Is Your Body Trying to Tell You Something? Unlock Deep Healing with Dr. Maria DeFranco Transcript

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Podcast Introduction and Guest Welcome

And for all of those listeners who may not know what an oral release is or TMJ, it's basically exactly what it sounds like intraoral, meaning going inside the oral cavity for muscular release.

So it's where the practitioner puts on a glove and takes their glove digit and goes inside the oral cavity, kind of like between the cheek and the teeth back towards the jaw joint itself to release the muscular tension of the jaw joint, which we are referring to as the TMJ, which is the temporal mandibular This is Doctor Talks, real talk from real doctors on the issues that matter to you most.

Hello, and welcome to the Functional Edge podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Julia Ward, medical director and founder of Balanced Body Functional Medicine. Today, I'm honored to welcome Dr.

Maria DeFranco to the show. Dr. DeFranco is a chiropractor, a body worker, and founder of OM3 Body, where she blends a structural work, fascia release, nervous system regulation, and deep embodiment practices to help her patients reconnect with their vitality.

In this episode, Dr. DeFranco will share her unique approach to healing, one that goes beyond traditional chiropractic care. We'll talk about the role of the pelvic diaphragm, TMJ release, and the deeper connection between physical alignment and emotional expression.

How Dr. DeFranco Found Her Healing Path

Stay tuned for a conversation that promises to expand your view of what's possible in the healing process and empower your journey towards deeper integration and resilience.

Thank you, Dr. Maria, for being here. We're so glad you're here. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Julia. I really appreciate that. I'm happy to be here. This is going to be a very fun conversation.

I just know it. Yeah. So can you start by sharing how you got into this line of work? Like, what originally drew you to chiropractic care? And how did that evolve into the integrative whole body approach you offer today through Own3Body?

Sure. I would love to answer that question. I do have something that's kind of coming through, Julia, that I was thinking about yesterday in, like, prep for our podcast.

And if this is too weird, we can always edit it out. But one thing I was thinking, it might be kind of fun to do because we're really dropping in together.

And I'm founder of Om3body, which has the word om in it. And om is a frequency. Yes. I was wondering if you would want to om with me. We're like, okay, cool.

I thought maybe you'd be into it. And then we can even ask, you know, people's lives are so busy and we're about to share a lot of information. So what if even the listeners, as weird as it might sound, like could just ohm along with us.

And it might be kind of funny because the audio, I don't know if it will record both of our voices at the same time. It might kind of cut in and out, but it would help me drop in.

It is connected with you. I know you just had a busy day. I just had a busy, why not? You've seen that quote, but first coffee. And a friend of mine recently came over to my house and he just kind of took me by the hand and he was like, do you want to own together before we drop in on a conversation?

And I was like, yes, I do. So it changed the whole frequency of our day, kind of slowly. That's great. Yeah, let's do it. OK, so I'll just count to three and then whatever comes out, we can just tone.

OK, all right. One, two, three. Delightful. Awesome. Yes. That was great. That was great. Because I was taking some deep breaths before we started. Me too.

But this, Björk's presence is like, okay, we're claiming it. We're going to be praising each other. How wonderful. Great. Thanks so much for asking about my line of work, what it is I do, and just the question in general.

For me, this work has always been about creating beauty, presence, and freedom, but starting with the body. I believe I was born an artist, most of us are, and then we kind of get conditioned out of it, but I've always seen my hands as tools to create with.

In high school, you could usually find me in the art room, at the ceramic wheel, developing film in the dark room. At the same time, I had a really deep appreciation for the human form, and I feel the body is the most exquisite work of art that there is.

And so it felt natural that my hands, which once shaped clay and developed and captured light, developed film captured light, would eventually learn to listen to and help reshape or shape the living body.

And one of the best days of my life as an 18 year old was receiving a massage at this massage school that I was looking at. And it was the first time I ever had a full body massage.

I was lucky enough to have an incredible practitioner that really held a really safe space. I felt so safe and deeply held. And it was like every cell of my body could finally exhale.

And it just shifted me. And then years later, maybe a year later actually, I had my first atlas adjustment. I got adjusted by a chiropractor. It was like a veil lifted in me.

The world looked brighter. My senses were more clear. It's like I came online more. I must have been experiencing great fog and I didn't even know it.

And then my nervous system got reset and I, I don't know. I just awakened. It was kind of like almost like a spiritual awakening. Like, well, this is life could be like this.

It's like I switched channels almost. And my first thought was like, I need to learn how to do this for other people. And. Yeah, I guess that moment and many like it since just continue to clarify my path that I'm really in the business of waking people to more life, more sensation and an increased ability to receive through our senses, because that's how we interact with life is through our senses.

And if those are numb, it's really hard to to experience life at the level that we want to or we're born to. And so my own sensitivity, once very overwhelming, has become one of my greatest assets.

Embodiment, Safety, and Cellular Healing

And as a child, I absorbed everything, every unspoken tension in the room, every shift in tone, like every emotion no one dared to express, especially growing up in the Midwest, like everybody's kind of, I shouldn't paint with that broad of a brush.

There's a suppression that can happen and so I kind of learned to play possum I think very early on disconnecting from my senses and from my body just to survive.

Just like kind of going offline and you know when we're young we often well we don't when we're young we don't think what's wrong with everybody else you know we think what's wrong with me right like there must be something wrong with me so massage and chiropractic helped me shed layers of shame the contraction and emotional residue that I didn't even know that I was holding in my body.

And much of it wasn't even mine. And that unraveling gave me a sense of freedom in my body, in my mind, in my breath. And freedom to this day, it means my deepest values.

So through own body, it's an evolution of all of this. It's chiropractic, yes, but it's also listening to the body, somatic listening, breath, the fascial work, movement, and just deep energetic presence for it.

I don't see people as something to fix, but as whole beings whose bodies are just waiting for permission to soften, to repattern, to return to themselves.

And my job is to facilitate that return, if that makes sense. Yeah, absolutely. That just kind of leads us into the next question of, you know, I love your statement about true healing is a love story of embodiment with every cell in your body.

So can you unpack what that means for you and how you help your patients experience that in their healing journey? Sure. I love that you love it. Can I ask first, like, what resonates?

What resonated in you with that? I think the fact that it goes down to the cellular level. For me, I find that fascinating that it's not on an emotional level.

It really translates down into our cells and into our body. I've been continuously surprised at the powerful connection between the mind and really after a deep fascial release.

That's when I uncover more kind of emotional truths that, oh, that's what I was, that was the pain I was holding on to and I didn't recognize it. Yeah, and it can go all the way to the cellular level, like you said, the level that we don't always think of.

We think of our muscles and joints, but part of that quote, to unpack it for me and why I came up with that quote, is every cell in our body listens to what we're telling it at any given time.

It's like whatever my thoughts are saying, it's like a loudspeaker to every single cell. So in a way that quote is like giving us like an opportunity to harness that story of how am I talking to my body and relating and healing it.

I mean because healing for me isn't about fixing symptoms or returning to some younger or older version of ourselves. It's about coming into that deeper more intimate relationship with our body as it is like right now with that tenderness and curiosity and deep reverence and like way like so many of us like myself I feel like we've learned to disconnect from our bodies to override those singles numb sensation and Also, we are taught implicitly to see our physical form as something not only to try and control, but to greatly criticize, you know, like it's never enough, it's that good enough.

And I feel like, you know, then we're saying those things. Really, and that's like a one-way communication channel. But then when we kind of open it up, like real healing happens when we begin to listen to what the body's actually saying.

And when we feel safe enough to be in our bodies again and feel connected and to honor sensation as our first language. That's the love story. So in my work, I help people experience this.

It's like, in a way, I feel like, you know, we have our therapists that we go see and everything, but I feel like I'm kind of like the go-between between the body and your inner voice.

Like I'm the Liam talking to your body. What kind of conversations are you? Are you shouting at it? Oh, what would

it say back to you if you knew it was actually, if you were listening?

So first we have to like create a deeply safe and attuned space, right? Where there's like receptive, where you feel heard or where the client is able to express and not feel judged because then when we're judged, we're not going to give you any information.

You can't really connect when you have protection. So yeah, it's, it's not, this quote is just like not just about releasing tension. It's about remembering yourself.

through your breath, your posture, but also your tissue. Your cells are working for you all the time. We don't always give them credit. And so I guide people into an experience where the body becomes a place of homecoming, truly homecoming, that love story, instead of hypervigilance.

So when somebody tells me after a session, oh, I feel like I'm really here, or I didn't know it could feel this good to be in my body, I know the love story has begun, and that's the magic I live for.

I get to witness people wake up to the aliveness of their selves and themselves, like, all day long, where they just, you know, it's like, again, switching the channel from constant self-criticism or inner critique to, like, appreciation and love for really this incredible machinery, that privilege to be able to operate and partner with.

So I hope that makes sense. Yeah, I mean, so much of your work supports not just physical relief, but the expression of vitality and aliveness. So how do you see that connection between body alignment and deeper self-expression?

Wow, that's such a good question. Well, I know for me, when I'm in alignment, and even like my neck being out of alignment or the shoulders out of alignment, I can feel my senses as well.

And through our senses, we can feel that vitality, right?

Integrating Chiropractic, Pelvic, and TMJ Work

So it's kind of like clearing the cache or clearing the obstruction of any kind and helping that energy move through the body so that you can experience yourself as one unified field.

not like kind of compartmentalization, which is also what we're taught, I think, implicitly to just kind of pull things off of that. Yeah, definitely.

So you combine chiropractic adjustments with pelvic diaphragm balancing, TMJ release, fascial work, and more. How did you come to recognize the importance of integrating all these systems?

And what kind of results have you seen when addressing them together? That's a really good question, too. Thank you. Over the years, I realized that addressing just one part of the body, kind of like how they teach us in school, you know, like a spinal segment or a joint, it's just not enough.

It falls short. Then you can, God forbid, set up further compensatory patterns of people. I'm sure you are familiar with that, right? So you really have to see it as a whole.

So I would adjust it with spine and it might give temporary relief, but If the pelvic diaphragm, for example, is holding trauma or doesn't feel safe, or the jaw is clenching with unspoken, that pattern would often, by the time they get back to their car, they're going to be right back out of alignment.

So the body, I see it as a symphony, not just a separate set of systems. The pelvic diaphragm, which I love that we're bringing that up because it's such an underserved area, jaw, breath, like all of it, the fascia are in constant communication all the time.

And if one area is restricted or out of balance, it creates a cascade through the rest of the body. So I started working integratively. It's not uncommon to work the jaw internally and the pelvis during the same session, or balancing the pelvis while working with the jaw really helps facilitate the breath.

So it doesn't just stop here or here or even here. It goes all the way down to the pelvis. And releasing the TMJ, it helps regulate the nervous system directly.

And I just learned to listen to following the lines of tension in the body that tell a story. And I'm just listening to the story. You're the writer of the book.

Your body is your book. You're the author. I get to read it. But ultimately, you know, the person on my table or the person I'm working with is the direct authority.

So I combine their inner knowing with these elements, and then the results just became so much more profound and longer lasting. People started reporting not just pain relief, but emotional clarity, that deeper breath, better sleep, and just the sense of coming home to their bodies, where their bodies are their friends.

I've seen long-held postural distortions unwind and soften, even fertility improve. I've helped a lot of women get pregnant when the root tension in the pelvic floor is addressed and heard.

We're not taught about those internal pelvic muscles as far as doing any treatments or maintenance or anything in our medical training. That's just not part of the…

Yeah. The whole curriculum. That's just, you know, something that I just recently learned about, that what you do. And I think it's amazing because it can make such a huge difference.

Well, thanks for giving me the opportunity and the platform to talk about it and just, I guess, the last thing with the pelvic floor or with healing in general.

Yeah. I always feel like there's an agenda. And there's an agenda with the pelvic diaphragm. Typically, when we approach the pelvis, we're either getting a gynecological exam, we're getting something in fact, sexual intimacy, which sometimes can be loaded and have a lot of pressure there and performance.

When do we ever get that area accessed with just the intention, not even the agenda, to listen, to help unload, to reclaim that area, just to be there for it?

Yeah. I mean, the pelvic floor is kind of like the microcosm of the rest of the body, too. Oftentimes, we approach with an agenda. And I think that's just what attunement is, is approaching without an agenda, just to listen to the tissues and what they hold.

Because ultimately, the body knows. The body and your intelligence knows far more than I could ever know. And so if it's given the opportunity to be listened to, there's so much that can be revealed.

Yeah. Can you share a story, you know, obviously without names or anything, where this multifaceted approach helped unlock healing for someone who had plateaued with more conventional treatments?

Absolutely. The first person that comes to mind quite recently is a man in his late 40s who came in with persistent shoulder pain and chronic headaches, a lot of upper tension.

He had done everything from orthopedic assessments, even consulting about surgery, chiropractic adjustments, a lot of massage, even some cortisone injections and acupuncture.

And while some things would give him momentary relief, the pain would always come back, especially during times of high stress. And when it came to me, I didn't start by focusing on the shoulder.

Luckily, he was very patient and open-minded man, because you know, when you have pain, it's like, let's just address it, like fix it, turn it off. But I'm not in the business of fixing people.

People fix themselves under my care. because of the partial healing mechanisms, but I'm just here to help facilitate that for them. So anyway, it gave me the benefit of the doubt.

I'm listening to his body as a whole. We found that his pelvis was rotated and compressed and holding a lot of tension in his diaphragm. Respiratory diaphragm was restricted.

Jaw also holding an immense amount of discomfort and unconscious tension he didn't realize. And he also disclosed that he had a long history of unprocessed grief.

from a series of losses that he never really had space to feel or release. And when we did eventually start doing the soft tissue work in his shoulder, ironically, right behind the heart, ironically, not ironically, an immense amount of emotion came through and came out unbeknownst to him.

I mean, he all of a sudden he found himself weed being sobbing on my table, which can be pretty shocking for people because they don't always understand the mind-body connection.

But it is really common in my line of work for emotions to finally process. It doesn't always have to be crying. It doesn't have to be sobs or weeping.

Sometimes people laugh. Sometimes they start burping. Sometimes people have to frequently urinate because they're just like moving it through. They have to go to the bathroom again.

It's like good. pee it out. So anyway, through a combination of pelvic balancing and fascial release, TMJ, cranial work, nervous system regulation, and just space for him to feel, his body continued to unwind and we also brought in that deep breathing.

Case Study: Unwinding Chronic Pain and Grief

So instead of having the breath stop at that upper thoracic area, the rib cage, we were able to bring it all the way down into his abdomen. and his system started to feel safe again and safe enough to let go.

So about three sessions in, he told me something that I will never forget because it's so well said. He said, I've realized that the pain in my shoulder was never really in my shoulder.

It was everything I was carrying, but I didn't know how to set down. Yeah. Wow. Oftentimes, if we don't have a place to put something or a way to process it or let it go, we're just going to keep carrying it, right?

We're just going to hold on to it. It's smart. If it's not put it down, you are going to keep holding it. Sometimes I feel like I'm a doula in terms of helping people with those unprocessed emotions and that pain.

I'm a pain doula. I'll feel it with you. Let's do it together. Pain isn't meant to be felt alone. We're not supposed to process alone. We can't actually process to depth alone.

We need another half of a nervous system to complete one full nervous system when we owned. So yeah, his posture changed after a series of treatments.

The physical pain went away and he just began to experience the level of emotional clarity and inner calm that he hadn't been able to feel in decades.

And I mean, I just think that that's the kind of healing that becomes possible when we recognize that pain is just a messenger. So often want to judge it.

We want to escape it. I'm the first to do it too. I'm not above the alley keeping for decades. Listen, what is your body saying? When I feel bad, I'm like, what's wrong?

I still have to coach myself to listen, be reactive. It's a lot easier to do it for other people than to do for myself. It's a lot of unspoken stories that the body is holding until someone feels safe enough to just release them.

It shouldn't necessarily require work. It's just not as a safety that's implied. and belts, and then the body just knows how to do it. We're part animal.

Our animal body knows how to do it. But again, operative word safety, we have to create the safety. You're one of the few providers doing the intraoral TMJ release.

And I'm sure that that impacts not just the jaw pain, but the full body tension and alignment. Yeah. Yeah. Yes, 100%. I love that you're bringing this up because as you may or may not know, this is like one of my favorite things to do.

I talk about it a lot. And for all of those listeners who may not know it in oral releases or TFJ, it's basically exactly what it sounds like intra-oral, meaning going inside the oral cavity.

for muscular release. So it's where the practitioner puts on a glove and takes their glove digit and goes inside the oral cavity, kind of like between the cheek and the teeth, backwards, the jaw joint itself, to release the muscular tension of the jaw joint, which we are referring to as the TMJ, which is the temporal mandibular joint.

And it's, you know, sometimes we laugh when people are like, I have TMJ. It's like, We all have a TMJ, but what we're often, you know, commonly referring to is TMJD, right?

TMJ dysfunction. Right. That's where I step in, right? As I treat imbalance, dysfunction, lack of expression of the jaw. And it's that's the it's named after the temporal bone and then the mandibular bone and where they they come together.

So, also, as I'm describing this technique to our listeners, if it just sounds good or relieving or it piques interest, chances are you possibly, probably need the release.

Like even my body, as I'm talking about, is kind of salivating at it because there's so much release that can happen with this, you know, a lot of times when there's clenching or guarding or holding.

We don't even know how much tension and yeah, it shows that in the dentistry world all like all the time Oh, you grind your teeth at night. Well, yeah, but how how should I how can I address that?

You know an anatomical thing with the bite but at the same time the muscles are what moves the the joint so and can send a ripple of tension to the body and the the jaw is one of the most highly electrical joints in the body with brain power.

I didn't realize that until just recently. And just to share a little of my personal story, I grew up chewing gum like an old cow. I'm just constantly chewing gum, and that's how I got some TMJ, and then clenching my jaw at night because of chronic stress.

But the kicker was when I got in a car wreck and broke my jaw on both sides. And so now it's wired shut for six weeks. And so just coming out of that, I didn't realize how much that affected my whole sense of safety was thrown off.

And I didn't identify it as such. It was just amazing. So when you did the TMJ release on me, it just felt so good. And it was amazing how much that brought me relief.

But also, isn't it so fascinating that your body didn't even register fully consciously that lack of safety? Your body's

so good at adapting. I mean, yeah, about having your jaw wired shut for that long, and you were still able to function, still able to work, do what you need to do.

Intraoral TMJ Release Explained

And all the time, your body's just adapt, adapt, adapt. It's incredible. And that being said, when you do get it addressed, even if you don't realize that it's there, it can be life-changing.

You're like, oh, feels free now. I didn't know. I didn't know that was an issue, but now that you've done some release, I've realized how much of an issue that really was.

A hundred percent. It's like a deep, a deep exhale. There's one client that I work with and she's like, it just feels like a shot of tequila. Like, and I'm like, Oh, that's your parasympathetic nervous system kicking off.

Yeah, the fight or flight. She's like, oh my, she's like, whoa, I don't know if I can drive. I was like, take a minute. Just let your body track and clock this because actually this might be more of where you might want to hang out is this relaxed state.

We're not, you know, talking bad about fight or flight, but there's only so much you can do and receive life when you're in a state of protection. Right?

Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. Well, pelvic diaphragm balancing is something that many people haven't heard of. So can you explain why this is so important, especially for women, and what kind of issues can this help resolve?

Yeah, absolutely. So we've gone from here to here down into a different cavity. Yeah, but they're very similar. Actually, they're kind of near images of each other, the jaw and the pelvis, and oftentimes we clench In our jaw, we clench the same muscles of a pelvic diaphragm.

I used to teach more frequently a lot of pelvic diaphragmatic classes, and my friend that I taught with, Erica, she was so wired with her. She could tell, I guess is what I'm trying to say, when she would clench her pelvis, and we talk about pelvic bowl a lot.

She was like, you're never going to believe this. I was in the park and I was watching my kid on the top of the slide and he looked like he was going to fall off and I could feel like my whole pelvic diaphragm clenched.

And I was like, make so, and also like the connection with this is her child came from the womb. Yeah. Then I know, like I started tuning in to the musculature of my own pelvis.

And I was like, wow, during times of stress, I also clench and typically are like type A, like overachiever types, we tend to hold there because we're about getting things done and go, go, go.

And women especially, I think in our culture can be kind of a no-flysant. Like we walk around oftentimes from head up, right? I guess I should speak for myself.

I was taught implicitly to disconnect from my pelvis. It was just safer. It was just better. It'd be better to be in my head. And I think that a lot of the pelvic work is about reclamation, about bringing your consciousness, about meeting the consciousness that lives in your pelvic bowl and having that be more online and expressive and claimed by you or the person that it belongs to.

For me, it was life-changing when I had this work done. I had no idea that there were muscles. I was already in chiropractic school at that point, had been a massage therapist for five years.

We didn't really talk about these muscles even in massage school. And when I had the work done and I received it myself, I actually felt like when I went and got off the table after I had the internal pelvic release, that my uterus, my fallopian tubes, the whole lower part of my colon and my bladder was going to go splat on the floor.

I actually got up and I went to catch it. And then I opened the door, I cracked open the door just to talk to the practitioner. I was like, oh, we're not done yet, right?

It's too loose in there. Everything feels like it's dropped. I don't think we're done with the procedure, right? And I'll never forget the practitioner looked at me and they shook their head and they were like, no, Maria, that's how it's supposed to feel.

It's supposed to feel open. You're supposed to feel space in there. I was like, what? Wow. And what really led me to the pelvic work initially was a mentor of mine and recommended it.

He knew I was suffering for years and years of really bad premenstrual symptoms, terrible gramping. And I was doing everything I could to, I mean, diet, emotional work, structural work, exercise, all the things.

And none of it was touching it. So I was really feeling like I was failing. I was failing my body. I couldn't understand what it was trying to tell me.

It turned out it was a muscular problem where that pelvic diaphragm, the muscular sling, that's what we're talking about, that goes from your pubic bone to your tailbone, like a piece of fabric or like a trampoline, was actually fixed in a holding pattern that it was elevated.

It was stuck. It wasn't buoyant. It wasn't resilient. It wasn't going down. So when the practitioner released the tension, all of a sudden it had more range.

It was able to descend. And we can actually control this with our breath. We control this muscularly when we activate. It's commonly called a kegel. If we contract and we can also extend and like blossom and bloom and push and have the reciprocal of that.

But a lot of times we're taught a kegel, but we're not necessarily taught the reciprocal either. We just walk around contracting, contracting, contracting.

Pelvic Diaphragm Balancing and Women's Health

And that can set up for more deep, deep muscular imbalance. So most body workers are only trained to address the external musculature of the pelvis, right?

The glutes, the hip flexors, the psoas, the gloria psoas, the serratum structures, but that's like trying to clean a window only from the outside when the smudges are on the inside.

And the pelvic diaphragm is the internal foundation. I mean, it holds, it's the foundational support for our reproductive organs, for our lower digestive tract.

it plays in not just physically, but energetically and emotionally. Bulls hold things. You know, that's what they do. And you know, as women, we have our menstrual cycle.

So yes, it could be clean and it can be purged each month. But also, you know, women in general, I'll speak for myself, I can hold on to things. right, just like a bowl, and sometimes being able to release that tension and that by contacting the pelvic diaphragm, it can release trauma, unresolved trauma, conscious and both subconscious, and just release that tension at a very, very deep level.

So chronic low back pain or hip pain begins to resolve, pelvic floor dysfunction improves, like a lot of times incontinence or even pain during intimacy, that gets wiped away clean, like just by bringing the body balance Also, orgasm is a very complex event that happens.

It requires a muscular balance, and a lot of women can have difficulty orgasming because maybe one side is tighter than the other, and it's just not balanced.

There's nothing wrong with them. They've maybe fallen on a tailbone, or they've had injury to the pelvis or a torn adductor or groin muscle, and they don't even know that that's affecting the function of their pelvic diaphragm and ultimately reproductive organs.

And I just feel like after, for me, when I speak to my own experience, an emotional weight just began to lift once that energy was cleared. And often, it can happen without even needing to talk it out.

With talk therapy, sometimes you could kind of get caught in the story. Yes. And then the inner create comes on line. But if you just go to the tissues in the body and you help facilitate safety and release, so much can be so much hair.

And it's like a good reclamation, you know, a way to restore relationship, a loving relationship with the very base of your being and to create a safe integrated container for vitality, again, to move in and through your body.

Yeah, absolutely. Well, that perfectly aligns us with the next question, which is, what kinds of movement or self-awareness practices do you recommend for patients to carry the benefits of your sessions into daily life?

Okay, I love it. Well, motion movement is one of my favorite things. I'm a total lover of movement, and I tell my patients that the real transformation obviously doesn't just happen on the table.

It happens in the days and the moments between the sessions and the little moments when we remember to move and shift our posture, unclench, breathe, and reconnect.

I often recommend play as medicine. You're really going to have your body's attention when you are in a state of play. It will be receptive to you. When we are in a state of play and ease, there's that signal of safety that is sent through the whole system.

And this creates better organization, you know, receptivity and productivity in our movements. So it's my personal belief that people who hate every minute of their workout and they have a story as they're driving to the gym of like, I've been bad.

I need to go work out. You know, I don't, I should be working out more. And then they just like, like grid and bear it. It's not going to be as productive or as efficient for the people who are in enjoyment, right?

And are like really having fun and play maybe are even laughing or listening to their favorite music. They're going to have better results as the body scoot, you know, as compared to the resistant bodies are begrudgingly going to the gym.

So again, my biggest thing is to have people be mindful of what you're telling yourself about your workouts while you're working out, how your body is looking, you know?

Instead of, oh, I'm so this or that. Be like, well, actually, I can really start to see tone in my shoulders. Wow, my body's come a long way. It's like how you talk to your animal.

It's like when you talk to your dog in a kind voice, its ears perk up, its tail starts to wag. Stupid dog, why'd you do that? It's gonna cower. It's not gonna do what you say.

I mean, it might, but it'll do it disjointedly and then slowly slink out. The body is, in my humble opinion, is no different. So practices that invite you into your body, not just through effort, I don't think effort, I mean, effort is important, but awareness.

I think can be the most fun. And so brisk or even gentle walks, dancing, swimming, a martial art, hide and seek. Like anything that just gets somebody moving, our bodies are like really designed to move, right?

And motion is the lotion. That's what my, that's like, yes, mom, that's so spot on. So. Also, self-awareness of how

we move on a day-to-day. I mean, I used to do CrossFit and, you know, I've watched the body mechanics of people.

I can't turn it off. You know, I watched somebody do, say, a 450-pound squat. Textbook, gorgeous. Love to watch those biomechanics. And then I watch how they sit on the couch and the waiting room or, like, in the lobby.

Bro, where are your glutes now? Like you just like squatted this and so how am I going from seated to standing? Am I using my hips? Am I walking from my hips?

Because a lot of times people are moving from what I call a naked spine. They're just like moving their ligaments but no muscles are engaged. So, you know, how we bend and how we walk, how we move are imperative to our overall health and pain-free body.

Someone who sits with intention and stands up with their glutes is way less likely to throw their back out randomly than somebody who's pushing off with their quads, even using their neck to propel themselves up for you.

Why are you doing that? I did it too. You don't know what you don't know. I'm in the business of bringing your consciousness back into your hips.

Movement, Self-Awareness, and Reconnection

That's the difference oftentimes between civilians and My athletes, like athletes know how to move or they've been trained so well that then that's just, you know, you watch an athlete walk through the airport versus somebody who may not move for a living.

It's just the same thing with kids. Kids have got it right. You know, before the age of five, it seems like like really good, beautiful squats. They know how to run.

They haven't been deconditioned out of it. So we have it programmed in our DNA to move, but it gets stuck. Are there some simple ways people can begin to reconnect with their bodies cues, even if they feel disconnected?

Yes, absolutely. When somebody feels disconnected or dysregulated, I feel like the key is to start small and stay kind. Instead of triggers, which typically a trigger will bring us into disconnection or dysregulation, I recommend somebody exploring and knowing their glimmers are things that make us feel more at ease.

Could be sharing a joke with a friend or, you know, taking deep breaths, listening to your song, spending time with animals. I love lately, I just love to lie prone on the earth, like belly to belly on Mama Earth and just like feel the grounding force of that.

She's alive, so get some sun. Just even like a couple sips of water can shift you into greater regulation. And then also an extra credit with that, with dysregulation is maybe trying to ask yourself, what have I been telling myself that might have shifted me into this disconnected?

Like, can I find the thoughts that created these feelings? Because the thought oftentimes is what, you know, can propel us into dysregulation or feeling offline.

Yeah, I guess also I will say this is a shameless plug, but you can find your local favorite chiropractor too. I mean, healing is not meant to necessarily do alone.

I feel 100% shifted when I receive good body work or I feel that touch or somebody brings me back into my body by just hugging me or giving me a pat on the back.

We're not meant to do it alone and just because we can. That doesn't mean we can't, we can, but that doesn't mean it's best for our nervous systems. We're wired as a pack.

It takes two people to complete one nervous system because of the mirror neurons and how we can mirror each other. Like I said earlier in the podcast, we can't really feel our feelings to depth without another.

We rupture in relationship. It's a fan relationship, but we also repair in relationship. We need relationship to repair. You know, if you feel disconnected, you feel dysregulated, like just know, you know, there's one, there's most likely billions of people, millions of people, at least out there that are probably feeling the same way.

Yeah. You're not alone. And if you guys are somebody next to you might feel the same way. So just offer a smile or a smile to yourself that, Hey, you're doing the best you can.

And it's not going to last forever. Yeah, that's wonderful. So you offer virtual care in addition to in-person sessions. How do those experiences differ for you and your clients?

And are there certain conditions or goals where virtual sessions can be just as effective? It's a good question as well, thank you. Again, I'm going back to our, in the beginning of this, I felt a tangible shift in my body.

I know we're not in contact, we're, yeah, for your land, I'm in full share. But it's amazing to me how a lot can be done virtually. Right? Like still in a tangible way.

And so yes, I do offer virtual care. And it is surprisingly how powerful it can be and a big part of my practice. So of course, like in-person sessions allow for hands-on techniques.

You get like adjustments, facial release, and of course the intraoral work. But virtual sessions invite like a different kind of intimacy and healing.

You're in the comfort of your own home, typically. You can have your pet by your feet. You can have your blanket on you. You can take notes. You can record the session.

But also in a virtual session, we slowed. We focused on the breath, the body, nervous system regulation, posture awareness, energetic coherence. And so I am able to guide clients through more grounded practices or practices that make them feel more grounded and more connected to their inner landscape.

and more aware of their body's subtle cues. And for many, this is where the deepest shifts begin. It's not from being worked on, but from learning to listen to themselves again.

And yeah, virtual care can be really effective for even chronic tension patterns like embodiment coaching, getting curious about their pain instead of judging it.

You know, sitting with your being by yourself is grueling. But sitting with it along somebody who's just there to hold it with you, that can be alleviating in itself.

Also, it can do integration work after a trauma or after psychedelic journeys. Sometimes people seek me out for that to kind of unpack these experiences.

You know, again, what surprises me is that most people do feel the feel between us. It is very much still alive, whether we're across the table or across the screen.

And with attuned presence, intention and practice, clients often just feel a seen and felt and supported virtual inward. Yeah, ultimately, I would say both in-person and virtual care about deep, I always go back to that, to the body, to what's ready to shift and to the person that you're becoming.

Each format, I guess, offers its own gifts. And I'm just honored to meet people wherever they are. That's also like, that's life, right? Wherever it is, try not to be too inconvenienced by life because life is just there to be experienced.

Yeah, wow, that's wonderful. Well, looking ahead, what's currently inspiring you in your work? Are there new

modalities or ideas that you're exploring?

Virtual Care, Fascia, and New Healing Modalities

Yeah, I mean, I would say the most interesting thing for me right now is the intersection between like the fascia consciousness and space-time, and how the body is not just a physical structure, but almost like a living, responsive field.

You know, I've been exploring how fascia, to me, mirrors the dynamics of space-time. It's fluid fascia, basically the spider web of everything in our body, I believe, is touched by fascia, that connective tissue, right?

What really gives us structure, and it's shaped by fascia is shaped by tension. It's shaped by memory. So this perspective is just helping me refine the way I listen to the body even more.

Instead of, again, just following the structural patterns and listening for resonance and for where that coherence wants to emerge. Like I said, it's like a big stretchy spiderweb inside the fascia.

And it's kind of like that soft soup that holds everything together. And when one part feels it's holding, it's tight, it will command the attention of the whole system.

They're discovering now it's actually an organ. The fascilis is its own organ. So again, I feel like the Spiderweb is kind of like space-time in the universe and space-time in a way I understand it at least is the invisible stuff that holds the planets and the stars and like even us here in place.

So space time holds the whole universe together and our fascia holds the whole universe of us together. So like even time can affect our body. When something overwhelming or stressful happens, our body can hold onto it, like almost like a wrinkle in a blanket.

And just like space time can bend and shift, our body can change and smooth out again, especially when we breathe and stretch or get good body work. So yeah, when we take care of our body, when we move and rest and listen, we're kind of taking care of our own little endings.

Like our body isn't separate from the stars. It's like made of them. So I guess I'm just going deeper inside the body, meeting those places. And my go-to technique is using my hands.

My hands are receptors. I'm constantly like listening with my hands and refining that. But my perspective, and the more I learn about the universe and I learn about nature itself, it really informs my practice on how I talk to the body and how I listen to it, how it talks to me.

Yeah, that's great. And then also, I guess, I will say I have been doing some ceremonial work and working with elements, ritual-based healing. Like, you know, I do something called Vitality Day here at my ranch, and that's been kind of in the last year and a half or so we've been really calling the elements in.

So we work with the breath. We were ire, which is like the wood-burning sauna, the water, which is cold plunge, and movement, the secret movement practices like yin style yoga where, you know, it's, I used to think like I had to hold like the client and it was like, okay, it's up to me, you know, to hold this thing up.

Like the elements are so good at doing that too. Like, you know, and ultimately it's the person holding themselves through the experience while they're externally held by the safety of the container that I create.

But we're creating that at a larger scale here in Kamirohi. And there's one thing to be one-on-one while you're healing, but also being seen in a community where you really feel belonging and you feel like you don't have to be a certain way.

Yeah, it's just so profound. So it's a big shift for me because I'm used to just working one on one and you and

Yvette, we're outside, we're in the elements like it's raining while the sun is shining, you know, and it's just a really it's delight to foster those experiences for people.

So I guess that's that's great. And we are going to put all your information in the show notes so people can access your website and see your Vitality Day, which I believe is the beginning of August.

Yes, our next one is August 2nd. It's a Saturday. I don't know if the podcast will be out before that, but if any of it sounds delightful to anybody, I would love to.

Absolutely. For sure. Well, if you could change one thing about how our conventional medical system views the body, what would that Under a conventional medical system, I would reimagine hospitals completely.

I would transform them from places where people go to be treated for illness into true environments. Space is designed to support restoration, nourishment, and wholeness, ultimately.

Don't get me wrong, I think we are exquisite in this country at crisis intervention and triage. I mean, thank God for that. Thank God. And that being said, I think there could be a shift of the culture of care in that maybe instead of just like solely sterile harsh lighting and cold clinical environments, like what I envision what I would change is like hospitals that also feel soothing, beautiful, alive.

you know if you paint the walls a certain color it's not going to change the sterile invite like the the degree the sterility i mean i know we need that in spaces obviously but why not maybe use a little bit more natural light or warm textures intentional design i mean that's when people are out there most vulnerable and families do maybe even access to nature maybe there's just more plants and environments that can calm the nervous system, not add to the overwhelm of it.

I go in almost, my whole senses feel like I'm just being assaulted. And I mean, I'm hypersensitive, but I just, yeah, and then the food is served, and I'm just like, this is not edible.

I mean, maybe, to change my mind, maybe there's some hospitals out there that are changing this, and I'm just, I'm not privy to them yet, but you know, for me, the food would be real food, like nutrients, maybe locally sourced, anti-inflammatory, lovingly prepared.

His food is medicine. What are the ultimate medicines?

Reimagining Medicine and Personal Self-Care

And yeah, it would like meals would just like support that cellular repair, not fill a tray. And again, just maybe bringing more of the psychology and the philosophy that, you know, patients aren't problems to fix.

or people with problems to fix their their whole being's navigating a deep and often oftentimes extremely nuanced healing process you know physically emotionally spiritually like really seeing them as well there'd be touch i would encourage breath work body movement And just like maybe a slowing of time and that healing wouldn't be so rushed.

You know, a lot of times in mainstream you have five minutes at best with the author that is prescribing life changing for scripture. You know, connection and dignity would be would be central and I think we just need to remember how we care for people is just as important as what we care or what care we give, I guess I should say.

That healing isn't just about the procedure, it's about the presence and environment and restoring someone's sense of safety and their own possibility in their own being.

A lot of times we're given the opposite of that. Yeah, I would go large. I would go, just a medical system, that's all. Yeah. Well, what are a few of your own go-to self-care practices or grounding rituals that help you stay connected and resilient?

Yeah, thank you for asking. I think my go-to practices are pretty simple, but they're deeply felt by me. You know, the more I work with others and I'm in relationship with others, like the more I realize I need to stay in my own body to offer that real presence.

So it's got to be something that I can do. expressively. And grounding, if you want to call them rituals or practices, are essential. Even just going outside, even if it's on the cement, the sidewalk, barefoot.

I can feel that, again, I talked about laying on the floor, laying on the ground prone on the earth. Sometimes even like in that kind of the child's pose.

You know, it sounds so basic, but I find for me it really gives my nervous system a chance to recalibrate and helps me feel held by the earth. and then pairing that with like soft intentional breath where maybe it's just a moment.

Like I'm feeling my breath just for like a minute. It doesn't have to be much. Those moments I think your body really clocks and can be really profound.

It can shift your whole day. One breath, one conscious breath can shift the whole cadence of your day. One om can shift our conversation. So I also love getting into the water, whether that's a cold plunge, a hot bath with like epsom salts, or even standing outside in the rain.

Water helps me like discharge energy and remember to flow and to be more like water, less resistant, more fluid. We're like 80 to 90% water molecular by volume.

Water is basically like it's our friend. It's us. It's like it helps us remember and Water holds memory. So it just it yeah, it feels like an intentional practice, especially just yeah being in a body of water and just being completely immersed I feel very held in that and then if it isn't evident already movement is totally medicine for me and It oftentimes has to be intuitive Like some days it's dancing and most days lately it's jujitsu.

It's, jujitsu is highly technical, but it's also extremely intuitive. There's an element of self and expression involved. And that's what I encourage with people like, yeah, do something technical, but make sure you're, you're experiencing yourself through it.

Like how, how do you get to experience yourself? You know, walk while taking in your favorite things in nature, whether you love looking at the trees or you love looking at the flowers, you love pointing out all the animals you see, like have your own.

stay connected to beauty. You know, for me, it's lighting candles. I love creating like little altars, like little places, pockets of beauty and intention around my house.

I think of like 10 of them, just like even like one in the bathroom. It's like got a little bouquet of flowers and a beautiful crystal or something just to anchor the energy and surrounding myself with like, yeah, beauty, beautiful things, diffused essential oils.

We were talking about that the other day. It's just like delicious. Yeah, and just being in spaces that make me feel alive or remind me of that aliveness, you know Yeah, yeah, awesome.

Well, okay, final question. Is there a book teacher philosophy that's been especially influential in shaping your work? Yeah, I mean, I would have to say, second to my mom, my own mother, my mom was very instrumental in my path to massage school.

She even found the massage school, but she was the one who gifted me the book at, I think I was 17 at the time, by Louise. And the title of the book is You Can Heal Your Life.

Influences and Closing Remarks

And Louise Hay, she has a map in the book of symptoms and basically what your body is saying based on those symptoms. And really, I feel like she was a pioneer in listening to the body first instead of just diagnosing it and shutting it down.

And so I followed her work. I've read a lot of her books. And ultimately, I have my mom to thank. But if anybody is interested in following Louise Hay and her work, I really, really highly recommend that.

Awesome. Well, thank you very much for joining me on the Functional Edge. I hope today's episode gave you fresh insights and practical tools to level up your life.

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