Rewiring Pain: The Emotional Body, Nervous System & Healing with Skye Roberts Transcript

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Introduction and Guest Background

I find it completely fascinating emotional locations in the body and how they lock up. Not everybody's trauma is obvious. You have to make the decision to seek more answers beyond just the physical body.

We continue to run on that pattern forever and ever and so we kind of go control, alt, delete. Hello and welcome to another episode of Root to Rise. My name is Dr.

Emily Spickle, your host, and I am very excited for today's show. Not only do we have a extremely intelligent woman as our guest, but she is a very dear friend of mine, And we are going to continue to explore the power of our emotions and how it affects our physical body.

Now, before we bring her on, I'm gonna share a brief intro for our guests. Skye's journey into the health and wellness industry began over 30 years ago, driven by her personal experience with chronic pain.

As someone who faced lifelong physical challenges, including multiple concussions and injuries as a Division I soccer goalkeeper, she has developed a deep passion for helping others live pain-free and healthy lives.

Her early career included work as a personal trainer, stretch therapist, Pilates instructor. But in 2013, she discovered what she calls the missing link.

And this is neurokinetic therapy, NKT. This discovery revolutionized both her personal healing and her professional approach to her client's care. In 2014, Skye founded the Functional Body Institute and as a level three NKT practitioner, she began integrating N K T as her primary tool for addressing pain, dysfunction and compensation patterns in every client session.

In 2017, She became an N. K. T instructor and today she teaches in four territories across the United States. Known for her approachable teaching style, Skye is now a sought after presenter and continuing educator instructor.

She is recognized for ability to simplify complex materials, telling engaging stories, which I can vouch for that, and creating an inclusive, dynamic learning environment, making her an ideal mentor for both new and experienced practitioners.

Currently, Sky is developing healing retreats designed to help participants explore and rewire their emotional, mental, and physical patterns that contribute to chronic pain.

These immersive experiences combine principles from survival patterning, attachment theory, and human design, guiding individuals toward lasting transformation through neuroplasticity and nervous system repatterning.

Sign me up for all of that. Welcome, Skye. It is such a pleasure to have you on. Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here. I absolutely love your work. And as someone who has received your methods and KT and Nervy and other methods that you practice, I know that have a very, very unique eye for compensation patterns for chronic pain.

A lot of it I feel is just intuitive through touching your years experience. I would love to kick this you just share a little b look at emotion and the f the body possibly holds on life experience is our be So my own personal experience kind of led me into the emotional component of things.

Emotions, Trauma, and Body Patterns

After a lot of the physical work and getting all the manual therapy, didn't clean up certain areas and, you know, working on thousands of people and seeing how, why do these patterns keep repeating when we're doing all of right things and they're getting the right techniques done.

They're the chiropractic care and need and maybe they're ev but why are some things n to be stuck? What is it a that they get trapped in p or a hip or our connectiv I think it's different for each individual.

I th you know, everybody has their own quote unquote weak spots in their body based on their injury history and you certain areas of the body are going to hold certain traumas or certain emotions more than others.

You know like the jaw tends to be more our anger and our frustration and or bitterness versus our diaphragm tends hold more the sadness and the grief or the anxiety.

So, you know, and then we have injuries in certain areas that maybe that bleeds over into, if that kind of makes sense. So you are saying certain traumas or belief patterns can find or they latch onto different tissue or parts of the body?

You know, our superficial fascia layers kind of like hold on to different emotions and tension in our body. And based on being in sympathetic fight or flight, we could really kind a lock down certain areas.

So I used to joke when I lived in New York City that New Yorkers put all their tension, maybe trauma tension in their pelvic floor and they were all locked in the public floor.

I don't know if there's any validity to that, but do you, it sounds like you must see patterns of. individuals locking into the traps or maybe into public floor.

I would actually see as a podiatrist a lot in the feet and in calves. Can you share just a few of those because I find it completely fascinating of emotional locations in body and how they lock up.

Well, again, I think it's history with people and like, you know, people could be disconnected to their feet because they don't have roots, so to speak.

They're not very rooted. Maybe their home life is very walking on eggshells. maybe it's also they've had a surgery like a c-section like myself and they get disconnected from everything down below on that scar because it kind of cut through nerve pathways so we have the physical disconnect but then we had the emotion of this trauma from having to have an emergency c section that's now tied into it.

So this is how one woman can have a planned c-section and not really have trauma because they planned it all out versus you know you try to have natural childbirth and then you get rushed into the emergency room for an emergency c section because you or the baby are at risk.

Yeah so you're saying that that scar would hold the emotion of the 100%. So they're going t in the anxiety and maybe g in that versus, you know, to have a c section becaus reason.

So we're gonna pl week around my due date 10 a.m. And you planned t to three months out and yo for that and you have yo It's kind of like when multiple people are in the same car wreck and one person is traumatized and the other ones aren't.

And it's like, what's the difference? And you know, how regulated was their nervous system going into this wreck? You know? Did they see it come in like or were they just seeking or having a conversation and didn't even know they got hit and then like what is their support system after the wreck cause all that is going to matter of whether we hold some kind of emotional trauma in that whiplash or that back pain or whatever injury we sustain in the car wreck.

So is that the missing link that you find in chronic pain and body work, muscle, joint stiffness, et cetera, is actually

the emotional component to it?

Yeah, it's like, you know, NKT is wonderful in finding these very physical patterns for people. But if there is this limbic override of emotional component, based on whatever the event or the experience, we have to address that.

And so we can refer clients out for EMDR therapy and sound therapy. different type of emotion that can assist them wit how you approach your cli try to look, let's say m in the kind of body heal if you feel that they're traditional approach of f and just NKT on its own, plus their homework.

Do you then start to explore deeper or from day one, do you go in factoring in emotion with your clients? it depends on what they'r like to go straight in fo these very physical patter these injuries or surgerie that you have within your sport that your playin sessions if we're not gett you know the results we're really looking for then we have to like look into what could an emotional component what emotion could be tied into this you, know or what trauma didn't get to complete a cycle.

Interesting and then it is stuck in the middle of its cycle in. The tissue in, the body yes in The fascia in of that envelope that lik like to get stuck and you manual release it and also try to think through the trauma or the experience or event while they're doing that work that can help your nervous system process it, and not see it as the threat that it was.

Scars, Surgery, and Nervous System Repatterning

Because it's really just about changing that perceived threat. If you address the traumas and the emotion, let's say through EMDR, trauma healing, and you're not doing NKT and body work, let's say, will it just release itself from the fascia on its own as you releasing the trauma or do you also have to combine that trauma work with bodywork?

I think it depends on the client. Ultimately, you know, the body is going to create compensation patterns around perceived threat. If there's not strength and stability around a joint, we're gonna need to.

Create that strength instability, through some form of strength training, exercising, right? And then if they're stuck tissue, obviously we're gonna need some manual work to unstick the tissue and then if there's structure damage where you know people need to actually have structure issues cleaned up we need address all those things but a lot of times there is an emotion overriding all that Got it, which you will not be able to fully release the literal connective tissue without addressing the emotion first.

Most people don't address that or even aware of it. Okay. death. Now there are peop therapist and yes they ca those emotions and repatter system. And yes, they don' Okay, but you know the more you tie the both together because a lot of times when people are stuck in that free space, they need to do the movement drills and the mobility.

the shake it out, sing it Yeah, the mobilize the m and be aware of, you kno that right now I've just my neck pain, maybe my back pain is my body's f signal of hey, You've jus and you're back into that that's driving these simp be aware of that and stop you know, let me do whatev best for my nervous system Yes, I like how you put it in the context of connective tissue fascia.

I have a chronic hip injury that we've addressed before. You've described it that way because I've seen it. In my practice for neurological presentations for like dystonias or neuritis is a complex regional pain syndrome.

So more nervous system driven, which makes sense as far as nervous system dysregulation you're in a fight or flight that that's going to flare up all the peripheral nerves but here thinking fascia and the muscles which I guess are controlled by the nervous systems so that makes as well but it's really really powerful and eye-opening and it gives the listeners the thought I'm really about empowering and if you're not getting the results that you are expecting and the practitioner that your seeing doesn't understand the depth of what you speaking of that, you have to make the decision to seek more, to see for more answers beyond just the physical body.

Yeah, very interesting. I want to go back to the scars because that is something that I don't know if a lot of listeners are aware of that and I've had my scars worked on and it might not be an area that people are thinking is contributing to some of their compensation or muscle inhibition.

Can you just share a little bit more about how you look at scars and how do you release scars specifically? Well, I mean, scars affect the nervous system again in many ways.

You know, some are very superficial. Some are not, you know. some scars are planned, Some or not. But the Nervous System doesn't like getting cut no matter what.

And, and when you're cutting through the fascia and the nerve, literally cutting Through nerves and your body is creating a compensation pattern around that to change your movement to protect you.

And what most people aren't told is, you know, hey, eight or 12 weeks after that surgery, or after you get your stitches out for whatever reason you had stitches in the first place is we need to rewire the compensation patterns that your body created around you're saying at the time removed is when you would not at that time they were Usually about eight or 12 weeks post surgery is when we would want it.

Cause you know, right after surgery, when I had my C-section, I needed my nervous system to send all the signal to the scar, to have it anchor down and close off and protect me from opening up and keeping all my organs in.

And you your first few movements surgery like that is your going, ah, you know, we things and we don't have c anymore. But we've got to by keeping her moving.

So to over signal this area but what we don't realize to run on that pattern f ever until we kind of go c So that's where the neuro and teaches our body to s scar and activate or re up the muscles that were shut Is there an emotional component as well?

A lot of times if it's an emergency situation or like the mother or the baby, you know, has some kind of major issue or trauma during this, yes, then we're gonna have to deal with the emotional components with that scar aswell.

Got it. So I feel like that is not discussed by orthopedists or obstetricians or I never learned that as a no offense to your New York there's a lot of pelvic And women are taught, you know, how to reconnect after pregnancy of how like your diaphragm tends to overwork or, we're pulling in our feet and toe gripping, to try to create that stability we've lost in her intrinsic core after carrying and delivering a baby.

Yeah. No, it's clearly missed in traditional Western medicine is this not even thinking about the emotional side, but just the neuromuscular repatterning that you're speaking about.

And if I can share firsthand my experience after having athletic pubelge or sports hernia, which is a tear of the rectus abdominis fascia, so it was a break in connective tissue integrity, Which led to a adductor longus spasm, and the whole leg was shut down, my deep hip would, shut off, pelvic fluid shutoff, as I'm sure you're familiar with the pattern.

But it was really interesting that I had the surgery, they re-approximated the tear, so sutures, scar, and then six, eight weeks later, cleared, you were good to go, starting to do the rehab.

I couldn't get the adductor out of the spasm that was there prior to surgery as well. It was really interesting that there was no resetting of that actual neuromuscular pattern.

And then, I wish I had known you back then. I did it in a very long convoluted way, but eventually I got towards the pattern, so can you share with the listeners just a little bit deeper about what NKT is?

So if they're listening, they can seek out if this is something that they want to explore in their own healing journey. Well, in your situation, that's where I would, after enough rest time and recovery from your surgery, I went in and

checked those specific muscles and see who has signal, who doesn't have signal.

And then where is that signal being rerouted? And in you case, the scar shutting down the rectus abdominis and the adductor area and psoas and other muscles that cross over that area that would be affected by that scar.

And then your nervous system had to rewire the pattern by releasing the scar and activating those muscles with some light isometric movement. So you do this through muscle testing, correct?

Yes.

What NKT Is and How It Works

Like, I wouldn't be able to figure out this pattern in myself, right? You would have to go to a therapist to understand. Yeah, it's really hard to muscle test your own adductors.

I haven't figured it out yet. So you do need someone to do the manual muscle testing to the different movement patterns to see, you know, is it hip flexion?

Is it a hip extension? you know access to your obliques as well as your rectus abdominis and transverse dominance. You know those types of things and and um but you there's therapists all over the world so through NKT.

Through NKT, yeah. And what would be the website that someone could find a specialist or therapist? Neurokinetictherapy.com. Okay. Neurokinetictherapey dot com to find someone.

Now, is this similar or completely different than muscle activation technique or MAT? I'm not really sure what MAT is, so I can't answer that question.

What I Can say is what NKT is and it's basically taking manual muscle testing or applied kinesiology with very specific protocols to figure out, okay, this is the fascial line that's shut down.

Like maybe it is your front line or your back line, or you're pelvic floor, you are in transit core. and then we're trying to figure out based on your history, where's your brain over signaling?

And then, we are teaching you how to down regulate that area and get signal back to the front line or the back line, or wherever your pain complaints are.

Got it. Okay. So, I know homework is a big part of your practice, probably NKT as well, turning off of a muscle, and you may use the appropriate words if I'm not using the right ones, but you're down regulating one muscle and then up regulating another so that we get into a properly coordinated pattern.

Why is homework so important to what you are teaching and how you get a client to successfully kind of move past that pattern? Well, I mean, ultimately, excuse me, we get into the pattern because of bad repetitions, because we did too many repetitons of something and then it became dysfunctional.

Or, you know, if we had this injury or surgery. So it takes around 300 to 700 repetition to create the patterns in the brain to where it's just a habit.

So I tell my clients, we have to get enough of the good reps in. Yes. Through doing that. So is that once a day is sufficient or you have do multiple times a to essentially do your good rep and program the nervous system.

Well, there in lies where components might come into have stress and anger, yo no offense to CPAs and peo there's a certain season where their back pain or neck pain, or wherever their chronic area is in their body, is gonna, you know, light up a little more during that time frame, because they're gonna be jaw clenching and stressing over crunching.

Right? So when we have a physical pattern, that's more emotionally driven due to our stress or angers, our fears, or environment. That's when I'm like, okay, we might want to do your homework a little more frequently during that time period.

Or if this is your golf pattern and you know, you're going to go play a golf tournament, then you might wanna do a more resets during breaks. Yep, got it.

As you rather function. Yep. No, that totally makes sense. Have you heard of a red light reflex and a green light reflux as far as posturing? I have not.

So a, yeah, so a a. Green light, reflex, and posture is think of like a hyper vigilant person like you're. in the wild, looking over the grass. So your neck is kind of coming forward.

You're a little bit more lordotic. The chest is up, so you're thinking posturally that pattern would be someone in a hypervigilant state where a red light reflex would kind the shutdown where they're rounded forward, they are tucking their ribcage down and shoulders are forward which is then kind this depressive and it's dissociated.

Just to go back to the emotion, and if you hadn't seen those, you see them without actually calling it that, but do you someone comes in, let's say they're type A, anxious, go, say, they are from New York.

And you can see them is your mind already saying there's some hots like some key areas where you know that there are patterns that lie in personalities or states like this.

Do you see that in your work? Oh, 100%. So you can tell like just by how someone can even lay still and relax on the table, right? When I'm trying to test a certain muscle, are they really fashionably guarded and don't even want to give up control?

Are they able to relax and let me just move them through certain positions? When I touch their body or when other people get worked on, you can see how, because when I teach classes, I can how the power of touch, even just a light touch.

If there's like a trapped emotion in an area, a person's going to have more of like an electric response. Being touched in that area. Then the normal like, oh, that's a good spot.

Dig deeper. It's more about, ah, kind of.

Homework, Repetition, and Daily Regulation

Is there a way for the listeners to start to self-explore their own connection between emotions and their body and possibly pain that they're carrying or compensation that their carrying, whether it's through different practices, seeing a practitioner, seen a body worker, anything to start to peak the curiosity to dive into this even more?

Well, awareness is key. So ultimately, if you can think, you know, every time my neck hurts or my hip hurts, what just happened a few minutes before then, right?

Or what is my stress levels right now? Maybe even dive a little deeper maybe try to think of what is the primary emotion I feel most days and what does my inner critic saying to me every day because a lot of that can drive the feeling that gets gets us into that triggered sympathetic You know, your green light or red light in my world is, are you in that fight or flight sympathetic response?

Or which is green in world. And then are more dorsal red, not moving, freeze, fawn response, you know? And how can we regulate or co-regulate to reset?

You got to have that awareness first that you've even been triggered and that your anger and your stress is making you jaw clench to create the neck pain.

So it's the awareness of your baseline emotional state, and then to correlate that to when you feel physical things in your body. Is that kind of how you're saying?

Oh, journaling is the best way to see your patterns. You know, obviously hiring someone, to help you see those patterns. It's really hard for us to see our own patterns and being on our hamster wheels.

Our close family members are pretty good about calling us out on their patterns, you may or may not want to hear it from your sister or your brother, or you're significant other or mother, but they can see your patterns a lot of the times and that's where your health professionals can also come in and help you see your patterns.

But just simple daily journaling of these are the feelings I feel every day to start seeing what are my patterns? So do you have any favorite, like your personal favorite for healing, whether it's EMDR, psychedelics, sound baths, breath work, just you personally in your own journey or for your clients that you recommend in exploring as far as that emotional healing.

Well, for me personally, as someone who tends to go in freeze mode, I do a lot of movements. I like to put my bare feet on the ground, use my neuro ball that you gave me, really reconnect my feet to my pelvis because my c-section literally like pulled the plug on that.

And so many women come back to me with the same thing that I've experienced. I felt like I was walking up the stairs, but my legs were three steps behind me.

So, you know, daily things for me is reconnecting my feet to the rest of my body through grounding exercises and being outside in nature. I try to kill multiple birds with one stone by the physical work, the mental work the emotional work.

So I'm smelling things that drive my nervous system into the right emotional state. I have the visual of the mountains and the sunrise while my feet are in the grass.

But I also like to walk over different surfaces just to light up the bottom of my and really put myself in joy and peace to reset that as my pattern instead of my old you know like panic or fear or anger that would drive my back pain and my backpack.

So do you believe in then like a daily practice or start your day with this or end your Well, again, it's about getting in the good rep. So just like homework with the physical repatterning of going through enough reps to get the body to do the pattern the way it is supposed to be, you would want to rewire your nervous system to have the frequency of the emotion that you want feel primarily instead of old anger or fear, resentment, whatever it might be.

Yes, daily journaling for 10 minutes or going for a walk in nature that works for you and your body that can tap into as many of your senses as possible to get nervous system, right?

Cause you really want to tap in to as of the senses is possible while you're doing this. And yes, the more repetitions, if you could just spend 10 minutes every day, wiring your nervous to feel the joy or the peace and safety instead of what it might be wired at, and not even knowing that that old concussion, because not everybody's trauma is obvious.

So my first concusion at eight years old, falling out of a tree, my chronic pain started years later, but we didn't know why. And it wasn't an obvious thing.

Yeah, that's a full take away with a gun or in some kind of major accident or, you know. So do you believe that we we all have trauma? I think we. All have some.

Kind of trauma. I. Think more people have. I think it's like degrees of it or, you know, a scale. Because again, it depends on what was your home life in those first early years and did you have safety and security from your primary care?

That then that's going to make you a lot more resilient when things do happen. Got it. So I recently found out about your retreats and I felt a little left out that I didn't know before, but I have been so curious and was thinking to explore retreat where it's like one stop shop trauma healing.

That's how I thought of it, so can you share a bit about you retreat specifically and the power or the importance of a retreat, just in general, so that the listeners are curious about that level of healing as well.

Well, I mean, for a lot of people, they don't realize we're not meant to heal alone. And so like the biggest part of the retreat is coming together and kind of creating your own tribe for healing and create your on healing vocabulary.

Cause a lotta people don' their own healing vocabular to say, oh wow, my body always heals itself so quickly.

Retreats, Support, and Final Takeaways

you know, why do I always am I? Always the one that whatever going around and certain patterns. So, you story, whatever that is a able to connect with oth who have been through sim you're not alone being abl yet have safe space help be doing a lot of sound h work of all types to help emotional and their phys Basically, it's really just a deep dive of figuring out and bringing awareness of what are my emotional patterns, what my physical patterns and how can I create the shift in the change to rewire those patterns.

While being supported by women in a loving environment. Yeah. Do you focus primarily on women and women going through trauma? Yes. I will do male retreats but initially it's women only.

And then that leaving a retreat is probably just as important as the retreat itself as far as how you reinforce that, your daily practices, everything else that you spoke about.

Oh, 100%. So we plan on sending you home with tools to integrate back in your real world after unplugging for several days. And then we do plan doing group follow-ups in 30, 60, and 90 days to have that hand holding and accountability that most people need.

Again, it's the support of the tribe. Yeah, to feel like you're not alone. Because I feel sometimes people can feel I'm the only one experiencing this depth or this type of trauma or feeling this way.

So there's something powerful with that. I love that I love that. And a lot of have support, they don't ha have the friends where th been moved across the cou in certain situations or or whatever their situati has that support tribe set to be what I call that sandbar to call when you know I'm in a tizzy and I can't regulate myself and my menopause hormones might have got the best of me.

Like I need to phone a friend right now before I do something I might regret, right? Yeah. No, I love that. I loved that Well, this has been very, very eye opening.

thoughts maybe is just, y that like, hey, some of y been there for a while, m and yes, you might have g done all types of things and those types of modalities are the manual therapies as well, but maybe trying to consider tying the two together and really just taking some time out of each day to check in with yourself and see what is this emotion I'm feeling on this consistent regular basis and doesn't vibrate at love or joy or peace or is it more something a little negative like anger or frustration, bitterness, resentment and really tying into that part of my hip pain or my back pain are my neck pain that I'm chronically feeling because I really think not enough people are tying those things together and they're not aware that they are breath holding and jaw clenching because of the anger and frustration, is then, you know, your neck pain is just the symptom that something's not right.

I guess sometimes it is very physical, structure-related issues, 100%, but then there's all the times it's just not, and I went and got the x-ray and the MRI and nothing shows up, that's where we have to look at, okay, what might be the mental or emotional pattern that's driving that pain and just awareness and maybe talking to a close friend that you can trust to give you feedback of how I be self-talking to create some of that.

And my own self credit. Do you hear me criticize myself or do you here me praise myself as my friend or sibling or colleague, whatever? You know, that would be my final thoughts.

It's just bringing awareness and journaling and having the right friend or two to ask the questions to help you sort. But if you can't find a professional in your area that lines up with you.

Yeah, no, such a powerful message. I know you've taught me a lot about my own body and to ask those questions, to be curious, I do have my daily ritual of my senses that I'm stimulating and anchoring and building those good repetitions.

So absolutely appreciate your work, Skye. Where can the listeners learn more about your works, neurokinetic therapy, but also that emotional side that you tie in very uniquely?

Well, for now, I'm kind of keeping things on the down low while I working on behind the scenes stuff, if you could appreciate it. So they can find out neurokinetic therapy information of upcoming classes.

If they're in the health and fitness industry and want to take this as a continuing education for someone like yourself, who might want implement it into your practice.

or if they're looking for a practitioner to actually receive the work, the neurokinetictherapy.com has a directory that's United States or international, depending on where they live.

Or you can reach out to me personally if you want more of the emotional work. Because I do know people in different areas. that can assist you or I can do virtual sessions as well so they can reach out to me via my email.

Okay, wonderful. Good. And we will share that all in the show notes. Thank you so much, Skye. It was such a pleasure and I learned so Thank you, it was a pleasure being here today.

Wonderful, thank you everyone for tuning in. Definitely check out Skye's work and ask those questions. Is possibly some of your musculoskeletal pain or chronic pain?

Maybe not just the physical, but a little bit emotional. Thank so much and I'll see you on another episode.