Opening Inspiration and Introduction

each and every one of you are awesome. In your own unique way, the world is a very awesome place, and right now it's also a little bit of too much darkness for my liking, and it depends on how you look at it, but I would suggest that we can all make a really big positive change in the world by shining our own light.

Find your passion, something you used to be passionate about, something you currently are, something that you wanna do in the future. Even if it seems ridiculous, Just do it.

Like just find something that lights your heart up and just focus on that. This is Doctor Talks. Real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most.

Today on Lime Bites, I'm honored to welcome someone who has had a profound impact on my own journey, both as a mentor and a close friend, Dr. Tom Moorcroft.

He's a gifted osteopathic physician, a deep thinker, and a true leader in the world of integrative medicine for complex chronic illness. Dr. Tom is known not just for treating Lyme disease and mold-related illnesses with a clinical precision, but for recognizing something that's often overlooked.

the emotional and psychological toll of chronic illness, and how it keeps people stuck even when they're doing all of the right things. His presentation title says it all, Beyond Protocols, The Path to Real Healing.

In today's conversation, we will go deeper than labs and supplements. We'll explore what happens when your spirit is exhausted, your nervous system is stuck in survival, and your identity gets tangled up in being sick.

and how to gently start untangling that so true healing can begin. Welcome to Lime Bites. Let the healing journey begin. And welcome, Dr. Tom. Thanks for being here with me.

Yeah, Mariah. Thanks so very much for having me here. I'm really excited and honored to be able to have this conversation. Me too. All right. So tell our listeners who don't know who you are a little bit about yourself and why you do what you do.

Yeah, you know, I mean, I just always grew up loving to play outside. You know, I was one of these follow your passion people, which drove my parents and my friends nuts because I'm like, one day I want to do this, one day I want to do that.

But I really found that like a lot of the core things that I really loved doing was was outside exploring nature. And, you know, as an undergraduate studying terrestrial ecology, wildlife management, I was like, this is amazing.

But a whole bunch of adults all got together. We'd go on a hike, we'd do some research, we'd come together. And then we would just sit around a table talking, and they were like, oh, let's do more research.

And then we'd do more research. And so ultimately, I was like, this is going nowhere. The planet's going to fall apart. And by the time we actually get moving and do less research and more implementation.

So I asked myself, who can we inspire that will get adults to do something? I was like, well, they're kids. And so I took a job with AmeriCorps. It was kind of like the domestic Peace Corps, so to speak.

teaching at the Institute of Ecosystem Studies, and I was teaching kids and really getting them interested in in the outdoors. And during this time, you know, it was my normal self, I would like go to work for like six hours and get done like 12 hours worth of work a day or you know, sometimes even more and like really doing great.

And then at one point, my boss pulled me over and she's like, Tom, What's going on here? The last couple of weeks have been pretty rough here. This is not like you.

I don't think you're goofing off, but you're not getting anything done and we need to talk about this. She's like, I need you to do some work on this project that you're really behind on.

And she said, I'll come back in an hour. But it's like, it kind of had that remediation conversation where I might be losing my job.

Dr. Tom Moorcroft's Background and Lyme Journey

And so Chris comes back an hour later, and she told me that she found me, and she's just looking at me like, what is going on? I was just staring blankly at a computer screen.

And she had to shake me to get me to pay attention. And as I kind of roused from this daze, we both realized I had been drooling all over myself. And she's like, what the heck is going on with you?

I have no idea. Like, I mean, I guess I'm a little foggy since I've been sitting here for an hour doing nothing. And then, you know, as we started talking, I realized I had been pretty fatigued and I had had a lot of muscle and joint aches.

And she's like, look, you got to go see the doctor. So I'm on, you know, I was like, I didn't have a doctor locally because it's just like this you know, volunteer gig, I go back to Jersey to see my parents.

And on the way there, I did start developing this rash that enveloped about a fifth of my body. So like most of my left leg, my left torso, my back, my arm, which is, you know, I go into the doctor's office and he's like, Hey, Tom, you've got classic Lyme disease.

take 10 days of doxycycline, and you're good to go. And as many of us know, a rash that covers a fifth of your body is not classic Lyme disease. So I have no idea how this guy even figured it out.

And the first four days, I lay on the floor, alternating shakes and chills. And I'm 23. My parents had to take me to the bathroom because I couldn't get up.

But four or five days later, I was actually feeling a bit better. And I finished the course, went about life. And over the next eight years, they're like, Same thing, brain fog, joint pain, fatigue, just everything.

And then I start getting angry because like, no one can tell me what's wrong. I go to the doctor and he's like, you have major depression. I'm like, F you because like, just cause my dad has depression doesn't mean I am.

And I never had it before this tick thing happened. And I didn't know that depression caused brain fog, joint pain and fatigue that then led to your, your mood problem.

It's not the opposite way. And so then I like had bipolar depression, you know, that type two one that's like all the good doctors and lawyers have, I'm like, I don't know any bipolar doctors.

I mean, if they are, their meds are working. But what was really interesting along the way, Mariah, is they kept giving me new diagnoses and none of the medicines worked.

They always were like, oh, well, like, you know, most people respond differently than you do. This is very abnormal. I'm like, well, then maybe the diagnosis is wrong.

And then they diagnosed me with ADHD. And I'm like, like, no shit. Like, everybody knows that. That's not a problem for me. And then they're like, I went in, I was dying.

And it was like five, six years into this thing. And I go to this primary care doctor and I go look dude I am dying you need to I mean take me seriously here this is not any I've tried all the meds I've listened to all the doctors it hasn't worked I've done everything everyone's asked and I go in his office and I go he's like well okay cool what do you got I go joint pain brain fog and fatigue and he's like oh I know you have fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue And I'm like, bro, you just basically told me a grab bag syndrome label for brain fog, joint pain and fatigue.

And the problem is you didn't tell me why and why they're happening, which means I have no way of getting better. And so A couple days later, I'm just stressed.

I'm just like, my life is going down the toilet right now. You know, recently married. I'm in medical school. I'm like, but I can't do two plus three in my head.

I have to write it on paper, which is a little interesting for somebody who's like graduated fourth in their high school and college class. It's just like not my thing.

And so then I just was standing again, instead of a computer screen, I'm blankly staring at a wall in my apartment, just going, my life sucks right now.

And I just remember going for whatever reason it was on my right side. I'm like, I see that path. I go down that path every day and it's not taking me where I want.

And I know that I want to be outside again. I want to be doing, you know, exercising, playing with the dogs, hiking, camping, mountain biking, skiing.

And I was just losing all my passions because I just was like going down that hole. And I said, well, I already know how I get this. I wake up in the morning and I go down that path.

So why don't I just say I want that and try to go that direction? And so I just decided that I knew I would never forget how sick I was. So I would just focus on what I really wanted.

Within a couple of days, somebody handed me a yoga DVD and I really researched it. And I found someone who had trained in India since the 70s. and really just started following their process.

And the hardest part about it was it was ashtanga yoga where power yoga comes from. And they really talked a lot about, but this guy was different. A lot of people get injured doing it because they're trying to be cool and like, you know, put their legs behind their head and be more flexible and Gumby than somebody else.

This dude was like, Yoga is movement on breath, not the other way around. So your breathing is your litmus test for whether you're doing it right. So it's a 90 minute practice, six days a week.

I started, I did about 80 seconds and I was in horrible pain and I couldn't do anything else. I sat there and for another 88 ish minutes, I just breathed.

I just learned to breathe and I just said, my life is so worth it, I'm going to breathe. And eventually that started to open up my body, calm my nervous system.

My body started to reject the Coca-Cola and the pizza because back then we actually thought those were food groups. And then I just slowly over the next couple of years healed about 70%. And I was back to almost normal.

I still had a lot of brain fog and some pain and, you know, I had another coincidence type of situation, you know, which I don't really believe in. But I was doubling down on what I really wanted and I got to switch to go to a doctor's office where they practice osteopathic manipulation and a naturopathic, osteopathic approach to treating Lyme.

And during that first day, I was like, all these people sound like me. And I felt like I finally was, I wasn't alone

anymore. Cause no, every doctor I saw up until then had never seen anybody like me.

Now I see a whole office of me. And so in the end, after the first day, I'm like, hey, I don't care what it costs, stick a needle in my arm, draw my blood.

I, whatever these people have, I bet you I have it. A couple of weeks later, you know, Lyme disease and was still there and babesiosis, which had never been diagnosed and could have potentially killed me, popped up.

And so over the next four years, I did treatment for that, found out I have heavy metal toxicity from all the mercury crap they put in my mouth back in the day.

Got all that fixed up. And as we're recording this, I mean, it's been over 13 years and I've had zero symptoms associated with Lyme, Babesia or heavy metal toxicity.

One of the reasons I'm so passionate about it is I've been there, done that, and I've been isolated by myself and told that I'm crazy. And I also know there's a different path.

And I also know that a lot of the other thing that gets me going, which is why we're talking about what we're talking about today is A lot of people are just saying, you need more meds, you need more gizmos, you need more this, you need more that.

And I'm like, more than 70% of my healing came from only what I did myself and learning to pay attention to the natural processes of healing within me.

And then I added that on and that's what was the magic sauce for me. Right. So I know you've helped so many patients through healing multiple different chronic illnesses.

When did you realize or what made you realize that following these various protocols, whether they were pharmaceuticals, herbals, et cetera, like when did you realize that wasn't enough?

Are you ready to revolutionize your approach to diagnosing and healing complex chronic inflammatory illnesses in both adults and children? The Lime Bites Symposium is your gateway to cutting-edge education, groundbreaking research, and innovative therapeutic solutions.

Join us at the 2025 Lime Bites Symposium November 14th and 15th at the Fort Lauderdale Marriott Pompano Beach Resort and Spa. Lion Bites is the premier functional medicine conference on complex, chronic, infection-driven inflammatory illnesses.

This year's meeting is jam-packed with leading industry experts discussing long COVID, mycotoxin illness, PANS Pandas, as well as Lyme and other vector-borne diseases.

This conference will arm you with the knowledge, clinical pearls, and practical solutions that you can implement immediately into your practice Monday morning that will literally change your patient's lives and get them on their path to true healing.

So join us at Pompano Beach or virtually from anywhere. Register now at LymeBytes.com. That's L-Y-M-E-B-Y-T-E-S dot com. I think it's what you said earlier is that people are literally doing exactly what they're asked.

and they're not getting better. And they've seen five or six gurus and they're not getting better. Or they start to get better and then they relapse. Like how many times have you seen somebody who's like, I mean, everybody these days seems to be freestyling.

So leave the chat GPT and the Google doctoring to us, you know, because we have the degree that helps us understand what to do with it and the experience.

So, but I mean, I found people that were mostly following their protocols And I would bounce ideas off of my colleagues and my mentors. And they're like, what are we doing wrong?

They're like, that's what I would do. And then it was like, everybody was, a lot of people get stuck on like everything outside of their body, right? I need the next greatest supplement, or I need to be on double dose Dapsone, or I need to be on disulfiram, or I need, everybody this week is asking me for albendazole.

I'm like, look, if you need those, you need those. But a lot of times it's the question of like, why are we relapsing? Like what, why is a, specific theme continually coming up in your life.

Because whether it's a chronic healing thing or just like, hey, maybe you don't have a chronic illness, but you know, you're in a relationship and there's a theme that comes up with you and your partner or you and your kid or you and your bestie.

Well, there's a reason that that theme keeps coming back up over and over and over again. It's because there's something you haven't addressed. And what I found was there was these themes that would recur and there was also a place where people didn't want to go.

And when they immediately gave me resistance, I was like, oh, did I just touch on that spot? You know, And most of the time it was sort of more involuntary.

And I think most people don't think of it. But when we ask them to go down a certain road and they immediately are like, viscerally no, I'm like, wow, we should really go down there.

But what I learned in my healing journey was Coca-Cola is a great example. My grandmother, she had a half a can at lunch every single day that I knew her and from all stories of her whole life, and the other half at dinner.

Most people don't have that kind of self-control, but in our household, there's like three liter cokes everywhere. And the thing was, when I was sick, I was like, my body started to not want it.

And it was just because of the yoga and the work of paying attention. But I was like, no, no, you can't. No, I can't lose that. I need that. And then I just was like, well, wait a second, though.

The best progress I've made in the last seven years is by paying attention to what it feels like in me. So I kind of learned kicking and screaming. to kind of pay attention to that, you know, my gut reaction more.

And it was funny. I would always tell people the only time thing, I remember this really clearly from college. People were like, would ask me questions about like, you know, why something went wrong.

I go, you know, it's weird. Every time I listen to my gut, not like my initial reaction, but really sit with it and listen to my, what's being told to me inside.

If I listen to it, it goes well. And if I don't listen to it, it goes terrible. And so I was like, wait a second, I've told people this story over and over and over again, that must mean I need to hear it.

Right. So I'm like, wow, there's a reason I say this over and over. It's probably because I should be listening to what I'm saying. And it's funny, everybody's like, you have one mouth and two ears, and you would think that I have seven mouths and no ears, but the way I talk sometimes.

But I mean, I started to learn to listen to myself.

Why Protocols Alone Aren't Enough

And in fact, in medical school, I did a presentation on the day I learned how to listen at a national conference, because everybody's like, what do we do?

I go, well, why don't we figure out what we should do first? How do you do that? In medical school they said listen to your patient for five minutes and if you don't interrupt them 95% of the time they'll tell you what's wrong as well as how to fix them.

You might have to read in between the lines, but if you just shut the hell up for five minutes and not, cause the average doctor interrupts, I think within the first seven to eight seconds is the stat.

So I just sat down and listened to people, but then I was like, wait, if I'm supposed to listen to somebody else, shouldn't I listen to me? And so that I can bring that into my work.

And so I was just like, my body's rejecting this soda. And I was like, well, I think I need it, but let's try and find out if I really do. Cause I'm pretty sure I don't.

It's not really a nutritional group. I started to learn this by that time. So I just like every time I listened to what was deep inside and not from an earning, a yearning like I must have and like, oh, I went to the store and I want to buy this or whatever, but like a deep resonance with, you know, I go back, like, we had a, when you do manipulation, right, you learn that there's ways where you can move into, if something doesn't move in a particular direction, you can push it in that direction more.

Like, kind of like if you see a DO or a chiropractor or naturopath who cracks a neck or a back, that's like, we call that direct. So we go into the barrier and move beyond.

The other thing is you can go the complete opposite direction and find balance and release it that way. The body does that. So one of our mentors in school was like, somebody asked this guy, how do you know what to do?

Because both work. How do you know which one to focus on? And he said, move towards each one, set it up. and feel and ask yourself, which direction feels most life full?

What's the one that opens up and feels healthful? And I was like, that is the most simple and most dynamic response I've heard any question ever. Because if it feels more alive, do more of it.

And if it feels less alive, do less of it. And you just have to learn to be objective in that. And that's the thing that really got me going was because that's how I healed.

I just was like, I know what the only thing I had was osteopathic manipulative medicine mentors, and then conventional medicine, which doesn't talk about any of this.

So I was like, well, these people are getting results nobody else gets. So I just said, how do I incorporate that more into my life and what I found was when I was you know going back to like kind of like the meat and potatoes of your question is when when I would ask somebody to go down a path that like you would see them be like oh yeah that's and then they would like freak out so you would feel this big when I hit the nail on the head especially about the emotional stuff you'd feel an opening and then a collapse Like they were scared shitless.

And I'm like, scared shitless is okay. I can help you with that. But it's when you just run away constantly from the thing that's going to do the most work.

And I'm like, but that felt so alive. And I was just like, wow, we've trained people in our society to run away from being alive and run away from their passions because not to go too crazy, but this is a really good control mechanism.

And I want to give people back control over their own health. Our system does, in the broader perspective, tends to present itself in a way like they don't want you to have control over your health.

It's not really financially lucrative for them if you do. So anyway. Yeah, that point's come up a few times already on this podcast. I'm glad someone else said, I'm like, shoot, did I just open the can of worms that I'm sure everyone…

No, you're good. I know you curate people who think that way. Yes. And it sounds like through your own personal healing and your own personal experiences that you already knew that emotional healing and energetic healing was a big piece of the puzzle for you.

And you were able to bring that to your patients from the get-go. Yeah, I mean, I think I was innately that way. I mean, when I was a kid, I'd walk around and be like, hey, there's worms under the ground.

And my parents are like, oh, yeah, you saw them after the rain. I go, no, no, no, I can feel them crawling under the earth. And I have regular sneakers on.

And I was like, there's water that flows through trees before anybody told me about sap. And they're all like, you are a weirdo. I'm like, I'm actually in touch.

So it's like, they tried to unteach me that because, you know, When you're growing up in New Jersey in the 70s and 80s, they're just like, oh, you are a Looney Tune.

I'm like, well, that's true. But I'm actually more like our native, more of a native culture person where I really was connected. So that was kind of a thing.

But yeah, there's just this deep knowing that you have. I think that it's like, you know, maybe it comes easier to some people, but I just have always fascinated by life.

And the part like, I remember like in college, I went to the White Mountains and I went to the University of Vermont. So I spent a lot of, I mean, tons of time outside and I had just done like a five day hiking trip in the White Mountains in New Hampshire.

And I come home and I remember talking to my mom and she's like, I just went to church and it was beautiful. And I was like, oh my God, that's amazing.

I just went hiking for five days and I was communing with God like the whole time and mother nature is amazing and I'm all connected to life and all this.

And she's like, well, you know. Tommy, when it's time, God will be there for you and welcome you back to the church. I'm like, did you not hear anything I just said?

But it's like for her, that's her thing. But for me, I felt so connected with that frequency of life. And through our osteopathic training, One of our mentors shared a story from her mentor that she's helped us pass along to even the next generations that if you treat everyone from the highest vibrational frequency of love, it doesn't matter what you do, it's gonna work.

Because if I come at you with nothing but pure love first, then my brain is gonna resonate with my heart. And then the choices that my brain objectively makes are gonna be less and less subjective.

and then we're going to be choosing the right modality because we're leading with love. We have so many people come into our practices where they're suffering so much, they have so much baggage because maybe they're afraid, they've been gas-lit, they're just frustrated and tired.

And a lot of these people have infection triggered autoimmune encephalitis or brain inflammation and autoimmunity from these infections. So they're not even the person you're talking to may not be truly who they are.

So on our end, I'm like, why don't we start with love? Why don't we bring that into what we do? And, you know, I guess one of the things I say all the time, but I've been saying so much like in the last couple of weeks even is, you know, I asked people, have you loved your lime today?

And they're all like, you're an asshole. And I'm like, no. I'm like, for real. Because if you think about it, if you hate on

something or somebody pisses you off, you feel like your Lyme disease and your chronic illness, it's very, negativity is very contractile.

So if I'm an illness or a vibration that's in this, how do I get out when you just created a solid ball around me? So on the other hand, if I say, oh my God, I love my life so much.

Thank you for being a part of my life. Thank you for what you're teaching me and what I'm able to learn. And now there's a door right there. If there's something that I'm forgetting to learn, put a postie on the wall on your way out and don't let the door hit you in the butt on the way out.

But it's like, I can't let you leave unless I give you space to leave. And so many people are so mad about this and so much, I don't deserve this. No one said you deserve it, but you got it.

Right. So let's just help you get. So I love to open this face. It's just like kind of, you know, I would recommend you love everyone, but you don't have to like everyone.

You don't have to like your illness and you certainly don't deserve it. In fact, if anything, I would suggest that we're all worthy to receive healing.

And then we all have the capacity to heal. But the only way to receive healing is to be at that frequency, which is to open up to love. And it's like, it's a starting point that's so powerful.

So I just think it's one of these places where we get so negative. because our life just feels like it's slipping away. Like a lot of times they said, everybody wants me to, it seems to want me to say I lost like 12 years of my life to this chronic illness.

I'm like, it was really different than I wanted it to be, but I didn't really learn, lose anything I gained.

Healing Through Breath, Yoga, and Nervous System Regulation

You know, I missed out on maybe something that I thought I wanted, but now I've got these new opportunities. So it's just that mindset shift because it was happening whether I liked it or not.

And I think a lot of it is mindset. Mindset is huge and how you want to look at things. We were talking earlier before we started recording, right? And it's like, oh, I decided to see the positive in the situation and learn from it, right?

Are you suffering from Lyme disease or another complex chronic illness and aren't sure who to trust when it comes to herbal supplements? Hi. I'm Dr. Mariah Hinchey, founder of Lyme Core Botanicals.

As a naturopathic physician specializing in complex, chronic, infection-driven illnesses like Lyme disease, I needed herbal medicine I could truly trust.

That's why I formulated Lyme Core Botanicals. where our herbal tinctures are handcrafted in small batches right here in Connecticut. We use the whole herb, Never Isolates, to preserve the full spectrum of medicinal compounds.

Every single step from sourcing to extraction is done with precision to ensure maximum purity, potency, and consistency. These are the same herbal formulas I used to heal myself and have used for years to help my patients and family members heal, too.

And now I'm making them available to practitioners and patients everywhere. Lyme Core Botanicals, herbal medicine you can trust from a doctor who lives this work.

Learn more at Lyme Core Botanicals. That's L-Y-M-E-C-O-R-E dot com. Well, when you make those decisions, the thing that I always talk about in presentations and we'll talk a lot about at Lime Bites is there's so much research behind this.

I'm sharing with you the passion of my personal experience and my experience as a clinician and as a parent. because a lot of this applies to parenting and partnering, but there is so much science behind this.

Improving, like we know Lyme negatively impacts the respiratory control of cardiac vagal tone, right? Which is a big fancy way of saying, hey, a lot of us have our heart.

Well, a lot of times if you were to take a few deep breaths, that should calm right down. But it might not if Lyme is negatively affecting your vagus.

But we can utilize the ability to control our breathing, control our mindset to help control some of the physical aspects. So we can come at it from both directions.

But we talk a lot about fight, flight or freeze in polyvagal theory. How do we get unfrozen? Well, part of that is we need to access safety. Well, how do you feel safe when you're sick all the time?

The problem is like a lot of people, you know, it's like we have to slowly ease into it. And a lot of times like easing into it is a 10 or 15 percent change shift in your mindset, shift in physically what you're doing.

It's not 100 or 300 percent big wholesale change. It's little consistent actions over time. And what we see is that improves neuroplasticity, that improves immune system function.

It's so interesting. There's so many little pieces that we'll talk about in the structure of all the science at Lime Bites. But if you even just look at gratitude and coherence, so heart math popularized this term.

But there's this thing where If you want to improve heart rate variability, and you do, because higher levels of heart rate variability improves your resilience to stress, improves your resilience to infection, and it's a marker that your immune function is increasing.

So what's the best way to do this? Spend five minutes focusing on your inhale and your exhale. Just breathe in and out of the center of your chest. Okay, I want to supercharge it.

Now think about someone or something you love to do that you used to love to do if your life is stinky at the moment or that you plan on doing when you're well.

But think of something that lights you up like the passions I thought about that were the jump start to my healing and hold that into your heart as you continue to breathe in your heart.

I can put any wearable on the planet on you and it's going to show that you have an increase in heart rate variability. So if you spend five minutes a day breathing in and out and knowing you're breathing in and out of the center of your chest and then you think about something cool that you love, you're actually, that is one of the biggest, most powerful immune boosters on the planet.

It's free. You're doing it anyway, so you might as well take advantage of it. And it's like, oh my God, it's so simple. And as you get yourself that boost in heart rate variability, that happens because you become more parasympathetic, rest, digest, heal.

That pulls you out of fight or flight. It pulls you out of that freeze mode because you're starting to feel safe. Now, it doesn't all happen overnight, guys.

Doing this once doesn't count. It'll work. You'll get your heart rate variability boost. But if you want to, it's almost like, People want detox. I'm like, lead a detoxification lifestyle.

If you want to be healthy, lead a healthy lifestyle. It's not like you don't go to the gym for a day or a week and expect to have big muscles. So work on this a little bit every day rather than a whole bunch at one like weekend retreat and then fall back.

And so when you do that, then you get more parasympathetic, then you sleep better. But my Dr. Tom, my sleep stinks. Maybe we should start with things that you can control, like five minutes of gratitude breathing a day, and it will lead to compound interest.

So there's so much research behind all this. In fact, breath awareness 10 minutes a day has been shown to turn off certain breast cancer genes. Like, I don't even, I would, if I heard that, I'd be just focusing on my breathing for 10 minutes, flooring to bed every day.

Right, absolutely. So tell our listeners, take a step back, tell our listeners why the body cannot heal or why it's so much harder to heal when someone is stuck in that fight, flight or freeze.

That's an amazing question. I mean, when you're stuck in fight, flight or freeze, the biggest problem I think is that your body doesn't know it's safe to heal.

Right? And that is a challenge because that is a reflection of your physiology. It is not a reflection of your constitution, usually. It could be, but generally speaking, this is just like the infections, the chronicity, the trauma of gaslighting or whatever other traumas you've had is all built up.

And so your physiology literally can't heal. because it's like, I am not safe. And so really, what's really interesting, and I found really early on in my research of Lyme, if you look at the brain scans that Dr.

Fallon and Dr. Donta have published, and you look at the areas of the brain that are negatively impacted by Lyme, and it doesn't even have to be Lyme in your brain.

In fact, most of the time it's Lyme in your system that there are certain targets in the brain, then the inflammation start seems to hit more readily.

The areas of your brain that are able to process the cues of safety, the physiologic cues, recognition of intonation of the voice, of gesture, and of facial expression, all get knocked down by Lyme disease.

So basically, if you're my doctor and I'm sick with Lyme disease, you could be sharing with me all these positive things, but my body may not recognize it.

Or you'll say it and I'm like, yeah, whatever. That's actually the physiologic change in your body due to the infection. And so the problem is you have less of an ability to recognize the cues of safety.

So we have to bring in other things like all these little practices we've talked a little bit about, we'll talk more about at Lime Bites. And even like Dr.

Porges with All the work in polyvagal theory has safe and sound. You need to express yourself through your voice, but a lot of people don't want to. So lock yourself in the shower when you take a shower or bath and sing.

Don't let anybody hear, but use your voice, be heard. And so the problem is, the longer you're sick, the more that just happens on its own, just as a result of chronicity.

But with Lyme in particular, it can actually cause it upfront. So you've got this double whammy going on for these chronically ill people. So then we just have to take a step back and figure out ways to do it.

And then the other side of the spectrum is if you change more than about 20%, If you stress the body more than about 20%, it will actually see diminishing returns.

And so you see a lot of these people get better almost too quickly. And then they're like, I'm so much better. And then like a month later, bam, it's like the bungee cord smashed them into the cement wall behind them.

I think that's because when you look at hormesis, which is kind of that like, that which doesn't kill you only makes

you stronger, but in a physiological sense, we only want to stress people 10, 20, maybe 25% at a given time and then back off and then approach 20% and back off.

There's over 1500 scientific articles proving that one point. which I was amazed that they published that many papers. I just would rather people pick one little habit a day that they can consistently do six, seven days a week, and I know we all miss one once here and there, and have the consistent practice of whatever it is, prayer, journaling, loving on your dog, whatever it is, but really in this full gratitude.

And we'll dive deep into a lot of the research and the specific practices at Lime Bites. It's really important to understand your body wants you to love on it and it wants constant love and it also wants small changes over time.

That's how you work with your physiology. And if you need more than that or you're super stuck, there's obviously other things out there that we've talked about.

There are retreats where you can go do certain things. I mean, I've even presented on the potential use of psychedelics in certain areas, both microdosing and otherwise.

Obviously, in the United States, it's very limited where you can do it, but there are places you can go in other countries. And the important part is, the way we change is typically negative things changes very, big negative things will change you.

very rapidly.

Fight, Flight, Freeze, and the Science of Safety

But if you want to have a switch to the positive, it's almost always the most consistent result is small change over time and repetition, you know, unless you go do one of these other things, but then you still have to do work.

Like I think that that's what people forget is a lot of this is work, but you're already doing it. And I guess to close on this little piece here is I always think like people are meditating all the time.

And my favorite definition, because not everybody likes the term meditation, right? It's like some people it's very positive, some people it's negative, some people don't care.

My favorite definition is to focus on, or excuse me, that's part of it. That's what I originally learned is to become familiar with. And so the way you become familiar with is you focus on something.

And so I take it a step further and I say, I want you to become familiar with the state in which you want to live. So what I did was say, hey, I'm already very familiar with this crappy state of living.

I'm just going to become familiar with the state that I wanna be in, I don't know how I'm ever gonna get there, but I don't care. I'm just gonna focus on it because I wanna resonate with that and I'll bring that into my life.

So ask yourself, you're meditating, you're becoming familiar with something today. When you listen to your thoughts, are you becoming familiar with the state that you're current, more familiar with the state you're in and don't wanna stay in, or are you focusing on the things and becoming familiar with the state that you wanna be in?

Because that opens it up, right? And all of the science proves that. And I guess the other part, too, is we are body, mind, and spirit. The osteopaths have been talking about this since the mid 1800s.

I know naturopaths have been talking about this long before in the 80s and 90s. It became popular in conventional medicine, the kind of lip services. But the one part that I think is important in this conversation to remember is body, mind and spirit are not separate.

They're just words to help us understand the triune nature of humans. And so when Dr. Still, the guy who founded

osteopathy was like, he said like, let's look at it and realize these are not separate parts.

But back then they were looking at medicine as physical only. And then the spirit was religious only and mental was like, still, even in my training, we were just barely saying that mental disorders and psychiatric disorders were not like separate from all of medicine.

And what we know is if I kick you in the shin, you're going to be like, ow. hurt, then you'll be, why did you kick me in the shin? And then you're going to, I shouldn't have kicked you in the shin.

And if I don't react in the way you like, then you're going to be traumatized and spiritually hurt by the fact that I kicked you in the shin. But you're going to have a physical, a mental and an emotional and slash spiritual response to that physical thing.

And so I think of it as like a bar graph to body, mind and spirit. There's a hundred percent, but we're not at 33.3% of each all the time. There's a variety, but you really can't heal.

Nothing happens in your body that doesn't affect you mentally, emotionally and spiritually. So why would we pretend it does? Yeah, it doesn't. You can't disconnect the three.

And that's the whole thing. And it's like, and when you put it together, and like I'm saying, in my healing, 70%, maybe 80% of everything was what I started to do spiritually.

But I didn't know it was spiritual in the beginning. And yes, I was doing yoga, but it was like, you have so much more control over your own healing and you are so worthy to receive it.

So work with it. And again, I still needed four years of treatment with doctors. I'm not discounting that. But I'm just saying, if you want to get better faster and more completely, be open to using all of it at the right time for you.

Right. So what advice do you give to patients when we're trying to have them have gratitude or feel that feeling and expand their heart and raise their vibration?

I've had this conversation with people a lot of times with patients where they're like, I feel like I'm faking it. I'm not grateful. I'm angry. I'm not getting better.

I'm sick. You know what I mean? What is your advice? to help people shift from that identity where they are saying, I am sick to I am healing without feeling like they're faking it or ignoring their reality.

Yeah, there's a whole bunch in there to unpack. The first thing is to say I feel sick. Stop saying I am sick. Do not identify with being sick. I am not a limey.

I am not a moldy. I have lime. Lime is in my body, making me feel bad. I mean, let's stop screwing around here because that, like, if you say I am sick, guess what?

That is a self-fulfilling prophecy. And it's a lie. You are not sick. You are alive. Now, you may have illness in your body, Say that, I have sickness in my body.

But you are living and breathing and if you were so sick that I am illness, you'd be dead within a couple of weeks. So we've all proved, unless you've been dead and now you wouldn't be talking to me, we've already proven that you have sickness, you're experiencing illness, you don't feel well, but you are not illness.

I mean, you are you. And literally, it may seem like a semantic argument, but it's not. It's like your nervous system, your spirit knows that. And again, when I go back to the love thing, you may not feel all this love, but you know what love is.

There's love in you. You are love. And it's like there's this vibration. It's just not the prominent vibration. Like, even if

you look at all the masters of mindset, like even like Bob Proctor is probably the most practical of all of these people because he just like, he would tell you to just stop talking that bullshit and go from like this level of vibration to this one, you have to change your thoughts.

But in order to get to the next level, you have to change your thinking before it happens. So Mary Morrissey, who's a colleague of Bob's and she's run multiple different week long world peace summits for the Dalai Lama with other world leaders.

So she's a heavy hitter. She's like, look, you know, all change starts here or all change is and everything is manifest twice, first in your mind and then on the physical plane, not on the physical plane, then in your mind.

So if you want to manifest it on the physical plane, you got to manifest it in your mind. those two statements are probably not very practical for most people who are sick.

And that's what I learned when I was working with them. Like that sounds really good, but how do you do it? So what is a practical very first step that someone listening can take today even to reconnect with their healing path?

Like what's step number one? My favorite is a gratitude practice where you write down three wins for today, no matter how big or small. It could be, I woke up.

I went to the bathroom on my own. I needed that for about a week and a half, but it could be anything. I'm breathing. I am alive today. Whatever, how small, you know, it could be, if you had the world's worst day, write down something that you learned not to do.

A lesson, right? A lesson is a positive thing. You know, I learned that taking chlorine dioxide when I was sick before I met a doctor is dumb because it doesn't work.

Sorry to bust a lot of people's bubbles here. But so I just write down three things that like went well in the day. And I mean, like literally, it could be the most minuscule thing.

Like I woke up, I'm ready to go to bed. Those could be two. Now you can just go, I'm breathing. Literally, it could be that simple, but you have to put an effort in to do it.

It's kind of like simple, but not easy. You just have to make it a habit. But the cool thing is, if you do this at the end of the day, do it for three minutes, no more.

Don't try hard. Just write down the first three things, no matter how piddly they are. It's almost like red wine. Or if you like red wine, it's like you go like this.

and then you smell it, and then you have a sip, and you can sit there and savor it for five minutes, that one sip. I want you to take the most nuanced thing of your day and savor it.

But you don't have to think about it, just write it down. And then here's the crazy one. Come up with three wins you're going to have tomorrow, no matter how big or small.

Take 20 seconds. I'm going to wake up in the morning, I'm going to breathe, and I'm going to eat like 10 more calories, whatever it is for you. And really just write that down.

It should take no more than three minutes to do all six of these, then go to bed. And then wake up the next morning, takes like 10 or 15 seconds, read all six.

That's all you do. I have had so many people do this. Everyone who takes me up on it between day four and day seven is like, I cannot believe how awesome my life really is.

And it's like, you just have to say, I'm worth it. I'm going to try. Dr. Tom's insane. But unlike so many of the other

people I talked to, he's actually been there and also gotten better for more than a decade without symptoms, without relapse.

So how many people can tell you that? So I mean, you could, right? You and me. So listen to Mariah and Tom. But try it on. But I'm serious, like, if you do this practice for three minutes in the evening and 15 seconds in the morning, write me and let me know how you're feeling in four to seven days.

It is unbelievable. And there are so many other practices, but this is the easy one. Now, people are like, well, what's the magic here? Well, what's really interesting is whenever I, most people listening are probably going to go, this sucks.

Identity Shift, Gratitude Practice, and Daily Healing Habits

Like, I don't even know what you're talking about. I can't do that. It's not going to work. That's your conscious mind trying to protect you. That is a normal reflex protective mechanism of your nervous system.

Be very grateful that you have that. That could be one of the things you wrote down. My nervous system is protecting me even if it's in an effed up way.

because it is still, your body is never not protecting you. It is never not doing 100% its best to help you. Your body is never checked out on you. You might be sick and it might be hurt in your body and your body can't do the best you want it to, but your body is 100% of the time doing its very best.

I can guarantee you that. Now, what's really cool is when you fall asleep and even the worst insomniac eventually will fall asleep at some point, it might be a week later, but they do.

When your subconscious mind is so good, but it's so in tune with and connected with the conscious mind. When I fall asleep, my conscious and subconscious mind dissociate.

And if you've ever heard anybody talk about your higher self, your higher power, your super conscious, when you fall asleep and those two dissociate, then your subconscious can plug in the universal intelligence, whether you call that love or life force or God, whatever works for you is good for me.

When you plug into that now, The reason the thing works to plan tomorrow is your conscious mind's not in the way to block new healing opportunities and new other life financial abundance opportunities, whatever it is.

You're connected to super consciousness to source. And now you're starting to download all these new really awesome possibilities. And that's why it happened so rapidly in like a week.

You're like, oh my God, I can't believe there's good stuff in my life. It's just about recognizing it. And then what's super cool is when you start to, you're not going to feel gratitude maybe in the very beginning, or you're just going to go, oh, kind of, maybe, whatever.

I'm just going to do it because Moorcroft said to. And I'm going to try it for a week. But then you're going to naturally start to sink into that. And when you're doing your writing of the six things every evening, now, instead of being all jacked up going, oh my God, I can't believe I have to write this thing down that doesn't exist in my life, and I'm faking it till I make it thing, you're going to land into gratitude by accident.

Because you're going to start to get parasympathetic when you think about it, and then you're going to go, oh yeah, and then your nervous system is going to calm down.

Now guess what? You do this for a week, 10 days, a month or two, now you're getting more parasympathetic right at, that's it, bedtime. Now you can sleep deeper, so you get more connected to healing, but What's the number one brain detox supplement in the whole world?

Sleep, because that's when most of it happens. So if you want to detoxify your brain, sleep better. If you can't sleep, get more parasympathetic, do this practice.

I've had so many people in like a week or two like cure their insomnia just by doing a gratitude practice. So I think you wanted me to give a really short version of that, but you know me, that is one of the most powerful practices I've ever seen.

Yeah. And that was a short response for you, Tom. It was probably pretty short for me. So we've danced around it, but tell me, paint the picture, what is real healing look like to you beyond symptom relief?

And how do we help our patients and ourselves hold on to that vision, even in the really hard moments? Yeah, I think I look at cure and I look at healing as a starting point to this very short answer.

Cure is eradication of disease, but I've known so many people who are cured, like of cancer. And they're miserable mother effers and everybody around them is miserable.

They're miserable, but they say they cured. They defeated the illness. I killed lime. Yay. What do you do? But their lives stink. But I've seen so many more people who heal, which is, to become a complete human being, to reconnect with source, to reconnect with love in your heart, shine your light to inspire those around you to do their own thing.

Like if you're a parent and you want to motivate your kid to do some change or to lead, it's all about leading by example. So I recommend all my, all the doctors and the other practitioners out there, you gotta be the healthiest person, body, mind and spirit in that office every single day.

Now, if you meet somebody who's on the same level as you, congratulate them, love them, give them a hug because they're doing a great job and so are you for motivating them.

But you can only inspire other people by the energy that you're sharing. And it works great in parenting, you know. So do that. But I think the thing is, it's about also healing your community.

And some people like big communities, some have really small ones. But it's your family unit, your friend unit. You and your dog are going to have a better relationship if you are whole inside.

So I always focus on wholeness. And I will say that the vast majority of people I've seen who are cured have to heal first. So if you want the best chance to eradicate your disease and you don't want to believe me in all this spiritual mumbo jumbo just for the sake of it, dive into it because it's your best path towards cure.

And I think You know, I can't convince it like, like the part of your question that kind of like is tugging at my heartstrings right now is I can't convince anybody of this.

And, you know, frankly, it's not my job. I can only show up and say, this is my experience and I love my life. And I even, I learned to love the shitty times because I learned to be a better person in that.

I do crazy stuff in my life, like apologize. for things I've done wrong to my wife, to my dog, to my daughter, to my friends. A friend of mine, I ordered some peptides for him.

He's a friend and a patient. He was away. I didn't want him to come to his house. And then I got busy and I ordered them a week and a half late so they didn't come on time.

And I was like, you know what? He's asked me all these questions. I go, it was my fault. I'm sorry. And he's like, oh, that's okay. I just was, I just wanted this to happen.

But it was like crazy, the change in the energy from just being a real human being. Most people want us to be real humans. So as a healthcare practitioner, as a parent, as a leader, You can't, I can't do what you just asked me to

do for someone else.

But I can show them, I can shine my light as best I can. And when I have a bad moment, I can share that I had a bad moment and here's how I'm changing.

So I'm all about leading by example, because if every, so many people go, Dr. Tom, do you really do that? like in your life. And most of the time they ask me about take the supplements and eat that way and exercise.

I'm like, yeah. But I will say, I cannot recall anybody ever saying when we had a conversation like you and I have been having, I don't remember anyone ever going, do you really live that way?

Because they all know I do. Right. And that's the best way to do it is for you and I to have, and I really appreciate the opportunity. I have so much gratitude for being able to have this conversation because it's not the sexiest conversation.

It's like, you got to show up and you love yourself. And a lot of times they say, if people really want to up the ante, step in front of the mirror, look at yourself, and then say, hey, Mariah, I love you.

Hey, Tom, I love you. And that spot that goes, if it does, which everybody's got a little something going on, is like the signpost of where you need, it's like radar to exactly where you need to go work.

you know, breathe into it and love yourself. But it's like, I can only, the only thing I, I mean, I can give people all the information, but they have to want to do it for themselves.

And I think I can tell them they're worthy to receive healing. I can tell them I love them. They deserve healing. They deserve love. But it's like, you have to feel it.

So somewhere in there, if it's resonating with you, even a micron, Man, that's a great thing to put in your gratitude practice. I know somewhere there's a little itty bitty part of me that knows that I'm worth healing and that I deserve it.

Because, you know, as you know, we can give people all the supplements, all the recommendations, but how many people come in to go, Dr. Tom, Dr. Mariah, you're going to be so upset with me.

I haven't done anything we talked about last time. I just was overwhelmed. So I just kept the same. I'm like, well, that's really good that you did this.

You kept going. Next time maybe call the office and we'll give you a little pep talk Don't wait a month. Yeah. Yeah, exactly. But they're like, oh my god You're gonna be so disappointed in me and I'm like, you know what?

I'm not disappointed in you, but I want to help figure out why you didn't take action Right. So it's like a man I would love to be able to answer this question differently and say do this and it'll work but this is the part where I If you're not worth this, who is?

And I would suggest to all the parents, oh, I'm focusing on my kids. I go, you're not doing it the right way. Because if you can't focus on yourself first and show your kids that you're worth it, that's why you're having so many problems with your kids taking their treatments, because you're not doing yours.

Right. Yeah. Lead by example. Exactly. Exactly. MSI. All right, well, before we wrap up, do you have any last pieces of advice you'd like to share with our listeners?

I would just say that each and every one of you are awesome. in your own unique way, the world is a very awesome place. And right now it's also a little bit of too much darkness for my liking.

And it depends on how you look at it, but I would suggest that we can all make a really big positive change in the

world by shining our own light. Find your passion, something you used to be passionate about, something you currently are, something that you wanna do in the future.

Real Healing, Leading by Example, and Finding Your Light

Even if it seems ridiculous, Just do it. Just find something that lights your heart up and just focus on that. That's the thing. And if you can find your light, I don't want everybody to go out mountain biking and skiing and doing all the crazy stuff I do.

I mean, one is it's probably not true to you. And if it is, great. But I also don't want to crowd the slopes any more than they are. Anyway, do stuff that's fun and gets you excited.

Follow your passion. And even if you think, like we were just talking, I just took up DJing, right? It's like, I've been a musician my whole life, but there's certain parts about just being able to share music with people in that particular way that I think would be cool.

But I'm probably too old to become a professional DJ or go to all these festivals, but guess what? I am anyway. You're still doing it. I'm doing it anyway.

And you know why? Because I just said I'm doing it. So just like, if you can even just see the look on both of our faces, right? It's like, I'm just beaming.

I'm just like, I'm doing something so ridiculous, and it doesn't matter at all. And you might be doing it at Lime Bites too, if we can get you the space.

So that's going to be amazing. That'll be so fun. Well, part of that too. Here's the other thing that I'm glad, and I'll try to keep this short, because you know I don't do that too well sometimes.

But like the reason I love it is like if we can share a journey together where we have movement of the body. One of the things I love about dance, even for people who like, and I'm not talking about like 80s dance party, although that works, is when When we move our body and we breathe deeply, we contract our muscles.

That's amazing lymphatic drainage. We also get very parasympathetic when we start to move in a groove, in a frequency. And this all came out of the breathwork training I've done.

But it's like it grounds your body. And you can do it even from lying in your bed, just kind of bopping your head or even thinking about music. You don't have to be dancing.

externally jumping off of a stage or whatever, but you just move with the frequency. And that's the whole conversation we've been having is about getting in the frequency of love and passion and joy.

That's what gets you out of Paris, the fight or flight and freeze. And it's what promotes healing. Why does heart rate variability increasing work? It's because you're in a frequency of healing and the frequency of life.

So just vibrate. That's why I said, do you have a negative meditation or positive meditation? It's all about the frequency. It doesn't mean you don't have bad thoughts and you don't have negative thoughts, you do, but which one do you live in more?

So live in that frequency because as you get into the frequency and you start to move and you start to like breathe deeper in your lymphatic drainage and your parasympathetic and you sleep better so your brain detoxifies and all these wonderful things.

you are learning to live in that frequency in an easier way. And that's why I love to share it that way. And so do stuff that makes you feel a little uncomfortable, but not too much.

Do things that really open your heart. And yeah, make you think, I can't do that, or I'm too old, or I'm too young, or I'm too small. I mean, I remember in hockey, like I went to University of Vermont.

There's a guy, Martan St. Louis, and I'm playing for the Rangers. The guy was 5'6". What hockey player in the pros is five, six, they're all six, three, like eight billion pounds and they're ripped.

This guy was just, he was just like following his passion. So it doesn't matter how old you are, how young you are. Now, obviously, if you're 50, you're probably not going to become a professional freeride skier who jumps off 40 foot cliffs.

You could probably do it. But I mean, there's a little bit of reality to age, but most of it's what we think. And I'm just saying, like, take advantage of it.

You're thinking all day long. Think cool stuff. Try it out. Because most of us when we have Lyme and we're in the middle of it, we're thinking about crap all day.

So you're not going to forget you're sick. You're not going to forget. Literally, if you can forget that you have Lyme disease, you don't have Lyme disease.

Right? I mean, everybody listening should know that one, right? If you can think your way out of that box, you're not in the box anymore. Dr. Tom, how would you describe the energy or atmosphere of the Lime Bytes Symposium?

Lime Bites is like a big old happy family. We're a whole bunch of people who are getting together and really just like working through the chronic complex cases.

We're talking about the nuts and bolts, the science, but also the true aspects of healing where we combine sort of the mental, physical, spiritual aspects all together.

But it's like these amazing practitioners getting together, revitalizing each other and also So it's kind of like family, community, doctors and other practitioners coming together in this sense of joy and hope and love.

And it's like really a crazy conference because it's so unlike so many others. It's not just hardcore science, it's science and connecting and we're all learning from each other.

And we all think outside the box and we all also think about who's in that box and how our outside the box thinking can work to really move the healing of the world forward.

So it's just like one of my favorite things to do. And as you know, I've done crazy travel to weird places to make it happen because it's the thing that really ignites my soul and we all can connect and share that with other people.

Yeah, thank you for that. And I mean, I think a great thing about Line Bytes is every single year, I learned so much at that conference. And it's odd because, you know, we go to ILADS and to MAPS and to TFIM and IFM and all of these different conferences.

And we see a lot of the same people talking and lecturing. But I mean, it's like every single speaker that comes on every year, I learn more and more and more.

And when you say that, one of the things that I really think about Lime Bites is I feel like we even have some of the same speakers at all these events, right?

But when you're at some of these other conferences, it's almost like they're telling me what they want me to hear or the people who brought them there want them to hear.

And like Lime Bites is like they're telling, it's almost more of a collaborative lecture. Almost like I feel like they're telling me like more about their heart and soul of how this actually works in clinical practice.

And we come together and I learn all that new stuff. But I also learn like, I feel like I learn more about the behind the scenes thinking that the lecture is doing rather than just a superficial, I have to do a scientific like research based CME lecture.

We have all that, but I feel like I get a window into the way they think. And so not only do I learn new things, But I think sometimes more importantly, I learn new ways of thinking that expand, that can take me out of my box.

Because I mean, no matter how big my box is, I still have a box and they're always, your lecturers are always challenging me to think bigger and broader.

And that's really kind of cool because not a lot of people these days after doing this for so long challenge me to think differently. I learn new information from them and I put it in my hopper, but I feel like Lime Bites challenges me to think differently and that's really powerful.

That's true. Thank you so much for joining us, Dr. Tom. And thank you, everyone, for listening to Lime Bites. I hope this brought you one step closer to true healing.

If it helped you, share it with someone who needs to hear it too, because together we heal stronger. Take care. We'll see you next time. Thank you for tuning into Dr.

Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health. Each day is a new opportunity to make choices that empower your well-being.

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