The Future Of Longevity: Peptides, Testosterone & Preventive Medicine Transcript

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Introduction to The Functional Edge

We have a lot of time and money invested in all this training and we are practicing how to take care of disease when we should be more focused on preventing disease.

Cause we know from a healthcare dollar standpoint, that's much more cost effective to prevent a disease rather than take cure of a. Yeah. And I find that simply put, go back a couple hundred years of how they used to live.

And it's not too far off from that. We can apply that to our day to day. I had to pull like a three, 400 pound chicken coupon wheels. But I got to work out of that, I have to wipe some sweat off my forehead before I go on this podcast.

but, you know, work, get outside, outside in the sunshine. Welcome to The Functional Edge. I'm Dr. Julia Ward, and this is where science meets real-world strategies for living healthier, sharper, stronger.

From uncovering hidden environmental toxins to unlocking peak performance and mental clarity, we cover it all. Ready to take control of your health and thrive?

Let's dive in. Hello and welcome to the Functional Edge podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Julia Ward, medical director and founder of Balanced Body Function Medicine.

Today, we're honored to welcome Dr Van Mailey to our show. In this episode, Doctor Van Mayley will be sharing insights on the powerful intersection of farming and medicine, the importance of discovering your why in the healing journey, advanced strategies like peptide therapy and male hormone optimization, and why tracking health metrics truly matters.

We'll also explore how motivation is built and why a collaborative approach, bringing together a trainer, a therapist, or physician can dramatically improve patient outcomes.

So stay tuned for an engaging conversation that promises to empower and inspire your path to wellness. Welcome.

Regenerative Farming and Root-Cause Health

Thank you for having me. It's great to be here. Absolutely. So you often speak about the connection between farming and medicine. Can you walk us through how the principles of regenerative agriculture translate into how we should be thinking about human health and healing at a root cause level?

Absolutely. Well, if you can see my feet right now, I'm barefoot right in my office and I definitely still have chicken poop on my bare feet. I literally, right before this call, ate lunch and then I went and moved my chickens.

Oh, good. My wife and I with two young kids, we have, I lose count because sometimes some die. Sometimes you get chickens from other neighbors and whatnot, but we got like about 28 chickens right now.

But we're practicing regenerative agriculture in the backyard. You don't need a huge space to do it. We've got five acres, I've been a big fan of regenerative agriculture for several years.

Joel Salatin is one of my heroes. He's like the OG when it comes to regenerate farming and he's based out of Virginia. Can you explain a little bit about what is regenerative farming?

Oh, sure. Sure. In my opinion, regenerate agriculture is getting farming back to its original intention, which is it's mostly in the livestock space for regenerated agriculture.

But especially when it comes to cows and chickens and not getting them in these big chicken houses or dairy farms and whatnot, allowing them to live their lives the way that they were intended to.

Okay. So not packed in shoulder to shoulder. Yeah. And, you know, they're made to roam like how the buffalo used to be when we first settles into the Americas.

They're going from one pasture to the next. and then they're stomping in the ground, you know, feces are in, they are urinating in. And that is all fertilizer and they move on to the next part, do the same thing and that grass just keeps getting better and better, and more nutrition, better soil.

That's how you're truly regenerating the earth as opposed to conventional farming, which is just I mean, I grew up in Michigan in the Midwest, where if you look at the farm fields before anything is planted, it's pretty brown.

And they have to just dump fertilizer. Sometimes they use manure, but most of the time it is fertilizer followed with crops and followed by glyphosate.

It's a mess. That's not the way God intended us to be farmers. I like to do a little taste of it in my own backyard and I reap the rewards. I get wonderful eggs every single day that I just walk out to the coop and it suits my lifestyle because my family eats about a dozen eggs a day.

So we got to make sure we have to support it. That's awesome. Yeah. In your experience, how disconnected have we become from our inputs, both in terms of food and lifestyle, and how does that disconnection show up in the patients that you work with?

Yeah, I think people just lose track of their roots, of kind of the core values that I follow at my practice at Black Sheep Palithar. Nutrition, exercise, sleep, stress, and then community, faith and purpose, all kind go in the same bucket.

Those are my core values and a lot of times when you're seeing somebody for the first time, you kind of starting at square one. Sometimes they've got their stuff figured out and other times you are kind grounding them again and being like, hey, You've been working really hard at this job for a long time but you've neglected.

Your food you've neglected your exercise. You're super stressed out You don't realize you're only sleeping a few hours a night. So you have to totally recalibrate somebody but my Mission and you know my take on this whole thing is that we have all the training in the world, right?

Finding Purpose and the Why Behind Healing

You and I went to the medical school we had a lot of time and money invested in all this training and we are practicing how to take care of disease when we should be more focused on preventing disease because we know from a healthcare dollar standpoint that's much more cost-effective to prevent a disease rather than take cure of a And I find that simply put, go back a couple hundred years of how they used to live.

And it's not too far off from that. We can apply that to our day-to-day. I had to pull like a three, 400 pound chicken coupon wheels. But I got to work out of that, I have to wipe some sweat off my forehead before I go on this podcast.

But, you know, work, get outside, outside in the sunshine, like be able to tell me what you're eating. Most people are so out of touch with the basic fuel that goes into their body.

You know I have two basic rules of my practice and I've had this for years is don't drink your calories. Like I drink water. I don' even think you are supposed to be drinking out this.

This is more of a serving. glass, but I just stole it from the house. And you got to be able to tell me all the ingredients of what you're eating. Like this, you know, this is my lunch, which I haven't finished yet, But it's very easy to Tell you what's in my breakfast.

I've got all my macros here, fat, protein, carbohydrates, and there is two ingredients in this meal. orange egg. And that's how simple stupid I want it to be for everybody.

So I hope that answered your question. Yeah, absolutely. One of the themes you're passionate about is helping people find their why. How do you approach that conversation with patients who are stuck, unmotivated, or simply trying to feel better but haven't yet connected to a deeper purpose?

Amen. I don't ask this right out of the gate because I do want to build rapport with people and just kind of chit chat with them and have them get to know me, I get know them.

And usually after, you know, maybe it's the first call or maybe at the end of first the call, just ask somebody, why are you doing this? Because the easy way, and you and I both know this in medicine, the easier way for us to practice is like, here's a blood pressure medicine.

Here's the statin, Here is an NSAID, like here is a PPI, usually like your cookie cutter stuff. Or the hard way to do it, which is more time and commitment and investment in your health is doing the things that I just talked about.

Yeah. So you got to ask people like, are you willing to commit? Are you will to invest? Because if they don't know why they're doing it. It's going to burn out really quick.

So, and then this is kind of like my end to talk to people about faith in Christianity. Like, I'm a Christian first and foremost. I want to honor God with everything that I do.

And then I wanna be a great husband to my wife and I wanted to be great father to two beautiful children. That's my why. I want to go to heaven one day and I wanna honor God and he's given me the talents, if you will, from Matthew of, you know, hey, your put on this earth to be a doctor, but be little different, like be better.

Don't follow in line with what everybody else is doing in medicine. And that's kind of how I came up with Black Sheep Health. But also too, I can't deny that I'm unbelievably blessed to be in this space to have the luxury on a Friday afternoon to chat with you and spend more time with my patients.

And that's how you get it done with people and really get in deep with them, find out why they're doing it. Are they doing for themselves or for somebody else?

But it's very powerful because that is the secret sauce, I believe. Once you can pull that out of somebody, which doesn't always come right out the gate, usually it trickles in, but if you find out somebody's purpose, that's life.

If you don't have purpose what are you doing for anything? Apply that to health, apply that anything. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. So from a clinical perspective, how much do you think that purpose and meaning actually influences physiology, things like hormones, inflammation, resilience?

It influences everything. Yeah. If they know what they're doing and why they are doing it, they will be much more willing to follow the game plan that we go through.

And if that game plan includes eating better, exercising more, sleeping more and they know why they're doing it, the physiology just works. It does. And you're sleeping good, you recovering, your sweating every day.

I get you to buy into a sauna. You're getting outside, taking your shoes off in the grass. This is how God intended us to be and how to act on a day-to-day basis.

And that's a subjective, like, these are the things that you have to do. But objectively, CRP, the biggest

inflammatory marker that we check, comes down.

Tracking Health Metrics and Wearables

Generally, homocysteine comes to a spot where you want it to. Glucose is coming down, A1C is going down triglycerides, all the bare-bones basic things we're checking.

Then the world will start working like a symphony. They start sounding good. So it makes the world of difference. And people are just excited about their health at that point too.

When you can give somebody that feeling of… man, I know why I'm doing this and I feel really good and better to my wife, my wives better than me, and my kids are behaving.

Things just fall into place and that's what life is all about. They're not here for a very long time and we could be dead tomorrow, we don't know. Every day is a gift.

Yeah, absolutely. How do you help patients who intellectually know what to do but they still can't seem to follow through? Yeah. That's a good question.

I think it's different for everybody. And that's like, if we had that secret sauce of one protocol, one size fits all, uh, we'd be having a different conversation here.

So you gotta meet people where they're at. You gotta understand, like, hey, am I talking to a CEO of a health company? Or am i talking somebody that woke up this morning and went, man, I need to be healthy.

I have no idea what I'm doing. Yeah. Or somewhere in between. So you gotta understand their background, what they know, What they've been looking at, right?

Did you just chat GBT this whole conversation or your labs right before this call? And like, I need to be prepared for that and knowing what you're gonna be asking me about and like with anything, like when I'm talking to a doctor, we can talk shop.

But when I'm talking to someone who doesn't know anything about health, you gotta talk in a different way, but you're all getting to the same goal. So you just gotta meet people where they're at and you got to find out what makes them turn.

Because for some people, they don't have a lot of time. They want to optimize on one call and get everything out of the way now. And they can follow that plan, hey, send me a macro plan.

Send me an exercise plan I'm going to do it. Whereas other people require some handholding and they want to those weekly check-ins or bi-weekly check ins, however we arrange it, so.

But keeping people motivated is a revolving door, which everybody's going be a little different. Yeah. So you emphasize tracking. What are the most important metrics you believe patients should be paying attention to and why does that data change outcomes?

Yeah, good question. There's a few other places that I currently work at and work with that have a life spore. So it's all proprietary, right? Because there's no like, there is a day in which you were born and then you have an age, like that's very, everybody understands that.

However, now we're coming up with scoring systems to where say I'm 35 years old, but my life score is at a 27 year old. Okay, so theoretically I am aging at slower pace than my biological age.

And what is that based on? So we base that off of, at this particular company, we based it off a subjective input of hey, what's your energy? How's you libido?

Are you sleeping? What types of foods are you eating? Those subjective questions and then matching that with the objective biomarkers from serum, so the blood markers.

Yeah. Where I think the missing piece is you got to have subjective telling me about your energy, how are you feeling? What are your biomarkers? And from a very robust panel, because if you're only looking here, you are going to miss all these other things, which we could have a whole other conversation about that.

And I tell this to patients a lot. If I could give you one prescription or one medication, that would be the best thing across the board, it would exercising.

Yeah. Right? Like exercise trumps every medication out there. For every single disease, exercise works better than any medication. Yes, I agree. So why are we not tracking physical health metrics in addition to biomarkers as a part of this whole thing.

Because we know, we just established that this is the most important piece, but nobody's really tracking that. Unless you're in like working with a trainer in the gym, like, hey, I benched 300 pounds today, let's get you up to 325 by the end of the year.

That's like an actual objective marker. But for things that I track in my practice are, you can't see my pull-up bars right here, how long can you dead hang?

We know that grip strength is associated with longevity. So if I weigh 220 pounds, I'd better be able to hold that body weight up for 90 seconds at least.

But most people can't do that. How many push-ups can you do in a minute? How may air squats can do you in minute. What is your deadlift? What's your squat?

I'm a big fan of HIIT workouts, so sprints is like the cheapest, easiest HIIt workout that you can do. You just run. What's your 40-yard dash? Yeah. And then not to mention all the wearables.

That's my next question. Like what do you think about the Wearable Devices? Are you recommending them? Do you use them in your practice? Yes, yes. So I'm currently rocking a Garmin right now.

I just, I love the watch and being able to have like time on it as opposed to a whoop or an aura where I can't see that. And then I've worn the aura in the past, but like, even I told my wife, like I want the fittest gold band that they can give us.

At the jeweler when we got married, the aura is too thick for me. Yeah, it's pretty thick. It bangs into dumbbells and I'm finding I always have to take it off.

You got to find out what works for you from a wearable perspective. But that being said, I love the data that fits out. If you're a data-driven person, which honestly most people should be because if you are not tracking, you were guessing and if your guessing, your are guessing wrong.

Most people, like right now I have only 962 steps and I've been just like at my computer all day today. Yeah. Cause most people will be like, oh yeah, I get 5,000 a day.

I'm like I bet you don't. So I love tracking the steps on a daily basis. HRV I am very big on. Okay. Deep sleep, REM sleep.

Peptides, GLP-1s, and Safe Stacking

Total sleep and then these body battery kind of arbitrary numbers, kind of like the life score numbers. I'm like, I will put less emphasis on that. More emphasis, on how do you feel?

Like, that's one of the biggest cons with these whole wearables is, man, if I could say a perfect situation, i went to bed at 9 30. i woke up at 5 30 and i feel great as soon as i wake up.

Like, I didn't hit snooze for too long and I felt well rested. I wake up and then my stupid watch tells me I got a crappy score. And now I'm like, wait, what?

You know, because your feelings most of the time, not every time but most the times your feeling, if you have energy, you probably slept pretty good. We're pretty in tune with our bodies that we know if we slept bad or not.

I really don't like when either a life score or a score that Garmin or Wook gives you doesn't match your own self. Trust yourself before you trust some of these wearables because I think they're really good.

Yeah. but I don't want people stressing out about, like, oh, what's my score? I didn't break 90. Ah, it was a bad night. Yeah. Oh, hold on a second. So, pros and cons.

Okay, exactly. Well, let's shift into peptides for a minute. Sure. And for listeners who may be new to this space, can you explain what peptide are, how you think about using them, and what makes a stack both effective and safe?

Sure. So peptides are short chains of amino acids. And when you put them together, you can create proteins that act within our body. These are things that are already occurring in our bodies.

It's a more or less natural approach. Right? It is not completely natural because you're injecting a peptide into your body, but how it acts in your body, it activates physiology that is already there.

So that's why I consider these peptides very much in line with my philosophy of health, of trying to do things in a more natural way. For example, I just ate lunch My GLP-1 right now is activated because it tells my body I need to slow my emptying, optimize my insulin sensitivity, and make sure that it absorbs that nutrition and utilizes it for muscle mass or storage or whatnot.

GLP-1s are the most common. I mean, if you talk about peptides, everybody and their mother knows what ozempic is. It's kind of like the modern-day Z-Pak.

Like everybody knows the antibiotic ZPAK, and now everybody know the GLp- 1 ozentic. They work. And I'm a big fan of them. Understanding kind what they do and how your body makes them already is very powerful.

So people can understand not to overdo it on these peptide. because you want to talk about stacking. It's like peptides is like saying medications. There's a ton of peptide and they all act on different, you know, these different chains of amino acids all do separate things.

Right. Categories within peptidies, of course. And that's where the stacking is very beneficial because you can stack a GLP-1 for, and just to put it simply, for the weight loss component of it with a growth hormone, releasing hormone like either tessameralin or sermuralin, CJC, epimeraline, with BPC-157 to get the angiogenesis, to the collagen replacement.

So that is a very common stack that I use. Those three medications, or those three peptides, but they work really well. And I think, you know, when done under the right supervision and cycling too, it's not like a kind of set it and forget it thing.

You should be cycling on peptide for sure. But just understanding what you're trying to accomplish, like with anything, know your goals of going into this.

What are you trying accomplish? is very key, but I use them a lot. I think they're very beneficial and I they are starting to gain traction throughout the medical world.

Doctors were like, hey, we don't want to touch that stuff when everybody else… Everybody else is taking off.

Everybody else is taking it. So we got to find out how to make sure it's safe, right?

Do no harm. That's our first rule of being a doctor. I think there is a place for it, definitely the regulation is, it has to fall in line somehow to where it is actually going through a pharmacy and it´s clean and the sourcing, the API on this stuff.

somewhere in the back warehouse of China, these things are coming from, and we're just injecting them through every defense mechanism that we have of our skin right into our bloodstream.

It's crazy, but everybody's doing it. So it's definitely having good results that people are willing to keep doing. I think as a medical community, we need to make it safer and just more and more guideline, if you will.

Yeah. And I think, you know, sometimes we need to point people in the direction of more foundational kind of issues first before going down the peptide route.

100%. Yeah, we're never going to peptides our way out of a bad diet or not exercising. Yes. Yes. And that's what I tell people too. I always go back to the foundation.

What is your why? Here are my foundational principles. Also, I know you want to talk about sauna and cold plunge and how long can you stand on your head to get the blood flow into your brain?

All these crazy things that people are doing, like tourniquet bands to make sure you get better muscle flow, right? Yeah. Or better workouts. Fix the basics first.

And this applies to peptides because if you've got somebody that has massive insulin resistance, they don't exercise, They're barely sleeping.

Testosterone Optimization and TRT Pitfalls

There is not enough growth hormone peptide that's going to put muscles on you on the planet. Yeah. No offense, but you're wasting your time, you are wasting money, You're basically wasting resources.

It's just not going work. So I don' t start with peptids for the majority of clients that I see. So, once that foundation is built, now these things actually work the way they're supposed to work, and you'll get the benefits out of them.

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I see that with one exception, with the GLP-1, I can use this to get going. Because I do find that a lot of people, if they're overweight or obese and they've been this way their whole life, If you can take 20 pounds off of them, say they have 50 pounds to lose and you take twenty off, you just created a new person with a perspective.

They don't feel the weight on their ankles, their knees, or their hips. People are noticing them differently. Whatever floats their boat, now you've got them.

Yes, you build momentum. I used to say this about Viagra and Cialis because I've sent thousands of prescriptions of that. It's like, hey, I can give you a really quick fix right now.

And now we can make it better, but this is, throwing your bone here. So I do like GLP-1s right off the bat. Yeah. All right. Now let's shift into the male hormone optimization space.

There's a lot of noise in this space right now, and what do you think are the biggest misconceptions that you see when it comes to testosterone in men's health?

Yeah, I think there are clinics popping up everywhere, these TRT clinics, popping-up everywhere. I should show you my texts, even my brother is like, hey, how do I do this testosterone supplement?

Good for me. There's a lot of misconception around testosterone, and when it comes down to it, go back to the foundational principles. This is how you build your natural testosterone is by the natural way.

We can get your testosterone higher. Now, when you talk about testosterone itself and all the modalities that are associated with it. You can do creams, you can injections, Kaisertrex, which I'm honestly not a big fan of.

I haven't had good success with Kaysertracks. What is kaizotrex? Kaizotex is the only oral approved testosterone right now, and it's supposed to absorb through the lymphatics as opposed to first-pass metabolism through liver.

I just haven't had a good response from my patients. Maybe I haven' done enough volume, but usually if the first couple don't do well, I'm I know how to dose an injection really, really well.

So, but yeah, there's those three and then pellets. But I do a lot of telehealth these days, so it's very hard for me to cut a slice in somebody and stick a rice grain pellet in their behind.

That being said, I think the biggest misconception is people not knowing their options. There's so much cookie cutter protocol medicine of like, hey, This is our TRT prescription, take it or leave it.

I don't care if you're 20 or 80, here's your TR, I'll see you in a year. That's kind of dangerous. We are constantly dialing in the dose and making sure I talk to my guys and like, Hey, how's you energy?

How are you sleeping at night? How's your mood? Your confidence get a little better? how is it in the bedroom? All these things that go in with testosterone that really there's so many different pieces and all of these companies aren't checking labs.

Like how on earth do you manage testosterone without checking Labs? Yeah. It's insanity. So, and then you want to talk about, like, I mean, could, feel like I could run a course on TRT and the problems associated with it and how to manage them.

Like one of the most common ones is American Red Cross loves guys with testosterone because they go in all the time. And then I see them with iron deficiency anemia.

Because they're over donating for these American Red Cross. And then they were like, Russ, why do I not feel good? I'm like because you're anemic. You've been going to the full bottom of it every eight weeks and now you don't have any iron stores left.

Yeah. So there's a lot of things that you gotta manage while you're putting a guy on TRT. And it's, I mean, i've had several guys come to me like, Hey Ross, have been doing whatever company, you know, the side of the road and they have this clinic and.

I just don't feel good. I'm like, well, this is why I run a blood panel. Like, Well, This is Why. You gotta manage this. My testosterone prescription is going to be different than yours.

And do you want to have kids one day? Like are you still entertaining that idea? You know, I think that you can do testosterone and still keep your fertility, which is something that we do all the time.

But if you're not even thinking about that or they're asking about it, and then you get on when you are 18, what some of these places will do. And then, you'll get to my age at 35 and you want to start having kids and come off with testosterone.

You think it's all good and sperm counts are zero. What do you do? It's traumatic. Yeah. You just got to take into account the person and make sure they are dialed in.

And it's not as easy, not to say that I'm the only one who can do this, right? But hey, it is not very easy. You got look out for a lot of different things.

Yeah. So I love your concept of integrating a trainer, a therapist, and a physician. Can you explain why this triad is so powerful and how it addresses gaps that we often see in traditional care?

Yeah. So say, take somebody in the general medical model, because I'm an internal medicine specialist, if you will, primary care. And for your run of the mill 40 year old person, you're going to see them once a year, annual labs.

Maybe you do labs, maybe you don't. Annual physical. bonus if the doctor does labs. And you might get a CBC, a CNP, and a lipid panel. Maybe an A1C if you meet the criteria for being overweight or obese.

Yeah. Most of the time, I've had several family members who I know are not healthy. I can just look at them real quick and look their lifestyle and tell them they're not.

But they come to me and they are like, yep. My annual physical doc says I'm good to go for the next year. Oh Lord. Like we got a lot of work to do, but that's how the general medical model works, is you get this touch point of 15 minutes, maybe it's a half hour if it is an annual, once a year, and then until that there is no focus on prevention, there's no focused on getting better.

The Power of a Trainer, Therapist, and Physician Team

It's just wait until it hits the fan. Because other than that, what do we do? That's not how we were trained in med school. We're trained for disease.

So we're basically waiting until disease happens and now we are useful. But we want to flip the script and be like, no, we can be useful when you're 20 years old, 30 years, let's build this foundation to where, hey, my best patient is one that doesn't come to me with sick.

They come out, Hey, Ross, how can I get better? So when it comes to my model, I see people at minimum four times a year. So they'll get quarterly labs with me.

That's an hour visit. And then you get to follow up with your coach. And the coach is very well versed in nutrition and some of them are personal trainers that we work with, but they're able to cheerlead and motivate the client to do the things that they are an extension of me.

We've talked about the same things. Hey, we follow the dietary advice. We're trying to put on muscle and they're there for them because people can lose touch.

If I'm seeing you once a year, you're going to forget about me within the first, I want to say the week, but it's probably the day. You might talk about it with your wife at dinner and then it kind of falls off.

But if you can keep somebody engaged and then work with some of these coaches are true like diamonds in the rough, that they're very good at what they do and they keep people motivated.

And I love like one of my coaches is every day I want to get you 1% better. I'm not trying to give you 100% over night, but I am trying get to 1 percent better because it's all about that compounding effect.

If we change one thing that will lead to the next, which will leads to next. And they're my best asset because I set the game plan. They fall, they actually fall through with it.

Yeah. don't tell me that these labs in 90 days aren't gonna look significantly better than they did on day one. And then the third component is a therapy.

If we ignore mental health, spiritual health. Like my therapist who sees myself and my wife, she is not just a therapist or counselor. I don' actually know what their title is.

But she's also a very devout Christian. She knows the Bible like the back of her hand. And she kind of sets me

straight too when I'm kind walking out of line and like, hey, is this what God is calling you to do?

And I was like that's fair. It hurts, but it's true. So I like to utilize the mental health, spiritual health component and somebody that understands that space to, sometimes they figure out the why talking with them.

Like when you get deep enough with somebody, maybe it is through that avenue, you're fixing like this mind, body, spirit. And that Trinity, if you will, works really well in the health space because you can't ignore physical activity, you can't ignore nutrition.

You can ignore your purpose. Like it all fits together. And that's why if you have the entourage of medicine, all in your favor, like all on your corner, that's how you're going to get better.

So I think the more the better when it comes to specialists in the room that can truly dive into somebody's health and get them better in all areas of their health.

Yeah, absolutely. So looking ahead, how do you see the future of medicine evolving? Do you think this kind of collaborative, whole-person approach will become the standard?

I would love it to be the standards. That would be great. I'm trying to grow that in my business right now at Blacksheet, but I think it's going to a very long time.

This is definitely a cultural shift that needs to take place, Things like that have really changed people's minds on these things. We're a long way away from the sick care model going away.

But my generation, most people are at least it's on their mind health. They're little bit more health conscious. So that's where I'm trying to do my best and spreading the word of prevention is the best medicine you can have.

So I do strictly cash pay at my clinic. I don't accept insurance. Insurance is a nightmare to deal with and it's better for the patient, it is better from me, from a business standpoint.

There's a lot of different reasons to not use insurance and its so much quicker to take care of stuff. Yeah. If I can get an MRI for somebody, I'm going to order it and they can have it within the week as opposed to, hey, we're going put you in a few months and also it will cost you like five grand.

Yeah, yeah. Cash pay wins. cash is king in this space. And it's good for it. It's not just like a selfish, like, oh, I'm making money off this. Like, no, you get better results.

You get what you pay for, and it is much more efficient. So if you could give one piece of advice to someone at the beginning of their health journey, somebody who's maybe overwhelmed, fatigued, unsure where to start, what would it be?

That's a good question. I would truly sit down with yourself, take some time with God, with your spouse, whoever is closest to you, and put down on paper, write it down, like, why do you think you're on this earth?

You're not going to be here a long time. Why do you think you are here? There are some people that are meant to work for a company for the rest of their lives.

There's some that live off of nothing and volunteer and that's their calling. Find out what your calling is and go with that. And I think that is the first piece of motivation that needs to take place to get you to your goals is like understand where the finish line is.

The Future of Preventive, Collaborative Medicine

Because if you don't know, you're going to lose sight of what you are doing and that's how most people yo-yo, diet, yo yo in life where they get really good, really highs, highs and really low lows because there's no northern star that

they're following.

And then from like really quick, from a nutrition standpoint, this will fix 90% of problems. Look at the fuel. that's going in your body. If you're driving, you know, an F1 sports car and you are putting in regular unleaded, that thing's not going to work very well.

Most people are driving around a Honda Civic though thinking that it's a sportscar and it can do all these things and they're kidding themselves, but put the right fuel in you body!

So what is the fuel that we need? Water? and know all the ingredients of your food. If you can't tell me all of the ingredient of food, you're going to be setting yourself up for big time issues later on down the road and keep it so simple.

An egg is an egg, an apple is a apple, a steak is steak. You don't know what's in your cereal, You know, blueberry muffin, whatever you want to call it.

Anything that came out of a package or a box. Box packages, mostly stay away from it. And you still can have those things. There's still good stuff in box and backs.

I can't even say it, I sound like the Grinch who like packages boxes or backs, there's good still stuff there. Better be able to tell me what's in it because if you can, then you're guessing and you are not going to be taking care of yourself.

Yeah. Okay. Finally, for our listeners who want to learn more about your work, where can they find you and how can start implementing some of these principles into their own lives?

Yeah, so my company is called Black Sheep Health and you can find me at blacksheephealth.com and apply to be a client. We'll do a discovery call to see if we're the right fit because as much as I want to Be your doctor.

I hope that you want me to. Your doctor there has to a mutual relationship there. So yeah, the website right now starting to get my dip my toes into the podcasting space.

So that'll be coming here soon. And then I'm on Instagram as well at The Farmer's Doctor. Okay. Awesome. Yeah. That's wonderful. Well, thank you so much and thanks everyone for joining me on The Functional Edge.

I hope today's episode gave you fresh insights and practical tools to level up your life. If you found this conversation helpful, I'd love for you to subscribe, share it with someone who might benefit and leave a review.

It truly helps us reach more people and continue to bring meaningful root cause health insights to those who need them most. So for resources, updates and behind the scenes content, visit drjuliaward.com.

And until next time, stay strong, Stay healthy and keep living on the functional edge. Thank you for joining me on the Functional Edge. I hope today's episode gave you fresh insights and practical tools to level up your life.

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