicine tools that I actually would like to share really quickly that the run, soft belly breathing is one of them. It's central to all of the mind body medicine techniques, even meditation.

You know, we need to find belly breathing that everyone's familiar with that term. Yeah. Soft belly breathing is really known as diaphragmatic breathing or deep belly breathing, meaning that we're breathing in through the nose and really sending that breath all the way down to the deeper parts of your lungs and expanding the belly.

So when the belly is soft, you know that your diaphragm is moving, and oftentimes the diaphragm gets stuck. When we go through trauma, when we hold our breath.

Right. And so by resuming soft belly breathing again, letting the letting the belly soften the rest of the body, the rest of the muscles will follow. Okay.

So this deep breathing is necessary. That's what we call soft belly breathing. When you're allowing that breath to go down into the belly and expanding the belly, inflating it and then deflating, okay, another one is shaking and dancing.

I love this particular technique because I know it may look foolish at first. And we did. We did this during my training. They turned down the lights over that we're not all shy to one another, but you're basically doing ten minutes of shaking the body that releases tension.

We know that tension sits in our muscles and in our cells. A lot of our emotions also get suppressed and repressed, especially when we're not encouraged to speak about them and express them right.

So this is a great way to basically release that tension in that that fatigue. And then it actually balances the the nervous system and, and relaxes the muscles of the body.

The same thing with dancing. Dancing is, is, is I mean, if you dance, you're literally you're letting go of all of your sadness and, and fear when you're dancing.

And there's also self-expression. This is this is another thing that that needs to happen. We need to be able to express our truth in our authentic self.

And these techniques is basically encouraging all of these things, you know, to express yourself very, very important in healing from our trauma. Meditation, of course, that is key.

That is very central to mind body medicine. All forms of meditation, dynamic meditation, eyes, open meditation for those who have extreme trauma and they feel unsafe closing their eyes.

There's so many ways where we can transition them so that they feel okay, but they're still meditating with their eyes open. What are those tools? Taichi and qigong is a moving meditation.

When your eyes are open, it's a great way to transition into sitting down and actually closing your eyes and to meditate. Yoga is also one of those mind body exercises, right?

Pilates is one love. Pilates. Drawings. Sometimes war torn countries where a lot of children were affected. Some of these kids were not able to talk about it, and they became muted.

Right. And so in order to release that, that trauma drawing is a technique to allow them to express all of those emotions. And also a lot of journal writing.

And we have data supporting that all of these techniques is actually improving quality of life. You know, as long as, there is a, a space that's holding that nonjudgmental space for, for all of those people who were affected by trauma to be able to express these things.

So this brings me to my last, aspect in mind body medicine. And that is community. Community is very important. You know, we're all relational beings.

We are wired to connect with other people. And funny enough that the quality of our relationship with others is what really improves our mental health, our health in general, health and wellness.

So there is an importance in having community, but making sure that the community or the tribe is supportive of your healing, allowing you to express your you right and being able to, rely on them in times of need.

And so all of these things are part of my body medicine, and I'm glad that we're actually doing this. A Texas Center doctor run. So yeah, it's it's really important.

And we're, we're doing this in the community that really needs. And right now we're super excited to to even take medical insurance, Medicare and all that, into so that people who don't normally have access to more of the holistic strategies can within, within our center.

But you know, through, through through it all and through everything that we just talked about for the last hour, I think the the the lesson is this lesson is that we don't know everything.

Doctors don't know everything. You don't know everything. No one knows everything know. And as long as there's a pursuit, to improve health, we don't have to know everything because we can start utilizing the tools that we do know that make the biggest impact.

And most of those tools are in mind body medicine. Because usually free breathing is free. Soft belly breathing is free posturing. Relaxation is free, right?

It doesn't take a whole lot. But all these tools are so much more powerful than buying something than buying a machine or device or supplements, stuff like that, because we need to start there as a foundation.

Supplements or supplements. The very supplemental devices are supplemental. We talk a lot about the devices on on the on the Brain Health Summit, but a lot of these are just easy buttons to get to a place.

And there's nothing wrong with that. I have devices that are actually right next to me that I actually use as my baby buttons, but my fundamentals are there.

Yes, there mind body medicine. You know, I was, recently I talked to, a bunch of other functional medicine doctors, who've been doing this for years. Right.

And we all agree the mind body medicine is the missing piece in integrative health that we all need to talk more freely about. Because it's it's really the root of what can improve.

Well, for a lot of us. And what's great, and this is, by the way, and this is very different than psychotherapy, talk

therapy and cognitive therapy. So let's end it there.

Let's talk about the difference between psychiatry and therapy versus Mind-Body medicine. Because there's there's a massive difference I'll have you go into that.

Yeah. So let's chat about talk therapy which is often what's done in sessions. Right. And so.

Mind-body tools for regulation and healing

Talk therapy may help to a degree if you're coordinating with the patients. Yes. Validation. Yes. It's it's encouraging of that space. But you're not going to heal from trauma from talking about the event over and over and over.

And we've seen this in our own patients. A lot of them are under the supervision of psychiatry or a psychotherapist for 30 years. Right. If they were toddlers, what is missing?

What is not changing? And a lot of this really is, again, we cannot conceptualize trauma. We cannot heal from trauma from talking about it. We can interpret, right.

The brain likes to interpret the events over and over and over. We need to change that loop. We need to interrupt that pattern. So how do we do that? We have to teach the person to come back home to the body, because the emotion, the experience of the past is happening in the body.

Okay. So we then need to rely on the wisdom of the body through these techniques. Taichi and she go accepting and understanding that something happened and we're going to breeze through that.

And this is a chance to repair it yourself, because when the event happened in the first place, you did not have the tools for how to cope with it, but now you do.

So this is a golden opportunity to be able to, you know, use some tools to be able to regulate your nervous system. Once again. See? And then now we can see healing is taking place because you're changing the emotional experience regarding the event.

We're associating different states of being. We're associating different emotional experience to the traumatic event okay. What are those emotional experience. Joy.

Peace. And just by simply actually smiling, you know, allowing yourself to just grin, give yourself a smile. I know these are simple things and I think that's what's fucking up with our minds.

I'm sorry for saying that. That is so. It's so simple. But we make things complicated. So just by simply smiling, it changes that shift. It changes the nervous system to react a certain way.

Right now we're responding to that event. And so being the emotional experience is what's really healing us from a trauma. And no, this is not going to be an overnight thing.

Right. Instant gratification is not part of my body medicine. I have to say. We have to practice patience. You know, this is not the same is not it's not like a pill that's just going to do it for us.

However, the long term effects of these tools is far greater than any pill that you can take because you get to discover who you really are. You have a new identity and you become much more resilient mentally and emotionally. So.

So talk therapy to me can only work to some degree, but we have to allow the body to, change our our demeanor. You know, the way we're standing up and the way we're showing up to the world, all of these things are part of that healing process.

Relaxation techniques, breathing meditation, teaching qigong played, by the way, play is also necessary for stimulating the prefrontal cortex, right? This is where you're really relying on the wisdom of the body and bringing that in, training that nervous system to go back to what we call social re-engagement system or ventral vagal state.

So what I'm talking about is when we go back to that, the body is feeling much more connected. We're curious about life, right? And even if there's a lot of chaos that's happening outside of us, you know that you're going to be able to adapt and that you're going to be able to adjust, and you have tools so that you can cope and leverage from the stress.

So that's, that's my take on talk therapy. You know, there's you know, I'm going to add a few things there. Okay. So, you know, with with talking and stuff like that, it allows you to be comfortable within your own identity.

Right. Mind body medicine allows you to engineer your own identity. They're they're actually two very different things. And so a lot of times we behave like we behave a certain way, which is called a process because of our inner core, which is the identity.

And that leads to outcomes on the outside. So people are are basically looking at outcomes in their health that they didn't expect to occur. And, and instead of saying, hey, what can I do to affect my process, which is maybe my identity, what most people do is what medicine can I take or stuff like that, say what?

What diet can I be on? And there's nothing wrong with that. As long as we dedicate a lot of our time into understanding what the identity is and the identity that we once were may no longer serve us.

And that's what I found over and over and over again. There's this is a this is really cool book, called Affective Neuroscience The Foundations of Human and Animal Emotions.

This is this is really cool. And we talked about that. Emotions are losing their concepts. Outside of the realm of scientific inquiry. That's what most people think.

But in reality it's not. It's actually within a barbell chemistry. So we know that that that topic right there, that emotions are just things that illusions.

Right. It's no longer true. Based on the last hour of what we talked about, we know the human physiology response to emotion. Yes. So let's say if someone, someone has attention deficit disorder, right.

And, and this goes against social norm, you're supposed to be this attentive, but you're over here. What they're doing, what they're doing. This is the brain is trying to escape the current thought because there's a lack of sense of security. Right.

And that could be because of upbringing. That could be because of, like, inflammatory foods or MSG or sugars and stuff like that high fructose corn sirup.

It could be that but to it's, but to, to figure out the whole thing. It's not it's never just one thing if someone has Alzheimer's, for example, and this is my favorite story about Alzheimer's is I love talking to patients with Alzheimer's disease because I get to figure out what in the past that they stuck on.

So if I talk to these people and I realize they're stuck in 1971, and the people that are in the room haven't been born yet, they're not going to know who they are.

But when I go there with them, what year are you and what year is it right now, and what are you doing when you like? What are you wearing? What's what's around you?

You know someone who has moderate to severe Alzheimer's. They'll start talking to start making a lot of sense. And in my brain, I'm gonna go to 1971 with them.

Yeah. And through there, I can see exactly what they're seeing. And then what? And then, because I'm existing in 1971, I'm changing their history a little bit.

I'm offering their peace. Right. If they experience something. And the Alzheimer's patients are always existing at a point when for some trauma happened, always right before, right and after that, the memory is not there.

And this is such an interesting human construct. So if I'm able to talk to a patient with Alzheimer's and make them feel safe, pull them into 1972 and then in 1973, in 1974, back to 2002, 2023.

Right now, I'm pulling them in that direction. They start recognizing the people that are that are around them. And this only takes a few minutes, you know, and I and I the first time I ever did that, it was complete accident was my friend's grandfather when I was in middle school.

And then I volunteered at Shelton Arms, which is a memory care facility in Houston, and I start playing around with that. It really intrigued me, but now I have an understanding of why it is that the brain will regress to a time pre trauma, right, is to protect itself and and, and and a lot of times we work with patients.

Well they got a good diet. They get on some great supplements. They have they have they have mind body medicine. They do a lot of breathing exercises.

And then they get more depressed because they now do they remember their, their own trauma about that time. It's when we say, hey, you know what, we really have to give you the tools to go forward.

But unfortunately, a lot of that time the family members start seeing them depressed and like, oh my gosh, you know, he's regressing. And so in actuality, if we look at the MRI, look at these things, we collapse actually improving.

Yeah. But they're more cognizant of their disabilities and therefore they feel lonelier. So their job is to play with them. Right. Like you said, play earlier your job to play with them.

Make sure that you bring joy into their life and play brings value. It's no longer doing stuff that brings value. It's not. Seeing your kids is not cooking, not in the car.

Play brings value. And this is where generations afterwards can improve. Generations up and the and the geriatric population in the United States is really being shunned upon, you know, and there's even expressions for some of these people like groomers and all these different things. Right.

Talk therapy vs mind-body medicine

So, so there's within medicine because within medicine, you know, Gomer stands for get out of my ear. That's what we that's sort of a joke that we actually have there in training.

Because these elderly people they're like manifesting symptoms. We don't know what to do with them because they're clinically stable. So calm Gomer. And this came from a book.

But it was a pretty good description. And then we have and then we have this term called boomers now which I think is actually a very detrimental term because labeling.

Right. Of devaluing any generation is, is not cool. It doesn't matter what generation it is is not it's not cool. I actually don't even like the I'm uncomfortable word millennials.

Comfortable with the word Gen Z, because it used to be just a collection of different generations. Now it's used as targeting, right? Especially on social media.

They're they're creating the generation. Yeah. Yeah. The millennials. Yeah. You know the name. Yeah. And what

we see now, what we see now, especially through the pandemic loneliness has increased the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease by 60%.

Holy holy crap. Increases the diagnosis of autism ADHD increases diagnosis of schizophrenia. Like what's happening of depression, of course. Right. So a lot of the loneliness and isolation is created.

This, this, this thing that's there a lot of people going through a lot of chronic disorders, chronic health issues already feel isolated. And this is why the community is required for that healing element.

This is why the community is exists to propel each other up. And so I can't stress, you know, how important your work is. Journey. And what you create the value to the world.

But it isn't really have to. And those people think, you know, I can't heal the brain unless I buy really expensive things and supplements and be on this crazy particular diet.

Well, it doesn't necessarily have to be that way. You know, it doesn't have to start there. And that's the message I want to get out from this particular session.

Yes, yes. All of these are internal resources. It's just underutilized breathing is underutilized. You know, these are all free. And that's why I love them.

They help me with my own healing, my own trauma healing from my own, journey. And it's these mind body techniques that I used in at that time. That run. I didn't have insurance.

You know, I'm just going to, you know, say that, and so I found myself really grateful. And I feel blessed that I have these techniques. And I still use them today.

And part of my identity and and I think this is, this is really a blessing because this is how I can connect with our patients. And this is this is what I'm sharing at our clinic.

And it's a joy to share them. Amazing. Well, we've, we covered a lot on this topic, and I really thank you for taking the time. Yeah, all of this with the with the public.

And we do this quite a bit with our patients. But speaking with the public is, is truly a wonderful thing to engage upon. So how do people find you on social media?

How do they interact with you? What did you learn? You know, you can find me on Instagram at Health Luminary. And also Jenny Marino, FDA and coach. Those are two Instagrams that I have.

And also my Facebook page is, health luminary. For now, those are that's how you can contact me, but you can also email me at Jenny at Health luminary.com.

I got some stuff coming up in the near future. Right. So Jenny is GE and why. Yes yes, yes. Just to be to be to be sure. And Jenny is also the mastermind behind, our, our online training, which is mind sculpting master workshop, where we actually go through all this stuff and that's at TLM university and.com.

You can find that too. Yes. Yeah. So with all sorts of other things as well. So, Jane, we really want to, we want to thank you for, for talking about this and, what we're going to do is make sure that the world hears about one body medicine, because I think it's a crucial missing step to medicine in general.

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. Doctor Ron, I appreciate it. Bye bye.