Introduction and Guest Background

I was in Trader Joe's and I just passed out. Bam. My atria beating at 288 and my ventricles at 72. You've got pneumonia, you've gotten congestive heart failure.

They saved my life. Absolutely saved. And then I realized quite clearly that my purpose was not done. I I said, we're going to reverse this in 120 days.

14 out of the 15, I doubled my strength in four months. I'm no longer diabetic and my prostate is perfect. 10 years ago, you probably got in a car wreck, but you broke several ribs and bruised your heart.

Welcome to the TBD Fit Podcast on Dr. Talks. I'm your host, Daniel Keeley, and I will be guiding you through this wellness journey in terms of optimizing health and longevity, where we unpack the science, the dos, dos and everything in between.

Come join us. Look forward to seeing you inside. Welcome back to another episode of the TV Fit podcast. where it is my goal to dissect all things health, wellness, and longevity and have a very interesting conversation with whom I consider to be best in their category.

So my name is Daniel Keeley. I'm a functional medicine practitioner practicing for nearly a decade now. And today's conversation is going to fun. We have John Needers here, who is a master of traditional Chinese medicine.

functional medicine practitioner and the host of his own podcast. He brings decades of clinical expertise and a powerful personal story of transforming his health at 72, which we'll get into.

Stay tuned here. This is going to be super fun. I want to really immerse myself in all things traditional Chinese medicine because I think that's probably one of the most forms of medicine that's often now overlooked, especially in our Western care model.

So I was very much looking to have this conversation and welcome to the show, John. Hey, thank you. I'm happy to be here. This is the first time I've seen your show actually, and I caught a few minutes of you talking with Dr.

Bobby and just that few moments I found to awesome. so I am going to start tuning into both of. So we love opening every episode, allowing the guests to provide their personal story, often pain drives purpose.

So kind of who are you and what, what shaped you into doing what you are doing now? Well, I'm right there with your pain, drives, purpose I'll go back to kind my introduction to Chinese medicine a little bit.

And this was in the early seventies and that was before acupuncture was even legal in U S I didn't know that. Right. and so I'd been a, uh, An athlete in high school, I played four sports, two of them really badly and two with them pretty well.

But anyway, it was a jock. I was an athlete. So I went down to UC Santa Barbara, became a couch potato, gained 40 pounds, just hanging out, having too good a time.

And I don't know how anybody can get through UCSB. It's right on the beach, right? You have to walk by the Beach to get to school. Anyway. Not great for me.

So I got up after those four months, went out with some of my friends and we played a rousing game of ping pong. I blew two discs in my back. I didn't know that at the time, I sat down in the chair, a soft chair.

They literally had to carry me to get me in a car with a lot of pain, took me, to student health. And they said, oh yeah, it looks like you probably did blow a disc.

We don't. You know what, we'll have to do some x-rays. So I did those and then I got a second opinion. Of course they say, hey, you've got to have surgery.

If you don' have a surgery, then you won't be able to walk in few years. And I said, okay, I guess I'll have surgery. So I came home and like I was more of a jock at that time, you know, play.

I wasn't bright kid, but I really loved playing sports. But I had one friend, this guy named Stuart McClay, who was incredibly eclectic. He was like president of the chess club and president or the physics clubs, all the things that I would never be involved in.

And we're sitting there talking and I told him what was going on. And I said, you know, so I'm gonna have to have surgery. And he goes, really? Why don't you try acupuncture?

And, I say, what the heck is acupuncture. He said remember in the old Kung Fu TV show where they stick needles in people. I says, are you nuts? I am not gonna let someone stick needle in me.

and he said oh I see. So you can let a surgeon take a scalpel and carve up your spine. You know? Maybe I'll try that acu-puncture. fellow in Berkeley, a master, master martial artist.

And he talked to me for a while and he says, you'll be fine. You just come do my Tai Chi class, my Qigong class. He said, and you need to change your diet.

So he told me all these things and I was eating horribly obviously in Santa Barbara. I said okay, all right, I can do that. The last thing he said was, he got up with this finger in my face and one more thing.

No sex, six months, even with yourself. And I went, Whoa, okay. Now I'm, you know, I am like 21, 22 years old. I said, Okay. But I was good. and at the end of the six, months I, was quite functional.

Uh, but it was actually kind of fast forward a little bit for years. Every time I'd have back pain and I go into an MD, it, look at my records. He goes, well, he got blown discs.

Unless you get those fixed, there's nothing we can do. It wasn't until I did my orthopedic training in the 1990s, I do a very intense orthopaedic and I found out it wasn' my disc at all.

It was my sacroiliac joint. And then I remembered when it had happened. I'd gone up for a layup, someone undercut me, and came down right on my Sacroliac.

And I've had, I had pain ever since then. So this Chinese guy, delightful man, gave me some simple, simple exercises. And as long as I do those, that's like five minutes worth, to this I'm 74 years old.

I have zero back pain. My only patient I know in their seventies with no backpain and I never had the surgery. That got me interested. And so his name was YC Chong and just an amazing martial artist.

Now he was a really great teacher, but very Chinese in the approach, very intense. You had to do it, you know, practice like crazy. I wasn't really into that at the time.

So he such a good teacher. But I kept doing the Tai Chi and the Qigong, changed my diet. started studying herbs with him and that's what really got me interested.

Now I had then started a real estate company and had a wife and kids and I couldn't really easily transition into going to school at that point. So I would study, I did martial arts six days a week every evening, four to five hours on the mat kind of stuff.

Mostly that was my introduction to the energetics of Tai Chi and Chinese medicine.

Discovering Chinese Medicine Through Injury

So that's kind of how I got into it. And, you know, I find that most people my age got in to it because of personal pain. Now I've been the president of an acupuncture school a few years ago, and a lot of students are coming in because they want to do it, it's a thing now.

It wasn't really a think when I was younger, so I feel very blessed to have had that path. What were the exercises you were doing when you had mentioned?

They're too ridiculous to even talk about much. One is putting your hand on your sacroiliac joints with your feet together and doing like a hula hoop kind of thing, right?

Cause that's going to stretch everything exactly evenly. And then you go back the other way. And then you put your hands at the base of your buttocks right where the tendon comes up and spread your feet a little wider and do the same thing.

And I've got so many patients with sacroiliac problems. It's not going to help with a blown disc, but a lot of people make that mistake where they've Got SI problems and glute problems And that's all they need is to keep that, you know, in shape.

So what I do being wanting to save as much time as possible, I probably shouldn't tell you this, so I, when I'm taking a shower, brush my teeth in the shower.

I shave in shower and I'd do my two exercises in. And then I am ready to roll. Right. So that to me is the epitome of being efficient, right? Changing out your teeth now and again.

I want to actually mirror that and see if I can tell me if i'm doing it right. Cause obviously people are going to want see it. So it's kind of just hands on your hips, on you SI joint.

Turn the hands the other way so that they're reaching. Yes. And now a little farther toward your spine, right in there. Yeah. Feet together. Exactly. Now hold your head as still as you can, almost like there's a belt around your waist that's pulling you.

The more still you keep the parts, the more you're going to stretch them symmetrically. That's it. Then you go back the the way. So slowly, slowly. Yeah.

And eventually you want to start reaching so that that arc becomes larger and larger. To enhance the stretch if you will. Now, if someone has sacroiliac pain at the time, I tell them just to go to the edge of the pain.

Don't, you know, not into it, just at edge and keep your hands over the area that's painful. I often, so many, because we have a sports press forum inside just in general health and fitness training.

The high here all the time, biggest or worst miss nowhere. No pain, no gain. And I go, absolutely not. That is such a fallacy. Pain is, is indicative that you're pushing something.

There's dysfunction. You need to stop the body's yelling at you. Yeah. there's a feedback there, right? It's like the red light doesn't mean go faster.

So, and then the other one is at the, your buttocks. Now you're going to put it right at base of the sits bone. It's a point in the acupuncture called UB 36. And so your finger is going go right where the tendon joins with the sit bone and feet spread about eight inches.

Exactly the same thing. That's perfect. Perfect location. Okay. You just do circles. Yeah. Yeah, that's it. And it's

almost embarrassing. It's so simple, but we have a little video that we give our patients and it really makes a difference.

Cause it also, you know, it kind of stretch the glutes symmetrically also. So it is really working a lot of stuff in there. I like it. I liked it that was a good way to start.

You know, I haven't, that's the first time John I've ever done that kind of live demo in person in terms of. Well, you're the. First podcaster that I have been on their show.

Who's ever. Done anything like that. So I'm totally impressed. That to me is the epitome of natural medicine. Movement is key. If you don't move it, you lose it.

It's foundational to our existence. When they evaluated the Hadza, some of these indigenous tribes, they found they were more sedentary than us, but yet no prevalence of cardiac disease, diabetes, Alzheimer's, any sort of metabolic issues.

Why is that so? yet they're more sedentary because they constantly have these micro movements. They're not doing strength training for an hour and then seated for the next 16 hours.

It's constantly foraging, kneeling, squatting, crouching. If you look at children, but when we were babies and such, that's constant what we're doing.

We're constantly always moving around, playing around. As adults, now that we become hyper-focused in terms of our careers and hyper focused in one position, The body goes tight and tightness creates eventually pain.

Yeah, all sorts of problems. You watch babies, you know, once they learn to walk and how they'll just drop into a squat. Just drop in to it and grab a toy, right?

And we end up seeing a lot of women. I do a lots of gynecology. My doctorate's in gynaecological endocrinology and we see a LOT of woman with incontinence.

And part of that problem is we don't squat, you know, indigenous cultures, they're up and down up to 300 times a day. In Japan, They still squat. They don' sit in high chairs.

And here we're not getting that pelvic floor activity. So a lot more incontinence here. How are you blending TCM and functional medicine? Because that's quite, quite unique in many respects, right?

You usually hear one or the other, someone goes kind of all in one regime, if you will. What was the, well, you spoke a little bit to the impetus about that, but how did you kind lend that together.

Well, the impetus for the functional medicine was a complete accident, which a lot of things in my life kind of seem, you know, direction, it's fascinating to see, You know the paths, but I had one friend very pushy and she was an acupuncturist.

And wanted me to do this weekend workshop with her. And I said, you know, functional medicine, and leaky gut, I'm not really that interested. So this is like 25, leakey gut.

If you said that to a doctor, they would just laugh you out of the room, right? It's like. and they tell their patients, don't ever see this lunatic, your gut can't leak, right?

And so anyway, I did this workshop with a guy named Jake Fratkin, and Jake was acupuncturist of the year, many years ago, but he started doing functional medicine along with traditional Chinese medicine.

And within an hour of sitting in on his class, my brain just started to expand and practically explode. It's like, oh my God. No kidding, because this was a world I had no idea.

I mean, I obviously knew about Western medical testing, but then the labs that he was using were things that I, obviously, did not know existed at that time.

And what really struck me is, although there's certainly a difference in directionality, functional medicine and traditional Chinese medicine, though, are really directed at keeping people healthy.

You know, and there are dozens of sayings in Chinese Medicine You know, the good doctor treats disease. The great doctor, treats, disease at the first sign of it.

the fabulous doctor and the amazing doctor. His patients never get sick. And I see that with functional medicine, looking at functional, medicine labs and my.

accomplice here, I'm gonna call her, Catherine Black, and I have a couple books on functional medicine lab reading. And when my patients look at them, they're really kind of blown away.

When they look the actual graphs, the mortality graphs for a lot of, you know, anything from sodium, potassium, just simple, simple things, then you start looking at the graphs and you see that the standard, so-called, ranges are not about keeping you healthy.

Right, do you need a pharmaceutical? Do you to be hospitalized, et cetera? But they're certainly not aimed at keeping you healthy. Well, that just hit, you know, seeing that functional medicine and Chinese medicine, really looking at people the same way, and also the philosophy of first do no harm, right?

Which is, of course, in the Hippocratic oath, but often isn't followed. And so in functional medicines, it's followed, And in Chinese medicines it is followed But when I saw the beauty, now 25 years ago, There were only a couple labs that I used for stool testing and a few labs I use for adrenal hormone testing, et cetera.

And now, you know, there's a new lab every week. You probably see that. I've got, so when we're going to do some kind of gut, microbiome testing inflammation testing.

We'll put up like five different labs side by side on my TV screen and go through and figure out which one we want to order. Right. Cause there are so many possibilities.

the, it's like a hand in a glove, really, doctor. It's, just beautiful the way they work together. I mean, traditional Chinese medicine as an herbalist, we have 10,000, 10 thousand basic formulations of Chinese herbal formulas.

And they've been using them for a couple thousand years. So there's a fit for everybody. With functional medicine, I got training in how to use supplements, which in some cases are much faster than the herbal remedies.

You get a quick thing or there is an underlying problem. To me, they fit so well, it was amazing. I definitely want to jump into the Chinese medicine part because Again, east and east, west, I think that's just the best blend when you can integrate both worlds.

And you said it so well, the component of do no harm. When you look at modern medicine and use of pharmaceuticals, it's crazy. I'm so far kind of removed from that world.

Our patients find us because they're looking for natural medicine. Now we give them options. Do you want to go the prescription or do you wanna go with the natural route?

There's pros and cons to both. Even herbs don't always come without consequence. So it can be very therapeutic, but also very, very powerful. When I see these, these commercials on the television that says, you know, side effects may include and maybe fatal.

Are we not scratching our heads sometimes thinking like what's happening here? Well, when I, my son was younger, he's 23 now, but when he was 12 or so.

And we'd usually mute commercials if we were going to watch TV, but occasionally one would slip in and he would start laughing. He goes, daddy, people don't really take this stuff, do they?

And I said, oh yeah, that one's a multimillion dollar seller. And he was just get this look like, Oh my God, may cause death. Okay. Yeah. So no, yeah.

It's first do no harm. You know, you asked a question. I didn't, I took a different direction.

Movement, Squatting, and Pelvic Health

But one of the things about traditional Chinese medicine with functional medicine is certainly with Functional Medicine you've got hands-on tests and things that you do and stethoscope, et cetera, which I do those things.

We have the advantage also of doing tongue and pulse analysis that's incredibly, incredibly accurate. My teacher, my pulse teacher I was That was a turning point for me.

I'd gone to a seminar, I didn't know anybody in the seminar. Nobody at all. And, you know, he was very curmudgeonly old Chinese doctor and so he taught in a morning about pulses and he said, ah, your not listening to me, ill come feel some pulses, and show you what I'm talking about.

So again, this is like over 20 years ago. So he comes, I'm in the front row. There's a woman who sits down for me and he feels her pulses and said, oh, you started hormone therapy probably about six months ago, it's really bad for you.

It could cause cancer. He said I would recommend this formula instead. Now I am skeptical. I look and I go, she's right at the age that doctors are all prescribing HRT to, right?

This is before the big scare. So he comes up to the guy next to me and he's a little overweight. You know, he was a bit older. And so he feels his pulse.

He goes, Oh, you've got a tremendously enlarged prostate, but it's not cancerous. So you don't have to worry, But you should, shrink it. Here's the formula.

The guy goes. Yeah. I was just at my doctor last month. Then he said, I had a very enlarge prostate. But it wasn't cancer. And I'm going, you know, he's about the right age.

So doc, He came up to me and I am. He put his fingers on my pulse. You better fix that." And I said, excuse me? And he said 10 years ago, you probably got in a car wreck, but you broke several ribs and bruised your heart.

And i said yeah, I did break several, ribs, and brews my heart and that was my last ever full contact martial arts tournament. Right. But he missed, he thought it was an auto accident, which makes sense and he was wrong, But, He got it, was 10, years, ago and then my, heart was bruise.

and so that I became a believer and started studying with him. Unfortunately, I've never become as good as he is, but the things that you can tell, for example, there's a condition in Chinese medicine called blood deficiency.

Well, everybody in school kind of associates that with anemia. It isn't anemia. What it is, is it's usually a low aldosterone causing low sodium levels, which is causing lower blood volume.

And you can feel the lack of blood volumes in the vessels. So when I find that, we'll do a raglan's test, everybody fails. Everybody fails and they have either POTS or some other form of dysautonomia.

You can that in pulses, Daniel. phenomenal. And then you can look at the tongue. You can see the various inflammatory states in kids. For example, you could tell if they've recently had vaccines because the time will get prickles on it and it'll get very red.

So when you put that hands-on visualization or visual experience along with the labs, toolbox to work from. Yeah. That's my goal with this podcast, but also it was myself.

I mean, I'm Uber driven to expand my toolbox, right? Because often with someone you go to a surgeon, what do you think they're going to prescribe? Right.

They have one tool in their toolkit. Like what else did you think was going to happen there? Right, right. And now some of these are understanding the impact that rehab can play into it.

It doesn't have to be the automatic kind of surgery. Well, it's the same thing with medication, Right? We're chasing a symptom. I'm curious. So one is who is the individual that you learned from?

Is he still around? Yeah, he's in Southern California and he is still teaching. He doesn't teach as much as he used to. His name is Jimmy Chong. Used to spell it Z-H-A-N-G.

Now he spells it C- H- A- N- G. I think it's easier for people. And he does take on a few students. So he will do kind of in-house. You go hang out with him for a view days.

He'll have you feel pulses and then you communicate about them. And honestly, that's the way you have to learn pulses. The rule of thumb is 10,000 pulses, well, in my opinion, it's 10 thousand pulses with someone else who knows what the heck they're feeling and what he did that was different.

So in school. We just learned these pulse categories. There are like 28 pulse category, 27 essentially, because the other one you're dead. And you are feeling at different locations on the radial artery, which is kind of a trip.

So that's how we learned. Then we go out and we try to apply that to our patients. Okay, this feels like a wiry liver pulse. What he did was completely the opposite.

In China, mostly they have hospitals per region for particular conditions. Like they a liver hospital. They have a neurological and stroke hospital. They had a cardiac hospital, and so like the person I studied with for stroke care, this number's impossible to believe.

It took me several times. His hospital saw 10,000 patients a day, 10 thousand a Day. they had the highest stroke rate clearance in the standard universal stroke And so they were saying 10,000 a day with a 98% cure rate.

It seems impossible, but I've worked with that guy. I worked his other students. They created a whole new train station at his hospital to take people out there.

So anyway, they're very specialized. What this guy did, what Jimmy did is he went to a liver hospital and he felt 100, 200, whatever, liver patients. Ah, this person has cirrhosis and this is what a cirrotic pulse feels like.

This person had this hepatitis. Then he went to a cardiology hospital. Okay, so this an AFib pulse, an atrial flutter pulse and so he approached it the opposite way and it was a much more effective way of learning it because he felt so many pulses where he knew the condition And then could feel the pulses where we feel that pulses and try to figure out the condition.

Very valuable, obviously in practice, but not the best way to learn. Yeah. You reverse engineered. Yes. Yep. For success, they'd identify specific origin.

Can you demonstrate on camera what that looked like? How you do it? So the pulses, so originally over many centuries, pulses were taken at kind of the same places we would take them now.

You know, carotid pulses. Radial pulses petal pulses et cetera. But then some enterprising doctor developed a system where you just check these three locations on the radial artery.

And he said they correspond to particular organs. Now. I've got to tell you, everything else in Chinese medicine is completely validated by science. If you want to look at the herbal studies, there are 10,000 a year coming out of China.

They are so complex and so coordinated looking at. The minutia of interleukins, cytokines, et cetera, neurotransmitters. So there's tons of science, the pulse diagnosis I can find zero science for.

I just, it works, you know, what can I say? Or, maybe it's my imagination, but I've had other people do it on me and tell me what was wrong. So that guy, Jimmy Chung.

On our intro, on our history, It says, have you had acupuncture? Have you heard herbal medicine?

Blending Traditional Chinese and Functional Medicine

And I had a couple come in and they'd put no to acupunture and yes to herbal medicines. And they were from Los Angeles. Jimmy doesn't do acu-puncture, he just does herbs.

And so I said, oh, did you see Jimmy Chong? And they said. Oh yeah, we did. And I. Said, Oh, yeah. They said do you know him? I, said yeah he was my teacher.

and they, God we're so lucky. I say, not really. they say why? Because he's better than I am. You know, I feel pretty good. Um, happy with my skill levels, but I've never seen anybody as good as Jimmy, But I'll tell you what I do, what.

I will work like Jimmy does. I won't ask you any questions, I wont look at your history, i'll just take your pulse, look in your tongue and tell you what I feel is wrong with you." And I said, okay.

So I did and I told him. And he said yeah, that's exactly what Jimmy said and i said no it isn't. He said well how do you know? I say because I know Jimmy.

Jimmy didn't just tell what's wrong, he told you how you got there. And the guy goes, oh my God, that's true. He told me when I was probably seven or eight, I fell out of a tree or out a balcony, fractured my skull, broke my arm.

But he said, and what you didn't report to anybody is you damaged your testicle. And he was all true, And I said see, That's the difference between Jimmy and I.

I just gave you a complete analysis and diagnosis and how I treat you, but I don't know how you got there, right? And that is the different between Jim and me.

And so it's pretty, pretty fascinating. Occasionally, we haven't done it in years. We just don't have the time, but years ago we used to do some street fairs.

There's a big one in Alameda and we'd have a couple of massage therapists set up with, you know, massage chairs and they would talk to people and then they go, well, maybe you should go check out John and he'll do a quick pulse and tongue analysis on you.

I have to tell you, At least 50% of those people started crying because they would sit down, I'd feel their pulse, look at their tongue and tell them what I saw and they'd start crying.

Because you know how it is when people haven't been heard by their doctors. I'm sure they do that with you too. And they're just so moved that someone, someone paid attention, heard their story or analyzed them a little differently.

So those are really fun to do because it looks like magic, right? It's its own science I'll say. You have Jimmy's contacts? Yeah, I can send them to you.

Yeah. Where are you located? Chicago. Okay. There's a woman in the Midwest that I studied other stuff with, but she's also a famous pulse taker. I'll send you her information also.

This is exactly what we want to highlight. So this is brilliant. Am curious to underscore when you said, you know, the tongue. What are some common things you're seeing and what does it equate to?

Well, for example, a red tongue is going to be more inflammatory or if it's really scarlet, more of a scarlett tongue, it could be a vitamin deficiency.

The thing I'm most concerned with actually, well anyway, and so if its really pale, its going be blood deficiency, the same thing you would look for, you know, might pull down the eyelids or something or look at the fingernails.

And you're going to see there's a lack of blood flow. So if it's pale, deep tooth marks on the sides, like everybody's mouth is different, but everybody tongue should fit their mouth.

And so if they've got deep, teeth marks, on this side in Chinese medicine, that's called a spleen sheet efficiency. But it is really an inability to move fluids properly.

Where you see that is in the tongue because the tongues swells and it presses against the teeth and that leaves those toothmarks. And in Chinese medicine, that's a spleen cheat efficiency.

Different areas of the tongue are used, are looked at a little different, like the very front. If someone comes in with a really red tongue at the tip, we know there's lot of anxiety and probably insomnia, right?

Now, medically, they're probably rubbing their tongue on their front teeth, and so it's getting red. But it does show up as red in infectious problems.

a variety of kind of retrovirus type things, or if a kid didn't vent a rash after a vaccine or after being ill, you'll see these red prickles and that tells you there's heat stagnation.

But the biggie for me are the sublingual veins. And the sublingual veins, there are two of them, right? One on each side. And that's, my mommy used to say, John, the windows, I mean, eyes are the window to the soul.

Well, those sub-lingua veins are windows to cardiovascular system. So you can see the level of blood stasis and now, you know, Western medicine's kind of coming around to that idea of sticky blood and, circulatory issues being at the core of a lot of cardiovascular diseases, but you see it.

I mean, I can tell you if my patients will come in and go, I'll ask them, are you doing your exercise and following the diet? And they go, oh yeah, I'm really good.

Let me see your tongue. Don't lie to me. No, you're eating badly and you are not exercising. Your blood's not moving. And so after a couple of times of that, they don't try to trick you, right?

Then the coating on the tongue, so basically there are dozens of things that you can see on tongue to kind of guide you. The thing about tongue diagnosis, I'm missing now four tongue diagnosis books because I've loaned them to nurses and they never came back.

Because they were fascinated, right? You can always look at a patient's tongue. They don't know. And it's easy. It's fast. Its really like photographic.

Where the pulse is, there's kind of an art to it. Like, you know, really what am I feeling here? But tongue is very quick. There's some very, very good books on tongue diagnoses with pictures.

When you take a pulse, how long does it work? For me, it's about two minutes. Everybody's different. There's a fellow back East named Lonnie Jarrett, who does a particular system that's aimed more at mental, emotional

issues.

And he'll take the pulse for 45 minutes, right? He'll just sit there and take a pulse. He will even ask people questions while he's taking their pulse to see how they respond.

Kind of like a lie detector almost. Jimmy Chong. Really on off, that was it. For me, I'm not that quick. So I take about two minutes to kind of go through it and so the way our practice on my piece works is a little different.

My wife is the acupuncturist for the 49ers football team. And so then she has a couple of sports medicine people that she is trained that work for her.

She just does sports medicines. Then I do internal medicine with Catherine Black. a Dr. Catherine Black, who's also an acupuncturist and certified in functional medicine.

And so what my appointments look like, the first appointment's very long. It's about two hours, and we go through all kinds of things, including lifestyle suggestions, et cetera.

Then subsequent appointments, people come in, they're with me about 15 minutes. I'll do pulse, I do tongue, do a check-in on their conditions, you know, how's this going?

How's that going. I'll make some changes to any supplements or herbs that I'm recommending. And then Katherine, who was a very good pulse diagnostician and a good acupuncturist, will take them for another 15 minutes.

So I am looking more at the macro piece of it. Okay, they're coming in for Hashimoto's or whatever they are coming for. I want to see their pulses, how they've changed.

What Katherine does is a little different. She will take their pulses and needle the patient while she's feeling their pulse, so that she can feel if she is getting the change in the pulse that he wants.

And if he isn't, then she may pick different points or she'll change how she stimulating the points. Then she will leave the patients to relax with the needles in and then come back at the end of the appointment and check again to make sure she has achieved.

So hers is more of a micro, right? This is what's here today, this is, what I'm going to treat today. Uh, whereas mine again is more macro and, uh, it's, I, you know, we kind of accidentally came to this because when I was really sick in 2023, couldn't get up and walk into the treatment room to needle people.

And so she had to start doing it and within a few months, everybody preferred that. So it was, the old desperation, right? So I want to get into 2023 before we do here.

So in terms of the acupuncture and correct my ignorance, the traditional traditional Chinese acupuncturists were using one needle. Is that correct? We don't know necessarily going back, say, 2,000 years.

There is an acupuncturist who's one of my heroes who was voted the top acupunturists from 1900 to 1950, and his name was Golden Needle Wong Le Ting. And he says, if you really, really do it right, all you need is one needle.

He said, I usually need three, right? So he said he didn't consider himself in the realm of the great. And I actually have a book, he was so famous. They went through and recorded his needling locations on patients for the entire 50 years.

Right. And I was very excited because he and I have a very similar style. So that made me feel good. But he used a golden needle and he would usually use about three.

Now the Chinese use gold and silver because the energy flow is different. Like for scoliosis, you might use a gold

needle on the back or golden needles on one side and a silver on other because you're going to toneify one side and sedate the other.

So the muscle kind of gets back in shape a little bit. We don't do that anymore. I do have some gold plated needles that I use occasionally, but since we don' t autoclave, they're all, you know, single use needles.

It would be pretty much of a fortune to use silver and gold anymore, so. Yeah. So we use electro acupuncture, which then we set up a current between the needles artificially.

That is the only form of acupuncture that I've found to work extremely well, where you're really just kind of opening the channel through the meridian.

The other forms, again, just out of one, I know in your patient population, even my own that go for acu-puncture, the, only time that i found it to be quite noteworthy is when you are running at current.

Is that what you do with everybody? No, but most everybody. If we're doing a treatment like a vagus nerve treatment, which people are really hot on now, especially I have patients coming up, can you do a Vegas nerve?

Treatment? I said, actually, I can't not do Vegas. Nerve treatment. So much of Chinese medicine is kind of based on, they didn't call it the Vegas, nerve, But really resetting the nervous system, the autonomic sympathetic nervous.

And for that, it's very effective without, without electrical stimulus. Cause you're really working on that neurology. Mike, my wife, you know, again, doing professional athletes, they fly in from all over the place.

It's really kind of trippy. She probably uses electro acupuncture on everybody. Uh, it was actually very fun. You might enjoy this. Do you, do you watch football at all?

Okay. Couple seasons ago. There was a series called the receivers. Every year they'll take one group, like quarterbacks or receivers, and they will take several of them and go into their homes.

They'll go in to their workout facilities. I mean, it's everything, right? And so a couple of years ago, my wife is teaching a weekend class and the assistant teachers are in town and she makes us stay up and watch this TV show, The Receivers.

And I said, well, honey, that's cool, I'll watch it. She goes, no, let's watch now. And it's getting late and we're all tired. Suddenly the last episode, I think it was episode six.

She's in, and I can tell you this because it is on TV, she's at George Kittle's house doing electro acupuncture on him. And you can just see his muscles jumping as she is doing that.

Pulse and Tongue Diagnosis in Practice

Right? And we, you probably could have heard us scream where you live. And she kept that secret. It was so cool. And so for that, for musculoskeletal stuff, it's almost always electro.

For neurological stuff I treat a fair amount of stroke patients. That's usually electro because you really want to stimulate up into the cervical and brachial plexus.

So it goes up under the hypothalamus and then you get some changes up there. Find it particularly effective for speech problems after a stroke. So we use it for that.

So I'd say 70% of our patients, we do Electro. If it's really just a stress-related problem, anxiety, Let's go back to the tongue for a moment. So you said the scalp on the kind of teeth marks on a tongue, which I find very prevalent correlates with spleen deficiency, if you will.

What, uh, what herbals or what does the treatment plan look like? I guess in general, you see, okay, so you say, red tip, but prickly, the bumping swollen tongue pale.

what is the, treatment look for each of them? Well, again, since we have such a huge tool bag, right? It's probably going to be very multiple. There are acupuncture points that are specifically to treat Spleen Chi deficiency.

Moderately effective, but when it gets really severe, I find it's not quite strong enough. So there are classic herbal formulas. The most well-known is a formula called Bujongi Chi San, which is fascinating formula.

I have one book. So there was a very famous teacher who I consider my great, great great grand teacher. And in 1243 AD, he wrote a book called The Treatise of the Spleen and Stomach.

There are two characters. One is the spleen, like in the West. The other spleen is, the functional aspects, primarily of the pancreas and small intestine.

So they say that the job of, of stomach is to rot and ripen the food, right? To break it down. And then it goes in to the small intestines. And then the spleen's job is to draw pure essence, right?

All of your nutrients. Pure essence from this food and then to push out the dregs. So your bowel movements, and so they consider those functions of the small intestine, the pancreas, et cetera.

in the function of spleen. And so what you're seeing here are patients that are having poor assimilation, poor absorption, probably poor diets, and so they just aren't developing the mitochondrial energy to really move their fluids, right?

You'll see a lot of edema, things like that with spleensheet efficiency. So in terms of then herbals or so for spleen division, we use a lot of glandulars as an example.

Yeah. Is that typical in your practice as well or what else are you incorporating? Yeah, I would probably add a pre, pro, post biotic to help them with that.

I wouldn't see any other imbalances that I'm noticing. And I might give them some vitamins or minerals or we have a couple of things that help leaky gut.

things that help really seal the membranes, et cetera. And so they work a little faster than the herbs in many cases. So I'm probably going to do a combination.

I am probably gonna do Chinese formula, some form of supplement that's going heal the endothelium of the gut. Then I will do something that is going help with the microbiome.

They will probably get all of those. While they are here, they will get some acupuncture. So if you're open to it, let's go even one step further. When you said something, Let's be even more specific.

And I say that because my focus for the last almost decade now has been microbial medicine or the interplay of your mind and every biological system. So when, when you say, you know, there's going to be something else, There is always something.

That's the epitome of functional medicine, right? It's, we're not one path. You're, not just your spleen, but there are other areas there that have become dysfunctional that you have to now provide assistance or.

obviously be mindful of. So when you said about probiotic or leaky gut formula or anything else, I guess, so someone comes in with that, what else are you administering?

Okay, well, I probably use something with immunoglobulins. You know, we have a variety of different immunoglobulin. We probably carry, like I can't keep track, seven or eight different probiotic compounds that we

use for different conditions, right?

Like SIBO, while we tend to use a particular formula, because there's great research on it. If it's just general, will use, something that's been fermented like five years or so.

That's got a really high postbiotic content. Are we going to have them, if it SIBo have particularly start doing more resistant starches, and we have a phenomenal fiber formula that we just got.

And it actually has a high level of resistant starch along with about nine of my favorite fibers. So getting a more bang for my buck on that one. Collagens sometimes, mushrooms and beta-glucan sometimes.

Again, it depends. Yeah, I mean, it's embarrassing how many products we carry now. It drives my staff absolutely nuts because they're constantly coming back and going, okay, what can we discontinue?

The entire room is full now and we need more room. I go, well, we don't really use much of that herbal formula, so that can go. Right. And so, you know, like you said, the list is so big and microbial medicine, You probably had this experience.

Well, maybe not, but 20, 25 years ago, literally, if I just gave someone a simple probiotic formula. They would come back, say, oh, I talked to my doctor.

And I go, well, what did they say? They said, don't ever see you again because you're a lunatic. Right? And, you know, and the estimates on the number of microbes in your gut goes up all, like, remember when it was 10,000 and 100,00 and, the, number, of different, different bacteria was a few hundred and now it's like exponential.

right? and The cool thing with the functional medicine part of it, as you well know, is that they've identified so many specific bacteria that cause or will treat particular conditions.

And there's something that comes out every week about that. So, you know I have to kind of, my study time is four to five in the morning and I find if I don't stay on it pretty much every day, chat GPT coming in asking questions.

I go, geez, I don't know. So, you know, it's, kind of self-defense that I do so much reading. Well, to your credit, it's the same thing with me. I was just at a medical conference and each of the presenters, they were asked, how are you staying on top of kind of where science is evolving in medicine?

And each one of them said, you know, specific medical journals, there are researching, their studying every morning. And that's what I want to align with individuals who want stand at cutting edge because there's no reason to live in the dark ages anymore, right?

to not prescribe some of these very very safe, very tolerable natural nutrients that are going to help move the needle. And yes, it's not a one-size-fits-all, but certainly there are gonna be things that hold true in circumstances, right?

Absolutely. So everything you adhere to, that's exactly what we're using. One step further, we are doing a lot more with peptides that I've been doing now for actually almost five years.

It's becoming a little more ubiquitous and I feel we just helping our patients heal in half the time. So I don't do my- Injection or oral? Both. It depends on the context.

Any musculoskeletal, any sort of trauma injury that you probably are doing with acupuncture, we're doing right to the site of damage. And I can't make this stuff up.

I have people walking in with crutches, walk out two days later off crutches. You mentioned stroke, I had a stroke patient. She came to me and if she's listening, she'll know how to identify this.

She said, I have a 178 out of 10 level knee pain. I go, God, we got to go get imaging. Like, let's go to the hospital. And she was like, no, this is my life.

And I go, wow, well, I can do something about it. I don't know how much. Usually I try to align expectations. You know, with one injection, it's going to be, you're going feel probably somewhere around 10, 25, maybe 50% better.

Within two days, we did subsequent injections. Her 178 out of 10 went to below 10. Wow, yeah, that's where I have envy of you, because we can't do that, right?

And I've just seen, I'd seen doctors that do this here just get such a dramatic and immediate effects. There's one, he's a surgeon, but he doesn't cut.

He works in a surgery group. And my wife shadowed him. Same kind of thing. Back in 2023, and I was telling you I had some serious problem, well, earlier in the year.

So I have gout and one day my knee blew up and it was actually, I've broken a lot of bones. I'd had kidney stones. This hurt worse than anything I ever had.

And I couldn't put the slightest bit of weight on my right leg. It was excruciating. What it felt like is that the fibula had moved out of place and was pressing on nerves.

That's what it feels like. And so I get to the hospital, they kept me for four days. They aspirated it. they did all this stuff. Never did figure out what it was.

So, you know, I went to this favorite doctor of my wife's. And, so again, They did CAT scans. X-rays, You name it, did it all kinds of stuff, couldn't find anything.

He takes his little handheld ultrasound. And he checks out my knee, 10 minutes, he goes, you see these? You see, these are cysts. These cyst are right there at your meniscus.

And when those swell, they're pushing on your fibula and the menuscus and it's pressing on the nerve. It's like 10 Minutes. He got it, right? And I didn't get an injection at that point because my knee felt great, but he does about 30 different substances that he injects.

And my wife loves sending people there. So again, there's, you know, it's a whole world in, in medicine. Let me take that even one step further. But first, how did he, what did you do with the cysts?

He didn' do anything. He said, come back and I can do some injections and we'll get rid of them or at least shrink them, probably get them. But I haven't had a recurrence of that problem, so I just left it alone.

You know, typical patient. So to me, cysts are sequestration of some sort of infectious agent that the body's trying to sequester. I never, yes, they're quote unquote often benign, but I don't ever find them benigned.

That's translocation of bacteria, sometimes viral DNA, you name it, some, sort, of a infectious component. And the body's trying to kind of be glue that off to protect you.

When I see gout patients, that to me is a gougt biome. It's very, very specific signature. Much like with Alzheimer's, much like what diabetes, like you can see very-specific microbiome signatures in representative of specific populations.

ADD, ADHD, neurodivergence, with adults, any sort of autoimmunity, it confers very specifically signatures. Same thing with gouts. Interestingly, the patient that I had come to me on crutches that walked out two days later without crutches who had plantar fasciitis and tremendous Achilles pain that he couldn't put any sort of pressure on it.

Similar to how you were describing it is we did two things. I did the injections subsequent days and then cleaned up

the gut. And immediately, I mean, the benefit was overnight quality of life wasn't right.

I couldn't even believe how fast when you said, dramatic and instantaneous spoke to his wife. Was that really true? Or did he like people say, yeah, okay.

That's why I'm coming to see you. It's not even me. The power of these, these molecules, it goes far beyond it. And this again, to me is the epitome of natural medicine.

She goes, Yeah, he was shocked. No, no, pain thereafter. Right. Under the right circumstance, the body wants to heal, we just get in the way. And when the presentation of leaky guide or obviously a specific altered gut microbiome.

Now you have translocation of bacteria in other areas. You have cysts, now it pushes on tissue. Modern physical therapy, this is where it fails because we're only treating the musculoskeletal versus there is internal biochemistry dysfunction.

So that to me is the problem. And sometimes it's just a product of our environment, right? We're living next to a golf course, we're breathing contaminated air, where food that we are eating isn't as clean as we had thought it was.

We are constantly drinking water that's contaminated with PCBs or VOCs. phthalates and plastics, organophosphates, you name it. It's unfortunately now there's 2 billion pounds of chemicals in circulation.

Yeah, it's ridiculous. And you look at the cord blood samples from newborns, they're finding a couple hundred toxins, but you just, the thing I wish you hadn't mentioned, he reminded me of golf courses, right?

And, uh, I have a close relative that just died of Parkinson's and I read the Parkinson study with golf courses. And unfortunately, we live too close to a golf course.

So I had to do a lot of stuff to compensate for that. something to consider our environment. Cause the, the terms, I mean, our genes haven't largely changed.

Cancer was almost non-existent, you know, a hundred years ago. Well, how do you explain what's happening here? Right. It's the epigenetic, obviously the in lieu of environmental triggers.

Okay. So going back though to, to the spleen, we identified the spline. You're obviously providing kind of a very comprehensive approach. Any, any specific herbal.

to support the spleen? Well, the classic is a formula called Bu Zhong Yi Chi San, and that was created by, again, my hero Li Dong Yan in 1243 when he published the Treatise of the Spleen and Stomach.

And like in medicine or most fields, there are different schools of thought, right? And in Chinese medicine, There's the school of Enriching Yin and there's a school, the fire school.

Lots of them. So Li Dongyan created the School of the Spleen and Stomach. And he says, it doesn't do any good to treat all this other crap unless you treat essentially the microbiome.

Unless you get the spleen and stomach working, Everything else is doomed to failure. It's like playing whack-a-mole, right? You hit the knee pain. Okay, it's gone.

Then you hit elbow pain, and it is gone, you get the headaches, they're gone but you're not getting to the root. He said the route is always again, translating the microbiome and the gut.

And so he was saying that in 1243. So he's my hero. So I applaud that because that's exactly where we start. But I will say, so when I started about 10 years ago, half the patients came in with gut issues, the other half with sleep issues.

And then talking about CNS imbalance or obviously HPA dysfunction. And what I found that sometimes before starting with the gut, like everything begins with a gut.

But then when you couple that with stress and now going back to the vagus nerve, how that innervates every step of the digestive tract, if there's problems here.

sometimes that could be the Achilles heel, right? So until you kind of correct this imbalance, someone's not sleeping right, they're stuck in this fight or flight, you're not secreting the enzymes, not assimilating as you said, your not eliminating properly, or your motility is stuck, maybe it's too fast, the assembly line is broken.

So we'll do kind a very therapeutic support of both, but often enough now, we start with that kind, I call it a stress leak reset. are sleep deprived, but overworked.

We're overfed and malnourished and we're under recovered. And so until we kind of get that reset, that rebalance, no matter what I throw at the stomach and the spleen, I guess, if you will, things don't optimize as quickly versus when I take kind that route.

So chicken or the egg. Less concern, more concern in terms of order of operation. Either we're doing conjunction or doing that first to be able to kind of quiet down the system.

So then the finally, the innate design can say, okay, we can breathe and now we prioritize healing. Stay to prepare. Yeah, you'd love Li Dongyan because some of his formulas clearly are treating what we would call anxiety.

He called it something else. It's, in Chinese medicine, it's a particular type of heat that flares, we say it flares up and vexes the heart.

Acupuncture Techniques and Electroacupuncture

And many of his formulas actually included that idea. In fact, I have one formula that I've read to a couple patients who talked way too much. They're on the phone constantly and on internet constantly.

It is from his actual writing and it says, here, take this formula and he lists the formula. Then it say, s take it warm. And then don't talk for four hours, right?

And don' think, just chill out for 4 hours after you take this formula. That's exactly what we need to do, but instead we over caffeinate and we decide, nope, we're going to press the gas even further until the wheels fall off.

All right. Yeah. I'm absolutely guilty. In fact, that's how I got in such, I wasn't following my own advice. Right. And I was just burning a hundred hours a week, doing all sorts of things that I could have easily gone without doing.

I know I. Could have gone with out doing them because I am not doing now and I just doing fine. So yeah, so I, was one of my guilty patients. We often are.

It's the caregiver syndrome, right? I'm completely complicit where we put everyone else's health in front of our own, until we recognize, whoa, now I got to rewind here and undo the damage and prioritize me.

Right. Is that what happened in 23 then? Oh, yeah. Yeah, absolutely. It'd be story actually. And I use this to illustrate a lot. What's good and what's not so good about traditional kind of allopathic medicine and why it's to combine these systems.

In late 2023, I was at the Trader Joe's is the big market around here. And I wasn't my associate, Katherine Black, who write books together and work together here, and I in Trater Joe and just passed out.

Damn. Now, fortunately, something kicked in from my decades of martial arts training. And everybody said, it was like I was in slow motion. I'm holding onto the cart, right?

And I went down like slow-motion and apparently I woke up pretty quickly, but I knew something was wrong because there was a container of hummus looking me in the eye and I know that wasn't right.

And of course I am a child of the fifties, played football, so I wanted to pop up and leave and they said no, come on, sit down. Took me to the hospital.

It was a very, very busy night at the Hospital Emergency Department and you know, they did check my head. They did a CAT scan and they didn't EKG and I'm sitting there and i'm actually sitting in the hallway because it's too busy to put me in a room and They figure I'm not in any great danger.

And so I see this young PA come up to the doctor who looked like a deer in the headlights. Really, literally, thank God there was this older nurse who would literally grab him by the arm and take him to a room.

She'd tell him, this is probably a stroke, and he'd go in and she'd give him as much time as she felt they needed, she would come drag him out. So anyway, but this guy was overworked, overwhelmed.

I saw the PA came up. with a strip, an EKG strip and she shows it to the doctor and they looked at each other and then they both looked. And then he shook his head.

So I figured that meant cool. I'm okay. I've had some atrial fibrillation before, but I was an atrio flutter, my atria beating at 288, and my ventricles at 72, so it's a four to one.

Well, that could easily be why I passed out. Also, they didn't say anything about it. Now, I understand they're busy, you know, But someone could have said, sir, we don't have time to go into detail right now, but there's a little abnormality on your EKG and you should check with your cardiologist right away.

That's like a 10 second conversation. If I hadn't gotten my records, I would never have known, except I knew my heart was out of balance. So I'd been able to control AFib for about 30 years with herbal formulas.

But the atrial flutter I couldn't, I don't know how to control it with herbs. And so I found a really good cardiologist and he said he recommended a catheter ablation.

I said, okay, cool. So I go in for the cathetor ablation, which is very trippy. The equipment, this giant TV screen, they put more things on to check my electroactivity.

There must have been 40 of them. But anyway, so they put me under, they go in, apparently it was a lot more intense than they expected, So they had me underwater anesthesia for longer than expected.

Well, in a 72 year old guy, long anesthesias is not a great idea. So anyway they sent me home that night. Next day, I'm watching a movie with my son and my wife.

He's home from college, and it's getting harder and harder to breathe, right? Well, don't want to go back to the ER, but finally it says, honey, you can't breathe.

You got to take me into the ED, go to this hospital because they've got a good cardiac unit. I could barely breathe at that point. Load up in the car.

My wife is driving me over. And I got to tell you the strangest thing, one of my favorite musicians, this he goes back into the seventies, was a guy named Warren Zevon.

He had developed lung cancer and he wrote a lot of the big songs in 70s and 80s. You'd recognize a lots of them. But when he knew he was dying from lung, cancer, he brought up all of his buddies, you know, Springsteen and the Eagles and all these people in to make one last album.

And so all the way to the hospital, I'm singing this song and it's darkness has fallen and I am running out of breath.

Keep me in your heart for a while.

And I kept singing that. It was like the shadows are falling and then I was running outta breath, keep me on your hearts for awhile. So it was so bizarre.

I get there, they check me and immediately they said, yeah you've got pneumonia, you got congestive heart failure. They hooked me up to all this stuff, right?

Saved my life, absolutely saved my live. And then four days later, they said, okay, you can leave now. I said well, what, well what should I do? You're fine.

You know, everything's good. Yeah. you don't have an infection anymore and your heart's working. Okay. So of course I went and ran all the tests that they should have run, looking at high-sensitivity C-reactive protein and all these other things.

And I was off the charts. had so much inflammation in my arteries and my heart. It was crazy. Now, fortunately we've got a really, really good supplemental formula that gets rid of HSCRP pretty quickly.

So I put myself on that and I myself put on some Chinese herbs and within a few weeks I was good as gold, right? So that's how I got there. That's I how got in the hospital.

But as I'm lying in a hospital… You know, I got nothing to do except consider, right? Meditate. And I realized quite clearly that my purpose was not done.

I was very clear about my Purpose and it wasn't done and I had a clear vision of what I wanted to achieve in the world and wasn t done, and so I started to create the intention to turn my life around.

And fortunately, I'd studied with a couple of masters of intention over the years and was very blessed to kind of know how to create that. And so I created the intention to turn my life around and I gave myself a goal of 120 days.

I said, so, So I was at that point diabetic. I had significant prostate problems, I have high blood pressure, and I said, we're going to reverse this in 120 days.

And so that's what I set out to do. I re-dove into all the books on training, weightlifting, et cetera. What I'm going call them more western supplements for muscle growth because I'd gotten very, very weak.

The biggest thing I did, I knew that for me creating cohort and ritual were critical. Now, as a kid, hated the word discipline. If someone said discipline, i was out the door.

Oh no, but ritual I'm okay with that. And so I realized I had to create ritual and a cohort. So I went to my friend and I said, look, and i need to get to the gym.

Will you go to gym with me in the morning? And, so what she does. She brings her dog over at five 30 in the morning and we have four Labradoodles and he plays with them.

And then we go to the gym five days a week and work out and then go the office. So it was a slog. I mean, for the first month, my God. My role, what I said is just show up.

Just show up. If you get there and you can't do anything, you just sit on the exercise bike and chill out, but you go every day. And that was huge. And every day I was, or every week I, was doing a little more and a, little, more, and then I started looking at ways to get my testosterone up naturally.

Cause my, testosterone was very low. So I. Started doing some supplements for that, started taking creatine for the first time and. A few other things like that.

I'm was. Doing a disodium ATP and suddenly my ability to work out went up a lot and I was keeping very close track of about 15 different weightlifting exercises.

And 14 out of the 15, I doubled my strength in four months. The 15th came in finally, but it took a little bit longer. So it was really out creating that ritual.

I get up at the same time every morning, and I do the little ritual in the morning. My little exercises that you demonstrated. I have some tea, get my stuff together.

I now bring my lunch to work and you know, it's very carefully selected stuff to keep my protein level up, to my fiber level. And what I found for me was the easiest way to do that is on Sunday mornings, I make a soup, usually like a vegetable soup with some meat in it, ham or something, with a ton of vegetables.

And then I make a chili, usually a bison chili. And if I eat those, I'm getting about 60 grams of, and I take a pint of each. If I do that, i'm, getting, about, 60, grams, of protein and about 30 to 35 grams.

Of fiber before I even do anything else. That'll bring a hard boiled egg. some high protein yogurt, etc. So I'm finally getting close or closer to my protein requirement.

I've still not really there, but I met my fiber requirement, and so by doing all of that stuff, As I get older, I have less and less energy in the afternoons.

And so I just learned to front load by day. You know, by 6.30 I've got my entire day prepped. I'd been to the gym and then I show up at work. Get off a little earlier than I used to and it's quite manageable, quite manageable.

So I feel great. All of those illnesses I mentioned, my blood pressure is now fine. No longer diabetic and my prostate is perfect. Once a night to pee and that's it.

I'm surprised. So in terms of boosting testosterone, what nutraceuticals were you using? I used a combination to get my sex hormone binding globulin down.

I use a particular supplement called Tomcat, which is kind of fun because it has Donkat Ali and Chongbai Mountain Ants. And Chongbei Mountain ants were for centuries only allowed to be eaten by the emperor or the Emperor's court because they were seen as an aphrodisiac, but they work not so much by increasing the testosterone levels and then for testosterone.

Gut Health, Spleen Deficiency, and Herbal Support

It's quite a few different things. There are quite several Chinese herbs that can be useful for that. Inyongho, cistancia, there's an herb called Tibetan.

It is a relative of citancia. They have to be wildcrafted. They grow in the desert. So I did those. I tried pine pollen extract in a particular formulation, and it really seemed to help.

But the company was weird, so I dropped that off after a while, but I think that gave me a big boost at the beginning. The only research I've seen has been done on fish.

But, you know, I figured, what the heck? And that seemed, it was probably, he seemed safe enough. So I did that and then switched over the Chinese herbs.

I mean, the Daoists, Chinese, It was all about longevity and sex, right? I, mean the emperor, we think, when we were younger anyway, but I think it's cool to have a harem.

Well, You've got to service that entire haren, that's a lot of work. And it becomes almost a full-time job for them. And so they found all sorts of ways to keep their testosterone up and maintain their libido and increase longevity.

Here's the problem because we treat athletes and sports performance. We had athletes. coming in with half the level of testosterone of what it was when I was their age.

And what's the rise, the prevalence of stress factors and connective tissue degradation, obviously joint pain and inflammation. So we see injuries far more prevalent.

When I'm doing a hormone panel, literally I see their T and 3T, everything there is off. And most notably is those hormones that are not only muscle protective, bone protective certainly heart protective.

I see huge disadvantages in our youth. If you're looking at some of these chemicals, atrazine, it's converting male reproductive frogs into the female parts.

And so it is no surprise as to what's happening. With modern medicine often, or the allopathic side, we're just providing a quick symptom relief. Going back to the component of cysts, right?

Okay, let's blunt the pain here, but what about the cyst? What you did so brilliantly is just combining both angles into optimizing your care and finding the routine that worked best for you.

And you were very intentional and you stuck to it, the supplements were there to use to kind of push you over that edge or the speed bump or take you kind over the top.

I remember in my youth where. You're right. When you have that harem, you're on. To me, it's not aging. It's our lifestyle, which then creates this consequence of quote unquote aging with a reduction in growth hormone and testosterone and very protective hormones.

Obviously the black box warning was really, finally. So we understand now the most potent molecules that we make are ones that should continue to protect us.

But because of this chemical soup, we're at a huge disadvantage. And I can see the difference for myself earlier versus now, certainly, unfortunately.

But again, two, it is the sleep, stress when you have kids in a career and a practice. And then as you've said earlier, is like eventually you break down, right?

And the last thing your body's saying, I know we need to make sex steroid hormones to procreate. The body is saying no, no. No. Yeah. Pause. Like we got to shut you down actually.

So. You mentioned growth hormone, so I was working on my growth hormones too, and for that I used a few things, but mostly Chong Bai Mountain again, it's an amazing place, the deer antler.

But just the tips that just, the last quarter inch is so rich in growth hormone and testosterone, right? Cause they grow those antlers back every year.

And so when they harvest it, it doesn't hurt the deer. But if they get just. The high quality tips, that can make, cause I'm, I've been getting blood tests every three months at the most.

Right? And, so I am checking all this stuff. So I can, and that's the advantage that you and I have, Right. It's that a, hopefully we know what to do.

We don't always do it. And we know how to test it, right? So we can go in and say, yeah, I've taken this crap. It's not doing anything. And then you find something else or you make a dietary change and you see suddenly things improve.

We used to use a lot of growth hormone earlier on. E-Vital I like from Biotics, but we would use that. Then over time, just with the advent of these peptides, I haven't found anything that's remotely as close to how quickly that

switch, like these growth hormones, predagogues work extremely well.

Devoid of actually taking growth hormone itself, same thing with testosterone, right? Nothing, everything pales in comparison, but as a very kind of safe and equitable natural alternative, These are very, very effective tools.

Again, going back to this whole component of increasing tools in our toolkit. So I appreciate kind of the depth of what you brought because for me, the herbals component in terms of like Chinese medicine is, that's something I certainly want to explore.

I'll fly in and we'll definitely continue this conversation. Because otherwise, you know, this is foreign, right? In the U. S. especially, The herbials that you're mentioning that have provided a high degree of efficacy for you.

I think majority of people would have never heard of her. Yeah. Yeah. It's important to find someone like you who's, who has done the research, spent decades of practicing this and, um, now kind of practice in what you preach, right?

And Lou, again, pain drives purpose. I want to go back though to still to the tongue because that's such a critical diagnostic that we actually do look at.

Uh, that often overlooked whether it's like the skin on the face or the, your eyes and the whites in the eyes. Exactly. The nails, tongue is one I always ask patients to kind of say out the tongue to see what's going on.

How are you treating some of these things when you see like a pale tongue or a white coated tongue, or cracked on the middle of the time or swollen tongue?

Well, you know, it's like with your practice, I'm sure that's a piece of information. Now you could do a diagnosis basic, like you can take a Jimmy Chong.

One of his big things is he said, You give me a blood pressure and a heart rate, a reading, and I'll give you a formula. Now, is it going to be the perfect formula?

Maybe not, but he can give you a formula, right? Because if you've got high blood pressure with a rapid heart rate, it's different than high-blood pressure, with the low heart-rate, at least in Chinese medicine, and so you can see whether it…

Oh, this is fun. I'll get to the tongue. But the other day, I had one of those people that works for me. She does sports medicine but she was doing a non-sports treatment on someone.

And she came in and said, God, I don't know how to put all this together with the Western medicine stuff. And I said. If you don' know, how do you do that?

That's okay. Chinese medicine has been doing it for a couple thousand years. I remember the first week in school, they taught you the eight parameters.

Is it hot? Is cold? is it internal? external? Excess? Deficient? So you're looking at these, treat that and you'll never be wrong. You will never hurt the patient and help them.

And then we can get more specific, but just start with that. She goes, I can do that! And it's true. There was a very famous acupuncturist in California.

In fact, she's the woman who was brought up on charges of practicing medicine without a license. She's a person around whom we got a practice act. And when she had new people working with her, they could only use 10 needles.

five on each side, and they had to be the same. And she said, because you can never hurt anybody with this, you

will always help them. In the United States, everybody needs this treatment.

So that was their initial treatment, then she talked to them about getting a little more sophisticated. But that's, again, the nice thing. First, do no harm.

But just so you know, I'm going to start doing some more peptide deeper dive. So in terms of, well, you said you're going go back to the tongue, but also are there certain things that everyone kind of comes out of your office with, whether it's vitamin D or magnesium or some of the autogenic formula that you see as something to help with sleep or gut?

Like, is there something that's becoming now almost ubiquitous that, that have you seen this pattern? Close to that, yes. There, you know, every month we go through, we actually have a Shopify account now, right?

And so we private labeled some stuff. And they're all my favorites. They're the only things that we use a lot of. So our fiber is really, really popular right now because most people aren't getting enough fiber and particularly with the resistant starch aspect.

We go though a lots of vitamin D with K2. quite a bit. Hang on, what are our biggest sellers right now? Hystagest and Hystagest. And a histamine pro, so the histamine pro high dose quercetin with a few other things, but the Histagest we love because it's a, just a DAOM enzyme.

And we have so many people that that's the first thing we do, right? It's just, let's get your histamin load down a little bit, get you inflammation load, down, a bit and then kind of see what shows up.

So those are probably our biggest sellers, actually. Which formula for fiber are you using? It's an ortho-molecular product and it's, yeah. You like orthomolecular?

So when you said that in the resistant starch and the sun fiber and solenol, I said it is the multiple. I knew right away. Exactly. And so our rep. So I don't.

I don't want to sound arrogant, but I meet with most of the reps because they're just selling me their product and that's their job. I'm okay with that.

But my orthomolecular rep, I would pay him to come in. There's never been a time that he has sat down that I didn't learn something really valuable. He's usually very professional.

When he came in with the fiber, he brought his shaker cups. And he was like a little kid, like, you know, or a dog with its tail wagging. And we tried that and we were instantly sold.

It's the only fiber I've ever eaten that I enjoyed, to be honest with you. My patients love that stuff. Yeah, it's a foundation now within our, especially because everyone's coming up with their, their guts torn.

Again, if you're at some high blood pressure, any sort of autoimmune issues, leaky brain, licky gut, You talked about histamine issues, mast cells, immune dysregulation, obviously high inflammation, then you have oxidative stress, now you DNA damage.

It can also go back there and you need to feed the healthy microbes, which we're just not doing. Or if we are, often the soil is replete of minerals. So even when we were trying to, sometimes we still at this disadvantage.

Yes. So we're on the same page there. Now going full circle again. I'm still cliffhanging. On the edge of my seat here. In terms of the tongue, I know that's big, just one piece of a puzzle.

As you said, that was absolutely accurate. Yes, my goal is how many pieces? do I need, but also like, how quickly can I put the pieces together, depending on someone's medical history, without having to do a battery of more tests.

Because in functional medicine, the biggest cry, right? People come in, costs are already high. Then you're doing more and more test. I had one patient come last week and she said, it's funny because most of these practitioners, they don't even know how to interpret these tests, then I realized not all functional medicines practitioners are equal anymore.

And sometimes these patients are even smarter than the physicians, It turns out.

Personal Health Crisis and Recovery Plan

And they don't know what they didn't own, that's why they're still stuck. And that why I say I never do my toxins anymore. So my goal is to kind of plug those holes and create the personalized treatment plan.

Again, going back to something so simple yet can be so diagnostic, right? When you said support the stomach, support to spleen. If you see, because I think that is often common, what we're seeing too like a pale tongue or a white coated tongue, or crack down the middle tongue.

Or like kind a red tip tongue and a hot tongue Do each of those confer different treatment plans? You're looking at different organs there. And then what is the kind of nutrition?

There's a tongue map. So we look at the sides of the tongue as being related to the liver gallbladder. You can see specific coloration changes there that can tell you there may even be a disease in one of these organs.

Like if you see like a black spot or a green spot on the side. Then just in from that is this spleen area. Sometimes you'll see it very depressed, and sometimes you will see very enlarged.

And so that's important. Then right down the center is the stomach crack, or hopefully not a crack but the stomache area. Sometimes, you see ice flow cracks that go sideways.

That's what's called the spleen-yin deficiency. So in that one, we're looking at a significant depletion, usually in pancreatic enzymes. and some other problems with the duodenal system.

Then when you come more toward the front, the very tip is related in Chinese medicine to the heart. And so that's where you're looking for heat, et cetera.

If you see a cleft in the tongue, it's fascinating. Often there are going to be some related mental spiritual problems. Just behind that is the lung area.

When people have had chronic asthma, bronchitis, etc., you'll see very swollen usually lung areas. There's an area just in between, and they don't often teach it in school, which is the breast area between the heart and the liver gallbladder.

And if that's swollen, then you know there's inflammation and or excess fluid in the breast on that side. So then I'll have women do particular exercises to kind of get their lymphatic fluids moving.

And you can see a difference. If they're doing it within a few weeks, you'll see that swelling go down. That's the delocations and then you see the different colorations.

It was fascinating. When I was in China, my doctoral program, I spent most of my time in a gynecology clinic. And in China, the gynaecology is mostly fertility because breast clinic is separate, problems generally genital are in different location.

a variety of combinations where they're having problems with fertility. And so they've got PCOS and a few other things going on. That can take six or seven months for me to get that to their doctors, to the insurance company, back to getting another test done.

In China, literally. That happens in half a day, literally. So there's a doctor sitting or senior doctor, two interns, patient comes in. Now there is no privacy.

That's kind of the downside. You've got six women sitting over here on a bench, all kind tittering at the woman that's there. And so she says, yeah, I haven't been able to get pregnant for two months.

The doctor sends her in the back room with an intern, says take a vaginal swab, send her down to the lab to these lab tests done. So then she sees more patients.

45 minutes later, the patient comes back with the vaginal swab exam already done and having all of her blood tests done. And so the doctor looks at it and says, oh, it looks like you might have polycystic ovarian syndrome.

So I want you to go down and get an ultrasound. They write her a script. She goes down. 45 minutes later she comes back with the ultrasound. She goes, oh yeah, definitely one of your tubes is blocked.

Did you have chlamydia? And she goes oh, yeah I did. I forgot to tell you. Yeah, so you got hydrocell pinks. This tube is open and that's the one you're going to ovulate out of this month, but you've got a little excess fluid in there.

formula to clear the fluid in the fallopian tube. She says, come in every two days. We're going to size the follicle and then we'll give you an injection to pop it out.

And there's a 70% chance you get pregnant this month. That takes six months. When I get an unexplained infertility patient, 90% of them are stressed. They're just so stressed.

That's why they're not getting pregnant. And so if you can remove six months of that stress and tell a patient, you know, You probably need it pregnant this month.

that goes a long way. Right. But what I noticed in the clinic, I was there with two of my buddies. And we're sitting so that we can see the tongues of the patient.

And after about 20 patients, I looked at my bedding and I said, maybe it's the lighting in here, but this is weird. My fertility patients don't have tongues like that.

I say, everybody here has a healthy tongue. By the luck of a draw, the next patient comes in with what we call a flabby, pale tongue with deep tooth marks.

And we looked at each other and said, that's what our fertility patients look like. Because in China, they're basically healthier. They're, basically younger when they are coming in and they don't, and their stress is different.

And my patients are burned out. But coming into their mid thirties, their working too much, you know, the whole wrap around that. So their tongues look totally different than they do in china.

Yeah. Cortisol certainly shuts down healthy burying function. Oh, absolutely. So thyroid function and all kinds of stuff. Yeah. It's horrible. Then you couple that with environmental toxins.

That's obviously driving internal stress and, um, pesticides, herbicides, driving, internal dysbiosis. And then you layer in some of these mold, micro toxins and.

vaccines and now you have the perfect recipe. My first infertility patient, the problem was actually the male, interestingly enough. So that was kind of a unique eye-opening experience for me because often it's the female, you know, who's first checked.

But everything checked out clean. It was the partner that committed the crime. And then the second one was a diabetic patient. I know you mentioned diabetes too and you're kind how you overcame that.

But again, what's interesting to me is there's so much knowledge that can be passed down that's often overlooked. And again the use of natural nutrients.

I do a lot more work now with Dr. Jill Christa who we had on the podcast and some of these herbal formulas that she has put together is remarkable in terms of quickly and how safely we get results with our patients who have liver flukes or any sort of parasites or mold and mycotoxin.

And sometimes with these pharmaceuticals, they work really, really well, but you're having to combine multiple and sometimes you don't know, whereas some of these like natural Herbal formulas are very encompassing, very, very safe and getting patients tremendous results in terms of healing.

So again, the herbals certainly can work under the right circumstance when you have the Right formulations, right? Things can move very very quickly. Sometimes we just got to get out of the way.

And to me the beauty is do what works. Now you and I are fortunate because we have a lot of background and so it's a little easier, but if you don't have that knowledge yourself, you know, You've got to find someone who does have it, who's actually interested in your health and healing.

and working with you, you know, in a way to make you healthy again. So yeah, that's kind of one of the takeaways. 100%. This has been a wonderful enlightening conversation.

I'm going to send you my tongue picture. We'll take care of that peptides for you. Where, where can people find you come see you visit you get in touch?

Well, our podcasts are on most of the, you know, Spotify, Apple, I guess, all that stuff, and on Dr. Talks. Our educational site is thebalancingpoint.net, the balancingpoint dot net.

And that's where you can kind of get our whole bit of information. This was absolutely wonderful. Any final remarks, anything that you want to kind tie any sort of last thoughts?

Well I, guess day of two. One, it's critical. I'll ask patients kind What's your why? Why is it important for you to be healthy? Right. Do you have family?

Do have a dog? You have kids, whatever. What is worth living for? What was worth putting your attention into this to kind of get them on board and creating some purpose and vision if they don't already have it.

baby steps, start with one thing at a time. You know, people try to revamp their entire life and that's okay. Sometimes it works, but it's like, okay, I'm going to get up at this time, Okay, we accomplish that.

I've gone to the gym at, this. Okay. We accomplished that and you kind of get those patterns set in. And I find for me now, certainly everybody's different, But I found for is what works for me.

And the other thing is I want to tell you that this is the nicest, most fun podcast I've done and I have been interviewed a lot and it's your level of interjection and commentary.

I just love it. So we'll send you some tongue pictures of like what they, you know, kind of a diagram. I appreciate that. It was actually a very, very long evening.

So I'm piggybacking off of, I was at A4M's medical conference and. Yeah. Literally flew in at 2 a.m. And I was supposed to be working at 5 a and so I'm running on fumes so, I could use some herbals right now, certainly.

Appreciate the feedback and those two points are exactly what we integrate. The first one, in terms of your purpose, that's the number one question on our medical health history.

Good. I want to identify why someone wakes up every morning. What's their reason to exist? How the Japanese

term, I think the ife guy. And then the second is addition by subtraction.

Less is more. It's the, the atomic habit. So it was just like one small thing, right? We're always trying to do all at the same time. I go, no, so here's what, this is exactly what I tell my patients.

If they're going to bed at midnight, my homework is that first week, 1145. Let's move the needle just ever so slightly. I know we want to get to 10 or nine and maybe even eight because something that's earlier.

It's our least growth hormone that we were alluding to, which happens on in the early parts of the evening, right? To preserve kind of our great healthy fat burning hormones.

But less is more. How can we just change one little thing at one time, and usually for my patient population, it starts with sleep. Obviously the sleep and stress is my kind reset that I do.

And then the gut. When you start there and people are already, you know, 50, 60, 75% better, then sometimes we obviously got to do a lot more digging.

Needless to say, so your approach and suggestion of the histamine and the fiber, that's one thing that I learned is when I do lot of more nutrigenomic testing.

Histamine set people on fire and they're not realizing it. That's exactly what I tell them. Yeah, you're on FIRE. Simple little things. I remember this one patient who was referred to as her hormones were severely mismanaged.

So we cleaned that up, but she still wasn't getting better. Well, let's do a genetic test. Let's see. And she was very high risk factor for histamine.

Meanwhile, what was she doing? Meal prepping every day for the week. That's food that is just bathed in histamine. God. We took that out of the picture because think about it, right?

Everyone's thinking like meal prep, that's healthy. You know, I'm quality control, controlling that. Well, not so fast. Actually, in nature, like you had to hunt and you have to forage and were eating daily.

And you're not really storing. Over time, we developed that, but we then ferment it. Now our bacteria was more robust in terms of this kind of chemical soup and especially with our hormones being off, beta-glucuronidase being high.

So we had kind to clean her up there. So you're absolutely right with the histamine. I think that's one that is becoming very, very unfortunately ubiquitous.

This has been an absolute pleasure. We're up on time and I would love to definitely connect to the flesh some here in the new future, in new year. But until then, last question I end every episode.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be? Well, this was a little different probably. Let me think. my practice, look at it. I went to a lecture many years ago at a symposium in Southern California, and one of the speakers was a Japanese acupuncturist.

And he talked for about two hours about his experience. Chinese medicine, there's a lot about yin and yang, right? Yin and Yang. Very rarely gets talked about in the clinic.

But he talked about it and it was one of those bizarre things. I came back to the office on Monday and as soon as a patient walked into my room, they were diagnosed.

It was like they had a map on them or something and I was yin-yang, blah, and blah. And it like magic. After the second day, I told my wife, this is bizarre.

This is wonderful, magnificent. But over the next week, it faded a little bit every day. And so there was something in the magic of his talk that released something, in my psyche, you know, my something.

and I want to get that back. So that would be my superpower. Maybe I can help restore that in the sense of I just went to go visit Frank Schellenberger's clinic and they did this microcurrent so they attached these kind of these nodes on the brain and to kind open up the channels and the actual device I think is called IASIS.

So I'm looking to find a provider here locally so we can provide that at clinic.

Purpose, Habits, and Closing Reflections

Because what was interesting is I am on an unrelenting mission to find anything that moves HRV. And this certainly did one treatment, much like yours, it went away after day two and day three.

But that first night of sleep was magical. Wow. going back to remember I said, you know, the stress lease, stress leak reset is starting in the brain and vagus nerve, we're stuck in this perpetual fight or flight.

And often it is we don't recognize it's just our accumulation of toxicity. So I have patients that come in and I ask them, what's your stress level one to 10? And I see they're very nonchalant.

They're like, oh, like a three, four, maybe five on a bad day. I know that what is driving that is this kind of either environmental burden or some sort of a chemical toxicity or an infection.

whether it's parasite or fungus or virus or bacteria, something like that is crippling the vagus, which then drives that internal stress and then the body can't clean out kind of as intended.

So you're stuck, you never repair, and which happens at night. And so we do a lot more with tracking wearables because I want to see the data to kind see how are we making progress.

While I don't assign 100% credence, There is, there's proof and pattern. So that's something that I couldn't agree more. I'll share that with you. That's awesome.

Yeah, I'm going to check it out. Thank you, sir. Just get some information out of that brain of yours. There's just so much in there. It's stunning. so I would love to have you share a little bit more with me sometime.

But we'll continue the conversation. I'm sure this is not the last one we will do around TuneIn New Year. For everyone else that's listening, definitely check out John's stuff.

He is a master traditional Chinese medicine blended with functional medicine. So he's certainly a man after my heart. This has been a genuine pleasure for everyone tuning in.

Make sure to like, review and subscribe and please share this with anyone who could benefit whether seeing John in person and the work that he does. You guys are great over there, so I appreciate what you're doing for everyone listening.

Thank you. Stay healthy and stay wealthy, my friends. All right.