Introduction and Guest Background

Hi there. It's Dr. Jenn, Welcome back. I have a beautiful, brilliant lady. Up next, who has spent her life really changing the lives for others. She practices classical naturopathic medicine and acupuncture, but she really treats the whole person and embodies everything that I believe are healers and our medical system should be doing.

So without further ado, I'm going to welcome Dr. Barbara MacDonald. Thank you so much for being here today. Oh, thank you, Dr. Simmons. It's wonderful opportunity.

I appreciate sharing. Yeah, we have a mutual friend to when I was planning the summit, she called me and she said, you must, must, must speak with her.

So I'm so delighted to have you here today. Can you start off by telling us, how did you get into this space? There's the long story in the short story.

The short story is that when I was in high school, I was sick and I had a form of autoimmune anaphylaxis. But my immune system just made a bunch of mistakes and I'd go into anaphylaxis and my father was an osteopathic physician, a colleague near him. Dr.

Won Kim put me on a macrobiotic diet, and I had never taken a drug in my life. My father just didn't believe in them and the diet worked. So I never had anaphylaxis. After that.

And I remembered that food could be your medicine. And then later in life I thought, Well, I'll be a counselor, maybe I'll be a massage therapist, and then my parents moved to work at the Upper Institute in Florida, and their doctor was a naturopathic physician.

I was like, What's that? And so I decided to find out for myself. And it was just amazing. It was exactly what I was hoping for in my life's work. And finding my way to naturopathic medicine led to Chinese medicine and from Chinese medicine.

I had a person who worked in our clinic who got breast cancer, and she was oh, I want to say she was 25 when she was diagnosed. And most women at that age had never met another woman who had breast cancer of their age.

And so she said, can we start a support group? And it just sort of as things do happen that yeah, more and more women, 25 to 40 came into my practice and they wanted to start a support group.

So I started this part group with them and they just talked a lot and they asked me to facilitate, but it was mostly their group and they taught me so much.

And of course made me care so much about them that all they wanted to do was try and help them. Amazing. Amazing. I want to back up a little bit and talk about that 25 year old that had breast cancer.

Because when I trained and I'm sure when you trained, that was unheard of. And so many women now get dismissed because there are doctors who trained. When we trained and we thought that breast cancer didn't happen to women of that age.

So my question is twofold. First of all, why are we seeing it more and more in this age range? Is there something else going on? Yes, I. I was too young and naive in my practice when Ashley was working at our office and got breast and had breast cancer to know that it was that unusual.

Most of my referrals were coming in Portland, Oregon, from oncologists or breast surgeons, and I just sort of happened to be around people who were younger when they breast cancer was diagnosed.

And then only after, you know, many years, I was like, wow, this is really unusual to have. I had, you know, at least ten women in my connections who had it.

And since then I now it's also commonplace. I moved back to Maine from Oregon in 2010, and it's definitely something's happening. It's a gut feeling. It's also in, you know, in my data, if I look at my how many people I have and the oncologists I work with and we also talk about this, why is it happening in younger women more often?

And the other part of it would be, why are cancers so different now than they used to be?

Early Health Journey and Path to Naturopathic Medicine

So I, I did not treat nearly as many triple negative breast cancers other than cancers such as that. And that's changed too. And all I can think of is the environment that we're exposed to.

And I have a theory of the pathogen. I think the pathogens that we're exposed to over our lifetime can influence our immune systems. I call it immune distraction, for lack of a better word.

So if the immune system is distracted here in Maine, I've seen it with tick borne illness all the time within you know, within months to years, people having tick borne illness.

And if I do a lymphocyte map on them, you'll see that there are natural killer cells and cytotoxic T cells are very deficient. And I think it's because they're over here in inflammation land.

They're they're trying to fight this. They call it a th 17 dominant immune system, white blood cell, inflammatory pattern. And the cells that should be fighting these mutations, which our bodies know how to do and getting rid of them, are unable to do so.

But I think our diet, our environment is playing a major role in other factors that create inflammation are involved as well. But we all know about endocrine disruptors.

Anyone watching this podcast has heard about toxins in the environment that relate to or similar to hormones. They're called endocrine mimicking agents or xeno estrogens.

And there are just simply more and more and more we do an environmental panel and that environmental panel, everybody has plastics in their system. Inuit babies in Alaska who never had DDT ever exposed directly are getting it from the water.

Cotton companies in Mexico can still use it, so it just kind of climbs up and then falls. And it's if they live in our fat cells and the breast tissue has a lot a lot of glandular tissue where these hormones mimicking agents like to live.

Yeah, I couldn't agree with you more. I think that there's no question that it's an environmental thing. It's interesting that you brought up Lyme and other kind of infections, these low lying infections, because for many years, like when I was growing up, you barely heard about Lyme disease, right?

And now you can't throw a stick at someone without hitting someone who has either had Lyme disease, knows about Lyme disease. Like you just hear you. You it's so ubiquitous now.

And I, I believe that the difference is our immunity has taken a huge hit like Lyme should be something that there are an intact immune system can take care of but we're under constant assault.

Yeah, I totally agree. I, I really didn't know what it was when I moved back here, but it definitely caught my attention. And so I started doing more immune testing and testing.

Tick borne illness, including Bartonella seems to be even, you know, another influencer from the tick borne pathogen. And I just think, in general, our whole nervous system is also bombarded by things that it wasn't accustomed to.

We had more downtime when I first started doing this 25 years ago. Even then, people, you know, weren't as stressed out, I think, as they are now. Yeah.

Some of the some of the coping mechanisms that people had they put on the back burner, especially during COVID. So I'm really excited to see people making positive changes in their lives toward creating that inner quiet space.

Yeah, I love that. Creating the inner quiet space. So tell me about your approach to the breast cancer patient and and how it might differ from patient to patient.

MM It really does differ quite a lot. It depends sometimes on how they came to be. In my practice. So if they were sent from one of my oncology associates, they're already just made clinical decisions.

They've already decided that they're had surgery or they are going to be having chemotherapy, and that was their choice. So my plan for them is a method of helping them to get through treatment with the fewer side effects and the fewest long term toxicities.

And then even more, I think interestingly is trying to use synergism. So I'm a person who I don't take very many risks in my life, like my portfolio financially is like low risk and I don't like working in the sphere of working with people in the medical community and natural medicine.

And I wouldn't want to make a mistake. So I have monograph after monograph for every drug so I don't interfere with it. And you fall upon paper after paper of, Oh wow, if you take this together with that, then you can enhance its efficacy.

You know, people who are going to use certain chemo, who take curcumin, the extract from turmeric, they will have much less numbness and tingling of their fingers in their toes and it works synergistically.

So more cancer cells die. And of course what they're going to be eating or fasting, those kinds of things. I work with patients I prefer to help them through and then continue on the the deepest, most meaningful work to me.

In addition to helping someone not have cardiomyopathy during Doxorubicin by taking CoQ10 would be to help them recover afterwards, but really take advantage of this horrible thing that's happened in their lives to find transformation on all levels that cancer isn't this this thing that is in our bodies, it's it's who we are.

And something's happened in our whole system. And maybe there are other opportunities out there to learn about ourselves on an emotional level, what our belief systems might be doing to interfere with our wellness and what foods we could change and take advantage of to be healthier in general.

A lot of the things you do for prevention of recurrence are also great for prevention of heart disease. They help get rid of our menopausal symptoms. If a patient came in not wanting to do conventional therapy and living in Maine, there are quite, quite a few people here who don't want to do conventional treatment.

In Oregon, if Portland was a big city, 90% of my referrals came from the medical community. So I didn't do as much alternative medicine. But since I've been in Maine, I treat all kinds of cancers or people with cancers of all kinds and then they get to drive the train.

Breast Cancer in Younger Women and Environmental Factors

It's really their choice as long as they are understanding, you know, the risks involved in not using conventional therapy. I've had so much learning since being here, mostly from I call them my renegade farmers up north.

They're just these amazing women who just don't have time for breast cancer and they do their own thing and I just help them monitor and they're doing great.

And that would be the other group. And I also haven't given up a general practice and that was intentional. Many of my colleagues are fellows of the American Board of Naturopathic Oncology.

Yeah, they only want to treat cancer. I just feel like working with people of, you know, whether they have irritable bowel syndrome or bladder infections or menopause in addition to treating people with cancer, has helped me maintain a better understanding of the whole body and the whole mind and the whole spirit.

And I love to treat the whole person. Yeah. And and the truth is that people with breast cancer are old people and that you have to address every single aspect.

Yeah, I would love to talk a little bit about those synergistic relationships that you mentioned, because so often what happens is that because the conventional medical doctors are unaware of these synergistic relationships, they usually say, No, don't take that, you can't take that, or that won't help, or it will hurt or it will interfere.

And they say, No, instead of, I don't know, more often than not. So can you talk to us about some of those synergistic relationships with Common Chemotherapeutic drugs or cancer treatments and and your naturopathic approach?

Sure. Early on, I think the synergism that was found to be most commonly used was the Q10 in Adrian Mice or Doxorubicin. So the risk of cardiomyopathy having your heart muscle get weaker during the treatment made it so that people at universities wanted to find substances that would help protect their heart.

And so they gave Coenzyme Q10 to women during treatment, and they found that they had much less cardiomyopathy. They also had much better energy. Coenzyme Q10 is, you know, fuels the mitochondria.

It makes our cellular ATP. And so it worked in a beautiful manner in the space of things such as aromatase inhibitors or Tamoxifen, you can find synergism with things such as green tea.

Vitamin D is very helpful in those fears. I have seen the most recent things that I've been working on making monographs for are for some of the immunotherapy medications.

And I can pull I can pull a file and grab some of those. I wasn't I wasn't really prepared to answer that question. But they are those are ones I haven't memorized.

But there there were several like some immunotherapy you don't want to have green tea with for some weird reason, it actually interferes with the efficacy.

But if immunotherapy is going to be effective, you do need to have plenty of white blood cells. If a patient has enough lymphocytes, they will run a lymphocyte map.

And if it's low, I'll give mistletoe or this or astragalus root. That's so interesting that you say that because I feel like so often people are given these immunotherapies and they don't have the inherent ability to respond.

So we say like, the immunotherapy didn't work and it's just that that person wasn't ready. Right. And there are so many things that you can do to prepare your immune system to be ready so that it can help you.

MM Yeah, absolutely. I think that the treatment plan changes and flexes with every stage of treatment. So if you're doing complementary therapy, helping a person get through surgery with fewer side effects and less bleeding, even if it's just taking some Arnica, Montana after surgery, radiation stopping certain things like the Q10 and the green tea, but using, you know, topical calendula gel, which has great research on it.

And then people are so tired after that that if they're going to be going on to another medication after that, I really

do believe in a three to 3 to 4 week hiatus.

If they if they were given some time between to work on their diet, work on their nutrition, really building up their longevity with adrenal tonic or herbs like ashwagandha.

Rhodiola is one of my favorites. I do a lot of Chinese herbal therapies, so classical pearls is a line of Chinese herbs that my teacher and her crew have created and Vitality Pearls has a lot of Astragalus Root and herbs that promote that vitality from the adrenal glands.

The water element. Amazing. You just said something that I wanted to comment on and I know I can't remember what it was. Oh. You. We were talking about decreased immunity and decreased white blood cell counts.

And I don't know about you, but I find a lot of people at the beginning of their journey already have decreased white cell counts. And it's not because they've had chemotherapy or they've had anything because they these are naive retreatment people, right.

With low white counts. So what's happening there? It could be a variety of things. Previous infections, of course, the first thing we think in Maine is tick borne illness.

So Lyme loves to create a low white cell count and so discovered most recently. That would be one of the things I would strongly consider. But I do have I have a lot of patients with really low white blood cell counts.

I would think of heavy metals as well. Yeah. When patients are done all treatment, I don't do heavy metal detoxification during treatment. I think that that's something that should be.

Wait till they're white cells are a little bit stronger if you're going to liberate those toxins and try to get them out of their system. But heavy metals can definitely reduce the white blood cell count and just toxins in general.

I've I've seen quite a few people. If we gave them a good liver detox, that can be helpful. And if they're not physically fit, exercise can actually stimulate the white blood cell count.

Yeah, that's that's interesting that you said that. But I think it's important for people to know that if you're starting off with a low white count, that's part of your picture.

And there is a reason why, right. That's not an accident. That's part of your picture. And so it's very important to look at your why and figure out why your white count isn't where it should be.

I personally look for a white count over 3.5. I don't know what your what your ranges, but I see people coming in not on treatment with what counts threes and I know that that's how they landed in my office in the first place.

Yeah. Probably played a big role. Yeah. You started to talk about a heavy metal detoxification and the fact that you don't do that during treatment.

Integrative Breast Cancer Care and Treatment Synergy

So can you talk about why and what's happening during that process and why you reserve that for when people are in a better place in general? I just think that if I'm going to be liberating specific toxins, especially a heavy metal which can lower someone's white blood cell count and can independently cause mutations, those toxins are better left where they are until a person's strong enough and healthy enough, and I can really be sure their liver is going to be able to eliminate it.

If you're going to do heavy metal detoxification, that person better have great elimination. So if they're constipated from their treatment and they're just liberating it, it's just getting circulated in their body.

So I really do think that there's a time and a place for for heavy metal detox and during treatment doesn't feel like

that time. Yeah, absolutely. Clinically more.

So I'd love for you to start to talk about how you approach someone who has breast cancer because you really do it in a unique way. And you're looking you're looking at more things than the average doctor is going to do.

I, I have learned to have an intuitive sense about a person when I'm with them and there's a feeling that I get that something's missing and they could be there for their first visit.

And we I sometimes have to send them their treatment plan. That's very left brained and practical afterwards, because this thing is like yelling inside that says there's something going on with this patient that put you put them in your office and not somebody else's office.

So lots of practitioners are excellent at keeping someone from taking the wrong herbs or vitamins or minerals, but because of this intuitive sense that has come from practicing acupuncture and qigong and doing guided imagery with my patients, that feeling just doesn't let me not address it anymore.

So they end up on the acupuncture table and over on the acupuncture table, I would take their pulse, for example, and if the patient if they had a huge wire like you're plucking a guitar string, we call it a wood liver cheese stagnation, pulse, it probably is that they're really, really having a lot of tension.

They usually don't come off that way. So when they're in the office, they seem so calm and so together and you get their pulse and you're like, Oh, that's what this is.

They need to be given permission to not work so hard. So in my framework, which was taught to me by my teachers through the use of qigong, a exercise and form of movement that helps us to step outside ourselves and connect with nature.

Everything falls into those five categories. There's fire, earth, metal, water and wood. I would say most of my patients come in with an Earth Constitution and secondarily would be a wood constitution.

But we all have all of these different elements within us. And when a woman is on my acupuncture table or we're just doing guided imagery from a distance, let's say they're down in another part of the state, the element sort of comes forward.

So let's say a person has this would constitution, they are really successful. They are so good at what they do. They they don't complain that they have to do the hard work of life.

They have arrived in my clinical practice with lists of things they've already read about. They already know that they want to change or have changed their diet.

They have already decided what kind of treatment they want and the stress and tension of all this is causing them to have jaw pain. Maybe the tensions, giving them, you know, their shoulders are really stiff.

Maybe they're getting headaches because they're not sleeping as well. But everybody around them thinks they're doing great like they are. Still have a smile on their face. They're still going to work.

And seemingly perfect, right? Yeah. Yeah. They're really they're really, really. I don't know anything. All humans. You are also very successful. I love my word clients and they have such tender hearts like they they really just need some permission to also create balance in their lives.

The Earth Constitution. When I go to feel their pulse, it's usually it's in the pulse a little bit. It's a slippery pulse in them in the middle, right stomach and spleen pulse.

But it's also a little bit of a layer of we call it phlegm and dampness, but it's kind of like a little layer of edema will be on their legs. They may have a little bit of a belly compared to, say, the fire.

The wood patient may or may or may not. But and that is usually stagnation of QI in their middle. And so if you ask them to relax their body and notice where inside you feel the tension the most, they usually feel it in the pit of their stomach.

So the work that I'll do with them is also giving them permission to live their best life. Let themselves be first that earth element person. They're your schoolteachers, your nurses.

And a lot of the people in the natural health field are also earth element. They are givers. They are people who want to help other people, their loved by helping other people.

And then now they need help. And that is really uncomfortable. They don't like that feeling. They they want to cook the meal for their friend. They don't want their friend to cook the meal for them.

So when we work with someone who is of the earth element, their food is really, really important. And also trying to help them quiet that mind that likes to ruminate.

It might even be just the to do list that's waking them up too early, but that that earth element just needs to have a feeling of being centered and grounded.

And because the breast tissue is the whole breast is represented in the earth element, their tumors could be just about anywhere. And then, you know, the fire, they may they may present having a little giddiness, you know, like that, laughing inappropriately, like out or denial.

The they have more heart palpitations. They're the ones that are likely, you know, monitoring them during their treatments that could affect their heart, would be wise people with the metal element, they women with metal, they will blame themselves.

The every element has an emotion, a body part meridians. The meridian is lung and large intestine for a metal. And that's your inner discernment. So we the lung breathing in, breathing out the large intestine, what we take in, what we release through the stool that person is is a very good at discerning what's going on within themselves and people around them.

But that inner critic is not nice to them. They will be so harsh on themselves that it's like, well, it's because I drink wine and it's really important that they hear the wine did not give them breast cancer.

They may think that it was because they're, you know, somebody they lived with a factory. Now, that definitely could be true, but they're always looking for what to keep and what to get rid of and also grief.

My patients who've lost loved ones within five years of their breast cancer and they are a metal constitution, it's hard for them to get over that and that the lung reading goes up the side of the breast and they they really need compassion for themselves.

Lastly, the water element, patient. There are very few I have found primary water element patients with breast cancer, but every one of the breast cancer patients who chooses conventional medicine ends up in a water deficient state.

So their adrenal fatigue is through the roof by the end, if it wasn't before, which often it is, and they they will be anemic and that deficiency of blood is deficiency of water in Chinese medicine.

That also means the emotion, courage, or like that terrifying fear. They're usually in a place of fear and they they just need to be reassured that it's just because they're anemic.

Everybody with anemia has a lot of fear. They're going to be okay. And giving them hope that when this is over, there going to be a new normal with a lot of vitality and they're going to feel great.

That is amazing. So I actually want to spend the last couple of minutes just really can you talk about all of those states so that people can see themselves in them and just know where they are?

Because this is something that is not at all part of the conventional medical picture.

Immune Support, Detoxification, and White Blood Cell Counts

But I think when people hear themselves and see themselves, they are able to maybe dial in to that. And then I would also love to talk about how what your work with guided imagery.

Okay it might be easier if we do the guided imagery and I take you through the five elements. Would you like to try it that way? I would love. That. Okay. How much time would you like for me to.

We have whatever time you need. Okay. So I always close my eyes and I am not technically savvy, so I have no idea how to put music on without it making my phone start ringing.

So we're just going to go quiet and we're just going to not have any backgrounds and music today. Let's go. Quiet. All righty. So if your feet could be planted on the ground, I'll invite you to imagine that your feet have roots.

If your tailbone could be directed down toward the earth, imagine or try to feel. There are some people who don't see in meditation. Imagine that your tailbone is reaching down, down, down to the earth when you feel a sense of calm by grounding and centering, allow your upper belly to soften.

If you feel in your upper belly that there's a fist or a tied up ball of knots that might be a clue that Earth is your primary element. It could be your secondary.

But one good thing to do would be to take a breath into the upper belly and then out breath in general is a tool that you can use to relax the nervous system.

So we breathe in for a count of four. We hold at the top, and then we allow that exhale to be slow and intentional. We're breathing in for four, holding and breathing out for six.

And as we exhale, we feel the nervous system beginning to soften and relax. If as you relax, you feel that center of your body beginning to melt, we call it the vagus nerve.

And there is starting to relax and unwind and move its way down, down, down toward the hips. If the mind is still active, we need to quiet the mind. If the muscles are strong and tense and tight, those muscles are the flesh, the body part associated with the earth element.

The organ would be stomach and spleen. So as we relax the muscles in the body, the earth element softens and relaxes the shoulders. Drop relaxing the palms of the hands and then the soles of the feet.

And then imagine the nervous system of your digestive tract. It's called your enteric nervous system. Imagine it going somewhere absolutely beautiful, a place in nature where you could rest.

And if you don't see in your meditation, just feel into your body. And you might be able to conjure the image of being somewhere in nature where you're close to the earth, you're feeling centered and grounded.

The nervous system of the digestive tract is starting to calm, and that's freeing up your immune system. Freeing up the digestive nervous system is helping to support your immune system, your liver detoxification even makes your neurotransmitters so you feel happier.

The thing about the Earth element is that we tend to ruminate, we think about something, and then we release it and then we bring it right back and think about it again.

It's really normal. While you picture yourself somewhere in nature, I like for you to bring up the image or the feeling of your favorite tree.

Five-Element Assessment in Clinical Practice

Or you can create the image of one as we move into the wood element liver, gallbladder, there's a feeling different with a tree than there is with the earth.

Even though they're intimately connected, we've relaxed and grounded your center, and now we're inviting the roots of those trees to reach down into the earth, imagining you're stirring the earth with your tailbone.

The beauty of the tree is their strength, their upright nature. That's the aspect of self where you can just do anything. You'll push, pull yourself up by your bootstraps, or you'll just keep going.

No matter how tired you are. If you're a wood element, you will take your supplements all the way through treatment. But I will give you permission not to do that.

Imagine that you are that tree or you're leaning against it and feel that that tree is flexible. The issue with the wood element people is their fantasy stick and driven and they get so much done, but they forget to be at peace within their center.

The way that we remember that trees, this word, energy in harmony. They're not deficient. The trees are not falling down. They're not in excess. The tree is not stiff as a board is the flexibility.

So picture a willow with those branches that are moving back and forth and feel that flexibility. That is a healthy wood element, flexibility, rolling with it, giving yourself exercise, drinking, detox, tea and eating root vegetables.

All of those things will help release wood element people. They are, if they're dominant, secondary in that element, they might get headaches. They might be the woman who had terrible PMS.

When they're off balance, they get really grouchy, especially with their partners. People that are closest. Unfortunately, even our children and the wood energy person does a lot better when they have flexibility.

So a plan is good. Sometimes the plan needs to change while in treatment. Somebody who's wood element really needs to watch those liver enzymes make sure they don't eat rich and sticky foods that are going to make their liver stressed out.

It might be a time to take a break from alcohol and use different herbs that help support their body like burdock and milk thistle. They can interfere with treatments or not within 48 hours.

But really using those the beauty of those root vegetables to help the body to feel more grounded and centered. We're going to move now into the other elements.

So you're still sitting there in this beautiful place in nature and you're leaning against the tree. I would like to invite you to soften the joints in your body.

Those are the tissue of the of the wood element. So the jaw is relaxing, the eyes are the orifice parts of the wood elements are soften the eyes, relax and soften behind each one.

And we're going to invite the mind to relax away from your brow and lean back in your head. The mind is at peace when it's resting within the heart. The mind is actually something related to the heart in that it feels the sense of connection to inner wisdom.

We're moving to fire now. So imagine that your heart is like a beautiful lotus flower. It's floating on a very crystal clear pond. It has the little roots that hang down to stay connected.

It's cooled by the water. So the fire that flames can be cooled. So it cools those hot flashes when we have too much fire. But if you picture the beautiful lotus opening its petals, inviting the mind to float its way down from the head to the heart, if you like, and your heart is feeling palpitations or you're waking so early in the morning with night sweats and you can't quiet your mind with true anxiety, not just going over the to do list, but true panic and anxiety.

And you've asked your doctor for Lorazepam or Xanax, or if your natural urine, your thinning, you're drinking your camomile tea, you're taking GABA with the heart resting, floating its way down, resting quietly within the heart.

This mind can be at peace Placing your hands on your heart if it feels comfortable allowing this fire to quiet. But if you have deficient fire, if the passion is gone, it's not uncommon.

The heart in the fire are responsible for the blood. And if you get anemic during treatment, it's going to make you have anxiety. It's going to make you feel like there's something terribly wrong.

But just remember, that's the anemia. It will get better using herbs such as Sage can help nourish this heart fire. If it's too hot and sweaty skullcap or quiet down, allow the fire element within to quiet and rest.

As you see that beautiful pond across your natural landscape, we're moving into metal. Imagine that in your landscape now you bring in a beautiful big boulder, like one of those big rock rocks on your hike sometimes, or a mountain that you love and imagine.

You could feel the strength of that mountain behind you or moving into lung, large intestine. And notice that when you put that metal element in, you feel a little more stable.

There is a strength comes with it. The metal element calls you. If routine is something that you like, if you're someone who carries a lot of pride and what you do, people who are in the military are often metal element.

Guided Imagery Meditation for Healing

They do great with routine. This element, however, can come with a deep grief. You can have a grief state or a metal state, even if you're not metal. But if as we talk and you're spending some time in your lungs and you're feeling grief, it's important to breathe into that and empty that out, allowing for the free flowing discernment that comes from a healthy metal element, discernment and Chinese medicine means where are you going to keep?

What will you let go of at times like having cancer? It's a time when people make decisions. They're like, Wow, I was wasting my time doing this habit or hobby or having this relationship with someone.

It really wasn't serving me. And sometimes that's the gift of cancer. We don't want cancer to have to learn these gifts, but if we have it, it's an opportunity to say what serves me do I breathe enough?

You think of things like constipation. Can I let things go or do I hold on to things too long? A metal element person in this discernment can get this deficient, meaning you don't do the things you need to do for yourself.

You don't let go of the people or the hard things in your life, and it can get very excessive as well. And get in touch with your own inner critic. We all have one.

But if your inner critic is so loud that you can't have compassion for yourself, that seems like a foreign concept. Then maybe metal is something that you would work with.

Metal is really a beautiful, a beautiful element that we all need within us. So we need to soften and take a breath of compassion, even for the parts of ourselves that we feel have shame, disappointment for not living up to the expectations of others, for not living up to the expectations of ourselves.

Soften the metal, have compassion for yourself. Ask that fire element to bring in a little bit of humor because it's

always something to laugh about or have delight in.

The last element will move into is the water element. If you like, you can place your hands back on your kidneys and your back, or you can put your hands on your lower belly.

For women, we place the right hand toward the skin and the left hand on top. The water element has an emotion of courage. If anybody has been so tired that they're barely able to keep their eyes open and they cry, their water element is deficient.

If someone has felt courage to stand up and to fight and to do what they know they need to do, no matter what their water element is so strong imagining you're somewhere beautiful in nature with a body of water, allowing that water to either be something you put your feet in or perhaps it's buoyant and warm and you could float within it.

Water element corresponds to your marrow of the bones. It starts with bubbling spring at the base of your feet near the ball of your foot. So imagine the water coming up from the marrow, from the feet through the legs rising all the way up through the marrow of the bones in your legs to your hips.

If you can imagine that feeling a well called your lower burner or your lower down chin, it's the well within the pelvic floor, keeping it soft, but allowing that to fill all the way up to your adrenal glands replenishing, rejuvenating, revitalizing your body, awakening the immune system in the wise white blood cells, feeling the energy of courage, rising up your spine, lifting your spine until it plunges all the way up through the neck, into the brain.

The whole nervous system is the water element. So if you have issues with brain fog, if you're somebody who is feeling tired all the time, you might look at the water element as needing support, feeling the energy of the water element, cleansing your mind, and if you like, opening the crown at the top of your head and imagining you could reach up from the top of your head and like my teacher would say, Allow the light from your head to go all the way up to the cosmos, to the heavens, to the stars above, and stir the Big Dipper with that light, realigning yourself with whatever you call spirit energy, opening and remembering that you are part of nature.

Before we come back, I'll invite you to soften the energy within your body and allow your energy field to expand. The state of stress is one where we wrap ourselves tightly in a cellophane wrapper of stress, a state of ease and flow which is required for health.

We relax from the inside, imagining your pores are open and your own energy field is expanding behind you, releasing the past, expanding in front of you, letting go of the future, helping you come right in to this moment.

Taking another breath as you slowly and gently allow the sounds around you to bring you back to the present. When you're ready, open your eyes. Wow. It's fun, right?

That was so powerful.

Closing Remarks and Book Mention

I know your patients are so lucky to have you to provide this perspective, this gift that you truly have. I just heard Lisa Nichols speak the other day, and she was talking about shining your light and remembering that your light is borrowed.

It's not yours and your light is given to you to light others way. And I am so grateful that you are here to shine your light and light others way. Thank you so much.

It was an absolute pleasure to have you here today. Have you did you write a book? Do you have a. I did. I wrote a book called The Breast Cancer Companion, a complementary care manual.

It was a was originally written with Kelly Jennings, a student of the oncology program. She wanted to help download my brain, she called it. And since then, there have been several different editions and it's due for a

rewrite, but it still has a lot of great information in it.

Amazing. Amazing. So if you're not insane and you want you want a little piece of her, please, please make sure that you got the book. And and I'm just so grateful for you to be here today, for you to spend your time with me and for what you do for everyone.

Thank you for all you're doing for everyone. To Dr. Simmons, I really appreciate it. Thank you. It's Dr. Jenn. Bye for now.