Introduction and Kate Kunkle's mission

Welcome to this episode of the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. I'm your host, doctor Heather Sanderson. I'm so excited to introduce you to Kate Kunkle. She and I were connected by email recently, and I was just telling her that when I saw her email signature about her Brain Health Matters podcast and all of the things that she has going on in the brain space, plus learning about her personal story where she, she was suffering along with her mother, who's a tragic illness and death from dementia, became she turned this tragedy into her mission in life.

Really, what we hope everyone will do is transform this sort of tragedy into purpose and meaning and helping others. And so when, when she learned that this and most dementias were preventable, Kate expanded her healing work as a sound therapist and nutritionist and became an even certified brain health professional, which I can't wait for her to share more about all of these things with us.

Kate, welcome. Oh. Thank you. I'm so happy to be here with you. I, I was just mentioning that I feel like I know you. I watched so many of your episodes last year, and I bought the package because I want to be able to speak as intelligently as I can to my clients and the people that I have on my show to just, you know, make the information, get out there.

I feel it's so important to have the information available to people every way we can. So important, and thank you for this. You're becoming one of these experts who can share their wisdom, and you really bring this very unique perspective.

And so you're you're also the international bestselling author of Don't Let the Memories Paint A Holistic Guide to Preventing Dementia, and the Healthy Brain series of short reads, including The Vegan Brain, The Plant Livers, Fast Start Guide, and the Musical Brain.

So you have all of these ways that you are sharing this information through your podcast, through your books, and your passion and empathy has is clear from just even a few moments of knowing you.

So let's let's get into it here. I'm curious about the mute, and no one else on the segment is talking about music and the brain. So this is just this really unique perspective.

How did you come to do this work? Music. That's been my life. I started piano when I was four years old, thanks to my poor mother, who's no longer with us.

But music has been such a huge part of my life. And when I began to work with people as a harpist, I became a harpist at the age of 32. I was it took me a little while with the harp, but the harp is very much used as a healing instrument, right?

So I got so involved. I worked with people with Ms. because I heard about this gentleman. Right. Doctor Ron Price, he was a music, instructor in Chicago, and he developed Parkinson's, a form of Parkinson's.

And when I learned that he was able to reverse his symptoms and improve his life, I mean, he went even back to being able to play the trumpet, which is quite a big deal.

You know, when you have Parkinson's using the harp. So that got me on this path. I had to learn more about this, and I happened to be working at a hotel in Las Vegas. That Excalibur.

And I had a coworker whose wife had Ms..

How music healing began

She was young, maybe 42, and she was in a wheelchair and had progressed so much that she was not able to actually use her hands to, to type or anything like that anymore.

And it was devastating for her. You know, besides the wheelchair, she has these other problems. So I said, look, let's give it a try. We'll see what we can do to try and reverse this, because I told them about Doctor Price and it took us about six months.

We got her a little lab harp and we started working just to get her hands to move again. That was the goal, to be able to get her to use her fingers. So we worked. First.

I was just taking her hand and literally running it along the strings to get the vibration going. And that's the tip trick to get the vibration, the frequency going through the body.

Now that I know more about it, I realize why that worked. But that was the start of my journey into this wonderful world, wonderful world of music healing.

And of course, when my mom was, diagnosed with dementia, I was devastated. Here I am, I'm supposed to be helping people and mom got dementia. Of course I was, you know, 3000 miles away, so made it a little bit hard.

But I still felt so guilty and I had to start doing research and see what we could do in addition to the music to help her. Wow. So you mentioned that the vibration has a lot to do with this.

So tell us what you've learned over the years. How does music therapy work? Well, music therapy is very different from sound therapy. So music therapy is very much a connection between a music therapist and a client.

And it is like almost like a psychologist, right? A music therapist. Sound therapy, on the other hand, uses frequencies to counteract, sometimes to improve whatever the ultimate goal is.

For example, I do something called vibro acoustic therapy. In that case, we put a client on a specially designed bed, so to speak. I lounge in that lounge are transducers.

The transducers conduct sound as frequency as vibration directly into the body. By doing that, we we bypass the emotional and psychological impacts of music.

We're still using kind of music, but mostly it's just frequencies. We're getting by all that and we're actually changing the way the body is vibrating.

We know, for example, that 40Hz is the base frequency for our brain, for if we're in the gamma state, which is the most active right. So if we've got 40Hz working on the vibro acoustic, I'm pointing over here because my bed is over here.

If we've got that working, then we can actually inspire the brain and the body to to resonate at a frequency that is healthy and more healing. And so what does this mean at a cellular level?

At a cellular level, we're actually working on the cells, does a whole bunch of things. It inspires, neural growth. We're actually, have research that's come from I think they were Italian.

I don't quote me on that. Some researchers know Japan, Japan. They actually inspire more white growth by exposing the brain cells to the 40Hz only to 40Hz.

For some reason. We don't know why. It's one of those things. You just have to. Okay, well, that's for the one. We are also able at that. So so we've got growth.

So we've got neurogenesis going on which is amazing. And then we can also help the cells oxygenate more because what is one of the problems with dementia.

And Alzheimer's. We don't have enough oxygen. So people who have like COPD and other issues like that are more likely to develop dementia because they're not getting enough.

Yeah, they're not getting enough oxygen to the brain. So what we can do with frequencies and it can be not just the 40Hz, but with other frequencies we help the blood circulate better.

Sound therapy, vibration, and brain health

And we are actually, oxygenating the cells. So there's all kinds of things going on. The most important thing to remember is that we are able to alter through frequency itself, not through psychological intervention or having people play an instrument or sing.

We can actually do this. And so that even if people are not particularly, cognitive, we can still inspire changes. Wow. How amazing. And so a sound. I assume we have experiences, right?

Like I can play some music from my youth all the way in the school and get this nostalgic feeling or, excuse me, I said to school even back when I was going to school.

So I would play like the music of my youth on the way into work will like, set the tone for my day, and I'm feeling really hopeful and energetic. And then I can also put on the music of like, right now, like club music.

And I'm like, all right, when are you going to Vegas? Right? Or the music to kill yourself to like the stuff that can be really depressing. So I, I have personally experienced so, so I think we can all relate to that at some level that music and noise, sound, maybe not even noise, but like there's this, there's a spectrum of what it elicits in us and so there's the good and the bad.

And can you kind of talk about what that spectrum looks like and how we can use this to our benefit? Sure. So one of the things I talk a lot about, especially to my younger clients, is noise.

If it's too much sound because as you know, we, risk hearing loss if we have too much noise, but also that the frequencies of certain noises are very disruptive to our bodies.

Good example here. If you go to a restaurant where in that restaurant, roadhouses are famous for this, you have, music going usually really loudly and very kind of rocky.

You also have probably some kind of a game on a big screen television, right? Football or baseball or something. You have very loud dining because they're trying to get over all the noise to talk to each other.

This is is absolutely not good for your digestion. Number one, it disrupts the microbiome. Number two, and you eat too fast, so you eat too much too quickly.

And that's and they depend on that right. They want you. It's it's not by mistake. That's very much on purpose that that is then you will eat more, you'll drink more and all of those.

So that's one example of the the not so good. And I'm just and when I first stepped into what is now Marama, when we were looking at purchasing that property, at the room I walked into had three TVs with different things on it, and one was like a sports game with the sound of the whistle.

Another was news and then another was it was like an infomercial or something ridiculous. And it I couldn't think straight. Right. And this was a this is a big deal in my life.

I was like, how are we going to do this or not? And I couldn't believe that there were people sitting in wheelchairs just being inundated by the sound.

That was so anxiety provoking and uncomfortable for me. And then they were sitting in there, saturated in that all

day long. You know, that is one of the things when I first went to see my mother in the nursing home, when she first went there, I lost it.

I absolutely lost it. On the administrator. I said, how can you do that to these people? That was the same kind of situation. It was allowed. It was inane nonsense that nobody should have to listen to.

And these poor people don't. Even everybody in that facility had cognitive issues. These poor people couldn't even speak up against it, you know, to, to to try to stop it.

It made me crazy. I was very upset. And so that's the into it well intentioned I think. Oh yeah. We'll put this on for entertainment. This will make them feel less lonely and not realizing what, a potentially harmful impact it's having.

Yeah, because besides, it, it causing stress. We also, as we age, we do have a certain degree of hearing loss. Most people, not my mom, she could still hear a mosquito squeeze.

You know what I mean? She she from very far away. She saw it. But, we do have hearing loss. And when we have hearing loss, as you I'm sure, know, we have to work harder to get information and to remember and to be able to filter that.

If you've got all that noise, it makes it even harder for that to happen.

The impact of noise, hearing loss, and isolation

So if somebody is talking to you, how are you going to answer them? How are you going to filter out the noise and actually get what you need out of it so that you can respond or remember?

So I think that's a very important thing for people to remember for themselves. Because if you are beginning to suffer hearing loss, get it, get something done for it, like I know seriously, you have to look after your hearing because it has such an impact.

You have such a much larger chance of developing dementia. If you have a hearing loss, not so much because they're intimately connected, but because if you can't make sense of things, firstly, you're going to start withdrawing from people because you don't want to be embarrassed.

So that makes it even more likely that you will develop dementia, and it's going to make it harder for you to converse, learn or remember. And then also visual.

We see this with vision loss as well. People often will have macular degeneration also. You know these are the arteries and there's some overlap between, vision loss and dementia because blood flow to the head and face and, and the brain is very similar.

Also the smaller arteries and the having inflammation in them. There's, there's some pathophysiological parallels there. And, and so when we start to lose our vision, lose our hearing, lose our senses, sense of smell is also an early sign of cognitive loss.

When we lose these senses, there's less inputs going into the brain. It's kind of like a muscle you're not building anymore. And when you when you lose it, when you don't use it, you lose it right in.

This comes up here. So we're not getting we're sort of the sum total of everything we allow in the food, but also these, these sensory stimuli. And and so of course hearing is so important.

So, so, so important. Sometimes I see maybe your mom was like this as senses of smell disappear, the hearing is a little bit more attuned. And so people's hearing improves sometimes with age.

Have you seen that? I haven't seen that too much. So, of course, mom always had good hearing, and I got it from

her. I can hear a bee's sneeze, you know, but some of us are, I guess, blessed mostly with that.

But, I haven't seen that so much. But I have certainly seen how people withdraw when they don't hear. Well, like, my dad had three strokes, and, the last stroke affected his hearing, so, he's a very personable guy.

He's not an easy guy and personable guy. And I found him, like, avoiding people and. Daddy. What's wrong? It's because he couldn't hear. He couldn't make sense.

And of course, being so proud, he doesn't want to have hearing aids. But we. My sister made him get hearing aids because it's it. He was losing his connection to people.

Yeah. And and we see that when you have that isolation people go downhill so quickly. It's heartbreaking. So you've talked a lot about the benefits of, of hearing, of optimizing sound for health, brain health in particular.

And then what about the musical education? So you've been at a piano since you were four. When, when do we need to start with? Can we start at any age?

Yeah, that's the great news because everybody that when I first started getting into this, people would say, oh, you have to do this from a child. But no, it's not true.

Now we can develop a stronger corpus callosum if we start earlier, you know, with that band of fibers between the right and the left hemisphere is stronger.

If we start earlier, but we can still get the benefits of a musical education. But partly because we develop more strength between the hemispheres and also because then we are involved, we are learning, we are doing those new things that are so important for brain health.

Right? So it's it's not just the music itself, it's the learning. It's like learning a new language. You can still get benefits of this by learning, you know, a new language, by learning music.

The other good thing is rhythm. We are rhythm. What's the first thing we feel as as fetuses. Our mother's heartbeat. And so we are rhythm. And it's, it's it's such an important part of society for ever really.

Drums and things like didgeridoos with that low. So we are rhythm and so if we can enhance our bodies well kind of going back to fiber vibration again.

Right. Because if we can enhance that with a rhythm. And that's why I recommend drumming to all facilities, all people who are having any trouble get involved in a drum circle.

So that's important. But yes, we can we can use the healing power of learning music at any age. I always say to people, what's the best time to start music?

It's today. Yeah. Just do it. Yeah. And we see a marama. We see the benefits of having, a musician come or even putting on a musical and how everyone starts to sing along and get involved.

They feel connected. It really is magic to put on that familiar music in particular. And so in way we can music help someone who's already started to struggle a little bit with cognitive decline.

Yeah. So that's one of the things that I really work a lot on because I, you know, my whole thing is about prevention. So if we've got a little bit of cognitive decline, we want to get involved in things that are going to boost the feeling of being able to do something about it.

So that's another reason I love drumming so much, because almost anybody can drum. Anybody can drum. So that's one thing. But also dancing. Dancing is so incredibly good for your brain.

Firstly, it's exercise. So it helps in all the ways that exercise does, but it's also very much usually a social endeavor. So you're getting exposure to other people.

You're coordinating your movements with other people. So that's why I always recommend it to people.

Music education, rhythm, and cognitive reserve

Learn ballroom dancing or salsa or something where you have to move your feet in a pattern and perhaps your arms to a beat, because then you are using the same parts that we use as musicians, and that does the same kind of cognitive.

It helps build cognitive reserve the same way. It's great. Yeah. We see this come from, I think, lots of angles in the literature dancing. It's about social connection.

It's the music. It's yeah, the rhythm that you're describing. And then it's also you're doing something physical. And we see this with exercise. It's a best exercise for your brain is when you pair cognitive exercise.

Cognitive work is like remembering the steps, remembering the, you know, the kinesthetic awareness, having to be in tune with your partner. All of these things create cognitive work at the same time of that physical work of the movement.

And that combination is pure magic. And that's when you get lots of benefit cognitively. And so, yeah, I think that's why ballroom dancing comes up over and over and over again for cognition.

Yeah. And people and and you're happy. You're right. A happy brain is a healthy your brain. So that's another big part of it. Just being happy singing singing and singing is good generally, but singing in a choir or with a group of people is better.

I love it for anybody who's getting a little cognitive decline. Yeah. Using your voice. So we've been talking about music and listening to music and rhythm and vibration.

Tell us about using your voice. Like what's singing can do? Singing itself is is one start. So do you remember, what was her name? Gifford. She was a senator in Arizona who was shot.

She had a traumatic brain injury from a gunshot wound. And they used music to help her regain her speech. So she was singing before she talked, because that's, again the first thing.

And I think it's the last thing we lose, right? The music, it's. That seems to be the last thing we lose. And she was able to use that music singing to help the pathway in her brain line up in a different way so that she could speak again, because somehow the music uses a different path.

And so she could then train her brain to use that same path for speaking. Is that not amazing? Well, this speaks to this idea of neuroplasticity, right?

That that our brains like plastic, is moldable. It's not like metal, it's not stiff. It's not like wood. You can you can mold it. And so this idea of neuroplasticity is that an our entire lives just never stops.

I think we think of kids, and young people are the ones that can create new pathways, neural pathways in their brains. And once they start losing brain cells, we can never create new ones.

And that's just absolutely, factually inaccurate. There is tons of potential, and I would argue, much underutilized potential to create these new connections and even neurogenesis, the creation of new neurons themselves.

Really exciting stuff. And what a fun, enjoyable way to start creating new neurons, right? Another one is something so easy humming. We don't even have to get the words out just humming because firstly, it stimulates the vagus

nerve.

So we have all the good stuff that happens when we stimulate the vagus nerve. But it's also very calming. And one it calms the vagus nerve, but it's also just calming to us.

Right. My grandmother, my father's mother was a Hummer, and she went through some really terrible times in her life, you know, the end of the World War two.

And she had a serious traumatic brain injury from something falling on her head. She had a heck of a life, but all of her life, she calmed. And I truly believe that just the way she was able to stave off all the effects of everything, I mean, when you think about all the things that went wrong, she should have had dementia at like 70 because, you know, with all of the risk factors that she suffered.

But she staved it off and she was in her home cooking and humming until she was 92. And she probably was saved a little bit longer. But she's lost forgetting to turn off the stove.

So they put her in in a facility with Opa. But that humming I truly believe. And the more research I do, the more I see that that is a powerful and easy, easily accessible tool for all of us.

Singing, humming, and mindful listening

I do it all the time. I mean, I heard her doing it. I've done it all my life. My uncle does it all his life. So we're we're really gargling. Does it do?

Actually, it stimulates vagus nerve, but for pure enjoyment. And it doesn't have to be conscious. But it's even better if it is conscious humming. And I love it.

And you get so easy. Totally free. Right? Just one of these simple habits. If you can get your self to do it, why not? No one has an excuse. No. And you can do it when you're walking.

You can do it when you're working. I mean, it doesn't it doesn't take anything special. I mean, yeah. So tell us about mindful listening. Yeah. So hearing music is very different from mindfully listening to it.

So you can have it on in the background. And that's great. It's good you know calming and it insures you up. And that sort of thing. But to mindfully listen to music, you can actually inspire much of the same benefit of learning to play a musical instrument.

And this is very cool because saying you, I like to recommend people use a classical piece because then you can follow the different instruments. It's a little easier to do now with YouTube.

You can just go in and and watch, you know, some kind of a concert and try to follow one of the instruments, one of the musicians. Where are they going with the music?

How is that fitting in with all of the other stuff going on? If you practice that, it's amazing how good you get at it, because you you start picking.

You can hear that instrument, but we're then using the same structure, the same parts of the brain that we're using to actually play the instrument. We may not be using the tactile, but we are doing those other things that we need that we use to get that growth and connection between the hemispheres.

So that's mindfully listening. And I, I have a couple of recommendations that I always give to my clients to listen to, Beethoven, because it's very easy to follow most of the, the parts, if you like a specific instrument, like, I love the cello, even though I'm a harpist, I love listening to tell you.

Yes, exactly, exactly. So I will always choose pieces that have a cello so I can follow what the cello is doing.

Because I do it myself all the time. I love doing it.

When I can't get to my harp, I'll listen to the music, and if you can watch, that's even better. When you're first starting, it helps a lot. Oh, to have the visual along with the grain.

Yeah, you can follow along a little better. Yeah, there's a connection here with it. Interpreting and acting on new information. Can you go into that? Sure.

So anytime we're getting new information, anytime we're learning something new, we're inspiring neuro genesis and neuroplasticity. Right. Because then we're just adding more to the arsenal of things that we can call on.

So if we're learning new things, whether it's the music itself, listening to new music or we're inspired or we're listening to something that we love because that inspires memory, right?

So even though it might not be something new, music, if you listen to it in a mindful way and track it, it's it's very helpful. Something else I wanted to mention to you, and I've forgotten what it is for brain health professional.

I put this to us. All right. It interrupt me when it does. I'm sure I'm very sensitive to sound. And I love silence. Is there health and healing in just quiet?

It's amazing. You should bring that up, because there is a study. I think it was the one in Italy where they were trying to test what kind of music was most stress reducing for people.

So they, they, they put a like a playlist together six different types of music. And in between they put two minutes of silence so that people could clear their minds.

And I think the thing was, the thing that was most stress reducing was the silence. They weren't expecting that at all. They they were expecting that it would be probably the classical or the new age music, but it ended up being the silence.

So that starts a whole nother thing. Now this is where I was going with that, with new learning, new things. If you are wanting to learn something new, this is also where the silence comes in because you can learn something.

Sure, just listening, reading, whatever. But if you start with five minutes of silence and then you do 20 minutes, it's kind of like the Pomodoro method of learning, right?

You do 20 minutes of learning, and then you're silent at the five minutes again, at the end, you remember, you learn so much better because of the silence.

Your brain has a chance to absorb all that great stuff and sort through it and put it in the parts of your brain where it needs to go. That's fascinating.

I almost that when you were describing that study, even though I appreciate silence, I was imagining being one of the participants, hearing the music and then hearing the silence and being a little stressed like this, anticipatory, like, why is it quiet?

And I would have expected the exact opposite from from a trial like that. I know, and the researchers were absolutely dumbfounded. So of course I had to do it again to see if that was the same.

Yeah, it happened again, but isn't that interesting? We I think part of the reason it's so valuable, especially today, is because the world is so noisy.

Yeah. And there's constantly the hum of something or a plane overhead. Even if you're out in the wilderness, it feels like there's something. But there are these nature sounds as well, right?

The sound of the ocean, the sound of a stream, the wind and the trees. Do do you have any insights about the benefits of listening to those sounds? Especially, you know, for all of us who don't have access to that kind of sound every day, if you play something like that in the background, is it helpful?

Oh, yeah. Absolutely, because it's going to make you feel more relaxed, right? It's basically a relaxation response. But I think we have to kind of watch how much we, put in the background to cover for things because it just gets to be too much.

You know, this is I live by the ocean. I'm in Ecuador. I live half a block from the ocean. We are on the most western point of Ecuador.

Silence, nature sounds, and brain recovery

There's not too much between us and Australia. Right. So it's a very noisy stretch of beach like in terms of the the waves themselves. It's very strong.

And I have to say, as much as I love the sound of the ocean, some days when it's really strong, I've had enough and I can't turn it off. Like, please, I just once I actually put headphones in, right?

Yeah. Because it's just too much for me. Like like you, I'm very sensitive to sound and I think that we have to watch, you know, what we're covering now, if people live in really busy places, like by highways or something for so they have a much greater chance of developing dementia.

If you live like in the high decibel area and by multiple reasons, because you're also breathing the toxins in those highways. Yeah, there's a there's a lot of insults from that.

Yeah. It's it's very dangerous. And in that case, if you you need to make it so that it isn't so jarring all the time, it can be very helpful to have like a sound soother type atmosphere, whether that's, nature sounds or even just white noise.

You know, I'm not fond of white noise, but, you know, if it works for you, hey, it works for you. Whatever the sound of a fan or something. Right? Right. Yeah. Fascinating.

So, you also trained with Doctor Ayman, and you're an even certified brain health professional. What does that mean? It means. Well, I've seen where, brain scans and you can shake a stick at more beautiful Spect scans, beautiful pictures of brains and the right apps.

But the intakes and the thoroughness that which they do at Amman clinic, those ten pages. I mean, I read every single one when I see a patient that's been worked up there because they're so insightful and so informative.

Oh, yeah. Because, you know, where is the blood flowing? What can be stopping that? You know, the whole history. Yeah, I had to kind of get used to that because as a, as a, a vibrant acoustic therapist practicing in Canada most recently where there are more regulations, I was not allowed to ask certain questions because I didn't have the ability to, destroy according to the laws, the information I had.

So I wasn't able to ask certain questions, but I took a Doctor Emmons course since I moved here. And so it's a whole new thing for me to ask all these questions and get all this information, but wow.

And the blood work and all of the things that you do, and I, I have to stress the most important thing to me when I have someone, a client coming to me, know where you're starting, where is your baseline?

How are we going to know what to do for you if we don't know what's wrong or how we're going to measure success? Right? Yeah. That's such a great, great point.

And when you have those pictures, I don't do a ton of brain imaging in my clinic just because of logistics and cost.

And I don't use brain imaging to do much of my intervention.

Just it. And there's other people that do. And, you know, we refer to them and stuff. And I know Aymen uses this scans a lot. But I couldn't agree more with this of so like, we need to know where we're starting from so that we can measure and then measure again and measure again and make sure we're on the right track.

Because if you tell me in six months, you feel no different, then I would. I want to know why. Like, what are we missing? And if we didn't measure it, I can't tell you how many patients of before we had the clinical trial, and before I felt as confident about the results that we've seen.

We'd have patients where I'd say, oh, you know, don't spend the money. You don't have to do all that. Like, we don't have to. It's a lot of lab work, right?

We don't have to take some blood. And then 12 months later, with wasted time, because we didn't realize that there was high mercury or molds or whatever it was that was really driving this.

And so now we just say, hey, baseline every time. Yeah, yeah, it's it's really important. I do this fiber acoustic therapy and in vivo acoustic therapy we use only one frequency at a time.

And I get a little bit of flack from some of my students. I teach I teach the therapy because I feel it's so important to get it out there. I still who give me a little flack because I think there should be music as well, because they're in the popular use of vibro acoustics.

There's a lot of music and stuff like that going on. As a therapist, I like to use one frequency at a time for the very same reason you're mentioning.

How do you know if what you're doing is successful? If it's convoluted, many other things. So with frequency, music has many frequencies. How do I know that if I'm using this music with the frequency I'm in, why is that?

The music that's helping? Is it the frequency that's helping? And if something isn't helping, how do I know what to fix? Yeah. You know, this is complex, right?

Brain health assessments and measuring progress

And when we can simplify and be specific and measure things, it gives us that feedback as all of us practitioners and and, you know, you have a very personal experience.

I think many of the people with personal experiences are drawn into this field and become providers, and we learn through that experience. And part of it is, of course, as we learn, we want to add to it.

And whenever we can simplify and make things a little clearer and get that, that critical feedback so that we can change directions if something isn't working.

It's just so, so, so important. Oh yeah. I think it also helps our clients or in your case, patients is because it gets so complicated and convoluted and overwhelm is that is the picture that I get so much so trying to keep it as simple as you can step by step, you know, whatever that is.

When I put people on my 12 week program, it's like, we're going to do this thing first. We're just going to get rid of the sugar. And once you do that, then we'll go on to the next thing because that's, you know, the only way to do this.

So however, you know, we what I've seen clinically is that the ketogenic diet is very helpful for people. And I know you are a proponent of a vegan diet, and I haven't seen many people.

And so I think we're on different sides of this. However, I'm a fan of switching diets so that no one should be on the

same diet forever. And I think a vegan diet, having a, you know, a season of being vegan, I'm, I'm a huge fan of, and what I'm basically trying to do is make space to have multiple opinions here, because most of what we've talked about is, is ketogenic.

And I want to hear what you've found with the vegan brain plant based meals and what you recommend to your clients. So actually, I like vegan keto. Oh my gosh.

So tell me how to do this in a healthy way. So. Well, I am gluten free. So that chat set me on a whole path. In addition, because gluten in my I don't know whether it's gluten or glyphosate, it could be both, but so that forced me to adapt my vegan diet quite a bit.

Yeah. And I realized that I don't need those carbs now. I still eat fruit most of the time because I live in Ecuador. Like, why wouldn't I eat the fruit and growing outside my window here?

But, I believe that if we can keep that simple carbohydrate level as slow as possible and keep our body in more of a state of keto genesis, because I believe that is good for the brain, I agree with you 100%.

There. I don't eat animal products because of, well, a whole bunch of reasons, but I don't react well to animal products. I haven't since I was a little girl.

It was like just something that I'm not. And when I work with clients, some of them go 100% vegan and they have great results. Others can't stick with it because they have a family member at home or wherever they're living situation is.

But I truly believe that vegan keto is 100% possible. It's also, I believe, probably a better version. And when I do the vegan brain, which I'm rewriting right now, when I do it, I will recommend more of the keto part.

Yeah, I think it's important for a great and if you if there's a cookbook that comes with that, I will be first in line to buy it. Okay. We'll see what we can come up with.

Yeah. It's a this is a really important conversation, I think, to be having because as you mentioned, you're vegan for multiple reasons, I'm sure environmental reasons, there are cost reasons.

There are I mean, just ethical reasons. There's so many reasons to not eat animal protein or, at least not flesh. And so finding ways where I can, you know, have been integrity, recommending a diet that is not only good for the person in front of me, but good for the planet and good for for others.

Species on the planet is something that I aspire to for a long time.

Vegan keto nutrition for brain health

And there's always this conflict. Yeah. And so I can't wait to hear more about a healthy vegan keto diet I have. Yeah, who I think did it really, really well.

And her she, she was a nutritionist very a foodie for sure. I had lots of resources and close good stores. And she spent a lot of time in the kitchen.

But she did it. Yeah, yeah, I mean, I, I cook every single day. There's nowhere for me to eat vegan food here. Well, there's one restaurant that just opened, some people from Spain. You.

So I don't have to cook every day. But yeah, I spend a lot of time in the kitchen and I spend a lot of time experiment, so it's good at that. Not too much.

I always tell patients whenever they're changing their diet, this is like, this is like bicep curls for your brain, right? Because you're having to it's all executive function, right?

Finding that recipe you're excited about and then shopping for it. Many the menu planning and then the shopping and then the preparation and then the execution and then the cleanup.

But all of that is it's new for many people because they haven't maybe used a mandoline before or a instapot or whatever it is. The new tools, the new they didn't know what a Jerusalem artichoke was, whatever it is. Right? Right.

And then you get all those wonderful prebiotics and probiotics. I make my own sauerkraut and tea and kefir water, so I get a lot of probiotics. But then I also feed those those little buggers with with good prebiotics.

Right. So I love as a nutritionist, I love the fun part of balancing all those things, you know? Okay, what can I add to this today? What can I add to my salad today to make it even more nutritious and help my brain even more?

That's what I'm always thinking when I'm doing it. That's such a fun, little fun challenge. What can I add to my salad today? What can I add to my plate tonight that's going to help my brain even more?

I love it, I'm so, so thrilled we had this conversation. This has been a lot of fun and I'm looking forward to more of them. And I it feels serendipitous, but like, this is my last day of recording and we've got you in and I, you know, just being connected by email and this past week and so grateful for it and just this community that is growing and really dedicated to changing the narrative around what is possible for those suffering with dementia and their families.

Thank you so much, Kate. Oh, thank you and thank you for doing this summit. I'm so excited to be sharing it with the world. I was so excited that I forgot to ask, tell us where we can find out about you.

Oh, brain health matters. It's my website. Brain Health Matters dot today I have a podcast, Brain Health Matters. Every week I have someone. This week was my favorite.

I just, you know, the air. Tomorrow I have a lady talking about pet assisted therapy and how much it can help with dementia patients. And yeah, so I do that every week.

That's the best place to find me. Wonderful. Thank you again for getting the word out and for just being on this path with us. Such a pleasure. Thank you.