Prevent Dementia: Julia Lindstrom's Brain Health Plan Transcript

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Opening on Sleep and Small Habit Changes

I think one of the best things to do is to start really looking, you know, look at the ten pillars, look at your sleep, my sleeping 7 to 9 hours sleep or my bad eight hours that I'm sleeping six because I'm reading or on my phone.

And that's what you concentrate on. And then we love telling people to do sleep journals in your sleep through all the time you went to bed. Go to bed the same time every night.

Can't make giant adjustments on sleep. Can't go to bed at one but also try to go to bed. That doesn't work. The biggest recommendation I have for people is the small changes add up.

There's a great book, Atomic Habits, and it really talks about 1%. Changes over the course of the year have dramatically affect your life. This is doctor talks.

Welcome to this episode of the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. I'm your host, Doctor Heather Sandison, and I can't wait to reintroduce you to my friend Julia Lundstrom.

She is the CEO and founder of Simple Smart Science. She started this mission almost 11 years ago when her dear aunt was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. And within one year, in this quick decline, she couldn't even remember her own children.

Introduction to Julia Lundstrom and Brain Health Mission

Then, five years ago, Julia's own mom started to see symptoms of memory loss and now has full dementia. Julia's vision is to reduce the number of dementia cases by 50% by the year 2050.

And the way to do that is to help people prevent it. Julia, welcome. Thank you so much, Heather. It's a pleasure being back. Good to see you again. And getting caught up with everything you're working on is so exciting as well.

Yeah. I want to give everyone here just an action packed, informative 20 30 minutes and all the updates on on what you've been providing. You were just telling me about the client retreats that you're running, and I'd love to just dive into your pillars of brain health and how you help a typical client.

Yeah, so about 80% of our clients really just need the foundational help. And so we know, you know, through your work and doctor reticence, work the 36 right, 36 reasons for memory loss.

And of course, we're all preventative. So everything we're teaching and showing clients is really looking at the science behind what can help to prevent dementia.

And so we're looking at that our ten pillars of brain health that incorporate everything from being social and having purpose, challenging yourself, using your memories, sleep of course, diet, exercise, all those things.

Supplementation are all encompassing in this. So typically when we start working with the client we come in, we have them do a memory assessment and then we determine where they need the help.

Right. And the biggest component of this and I think you know this is the accountability like a lot of people know so much of this stuff.

The Ten Pillars of Brain Health

Everything. I've never had anybody doing 100%. But we have a lot of people that do a lot. Right. But it's the

accountability, you know? And so that's where we really focus a lot of our time.

We've brought in last year, we talked a lot about the CMS and and looking inside people's bodies. So that's continuing to be a part. I mean, I know I spend a lot of money every year on on testing preventative things, right?

I had a stressful year, so I wanted to test my cortisol and make sure that I'm okay. You know, so doing that kind of testing to to to make sure that, you know, nothing is coming down the line that's unforeseen.

And so that's a lot of what we're doing now. We were started doing some functional DNA testing, a lot. We have a geneticist now, who helps us with that.

PA, you know, we like to say your genes load the gun and your environment, your lifestyle pulls the trigger. Right. So that's really what we're looking at.

And it's great to see. Like, for me, I don't know if you've ever done any functional DNA testing, but, for me, you know, I don't process inflammations very well.

I don't process toxins very well. So I know I have to keep my lifestyle and all all the things, but that's an inflammation. I need to be extra careful with inflammatory foods and stress, things like that.

So it's really great. I mean, I just think there's so much individualized care that needs to be done and customization, which I know you do a lot of, and that's what we're focused on because your body and my body are not the same.

Yeah. The genetics conversation is always really interesting, right. Because I think some people are really turned off by it. Right? They think, oh, there's nothing I can do about my genes.

So why would I even want to test them or know? And yet epigenetics or those inputs, the way we eat, what we eat, how, how often we move, how much good quality sleep we get, how we interact with others.

You mentioned socialization and avoiding isolation. Those things have a much bigger impact on how our genetics are expressed, and genetics and understanding them can be so empowering because as you mentioned, if you know that you don't detoxify well or that you are prone to more inflammation, maybe you have the ApoE e4 genetics.

This is something that if you know this in your 20s, you can make different decisions than if you kind of put your head in the sand and pretend it isn't there and so you can get ahead of it and do such.

I mean, in the prevention world, this makes so much sense to understand your genetics, right? Later on, when someone with severe dementia is testing, that's almost for prevention for their their offspring, they're the people who share their genetics.

It can become a tool for prevention and motivation. Right? Exactly. I mean, it's just fascinating to know. I mean, they even they even have it down now to, you know, I don't absorb binder transport, vitamin B12 or vitamin D.

Well, and so I take a certain type of vitamin D. And I got to take it twice a day because if I just take in the morning I'm not absorbing it. So it's, you know, it's like just getting in a long road.

It saves us a lot of money from taking a bunch of stuff that isn't working. You know, we like to say expensive PE, but it's this concept of let's, let's really look at the individual's body and inside their body, you know, we we talked like so we talked a lot about the cgmps, the functional testing.

I know you do a lot more in-depth testing, especially when it comes to the Recode program and things like that. But on the prevention side, that's one of the huge things we've seen.

And even down to that you mentioned, are retreats that are retreats. We're putting everybody on EEG and we're

looking at their brainwave states, and from their brainwave states, I mean, you can see ADHD, ADHD, you can see TBI, so you can see all the stuff that's having Parkinson's dementia.

You can see that in their brainwave states. And so we work with clients to get them not only congruent brainwaves, but also looking at getting them into the alpha brainwave state, which is much more.

I not only creative and where you should make your better decisions, but also a much more healing state. Right? So it's and again, it's just so individualized per person and it some people get there easy and some people don't.

Personalized Testing, Genetics, and Brainwave Assessment

And and to work with them and teach techniques. And so it's it's taking it a really I mean that's going really deep when we do our retreats, individual retreats, we it's really deep diving.

So again, 80% of the people just need the foundational work. But it's really fun to to really go to the next level with some of this stuff. And when you see a new client, how do you decide which pillar?

You mentioned there were ten of them. How do you decide where to start? Right? Or do you throw everything at them? No. No. 15. Yeah. We have a motto. We meet them where they're at.

And so people are busy whether they're retired or not. Some people are busier in retirement than outside, so it's really important to get them. And we do an in-depth memory assessment intake.

And so we're going through their lifestyle, their diets, their sleep habits, their social habits, what what their lifestyle looks like. Give us walk us through a day, you know, and that really helps us determine where they need the most help.

And so if it's sleep, we have sleep experts. Right. And so they can talk them through that. If that's diet with nutritionists and we talk them through that.

And so we like the, the first 30 days is really about where we can have the highest leverage. We want people to get results really quickly because that's going to keep them motivated to do the harder work down the line.

Right. And so and then you know we do live interactive classes. So if we say hey we want you to start meditating because you have, you know the fried brain or you know that they work too hard all their life and they're just this scatterbrained, you know, high cortisol, that kind of a thing.

We actually now this past year have started doing interactive classes where they can actually come. So we say go meditate. We have a class once a week where they can and it's all online, right?

So they can come and they can show up and actually do the work and learn different, different techniques. We do breathwork once a week. We have brain healthy cooking classes.

They can come join, ask questions individual. So it's really, really fun. Memory classes how to use your memory better so you get this interactive social component accountability.

All of that is inside the programs. And I think that's one of the biggest things, because when most people come to work with us, they they really don't know what the root cause of.

And most don't have the same type of issues. Right? They are just a little bit more forgetful. They're not feeling as sharp as they used to, or a little bit of brain fog.

Sometimes nothing that's screaming you've MCI or anything like that, but just not feeling like they did 10 or 20 years ago. Yeah, that. And that's where we want to look at the cognitive environment.

But and what a luxury right? When someone comes into my office and they're like, well nothing shows up. I've got a perfect score of 30. I'm not testing as impaired on any of the the quizzes or anything that, I've done with neurology or my primary care provider, but I know my brain isn't working the way it did ten years ago.

And this often will happen for professionals, right? The people who are very well educated, they've got a lot of what we call cognitive reserve, and maybe they're super sharp and quick, and they never would forget a name or miss a word or not be able to calculate something in their head.

But all of a sudden, or maybe gradually even that's more common. It's like it's not what it was before. And that is such a luxury to be working with patients then, because it's pretty quick and easy to turn it around.

It doesn't take as much effort as if we're talking to someone with more severe Alzheimer's. Talk to me a little bit more about the psychology of the pillars of brain health and and how they've helped people.

Accountability, Retreats, and Client Success Stories

And if you have any examples of people you've worked with, that'd be fantastic to hear some stories. Absolutely. I mean, it's it's a wide spectrum of people we've worked with.

But, you know, you talked about professionals. We see a lot of the burnt out brain where they've been working for 12, 14, 16 hours a day for decades. And all of a sudden they come in and their brain is literally fried.

Right? So it's and because they haven't stopped their brain forces that to stop. And so we get a lot of that. We see a lot of professionals that come in.

And then it really is it's complete lifestyle overhaul for them. Right. They don't they maybe they're working out, but they're not doing strength training.

Or maybe they're not taking any time to meditate or slow down or breather. And I always hear, you know, the meditation, oh, it's so boring. I can't do it.

Or my brain just wanders and and that's funny. Meditation is how you know you need it. That's. Yeah. So I like to say I heard it once. Somebody said it.

It's not my original, but, if you can't do it for one minute, then you need an hour. Yeah, exactly. I know I went on a meditation retreat with my mom not that long ago, and she was like, I can't sit still.

I can't just sit there. And I was like, you need it more than anyone can. I? Which. And it's not meant to be torturous. It's so funny. My relationship with meditation, it's like it's my sacred time at to to myself.

I get it in the morning, I get up. I'm so motivated to get up and out of bed because I want to race everybody else out of bed so that I have the house to myself.

I have that quiet time and my day doesn't feel like it's started until I get that, and it's so different. If I miss it for some reason, I'm sorry. Go on. So.

And I'm absolutely with you, I mean that that's just it. You know, we had a woman that was in a car accident, two years, three years ago now, and she started working with us about a year ago.

And when she went in, the doctors said that there was so that it looked like she was already on the path to Alzheimer's after this car accident because she had concussion and all this stuff.

And they said, you're going to have Alzheimer's within five years, which, you know, she's she was six years old like this. She had nothing before it. So she did a lot of work prior to that.

I mean, her whole face. What before you came to us, she looked like she had had a stroke, but all that was kind of fixed before she came to us. But she was forced to quit, and we completely changed her diet around her health.

Her lifestyle got her to slow down and start doing the work using her memory again. You know, our cell phones are just some of the worst things for using our memory.

We just don't anymore. And I mean, she she says that we just saved her life because she feels incredibly sharp. She feels healthy. She lost 25 pounds. She's.

I mean, that's just it. When you put your brain health first, you just lose weight because you're not worried about the waistline, you're worried about your brain.

And, she actually came to one of our retreats, and she was one of the more difficult ones because of some of the brain damage that happened with the car accident.

But we were able to get her into an alpha brainwave state where she could come to a calm, relaxed, you know, relaxed state. And now she's continuing to do the work.

And that's just it. It's the continuing to do the work, the accountability and how important that is. Because when you show up every single week to talk to somebody, you know, a doctor says, oh, go, go do that thing, you need to go do that.

So I'll see you in six months. It's not giving people what they need to really get the work done. But when you're paying for something that you need to shop weekly and say, I did do this when I've had a client tell me that he he's a veterinarian and he gets home now, he does surgery late, and sometimes it gets home at 11:00 at night.

And he says, but I know I go and do these exercises that my coach gave me, even if it's for 10 or 20 minutes, because I can't see her face the next day and tell her I didn't do it.

That accountability right. This isn't rocket surgery, right? It's it's the basics of diet and exercise and stress management. The hard part is doing it is actually implementing these ideas.

And so is there. Is there a certain I mean, accountability you mentioned, is there anything else that you use to help people implement? So when we we talked about this last year, but I'd like to circle back to it, like the continuous glucose monitors that we put on people, that gives them the instant feedback loop.

And everybody thinks food when it comes to glucose, but it's really sleep. I mean, it's also food, but it's sleep. It's stress, it's exercise. All of those things affect it.

And I think once people start to really get used to it, we put everybody retreats on it, you know, and everybody's sitting around a table. And it's shocking to see how they all react to diet and exercise and and the perfect brain healthy meal.

And some people are great with it. Some people aren't. Then we have to figure out why that is. But what's always shocking to most people is a feedback loop on the stress.

Like I had, you know, they'll say something like, oh, I had, you know, some raisins or a milkshake or a candy bar. And my glucose went up 60 points. I got in a fight and I went up 100.

I they don't understand how toxic these relationships can be to your inner health or politics or anything that gets you that riled up, that right. How much that's actually affecting your on the inside.

So I love things that give them that instant feedback loop on what they're doing. And so that's something, you know, they scan on their phone and they're able to see within an hour what happened.

And that is the biggest lifestyle changer for those people. Are you a fan of the rings or the watches or things that track sleep as well? We do a lot of that.

Yeah. Everybody at our retreats get some sort of tracker. We like the rings. I like the ordering. Is really big. I, you know, it's a double edged sword.

With that, people get a little too obsessed with it.

Tracking Sleep and Glucose for Feedback

Or if they're not a good sleeper and they put it on, they get even more stressed out that they're not sleeping very well. And so there's a there's a fine line balance there, right?

We've even had people get obsessive with cgmps and want to wear it for six months or a year. It's like you don't need that much. That's all the time you need to learn and then adjust accordingly.

And then once you're okay, stop with the data. But, I do love the trackers because it is important. A lot of people will say, oh, you know, I sleep eight hours a night, and really, maybe they're only getting five.

Like, they don't really understand what's going on at night or they're not getting any deep sleep or they're, you know, so it is good to track that a lot.

So we definitely do that for, a lot of our clients that need it, especially on the sleep side. Yeah. Amazing. So where do you recommend people start at home to get on this track towards those ten pillars of brain health?

Having this really great foundation is would it be one of these trackers or something different? Yeah. I mean, I think if somebody I mean, first of all, we we put on a lot of free workshops and so people can go, I think we gave you guys a link so they can go sign up for one.

It's free. They learn for an hour, which is great. And we talk about everything from how inflammation affects your memory to stress to diet, exercise, sleep, all of that, how that really affects your memory.

But if they really want to get started just on their own at home, I think one of the best things to do is to start really looking, you know, look at the ten pillars, look at your sleep and like sleeping 7 to 9 hours.

And I really quite or my bed eight hours that I'm sleeping six because I'm reading or on my phone, you know and and then and that's what you concentrate on.

And then we love telling people to do sleep journals. Write in your sleep journal what time you went to bed. Go to bed the same time every night. You can't make giant adjustments on sleep.

You can't go to bed at one. And then also try to go to bed at ten. Doesn't work right. It's making small changes and I think that's the biggest thing.

The biggest recommendation I have for people is the small changes add up. There's a great book, Atomic Habits, and it really talks about 1% changes over the course of the year have dramatically affect your life.

And so most people try to make these huge shifts overnight and it's not sustainable. You know, we say you're not going to and especially if you don't like it.

So we say right. We say it's an all la carte menu. It's not a one size fits all. So if you don't like something you're not going to do it for life. So let's find out what you do like.

So if you wanted to work with us, of course we do. Your memory assessment. Look at all of that. But otherwise just sit down and start writing. Where do you think you're lacking in life?

Right. Whether it's the diet, the exercise. Well, again, let's go through those ten pillars you mentioned sleep, diet, exercise. I'm going to assume those are two and three.

You're not going to forget one just because I'm on the spot. But there's supplementation of course. And I think that once we talked to a lot of people about, oh man, so many pills and all this stuff, and again, how do we know if we need it?

You do have to do some testing for supplementation. You really do. Yes. There's some things like reminders today that you should just take for prevention going forward.

But it's you know, you want to take calcium if you don't need it, if you don't have any calcium issues. Right. So there's a lot of things people are taking or they're taking the wrong form.

But so I think for supplementation, it is important to do not you don't need to do it, go crazy with it.

Where to Start at Home: Sleep, Journaling, and Small Steps

But you do need to do some baseline testing to see what you really need and also work with someone like yourself. Because if if you don't know, you know, if you're taking a supplement that's blocking the pathway, that may be harming you somewhere else.

So there's a lot of moving parts to go with supplementation. And that's one of the areas that I think people really should invest in themselves and find out what they need.

And then we have being social, right? Being social is more important at 85 year hard study, more important than diet and exercise, right? Just getting out there.

And I have people that say, oh, I talked to people on the phone all the time. That's great. And it's not the same as is the one on one energy. You get it? Just you.

We have energy fields. We absolutely need to be around people. The purpose and the challenge, we kind of clump that into one. But we see people all the time that, you know, when you're just sitting in front of the TV all day, your brain is going to die.

Hey, I mean, it's, you know, my dad used to say that your eyes are going to turn square. Well, your your brain is going to get it. I'm trippy. I mean, it it just isn't getting the stimulation.

Or maybe it's getting that stress stimulation because you're watching news or whatever. And then we have breathwork, and that's not just breathwork for your lungs.

That's opening up your, your pathways, breathing through your nose as much as possible. Really important. Right. There's a yeah, there's lots of lots of studies, lots of science around the importance of breathing through your nose and not your mouth.

And unfortunately, as people get older, we see that, you know, the mouth breathers. So we we work with people on that, teach them breathwork techniques to start to use, breathe through their nose even at night.

Right? The mouth sleep the mouth. Breathing at night is really hard. We do talk about mouth taping. But I think I've lost track. But then we have use it.

You got to use it or lose it. So we talk about learning. A lot of times people just stop learning, right? Our learning curve when we're young, it's straight up and down, and then we get married and have kids and it just kind of flattens up.

And then it goes negative in our time. And a lot of times we just stop learning, and that's one of the biggest ones.

We need to continue to learn and grow every single day.

So I don't remember how many that was. I'm trying to think of either one eight. Let me see. I don't when sleep number one, diet number two exercise number three supplementation.

Number four socialization. Number five purpose and challenge. Number six breathwork. Number seven learning number eight meditation. Number nine. Definitely number nine.

And boy, from my head, I'm gonna have to send you up is. Well, this is my reason for people to go to your website. And I know those ten pillars that you're going to know.

Make me look it up because it's going to drive me crazy. But, the the meditation, I think is a really big one as well, because this is something most people don't think about and they don't think it's that important.

It's the of stress reduction. Sorry, that was the 10th one. And that's another really big one. And a lot of times stress reduction comes with meditation.

But it also comes from unfortunately for a lot of people changing their life, changing their location, changing their life and even changing their relationships.

And a lot of people don't want to hear that. So that's something we we work with as well. But, or we refer out to therapists or we refer to relationship experts, but it's it's really difficult when we talk to other people that have been in relationships that are abusive and they're never going to leave.

So it's, it's really creating safe spaces for them. And, and I don't mean physically, sometimes physically abusive, but just not not a growing, enriching relationship.

All Ten Pillars and the Role of Stress Reduction

And so it's helping them with that to to if they're not going to get out of it, to learn to create a safe space for themselves, to give themselves that stress reduction from it or to manage it better.

So there's a little bit of therapy in there too, right? So it's it's a little bit of everything. And a lot of them do go like this. And controlling. But it's really important that people start to focus on these lifestyle changes.

And it's not just what's inside and they're testing. It is the environment, it is the toxins, it is the mold and the heavy metals. It is, you know, if you're never getting outside in the winter because it's cold, you either you need to force yourself or, you know, take some vacation time and go somewhere warm or move.

And I just lived in Denver for the last six months, and I don't do winter, so I moved to somewhere warm. So it's great. So you know, you got to know what makes you happy.

And the environment has to be a peaceful, calm, happy place. And, that goes for everything. You know, we work with borders, we work with and those are not relaxing, calm environments either.

And help them get organized, you know, organizers that come over and help them get rid of it. And it's it's really everything, right? It's it's looking from the outside in and the inside out.

There's so much to this. And it's, for a lot of people, they find it challenging and overwhelming. And so having a coach, having someone who can walk you through this, whether it's the medical piece of it, having a doctor who can run testing or having coaches, if you feel like your, gap is in these lifestyle places.

And accountability, like Julia mentioned, is what you need. I think it's so important to be working with someone if you're feeling is overwhelm, right?

Find a teacher, find a coach, find a partner and accountability buddy. Find someone who can help you get the most out of this approach because we see it work.

The thing that keeps it from working is not doing it right. So get get that support. I want everyone to know where they can find out more about you. We're so grateful for your support of the summit and for you being here and all of your time and expertise.

So please share where people can find out more. Absolutely. So like I said, the best way to just learn more about what we're doing in general on about me and who I am and what I teach is just sign up for one of our workshops.

We do have several. We have a workshop on sleep inflammation. How to improve your memory in 30 days or less. And, really just learn more that way.

How to Learn More About Simple Smart Science

So I think we have a link that they can join there. Otherwise you just can go straight to our website at Simple Smart science.com and learn everything we're doing from our coaching program to our retreats or five day intensive retreats.

And this year, we're in the process of getting funding to now bring it to where people live in their homes and, retirement communities, and being able to give them food delivery based upon their genetics and what they can have.

Is it your genetics? Well, so tell your food sensitivities. I mean, it's crazy how much the functional DNA test can tell you these days, from hormones to sleep to what kind of exercise is best for you.

So to be able to create these environments and packages where people live in their homes so they don't have to move, they don't have to go to facilities, it's so important.

So I think all of that and we have all that on our website. But I, I encourage you to reach out to us, talk to us. Book a call. You can get all that from our website.

And we're happy to help you and, and start on the process of even doing a memory assessment so that you know, the baseline of what's causing this right?

Well, it's so, so wonderful to have you here. We're so grateful for how you support your clients and, and the amazing results that you get for prevention.

So fantastic work. Thank you for doing the work you're doing in the world and also for your time today. Thank you so much. Heather is such a pleasure chatting with you again.

Take her to the. Thank you. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health.

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