Introduction to Kiki Newman and Mental Health in Parkinson's

Welcome to the Parkinson's Solutions Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Ken Sharlin. I hope you've been enjoying all the wonderful interviews we've had for you this week, and I am very excited to now introduce you to Kirkland Newman.

Kirkland I call her Kiki, and that's how she prefers, I think, to be address. Kiki Newman is an Anglo American journalist, a philanthropist, and she is the founder and editor of MindHealth360.

And this is a free global resource for integrative mental health and functional medicine. Psychiatrists, neurologists like myself and as well, she is the host of the MindHealth360 Show.

She is also recently taken on another hat, yet another. I don't know how she does it all, but she is the executive director of IMMH the Integrative Medicine for Mental Health Conference, which has educated so many holistic practitioners around the world.

Now here we are talking about mental health and you might say, Well, what does that have to do with Parkinson's disease? Well, anxiety and depression are pervasive in Parkinson's, and the statistics are really quite staggering.

At least a third of all people affected by Parkinson's suffer from mood disorders, although some estimates are that up to 90% are affected. And mood disorders are the most prevalent non-motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

They can be part of the expression of the disease, as in its full form, or they can be premonitory and herald the onset of the motor symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

In fact, mood symptoms can be the earliest expression of Lewy body dementia, which is related to Parkinson's disease. And we can also see changes in personality which can lead to the tragedy of suicide, as we did with the great actor and comedian Robin Williams.

So that was a little bit of a lengthy intro, but it's so important to understand that we are talking about an incredibly important subject, which is mental health and how can we approach this with Parkinson's, with our loved ones, with our friends and our colleagues, and really spread the message that there are many solutions to addressing mental health.

Kiki Newman, welcome to the Parkinson's Solutions Summit. Thank you so much for having me. Dr. Sharlin, It's wonderful to be here and I'm very grateful.

And I'm, you know, passionate about mental health. But also from a personal perspective, I have become very interested in neurodegeneration because for the last two years, I've actually had mold toxicity, which has caused Parkinson's tremors.

It's caused muscle for circulation. So for six months I had all these really scary neurological symptoms, such as fatigue, muscle weakness for circulations, repetitions and tremor.

And I had no idea. Of course, you know, you, you, you imagine the worst. And it took me about six months to figure out that I had a really bad case of mold toxicity.

So I became very interested in the whole near neurodegenerative aspect, which originally I had been focusing mainly on mental health.

Founding MindHealth360 After Personal Health Struggles

So this is very interesting to me. And what's particularly interesting is the intersection between the mental health and the neurodegeneration and, you know, the co-morbidities.

But also if you look back at the root cause, you know, what are the root causes? And it seems to me that there are so many common denominators between these areas and how much they overlap.

So I will be quiet and let you ask your questions. But I just wanted to preface it by saying that. Absolutely. Well, why don't we start out with explaining exactly what MindHealth360 is for folks is?

I know they're going to want to explore that after this interview. So MindHealth360, I basically started I had very bad postpartum depression after the birth of both my boys, one of whom is now 18, and the other one is 14.

And I had a really difficult experience. You know, I had terrible insomnia. I had postpartum anxiety and panic disorder. So I would have panic attacks and a lot of anxiety.

I would put on, you know, Mary Todd's opinion or REM run. I was put on various sleeping pills. And I really had a terrible time because the only solutions offered to me by mainstream psychiatrists who I saw were basically, you know, antidepressants, sleeping pills and some CBT.

And I really struggled. In fact, I think I got worse rather than better on these drugs. And I really, really struggled for for several years. I then became addicted to these drugs and I couldn't seem to get off them without having terrible rebound, panic attacks, insomnia.

And I mean, I just, you know, and meanwhile, my hair was falling out, my nails were brittle. I was even more depressed than I had been. So I was less anxious, but I was more depressed.

And so the whole thing was just and I had no support from my conventional GP or psychiatrist or even endocrinologist who diagnosed me with reactive hypoglycemia and all these strange things.

But nobody really put the whole picture together. And then I discovered functional medicine. This was back in 2011 and I discovered Dr. Sara Gottfried who was doing webinars on hormone health, and I sort of started to follow her and learn all about functional medicine.

And I thought, my goodness, why do more people not know about this? Because really, if you look at the root cause, especially in the case of hormonal mood disorders such as post-partum depression, PMS, menopausal symptoms, you know, so much of them are linked to your nutritional status, to your hormone levels, etc..

And yet mainstream medicine was not looking at these at all. And so the more I knew, the more I learned about functional medicine, the more I thought, well, you know, mainstream people, anybody in the public, nobody knows about this.

So you go to your mental health worker and they'll say, Here's an SSRI, I go do some CBT, and that's all they've got. And that's just not enough. And so and it's not even it doesn't even scratch the surface as far as I'm concerned.

So I went on a healing journey which lasted about three years. It took me a while to get back on track and I found I had heavy metal toxicity, I had very low hormone levels, I had very high copper, I had very low zinc.

I had, you know, all these sort of biochemical imbalances that were obviously going to make me incredibly depressed. And the drugs were just masking the symptom, you know, and they weren't they were barely even masking them.

They were actually making them worse. So I just thought, okay, this is scandalous. This needs to get out there. So I created this resource, which is a free resource for anyone suffering from mental health, whether it's depression or anxiety, insomnia, cognitive issues, memory problems.

And then in 20 that was in 2018 when I launched it. And then in 2020, during COVID, I launched the MindHealth360 Show. So I started to interview top integrative mental health people and their field.

And that proved very, very popular. And, you know, I just love hearing from all these amazing doctors who are not and, you know, not all these different doctors who are not in the mainstream necessarily, but who really deserve to be, because, you know, my ambition is to revolutionize the way mental health is diagnosed and treated.

And as far as I'm concerned, it's not happening fast enough. And then recently I've taken over. I'm a major, which is integrative medicine for mental health, which is a conference that really showcases the best of integrative mental health practitioners and fosters learning among mental health professionals who are interested in functional medicine, psychiatry and neurology and integrative mental health.

So, you know, to make a long story short, I really wanted to provide free resources for anyone in the world. Their friends, their family and their health practitioners raise awareness and really start a revolution so that people started looking for a root causes and that they knew that there were root cause approaches available and that there were solutions available that they were not being briefed on in their conventional medical practice.

So and you've talked you're really what I would call kind of a connector. Among other things, you bring people together, right?

Connecting Functional Medicine, Trauma, and Neurodegeneration

And you before we started this recording, you were talking about really some of the world leaders in the area of neuro, of trauma, of emotional trauma.

I think you mentioned Steven Porges, who were you know, for the folks who really want to dive into this subject, who are some of the folks that you've that you connect to and you recommend and you really learn from yourself?

Such a great question. And there are so many can and I mean, one of the you know, I really I mean, I was saying there's so they're the biochemical people, so the functional medicine people who, you know, they do look at sort of the nervous system and trauma and the psychotherapeutic side of things.

But a lot of them are doctors who look at, you know, your gut and your hormones and your toxins and your inflammation and your infections. And then there's a whole world of trauma and psychotherapy and the nervous system.

And people like Bessel van der Kolk, Steven Porges, Dick Schwartz, Peter Levine, and in fact, I was just at a conference this this weekend with all of those people, the Masters Series at Oxford.

And what I'd love to do is to bring these two worlds together, the biochemical world and the more psychotherapeutic world, because the two are completely linked.

I mean, our minds and our bodies and our biochemistry and our psychology are completely inseparable, and we separate them at our peril. But to answer your question, I mean, certainly in the world of trauma and nervous system healing, because the nervous system physiologically is so important, so mean, I'm I'm not going to teach you that, you know, both in terms of our psychological health, but also in terms of our physical health, because, you know, our autonomic nervous system regulates everything.

And, you know, Stephen Porges, I think is just such a pioneer in terms of his work with the poly vagal theory and you know how he's realized that, you know, there is, there's the sympathetic system which is fight flight.

And then of course there's the parasympathetic, which is not only rest and digest and the ventral vagal, the social engagement, which are key, but also the dorsal vagal, which is the shut down response, the freeze response and the role that has in trauma.

So that's been fantastic. So I mean, I've done two podcasts with him, which I think obviously are great, but he's a fantastic pioneer. And this Dick Schwartz, who's done Internal family Systems so helpful and he did a fantastic he did a fantastic study on rheumatoid arthritis showing that this internal family systems, which looks at different parts of ourselves.

So we have, you know, the perfectionist part and the angry part and the good girl part. And then you have yourself, which is the more spiritual embodied, you know, curious, compassionate, courageous, clear self.

And then you have all these parts which are protectors and they're exiles and they're parts that have been wounded in childhood all, you know, often and then who adapt to try and cope with with life and with these wounded parts.

And the interesting thing is that even though that's a psychological approach and it's a psychotherapeutic approach where you work with these different parts, he's had incredible results with very physiological things like cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, where, you know, people have and especially in terms of these autoimmune disorders where the parts work and healing the trauma and the nervous system has been huge, impactful on the physiological symptoms.

So that's fascinating. And then in terms of the more maybe biochemical side, I mean, obviously, Dr. Kat too, so I think is fantastic on dementia and looking at all the different she works with Dr.

Reddy's with all the different I mean that's your wheelhouse. So, so I'm you're wonderful at that, Professor Lustig, who I think is fantastic, and he looks a lot at sort of the impact of diet on and metabolic health.

So he looks at mitochondria, he looks at sort of, you know, the energy of the cells and the Krebs cycle and you know, how we produce energy, how our cells produce energy, what foods and what diets are better for that than others?

Who else? I mean, I've had so many Dr. Mary accurately, who's fantastic. She's a psychiatrist who looks at mold, mold, toxicity a lot. I mean, she looks at many different things, but neuroinflammation and how various different toxins, especially molds, can create your inflammatory conditions, which can then really impact your mental health.

That's Cara's. Yeah. I thought was really, really good in terms of also neuroinflammation and how TBI so traumatic brain injuries can prime your micro glial cells.

You know, ongoing neuroinflammation. And it's very important to sort of dampen those down because more and more is, you know, I mean, so many of these mental health issues, whether they're depression, anxiety, you know, insomnia, cognitive decline, neurodegeneration, but any neurodegenerative diseases are so linked to inflammation.

Absolutely. You know, and so I think, you know, anybody who's looking at that and all the people on my channel, I mean, I called I have quite a few others, Felice Gersh, who does hormones because hormones is another very important part of mental health.

You know, and and again, nobody's going to look at your hormones and you can be menopausal and they'll say, well, let me give you an antidepressant. But in fact, they need to dial back that, you know, and improve their hormones, essentially.

So there are a lot of fantastic people out there doing fantastic work. And, you know, I certainly haven't interviewed them all yet, but I'm planning to I'm going to interview everybody.

And I think it's really worth just following these people because there's a lot of research and there's a lot of clinical practice that is going on out there in the functional medicine community, which is really helpful and which is route calls medicine and which is really helping people go to the root cause of what's causing their either their mental health symptoms or their neurodegeneration.

And I think that is absolutely key. Absolutely. And, you know, one of the ways that I present this information, because a lot of times I sort of admit that, you know, the basic concepts are ultimately universal, right?

Whether we're talking about depression or whether we're talking about Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. But for the way that I have framed it to folks is we have to be disease centered at times.

That's the conventional model. We make the diagnosis. And once the diagnosis is made, you have Parkinson's disease, then we treat that generally with a drug, perhaps surgery, levodopa deep brain stimulation in Parkinson's.

And those have value because until the day comes where we simply wipe all these terrible diseases off the face of the earth, and I hope one day that does come, we have to realize that each of these approaches offers something to the individual.

Now there's the disease centered approach, but then there's the patient centered approach. That's a person centered approach. And we have to strive to understand that person.

What is their narrative all the way back to the the traumas, those adverse childhood experiences that really shaped the autonomic nervous system, maybe almost permanently.

Although some of the promise of psychedelics is challenging the notion that these these structures, these functional structures are so hardwired that, you know, they are very difficult to change.

A Three-Part Framework for Sustainable Healing

But if we can have one foot in the conventional world, as we were talking about earlier, and one foot in the more holistic world, which by the way, is extremely science based, which is, you know, very, very reassuring, then we really offer the most well, comprehensive were 360 degree approach right to to the care of the patient, to our own personal wellness journey.

Right. Can you I was looking on the mind health 368 and you have front and center a diagram that kind of depicts the vision of health that you're talking about.

And could you share that? Because I think that really gives a very nice framework for folks. Absolutely. And I was trying you know, I mean, I have a sort of systems brain and I was trying to break this down because, you know, and make it accessible.

And one of the things that really struck me is that, you know, the way to treat mental health issues from a, you know, in a sustainable manner is to really treat them from all sides.

And so I broke it down into three. One was the biochemistry, the other one is the lifestyle behavioral aspects and the other one is the psycho spiritual aspects.

Now these are just names that I have sort of come up with or different names for them. But in a nutshell, those are the three baskets that I think are crucial if you're going to really sustainably heal to look at.

And the biochemical includes things like your nutrition, your inflammation, your infections, your toxins, your hormones, your gut issues, you know, all those which are so important.

Then your psycho spiritual is your adverse childhood experiences, your chronic stress, your difficult life circumstances. You know, sort of your attitudes.

And then the third piece, which is the lifestyle behavioral, is sort of what are your habits? I mean, how do you sleep? How do you do You get sunlight in the morning, How do you eat?

What are your what are your exercise habits? And, you know, if you look at all three, they're all completely linked.

And one of the things I find fascinating is, you know, people with trauma, with childhood trauma have greater susceptibility to biochemical imbalances.

So we know what we call a Lyme personality or mold personality are usually people who've had childhood trauma who are more susceptible to mold toxicity or to Lyme disease, which is quite interesting.

And then vice versa. We also know that childhood trauma increases your susceptibility to Lyme disease, etc.. So, you know, it really goes both ways. And in fact, I mean, the other way you can get Lyme disease and you can get mold toxicity, you can get biochemical imbalances, and then that primes your system to be more reactive to psychological stressors.

So that was the way I, I got slightly confused, but that's really important to realize that there's this bidirectional communication between your life experiences, your cycle, logical state, and then your biochemical reactions and, you know, and so it's really important to heal all these aspects and to look at, you know, how you're living, how you choose to live, and also what sort of early life stressors, ongoing chronic stressors you have, and then what sort of exposure is.

And the other interesting thing is, you know, your brain as you as you know, doesn't distinguish between psychological stressors and physiological stressors.

So it will react in the same way. So your nervous system will go into fight or flight, whether it's a mold toxin or a heavy metal or a lime, you know, pathogen, or whether it's childhood trauma or, you know, a sort of psychological stressor.

And that's a really important thing to consider because it means that the only way we can sustainably get our nervous system is back on track so that we can create homeostatic resilience, which is what we're really looking for, is to address all these aspects.

And I think part of the problem is that, you know, in our medical profession we're so siloed in terms of, you know, while there's a gastroenterologist and there's the psychiatrist and there's the cardiologist and we really need because we're we're systems I mean, we're human systems, we're very complex and we need these sort of systems approach to healing in order to achieve, you know, homeostasis and homeostatic resilience, which is what we're all after.

So I'm very passionate about this three pronged approach, and I really feel that in order to heal or even get I know that that word is slightly controversial, but in order to get close to that healing, we really need to address all those factors, you know, and come at it from those three angles.

And it's so important, this healing or wholeness, which to me is there's sort of a they're not quite synonymous, but they're they're very close. This is really critical to the journey.

I think one of the most devastating illnesses that we see fairly often here, shoreline, health and neurology folks had come to participate in our brain tumor program.

Is amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS, Lou Gehrig's disease. And this is a disease that while it can affect people as they age, it's not exclusively a disease where age is the major risk factor.

We've seen many young people with ALS. It has a, you know, 50% two year mortality, a 50% in two years, unlike, you know, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease, which, you know, you could have Parkinson's and, you know, your life goes on and you're you're kind of will manage it with the managed with the disease.

And maybe, you know, your life takes a turn in another direction. Has nothing to do with your Parkinson's disease. We've know in multiple sclerosis, the average life expectancy is age 75.

So it's really only a few years shy of the average life expectancy in the United States. Not that we couldn't do

better, but the point is ALS is devastating and there's a lot of folks out there with major stakes in and in the research, in regenerative medicine, trying to really fix the problems related to this disease.

And we've made strides. But we're not there yet. So how do you work with someone when you know that they have this devastating illness and we have to sort of work mind, body and soul?

We do have to correct those cellular imbalances we have here our Brain tuneup lab panel.

Applying Whole-Person Care to ALS and Neurodegenerative Disease

But we always work with the whole person, coaching life, coaching, health coaching. A lot of spiritual work is extremely important. How do we say I have this disease but the disease doesn't have in me?

Because in the end, really, our lives are narratives, right? And that narrative is thrown askew by these major. You know, here I got major diagnoses here.

I was going along, I had my plans, I had my vision of the future, and then I get cyber railed right. And you really get side rails with ALS. So how do we bring that healing experience?

We've got data that shows that we can slow disease progression are weak during the disease. We're probably not during the disease yet, although Richard Medlock from Duke University has a reported several cases of ALS reversals.

But these, to be honest, are still rare entities. So bringing in those tools of functional and regenerative medicine that you're talking about can be a huge game changer for folks and in how to live their life, right?

How do you live your life with this with this condition? You know, it's funny that you should say that because, of course, when I started having my muscle twitching, my muscles of circulations, which were really very intense, I mean, I would have hundreds a day and every single muscle of my body.

I mean, it was very scary. My first thought was, you know, ALS. And so and, you know, and I went to see a neurologist and they said, well, you know, we have to watch it.

We have to watch if it progresses. Now, you know, knock on wood, after two years, it hasn't progressed. And so, in fact, it's improved. But I've been working damn hard to really try and reverse things.

Now, in terms of people with the ALS diagnosis, I mean, you know, that is you know, it's it's devastating. But I'm such a firm believer, having been through and, you know, obviously I wasn't diagnosed either with Parkinson's or with ALS, but I did have these really weird, very similar symptoms.

And I had muscle cramps and I had tremors and I had a lot of these sort of neurodegenerative symptoms. And so I went on this real quest to take a mind, body or soul approach to say, okay, well, if I do have one of these neurodegenerative diseases, how do I deal with this?

And one of the key things that really struck me was, you know, you have to really be very disciplined, I think, about your lifestyle and about, you know, trying to get the right foods and, you know, looking at ketogenic diet.

I mean, ketogenic diets are having very exciting, you know, MCT oils and ketones and ketogenic diet or have very exciting research both for mental health disorders but also for neurodegenerative disorders, including to some extent ALS.

I think that's, you know, one of the first things is the diet. And then the second thing you know, is is exercise, keeping things moving, you know, flowing as much as possible because that's so important for your mitochondrial health.

And so many of these diseases are, you know, might come from, you know, really there are three things, I think. And I mean, you're the expert, you're the doctor.

But from my research, there are really three things that are the enemy of of neuronal health. It's inflammation, you know, oxidase and oxidative stress and mitochondrial dysfunction.

Those are the three things that really leap out as common denominators across the board, whether it's mental health symptoms or whether it's neurodegenerative symptoms.

And so anything that you can do to tackle those three enemies essentially inflammation, you know, mitochondrial dysfunction and anti, you know, oxidative stress I think is very, very important.

So whether it's the ketogenic diet, whether it's exercise, whether it's sleep, whether it's hot, cold, you know, hot cold exposure, So that really boosts your mitochondrial health, whether it's heat shock proteins from infrared saunas or whether it's, you know, ice baths, those are really, really important.

The other thing is, you know, relaxation and calming the nervous system because that's so important, you know, your vagal tone and, you know, calming the system down, the nervous system.

So that you're you're in a better vagal tone is very important. You can do vagus nerve exercises such as gargling and singing and humming. And, you know, there are there are all these vagal nerve stimulators you can try meditation, I think is fantastic. And the two other things that I would say really are important are, you know, your toxicity.

So we know that toxins are incredibly damaging to mitochondrial health, you know, increase reactive oxygen species there. You know, there's a lot of they can cause inflammation, etc..

So whether they're moles and bio toxins, you know, or whether they're pesticides, herbicides, plastics, or whether they're pathogens, you know, whether they're bacteria or viruses, you know, all these are inflammatory agents, which essentially an oxidative agents, which I think really need to be looked at.

And so, you know, whether it's heavy metals or molds, so any sort of detoxifying protocols, I mean, obviously always work with the practitioner. You know, this is just but from my research and from my own personal experience, whether it's infrared saunas or, you know, hyperbaric oxygen, also has very, very good results, I think, for a lot of these conditions.

And, you know, eating a very healthy diet of Whole foods, no sugar, you know, and high good fats and, you know, moderate protein and moderate, complex carbohydrates.

But, you know, the so there are there are a lot of things that can be done. And I think from the point of view of managing your mental health, though, in terms of managing the anxiety and managing, you know, the fear that must come with these diagnoses, you know, I think, well, meditation is key, but sometimes that's not always easy.

You know, it's not easy to maintain, but there are a lot of supplements that can help as well. I mean, I'm a big fan of the are you Vedic sort of tradition, which is the Indian tradition of ancient health, and they have fantastic adaptogens whether they're ashwagandha or Gen Singh's or, you know, they have very good herbal adaptogens, which can really help support the stress response when you're faced with a sort of very difficult diagnosis.

And sometimes, you know, it takes time to dial in your lifestyle. And so just having something like, you know, there are various different compilations, I don't you know, I don't know which ones, but I personally use these cortisol monitors that sort of help, and they have these wonderful herbs that sort of calm the nervous system and, you know, things like infrared, sauna, heat and and cold water are very good for the nervous system, for the vagus nerve.

And the thing that really helps your nervous system develop the resilience to deal with the anxiety of these

diagnoses and the fear is essential. And of course, you know, I've never done this myself, but psychedelics, as you mentioned, I mean, you know, there's huge amounts of research now saying that they're hugely helpful with difficult diagnoses, whether it's cancer, whether it's neurodegeneration, whether it's fear of dying and, you know, whether it's sort of expanding your consciousness for a more spiritual approach and preparation for the difficult times, you know, that that that come with this.

Now, I personally have never done psychedelics, but I know that there are fantastic research studies on how effective they are. Yes. So I think really taking a whole toolbox approach to these difficult diagnoses and really making sure that you take all the boxes that you look at the toxins and the heavy metals and that you do the therapies that can help detoxify.

And you look at the anti-inflammatory therapies and the things that help you sleep and help and do the right exercise and things that boost your mitochondria.

And of course there are supplements that boost your mitochondria, whether it's co Q10 or magnesium or, you know, there are a lot of very good supplements for that.

But you know you're the expert on. I'm not, but I just think it's really important to take a very holistic, very thorough approach so that you're really looking at all of these factors and it can be overwhelming.

But I think if you work with a good practitioner who can say, okay, have you looked at this? Let's look at your sleep and let's look at your nutrition and let's look at your toxicity and let's look at what sort of infections you might have that might be causing neuroinflammation.

And have you had a TBI, you know, traumatic brain injury that might be priming your neural cells for inflammation. All these things need to be looked at and I really believe and maybe it's naive, that if you do, if you do have the ability to and the resources and that's the challenge to look at all these factors, you really can slow things down or improve things.

I mean, I didn't have a diagnosis, but my neurological symptoms are, I'd say 85% better in the last two years. And they were terrible. And, you know, but I have been working very, very hard at getting rid of all the toxins and the infections and boosting the mitochondrial function.

And I really you know, I saw a huge, huge difference. And I'm not saying that's available necessarily to everyone, but I do believe that it is possible.

And I'm passionate about making sure that people look at these things and then spend whatever resources be at time or money that they can, you know, to find the right practitioners to work with and to help them.

Because I do believe that healing or at least slowing the progression is possible. I mean. Absolutely. I want to tip my hat just a little bit. We're partnering with Sandra Scheinbaum, who is the CEO of Functional Medicine Coaching Academy, to say that, you know, we have many resources today if we're information on a personalized level, if you see a functional medicine provider and they're going to do the testing, but in the end you have to implement all of these things, right?

You have to put it together. You have to be able to personalize it and you have to be able to live your life every day. You know, there are a lot of it's sort of I don't want to belittle the things that are out there that are sort of gadgets.

But to say that it's very easy to go from, I have to go from my infrared sauna to where my light helmet to getting in my hyperbaric to, you know, using my laser or what have you.

And everything has a value. But then how do you actually put it together in such a way that, you know, you can have a passion for every day that you wake up and say, you know, that gratitude and, you know, the build ability to live your life and ultimately do the things that are most important to you, maybe it's your children and your grandchildren, your pets, the people that you're serving in some way or another.

So we do have to get out of the hyperbaric chamber ultimately and be able to do those things.

Vagus Nerve, Connection, and Closing Reflections

And that's where I think the coaches can be incredibly helpful. I think that's so true. And that also brings brings me to a point, you know, I mean, we can get a bit obsessive, especially if you have a diagnosis.

You know, you get a bit obsessive, which is normal. And so you're like, first of all, it's so very overwhelming. It's like, I have to do this and I have to do that and I have to do that.

And there you're right. I mean, health coaches can be incredible at sort of crafting a program for you and they can help you follow that. But also, I think getting out of ourselves, I mean, you know, their whole biohacker movement of all these people who go and do all this biohacking so they can live forever, you know, it can it's it's a different motivator from somebody who has a terminal or a very difficult diagnosis.

But, you know, I think connecting to others and getting outside of ourselves is so important. And I mean, back to the polyvagal theory, you know, as Steven Porges says, you know, you have to be in a ventral vagal state, i.e.

a social engagement state in order to promote health growth and restoration. And he's very clear about that. And of course his wife, Dr. Sue Karcher, is one of the key people who worked with oxytocin and Basil Preston, and she's one of the key researchers on that.

And, you know, oxytocin is incredibly anti-inflammatory. And so, you know, oxytocin being the love and bonding hormone. And so having a sense of purpose, having a sense of gratitude, having a sense of connection to others, to our friends, to our loved ones, even to pets, is really crucial to healing and to calming the nervous system and to reducing inflammation.

And it can be measured on a physiological level and a biochemical level. And so, you know, rather than and it's easier said than done, but rather than of panic and say, okay, well, I've got to do as you say, you know, my hyperbaric and my infrared and my, you know, laser lights and all these things, you know, that's part of it.

But it's also just taking time to be in nature, to connect with friends, family and loved ones and really get into our ventral vagal sort of state. And that's very important.

Now, we and I don't know how what the order of the interview is it's going to be quite yet. But we talked to Alex Curtin, who is located in, I think in the Tel Aviv areas in Israel and has a wonderful program for people with Parkinson's disease and, wrote a book that is called Goodbye Parkinson's, Hello Life.

And I was just thinking about your point about the divisions of the Vegas where the freeze, you know, and how the freeze, so to speak, is really the in many ways, the outward expression of Parkinson's.

Right. The frozen face, the lack of facial expression, the lack of movement overall, the slowness of movement, and how can we sort of break through that mask of Parkinson's disease.

And I would certainly encourage folks to watch Alex's interview and to go to his website because of the wonderful work that he's doing. But it's really it's so much about engagement in the end.

It's so much about breaking through that and connecting and moving and flow. And when we let those energies flow, the effect at that cellular health level is actually quite remarkable.

You know, you can sort of take all the vitamin C in the world, but in the end we have to take those action steps, right? I think that's so true. And that's one of the challenges, you know, is really that's why I want to bring these two worlds together, because it's so important.

And I was talking to Dr. Aimie Apigian, in fact, this weekend and, you know, she does a summit called the Biology

of Trauma. And it was very interesting because she was saying, you know, the trauma response really when you go dorsal vagal, which is a sort of shut down freeze response, it affects you on a very cellular level.

And so your mitochondria really sort of stop producing as much ATP because you're in this sort of shut down mode. Now, I don't know how much research there is to back that, but you know, and I imagine it's quite hard to do.

And I thought it was an interesting idea, but it it sort of makes sense, you know, And that's why I think also healing the trauma is very, very important.

You know, getting into this sort of nervous system regulation and understanding what parts of you in your life are shut down, are blocked, are frozen, you know, from a psychological perspective, because that will have a cellular impact.

It will have an impact on, you know, your cells and whether it's enough to, you know, cause a neurodegenerative disease, I mean, it will definitely contribute.

But, you know, and the mitochondria being these sort of little batteries and these powerhouses that energize the cells, there is that sense of life force.

And I always say, you know, we have in Chinese medicine, there's the chea, which is the sort of life force. And then in Western medicine, we have ATP, you know, which is what is produced by mitochondria.

And there's a sort of link this chea, this vital life force and the ATP produced by our mitochondria, which is our sort of cellular energy and anything that you can do to boost that vital life energy and to, you know, boost your mitochondrial function is so important.

And I think a lot of that does go through some sort of psychological healing work and and, you know, working with the right people. And one of the things, as I said I love is IFRS internal family systems, and they've done some very interesting research with autoimmune disease and sort of, you know, improved physiological outcomes thanks to this very psychological approach.

So, you know, it's all linked basically. And I think that's what we're all trying to say. And I think that's, you know, the only way that we can really approach sustainable healing is by looking at these at all the systems essentially.

Kiki there is so much I wanted to ask you about and I can't believe the time is about up, but we're going to definitely pencil in another opportunity to connect and and talk about even more things, including the importance as you do as part of your work of supporting causes and movements that you see as being really, truly valuable and helpful to others.

As a philanthropist, such important work, we we want to support the Parkinson's Foundation, the Michael J. Fox Foundation and all the other good organizations out there that are really trying to further not only the research in curing this disease, but also really supporting the people who have the disease and their families and loved ones.

Well, Kirkland Newman or Kiki, it it's been such a pleasure to visit with you today. I want to encourage folks to check out MindHealth360 and maybe even consider attending an IMMH conference and having that in-person experience with all these wonderful thought leaders that you were able to bring together.

Absolutely. Well, Ken you were wonderful and well done for the work that you're doing. And you're a real visionary and you're a pioneer and you've been doing this for years and years and years.

You one of the first who's been in the space. And I really take my hat off to you and I can't wait to interview you on my podcast. So I'm very excited about that and I can't wait to see you in IMMH in 2024.

That is great. Thank you so much, Kiki, for your time. Thank you Ken. Take care.