Introduction and Dr. Tom Moorcroftu2019s Lyme journey

Hello. Welcome back to the Heal Your Thyroid and Reversing Hashimoto's summit. It's Dr. Jen. So today we're going to talk to Dr. Tom Moorcroft. So funny story.

I remember him lecturing when I was pregnant with my youngest. It was in Chicago and I was driving up there and driving back the same day and was so excited to hear him lecture on how he treats the sickest and the most sensitive patients suffering from chronic Lyme disease.

So he is an expert. He has multiple programs, including the Creator's Thrive with Lyme blueprint. So Dr. Tom, I'd love to have you tell us a little bit about why did you get involved with tick borne illnesses in the first place and then we're going to tie the thyroid into all of this.

Yeah, well, thanks for having me, Jen. I really appreciate it. It's great to be here and now, you know, I mean, I was just kind of doing what I tried to get everybody to do, which is follow my passion, follow my heart.

I really love playing outside, you know, hanging out in the woods, in the mountaintops, in the stream. So Mother Nature and I go way back and that was always my thing.

And so we you know, I was in college for landscape ecology and terrestrial ecology. Just basically I wanted to save the planet, right? So I was growing up with these big, big, dreamy, lofty goals.

And I realized that like all these adults I was talking to and studying with all wanted to do the same thing, but we went. We would go outside and we'd study something would come back in, and then we would just talk about it and we would just talk and we would talk.

And then we would be like, schedule another meeting. And I was like, Well, this isn't working. So I was like, Who the heck out there? It would really make a difference.

So if I put my energy somewhere else, where could I actually make a difference in the world? And I was like, Oh kids. Because if you get them stoked and they have a really good experience, then when they're younger, they they're going to start to take action right away.

And so I went to the Institute of Ecosystem Studies on an AmeriCorps internship, which is kind of like the domestic Peace Corps. And I was just teaching kids outside the things I love.

So hopefully they would get involved in, in caring for the planet to a higher degree. And next thing you know, one day I remember my boss is like shaking me.

She's like, Tom, Tom. And I was like, what? You know? And she's like, I we just had a meeting an hour ago, and you've done nothing. I know that because your computer has the cursor blinking in the same spot.

You've written nothing. And why are you drooling on yourself? And I was like, Huh? And I had actually been drooling on myself. And so and then kind of in retrospect, I realize that my brain I was a little, you know, lots of pain in my joints, in my muscles and a lot of fatigue.

And so this is kind of the beginning. I got diagnosed with acute Lyme disease. I get treated for ten days. I was sick for the next eight years. And about six years into it, I was just like, No, I'm doing everything the doctors said right?

But they diagnosed me with depression and give me the medicine that didn't work. Then they're like, Oh, you have that bipolar type two. Like all the good doctors and lawyers who overachieved those medicines didn't work, they

told me, had ADHD, which everybody who knows me knows that that's true. And that's not a problem. That's just how I live.

And then my primary, I went to them after about five or six years and I was like, Dude, I'm dying here. I've got brain fog, joint pain and fatigue. And then he's like, Oh, I know you have fibromyalgia.

And I was like, Dude, that doesn't tell me like why I'm sick or how give me any hope for getting better. So I basically fired that dude and someone thankfully handed me a yoga DVD.

I didn't know anything about it. I couldn't touch my kneecaps at that point. I was so decrepit. But I learned that you can sort of reignite your own self healing through, you know, essentially my teacher said it's breath on movement, it's not contortion ism.

It's literally if you can't fully breathe, you're going to hard. So it's a great litmus test for all of us. And so I did basically an hour and a half of yoga every day, six days a week for a couple of years.

It was exceptionally hard and based on what my training was as you do as much as you can, and then you breathe for the rest of the time. So I spent a lot of time doing yoga for 90 seconds and then breathing for 90 minutes.

And ultimately, after about two years I was like 70% better, but I still needed to find some docs to help me out. And that took another four years, but I thankfully eight years in figured that out and found the people.

And then I got better, you know, when I was free and clear and I was just going to go do osteopathic manipulation and really just open up people's bodies, get their energy flowing, and let them express the self-healing.

But I put my hands on one person and they were vibrating in a way that was very clearly not medicine related, and it wasn't normal. And through my training, we had learned to use that as part of our diagnosis.

I was like, I think you're infected. I didn't know anybody at the time to treat them. So I ran some tests, I treated them, they took they got a bit better.

They told somebody else. And then that person came in. And then three other people came in and next thing you know, that's all I was doing. So but it was like my experience was, you know, we're left out in the cold, you know, where we're not being taken seriously with when we complain of, Hey, I have brand new anxiety, I have brand new depression that I never had before.

And it was like that. And so I just kind of went down that path because people were showing up who were suffering and then word of mouth kind of got us going.

And it's just such an interesting place where you can read hardcore science, functional medicine and healing and also personal responsibility and healing.

And I find that in the Lyme world and the reason I love it so much is there's a lot of people who are into the hardcore science behind the meds and the herbs and then the functional medicine piece people are bringing in.

So few people want to tell patients the real way to heal, which is they have most of the responsibility to do it themselves. And to me that's empowering, not scary.

And so that's bringing those three things together is really the place that gets me. So motivated to be doing this work. That's such a great story, so beautiful.

And you're you were practicing in like Lyme country, right? Oh, yeah. You can get a lot of tech. So in that is what the crazy thing is, is that you were you were surrounded by this disease and no one really knew how to treat it properly.

And they were saying that everyone had like fibromyalgia. Right.

Lyme, climate change, and becoming a better host

Well, it's interesting, too, because and I don't know if I told the story when we, you know, on the stage the first time, like we met. But I actually got Lyme disease when I was working at the Institute of Ecosystem Studies.

It's now called the Kerry Institute. They renamed it. But Gene Likens the guy who discovered acid rain started at that place so that we could be more sort of progressive in our sight on our studies of the landscape.

But they also had this great educational place and they had a great garden. So they're like five or six of the of the the staff for the grounds who were doing all this amazing outdoor gardens and they were all decrepit in their early thirties.

And everybody's like, Oh, I had Lyme like six times. I got over it. I'm like, You don't look like you got over it. But when I got sick, I was literally 20 minutes from Richard Horowitz, his office, and not one person at that place at the time.

Now they're now they work with them regularly, but back then, they hadn't made the connection. So I'm literally 20 minutes from I could have gotten treated for three months and been fine.

Instead, I was sick for almost 13 years and this is why I'm so motivated to put the information out there. And I'm so thankful and honored to be here because if we can get one person to get early diagnosis and early treatment, that's one more person who doesn't have to suffer for over a decade like I did.

And I'm just thinking of all the people I used to work with and hang out with. I'm like, you know, they're all decrepit and they've got all these, you know, early arthritis and all this stuff.

It's really just they got Lyme that wasn't fully treated. So yeah, I mean, when, when, when it's around and then we see climate change is such a big deal and everybody's like all, you know, pretty much all the 48 contiguous states have found Lyme in them.

In some places it's not a lot, but a lot of the places where there's not a lot, it's it's rapidly expanding and it's the climate change and ticks. You know, when I went to the University of Vermont as an undergrad, we never, ever, ever saw a tick in northern Vermont.

Like it was unheard of. And now you got to worry about getting Lyme in northern Vermont. So it's it's there's a lot more accessibility to getting sick.

You know, there's more access to ticks these days than ever before. And I don't think I've ever said it that way, but there's definitely, you know, there's that the ticks, ranges spread and and it's a place where a lot of your listeners might be like, hey, like five or ten years ago, which is what a lot of doctors are doing.

They go, Oh, I'm using information from ten years ago to tell you that Lyme is not in our area. So it's just an important thing to get to get the word out and get diagnosed and treated early if possible.

Yes, I agree with you. And that's what I meant. Like when you got sick and early, early on in your practice, that was considered like lying prime Lyme area.

But you're right like now because it's not getting as cold in the winter, you're not getting that die off and there's they're getting more populated. So especially, you know, we have a lot of deer around here and it's not as cold during the winter.

It it's been pretty mild. So the ticks, you know, are surviving through the winter and they're multiplying. So definitely have to be careful and a lot of people are freaked out by by Lyme, by ticks.

But I always try to give people reassurance. Look, we live with viruses and bacteria every day. You know, you can heal from things. We just you have to go to the right people that know how to fix it and you have to prime your body to be able to endure this and make it make your body more resilient.

Because especially like look at COVID, you weren't going to avoid that. Some people thought that they they would. And whether it was, you know, avoidance of people amass the vaccine, but telling you everyone ended up getting it that I talked to.

So no matter what they tried. So so yeah, definitely, you know, helping the body prepare for those things. Well and I also think, Jen, if I can for a second, it's like, you know, with COVID, it was really easy to say become the world's worst viral host.

Like, I want Kobe to look at me and go, it's really way too hard to infect him. I'm going to go get somebody else. One of the things I notice that was really interesting is I used to get bitten by ticks all the time and then through my healing journey, you know, I never I didn't know functional medicine existed.

I knew a chiropractor cracked your neck. I was in osteopathic school and I was learning about cranial sacral work and all that kind of good stuff, and I was diving into it.

But that was the only natural healing that I knew about was manual medicine. And so I didn't know about diet. I was still, you know, soda, pasta like crap, cookies and water.

That's what we grew up with. But then as I started to heal and go through yoga and listen to my body, after my body started to reject it, I started to learn to listen to my body so that I wouldn't eat these things that I subsequently learned, why I didn't, what it shouldn't have been eating them, but what was really interesting was I am no longer a tick magnet.

And there's some research on ticks how there's certain humans who have like it's a pheromone thing, so certain people smell better to a tick than others.

And I wish people would dove deeper into this research a little bit more because a lot of the stuff in lime is small studies, but like literally I'm not attracting as many ticks and I'm still doing the same thing and I'm pretty sure it's because I've changed my lifestyle, I've upgraded my attitude, I've upgraded my heart set, I've upgraded my food intake and I've cleaned my body.

And I'm pretty sure the reason chicks don't bite me is because I'm not a good host. I mean, you know, it's just like especially all of those who take really good care of ourselves as aliens came, I would be the last one on the menu because I'm basically muscle with no no good fat.

You know, it's like but it's like do the things that you can do at home to minimize the potential illness that you would get. So essentially supercharge your immune system before you even see it.

It's a it's a really it's interesting how much control we actually have on being healthy. Yes, I love that. So good thing you're you want to be a chick magnet, right?

Just not a chick magnet. True story. And you're you're now because you like you said, you have lean muscle and stuff now. So so that's good. But yeah, I agree with that.

Make yourself not a good host to, you know, even reactivation of things like Epstein-Barr and all of that is these viruses, you know, talk about shingles.

I have patients always ask me, should I get the shingle vaccine? And I'm like, well, let's talk about shingles, you know, because I've had a slew of people that have gotten shingles after the vaccine since the last two years.

So maybe there's some correlation with COVID. But, you know, if you are making your body stressed out, if you're

not sleeping, if you're eating like crap, then yes, those viruses are going to reactivate and you're going to end up in trouble.

So I think that people also like we were talking earlier before recording, sometimes we get so honed in on medications and supplements that we forget to talk about sleep and we forget to talk about the really simple things like just moving and exercising and moving your body. So.

So, yeah, make yourself a bad host. I love that. Yeah. You know, and it's like, like sleep is so critical. All these people are like, oh, what is the best brain detoxification supplement you have?

I might sleep like I've been like you mentioned I had this conversations. Like every time they ask me to talk, I'm like, Can I talk about sleep? And they're like, I'm like, Yes, sleep.

Because that's how your brain detoxifies and we talk about movement and breathing because that's how the rest of your body Detoxifies So everybody wants like to by like, you know, get the nice bottle of whatever you have on your desk and we all can use some support.

But man, when you can support yourself and you know, one of the things that's really interesting, I think, too, is what kind of what I heard you say earlier is we're kind of in synergy with a lot of these things.

If you look, we all talk about the microbiome and the health of the gut. These are not organisms that are part of us. They're literally outside of us.

It's a tube that we're around. But our colon is literally an entire ecosystem that is not in our body. It just happens to be passing through. And these are other organisms that actually help us function while we function well together if we're in harmony.

And then a lot of people say, well, why is Lyme so chronic in some people? Well, we have some research. It shows about 80% of people will get better with pretty much anything.

You do a short course of antibiotics. But we're but the powers that be are quiet for the other 20%. And then Johns Hopkins did some research showing that about 80% of the mice that they artificially infect from a tick just get normal Lyme disease.

And if they get persistent symptoms, it's because we didn't treat them. So they're calling that like late persistent Lyme. That's the normal way people are talking about getting these late Lyme symptoms.

But then there's this other 20%. It's an interesting that the numbers almost exactly overlap, but the other 20% actually can get persistent forms. The ones that get people like long term sick from Lyme immediately after being bitten by the tick because the persistent forms are forming in the tick.

But it's not a lot. It's but it happens to be about 20%. And I'm kind of like, wow, we should really dove deeper into that one. And the other part that's so interesting, so it's not everybody who gets Lyme is going to be somebody who needs to come see me or you to get better.

But there are a good percentage of people. But the other part is we're also learning that a lot of these bacteria and viruses communicate directly with get this thing, our mitochondria, those energy factories of our cells, and they're in direct communication because really if you think about it, Linspire kids have been around for over 13 million years, way before humans.

They know how to persist. They're smart. And the other thing, when I start to think about what could I learn from these infections, one of the things that Lyme does not do is Lyme does not fight reality.

So and what I mean by that is if it infects you and you have like really strong joints, but you have one messed up joint, so maybe you got injured running or playing hockey like someone you may or may not be talking to them.

What ends up happening is it'll go there it goes, the path of least resistance. And then if you start using herbs or medicines or even just your immune system goes after it in the environment, in your body becomes inhospitable.

It just goes into a ball or it gets into a little micro colony that we call BioFilm.

Mindset, labels, and healing from chronic illness

And it just chills and it waits and it doesn't fight. But then when your guard goes down, it comes back out frequently. So one of the things in a mindset that we can use is like, let's not fight Lyme or the bees or Bartonella that we get.

I love to say, what am I supposed to learn now? Not that I'm agreeing that you should have gotten Lyme. I never. I don't think anybody needs to get Lyme, but if I have it, I'm I could learn something from it and I say, hey, thanks for teaching me this.

But by the way, also you're no longer welcome in my body, which is a completely different mindset than get the hell out and I have to beat the crap out of you because I'm fighting you.

Because if you think about the way we've been in synergy with these organisms over all of our evolution together, it's by working together. And I know that like a lot of people are like, No, you can't work together with an infection.

I'm like, You certainly can. And if you just change that simple mindset where you're not fighting it because it's what you, what you resist persists and what you're okay with, it's just like, Wait, if I want to lose weight, I lose it and I gain it right back because that's what we do with things we lose.

If you want to get rid of the weight, you release it. Same thing with my Lyme. I'm like, guess what? Thank you. So very much for being here. I'm releasing you and it's just like this little thing that then supercharges your immune system.

And I think people think I'm nuts when I say it, but it's like, how many doctors have one? Had Lyme disease to overcome it and been symptom free for over 12 years as at the time we're talking and then also has done this for other people.

So there's a lot of people who continually fight the battle, but it's like I go back to Mother Teresa. She's like, If you want me to come to an anti war rally, I won't do it.

But if you want me to come to a pro-peace rally, I'll be there all the time because it's that simple mindset shift where we stop fighting it and we start just living our lives.

And then a moment ago, you reminded me of something I remember very clearly in medical school. It was funny because I remember first I got caught drooling on myself, staring at a blank screen.

So in another moment, as I was getting, you know, right before the yoga DVD thing happened, where I was staring at the wall in our apartment. And I remember very clearly I saw this path in front of me, and it was this road where my life is going that direction.

And I know what it's exactly like because it's six years I've been going down that path and I was like, I don't like that path. I don't know where to go next, but I do know that I want to go play outside.

I want to like have a family, have a kid. I want to go. I want to play with my dogs. I want to go. All the other things. I saw that other path over here and I was like, I know, I know how to do this one because I've been doing it.

And I also know I don't like it and I'm going in that direction with my inertia. So whatever. What if I go that way? I don't even know what that means, that the worst case scenario is I fail, but at least I've tried. So I chose a new path.

And that's what really brings us to today is like as soon as I said yes to my future, then I was able to actually have a future. But when I was fighting Lyme disease, I mean, I was blessed.

I had no label, I didn't know what it was. So I actually feel like a lot of my patients are getting a diagnosis a little sooner, but then they're also getting a label that they can attach their name to.

And I don't please don't become a moldy or slimy. You definitely you don't want to do that. You have Lyme, you have mold. You're experiencing it and you're healing from it.

You're in the process of healing from one because I thankfully didn't know a name. Jen. I had no name for what I had. I just knew that I needed to go to my future.

And so I decided to do that. And then it all unfolded. All that fun stuff we can talk about came in our laps. But it was because I decided and said yes to an actual different future.

That is such a great point and I talk to my patients a lot about that because there's this thing called medical hexane and you you almost like get a curse from your doctor because they're like, you have cancer, you only can live four months.

And people want to know like how long but but they're putting this deadline, they're putting this label like you have fibromyalgia, you have depression, anxiety, right?

No, you're you're suffering from those symptoms, but it's not you. So I think, like you said, I've had patients that come into my office and I've even had to give them a new diagnosis of like Hashimoto's and they weren't looking for that at all.

They just knew something was off. And I'm like, Look, this is not you, this isn't who you are. This is just with a lab. Say your body can heal. We're going to reverse this.

This is good that we know this so we can make lifestyle changes so it doesn't turn into another autoimmune disease or something. So I think that, like you said, you weren't labeled.

So that really helped your healing as opposed to if you were given a label of Lyme. Yeah, especially if you were in medical school at the time, I'm sure you would have taken that to heart and it would have impeded your healing.

And I agree with you with Lyme like everyone just wants to kill, kill, kill, fight, fight, fight. And when I have patients that want to do that, I'm like, I am not the right doctor for you because we have to fix your gut health, your lifestyle, your diet.

Let's get you feeling really good. And then we could talk about, if we want to, to, to actually go after that, that darn sparky, which is really tricky.

We can get on. But but yeah, I agree. I think that we really have to look at any disease as it's not us, it's just something that we can we can heal from.

And the medical model is just not like this at all. Right. And I mean, I think to your point, like when you look at it and you say, hey, I have this disease rather than I am this disease or I'm overwhelmed, then you can actually have this sort of ability within you to start to think about, hey, well, if I don't if the disease is just something that's a part of me at the moment, but it's not all of who I am, then I understand.

Even if I'm not a doctor, I understand the importance of my gut. I understand the importance of my mindset and my food and my movement and all these other things.

And it doesn't mean that we don't give them the other things. But honestly, like my journey was, I overcame a lot of this really quickly. Once I all I did the really hard work on my own.

And so I'm trying to teach people to do it before they're sick or when they're mildly ill so that they can start, you know, because it's really it's not about doing what I did.

It's about finding out what you can do on your own and you find something that works for you, right? Because my motivators are probably not the same motivators as yours.

And obviously it sounds like we're both very motivated by our families. But, you know, there are certain things I like to do. I don't my daughter like does a lot of skiing.

I love a lot of skiing, too. But she also would prefer to take some time, not do as much as I do. And she likes to sew. So I'm like, Let's go. Like find the thing that you're passionate about so that then that you can do the things at home that make when you work with general hire somebody like that work better.

So it's yeah, I mean I think it's just that mindset of like where you fit into the whole thing and it's, it's just a small portion of what's going on that you can recover from.

And I think in Lyme I think that's really the biggest scary thing is so many people are saying, oh, you, you can't get better, only goes into remission.

Well, it's been in remission for over a decade and I burn the can a lot more than both ends. I've got a bunch of flames going in the middle of the wick too, and it doesn't come back.

So you can definitely overcome it, you know, and I don't worry about am I in synergy and is it hiding in make you know it's like I've had so long where living this lifestyle of health and you know and it's like really it's like I live a healthy lifestyle.

I, you know, everything is kind of focused on just longevity and enjoying myself and doing the things I love. So it's not like a chore for me. It's, it's fun.

I make actually, like, ritualized all the things I do, like, even like my water. Like, I'm so thankful to myself that I drink my water and that I put my hydrate.

You know, I do the hydrogen water, I do my electrolytes or even like when I'm eating, it's like every little new piece of nutrition. I'm so thankful to the plant or the animal for it, but I'm also like thankful for my body and the microbes in it for absorbing it.

And it's like, I don't make it a crazy like science all day long, but it's like I'm just thankful for how everything works to make me healthy and including, like, I'm sick and I have to take my supplements or whatever.

I'm really thankful that I'm willing to do that for myself because otherwise it just becomes a chore that I, I know I've done it myself. I stopped doing it because I just go, Oh, I'm killing Lyme and it's really hard to kill Lyme or I have to take my thyroid medicine, or I have to do my autoimmune diet to fix my thyroid.

Boy, that's so boring. It's not motivate, you know. So I always try to find a hook of like, what am I motivated by and get really excited about it. Yes, I love that living in gratitude and also doing things with intention.

So important. So important. Yeah. So could you go through what's the connection with autoimmunity and Lyme? Because as we know, Hashimoto's, which is the most common cause of hypothyroidism in women, you know, it has that autoimmunity background.

So how does Lyme and other infections like that tie in? You know, I think that's a great question because I mean, partly what happens is Lyme in and of itself can just disrupt hormones in general.

So if you get acute Lyme, you can see thyroid like symptoms, right? So and you might not even see a shift in the actual thyroid itself, but you can see stuff that looks like it.

So we see a lot of sort of like changes in energy, brain fog.

How Lyme can trigger autoimmunity and Hashimotou2019s

You can see things like even, you know, joint muscle pain which might be a little more Lyme and thyroid, but certainly there that rapid heart rate and just abnormality in, you know, your temperature and all those kind of good things.

But then kind of and that would be more like short term like can you treat your acute Lyme? You start to feel better hopefully. But there's also there's a lot of thing where you get like this subclinical exposure to antigens from bacteria.

So basically, you know, the antigen is the part of the bacteria that's stimulating our immune system and our immune system's reacting to Lyme shares, a lot of amino acid sequence homology of what we call it, or its similarity to a lot of self antigens.

So we see that Lyme can, through molecular mimicry, trigger things that like multiple sclerosis or in the case of thyroid, if you're a genetically predisposed person to say like maybe you've got HLA, dr5 and you've got, you know, Hashimoto's or whatever, if you're starting to see this Lyme that it's amino acids are really similar to things like your TSC H receptor, your thyroid globulin, you know, or even your thyroid peroxidase.

You can start to see that we start to trigger this autoimmunity just because we look similar to self. And the example I find that the MSA examples a really simple one to think about.

So multiple sclerosis is like where the insulation on the outside of our nerves falls apart and so the nerves don't conduct as well. But if you think about a copper wire, it works best when it's wrapped in insulation.

And if we take some of that insulation off, it doesn't fire well. Well, in mice that that insulation there genetically looks and that's you looks very similar to some of the genetic sequences of the tail of the bacteria that causes Lyme disease.

So and it's a bacteria called Borrelia Burgdorferi that has a flagella or a tail. And genetically they look really similar. So after you treat Lyme, whether it's you have a subclinical kind of chronic Lyme case or even you just, you know, potentiated the body to react to it, but it's cured.

Your body can start reacting and go, oh, that's insulation around my, my nerves looks a lot like Lyme. I'm going to attack it. And a similar phenomena can happen with, you know, the TSA receptors and then TPO and things like that is that your body actually starts attacking different receptors and parts of thyroid because it looks very similar to the bacteria.

And this kind of goes back to the conversations that all these organisms had back in the day is there we're all communicating. So a lot of what looks like a self or part of our human being is very similar to a lot of these bacteria because our genetics are so similar and that that similarity can you get your body can accidentally go after yourself rather than the bacteria and that that's kind of the initially how it gets set up.

Yeah. And this can be very frustrating and it can also be frustrating when you're told that this can't be reversed because when you get to the root cause, treating, keeping that bacteria, that virus that is producing that molecular mimicry, keeping them in check, you can start to heal.

And a lot of the times just gut health is big with us. So that that's kind of the start where where I do and what I do in my practice when I'm dealing with the Hashimoto's patients is we, we start with the gut health.

Well, and it's interesting that you bring that up too, because when you talk about gut health, you're not I mean, if your gut is off, you know, you have leaky gut or you have some other abnormality.

Autoimmunity is rampant because what we're seeing is instead of in the in the gut, we have this tight junctions, you know, they're supposed to only let small it's like a little hook and they're supposedly really tight and little pieces of food go through and other thing.

But if it gets bigger and the pathway in through the gut wall becomes wider, then we're getting all this extra stuff that the body is not used to seeing and that can, you know, lead to this molecular mimicry just and then also inflammation in general in a lot of our symptoms of Lyme and thyroid like crappy memory and body wide inflammation and joint pain and poor sleep can all just because your gut is off and it's not even because of these other infections or conditions.

And you know, the other part with Lyme and some of the other co-infections, such as the BS in Bartonella, we've actually been able to biopsy these out of the gut wall.

So I see a lot of people with gut dysfunction, but it came out of the blue and it didn't make. And then it was temporarily related to say maybe a tick bite or symptoms that ultimately we attributed to Lyme.

And then you treat them even just with straight up antibiotics, you can actually see their gut function get better. And then a lot of I've seen tons of people where it's like they come in, they've got this line picture, they've got this grays or Hashimoto's type of picture going on, and we start to treat everything, like you said, focusing on the gut.

And then we can go and we see that it all goes away, you know, and it's like, wow, you just why do I no longer need thyroid medicine or why do I, you know, when I needed like 125 mikes or something or whatever, and now we're down to 25 and we're kind of on our way out.

It's like, Yeah, your body actually can heal from this, but it's that what is the underlying driver of all of what we're seeing? And so that's where we look at like how does the body function?

And Lyme is a piece of the picture or thyroid dysfunction, this piece of the picture, rather than making Lyme the only thing we focus on because then we forget about like the totality of this amazing self-healing, self-regulating system that we all are traveling in at the moment.

You know, our bodies. Yeah. And while you're aligned specialists, you also, you know, gut health and thyroid and and all these other things. And every person is going to look different.

I think that's the tricky part, is that there's all these little puzzle pieces and gosh, sometimes I'm talking to a patient and they they've had this horrible trauma, you know, when all their symptoms started or they started, you know, six years later after a family member died suddenly.

So I think that we we have to realize that we're very we are complicated. And I would like you to talk, Doctor Tom, about sleep a little bit more. If you could talk about the lymphatic system and all of that, just because I really want to hit home how important sleep is with with healing and with Lyme.

And and you had said that sometimes though our gut health if it's not functioning properly that can affect sleep. So can you dove a little bit more into sleep for us?

Yeah. I mean, this is one of my favorite topics as I'm sure you sure? You know what it's like? We talk about the gut, brain, you know, the gut brain axis quite a bit.

Right. And so I would suggest that I would like to see more people amend that. And the reason we talk about that is like the vagus nerve. We talk a lot about calming the limbic system and the vagus nerve in a lot of chronic things, especially mold and tickborne co-infections and things like that, Lyme disease, whatever.

But this is just a part of our whole system. And so that vagus nerve is connecting the brain to the gut. And the gut actually our bacteria in our gut feed back to the brain, a lot of things, including the ability to remember, to create new memories, to also to be able to retrieve other things that we already know.

And then on the flip side of that, the interesting part to me is that we're to clip the vagus nerve that connects us to you. Literally stop having memory.

You literally can't recall anything. And then if I were to take a mouse that I were to eradicate its microbiome, the good bacteria in the gut, it literally does two main things.

One, it can't it doesn't remember things that it doesn't learn, but it also develops acute anxiety, which is kind of interesting. So then if I start to look at the rest of this, I would love to be able to reintroduce the heart here because basically the reason we're talking about the brain and the gut are that they both have their automatic nervous system.

And then the heart also is the third major organ system that has its own autonomic system. And they all work together. And that's why I so much of what I've already been talking about is more along the lines.

It's not even just mindset, it's heart set. It's like, what are you passionate about? Because it's so critical when you talk about traumas that we go through trauma is somebody beat you up or you were afraid someone might beat you up like it's real or perceived stuff and the other part about trauma, which is so interesting to me as we kind of dovetail into sleep, obviously, is trauma is about your nervous system response to what's going on, not necessarily what actually happened, because one person's stressor is another person's trauma.

And that's a really important thing. So we're not it's not about, you know, judging someone and saying, oh, no, no, that wasn't traumatic. Like, no, if if you feel it was traumatic, it was let's work with it.

Because all of these things lead to this fancy thing we all call inflammation. So whether it's the guts off, the heart's off the brains of we can create inflammation in other areas of the body.

Sleep, lymphatic drainage, and brain detoxification

So then when we dovetail that with sleep, as you mentioned, the lymphatic system is the system. That's the primary driver of brain detoxification. It's a fluid wave that moves from the arterials through the matter of the brain to the vein walls, and then we kind of drain the dirty water.

And so it's so important, though, is there's primary drainage pathways out of the brain and one of them is about 30% of the dirty water coming out of our brain goes through our nasal lymphatics.

So so many of our folks who have chronic sinusitis or mold exposure or even kids at pins and pandas, we think that a lot of the autoimmunity that we trigger with recurrent strep infection or even recurrent mycoplasma infection is actually because of recurrent infection.

And then in the throat and the nose, which triggers our own autoimmunity in our own self, cells go back up and cause the brain inflammation. So the system that and the other part I should say one of the other major drainage routes is right along the vagus nerve in the crowded artery.

So so many of us who are like head forward posture are messing up all the back here and then we're all like, What can we do for my vagus? Like, I don't know.

First of all, maybe just sit upright and do a little breathing and stretch your neck a little to start. Then we can get fancy. But the most important part about this, or I shouldn't say the most important part, but a very important part of the system is it's primarily active while your sleeping, and most research is pointing to deep sleep.

So when I talk about the inflammation, I talk about the anxieties and the traumas. These are things that can interfere with sleep. And so that's why it's so important to start working on simple movement and getting yourself also to sleep.

Because we want to detoxify the rest of the body. We want to clean up the gut so the inflammation starts to come

down. And all this stuff that I said, you know, like, hey, if we mess up our gut, we're angry.

We can also trigger acute anxiety and we also process a lot of our gut reaction and that anxiety in our gut. And that's our litmus test, kind of like my breathing test from yoga.

So if you notice, it doesn't mean it's bad. It just means what do you do next? And so all of the things I work on is try to get people to be able to sleep, but it's not always just sleep, right?

So a lot of it is what do you do during the day to help you get ready for sleep? That allows the inflammation to be low. That allows you to be a little less anxious today than you were yesterday, so that when it is time for sleep, you can get really good, deep sleep and optimal flushing of the brain and what's really cool and, a lot of the work that we do, Jen, is a lot of the ways that you can open up your nose and optimize drainage is through breathing techniques.

Well, a lot of the ways that you can get yourself calmer so that you can sleep better, whether you do it right before bed or some other time during the day, is breathing techniques.

And they're not the only thing, but they're things that you can do at home for free. And then the other part, I always whenever we talk about sleep, I love to say, just remember your wi fi is great, but it's also pro and pro irritability for your brain.

So people are exposed to a lot of like both of us are sitting in front of a computer. If you were to draw our red blood cells and you would do a live red blood cell smear, you would probably see what we call Rouleau body's stacking of red blood cells that we also see in other inflammatory conditions, such as, you know, lupus, rheumatoid arthritis.

We probably even see in some people with more, you know, sort of profound washes and stuff like that and the thing is that happens. But what also happens is when we turn off the exposure to, say, the wi fi in the computer screen, we see that that our bodies go back to a more normal, less inflamed state.

So one of the things I do for people to sleep is say if you need to use a Wi-Fi router, which many of us are, grab a timer for like five or ten bucks, plug it into the wall, pick a time.

It goes off every night at a time. It goes on in the morning, set it and then just forget it. And that way, every night you have a reminder once your wi fi gets turned off, whether you want it to be turned off or not.

So you're not staying up all night goofing around on your computer. But the other thing is, it's just regularly you're getting common. I've seen so many people with insomnia just turn off their wi fi and they go to sleep.

And so for a few people out there, if you're like me, I slept great. I learned about this. I turned off my wi fi, had insomnia for two weeks, and then I went back to sleep.

So I was actually detoxifying from being used to this pro-inflammatory state. And it's a simple thing to do. And then in the morning if you can get out and get some sunshine and go get some fresh air, it's a great way to start moving your body and detoxifying, you know, in your your chest, in your belly, in your legs and arms by moving around and breathing a little more.

But also that early morning sunshine is going to stimulate melatonin, which is everybody thinks of as our sleep hormone. But we need natural light to stimulate our brain, to create it.

And then we need darkness and coolness at night to stimulate the release. So the other thing about bedtime, then, dark and cool and those kind of simple little things can help us.

The I mean, aside from the timer, which is probably 799 on our favorite online outlet or even down the road at the hardware store, outside of that, this is all free and you can start doing it tonight.

And that's what's so beautiful about it is our body wants to sleep deeply and detoxify for you. Doesn't mean that you don't need to treat them all toxins and do a cleansing of the nose.

It doesn't mean you don't need to get some probiotics and whatever else for your gut, but these are simple things that can actually clean your brain better than any other supplement.

Like, literally, if I gave you the world's best detox supplement, I gave you $700 worth of IVs over a week. None of it will finish the job if you can't drain the water out of your brain.

So you need to sleep. And so that's why I just am so passionate about sharing simple tips for sleep. Because no matter what you do, if you're not doing this first, you're not optimally draining your brain, you know, and I love it.

Like, eat, sleep, move, breathe right behind you. It's like you don't. That's all you need. Yeah. You need the basics. And what you don't need is to go to your doctor and get Ambien.

I mean, I'll get because then you're not sleeping. So that's another thing is people think that, oh, I'm on a medication to help me sleep or I take a Benadryl.

No, you're not getting that deep sleep. You're not getting in the you know, so. Almost no medicine that actually improves sleep architecture. There's one or two that are appropriate in certain situations, but not in many, but literally your sleep, you just forget.

And I mean, I know you know this because you brought it up, but you forget that you're not sleeping. That's what sleep aids do. They essentially knock you out and you forget that you're still in light, sleep or restless.

You need to actually sleep. And the way to do that is to do what's right on your wall there with your book. I mean, that's literally like the recipe right there, you know, eat, sleep, move and breathe.

And that's all you need and, you know, the other three and then turning off your wi fi and kind of creating your and again, ritual. One of the things I love to do is at the end of the day, I want to prep people to sleep great.

And I also want them to wake up the next day supercharged. And I learned I'm well known for being very complicated and overcomplicating things. So I learned this thing from, you know, Dan Sullivan and Ben Hardy.

They wrote a book on the Get Gap and the Gain, and they're just like talking about it. It's a business book, but really, we we talk a lot. They're just like healing from from any kind of chronic illness, the gratitude that you mentioned.

So one of the things I love for people do is at the end of the day, spend 3 minutes. That's a no more than that because it's not a make it simple. You write down three great things that happened during the day and a lot of people are sick or like, I didn't have three great things happen.

I'm like, okay, well what are three small things that happen? And then and I actually think the smaller, the more nuanced it is, the more same. It's like you have a sip of wine or something and you're like, you know, one sip and you're, you know, experiencing it for 5 minutes.

That's it. Feel something so small that you can find the nuance, loveliness in your day or just a lesson that you're going to learn from it, what not to do tomorrow.

So you just write down three wins and that should take you like less than a minute. And then your 2 minutes is like, I'm going to plan three wins for tomorrow.

And then even if, you know, these are three things that are going to happen, great tomorrow then you just put it out, you read it, you put it down, you go to bed 3 minutes later, and then the beauty is you laid out when you go to bed.

Because for me, whenever I write down something that's really good that's going to happen to me, I'm like my cognitive higher self. My conscious brain is like, No, no, no.

It's going to come up with all the reasons that I shouldn't do that. I might fail, it might not work. But when you finally get to sleep, you dissociate from your conscious mind and your subconscious essentially becomes super conscious and it plugs you into life to God, the universe, whatever word works for you, and you start to come up with new potentials and new ways to solve these problems.

So then when you wake up the next morning, you just read those six things from yesterday and that's it for one minute. So it took you a whole 4 minutes between last night and this morning, and then the first day or two, you're like, whatever.

But it starts to get easier to write down the three wonderful things that happened during the day. And then for me, about the second day I did this, I was like, Oh my God, I had like 12 great things happen today and your list can get really it's really hard to stay with three.

And ultimately in about 5 to 7 days, most people who do this are saying, wow, my day is actually a lot better than I ever thought it was. And they're starting to see that the next day things are happening like this and they're making a ton of progress.

And the beauty, the reason I love this is at about that same time that 3 minutes at night becomes the ritual that puts you in a parasympathetic state because you're no longer stressed out by all these things.

You have your three minute oasis, and then that allows you to get in a deeper sleep without making it super complicated because you're going to write down six things.

So it's a lot of fun. I love that. Yeah And especially getting in that parasympathetic state, getting ready to sleep and that's that's sleep. Like you need to be in that parasympathetic rest and digest.

So, and it's amazing for healing. So it's one of the major reasons I got better from line. All the mindset, all of this all of that it ended up the biggest thing at the time was I was like I'd sleep four or 12 hours and it made no difference in how I felt.

And the thing I want people to understand, though, is I realized thankfully, like I had didn't have a label at the and I was newly married. So there's a reason to maybe stay in the bedroom a little longer or at least where, you know, hook it to whatever will motivate you.

My wife is like 8 hours of sleep is the minimum. I was like, you're crazy, man. That's I got stuff to do. But I bought into it because I wasn't feeling well and I literally needed to sleep eight plus hours a for over ten months consistently before I woke up feeling rested.

So this practice to get parasympathetic does not happen necessary in two days. Going to sleep for a week and getting 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep does not mean you're going to wake up feeling refreshed.

In fact, most people feel when you're actually sleeping deeper, you're going to wake up more tired and have a harder time in your day for 2 to 4 weeks.

And for me it was more like three months. And I believe that what's happening is you need to sleep, your body wants more sleep. But the difference is it's like it's almost like you love sleeping.

It's like you want more of it because you're feeling so good. It's not like your house and you're just like smashed because you did a two day, you know, a 48 hour nonstop residency thing like we all done before, where you're just exhausted.

It's like, mostly like your body's going, I need more of this healing sleep. So a lot of people, when they start to sleep

well, actually get more tired and then they run away from it.

When you start to get more parasympathetic, the first thing that happens is you notice how sympathetic you are.

Gratitude, recovery habits, and where to find Dr. Tom

So you're like, It's not working. That's all. Okay? You just, you know, it's like my yoga teacher. He said 99% or 1% theory, 99% practice, just do your practice.

Work with someone like myself or Jen or someone else who knows what they're doing. Trust in that. Find someone who vibrates and resonates with you and then go do the work.

Because it's not a short game, but it's the game. It's literally you might take. Like for me, literally, I didn't even notice sleep was helping for at least three months and then it took another ten months to wake up with energy or another seven months.

But the bottom line, Jen, was it was I was worth it. And that's another message that I always try to share with people. And I know it's like crazy. It's like, how do you heal from my well, I'm worthy of receiving healing.

So many of us are putting it out side and other people like parents, we want to help our kids so much. I'm like, The only way you can help your kids really 100% is the first put on your own oxygen mask is to care for yourself first and then care for them.

And as parents, I know one, you know, couple of days a week, you might not do what you want to do, to do it your kid wants. But the point is put yourself first and have love and gratitude to yourself for doing the work to heal yourself.

Have that love and gratitude. Say, Hey, like I'm taking the supplements, I'm doing the work, I'm listening to this amazing conversation and this entire summit.

And what I'm going to do is I'm not going to grab on everything and use everything. I'm going to pick the one thing that resonates with me, and I'm going to consistently do it for seven days.

And after I do it for seven days, man, it's going to be really easy to do it for another seven days. And now it's 14. And then I'm going to get to my 65 or 66 to 75 days, depending upon who you read it.

Now, it's going to be a habit that every night I'm grateful for what happened in my day and I preplan my wins for tomorrow because I know after it becomes a habit, then I'm going to sleep better.

So it's always about put yourself first. And I just think it's so important because that's I bought into the long term investment in me because I said I was worth it.

And everyone listening. You have a unique light to shine in the world. We it now more than ever. So don't play small, play big. And if you're feeling crappy, know that someday you'll have that chance to really shine that light. But 10%, 1%, a quarter of a percent more light on the planet today versus yesterday makes this place an amazing place.

And together we can make that shift. And it's all by focusing on healing ourselves first, not last. Love all that. So many great points today in the conversation.

Thank you so much, Dr. Tom. So everyone is going to get a good night's sleep tonight because they will listen to you. Could you let everyone know where where to find you, where you hang out on social media and what exciting programs you have that people could look into?

Yeah. Thank you so much. And it's so funny. It's like I talk about the Lyme stuff and we talk little bit of hard core

medicine and then we talk about the real healing, which I'm so grateful for the opportunity, but I do actually write some things where we dove a little deeper into the science as well.

So the best place to find a lot of that is at our main website is Origins of Health.com. For any practitioners who may be out there, you know, head over to TomMoorcroft.com/mentorship.

We've got a mentorship program if you want to have help along the way. And then for all the folks who, you know, really resonate with kind of the message of what we're talking about today, I have the Thrive with Lyme blueprint, which is conveniently thrive with Lyme blueprint dot com where we dove into not only the herbs and the meds and the diagnosis of Lyme, but we also take people through creating their own individualized sort of self-healing program that they can implement at home to supercharge their healing and be an adjunct to all the other work they're doing with their practitioner.

And then, you know, we're on Facebook and Instagram and stuff like that, but grab us that originsofHealth.com and it will take you everywhere in our interwebs sphere.

Awesome. Thank you so much for your expertize today and sharing your journey. And thank you so much for having me and thanks for everybody for listening.

So honor.