Reset Your Nervous System For Deep Healing Transcript

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Introduction and speaker background

Chronic fatigue syndrome is not a diagnosis, just like chronic pain is not a diagnosis. Just like lots of these chronic conditions, what they what you're told is a diagnosis is just a name for the symptoms.

It doesn't tell you what's actually going on in your body. Behind that there were no maps, there were no frameworks. It was biohacking before biohacking was a thing.

The thing I was most defensive about and most resistant to was the idea there could be any role of psychology in what was happening. It's not necessarily what causes us to get sick, it's what stops us from healing.

This is doctor talks. Welcome back everyone. It's Jana. Thanks for returning to the Medicine of Mindset Summit. We are here all week to educate, inspire and hopefully move you in a new direction with all this amazing information that we are offering all week long with our 50 plus amazing speakers.

This conversation is going to be amazing because we are highlighting the work of Alex Howard now. We were chatting off, before we kind of got on to the virtual stage.

And as a mom of three boys and as the dad of three girls in slightly different phases of, of life, it's really cool how quickly, you can connect to someone.

And I know that what we're going to be sharing over this next little bit is going to be really amazing. And so let me tell you a little bit about him.

He is the CEO of the Alex Howard Group. And this includes the optimum health Clinic programs, coaching programs like Conscious Life, the Reset Program, Therapeutic Coaching and Therapeutic Nutrition.

He truly is passionate about making physical and emotional healing accessible to everyone. And in the last few years, his Super Conference series has impacted over a million people.

And so radically impacting is one of the values of this summit. And when you come, you know, when I have all these amazing people coming with this million people impact in their back pocket, you know, it's going to be extra yummy.

So, he wrote the book called Why Me? And Decode Your Fatigue, which I think are both fantastic titles, and I actually do want to dive into the why me?

Because I think so many people use those words every single day. And since March of 2020, Alex has been documenting his therapeutic work and real life patients via his In Therapy with Alex Howard on YouTube.

We're going to get at the end to how you can connect with him more, learn more about his work. In the meantime, Alex, welcome so much to, I want to welcome you to the Medicine of Mindset Virtual Stage.

Thank you very much for having me. Looking forward to getting into it together. Okay.

Alex Howard's fatigue journey

So the title, we always have these formal titles to our talks, but what I can say is we're going to use the title and I'd like to, you know, root into your story.

And then we're just going to let the conversation kind of organically go from there. And so resetting your nervous

system for deep healing is the title of your talk.

I also want to loop back to the title of your book, Why Me? And Decode Your Fatigue. So there's obviously something behind that. Tell us a little bit about you and how you came to be an expert in this area.

I think like a lot of people who work in this area, and I'm sure a lot of people which are following this event, it wasn't it wasn't a grand plan. I didn't one day go and see a careers counselor and go, I'm going to become an expert in fatigue and trauma and healing.

All of these things. I, I went on my own journey and, you know, I guess I'm still on my journey. But that fatigue journey was a seven year journey which started in my mid-teens.

And I, I and in many ways it was a sudden onset experience where I thought I was doing fine. I, you know, I loved playing sport, I loved playing guitar in various bands.

And then one day I woke up and it was like, if there was a plug of energy into my body, someone had taken it out and suddenly the most basic things became incredibly difficult.

And so of course, I went and saw my doctor, and my doctor said, well, initially he thought I had a virus. And then after a while it was, I think you have this thing called Emmy or chronic fatigue syndrome.

And it might take six months for you to get back to normal functioning. And being a 16 year old kid that loved sport, loved going, you know, and also being at that age where you just start to get freedom, you know, you just start to be able to come out into the world.

And having all of that ripped away for six months seemed like a, like a life sentence. I think if you told me at the time that it was going to be a seven year journey, that would have just seemed impossible.

So the first couple of years of that, my grandmother was very proactive around natural health and nutrition. I went I was dragged around saying various, medical experts, scientists, nutritionists, naturopaths and went through what I think a lot of people may resonate with, which is a very frustrating experience, where each time you get some hope, you know, you read testimonials or you you hear about something that's helped a lot of people and you think this is going to be the thing that that person sounds just like me.

And then I'd go and see these people and I'd see them a few times, and then nothing would change. And after a while, it wasn't that I was negative about the potential for things to be different.

I was desperately wanting things to be different. I just couldn't really bad the disappointment anymore of investing hope in something that that didn't didn't work.

And so I think, like a lot of people going through these very difficult health journeys after a while, it's not that I was suffering from debilitating fatigue because I was depressed, but I was certainly becoming depressed by the fact that I just couldn't live my life the way that I wanted to.

And so a couple of years in, I had a conversation with my uncle. My uncle is little. I don't know if you've seen that the Lord of the rings films, but he's a little bit like he was like Gandalf in Lord of the rings, that it it didn't have a, like, a beard and a hat and stuff, but he would turn up at just the right moment and have, like, the right words of wisdom that he sort of like, disappear off into the, into the horizon again.

And on this day that I spoke to him, I, I was particularly, frustrated and fed up. And he said, how are you? And, you know, people, people ask us how we are and often we say, I'm fine.

And I was like, I'm not funny. I hate my life. And he he asked me a series of questions, and it was a series of questions on the surface was relatively simple coaching type questions, but it really was the fundamental turning point in my whole life.

And the reason, really why I'm literally here today, but also here talking in, in, in the way that I am. So he asked me, firstly, he asked me how badly I wanted to get better, like on a scale of 0 to 10, like how badly did I want it?

And I was, I was really I was really sincere. So I was like, I'm not a ten because that things that I wouldn't do, I wouldn't kill someone and I wouldn't chop off my arm with the two examples that I came up with.

But I was like, I'm nine and a half out of ten. Like, there's almost anything that I would do to, to, to change a situation. He said, okay, I want you to make a list of all the things that you believe could help improve the situation.

So as I mentioned, at this point, I've been dragged around various nutritionists and naturopaths and so on. So I realized the nutrition part of the picture.

I've come across the idea that things like meditation can help, the psychology might have a role where we can actually we'll come back to that. So I had a few things on this list, and he asked me to write a list of things that I thought made me feel worse.

That was just one word. It was life. It just felt like getting up and trying to to to live with that. And it said, okay, how many hours a day do you spend watching television now?

You got to imagine this was 1998. So this was this was before good television, right? This was before mass use of the internet. This was before Netflix and Amazon Prime and Hulu and all these places where there's these amazing TV shows.

We're talking trashy UK based and Australian based soap operas. And it wasn't that I actually enjoyed watching these TV shows. It was just lying on the sofa and disconnecting and numbing out and trying to live through other people's kind of experiences was better than the misery of the physical pain and the exhaustion and the dizziness and the headaches and all of the symptoms I was experiencing.

So it was seven hours a day that I was watching television. I said, okay, how many hours a day do you spend doing the things that you yourself have said you believe could make a difference?

The answer was basically none. There's like, so you got to help me square the equation. You're spending seven hours a day watching TV, but you're a nine and a half out of ten.

You'll do anything pretty much to get better. You got a list of things and you're not doing them. And I was so desperate at that point, the being defensive or making excuses or go into a victim place, which I was entirely justified, doing any of those things just wasn't the thing that happened.

I was like, wow, maybe I could do something to change the situation. And of course, I had all kinds of of, of some people might call limiting beliefs.

I would just call like genuine fact, like I was 18 years old, I had limited energy to get access to books, was like going to the local library and ordering books on self-development, which was pretty embarrassing as like an 18 year old, kind of kind of boy, basically.

But the longest, the longest short of it was a five year journey from this point. So it wasn't like there was one miracle answer. What I found is there isn't one answer.

There's many answers. And different things work for different people at different stages in different ways. And we can we can get into some of that. But ultimately, I found my way back to, I say, back to full recovery.

I found myself self back to full health, and I'm not sure I'd ever been at full health. Prior to that. And that was really, for me, the foundation of my whole journey.

Decoding chronic fatigue and the role of psychology

And that was, 20 years ago now that that that full recovery happened. And there's lots I could say, but I've been talking it use a lot. I ask a question, but so that was really how I got into into doing this work.

So at that point, you were two years in the next five years were discovering what you needed to do on that list that you wrote. Tell us a little bit about that.

What were some of the what were some of the strategies that when you think about it, you know, a 20 year old guy, I'm the mom of 20 year old guys right now.

And, so what were some of the things that you were doing in those early days to move the needle for you back to back to full health as you as you explain it?

Yeah. So my, my first book, you mentioned the book title was my first book was called Why Me or Why Me? So me being the the how in the UK, what we call in the States tend to be called chronic fatigue syndrome.

And my second book, which took came out about 18 years after the first one, because it took me that was to really figure out how to how to do it. It was a book called came out last year, called Decode Your Fatigue.

Because really, that's what I realized in those five years. It just took me many, many years professionally to really figure it out in a way that I felt I could articulate it, that you fit that well.

Firstly, fatigue. And I think it's true for lots of different chronic illnesses. Chronic fatigue syndrome is not a diagnosis, just like chronic pain is not a diagnosis.

Just like lots of these chronic conditions. What the what the that what they what you're told is a diagnosis is just a name for the symptoms. It doesn't tell you what's actually going on in your body behind it.

And so the the labels are helpful as much as they may hopefully get people to stop pushing themselves drinking. Right. I've got a thing I'd like to do something about.

They may be helpful in terms of getting some understanding people around you or in the workplace. They're getting certain concessions you may need to help support you, but they do very little to really help you understand what's actually wrong.

And if you don't have clarity on that, you can't you can't ultimately get effective intervention. You can have intervention which treats symptoms like you can do things that might treat a symptom of a headache or muscle pain or whatever.

But to actually really have a long term solution, you firstly got to have that clarity. You've got to decode. And so in those years, for me, it what part of what was so difficult was there were no maps, there were no frameworks.

It was just it was biohacking before biohacking was a thing. It was just lots and lots of trial and error of trying different, nutrition programs, different foods, approaches, different supplement protocols.

One of the pieces, the kind of irony of of really my, my, my life's work is that the thing I was most defensive about and most resistant to was the idea there could be any role of psychology in what was happening, because I knew that I was suffering from a very real physical illness.

It wasn't a kind of, you know, people would talk about, well, mainstream medicine. Can't find anything wrong with you. In fact, general medical practitioners would say there's nothing.

We can't find anything wrong with you. Therefore there's nothing wrong with you, which, if you think about it, is really the highest level of arrogance, because the presupposition within the statement is that that individual practitioner or indeed mainstream medicine knows everything that's ever been known and ever will be known about the physical body, or it will be.

We recognize something is wrong with you, therefore, but we don't know what to do about it. Therefore, you can't recover. Again, it's an utterly arrogant statement that if we don't have the answer, nobody has the answer.

So but so this it was kind of those perspectives out there. And therefore the conclusion that would often be drawn is therefore it's psychological. It must be in your mind.

But psychological in the sense that it's not real. You're making this experience up a little bit like, somebody who's lost a limb and has phantom limb pain.

And it's not possible in reality for that to be pain because there's no limb. Therefore it's, it's a construct of the unconscious mind, effectively. And I don't think I can emphasize enough the rage, the frustration, and ultimately the sense of isolation that comes from suffering from a medically unexplained illness or at least a mainstream medicine, unexplained illness, when you know something's wrong because you're living with it day to day, but you're being told there's nothing wrong or it's all in your mind.

And so I was deeply defensive around the idea that there could be a role of psychology or mind body medicine in the the real physical symptoms that I was living with.

But as time went on and I did more and more reading and I had the, the, fuel of my own desperation and frustration and pain in the experience that I was in, I, I started to realize that I wasn't really doing my job properly, of trying to get my my journey back to recovery without looking at everything.

And so one of the pieces that was important for me, although I've discovered having worked with thousands of thousands of people over the years since then, how important is in different ways?

It was very embryonic in my understanding at the time that ultimately, for the body to heal, it has to be in a healing state. And when we suffer from a medically unexplained illness, one of the things that happens is we don't know what's wrong with us, why it's wrong with us.

Will we ever get better? Should we rest? Should we push through? How are we going to feel tomorrow? Will we be able to do the thing that we've committed to do, the inner heart we care about doing?

And so the almost inevitable result of that is a nervous system goes into a state of dysregulation. You know, we we all have if we survive a session from pain, we have a stress response, which is activated and triggered when we're in moments of physical or emotional, danger.

So thousands of years ago, you know, you and I could be walking, walking around and suddenly a sabertooth tiger is there. And in that moment, we have one of three choices.

We're going to fight it. We're going to fly it. We're going to run away, or we're going to freeze, and we're going to hope that the tiger doesn't see us these days in life that might be walking down the street, and there's a electric bus that we can't hear thundering towards us, and suddenly we see it and we we have to leap out of the way.

Or it might be a situation where we are taking a driving test, and we know that if we fail this test, we're not going to get our driving license. And so we want to be really activated and really focused in, in what we're doing.

But in those moments, our nervous system releases certain, chemicals. So adrenaline, cortisol, blood supply goes away from our digestive system and towards our arms and legs so we can activate that capacity to respond.

That's a healthy stress response. That's a healthy way to respond to an acute, short term physical danger. The problem is that when we become locked in that response, because the danger doesn't go away, because we constantly feel under threat to our body, to our symptoms, to the lack of cultural understanding, the misconceptions that stress response becomes maladaptive.

And we can maybe come into it a little bit. That maladaptive stress response has an enormous impact on every part

of our physical capacity, and ultimately it inhibits our ability to recover and heal.

So, you know, we can get to, you know, you can break a break a limb as long as you set the bone. You might take painkillers to manage the pain, but long as you set the bone, the bone will heal.

There's nothing. There's no miracle in modern medicine that makes the bone heal. The body does that. Or, you know, you get a cut. And as long as you don't get it infected, you might just stitch the skin together, but it will heal.

The question I ultimately was, was learning to ask myself was it's not necessarily what causes us to get sick, it's what stops us from healing. And there are a number of factors to that.

But in my experience, both personally and professionally, one of the most important is is our nervous system in a healing state. And if it's not until we bring that into balance, many of the other interventions we use are either ineffective or limited in their effectiveness. So.

So to bring that back to to answer your question, there was no one answer. But ultimately decoding what was happening and figuring out my own unique presentation of fatigue was important.

Trialing it, trial and error, different things. And then this piece of of understanding what's happening in my nervous system and working to bring balance to that.

As I was listening to you share that part of your story, Alex, it it feels like we have lived parallel lives across the pond from each other because I had, I think, really the exact same thing.

Mine was in fatigue. It was undiagnosed digestive pain. And by the time I was 21, I was on 11 different medications and was told by my doctor sitting across the desk from her that the medical team, after two years of tests and specialists and great that they believed that the pain was in my head and that I was seeking attention and they wished me a nice life.

And so for me, it was polarities. That's really was was what was my vehicle. I didn't know it at that time. I saw Madonna on the cover of a fitness magazine and etc.

and I bought the magazine in 1999 and I was like, I'm still a Madonna fan. And I thought, well, Madonna's doing it, I should do it. And what I found was in my body.

Well, after 16 weeks of Pilates, I had weaned myself off all my medication, but I thought it was a fluke, right? Like I would knock on wood. I would do all the, you know, all the little, things that would be, you know, protecting me if it was just, you know, the universe playing a funny trick on me.

And what I love that you shared with our audience, because I know with confidence there are people who are hearing this conversation, and there are little light bulbs going off.

Or they might be thinking the same thing.

Nervous system regulation and healing

I experienced that, and the way you positioned it, as far as the body truly is, it's spectacular. It can heal, but if it's not put into a state or an environment for healing, you might feel like that hamster on the wheel that it just keeps trying and trying and trying.

And even though you see all these amazing success stories for you, that's that's not the case. And so let's go a little deeper into this concept of the psychology and the nervous system.

And in a world where we expect immediate results these days. Right. You send a text, you expect an answer. You look at, you know, you look at the Instagram feed and you're thinking, well, there's a 21 day this and a 21 day that.

What you're talking about is not a quick fix. Correct. And if so, how do we start to shift our mindset around the psychology of our body to give it what it needs to do its job to heal?

It's a great question. You know, one of the things that is interesting is over the years, you know, having, you know, the Optimum health clinic, we have a team of, of, 20 full time practitioners specializing in particularly in fatigue related conditions.

So any one time we've got well over a thousand patients in treatment. I therefore, I regularly get the email or the text message from the friend of the friend that says, oh, my friend has been diagnosed with this or my friend has got suspected this.

Can you have a quick chat with them? And and it got to the point. A while ago I said to my wife, I think we should stop telling people I do because it's getting a little, it's got a little overwhelming.

But the point I wanted to make was that it's much easier to work with someone that's been ill for a sustained period of time than it is with someone that's just starting to get those symptoms, because when someone is just starting to get those symptoms, what they really after is how do they get things back to the way they were before like that?

There's there's a kind of, an understandable reluctance to make substantial life change because things are still kind of holding together. It's just that they're struggling to hold it together.

It's when someone is in that pain in that state for a while, there's a recognition that something more fundamental has to change, that. It's not just trying to think some different thoughts or do a few practices or take a few supplements to sort of re hold things together that often as it sounds like you experienced in your journey, it's a journey and it's a process, and there's often a lot of momentum behind these patterns that have played roles in in people getting sick in the first place.

And that the last thing I would want to do is give the impression that I think that the fatigue related conditions or chronic pain or autoimmune conditions or, you know, these these different, chronic conditions are all psychology because they're not there's, there's there's of course, a whole other area in terms of functional medicine, in terms of looking at things like digestive function, hormones, immune function and all these, these, these different pieces.

And there are certainly certain, for example, personality. Patterns that don't necessarily cause people to get, well, but they're like loads on a it's like if your body's a boat and it can take so many loads before it starts to get overloaded.

And there are several ways of approaching ourselves and approaching other people and approaching the world that put bigger loads on that boat. And there's there's a number of different ones.

But to give a couple of examples, I talk a lot about a achieve a pattern where we define our self-worth by what we do and what we achieve, and so the more we push ourselves, the more we achieve, the better we feel about ourself on one level, but the more depleted we become, therefore the more we need.

Those achievements are trying to feel better. I also talk a lot about help, a pattern where we define our self-worth by what we do for other people. So there's a constant over giving and overextending of ourselves to try and meet that deficiency inside of ourself.

So to go back to your question, if we've got these ways of relating to ourselves and relating to the world, it's not as simple as just having a few, a few practices or taking some supplements or whatever.

There has to be a more fundamental change that has to happen because these ways of relating are fundamentally unsustainable. It's just like if you think about sustainability in the environment that you can't just keep, we can't just keep taking resources and polluting the planet forever.

Like there's a point and we start to see that in things like climate change. So we have we have to achieve a pattern

and we have to help a person. Now if we think about how in the time that someone is in that situation where they're pushing their body, they're making everyone else's needs more important than their body starts to give signs of chronic pain or signs of fatigue, or there's an autoimmune condition that starts to flare up.

It's taking a supplement, just taking a supplement, or just doing a meditation. Mindfulness practice and not changing that core pattern means that all we're doing is going deeper into a hole where it's fundamentally unsustainable.

Just like if you think about the environment, we can't endlessly just take resources and put waste into planet Earth before some point we start to hit limits to that.

And so one of the ways the psychology is so important in our healing journeys is it's not just the tactical things that we do to help better support our body.

It's the fundamental way that we are approaching ourselves and our lives, and that has to ultimately be sustainable. We have to be building a more energy, more resources than we're taking away.

And if there's constantly a deficit, no amount of just fixing those symptoms is, is going to is going to address it. And so it's a really answer your question.

It is a journey. And it's a journey that has different levels to that journey. There's for many people a a nutritional therapy or a functional medicine informed level to where there's a psycho emotional healing level to it.

There is sometimes a spiritual or a kind of like bigger question level. But there's also a behavioral level, like, just how is my life set up and how am I meeting that?

And often it's our unresolved traumas and, and kind of history which is setting a lot of these dynamics up. And that's often part of what has to be addressed as part of the healing journey.

So if we have someone, watching who is like, okay, but how how, Alex, how long is this going to take for me? What how do you how do you frame the answer to that question so that it doesn't feel like it's, you know, you know, we can say the journey and, you know, it's an adventure.

And, you know, Rome wasn't built in a day. But realistically, I know for me, at the six month point, I was just really starting to be reminded of what life could be like.

Right. And I was in my early 20s as well. Okay, so let me ask you if there's people watching who want to know how long will it start or how long will it take before I start to feel a difference?

Because I feel like once we feel a difference, we can be motivated to, you know, to go on this marathon because sometimes it does feel like a marathon.

But there's that, there's that really critical point where I've been doing I've been trying things for weeks and weeks and nothing's going on, which again taps into mindset.

What would you say is a spare or is this is this not even a fair question for you? But when you return that it blind all this nervous system stuff, what can people think or expect to feel and how many months?

It's a it's a fair question because it gets asked us all. So I'll do my best to answer it. No it's not. It's a couple of things I think are really important.

Firstly, the decoding piece is really important because you can spend years doing the wrong intervention or doing the right intervention at the wrong stage, at the wrong sequencing of that intervention.

So it's not the amounts of time, it's what you do in the time that that we're talking about. And so, you know, let's

say. So I talk a lot about sequencing of intervention.

So someone could be doing the perfect nutritional protocol for their body except their bodies in a manner adapt to adaptive stress response. So they're having, irritated responses to, to supplements because their system sees them as a threat and as a danger because it's hyper activated.

Or you can do a detox protocol that the body's not strong enough yet to tolerate. And so it just causes all the symptoms to flare more. And you need to build things up a certain amount to then be able to do that.

So often when things are not working, it can be that the wrong things, but it can also be the sequencing of how you do the intervention. Yeah, I think you made a really important point, which is if you got to spend months and months doing something and you get no early signs of it working, it's really difficult to have the motivation to follow through with that.

And so, for example, you know, I have a 12 weeks is a is a time period that I work a lot with because I have a program called the Reset Program, which is a 12 week program on resetting your nervous system.

And it's very deliberately designed that in those early weeks, we get some of the real fundamentals in place that for the majority of people, there will be some noticeable impact.

It doesn't mean everything's transformed. It doesn't mean that every symptom is transformed. But there will be should be a noticeable impact to the rest of the majority of people of feeling at least a calming and a settling of the system.

Now, for some people, that's the most important piece of the jigsaw of their healing journey. And the body can naturally self-heal from that point. For other people, what it does is it means that they start to get much better quality sleep, and the sleep means, you know, it's in deep sleep.

We release growth hormone, for example. One of the key things a body uses for healing. And then we wake up and we have a little bit more energy. We're able to move the body more.

That means that some of the pain issues start to improve. And what it does is it turns a vicious cycle into a virtuous cycle, where a series of other things then start to come back into balance.

Reset Program, community, and trauma patterns

Other times, what it means is that other interventions that we were reacting to or weren't working go back to my sequencing point, then start to have more of an impact and say what I would say is that in any kind of therapeutic work, we would hope to see early signs of improvement relatively quickly and then for some people, it may be weeks and months, and in really complex cases it can be months and years.

But there should be progress along that journey. And I'm quite cautious of things where someone's just endlessly told, oh, you've just got to be patient. You've just got to be patient.

We should feel that something is having an impact on our system, and that is exactly the motivation then that that helps us to continue going with doing the work.

So earlier in our conversation, we talked about your In Therapy series on YouTube. And I know that that's a place where we can send people to. But you bring up a really important point that I want to make sure we highlight for our audience is that think of this like going on some sort of a vacation, and you've never been to this place before.

You don't. Maybe you don't speak the language, maybe you've read a book about it, but it may not have resonated with you. A program like what Alex is talking about, the reset program truly is a guided healing journey.

So that it's like. It's like if you were on a safari, you might not want to go on your own into, you know, a little, a little

cave or you know, where there's a stream where there could be some sort of exotic animal that could, you know, get you.

This is very much like that. Healing journeys taken alone can be very isolating. Yes, yes, they can be empowering and inspiring. And so can you just talk a little bit more, Alex, about that reset program.

And let's talk a bit about the value of a sense of community. Or, you know, when we are when we are healing. So that I feel like that's part of what's missing is we think I got to do this on my own because no one else on there understands it.

Yeah, yeah. Well, I'm going to speak to a couple of pieces there. Firstly, the value of a really tried and tested and thought out program is it means that the sequencing should be much more thought out as opposed to the haphazard try a bit of this, do a bit of that.

And my thing has always been to try to integrate as many different pieces and then have the minimum effective dose of each of those pieces, so it's not overwhelming.

And we're able then to put things into action. So I think the thing with the reset program, which has been so powerful for people, has been that you're not just working on for some, I was talking about the achiever patterns or the helper patterns.

There's a bunch more patterns like that. You're not just working on that level. You're not just doing things like meditation and mindfulness practice.

You're not just using NLP or cognitive approaches. You're not just working with emotions. You're working all of these different pieces. But in a very tried and tested sequence where, for example, you need to have some basic calming of the system before you can do the emotional healing work.

Otherwise, the emotional healing will actually further activate the system. You need to have practices that will help build an overall calmness, but you also have to have ways of working with the triggers, then reactivate the system so that sequencing take you know, part of the reason my my recovery journey was five years was because I was constantly trying and testing different things in different ways. I this this is this is not, a request to the universe.

I do not wish to go through that journey again. But if I was to go for that journey again, I'd like to think it would be much, much shorter because of that figuring out of the of the different pieces and also particularly knowing my body and what my body needed would be different to what what, for example, your body might need.

And that's why that personalized approach is important in terms of the community piece. One of my one of the great blessings of, of my life, now is that with, you mentioned, my YouTube series, the.

So we, we put out a filmed therapy session each week and in the, in the more recent format, we've been doing it for three years, but in the most recent format of the series, the participants have eight sessions with me.

And then we put those sessions out weekly for eight weeks. So partly in answer to your previous question, I only get eight hours, so I get eight one hour sessions with with those folks.

And there's enough that moves in those eight hours that there's a, there's a real journey and people get to follow that journey. But the community piece that's so interesting is we currently at the point of recording average around 5000 views, a week on YouTube.

And then we get a bunch more on on the podcast and you just have to go and read the comments to see how the witnessing of someone going on a journey like this, how much it impacts the people watching, how people say, oh my God, that's just like me or my life is really different to your life.

But that thing that you talked about really resonates with me. And it's kind of it's extraordinary because I'm sat in

the in the room next door with me and the participant and the two videographers that, that, that do the filming and that is saying and then I realize the, the intimate experience between the two of us is rippling and impacting thousands of people that have all got to excuse my language, the same shit we've all got.

We're all different, of course, but there are the same core issues that many of us struggle with and just that recognition that we're not alone, and that that blessing of being able to go on a journey together, I think, is enormously powerful.

I love that so much. And so I'd like to know, what do you feel is not being talked about enough right now in your from your area of expertise? It's a good question.

You know, I think one of the things that is, is changing at the moment, but I think in the wider, kind of health world, I still think has a long way to come is the and it may seem like a simplistic, but I'll give a bit more substance to it is the impact of childhood trauma.

Now, I know that there's lots of conversation about, impacts on the body and the nervous system and so on. But the thing that's really interesting to me is that very often the way that we try to address and solve our problems and including, for example, health health issues is the way they got set up in the first place.

So often what's happening is, let's say the childhood trauma was that we learned that we're only safe in the world if we if we have control of the environment around us, and we didn't have control of that environment.

And so we learned that we need to have control. And so we go on a health journey. And actually the way that our childhood trauma is rippling and echoing through our life is we're now trying to control every detail of our health journey and the very things that may have been of service to us have now become another thing that we have to get right, and we have to control all of the time.

And so, yes, trauma is a sub, but it's a subject that's got a lot more attention in recent years, but particularly the way that it sets up, not just the kind of molecular physiological pieces, but the very, perspective from which we meet the whole journey that we're on.

And so throughout our conversation, you know, we've been getting glimpses into your personal life and how it's brought you professionally to where you are today and the impact you've made.

And so I want to just wrap this conversation by asking, what are you currently doing on a daily or weekly basis to nurture your own mindset? Do you know what's really funny at the moment?

So my, my wife and I have got three daughters, and we're currently having some work done on our, on our house in London, which means we're in a rental property, which is, which is not it's not perfectly comfortable in certain ways.

So a lot of my practice has got thrown out, like my morning meditation went out the window because I had nowhere quiet in the house to be able to meditate in the mornings.

So my morning meditation seemed to get replaced by, hanging out with the dogs and the dogs. My. I woke up with one of our dogs jumping on my face in the mornings.

And so just trying to find ways to land him myself, which are perhaps a little bit less formalized of sitting and meditating for 20 minutes in the morning, and just really remembering to come back to the moment.

Personal mindset practices and closing resources

So that certainly, certainly one piece, you know, the other thing, you and I were talking before we started recording about having kids at different stages, and I was saying to you that your, your boys are at a stage where it's like a net positive contribution to the family, like they can actually do stuff that's helpful, whereas my girls are like six

between 6 and 11.

So it's a nearly six and 11. And, and so one of my real practices as well is it's, it's, I guess it's a continuation of my first point is just coming back to the presence of the moment of of the richness and the joy of just being with the people that I love.

And one of my tendencies. It's very easy to be in my head, problem solving, trying to do three things at once, trying to, and just recognizing that being present is not just the thing that happens when one meditates, or one does yoga or one does that practices that.

Life is happening right here, right now, and showing up to that is what's most supportive. Like, put another way, often we have these ideas, like I was talking about for those two passages, like the achiever pattern of the help, a pattern that the support that we need comes from getting somewhere.

Like, if I do this, then I'll get that. Or if I achieve this thing, then I'll feel this way or I give this thing to that person, then they'll be there for me, as opposed to realizing that the support that we need is, is here.

The question is, are we here? And our tendency is often to be somewhere else, and then we're disconnecting from the resources that we need. And so that's a big part of my practice these days, is just trying to remember to come back and to connect in the moment.

It's such a good reminder, right? It's I think sometimes we search for things beyond what's simple and maybe right in front of us because it looks it doesn't seem like it could have that drastic of an impact, but it really does.

And so, Alex, where would you direct people if they want to? I mean, we talked about a few of the resources, let's just wrap it up here nicely at the end, letting people know where they can connect with you.

Yeah. So the the sort of central portal for everything I'm involved in is, is my personal website, which is alexhoward.com. And there you'll find, links to a free three part video series about the reset program that we talked about.

So if this conversation around learning to reset your nervous system resonates, that's a great way to get a sort of deeper dive into that. And then, yeah, my, YouTube series, you just go to YouTube and search in therapy with Alex Howard.

And there's over 100 sessions there now, but particularly the more recent, series. We've really, I think, refined the, the, the format recently, and I think it's much easier to it has more commentary that sort of brings it alive that I think really works.

So that's a great way to just come on the journey with, with many other people. Amazing. I want to thank you so much for your time and your brilliance, and how you have just given throughout this interview so many little nuggets so that our audience and that's what it's all about.

It's about resonating. You may not even think one of the sentences you said, you know, could could have that amount of impact, but that's that's what's happening all week long here.

So thank you very much for saying yes to this project. Well, thank you so much for having me. I've really enjoyed our conversation. So thank you. All right everyone, that wraps another episode here at the Medicine of Mindset Summit.

I will see you back here with our next speaker. 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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