Six Pillars of Resilience: Tools for Managing Stress and Flourishing Transcript

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Introduction to Resilience

It's all connected. Well, first of all, I think it's important to, to know that everybody is resilient to a certain extent. Right. The fact that you got out of the world and you're here and you've gotten you've gotten everybody's been knocked down.

I don't know how many times. And it's and it's still here listening to the show. So the notion that you're not resilient is incorrect. So everybody is resilient.

And resilient is about the ability to be able to bounce back after adversity. So we've all done that. The question is how well are we bouncing back. We bouncing back broken.

We bouncing back stronger. So if you look at athletes that put themselves under a lot of stress, they come back stronger, faster, better. Welcome to Doctor Talks the podcast where every episode leads to a healthier you.

Join us as we navigate the world of optimal health, uncovering groundbreaking strategies to conquer chronic disease. In each episode, we'll bring you the latest insights from leading health experts, medical innovators, and wellness warriors.

If you're seeking to transform your health journey, or if you're looking for answers to burning questions, you've come to the right place. Get ready to unlock the secrets of lifelong health and vitality.

This is Doctor Talks, real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most. Hi everyone. Welcome back to the Integrative Health Podcast with Doctor Jen.

Today we're going to be talking to Doctor Eva Shalhoub. She is an internationally recognized resiliency expert, physician, author, keynote speaker, and spiritual advisor.

Guest Background and Career Path

Doctor Eva served as an instructor of medicine at Harvard Medical School and as a clinical associate of the world renowned Benson Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital for close to 20 years, serving as our medical director for six of those years.

She now works with clients and companies, and serves on a variety of boards to refine the ways in which we approach resilience, health and leadership, encouraging her audience to believe in the possibility of transformation, of connecting with one's spiritual core and discovering optimal resilience and light and connectedness, joy and fulfillment.

She's the author of six books, including burnout for dummies, resilience for dummies, Your Health Destiny, The Stress Management Handbook, The Love Response, and coauthor of Your Brain on Nature.

And I know we all really get burned out and need resilience. So this is so great that we're going to have this discussion today. Welcome, Victor Salahub.

Thank you for being here today. Thank you for having me. Awesome. Yes. Well, let's talk a little bit of how you even got into this as a physician. Were you burnt out yourself or did you find people around?

You were burnout. And how do you. I would say yes or no. I got into this, really early on in my career. So when I

was, when I was a resident, I was training at Boston Medical at Boston City Hospital at the time in Boston Medical Center.

I was planning on going into being intensivist and pulmonary medicine, intensive care medicine. And in 1996, we had a very large population of, HIV positive patients.

And I was, I stuck I got stuck with an HIV needle and HIV infested needle, was a very big exposure in 1996 was basically a death sentence. And, the NIH had just come out with a, a study on a post-exposure prophylactic cocktail.

And I was one of the first people on it to, prevent conversion. And it was a six weeks of being on 14 different pills a day. And, essentially, I, I did not have a lot of good coping skills.

And I spent six weeks crying a lot. Worrying a lot. Concerned that I was, you know, going to die with a huge loan debt that my parents are going to have to pay.

That I was going to die alone, that no one's going to love me. That I was going to suffer, that I was going to, you know, be sick. And, you know, what have I done?

And I went through just a whole series of of emotions and in fear and physical pain because of the medications made me quite sick. And, and during that time I just that there must be something more than this.

And I, you know, I vow that if I get through this, I'm going to really give my life over to service. It was, you know, pretty big. Needless to say, I did not convert to HIV, however, that that year was a sort of a five month period where, you know, that brought me to my knees.

So I sort of sort of rallied. I said, I'm okay. I'm just going to going to follow a midwife around. I'm going to be there for the for the needy. I'm going to take care of people. I'm going to be more compassionate.

And then my dog died. My grandfather died. Somebody started her rice raising me and writing letters to the medical board. I take them to court. My apartment burned down and I lost everything and didn't have renter's insurance.

And my father had a heart attack all within five months. So, needless to say, 1996 was a devastating year. However, it was also a year that brought me to my knees.

I became quite depressed. I just didn't want to live. And during this five month period of just kind of living in this darkness, I don't know what happened.

I just lived in darkness for five months, and then I just came out of it one day when a friend pulled me out and said, we miss you. And I tell this story so many times, but I just don't even know what happened though.

I woke up and I as I realized it was asking the wrong question. I'd been walking around saying, why me, why me? Why me? Feeling really victimized by my circumstance that every time I pulled myself up, I'd get knocked down and pull myself up and get knocked out.

And I just didn't have the energy to get back up. And I thought to myself, you're asking the wrong question. The question isn't, why me? It's why not me?

The Needle Stick and Burnout Journey

Nature. Just as soon as a forest fire burn has a flower bloom, it's not personal. You're taking life personally. When life just happens and you have a choice of either being a victim of life or a creator of life, a co-creator of life.

So that's when I knew that I had work to do, that I had some work to do that I had to learn about what resilience was all about, because it had a spectrum that we fall and get back up.

But if we stop getting back up, that's burnout. And I wanted to learn more about that. And that's when I started working at the Mind-Body Medical Institute with her Benson to learn about stress in mind body medicine and not only apply it to my own life, but apply it to my patients life. So.

So I started pretty early on, and it's been a road all along the way. So that's, you know, almost 30 years of having moments when I am enlivened in moments and I feel a little burnt out, worked out and developing, coping still coping tools that not only help me but help others.

Oh, that's that's quite a story. I yeah, I got stuck once in resonance or no, it was after a residency and I was doing a dental block on someone and they like grabbed my hand out of their mouth and it stuck me.

And it's very scary. If for those of you that work in the medical field, you realize this. It's it's very scary. But yeah, resilience is something that we're not really taught about in medical school.

That's another thing that's crazy. We're just told to power through it. And and that comes like a lot of depression. There was a suicide in my medical class, and there was one after my residency, like, after I left.

And it's. We just need to talk about this stuff. It's hard. It's not easy to talk about. And we need to realize that we have to communicate these feelings with people if we're feeling burnt out.

I was reading, Philippians two in the Bible and just. Yeah, like, if you're in jail, you know, Paul's in jail, and he's he's asking God, you know, like, if I die, I'll be with you, but I know I'm supposed to be here and do more good work.

So if we're wallowing in the sadness, we're not able to help others. So we need to talk about it when we're in those hard times. So how do how could you explain in an easy way to those listeners out there how resilience can impact our health?

Because it is connected. It's all connected. Well, first of all, I think it's important to, to know that everybody is resilient to a certain extent. Right?

I mean, the fact that you got out of the womb and you're here and you've gotten you've gotten everybody's been knocked down. I don't know how many times.

And it's and it's still here listening to the show. So the notion that you're not resilient is incorrect. So everybody is resilient. And resilient is about the ability to be able to bounce back after adversity.

So we've all done that. The question is how well are we bouncing that? Are we bouncing back broken or bouncing back stronger. So if you look at athletes that put themselves under a lot of stress, they come back stronger, faster, better, you know, physically anyway.

So and then there's the mental toughness that comes along with it. And that allows them to like to really thrive. So if we want to look at resilience, think of it as a bell shaped curve that, you know, there's sort of the middle ground which we call wellness.

And then there's other ground or we call burnout or fitness where we just can't get back up anymore. The systems just doesn't have any more oomph anymore, no energy.

And on the other hand, where we've gotten better, where we either call that homeostasis, which is getting stronger and in, from stress, or we call it flourishing, where we just, you know, we're just better.

We're stronger, we're better, we're more acute, more and more energized as a result of the adversity. So it's remembering that it's not about not having adversity.

It's how we learn to cope with it and then thrive as a result of it. And that's very, very much connected to our health and well-being because it's connected to our stress response.

And our stress response is connected to everything, to our entire body and how it operates and how it adapts to any changes that happen in to our environment.

And that stress response involves every system of the body, from the cardiovascular to the gastrointestinal to your mental. And when the body's under a challenge that response gets activated.

And if the brain believes that challenge is not manageable, it'll be hyper activated. So that means more inflammation, an increase in heart rate, an increase in muscle tension, a decrease of serotonin and dopamine, which are the neurotransmitters that help our mood.

So when we're not in balance and when we can't correct that response, we can't find adequate coping, the system is going to get hyper activated until such time that it burns out.

So it's very much physiologically connected to our health. Yeah. And I think one pet peeve of mine is when doctors tell their patients, hey, just stop stressing.

And I'm like, oh my gosh, like you're there's always going to be any kind of stressor. And everyone's level is kind of at different of their stress and what they can cope with.

But I tell them, we're going to work on your resilience to stress. We're not going to get rid of stress. There's always going to be something there's always going to be suffering in the world, right.

So we have to look at things differently. Well, I definitely, encourage people to look at stress differently. In any case. And it's sort of people, but I don't think people realize it's the stress is really positive and that we actually would be dead without it.

So stress is really just a term of physics. And it's basically telling us when something is out of balance. So every living organism, including the ecosystem, every system wants to be in what we call homeostasis, which is that steady state that we learn about in biology, which is impossible to maintain or sustain because everything's constantly changing and moving. It's dynamic.

So the universe is dynamic or dynamic. The Earth is dynamic, and it's always needing to right itself. Right. The Earth is constantly writing itself, and so the body does the same.

What same thing. When there's an imbalance, the body that needs to right itself. So hunger is actually a stress. Being cold is a stress. Being too hot is a stress.

Being uncomfortable is a stress. When we're uncomfortable, we shift positions and we get back into comfort. So that's the writing itself. When we're hungry, our body lets us know that we're hungry, that our blood sugar is off, and then we go and eat something, and then it writes itself.

That's what we call coping. So there's a difference between adaptive coping and maladaptive coping.

Stress, Coping, and Health

So adaptive coping is I'm hungry. That's the stress I eat. That's the system writing itself. And now I'm back in balance. It's a term called alo stasis instead of homeostasis, which is the ability to achieve stability through change.

How we get back into balance by changing, by adapting and, maladaptive coping would be I'm anxious and I eat. So the eating is actually calming. Our anxiety down.

But it's not solving the reason. The anxiety is there to begin with. So it's a it's coping. I'm getting through the day, but I'm not actually addressing the reason that I'm feeling anxious.

I'm just kind of putting a Band-Aid on it. So we call that maladaptive coping because eventually the system is going

to get hurt by that, because you're not actually addressing the stress, and the stress is not being extinguished, and the system is not getting back into it. It's not getting righted.

It's just getting like slightly corrected, but it's not getting righted. So I think it's important to remember that without stress, we'd be dead okay.

Without stress, you'd never get out of bed in the morning. You wouldn't, you want you wouldn't want to change anything. You wouldn't want to find out any information.

It's the lack being in a state of lack that motivates action. And that's the beauty of being human. If you weren't human, you wouldn't have stress at all and you'd be dead.

So I really encourage people to understand the beauty of stress. And that's really about learning how to use stress. So it doesn't use us and it to, you know, take that control back.

Yeah I loved watching you said and how you explain the different coping. I was just talking to my daughter. She was at work this weekend and she was just shocked.

She works with a lot of college students. She's a server, and she was shocked at how many of them vape, you know, and I'm like, yeah, it's like a it's like a pacifier.

I mean, you know, they're like everyone's sucking on them and it's like it's the new coping pacifier. It's not it's not okay. So they're they're not being very resilient.

They're using that to cope. And and that's not good. But maybe if someone told them like, hey, you know, it might be a stressful that your car might not start or your kids might be just kind of crazy and have meltdowns because they haven't been they've been staying up late, you know, because it's the holidays, but you're going to breathe through it and you're going to be resilient and it's going to be okay.

And you should be grateful that your kids are alive and healthy. So, you know, you shouldn't be sucking on a V8, right? So it's it's very hard because we're also I feel bad because she's like offered, you know, these vapes, all her friends at school, they they vape in between basketball practice like and it's like you really have to talk with those around you about what this resilience is.

And as we're talking about today, because if not, they might fall prey to some of these different coping mechanisms which are unhealthy, which we see a lot in, in patients with, with medicine.

Right. Like overeating, smoking, drinking. You know, I'm sure you could probably go into that a little more. I'd love to hear. Well, I think I think that the major thing here is it's the why.

Right. Like why? Why are they choosing this as a coping mechanism? And that's what we really want to look at. What are the what are the anxieties? What are the fears.

What are the psycho spiritual aspects of of what's happening here, the environmental issues, the pressures that are leading them to use this as a coping mechanism?

Because once you've found that, oh, this helps me feel better, you're going to use it. I mean, all behaviors essentially addictions to a certain extent because the brain, it goes towards reward of what helps you feel better and away from what makes you feel badly.

So it's just how we're designed. And so unless you teach people how to develop self-awareness and how to essentially reset the thermostat, because if you're cold outside, you're going to shiver and trying to stop that shiver when it's cold outside, it's impossible unless you reset your internal thermostat.

So this is a bigger issue. It's really about working with people on that, on a cultural level, on a community level, on a

and a an a way of re addressing how they see themselves and how they see the world.

Because as long as they have that anxiety and have those fears and have those pressures that parents, society schools put on them, and they're not given other coping tools to manage it, that's what they're going to do, because it helps them get through it, and it helps them get by.

Yeah. So it's a bigger issue. It's a bigger help. Can I ask you what you think the pandemic did to resilience in the United States? You know, it's a very good question.

I think that, it did it had some, positive effects and probably some negative effects. Both. So on the negative aspect of of it from and resilience is the lack of connection.

So people went from we were humans. We have a necessity to be with each other physically and to have a sense of belonging and the isolation really took away one of those coping tools that we really need as human beings to thrive.

So that sense of connection, that sense of being with other people, social isolation, and, you know, that that's on that one negative, another negative or screen time.

So we know with your brain our Nature, which was released in 2012, and we we saw that the advent of screen time was increasing anxiety, depression, mental health issues and ADHD and things like that, especially children.

Lack of empathy, more irritability, more anger. And so you can imagine 12 years later how much worse it is. And with Covid, wherever school was on screen time and everything became screen time.

And so the kids of of it, especially during that time, had less socialization and more screen time, which is again, a really bad recipe for, for mental health and possibly physical health and ability to manage resilient.

So that's on one hand. On the other hand, we had people who especially were sort of were taught that you need to do something a certain way and work a certain way and, and be sort of a workhorse.

Realize that, wait a minute. I don't actually even like doing that. I started sort of connecting with their own core values, as opposed to doing what everybody else is saying and saying.

Wait a minute, I actually have other interests. I'm going to go spend time in nature. I'm going to maybe develop myself spiritually. I'm going to reassess my values about what's important to me, and not sort of give my power away to the larger authority as it may be.

So I think from that perspective, also, for introverts who were released of that social pressure to have to be with other people and, and to be able to go more inwards and inform their world within that it was also really helpful for people.

So I think from a level of being able to sort of look at things and say, wait a minute, why am I giving my power away to a larger authority? Let me reassess my own values.

What's really important in my life and in my world. So I think in that respect it was really powerful. Yeah, yeah. That's great. It definitely was different.

So it was interesting to watch all of my kids go through it in each age group is that I have kids five through 16, so it all affected them differently.

And I feel like it hit my 9 or 8 year old the worst. But because he was in that like kindergarten age and that's like a lot of parents see that. So, it just very interesting.

But it did we did get really resilient. We did crazy things, like we got chickens and went outside and but the screen

time, do you know that commercial where it has the girl, she gets a phone for Christmas and she's on it all the time.

And then she starts like her demeanor, like just gets really depressed. And then she's like crying all the time and watching TV all the time, falling asleep in school.

And then she sees her bicycle. It's a bike ad and then she rides her bike. Do you know what I'm talking about? That commercial? Yes. Yes, yes. And that's exactly, exactly that really does happen.

Yes. It's a big time studies looking at, you know, people on their phones and what's happening to the brain or people who are not who are basically nature deprived, and what happens to the brain and what happens to the brain when you even just see scenes of nature get out to nature and what it does for us?

And so this is all very real. It's very real. Yeah. That one like got me. I was like, oh, but then I'm like, well I'm watching the screen. It was during a football game.

But that was like, it is funny, but that Yeah. It's so hard with kids too. And as parents, yes, it's harder. You have to set those limits. But I will tell you when I'm like when I say to my kids, hey, clear off the table, I'll, let's sit down and play some cards.

They've never said no. They're, you know, like, that's what they want. They want that human connection and they want to play cards. So. So yeah, that helps with their resilience.

Right. Exactly.

Pandemic Effects on Resilience

The social connection, the play, the having fun, the creativity that having having you know, when you're only looking at a screen, you lose out on a lot of the creative abilities of that, that the brain can then innovate and create that you would get from nature.

So and, you know, and the connection with others. So it's not that it's totally negative. There's a lot of, you know, the brains of the kids today are different than ours for sure.

And innovative in different ways. So it's not about creating a negative, it's just finding balance within that. So, you know, having periods during the day when you're unplugged and, you know, focusing and being with family and being with friends and being fully present, and really being able to create that sense of connection with yourself, with the outer world and with others.

So creating those, those times when you do that. So it's not sort of not having screen time, it's just finding balance. Absolutely. Well, what are some more practical tips and tools for cultivating resilience in our daily life?

Yeah. So I I talk about the six pillars of resilience. So the first pillar is your physical vitality. So what can you do to support your physical vitality?

I would I recommend you start changing your mindset and looking at everything as either fuel or toxic. So the activities that you do or don't do, the sleep that you get or don't get the nutrient rich food or lack thereof that you put in your body, even the people that you keep around you, or the thoughts that you have, or the the time that you do for recovery and relaxation.

So everything is fuel for your mind and body to either thrive or die. And figuring out what suits you best. So what kind of movement suits you best? What kind of, nutrients suit you best?

What kind of, sleep regiment suits you best? I mean, there's a protocol for everybody, but the question is, you know, you might have some variations that work for you, that don't work for you.

And remembering that your, your, your gauge is how you feel. Your gauge is how much energy you have. Your gauge is you know, how much focus you can have or how much happiness you hold in your heart.

And it's going to have it's going to be variable according to your physical vitality. So that's one because I mean, again, you I think about my ability to make decisions when I'm sleep deprived versus fully rested.

So they're very different. So the second one is your ability to make decisions. What is your mental mindset. So working on how you perceive yourself and you perceive your world.

Are you a victim or victor or a co-creator or do you look at something and and do your limited beliefs get in the way, or are you able to look at something as an opportunity?

So I encourage people to start looking at their world as opportunities, but even in most difficult situation is an opportunity for learning and growth.

How can this be an opportunity? How could this be an opportunity? That's what we call the growth mindset. The third pillar is about your emotions is to start learning about emotional intelligence and how to check your emotions, how to keep them in balance.

Emotions aren't negative. They're just like hunger. They let us know that we're out of balance and develop skills and tools to find that emotional equilibrium, that emotional balance, whether it's mindfulness through meditation, cognitive behavioral therapy, there's all different types of tools that allow us to recognize what's happening with our emotions, to be able to step outside of them and use them to inform us rather than take over us.

And then how affect our behaviors? Because our negative emotions come in, it literally causes our mind to drop down into victim mode and that the world is against us, not for us or with us.

And the fourth point is what we just talked about, which social connection, which is working on our relationships. Again, like I said, we are social beings.

We want to feel like we belong. Our resilience comes from being in community. Our ancestors never would have survived on their own in the wilderness. So it's looking at our relationships and looking at our our sense of community, what we're a part of, who we are a part of, who gives and who receives.

And in developing those relationships. The fifth one is also about connection, but it's about spiritual connection. Ultimately, our ability to transcend this world, our humanness is our spiritual ness, our spiritual connection, a connection to something greater than that allows us to give us meaning and purpose in our life.

So working on that, working on our meaning of purpose, connecting to a spiritual community, whatever your belief in is, it could be nature, but reminding yourself that you're connected to something greater than and the last pillar is a pillar of self-awareness and self leadership.

Six Pillars of Resilience

Understanding that we take accountability for our actions, for ourselves, for our beliefs, for our thoughts, knowing that everything we think, feel, do affects everything else around us.

So either a boulder or your pebble, but either way you create ripples in the water and taking accountability and responsibility for that. So every day, being able to do practices that support you in those six pillars, I love that.

That's great. And it's just such a positive spin on everything. And we all struggle and everyone, everyone has hurdles. We all have valleys, we all have mountains.

And it's hard when, you know, bring up social media again, or being on a screen when you're just looking at people's mountains, you know, and they're not sharing their valleys.

I personally always share my valleys on my social media because it's, it's it's a part of me. And I'm actually proud of those valleys because it brings me closer to to Jesus, to my faith, to, to, you know, talking about that higher being.

So I'm grateful for those now. But when I was going through residency, those valleys were hard being on call. You're so busy that you're not you're not leaning into those steps.

I remember we would have once a month, I think, you know, residency, like wellness days and do paintball or something. And it was great for that human connection.

But it was it was just a hard time. And now I think it's it's a lot better. You know, I think doctors are better taking care of to some extent, even though it's it's still a problem.

So but, so when you went through that needle stack, did you, did you have like a mentor or something like walking you through that at that vulnerable time? No.

Nothing. No. Never had a Shane never have. No. I mean, so I think everybody's got their own path. You know, I, I think you would agree that with your, your spiritual, belief system that we each have our own divine guided path.

And, you know, we don't really know why until afterwards when we try to make meaning from it. But I do believe now, you know, almost 30 years later, or even just my entire life, that for me, I, I need to go through something on my own and figure it out.

And that at this age now, where I have colleagues and, you know, other people that are esteemed and are in their mastery that I can turn to for some guidance or advice.

But a lot of what I needed to go through in my personality type and, and my journey was figuring it out on my own. I don't think anyone I had people along the way who supported me, but putting it all together was something that was part of my own creative process.

And so and I feel like I went through it so that I can help other people, not have to go through it or not have looked through it as difficult, you know, in such a difficult way that they can find more ease.

That something that might have taken me ten years will take somebody, you know, ten weeks or ten days or what have you. So again, so I just feel that in my divine path, and really, for me to be able to really, really help people, I needed to go through all of it, because otherwise I might be a talking head and, you know, not really coming from my heart.

Yes, I agree with that there. And there's a lot of that out there, too. I feel like that with my Hashimoto's, my journey and I, I'm glad because I get it when I see someone with an autoimmune disease sitting across from me.

I'm like, I've been there, I get it. So you coauthored your brain on nature. I would love to hear more like geeking out a little bit on what the brain does in nature, because it's beautiful.

I'm looking outside. It's rainy here today in northwest Ohio and gray, but it's still beautiful. I love looking at all the trees. Yeah, well, so the that the your brain on nature is based on.

I mean, it just talks about all the research, that we have that is confirming how important nature is for our brain. We are nature. We were born in nature.

We will die in nature. We lived in nature. Our ancestors did anyway. And the human being has not actually been around long enough for evolution to have caught up with technology.

In other words, our brain is used to being in nature and not used to being in a concrete jungle looking at technology. So it's actually very stressful to the brain because it's in a foreign it's in foreign land.

Even though psychologically we've acclimated, we're used to it. The brain is actually not so happy with it. So the brain wants to be in nature. It's comforting.

It's beautiful, like nothing in nature is ugly. And so the research shows that when you spend time in nature, 20 minutes a day, it improves your immune system.

It lowers the stress response and improves cognition and improves, energy levels, improves healing. We've seen that when you put plants in rooms, people get out of hospitals faster.

So it is very apparent, oh, when you exercise, for instance, indoors versus outdoors and somewhere in nature you feel less fatigue, less pain. You can go longer, go faster, you're more enlivened.

So there's a lot of research that is confirming to us how important it is for us to be connected directly to nature on a regular basis, 20 minutes a day, getting away on weekends, having photos of nature around your home, reminding our brain that we're still very much connected.

It seems like we need more outside gyms. Like I'm like, oh my goodness, because I didn't know that study that if you exercise outdoors, like like I'm telling you like lifting weights because that's I don't walk like inside on a treadmill.

You know, sometimes I'm like, just go outside, put on a raincoat, but it's I need a Smith machine, like outside. Well, you think you do. I mean, yes, if you had a, if you had a speed machine outside and it, you know, surrounded by green and trees, you absolutely would feel a lot less discomfort.

And the other thing of that is like, you know, going and learning some functional movements and going outside and doing some pull ups on a tree and, you know, using, stones to, to lift weights and, and, you know, that also then ignites your brain and the creative pathways for innovation.

So there's a lot of different ways that nature can be helpful, you know, either putting your gym out nature or using your nature as your gym. Yeah. Yeah, I love that.

I, I've seen those, those like rock beach like beach, like, they use rocks and like all that stuff for workout. I'm like, that's so cool. I would love that.

Just being in the sand and but yeah, no no no no. Northwest Ohio maybe another time. Yeah. But not at this time of the year especially. But yeah, but but the kids like if they're inside and they're suffering I'm like, go outside.

Like you need nature. Just go outside. And then they go and they play and they have fun. So it's we laugh about that because, you know, we're we're we're Gen Axis my friends and our Gen Z.

So you know when we were growing up we were told go outside and don't come back until dinner. So they didn't want to see us. We were out. They had no idea what we're doing. We're out and about.

And we were not allowed back in until dinner time. So yeah, no, I love it. My friend and I would go on this property with like a bunch of streams, at her house and then our house.

We had a pond and we would, you know, try to find Snapping Turtle. We got leashes on us, ones like, we we had so much fun or even, like, when we were teenagers, we would play laser tag outside, sit around the fire.

So definitely, gosh, the phones, I mean, all these kids that are just so in their phone, I and I try to be careful because I do a lot of work on my phone and I'm sure you with like networking and all of that, it's it's hard.

So just make sure you're putting it down. Your kids aren't modeling your behavior. Yeah. And when you're talking to them, be fully present. You know, I think we do that with each other and we do that with our children.

Is that, you know, we're talking and then looking at our phone or that the phone is right there. So it's really important to practice presence, you know, full presence and not because otherwise we're advocate advocating what I call learned invisibility that the other person is starting to learning that compared to your phone, that they're invisible.

And we have enough of that in our world, or we learn invisibility or, you know, we get sort of shunned and pushed away, and, you know, told that we're too much or not enough or whatever those messages are.

Nature, Presence, and Boundaries

And to really practice authentic presence. I love that learned invisibility. I just came up with that term. I'm about to release an article on it, so, I don't know that.

Well, and it's true. And it's so hard because, you know, I work, I do a lot of work from home, and, you know, the kids will, like, pop in and they'll see me doing it and review it and then just wait.

And then so I try to be extra present with them because they do get a lot of me, but they see, you know, I'm working in front of them. I'm not like physically going somewhere a lot of the times to work.

So but you can you make up for that by connecting with them later differently if you set that boundary, does that overcome that? I think it's also really important to just voice it.

You know, you can say, listen, I'm, I'm, I'm working. When I'm working, I'm not going to be fully present with you. And so and I'm going and create like a time, a boundary like okay, I like and can draw a line and say, okay, right now I'm at work so you can interact with me, but I might not be 100% present when I'm talking to you because I'm at work now, I'm going to step over the line, and now I'm back home and I'm going to be fully present as your mom here at home, and I'm not going to work.

And so you can just state that. And so you create clear boundaries between my work time and my home time. And even if you don't have kids or something that you can do.

So, you know, I sort of draw my line outside of my, my office at home and I step out. I'm like, okay, I'm not working right now. And then I step back in my office, okay, I'm working right now.

So I love, you know, so it's sort of that people know where where you stand right now. So you might be like, you need to do an hour's worth of work sometime in the evening.

So you say, okay, kids, I'm from 7 to 8. I'm going to be working. So it's just going to be work time and then I'm going to be fully present with you after that.

So that way you're completely focused, but you're focused and then you're not. Right. So I do that with all those people that have a difficult time focusing.

We call it time distraction. Right now I'm just going to focus and then I'm going to time my distraction and my time, my period that I'm going to be fully present with something else.

So just stating it out loud and following through. Doctor Iva, I think I needed this too. I'm so glad that you gave those tips and tricks for me, because I'm entering a season where I'm going to be homeschooling my kids for a few months before their new, It's like a hybrid homeschool start.

So I'm going to need to make sure I have those clear set boundaries for them so they still feel like I'm giving them attention and not feeling that something popped into my brain because I have some cats that are very needy.

They're very needy. Anyway, there's things sneaky cats do. Do animals feel that same way when, like, you know, they're adults or like, so they feel that too?

I mean, I don't know, but I think they do. I think animals are more sensitive. I mean, they're really intuitive and really sensitive, and they know when you're fully present, they know when you're not.

They know when you're unhappy. They know when you're stressed. You know, they're we're all we're living beings are sentient beings, which means we feel before we think, before we do anything, we feel.

And they can they can pick up in your and your vibration. They pick up on your and and whatever it is you're experiencing or feeling. They feel it and they will respond in kind.

So anxious. They're anxious. If you're happy, they're happy. So, you know, they pick up on that for sure. Yeah. I was just wondering because not everyone has kids around, you know, so they have pets and now I you went through a little bit of this, the mind body connection and its role in overcoming adversity.

Can you do you want to go into any more detail on that? I think it's just important to remember that you're not an isolated being. Nothing is separate and everything is interconnected, that your, your brain is secondary to everything else.

Okay? Your body feels first and your body and your brain discerns after. And that when your body is discerning that there is a stress present there lets your brain know when it's present and then the brain will look at.

It's a database that it's created since the day you were born of what to do and then will initiate an action. That's how everything works. And so you're designed to try to find relief, and your brain is looking for a way to get you there, to get you to write that situation.

Your brain is basing its knowledge on what's happened in the past and what it suspects might happen in the future, and it ties it in with your emotions.

So when you're in a negative emotional space, it'll take you to your past when you had the same negative situation, come up with the belief system that occurred at that time, which is normally when you were young and didn't have much of a brain.

And then it will propagate the action, emotion, behavior that will help you then move forward to cope. The reason I'm saying that is because many of us, when we're under stress, I've triggered trigger belief systems and encourage when we're younger that are not really true and not logical.

We call them distortions, cognitive distortions. And those are what's motivating our behaviors, actions, beliefs, and and reactions to other people and to how we cope in life.

If we don't, as we assume that connection to self, to the body, to what I'm actually experiencing, and then take care of self, then we're always going to keep doing the same habits over and over again.

That's why diets don't work. All these self-care help self-help books don't work because we haven't reset the thermostat. So number one, in understanding mind body connection, knowing that everything is connected, everything is interrelated.

And if we want to feel more empowered in our lives, it starts with us. Starts with learning how to feel, how to be connected to our feelings. Number one, how to we we so that self awareness is number one.

Two is self-regulation is being able to regulate that stress response so that we can get into a place of balanced so that we can have access to how we maneuver.

Because again, when we're in stress and contracted, we can't see clearly or think clearly. When we're open, expansive and calm, we can. And the third thing is self-compassion.

What will get us out of this stress response, this fear, this anxiety is love. Is love spiritual love, social love, self-love,

and that compassion that we can fill ourselves up with.

Then we can get regulated and then figure out what needs to happen. So all that fuel I'm talking about all the self-talk, all the mindset, everything, all that sort of saying of knowing what my leadership is in the world.

It's all based in love. So the mind body connection for resilience and thriving and flourishing is based on love. Loving oneself, being connected to something, loving that's greater than and the love that connects us all together in our humanity.

So that that's what I that's the only thing I want to add.

Mind-Body Connection and Closing Thoughts

Yes. That's beautiful. I like when I do the little heart to you. We all need more love less I love that that's so great. That's a that's a great just way to end you know the the podcast I love that.

So definitely so many useful tips and tricks for resiliency which is so important. I mean I'm telling you, every patient that comes into my office stress resilience it's it's on the table their cortisol.

And yeah it's not going to go away. Not necessarily a bad thing. Like you said. There's people that can't make cortisol. They die. You know like you die if you don't make it is also so it's it's there for a reason.

So I just love that this is your passion and that you turned in a situation of pain and and really hard. I mean, I couldn't imagine, I mean, I, you know, I've heard of it happening to different residents and stuff, but, you know, if you're the one, it's just a whole different thing.

So I love that you brought that story and made it your career to help other people become more resilient. Now, doctor Eva, how can everyone find you? Where where do you like to hang out on social when you take that up?

I think you can find me in any. Anywhere. Is doctor self-help dot com? It's my website. We're growing. I'm growing my YouTube channel. So I'm going to have a lot of really informative, information on there going forward, I think starting this Thursday.

This, this, this end of, I mean, end of December, we're going to be starting that. And also I'm on all of those social media channels, LinkedIn and Instagram and Facebook.

What else is there X Twitter or whatever that is now. And I think even TikTok, I'm on there, but I think that that's probably not going to be around by January anyway. So, but yeah, I'm all the, media channels.

I have, six books that are out, as you know, and, yeah, that's amazing. So any future projects or is YouTube what you're putting all your effort into right now?

Oh no. No. Yeah. There's always different projects. Projects happening. So, we, we, I do, workshops and retreats often. I've collaborating with two other mind body medicine.

One's a doctor, one's a nurse practitioner. We've done two retreats, workshops together already. We're doing I'm going to be doing a lot more of those, which are these transformational workshops for people to move into flourishing and probably doing a flourishing project with them.

And, yeah, there's always something brewing, probably going to write another book and, like I said, mostly a lot of seminars, workshops and programs that will be coming out in, 2025. Great.

That is so exciting. Well, thank you so much for being here. I appreciate all your time and your knowledge. Thank you so much for having me. Thank you for tuning in to Doctor Talks.

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