Why Lyme Disease Causes Sensory Overload Transcript

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Introduction to Lyme, inflammation, and sensory overload

We have more common things that will cause problems like mold, like a crappy diet, lack of exercise, stress in your life. Stress is the number one cause of inflammation in the developed world.

But you have the mold exposure. You may have heavy metal fillings in you mouth. Um, you can have a whole number of things, but then people are like, why is somebody getting triggered by going on a hike?

Like a really mild hike. Well, the problem was it was a stressor. that sometimes is good for you, but you were at a point where you couldn't handle it.

Once you're initially triggered by something like Lyme or a co-infection or from mold, then it can re-trigger people. Hi, and welcome to the LyME Bytes podcast, where we shine a light on the misunderstood science of LyMe and other vector-borne diseases, as well as the truths that many still miss.

I'm Dr. Mariah Hinchy, naturopathic physician and fellow of the Medical Academy of Pediatric Special Needs. I specialize in treating chronic Lyme disease, as well as other complex inflammatory conditions.

In this podcast, we break down what's working and what not. We share the facts that most people miss, We challenge outdated thinking, and we give both patients and practitioners the tools to heal smarter.

So let's get into it and change the way we heal Lyne. Hi, and welcome to another episode of the Healing Lime Summit. I'm your host, Dr. Mariah Hinchy.

And today we're going to talk about a symptom that I see in a lot of my patients. It's something that can lead to irritability, anxiety, can be very isolating and actually impact a lots of patients' relationships.

Dr. Moorcroftu2019s Lyme story and recovery

I'm talking about sensory overload, and for those of you who are lucky enough to not know what it is, it's a phenomenon where the environment is actually overwhelmingly uncomfortable.

And here to help us navigate through the link between Lyme disease-induced sensory workload is Dr. Tom Moorcroft. He is a great friend and colleague, and I am beyond excited to do this interview with you.

So, Dr. Moorcroft, please tell our listeners a little bit about yourself and how you came to specialize in treating tick-borne disease. Well, thanks so much Dr.

Hinchy or Mariah for having me here. And it's such a blast to be able to have this conversation. Cause as you pointed out, I love the word you use isolated is such critical one to understand.

So in my story, you know, working at the Institute Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, New York. It's now called the Carey Institute, but basically they do a lot of landscape ecology, biology research, and then they education.

I was working in education because I love research. I have a whole bunch of older people getting together and talking about papers and then what we might study next before we do something.

But I really wanted to know who takes action. If we get them excited about Mother Earth, who take action? And it's the kids. So I started teaching kids and one of the things that ended up happening was I start to have job performance issues several months after I took this position.

And my boss was just like, what the hell's going on with you? Because you know, you've gotten like 14 hours worth of work done in like five hours on a regular day.

You're just the energizer bunny. And I'm like I don't know. She sat me down, she said, I need you to get work on this project. and she says, hey I'll come back and check on you in an hour.

When she came back, She actually found me staring at the wall and had to shake me to kind of get me come too. But my eyes were kind open. Then we both looked down and found out that I was drooling all over myself.

And within a couple of days I got this big old rash and then I realized, oh well, I was kind of tired. My brain wasn't working. I wasn' hanging out with my friends as much.

And I went to the doctor. They diagnosed me with acute Lyme disease and they treated me for 10 days with doxycycline. But over the course of the next 8 years, pretty much every symptom came back.

And then, so I had a lot of brain fog, joint pain and fatigue. And, then I would go to the doctor and tell him this, he'd be like, oh, you're depressed like your dad.

I'm like well, I am not, but okay, sure, i'll try the meds and they didn't work. and then they said, Oh, no, You don't have that. You're like you have bipolar depression.

All the good doctors and lawyers have because it gives them the extra oomph. Like right now I'm getting very irritated because one, I've listened to all your stories.

I tried all of your medicines and they don't work. And I actually am irritated, because I am in pain and I can't think and you're not listening to me.

So I became increasingly, increasingly isolated from the medical community and then people around me didn't know what was going on. Family and friends were like, what's your problem?

you know, everything looks great in your life, you look great. I'm like, I feel like crap and you're telling me I look so I am okay. And so, over time basically what happened was, my back was against the wall, and I found myself staring at another wall again going, My life is going to hell in a hand basket.

Like, i'm following this path and it's not working. i don't like it. And I know if I keep down that path, it'll be the same. I didn't know all the things I knew today.

Didn't have exposure to naturopathy. Was new to osteopathy in medical school, but I did know about nutrition. So I was just like, I'm just going to choose something else.

And just said, what are my goals in life? And what do I want? I, you know, had been recently married. Um, wanted to have a family. Love going outside and playing with the dogs and yada yadda.

In the end, was like I just gonna pretend that that's my life. Because I know if I just keep doing my normal life, I'm getting the same thing. And then somebody handed me a yoga DVD and I started doing yoga.

Then my body started to hurt less. I noticed that other people irritated me less and then I also noticed I was engaging with other more. When I went to the store, the lights weren't attacking me anymore.

Sound that was really low wouldn't bother me and it had to be much louder, almost like a normal person. And then I started to change my diet and then ultimately I met two amazing doctors in Maine who treated me for the next four years and it took me about six years to get better.

But as the time we're recording this, I've been symptom free from Lyme and Debesia for over 12 years. And all of those sort of pieces of that sensory overload, as well as, the isolation from everyone around me because they

didn't know what was going on and they just thought I was crazy.

that all that sort of fallen away as the symptoms, um, went away with effective treatment. Yeah, that's awesome. Thank you for sharing that story with us.

So, you know, first… Oh yeah, so you did ask me one other thing. Why do I do this? Because I don't want anybody else to have to suffer like that. And if they are already, let's help them get better quicker.

Yeah, and there's so many people who are. So you know firsthand what exactly we're talking about here with the sensory processing disorder and sensory overload.

What sensory processing disorder feels like

For those people listening who don't know what that is, can you talk a little bit about just in general what a sensory-processing disorder means and what some symptoms are?

Yeah, I think at the top you really highlighted it really well. And it's really this condition where we describe, like we call it a condition, but it is like when your brain is processing sensory information from the outside.

So things you see, hear, smell, taste, touch. or even how you emotionally feel in an area. It's not so much that the thing coming in is bad or in and of itself overwhelming, but it's the brain's response to it.

Its interpretation of the external stimulus That really is the thing that drives symptoms. So some people can't put clothes on. I mean, I have kids who literally are basically wearing these, you know, a dress with no underwear, no bra, on no socks, know nothing.

And it's like three times too big for their parents, but that's the only thing they can be in or. Someone can only wear certain clothes and they have to stay dirty because cleaning products and water bothers them.

Or the opposite is they can't get clean enough, which kind of borders in OCD. And a lot of what I see is like, and what my personal experience is, you can see there's lights on me right now, right?

I would have died. 15 years ago, there's no way I was like glasses, you know, huddling and I would go like shopping in a mall or something when we used to have those things.

And it was, like, I literally felt like the ceiling lights were attacking my body and my nervous system would get all wound up. So the same thing can happen.

It could be a smell that does it to you. And for me, I could never stand perfume. And it's not like I love going through like a mall setting where they're spraying it all over, but now I can appreciate it and I smell a flower and not feel like it is attacking me.

So essentially it like whether it tastes or touch or smell or hearing or whatever, it this part where your nervous system hyper reacts. and everything is like, you know, and sometimes it can be even worse, but it's like and it is non-stop.

Sometimes it really can become an intermittent thing but for most people it starts intermittent and becomes more and more common and can really be disabling because you are not able to trust what's coming in.

You're like, yeah, I know that there's only like two lights and they're on the dimmer, but I feel like it's attacking me. And that's really what it is.

So the sensory information coming is processed at a much higher degree of gain than it really probably deserves. That's the brain processing disorder that comes through with sensory processing disorders.

How does Lyme disease bring that out or exacerbate it if it already there? Yeah, I think this is like so key and I just think there's two main ways. There's the direct way and then there is kind of the indirect way.

And the Direct way is that things like Lyme, Bartonella and even Babesia can change the way you see things, right? or the way your muscles work. And one of the classic ones at a very basic level is a thing called convergence insufficiency.

Essentially what that means is we've got our two pupils, the little black dots that allow us to constrict and dilate to focus and also tolerate the light.

Well, Babesia can actually change your ability to regulate how your pupils close or open. So they may be more dilated when the lights are bright, which is the opposite of what they should be doing.

Then you would be overwhelmed directly. But the other thing is we also see with convergence, if I hold a pen in front of my eyes, in order to focus, I need to put both my pupils on one point.

And same thing for reading. If I'm reading something, I have to be at a focus there. However, lime can change the way I see, and many people talk about visual snow and things of that nature, but it also can the control of the muscles.

So if you try to focus or you have somebody hold a finger or a pen in front of them and keep their focus on that one dot, if my fingertips are your pupils, they should go like this when they come in and they go out, so we always have one point.

And that allows us to focus normally. Well, in Lyme and a lot of these other infections, we screw up the processing so the muscles of the eye work well, the eyes themselves work perfectly.

So you go to the, eye doctor, oh, I got 20-20, but I can't focus on the page. What we find is when we ask them to do that, their pupils do not line up.

And that's a processing process within the brain itself directly caused by Lyme. And it also can be caused my things like head injuries. So we also know that Lymen Bartonella can affect the eye.

We know they can effect your hearing. Some people get tinnitus, but other people just get acuity increases or decreases. When you start to hear a lot of stuff at a much higher degree, that can kind of overwhelming.

That's part of how it can happen. The indirect one is a little more insidious because it's all about, in my mind, the toxin load someone has. Lime not only directly causes toxine load, but it is so pro-inflammatory, so it increases inflammation, and now it kind of like you have a glass and it overflows.

So the problem then becomes, the more inflamed you are, it's almost like in mast cell activation syndrome, right? So in that disorder, we're talking about the immune system and looking at like everything coming in.

How Lyme and co-infections drive sensory overload

It's trying to protect you from everything as if everything in your environment is an insult. Similar, when we get Lyme and our nervous system gets all jacked up, it's trying to protect you but it views everything because of this low-lying sort of inflammation that chronic Lyne creates that every single thing around you, your nervous systems like, wait, that might be coming after me.

And so then you get that kind of hyper irritability. And even as I'm talking, I can feel that I am almost experiencing it under my skin because I remember what it feels like.

So lime really can drive the toxin overload and as so many of our patients know, it's kind the straw that broke the camel's back. Oh, so they lived in a moldy environment but they were okay.

Oh, they had heavy metal feeling like mercury fillings in their mouth and they were okay with it. Not great, but they're okay. Then they get lime and now it just kind of the cup overflows and it's kind really hard to get everything back under control.

So that's where a lot of our lime people sound crazy to certain people because they are like saying that, Hey, I went to the supermarket and flared my lime.

And people are are you crazy? But I'm like, yeah, because. They only had 1% more toxicity and inflammation they could deal with. but they got a 25% boost when they went outside and now they're down for a week.

So this is really like a place where what goes on in our chronic Lyme patients where they seem like, a lot of other people from the outside, unfortunately leading to this isolation, think that they are overreacting.

And so the thing is a lotta times it's not that you're over reacting, but it is that your immune system and your nervous system are in fact hyper irritable, so they ARE over-reacting.

But that's not a personal choice. That's a reflection of the infection. And one of things with Lyme disease and healing is we have to feel safe. Right?

And the problem is, and I'm sure we can dive much deeper into it, but the big issue with lyme is that in order for you and me to understand that we're safe, because most of us know we are safe to heal, right?

We're like no shit. duh, I'm supposed to get better, right? It would be safer for me to be not sick with Lyme disease, but our nervous system doesn't process it that way.

And the cues of safety, particularly understanding facial expression, vocal intonation, and then gesture, you know, in body language, all of those are processed in areas of the brain that Lyme disease can actually slow down the function of.

So if you're chronically sick, those areas stop working and you can't understand your safe for whatever reason. Even just isolation from COVID can do that.

But then if get LyME on top of it, that is also blocking the same pathway. And it's literally preventing you from recognizing the safety that everyone around you tells you you have.

And so then you get more irritable at them and then get isolated because they don't think that you're listening to them. And it's kind of downward spiral, right?

And that's the bigger picture piece. But I would say that it is difficult to tease out which one it But because we're starting from both sides, either the Lyme directly causing a problem, treatment can help with that.

But then getting it back on track for any of the other reasons, each person listening to this has the ability to access healing from that perspective as well.

So the nice thing is no matter which side you're on, we have access to healing. Right. And I think as long as you are kind of looking at the person as a whole and not trying to do things like in a linear fashion or piecemeal, like if you're tackling the whole ball of wax at once that that individual is struggling with, then you'll going to see a much better resolution and complete sort of resolution of symptoms.

You gave the example of going into a moldy building. Obviously, that would be a trigger that could bring this out in a patient who already was suffering from Lyme disease.

Can you talk about, first of all, elaborate a little bit more about mycotoxin illness playing a role, but what other triggers would there be that can potentially exacerbate this in the patient?

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So join us in pompano beach or from anywhere in the world. Don't get left behind. Register now at lime bites.com. That's L Y M E B Y T E S. Yeah, I feel bad.

I usually have my clear water cup with me, but today I have a nice one. It's actually one my mom got me for Christmas. This is Tommy's hot coffee. So cute.

But it's really simple in my brain. And I like to keep it super simple. There's a vessel that has so much that it can hold. If you've got stress in your life that's up here, you're doing all right.

Then you got a little bit of mold in you life and you are allright. But now you get Lyme disease and now your not alright and the vessel or you, your body can't handle the amount of toxicity that you're exposed to.

And so the problem here is if I were to have removed that mold, now my Lymen and my stressor of life are right here and I'm in a better place. But when you have mold and lime, now you're over the top.

And so this is the challenge. We have more common things that will cause problems like mold, like a crappy diet, lack of exercise, stress in your life, because I mean stress is number one cause of inflammation in the developed world.

But you have the mold exposure, you may have heavy metal fillings in your mouth. You can have a whole number of things. But then people are like, why is somebody getting triggered by going on a hike?

Like a really mild hike. Well, the problem was it was a stressor that sometimes is good for you, but you were at a point where you couldn't handle it.

And that's really the thing. So any, once you're initially triggered by something like Lyme or a co-infection or from mold, then it can re-trigger people.

And the challenge with some of our toxins, including mold like you were saying, is these, you can become either, one, it's in your environment where you are living and or you become colonized so you walk around with it and even if you go to a different environment, bring it with you.

Same with Lyme. You are in an environment, you got it, but now it's in you.

Mold, toxins, and other triggers that worsen symptoms

So no matter where you go, like when I was at the mall, when i was in high school and it was beating the hell out of me, I could just leave, and I feel like crap for an hour but then I would recover.

But when can't leave the mold because I'm either living in it or I am walking around with it. Or I can leave Lymen and Babesia because it is in my body, that's kind of where they become a bit more challenging.

And it really brings up a concept called hormesis. And I think it's a really important one because it will give us understanding of how to heal in general and also specifically how overcome this because hormesis is essentially this concept of you could have something that in the proper dose, well, in inappropriate dose and too high of a dose or too long of an exposure would be toxic.

You know, like let's take the example of exercise. If you do too much exercise, it breaks down your body. But if you just enough exercise it actually stimulates growth, healing, and optimal immune function.

So in hormesis, it's like making sure I get the best amount of exposure to the toxic substance for the appropriate amount time. And it is like Goldilocks, you don't want too little because if you ever stress your body, It will never heal.

It'll actually fall apart. And if you stress it too much, it won't heal. It'll also fall apart. So there's this beautiful curve that people show and it's literally just, just it goes up and comes down and just like a bell-shaped curve.

And what's so nice about it is as you stretch out your body a little bit more and you challenge it a bit, You actually will heal more quickly, but when you get to the top of it, then you start to slide down the curve.

And then, you started to get diminishing return. I often see this where we're pushing in a treatment protocol and then people start. Plateau or they start, to see a few things and they're, Oh, no, my lime's worse because the treatment's not working.

That might be a possibility, or you could be on the downhill because you're. Pushing too hard. And then the thing is, once you go below the original kind of up and down and you below, it becomes toxic, which is essentially saying that there's an area, a sweet spot where if you challenge your body a little bit, push through a bit but not a lot, you'll get better faster.

And what's beautiful, Mariah, is there is over 1500 studies on what optimal hormetic stressor dose is. And I'm sure that means nothing to almost all of us.

And it almost means to me, except I read a lot on it. But it's 20 to 30% above someone's baseline level of stress is enough. More than that typically leads to true toxicity quicker.

So my message about this, even if it sounds like a little bit of mumbo jumbo is you want to push a hair, but you don't have to really hard. A lot of the things I hear about everybody, oh, that's a huge herxheimer.

It's great. The challenge is how many people have you seen that either they're doing a little better and they push and get a Hertzheimer and crash because they just went immediately to toxicity or they get better so fast.

They're just like, boom, they take right off. But almost everybody gets snapped back and have this big crash. And people are wondering why. It's because we pushed our nervous system.

too hard. We pushed our physiology too. So this is a great concept that allows us to take a deep breath and just allow our body to heal at its own pace.

And our pace, you know, your and my pace of recovery from a particular incident will be completely different and unique and personal. This is powerful because now we learn that while we can learn from what everyone else around us is talking about, their experience, We need to have our own, because I would say that while we started off talking about isolation from our family, our friends, or even the medical community that at the time we trusted, and then they betrayed our trust, the biggest isolation I see is the damn line field isolating each and every one of their own members.

Doctors are doing this, patients are, doing the online forums are like, if you're not doing what I'm doing, you are not, not right. Well, but I'm not you, so let's not have that conversation because I get hermetically overstressed and I go into mental emotional toxicity.

which then suppresses my immune system and allows my Lyme to get worse when I try to treat myself as if I were someone other than me by comparing myself to them.

So my thoughts and my message would be learn from other people. Learn from this entire amazing summit and then sit down with your health care provider and figure out what's uniquely appropriate for you.

Because that is actually the number one way that people with Lyme get sicker is trying to have someone else's healing journey. Yeah, I couldn't agree with you more.

I think that different people are going to respond to different treatments that are right for them. And, you know, that's why there isn't a one size fits all, there's no like, here's your standard protocol to cure Lyme disease, right?

Like it just, it doesn't exist to my knowledge. and I, think as medical providers, we have different styles that attract different patients to us. I think patients have a lot of really good instincts and they're drawn to the people that practice medicine in a way that resonates with them and is going to be able to heal them.

Dr. Moorcroft, please let everyone know where they can find you. Thank you so much. And I certainly encourage everyone to become a member because I was like, wait, we're done.

We have so empowering people to start making a change at home today. So definitely take advantage of that. And I thank you so much. I know my medical practice is originsofhealth.com.

You can find out all things about myself and my partners and the people who have trained with us and work with to help other people just like you heal from Lyme, mold exposure and even pans and peels.

pandas with kids and so it's our big thing. And then, you know, one of the most important things to me is I can't see everybody by myself. I know that you and I talk a lot offline, like we're so busy helping, but that's why we do things like this.

So one the things that I've really felt the benefit of is the mentorship and the mentors that i've had, including Dr. Horowitz. And, you know, I've talked so much and I gained so from talking to other practitioners.

So I do a practitioner training program called the Lyme Disease Practitioner Certification and Mentorship Program. Year long, we're practitioners who are seeing patients, have the ability to get real firsthand knowledge.

We take what we learn in workshops and what learn at conferences and when people are talking about informed. and give you true one-on-one and small group mentorship, as well as fill in any of the blanks.

So it's a true medical fellowship level of training, and people can find out more at tommoorcroft.com. Awesome. Thank you so much. Okay. dive back in by talking first about how would you, and I mean, obviously if your patient has the diagnosis of atic-borne disease, then, you know, we kind of know that some of this sensory processing disorder is linked to that.

But can you just talk a little bit about symptoms of like a true dare I say like a true sensory processing disorder versus one that is being sort of exacerbated or ignited or caused by Lyme disease.

Yeah, that's a challenging one. And I think the big thing is timing. Like if you've had a kid who's just always been that way, Now, granted, in my head, I already hear the peanut gallery going, well, they could have congenital one.

It's possible, but do a really good history. But if you have someone who is born and everything's okay and then they're developing, there are three, four, five years old and they've got like one thing or one really small thing and

there's probably no history of these other infections, it might be a true sensory processing disorder.

The issue is, what drives it? Is it a head injury that they had when you didn't realize?

Hormesis, pacing, and avoiding over-treatment

I remember my daughter Talia had fallen down the stairs, like four or five stairs. It wasn't anything crazy, but she tripped and landed with her head down and hit the banister when she was three and a half.

And it was like two years later, she started having some challenges reading, even though we did everything right. Well, granted, she just needed a little extra help and then got past it.

But in the history, we thought it was from the head injury. So, but her challenge was something. It was just not apparent in beginning. We had to track back and we had rule out everything else.

sensory processing disorder is kind of a diagnosis of exclusion. It's really about, is there any, I'm always like, Is there something treatable? And everyone, it is not all Lyme.

I just want to get it out there. God, if it were, one, we would have more money in research, but we're getting a lot more research now, but there are other things that can do it.

I mean, and we see autistic children are a great example. They have a lot of processing and a lots of sensory issues. And in some of them, there is a Lyme overlap, But there's a big difference in a kid who's got like non-Lyme and non tick-borne related autism-like symptoms and true autism, right?

And it's like, I know that there're overlaps, Right? But, There are people with other thing. But the question with autism is, What is it? Because so many people following a biomedical approach to treatment will find that if they do the nutrition, they find out that they have cerebral folate receptor antibodies and all these other things that we can improve a lot of that.

So my question always is, it's kind of like genetics versus the environment, right? So much of what pushes our sensory processing is actually our environment.

And a lot of our ADHD, and I'll use the example of ADHD right now, technically not sensory processing disorder, but it kind of is because they can't focus on one thing in their environment because you're being overwhelmed by everything.

And the only thing that can cause them to focus is like a video game that's moving at a hundred million miles an hour. So then they tune it out. But most of us might enjoy a game from time to time, But that should not be our medication, right?

And so, I'm just going like, well, why can't you handle everything around you? And, so much of it is the tools that you've learned to deal with it and also the, and I know the work you do, it's like I don't really think of you as a person who starts with infection.

I mean, unless it like the most obvious thing you need to do. And I would agree with what you said earlier, sometimes you just do it all at once. But I mean, I know that there's this baseline of like, how is the body itself functioning?

And is Lyme, because Lymes a part of the fully functional body? Because your body, the other thing too, is that the is always 100% perfect compensation.

It is literally doing the very best it can for you at any given point in time. Now you might not like where it's at, and that's why we do things like treat the infections.

We see Dr. Hinchey and we get like our gut fixed up, we got a good diet plan, We get the right supplement. we all do these things. So, but it to me, it like, a true sensory processing disorder is kind of this leftover piece after we've verified it is not other things You know, because otherwise, I'm like, why are you not handling it?

We can be born, our brains aren't wired quite right. I mean, we can't help that. That's just part of normal development. But for most people, I can't recall anyone I've ever seen where they haven't been able to see some improvement in their ability to handle their environment and interact with it more appropriately.

If they take care and fuel their body with the right fuel, they sleep properly. They learn some of the tools, which I know we're going to talk about in a minute, to help them get out of their own way when they get stuck in the mental loop because Lyme sets those up too.

So it's like, I'm willing to do all the work because I think everyone here listening deserves to actually optimal health. And my optimal and your optimal in someone else's may be different.

but we all have this ability to lift up the bottom. And so that's really the big difference is, I mean, and if you were completely fine and then you got Lyme disease and now you're not, well, then we know where it came from.

That's a little more cut and dry. Right. So you are dancing around my next question, which is in addition to treating, in fact, If the sensory processing disorder or sensory overload is infection driven, what would be other treatment modalities or therapies that you would use to help to resolve?

Are you suffering from Lyme disease or another complex chronic illness and aren't sure who to trust when it comes to herbal supplements? Hi, I'm Dr. Mariah Hinchey, founder of Lynecore Botanicals.

As a naturopathic physician specializing in complex, chronic, infection-driven illnesses like Lymedisease, i needed herbal medicine I could truly trust.

That's why I formulated Lymencore botanicles. where our herbal tinctures are handcrafted in small batches right here in Connecticut. We use the whole herb, never isolates, to preserve the full spectrum of medicinal compounds.

Every single step from sourcing to extraction is done with precision to ensure maximum purity, potency, and consistency. These are the same herbal formulas I used to heal myself and have used for years to help my patients and family members heal too.

And now I'm making them available to practitioners and patients everywhere. Lyme Core Botanicals. Herbal medicine you can trust from a doctor who lives this work.

Learn more at LymencoreBotanicles.com Yeah, I think this goes back to where we say Lyme can cause your brain to get stuck in this mode. And there's also other things that can get you stuck, right?

So like isolation, stress, just being sick for a long period of time, irregardless of what caused it. So let's say we have Lyne and we got these stressors.

The beauty is now we've two sides and this side you access healing. like you said, by treating it. The other side is we go, oh, I have access to healing, so maybe my Lyme is not moving as well as I like with my treatments.

Maybe it's not because I'm not treating hard enough or like we said earlier, maybe I am treating too hard and I need to pull back a little, which I actually find works way better than most people would pontificate about, but it is actually finding that sweet spot.

But over here is where we have a lot of power because Anytime we remove the stress, you know, when we take the level down on our mug and we takes some of that stress out, that is analogous to boosting up our immune function.

So then we have less hyper irritability. Over here, I do a ton of things. I mean, one of the most basic is sleep, we could talk probably for days on that.

So that's a really key because that when your brain optimally detoxifies.

Mindset, gratitude, and nervous system retraining

Most of your detoxification happens in deep sleep through the glymphatic system. So we want to focus on that. But then people are like, I can't sleep because my mind keeps racing, right?

Okay, so now let's take charge of what we're thinking about. The first thing I suggest for people is figure out what you really want and focus more on than what don't want.

Because it's really hard to forget that you don't want Lyme disease and it is hard forget about your symptoms. So don´t worry, if you focus on what you want so much that can't remember what was wrong with you, then you are better.

Which is great. Your medications and your herbs do not sterilize your body. If you become sterilized from Lymes, it´s because your immune system did it.

we just bring down the load with the antibiotics and the antimicrobial herbs. So if you're not concurrently working over here. Now, I would also say nutrition is critical, not just because it's your microbiome and your immune system, but because of the feedback from the vagus nerve up to your brain and relationship of nutrition to mood and thinking and cognition.

And we know that if you had a standard American diet, I can make you stupid. I could literally make mice forget things by giving them a Standard American Diet.

And you know, and if eat two baked goods or processed foods per week, you increase the risk of depression by something like 56%. So it kind of makes us wonder.

Then when we get to the other things that we often overlook, If you think about polyvagal theory, so many of us talk about fight or flight as our sympathetic nervous system and then rest and rejuvenate his parasympathetic.

But Dr. Porges tells us there's this other part because like fight-or-flight means the saber-toothed tiger hopped into my camp and I'm like, dude, I can win, i'm going to fight him.

Or you're like oh my god, that's a saber toothed Tiger. I cannot fight them, but I could run away and have a chance to win. The challenge is if the sabre tooth tiger grabs me in his mouth or her mouth, What do I have left to do?

I've already not flighted well enough and I certainly haven't fought well because I'm in the mouth. So what can I do well? Usually what you do is play dead.

because cats tend to get bored and then they drop you and you can scurry away. So when I get caught and I feel like I no longer have a chance to win, I know longer feel I actually have the ability to heal, that's the time where I freeze.

And the freeze state is really not great for our immune system because it leads to more suppression of the immune greater inflammation, lower detoxification, and lower gut function.

And lo and behold, you also see people start doing more of this and they have greater withdrawal, which leads to greater isolation and which lead to a greater freeze state.

So they're stuck in this thing. This is where You need to feel safe in order to heal. And I want to change that word for a minute. Safety is safety to your reptilian keep you alive nervous system, not to brain that knows you are safe,

but it just still can't take action.

This is that reflex protective mechanism that does its best to allow you to pass on your genes. And being alive and passing on your genes is not necessarily related with feeling great.

So how do we push, and let's change the word to comfort zone, right? Because if you're familiar with something or you are comfortable, then your nervous system is like, okay, I'm safe.

So if you're sick with chronic Lyme, you have babesia or mold, artinella, whatever, for a long period of time, that becomes your familiar state, aka your comfort zone.

If I ask you to change too quickly, get snapped out of it, and it just pulls you right back. That's what we were talking about at the top of the talk.

Right? So that's also where hormesis comes in. I need to push a little, but not too much. Cause if I don't push at all, I won't heal. But I want to, push so hard that I either become toxic or I overwhelm my familiarity set point.

So we want, to move a bit. The question is, how do you do that? And one of the really easy things that you can do is to take a deep breath at the end of day and go, what were three things, that went well today?

And it doesn't matter how big or small. I would actually suggest the more nuanced and smaller, the better, but start anywhere you want. And I, when I started this with our daughter years and years ago, she go, I go.

What was great today? She goes, my cat. Okay. All right. We need to get three. What was great today? My cat. I'm like, OK. Well, if we're an adult, we could probably come up with three.

But when I am talking to a five or six year old, let it be their cat because I did this for a few weeks and then it was like my cat, my friend. Right.

So do that. And then if you want to up level this whole thing, so you get a little bit of gratitude. Gratitude opens the heart and gratitude and love equal safety because the nervous system becomes parasympathetic.

And if you want to get into science, it also boosts heart rate variability, which is an indicator for resilience to stress and infection and increasing immune function.

So literally, yes, by just recognizing the small goods in the sea of crap that you've experienced today will boost your immune system, probably more than a supplement you can put in your mouth.

Then after you write those down, and that should only take you a minute or two, write down three wins you're going to have for tomorrow. and then put it down.

When you wake up in the morning, you read those six things and you're good to go. Four to seven days into doing this, You're gonna go, oh my God, I have like 10 things I'm grateful for and now I am sleeping better.

because you become parasympathetic, not frozen, but you get into rest and rejuvenate, which then lets you go to sleep, allows you to brain detox, also boosts GI function because it happens primarily while you're in parasympathy.

When you are sleeping, it's a great time to heal your gut and then all of a sudden you can think more clearly and your immune system works better. And then, so that's one thing I love to start with because it's simple.

And a lot of what we do in our different programs and with our patients, I work a little bit with breath work and guided meditations, as well as I teach people self-hypnosis.

Hypnosis and meditation are really interesting words. My favorite way to look at meditation is to define it as to

become familiar with. So it's not about focus.

It's about breathwork or Aum or quiet. To become familiar with the state that you want to live in. So I'd ask you this throughout your day today. What kind of meditation have you been in?

Have you've been a positive meditation focusing on what you want and acknowledging that some things in your life aren't the way you wanted? Or have been focusing what don't want, a.k.a.

a negative meditation? Because whatever you think about the most is what bring more of in you life and it can be challenging to get started with. Which is why I say, just write down three things.

Don't stress yourself out here. Like, I got up and I was able to go pee by myself today. You know, i was up for 30 minutes before i got overwhelmed by the light rather than 20 minutes.

Look for the nuances because it'll pick up steam. And really, and the same thing with hypnosis, the thing that's a little different is We teach you ways to go around your conscious mind, because right now I would say that probably 75% or more of the people that just listened to what I just said are like, I can't do that.

Or some version of that popped through your mind. And that is your critical factor, your consciousness mind going, nope. That didn't work before and I'm going to protect them.

I know I need to do DNRS or Gupta for six years before I am going be better because I read it on the internet. Like your body is protecting you. So a lot of people try to work on going around the conscious mind and just reprogramming the unconscious or that subconscious mind because that's the kind of the workhorse of changing your mind to boosting your health.

But what I would suggest is let's make it easier. Let's chill the conscious mind, install new programming into the subconscious mind and allow the consciousness mind to say, I'm allowing that to happen.

And then you get it in a relaxed state, but you don't try to avoid it. And I hear that a lot of what we teach in Vegas Retraining and in and a of our amygdala retraining, and all of these other things we do is we're trying to essentially trick the conscious mind to let us go around it And what I'm saying is that ain't going to work in the long run, or if it does, it will require a lot of extra energy and work that many of us don't have.

I know I didn't. But what i realized is over my journey was if I started to recognize that what was doing for myself, was incrementally working more and more every day.

And some days I'd go back, but I just had a little more today than yesterday and I kept that up. The thing I didn't tell you guys is in the beginning, like I said, for the first eight years, I did not have a diagnosis.

So the two years of my treatment, I didn't have a name for it. Like when the actual healing treatment, the six years of doctors being a-holes is a different story, but it was really interesting because I did have label.

So when I started to get better, I was just like, this is amazing. I'm getting a little bit better. And like 1% better for me was like the most amazing stuff ever because.

for the past six years and I'm like, oh, this is amazing. So that's a lot of what I like to do. And it's really to empower people to understand that with very simple techniques that they can literally reprogram not only their current state of health and healing to optimize both sides, not to just say, um, now you don't need Lyme treatment.

I am a great example. Two years of prep work and then four and a half more years or treatment, But now how many people can tell you they haven't been sick for over a decade?

You know, and that's what I want to share with people that hope, but also that all the work you're doing over here in that sort of stress, mental, emotional stage to help you move out of that fight-flight-free state.

is that's actually a part of the healing that you have control over. And every time you do a little practice, that sounds so stupid. Spend three minutes no more writing down three things that were great from today and three that are going to be great tomorrow and do it for a week and a half and I bet you'll never stop doing it.

That sounds like too simple to true, right? But I would challenge everyone here to do that. And I would love for you to reach out to me and let me know how that changed your lives or if it didn't because this is empowerment.

And one of the big things are if you can develop the skills to provide your body with the appropriate hormetic stress like enough and you don't overdo it, then you actually start to gain momentum and healing.

Then you become more objective. So I'm on double-dose Dapsone, I am on disulfiram, on tefenequin, cryptolapis knotweed, cat's claw, whatever it is, and I feel worse.

Am I pushing too hard or am I not pushing hard enough? And the problem is most of your doctors aren't living in your body unless you're the doctor and the patient.

So we can do our best to ask you questions, but what we need is you to be totally in touch inside. And one other thing that really I'm glad I didn't forget, the sensitivity that is developed by most our Lyme patients and Lymen friends and tick-borne co-infections, I would suggest is an amazing gift.

Caregiver guidance and communication strategies

Because when I grew up, I could feel all kinds of crap and my parents thought I was crazy and weird and they didn't want other people to think that, so they tried to beat it out of me.

So I kind of like, you know, in a cocoon not being fully me and then Lyme disease blew it wide open. And then I felt like everybody who touched me, I was raw.

Like they were, you know, lemon and dirt and salt in a wound. So it was like two extremes. But what I learned was when your sensitivity actually brings you back more to your natural state.

I'm always looking like, what is this infection giving me as a benefit? And so I said to Lymedisease, they said, You know what? Thank you so much for all the gifts on your way out the door because you're no longer welcome in my life.

Please leave a note that reminds me which gifts I'm supposed to be learning about in the future. But I didn't say get the hell out of my body you piece of crap infection.

I hate you because then it'll never leave because it will be cemented in like my cocoon my parents tried to make. The point about the sensitivity is you can learn to turn it down.

and you can learn to turn it up. But right now, I remember in the beginning, it was so hard to turned it down. Now I can go into a mall and I could be wide open or I close it.

The airport is my favorite. I like to keep it tight because there's a lot of weird energy going on. You can do this. When you learn how to do that, you go, Hey, I adjusted how I feel right now.

Three things changed, but two didn't, because those two things may be more the physical. So explore this mental, emotional, spiritual, voodoo, whatever you want.

I love using the word voodo because I think it's awesome. But this energetic side of yourself that's truly a hundred percent part of who you are and love on it and learn it, and ask what it is about.

Because to me, this is the place where a lot of us stop. And so in our practice, we also use a lot of things like homeopathy to make it a little bit easier.

I might do those guided meditations and breath work I talked about, but I may have binaural beats in the background, right? Because we're helping with technology to achieve the brain state for you.

So we can do that. But a of like the other work out there is hard. And I give people tracks that they put headphones on and they can chill. through just participating at the very basic level, aka turning it on and listening for 10 minutes.

We've done the heavy lifting for them, right? And then when they're ready, they can go to those next levels. Yeah, I think that's all great advice. And I there are things that you can do and that can you do at any time.

And I think we all know that feeling, right? Like when we're going into fight or flight or when something has triggered us and we are overwhelmed. It's almost like you just lit a stick of dynamite.

If you could just remember to stop, take a deep breath, count to three, do something. You can actually slow or stop that whole ignition process. And literally stop yourself from going into like this full overload or even into a panic attack.

But I think for a lot of people, they don't even realize that they have the power to affect any of this, right? Much less inhibit it. So, and I love just starting with, we have like a little, you know, at dinnertime.

Right? Like it could be a simple dinner time check-in with the whole family. Like, it doesn't have to be something that the patient does by themselves.

Right. Go around the table. What's three great things that happened today or good things or three things. That didn't suck at least, you know, and did you learn from the bad stuff?

Right, that too. Right. If something bad happened, what did you or could you learn? Sometimes we need other people to help point that out. But that being said, so we talked about the patient, and what the patients can do, right?

What advice would you give caregivers or loved ones because a lot of times, no offense, They just don't get it. So, like, what would you say to parents and caregivers of a patient that has a lot of this sensory overload, whether it's in relation or not to an infection?

Yeah, I totally agree with you. Like, first of all, i would say look in the mirror, take care of yourself first, and check your shit at the door. Because seriously, Is there ever a time in your life where you felt a certain way or thought something and someone else didn't understand you?

It has happened to you. I would say I've been doing this for over 15 years exclusively. That's it. It's all I do. May have seen one person who may have had more than 50% secondary gain going on in their brain.

Most of the people I have ever met, despite what it looked like on the outside are not just taking advantage of this. Yeah. Right. They are not making this up.

And if they did start to make some of it up, it's because they aren't on that loop that we talked about earlier with the fight, flight, freeze. It's like the more they feel like crap, the they're going to feel that crap.

So first things first, support the patient. Recognize there is something going on. You have to acknowledge their experience of themselves because you don't know what they are going through.

And one of the number one ways to disassociate anyone in your life is to invalidate their experience of themselves and then they feel betrayed by you and other people and they get worse.

So let's stop adding fuel to the fire. And then I'm a big believer in not leading by the example of power, telling them to do this or that, but to actually lead by power of example.

You should be, if you're telling someone else to something and they should act a certain way, look in front of that mirror and go, Hey, what in my life am I not showing up the way I am telling then they're not and you need to lead my example first.

And that also means, I know I work with about 50% children in our practice, many of whom have infection triggered autoimmune encephalitis, AKA PANS, PANDAS, really nasty behavioral stuff going on because of the infection and what it triggered.

Most of parents are trying so hard to help the kid that they're not taking care of themselves. And a lot of times the kids start to not do the things parents want.

But it's probably at least in part because you are not doing the things that you need to do for yourself and they get it. They might not be able to verbalize it yet, but they're following your example.

And even adults, like if I want to change something that my wife Jill is doing, I have to make sure that before I open my frigging mouth. I need to look and say, what am I doing that's similar?

And more times than not, if I change a behavior that on a similar thread, she'll change. So really take care of yourself first so that you have the energy to show up for the other person.

You can't be a great partner, a friend, or a parent if you feel like dirt too. So take care of yourself and try not to tell them what to do. So one of the things that I learned that was really cool, I call it LEA, L-E-A just because it's easy to remember, but it is listen, echo, and ask.

You listen to them and as you know, it was hard for me to listen because I just want to fix things. But you listen. Notice there's no fix in here anywhere.

It's listen echo and asked. And then you're going to echo back, kind of paraphrasing what they said, because that way they know you were listening to them.

And, then, you are going ask them about it. So, in a social example, we could make health ones, but would be like, my daughter was on a ski team where they were very intense, very high level, and she was the youngest girl by a long shot.

Then there were a couple of boys who were close in age, all they wanted to do was ski or play on their phone. which she liked the skiing part but the social part of watching boys on a lift play with a phone is kind of like that's not how we live so she was telling me then we tried a different team that was more social and then she's telling how it's neither one is good and blah blah and I was like So thank you so much for sharing that and letting me know.

So it sounds like, you know, being on that ski team last year, there weren't really all that many good things or something. I used some of her words. And then she's like and you could see her change.

She was like thinking, like wait a second, I just said that out loud. Huh. Then I said, well, were there any times where it went well? Was there, even like for 30 seconds, was there something good to happen?

And she goes, Well, yeah. And then she didn't stop talking for 30 minutes and you can do this with your health. It's kind of like, Hey, I had a really shitty day.

Thank you so much for sharing that. They, that you had. I hear that your day was really one of the worst ones you've ever had, was there anything in there that wasn't as bad as the rest of it?

So I didn' even ask if it was good to say, is there something that was less bad than the worse? And there always is, and then you can go and you explore that.

But nowhere in here did I try to fix it, which is hard for me. I'm a doctor, I am a type A person, a dude. All these things add up to tell Tom something, Tom automatically fixes it even if that's not what Jill wanted.

So really there's so much power in using this on yourself and others. And just love on these people. This is a person I assume that you love.

Love, healing, and closing remarks

your life if you're a caregiver. Go back to the place of where they live in your heart and understand that they may have an infection, they are not the infection.

And that's really the big thing. The biggest thing that I experience with so many patients is that invalidation, the accidental betrayal, of people who don't understand them.

The goal, it's like, I've heard a statement, a little catchphrase of course, listen to understand, right? And another way to, in like to define communication is really the goal of communication, is the response you get.

So if you are communicating with your loved one and they start throwing blades back at you or they hate speech, maybe you kind of missed the point of what they need today and you're just adding more stress to it.

But if you talk to them and listen to, them you echo what their experiencing and then you ask them a question that can help them move to the next level, Now they're like, they open up and you can see their guard goes down and oh my God, all of a sudden they are parasympathetic.

So you just gave them a gift of healing that may be powerful than any medicine they put in their mouth all day. Because you gave the love and that vibrational release.

Even if I just said that. When I just said, when I was heard, I could feel my whole body calm down, right? I'm very kinesthetic. I feel all this crap as I am talking it.

So I always have to make sure I end on a good note so that my energy is all nice. But yeah, love on them, man. Love on those people because they're sick, but also remember all the other things we talked about and use that in your own life so you can help them see how to use it in their lives.

And this is really, the most challenging part is we're all responsible for ourselves and no one else. and we are so influential around everyone around us.

And one of the reasons I say this is like, all the things I try to teach people are things that work in health, and then they can use it in the rest of their life too.

So it's not like oh, you're just using it to get better from Lyme and you go about your life. These are actually life skills that allow you to remain healthy for…

as long as you can. And so that's really, I mean, it's a bit of a long-winded thing, but I think caregivers are the most, and the other part is understand that we all understand, that you're under stress.

It's not just the kid who's sick or the wife or husband or partner, you know, who is actually sick. We understand the lover, the caregiver, is feeling this.

And a lot of times as a parent of a teenager, I don't know the right answer. But what I do know is that telling them the shit that I know that they don' want to hear, or if I accidentally say and pisses them off, if i keep going, that makes them feel worse and makes me feel worst, drains both our energy, suppresses our immune systems.

So if you screw up to say, hey, I'm sorry, why don't we try something different? Have fun with it. But what you'll find is when you caring for someone else and helping lead by your energetic and your physical example and you're

mental, emotional example will help you feel better and them feel and then you all be at a higher level of health together than you were when they started.

Yeah, that's great advice. I honestly couldn't agree more. So before we wrap up, I want you to let our listeners know what you think the most important thing in general.

This is a wide open question. What do you thing is the important to keep in mind when dealing with healing Lyme disease? That's a beautiful question, one thing.

One thing, one word love because like love yourself. Try this one on for size love lime today because you know the thing is if you one of my mentors said and she shared this from her mentor who's a very influential osteopath he said if You treat everyone and everything from the highest vibrational frequency of love No matter what you do.

It'll work better and it will eventually work and And for me, it's not so much about curing people from Lyme disease. I would like that to happen, but you've heard of people cured from lyme, cured, from cancer, cared from whatever else they have who are miserable.

They make the world less fun and they aren't happy themselves. But if we heal, if you allow someone to become whole again, meaning feeling love and gratitude deep in their every nook and cranny of their being, then they become whole.

And to me, that's healing. It is easier to heal if you're whole, it's easier achieve cure as part of healing than it is to cure and hope for healing later on.

If you start with love, not everyone's going to make it. This is the real world, everybody. You know, people live and die at different times and different durations.

But what I do know is if you have love in your heart, you're going to enjoy the time you, have the health you to a higher degree, and you'll have a much better chance to get to that next level.

Thank you for that. Okay, so that's going to conclude our interview. And honestly, I don't think we could have left it on a better note. So for all of you watching, i really hope that this discussion has helped and is helping you along with your journey and healing Lyme disease.

Dr. Moorcroft, before we go, one more time, just let patients know where they can find you. Great. I'm at originsofhealth.com and tommoorcraft. com. Awesome.

Thank you. And we will see you all at the next episode. If this episode gave you an answer, brought you new insight, or made you think differently, subscribe to the Line Bites podcast and share with someone who's ready to take control of their healing journey.