What I thought I knew about healing was wildly off base. If we're ignoring the nervous system, your body is always trying to protect you and find balance.

It's when it's chronic, it turns into an issue. We have to take a both approach. we have look at both the body and we to look the mind. The person in front of you is the most important, right?

Not if the numbers are moving up and down. They're just, like you said, part of the picture. Part of picture, tool in the kit. Symptoms are only part the story.

I'm Dr. Drew Kidder. I am Dr Emily Hernandez. And on the healing terrain, we explore deeper systems influencing clinical outcomes from toxic burden and microbial imbalance to the foundational factors that drive resilience and long-term health.

Hi everyone, I am Dr. Emily Hernandez, naturopathic doctor and on the clinical team here at Cellcore. And we are here with the Healing Terrain podcast.

I've got Ellie Anderson with me. Excited to have you. Tell us a little bit about who you are. Yes, hi everybody, i'm Ellie Andersen. i own an integrative wellness facility in Minnesota.

You'll probably hear it throughout the whole podcast Love it. Oh, it's very obvious. Uh, i'm a mom of six. That's my first. Amazing. First passion, first and foremost.

A traditionally trained Western medicine dietitian turned functional and then ended up getting my master's degree in integrative health with a focus on trauma because nutrition alone is not enough to heal chronic disease.

And that's exactly what we're going to talk about. Yeah. Just so valuable. Amazing. I think a lot of clinicians have the same story. You know, we get into health and healing because we ourselves were patient first.

Yes. We wanted to be well and we learned very quickly the Western model's not the way to actually heal and be well. And then after working with people functionally for quite a number of years, probably four or five years before I pursued further education, I realized that what I thought I knew about healing was wildly off base if we're ignoring the nervous system and the way the body was created for safety and that it's not broken, it is trying to protect you.

And so that's one of my biggest passions in helping anyone who comes in my door, whether hormones, fertility, the big C. Your body is not broken, it's protecting you.

So we need to figure out what it is protecting us from. It's truly such a gift to have been doing it. I've been a clinician for almost 10 years now. That's awesome.

As long as I have It's humbling and I love being able to educate people on it, so I'm super excited to be here. Yeah, I know. So happy to have you. And it's such a great interconnection of nutrients and the nervous system and microbiome.

Let's get into it. When you are seeing your patients, are they mostly coming to you for nutrition first, like in their minds? So we get a lot of people who are tired.

They're just exhausted. they don't have the answers that they've been seeking. They don' even actually know what answers they're seeking, but they know the model thus far has not given it to them.

And so I don"t think they actually what they"re coming to us for. But they figure something is efficient, right? And we are pretty much a completely referral-based business.

So they hear about it from people that know and trust and love. Yep. So there's an innate level of so-and-so said it would work for me, so I'm going to try it.

And I feel like, again, a lot of functional providers are in that space. Yeah. and so it's our job to guide them because we do muscle testing, we to functional lab work, and do IVs, We do peptides.

We to it all, but not everybody needs everything. Right. The most important thing that we is some of those nervous system biohacks and the real life bio hacks that get people back to being in a state of safety and security.

So it's our job to intake and to figure out what someone needs and create a personalized program for them. Love it. And I feel like we started our practice, started my practice doing a very rigid type of model and quickly realized again, like…

This person might have the exact same symptoms as this person, and they need a completely different care plan to be well. And so just creating that type of approach for an individual has been really freeing.

Freeing for our clinicians, free for the patients, it's so beautiful to see people heal. Probably more effective, right? So much more. So I know when I have patients that come to me with fatigue or hair loss, like I must be missing a nutrient, right?

And sometimes there is that component, but tell me a little bit more about the different layers that can factor some of these pretty general, common symptoms.

Like it's not just nutritional deficiency. What else could be going on? It's just not nutritional, there's so much more to it than that. And I love a good micronutrient test, Vibran's America's Micro Nutri Panel.

I loved it, But here's the thing, you're only as good as what your gut can absorb, and you are only good at how regulated your nervous system is. Because most people don't realize that baseline, if you neurological chaos, whether from stressors or from internal stressor, external stressers, whatever it may be, your baseline nutrition need is just fundamentally higher.

You're eating through minerals at a much more rapid pace. So you might be thinking you're getting enough, but if your gut's not digesting and absorbing it, if you don't have enough stomach acid, just simple little things where it's like, I'm eating all the time, and I am still starving.

I'm drinking electrolytes, I am doing the things, but I still feel like I've dehydrated. It's like you probably are because your baseline physiology has shifted to accommodate you running from the bear.

And so as valuable as those labs are and as it can be to isolate and replete therapeutically those micronutrients, We still have to dig deeper. We have figure out the why behind it.

And why is your body going into this repetitive mode? What can we do to create safety so it stops, gets off that hamster wheel? And nutrition starts to work for you the way it was supposed to.

I went into dietetics with the young little me, I'm thinking 18-year-old Ellie in college. So young, so naive, bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, thinking food could heal.

Yeah. And what I learned was none of that. What I learnt was, cake house, tube feeds, propofol, fake food, faked food. Yep. My sister's a registered dietitian.

So yeah, I remember going through that, yeah. It's all fake and it's frustrating. Yes. Medication and food interactions, but the food is fake, and the medication is faking.

I get so sassy about it. Because what I believed I went into was not at all the education that I got. And I was bought and paid for. Then I had to unlearn all of that in order to actually step into who I am now.

The license opens up the door, but the way we practice is not the right way to preach. Knowing that the current model is what keeps people sick, we can't keep creating the same we can't just look to labs and we have to look at the body as a whole, the human as whole and the individual as the whole.

And create a plan that works for them that really helps with full healing, especially for chronic disease. So tell me about this whole gut nervous system, gut brain connection.

Oh my god. I know we could spend much longer than you have. It's very important for people to realize, especially if they're listening to this podcast and we are in the world of mold and parasite and stressors in general, your brain, also your thought process, can release histamine.

If you're stuck in a negative mindset, it impacts the inflammation in your entric nervous system, which is throughout your gut, and it creates a protective inflammatory response.

Oftentimes when we think of fight or flight, when Inflammation, it's bad. It has a negative connotation. And that's the first thing I try to disengage from my clients with chronic stress coming in the door is your body is always trying to protect you and find balance.

When it is chronic, It turns into an issue. mobilizing inflammation, which should be protective, for an extensive period of time. And then why is our nervous system upregulated for extensive periods of times?

Is it the stressors that are around us, the stresses that inside of us? And it keeps going back into that feedback loop because the body loves cycles, it loves its patterns, and it creates repetition.

And then getting stuck in those patterns. It goes right back to it. And so that's why habits, just a simple baseline, like taking it and reframing it from something very complex like neuroplasticity and that brain pattern too, it takes 21 days to build a habit.

Most people are like, you're right. Yeah, yeah. Because your brain is plastic, its creating a new normal. We have to work with the brain and the body to create that new And that helps that gut-brain access start to work the way that it's supposed to.

So when we're looking at helping someone heal, we have to take a both approach. We have look at both the body and we look to look the mind. And if we are missing or ignoring one, We're going to not heal in a triune way, that our body was designed, body, mind, soul.

That is something that I'm so passionate about teaching to people, because a lot of times we'll hyperfixate on the brain, or we will hyper-fixedate the on body.

Yeah. And they will not be on the same page once we're so far into our journey. Yeah, so it's really beautiful to see people wake up to that. That's amazing.

So do you have a certain order that you do them or kind of, I guess, depends on patient? It depends from the patient. Can you give us a little bit of background about like what your kind go-to is for working on gut and what types of things you're looking at and then same thing with the nervous system?

Yeah I love all of that I think that there are simple assessments that people can do to not in a place both nervous system wise or gut wise to get a gauge of where they're at baseline.

So super simple hack I like to recommend for people is your baking soda burp test, fourth of a tablespoon baking, soda, four ounces of cold water, first thing down the hatch in the morning.

How long does it take you to burped? That can be indicative of how much stomach acid you have. How much stomach acid you have is a direct reflection of how much stress that you're carrying, how tight the gut is.

And then if your stomach asset is off, pathogens are much more likely to thrive. So especially if you are caught in this consistent and constant kill, kill pattern, we can do so much by simply supporting the enteric nervous system within the guy by stabilizing that pH.

You can that with digestive bitters, you can with that digestive enzymes. Really I like to do both approach. I like to do enzymes to start, bitters to get those stomach acid secretions back where they need to be.

And then for the nervous system, are you jumpy? Do you sleep with the leg up? You wake up frequently throughout the night? Can you down regulate? At baseline, what is your heart rate?

What does your brain do when you have a moment to still? Are you open to it? And just small assessments where people are usually aware if they've been through a large T-trauma.

But it's some of those small, repetitive traumas that create the same sort of reaction in our body. And making people aware that, again, the body's just trying to protect you.

When it reverts to these, it is just protecting you, so we need to make the bodies feel safe internally and externally. I have a lot of patients that have that recurring SIBO, right?

And it's like, well, if you just, all you do is focus on killing and you don't fix the root cause of the high stress or the low stomach acid. It's just going to keep coming.

Great. So it is important to be looking at constantly asking why, you know, I feel like we're lifelong students, to constantly understanding why things are happening, how they're all connected.

I always tell my patients, I'm like, listen, we're learning together. I am in a calling with a seemingly never ending learning curve. We're always learning something new.

And I think that giving them the permission to be a student of their own body is empowering instead of feeling like They're stuck, they're suspended, and they are at the mercy of other clinicians.

I want them to know like I'm in your corner, I am here. This is your body, this is you journey. We're going to make suggestions, we're gonna come up with a plan.

If any of it feels like it's too much for you in this moment, let's talk through it together and figure out what you need in the moment to feel empowered to take the next step.

They are the expert on themselves, right? Exactly, exactly. And it is freeing to give them that permission to be able to one, say no, say yes, take a break, keep going, go with vigor, and empower them to do that.

It's truly so beautiful and I think a lot of times we look so heavily, we lean so heavy into labs, labs for chronic illness. What do the labs say? Okay, the Labs are a picture, they're a tool in the kit.

We have to utilize how you're feeling from day to day, how your labs can be perfectly normal. You could still feel like crap. Your labs could be crap and you could feel really good.

There's more than just those numbers at play here in your journey. I was always taught labs are there to already confirm what you already kind of suspect or something that maybe you don't see on the surface, but the reality is the person in front of you is most important, right?

How they're feeling, not if the numbers are moving up and down. It's just helpful to put into a full picture, but they're just, like you said, part of the picture.

Part of a picture tool in the kit. Yeah. Now, a lot about parasympathetic nervous system, right? This is kind of main part our nervous that supports digestion.

Obviously, that's kind where that huge gut-brain connection is happening. Give us some tools on how do we help optimize and support the paras sympathetic nervous.

I'm such a big fan of parapsympathy nervous and That rest and digest. But it does so much more than that. Rest, digest, heal, optimize, health, thrive.

The really unfortunate and beautiful thing about the parasympathetic nervous system is only about 20% of those nervous systems fibers. Our body is more prone to be firing with the gas pedal going.

That's how we stay alive. We go into sympathetic mode. So I really like to encourage people to learn to be still, to settle into the discomfort of being still that a lot of times, especially in modern society, our worth is directly connected to our productivity, which is untrue.

And that's never going to allow us a space of healing. I'm still very type A, obviously, but at the same time, at end of the day, I've added nervous system work to my to-do list so that it feels like something I can check out the list, right?

She's going ask you, how do you stay still with six children? We all do nervous system work together. You're teaching them from an early age. We lay with our legs up the wall.

If we need a minute, we take a minutes. So for the go-go-gurus out there, what I really recommend is margin starting. This was really hard for me when I first started working on my own nervous systems and my healing.

I literally started with two minutes, two minute a day of doing nothing so that I could see what my brain would not let go of. So set aside time in your calendar, when the alarm goes off, you put everything down and you just try to be still.

And for the first two weeks people do this, there's so much noise. I bet. It's hard to still Yeah, but it's a practice, right? Like I would say, meditation isn't just you shut your brain off the very first time you do it.

No, it doesn't. Small, start small and bite size. 21 days, right? 21 Days to build a habit. And the other thing that's really beautiful about starting to do that is a lot of times for those of us, people will say it's like ADHD, ADD brain.

It's, like, no, you're just unsettled and you are stimulated. Yeah. and there's probably got strengths, but when you have that timer for two minutes where you doing nothing, the most important things for you to finish for the day will bubble up inevitably.

It'll be like, don't forget about this, you jot those down, go back to doing nothing, and then that's the first thing you get back doing once you're back at work.

And so it becomes a really easy way to continue to accomplish everything that you need to do. Busy does not always mean productive. So it helps quiet the noise, especially if you are a high achiever.

And then laying with your legs up the wall in 10 to 15 minutes helps down-regulate that cortisol pattern, repattern your circulation, gets the gut getting blood flowing back to it.

You're kind of resetting that circulatory pattern. So doing that a couple of times a day, especially along with our cortisol patterns. Yep. Mid-afternoon, early evening, I make all my kids do it…

I can see you with six little legs. We're all lined up. We're all at the wall, we say our night prayers with our legs up the walls. So it's just awesome.

Become, you know, built into what we do and then also just getting back to reality. Get outside, get real sunlit. Love that. Put your phone down. It does so much for our nervous system to live in the present.

And that alone, I've seen so healing for people such as you. There's always those small shifts that are consistent, like taking a deep breath, three deep breaths before breathing.

That's a big one that I always tell people to do. Breath work, you're so right. Do you have any breath work patterns you typically recommend to people?

I kind of give a few and then let people choose what they like. You know, there's the inhale for seven, hold for four, exhale for eight. I think I've heard exhaling a little bit longer than inhaling can kind be a bit more relaxing and get parasympathetic, or the 444. Which ones do you like?

I like the 444 as well. Yeah, me too. the, it's actually like a 10, 10 10. Inhale for 10 so it takes a little bit of practice to get there, inhale for ten, hold for Ten, exhale for two, and then heagling up while you do it for the pelvic floor for The Mamas.

But the whole time I'm also touching my core canister so that I can engage the full core, the front, sides, back. I would say don't jump to it because people will get lightheaded, but making sure you're filling up the hole breath.

Yeah, so that's one to get into a practice or and do that. Yes, and then just get that pattern down and lengthen it out so you can really fill up the whole lung.

It's so helpful, but humming also is so good. And gargling. So any small, simple, free. small, simple, free things. And then if people are like, I don't have time for the small simple free, then you got to get on the biohacks because time is also money and money makes people care a little more.

Not what I like to defer to, but some people that way. So then Flopresso is hands down one of my favorite for ecosystem regulation. so good for the lymph, for that parasympathetic activation, especially with PTSD if people have traumas.

So people don't know about that, it's like basically almost a full body suit that squeezes each individual part. Blood pressure comes in warm. Yes, so nice.

It helps unwind that fascia tissue. And the fascia is really woven around our gut. A lot of people don't recognize trauma and stress binds up their gut, you're running from a bear, the body's not going to stop to poop if you run from the bear.

It's too smart to do that. So starting to connect the brain and the gut again and get them back on the same page to regulate is huge. innately and intimately our bodies were designed so we can't just look at our symptoms in isolation.

That can sometimes be overwhelming for people. So just taking it to a level that works for them and encourages them where they're at and giving them education on the back end once they start to also see the difference in the shift.

Man, it's such a gift. I love that I get to do it. I can tell how passionate you are and, you know, people are lucky to see you as a patient and get that support, that individualized support.

It's huge. Yeah. Well, we've only have a few minutes left. Any big take homes or if you're going to reach for something to help kind of support that gut brain.

Is there any particular, you know, supplements or protocols or anything that you tend to reach for that have been successful for you? Yeah, yeah. You have to be pooping every day.

Yeah. I mean, if you're not agreeing every, it's telling me your gas pedal is going too much. Yep. So I just really like to encourage Bellmover, of course.

Bellcore is one of our favorites and then Digestive Bitters on top because there already is some in there as well. Yeah, um, I always like start with pooping.

The sun shines brighter when you poop every day. So if you're not poopin every Day, don't blame your body is trying to protect you So then I would do really gentle like the gut movement with bowel movement the flowpresso and breath work just to teach people to downregulate Often times those people aren't and they don' even realize that the level of tension throughout their body.

Yeah Um, so that's always my first tip breathe. Yep, poop. Great. Look at the sun. maybe some sleep in there sleep yeah that's usually though i can't even start with sleeper people because they're so wired yeah the thought of sleeping more than their glorified nap yeah is honestly too it's overwhelming for them well a lot of stress gotta start somewhere right so i like somewhere but seven and a half hours of sleep is So critical.

I hear you. When they can get there, it's a win. For sure. Absolutely. Well, you gave us some really great take-homes. We really appreciate it, especially the free one.

It's always nice to be able to figure out how to implement these things to quickly change things. If you're consistent, I could talk to you all day. This is amazing.

So fun. Thank you so much for joining us and for all your expertise. Hopefully, patients come see you, and especially to get that whole approach, mind, body, spirit, soul.

Amen. So good. Thanks so much. Yeah. We'll see you guys soon.