Introduction and Client Testimony

I was ready for, immediately I bracing for impact. I immediately thought like, okay, I'm opening my pills and like measuring out how much I would be tapering off while adding on amino acids.

But I, was expecting like the downward drop of a roller coaster. Because I so open and transparent with you about this is what I am feeling and this what is I feeling it.

What does this mean? What should I take? And trusting you implicitly, I think that allowed me to trust within the amino acids of, okay, no, Lori's got me, so I can trust that this and if I'm feeling this way, i can take that or if i'm really overwhelmed or my ADHD really kicks up and I am feeling another type of way.

What can I do? Welcome to Take Back My Brain with Lori Hammer, where real healing starts in the brain. I'm Lori, a functional nutritionist and mom who's walked the path from anxiety and burnout to clarity and calm.

Each week, we're going to dive into brain-based tools like amino acid therapy, gut health, fasting and faith to help you reclaim your energy, emotions and sense of self.

Hey, everyone. Welcome back to Take Back My Brain. I'm your host, Laurie Hammer, and I am really excited today because I have with me a client and you're going to hear her testimony.

And she is an amazingly beautiful woman. Her name is Lauren and she has had quite the journey. So I will let Lauren introduce herself and Lauren, welcome to the podcast.

Hi, thank you. Excited to be here. I'm Lauren. I am based in LA. And I found you a year ago and I can't imagine my life without you now.

Life Before Tapering Off SSRIs

I know, I can't imagine my life without you. It's been a crazy year together, but it's so fun. Yeah, it really has been. Can you tell us where you've been, where were before you came to see me, like mentally, emotionally, physically, what was your life like?

Yeah. So I, wow, we're gonna start. I was I think just on a hamster wheel of life for maybe my whole life. I think the backstory adds some color and context.

Had a pretty traumatic, abusive, neglectful childhood, very much a latchkey kid. And as a result, found myself very anxious and depressed and was put on SSRIs when I was maybe 19 or 20. So I was on them for 15 plus years and have been in therapy for ages, well over 20 years, and found myself at this juncture where I had an opportunity to go experience some ceremonial plant medicine, which you cannot be taking SSRIs to experience because she's a very jealous plan.

So was recommended through a friend of a friends of somebody who knew you, lots of different referrals. There were a couple other individuals as well that were recommended to me to have a consultation call with of how do I taper off these SSRIs in a safe way because Western medicine culture doesn't help you do that, which is wild to And I, even as an adult, my brain hadn't fully developed while I was taking these medicines.

And so that was really scary to me. I were so determined and dedicated to go on this journey of plant medicine, but found myself terrified of what it was going to be like coming off of Lexapro and Effexor and Can I do it?

Am I going to feel safe? am I gonna lose my shit and want to do something drastic? I'm gonna wanna kill myself?

Like what are the on that scale where am i gonna fall and am gonna be okay?

i hadn't known anybody who has ever tapered off meds before so that was also really scary. I didn't have somebody that I could chat to about it. i had a few consultation calls where the suggestion was like, well, just, you know, like anything else, here's the math, taper off the dosage.

But it didn't feel supportive. It was just like good luck. My doctor that I also told him straight up like hey, I'm coming off these meds. He was also concerned and said like you can go back on them if you need to.

So everywhere across the board was giving mixed signals and I didn't really feel supportive.

Starting Amino Acid Therapy

And then I had a call with you and you were like, no problem. This is, this is light work for me. this very supported nurturing connection with you where I was like, okay, I don't know much about amino acids.

I do not pretend to know a lot about homeopathic medicine, although living in LA, it's thrusted upon me and I'm very much sipping the Kool-Aid on a daily basis about it, but did not know enough to figure out where do I start, what do And I think it was all really scary and created a plan with you.

You made amino acid therapy simple enough for me to understand what it is and for to explain thereafter to other individuals that I know who were struggling with the same thing, how that works and what that looks like.

And, I now that it's different for everybody who wants to come off their meds or figure out transitioning med, For me, this was the only way to do it.

And it's been almost a year now. I think it'll be a years in early December. We'll all be SSRI free and still taking my amino acids and prepping for another plant medicine journey in January.

So really excited to still be here and experience life in a different way off SSRIS. Right. I would love for you to kind of dive into that Lauren, because you said your brain had not truly developed on the meds, you've been on med for so long.

Yeah. Watching you go through the process of actually feeling the feels without medication has been an interesting journey. It's blessed me. You know, I prayed for you a lot on this whole journey because when you haven't felt the, you know like the real feels in 25 years, it feels really foreign.

So what's that been like for? Yeah, a lots. I do think that there I think I got on the meds maybe when I was 19 or 20. I in college getting ready to travel abroad and I felt really scared about going and living in another country and not having support.

And most of my family was already medicated. And I think it was my stepmom who was like, oh, yeah, when you go to see Dr. So-and-so, like just say this, that, and the third.

I was, okay, sure, I'll try it. This is, my sister's on it, this was never something, being depressed and anxious was something that was negative in our household.

It just kind of was. But as a 20-year-old, I was already so unconscious and living in this state of survival because that's what I learned growing up in an abusive household with lots of neglect.

And then as you're 25 and the three parts of your brain come together and you figure out all the things that you want and like and don't like, at that point I already overworked and underpaid living and in New York.

So I had no time to just pause and just be in my brain and be itself. And I think it took coming to LA and having it get worse before it got better and found a therapist after.

got 20 years of therapy, where I felt like, okay, now I'm digging deep, I am getting to the deeper stuff.

Emotional Healing After Medication

And I think that makes a huge difference. You can never go as deep as your – you can't go deep unless your therapist is going even deeper, right? And that was a big thing for me.

So even just being on the meds, able to access more of myself. But then coming off Lexapro in particular that I had been on forever and then, coming of FXR, it was like this veil was lifted and I was able to really…

It's not like the world became more colorful, but I able see feelings and experience them in different ways and wasn't pushing them down. And I think there was a lot of repressed feelings, especially even just hearing myself speak about some of the things that was feeling.

made it real and hearing it made me emotional. And I was always like a weeper, like, a good birthday card, great film. I'm weeping, but it was never to a point where I could access and touch certain things.

Even going back East and visiting my family on this past summer felt very different not being medicated for the first time and seeing and experiencing my Family, which is this is where all my wounding came from and Seeing how my parents interact and my sisters and My friends and it was really beautiful.

I was able to kind of take a step back and see it almost like the ghosts of Christmas past, like I was there, but I could see from a different lens, from real grown-up mind versus my child mind state.

But I don't think I would I don't think I could have predicted the level of feeling that I was able to access once I came off the meds and through amino acids for sure.

Hey friend, just a quick break to remind you if calming your brain is the missing piece in your practice or in you home, my Mind Thrive certification course teaches you exactly how to do that with targeted amino acid therapy.

So it's real science, real results, no band-aids. Enrollment is now open. Link is in the show notes. That's amazing. I don't think people really understand what can happen when you remove the medication for sure.

What surprised you most about the amino acid therapy? I was ready for, immediately I bracing for impact. Yeah. I felt like I was in a meth lab opening my pills and like measuring out how much I would be tapering off while adding on amino acids.

But I, I wasn't expecting like the downward drop of a roller coaster. because I was so open and transparent with you about, this is what I'm feeling and this what is feeling it.

What does this mean? What should I take? And trusting you implicitly, I think that allowed me to trust within the amino acids of, okay, no, Laurie's got me, so I can trust that this endorphin is also going to have my back too.

And if I'm feeling this way, I can take that. Or if i'm really overwhelmed or if my ADHD really kicks up and I am feeling another type of way. What can I do?

And I think that surprised me the most where there wasn't any impact. There wasn' a big drop at any point on this journey.

Body-Based Trauma Release and Recovery

It just, it was a smooth sailing. They were waves of, i am not ready for these emotions. Yup. But it was supportive. And I think that was my biggest shock, because I wasn't prepared for that level of support.

That's good. I mean, I loved working with you every step of the way. So I never want anyone to feel alone, so I'm

glad that that comes through. As you went through this last year, What do you feel like has been the biggest shift since?

Because we've done a lot, we have done amino acid therapy. We've got healing, some detox. I mean, We have a done lot. Some testing. What are some of the big things that you have healed from in the past year?

Oh God! I think I was storing a LOT of trauma and stress within my body. As soon as we started this journey, I want to say like a couple months in. I think I was like very freshly coming off my meds.

I had just a little bit left that I taking, and I have a weight lifting accident. And it was not because I lifting incorrectly or improper form or it too heavy, but I holding so much stress and tension in my back and in body and had no idea.

and think that, I couldn't walk for a couple months and was in the hospital, had extreme That was crazy. Physical therapy. I didn't think that was possible, and I've heard that your body really does keep the score, but never experienced it.

And I think, that taught me the patience and the power of how important it is to ask for help and to be open to receiving that. That kind of set the tone and theme for what this journey was going to like.

It's made me be more comfortable with being vulnerable and allowed me to really speak up and that it's okay to not be okay. You can't be OK all the time.

And now when people ask me, like, oh, hey, hi, how are you? I don't care if it's the Trader Joe's cashier or a colleague or friend. Like, I'm never just, good, How are You?

Because like I am not good. Nobody is good at the level to be honest and vulnerable is I think important to share. So I've always given like a four out of 10, you know, and if they can meet me and engage with that, Like I'll tell you I have a 4 out 10. I think the ability to not project and to stay honest and true to self is the biggest takeaway, I thing.

Yeah, that's one of the things I've noticed in you over this last year. Not that you were always super reserved in the beginning, but you very tentative to really express everything past the years going on.

You're like, hey, this is just the way it is. This is what's going, on this how I feel. You know, and then really learning how to, you know adjust the amino acids or adjust your lifestyle or things to talk about in therapy or to.

Talk with somebody who, You need to have those tough talks with, right? A year ago, I don't know that Lauren would have. been able to do all of that I mean I think I told you that a couple months ago I'm like you just look stunning like she does I wish I had a porn after like right now because you were super cute before but now you're just like I means you can tell that your body has done so much healing and you are still healing.

It's not a one and done thing it's definitely a journey. It really is. I think my people-pleasing nature was so strong. Like, I learned how to pretend everything is fine growing up, so that was just my go-to mode.

And I shed that through this experience, and I just don't have an interest to do that anymore. If it makes somebody else uncomfortable, those are their feelings.

But yeah, I think this whole journey has changed me through having tough conversations, through relationships, friendships, like going through breakups.

There's been so, so much. And I feel so better. My skin is clearer.

Sleep, Rest, and New Habits

like the blood test analysis that we did, the hormone analysis. I was so curious and a lot of those results, I needed you to translate the gibberish for me because I made no sense, but it was fascinating.

And I've lost weight without trying. Like I think my distress and anxiety and depression just kept everything so locked in my body that I wasn't able to ever get rid of, in a sense.

And now I just feel- Yeah, people need to understand that. For sure. When your neurology is so wrapped and wound, and people are trying to lose weight and they're not losing weight, or they are, you know, trying go through therapy, they can't go though therapy.

Well, if your body can unwind, it just doesn't release anything. People go to detox therapy for years and years. But if you're body is still wound up, your still stuck in overdrive.

Like, no wonder you're not, right? I mean, I have another client and she was just on the amino acids and, she'd already had a great diet. She's a fellow practitioner.

Put her on amino acid and lost 35 pounds in the last six months without trying. Like she didn't do anything other than her body is finally more relaxed.

Yeah. And I think I felt that too. Not, losing 35 lbs, that'd be a little drastic for me. I'll take it. But I remember at one point I felt guilty because I was just laying on the couch and I remembered you telling me like, well, yeah, your body feels safe enough to relax now.

And I had never really felt that. I've always been like go, go do, do and distract yourself so you don't feel stuff. So leaning into that, even post-injury felt really nice to just allow my body to be.

And I think that was game changer. So now if I'm just doing nothing, like I know that's also healing and I can remind myself of that and let go of the guilt that I feel that comes up.

Yeah, we weren't created to be driven all the time. I mean, God created us for rest. He rested on the seventh day. Like, clearly He likes rest, We need to allow our bodies to have that rest so that we can heal.

And you've learned how to sleep. You know, that's been a huge thing. Oh my God. Yes. My sleep score this morning was 84. I'm like dying to hit 90 one day.

It's so hard. Just I am constantly getting up to pee in the middle of the night, but sleep is like huge now and I don't need many amino acids. before bedtime to achieve that now.

So I've now have like healthier routines and habits leading up to going to bed at night and even waking up in the morning. And that feels nice. Like being an adult is so hard and nobody prepares you for it.

I feel like now at 37, I have mastered how to have a good bedtime routine. Sometimes I'll mess it up and it's not as perfect as I want it to be, but I can try again the next day and just remind myself of that.

Yeah, and I love the fact you're like, well, I get up and pee during the night still.

Investment, Support, and Final Takeaways

Like, we're still in the healing process, right? So there's still things that are still human. Still human, still thing that we are working on. But such a difference in last year.

Yeah. Huge. Yeah. So everyone listening, what would you like to, if there was like one or two things you'd want them to know the most, What would he say?

I think the first thing, this was a true reaction for me. Yes, it is expensive. It's expensive And nothing makes me want to roll my eyes more than when people say, I just, for financially I can't afford that.

Sure you can. It's an investment into your health. You have one life, you have body and one purpose. Like this is

your one shot to do this and you're not getting any younger and your not any healthier.

And I've been guilty of doing that too for a lot of things. And then we'll quickly drop loads of money on food that I don't need to buy or an experience or clothes.

And I think it's so much easier to spend things that you really want to have instead of investing in something that maybe you can't tangibly hold in your hands, but it is worth it.

I can't say that enough, and I think when I've recommended you to friends before, kind of opened the gate after explaining my experience and then giving them your contact info, said like, pause.

I know that you will have sticker shock, I did too, but this is an investment into your health and something that will feel lifelong. Nothing that buy or experience you'll have for that long.

And I think that is the biggest takeaway for me and something that I should really be shared because what you think something should be priced as simply because it's not what want to pay is not real life, that's a reality.

And yeah, your level of expertise and the way that you give yourself to your clients I thinks is space volumes beyond just the working with the amino acids and I that needs to be said upfront.

Aside from that, I will say that yeah, it's hard, but you can do it and you're not… There's accountability in this and there's support in it, and I think it is worth it.

I still can't explain to somebody on the street what an amino acid is in a simplistic form, A year later I'm still taking my amino acids seven times a day and sometimes I'll mess up and I will skip the afternoon doses and think like, shit, I messed up.

But I am still human and still figuring it out and this is a journey and nothing is perfect, but it's so, so worth it. I love it, Lauren. It has been such a pleasure working with you and love your story.

Love the outcome we have so far. You've come so and so proud of you. Thank you so much. I thank you for sharing this with everybody. Can't tell you how much I appreciate it.

And I know there's going to be so many people listening that can relate to your story, and you're going be such a blessing to so people. So thank get the word out for you, because I think you are incredible and have changed my life in such an incredible way, but the people that are like, oh my God, what would I do?

I could never be off this. What if I'm on an abandoned island or there's a natural disaster and I don't have my meds? You'll be okay because of this." Yeah, which is such a drastic way to put it.

But I've always thought that like, what if I want to desert an island and I don't have my Lexapro or like my asthma medicine? Like, well, there's a solution for that.

Yeah. That's very real. It's huge. There's so many nuances to all of it, so if any of you like to chat with me, I'm on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok. Message me at Take Back My Brain.

Visit my website, LaurieHammer.com. Thank you, Lauren, again. I love you so much. Appreciate you. Always. Love you! Love You! Thank You, everyone, for listening.

God Bless! See you in the next episode. Thanks for Listening to TakeBackMyBrain. If today's episode helped you connect with hope or direction, I want you to follow the show, leave us a review and share it with someone who needs it.

And if you're ready to start your own healing journey, explore our courses and our coaching programs at lorihammer.com backslash store. So until next time, remember you cannot medicate away a nutrient deficiency and

healing your brain isn't just possible, it's powerful.