Introduction to Fibromyalgia and Guest Bio

any type of illness, particularly a chronic illness. We get stuck in this loop where we start seeing what's missing, right? What's being taken away, what we can't do.

And the more you focus on those, the that's what you see. So we have to kind of purposely shift that back and in the process, We also are often changing our thinking from more of a victim mentality where something is happening to me, right?

Fibromyalgia happened to be. This is Doctor Talks. Hi, welcome. I'm Dr. Roger Murphy. And I am your host of the Freedom from Fibromyalgia Summit. Delighted you're joining us today.

We have Tammy Stackelhaus here, who's a health coach and the founder of The International Fiber Magic Coaching Institute. She's the author of two books, The Fibromyalgicoach and Take Back Your Life.

Her podcast, the Fivromalgia Podcast, is wonderful. Tammy, thank you so much for being here. I really look forward to having a conversation about your experience and what you see with your clients in Fiber Magic.

Thank you. So much. It's a pleasure to be here and I love sharing our stories. Well, Tammy, so you've got quite a story, your own personal journey through fibromyalgia, which led you then to take on this goal of being able to help others with this condition.

Can you share a little bit about your story? Your personal story and then how you decided to become a fibro-malgia health coach and to train others to be a Fibromalgia Health Coach?

Absolutely, absolutely. I think the first part of my story starts like a lot of us. You know, I was one of those kids who was always getting sick. My tonsils taken out as a young age, developed mono when I in junior high, like all the things, right?

And eventually, When I was older, I diagnosed with fibromyalgia. My diagnosis came in 2007. And you know, it was really hard because I also was newlywed.

I had gotten married about six months before my husband and I lived in the same town for a whole month before we got married. We had met online. really hard for him, it was really for me.

But like, you know, just getting married and then also getting this this new diagnosis. And, things got so bad that about a year later, I actually filed for social security disability.

I had this moment where I was trying to clean the house because I have company coming over the next day. and I just ended up like sitting on the stairs, bawling my eyes out because i was still in my pajamas.

Right?

Tammy's Fibromyalgia Onset and Diagnosis

I hadn't had enough energy to get dressed, but yet here I am trying to clean the house and I'm thinking, I can't take care of myself. I Can't Take Care of My House.

Maybe that's what disability is for. So that was like the lowest of the low right there. Well, I'm curious now, prior to that, were you in good health?

Did you have any other health issues? I mean, obviously you had some stuff growing up as a kid, but prior that prior, to really starting getting the fatigue and I guess the pain, did you Not, not really.

I mean, I was one of those people who was basically healthy, but just had these little nagging chronic things, right? Like I had chronic headaches and I have IBS and like nothing major, Those little things that still drive us nuts, of course.

And I had been working at a very stressful job for about nine years. Before I got married, I was the customer service manager for a software company. So I managed the call center, the tech support, like all of that stuff.

I'm sure that chronic stress was my trigger. because right after I left that is kind of when everything fell apart, right? You know how we kind hold it all together while we're doing something, and as soon as it's over, like, yeah.

So you feel like that nine years of a lot of stress eventually caught up with you, maybe just when you gave that up, it was like aha, then you realized, uh-oh, now I'm probably a type A, I would assume.

A little bit. And I share this in chiropractic school, we would study for two, three nights in a row, cramming for the end of the year exams and get little to no sleep, push through.

And then sure enough, two days later, everybody on the whole campus would be sick as a dog because you just do what you had to do, right? And so I think in the fibromyalgia community, if you're type A or even if your type B, you do whatever you have to, do you feel terrible, but whatever got to you, just put up with it.

get through it. But then I think for most people though, there comes a day where you just realize you can't do it anymore. And I guess that's where that you were.

That's what you got into that place. Yeah. Yep. Exactly. I mean, I remember many days where I was sitting in my office and I literally remember having the thought if I could just turn off the lights and crawl under my desk, like I would love a nap right now.

You know, like I was just so exhausted and I would go home and of course I wouldn't hurt. But you know I'm thinking this is just normal life, right? Because like, I've had these little things wrong with me, but, nothing big.

And you, know. I, was really in my twenties, so like 20 year olds aren't supposed to go and hurt after a day of work sitting at a desk, But that was me.

So yeah. So from there, where did you go? I mean, you're 20, 20 in your early 20s. You've got, not really sure what's going on, but obviously you are not doing well at all if you have to give up your job and go on social security.

I'm mean you had, this was a wake up call. Where did reach out and what was your experience reaching out to, I guess, practitioners for help? Yeah, so since I had gotten married, I was on all new insurance.

So I actually didn't, like I, had to start over finding doctors, right? I have been kind of pursuing this a little bit before I got married. Like I said, you know, sitting at my desk being so exhausted.

And I even talked to a few doctors about fibromyalgia, but I mean, this was, you know, early 2000s, so there wasn't a lot out there. I remember one nurse, I had sent them a message and she actually emailed me back and said, "I'm not sure what that is, but I'm like, oh, So, yeah, so I had to start all over, finding a good doctor.

Fortunately, I mean, just did all this on a website, but I just like happened to… I always say this is a God thing because I picked somebody at random that just looked and sounded good on the website.

And it turned out that she had actually, fibromyalgia was actually one of her focus areas in med school. So she actually knew what to do with me. I cried all the way home because finally found somebody.

practitioner or they were able to help you to then overcome your fibro? She helped me get started. I've had several great doctors in my life. What often happens for a lot of people, I definitely see this in clients, you'll have a doctor who's really great who gets you started, but at some point there's something that you need that they just don't have.

Whether it's you've got other conditions going on that need to be managed, or whatever. So she definitely got me started. She, I remember leaving her office that first time with like a handful of prescriptions and you know, it's just my attitude at that point was I'm not working.

I don't have another job. My only job is to get better. So what do I need to do? And I started reading all the books. Yours was one of them. As I was doing all my research, I sort of started experimenting on myself, right?

Like if I do this, how do feel? If I try this how I feel. And kind of just going through all of that. But in spite of all that, about two years in I just like had this moment where I saw the trajectory of my life.

Right? Where I saw every medication is making me gain weight. And I thought that, yeah, I'm kind of treading water, but I am not really getting better.

I could look into the future and see a future I did not want.

Finding the Right Doctor and Early Treatment

Right. So I made an appointment, talked to my doctor. Fortunately, she had a health coach in her office. She connected me with my health. Six months later, my life looked completely different.

Wow. Yeah. And it's just that support of having somebody to help you actually do the thing, right? I think a lot of us know what we should do, you know, eat better, get good sleep, like all of those things, but doing it is so hard and fitting it into your real life is hard.

Yeah. I like that you shared that this became your full-time job. You weren't working and you realize, okay, well, this is my new job now is to get well.

And I think there's a lot of folks that are watching, they're thinking, yeah, I've been I had to do that for a number of years, but I'm just kind of spinning the wheel.

You know, I just can't get off the hamster wheel and unfortunately I think there's just not a lot of practitioners or even health coaches out there who really understand fibromyalgia.

So it does turn out to be a journey that oftentimes ends in hopelessness and we're changing that with the summit and your podcasts and thank your books.

But it's expected that if you've got an illness that people don't really understand and conventional medicine or even functional medicine, practitioners really don t know how to get you to the next level, you get a little discouraged.

Absolutely. I mean, that was my moment, right? I even had a doctor who knew what to do with fibromyalgia, but I still hit this point where I was just sort of treading water.

And I think Too often, we think we're trying to find the magic bullet, or we are trying find THE provider who will help us. And it's really, it takes a team, you know?

It takes the whole team of people, and it take a lot of different things, trying a lots of things. There's no one magic answer. I really realized during that time that I wasn't going to one thing that was going make me 100% well.

But I could find things that would give me 2% and 5%, and I can add up all those little bits and eventually get there. So it made me more open to trying some of those things, that helped a little bit, because I knew I would add all of

these little things together.

Right? Yes. So people get the diagnosis and I really think once they get to diagnosis, that's really the beginning of their journey. Prior to that, it was hit and miss, a bunch of tests, bunch practitioners, no one really knows, but eventually someone says, oh, well, we don't know what you got, so we'll just call it fibromyalgia.

Now I know that sounds kind of facetious, I mean it is kind like that. You finally get it to the point, someone gives you the diagnoses and a lot of times the thinking process is, finally, somebody knows what I have, they're gonna be able to help me, I'm not crazy.

But then you run into, well, you just have to learn to live with it. Right, right. And that is not encouraging. I think that a certain amount of that relief of, oh, thank goodness, someone knows to do with me.

Now I am gonna find help. Like, that I totally valid, because we've been wandering around in the dark and we finally have found somebody with a flashlight, But then to be told, ah, but there's, you know, we don't really have very good treatments or there is not a lot we can do about this.

Like that's just like turning that flashlight right back off. You know? It's so hard. And that is why I have made it my mission, and I know you have too, to like make sure people know that, there are things that can be done.

Yeah, I mean, and many of the interviews, we've made a point of sharing the fact that fibromyalgia is very much treatable. And I don't have all the answers.

Jacob Tadebam doesn't' have answers, Neil Nathan doesn' t have the answer, Tammy Stackelhaus doesn t'have all answers but what we do have is a track record of working with, depending on the practitioner, in my case, thousands of patients over the years.

And we have a track record of showing what are some of the common things that really do move the needle and can make a big difference. But I do agree.

I think it has to be a team effort. You have to proactive because patients that I work with, they know going in that, I'm going to ask things of them changing their lifestyle, changing some their unhealthy habits, change in their diet, things I am going expect of that if they don't do that.

If they don't show up and be a team player, we're not going to get to where we need to go. And I've admitted this on some of these interviews, you're so right.

I run into patients and my track record's pretty good. But there's patients that I get them to a certain point and I think, I'm just not smart enough.

You know, what else to do with this individual? And then I feel bad about that, but I That's just the way it is and that's why it's really important to educate yourself, make yourself a priority to invest in yourself.

Knowledge, knowledge, like your podcast. You could listen to Tammy's podcast and get one thing out of that podcast that told you that I don't even know what it was, but it's some ah-has.

Oh yeah, that's why I'm not sleeping at night. It's that kind of mentality I think we want to nurture. Absolutely. And foster that idea, right?

Why Fibromyalgia Needs a Team Approach

Right, because when we as patients go into a doctor's appointment, if we're not well-educated, then we are kind-of making decisions about our health in the dark.

Like, okay, whatever you tell me to do, I do not know if that is really right for me or not. I don't really even know how

that medication is working. Like we need to be educated as patients.

I mean, it's our bodies. It's, our lives. We need, we to know, and we, to have a say in that. And I think the most, the, most empowered patients are the ones who tend to improve the.

Because they're taking ownership of that and I, mean it, part of why my book is called Take Back Your Life, right? We get to be in control of our lives again, but we have to have the education to do that, right?

I totally agree. I find my patients, the more they understand what's going on with them and what we're trying to The better they do because they're able to be a participant in this whole process.

That's why I like health coaching, especially your health, coaching which focuses on fiber managers, specifically the people that you trained that are your students that's trained to do this.

So I think it's great. Do you, do you find working with, I know you've worked with hundreds of clients and you got students at your work with that or your training, Do find that stress Whether it's acute stress or chronic stress, it is really the straw that breaks the camel's back that's the trigger that kind of brings all this on.

Um, I can, yes and no. So it depends on what you mean by stress, right? Like chronic stress like me at my job for some people, that's the thing. And I, and I kind of think that really for anybody, if it goes on long enough, it's a thing, but sometimes that stressor is a car accident or, you know, having a baby, should be something good, positive, but because of all the stress and not enough sleep and everything else, boom, fibromyalgia, right?

So I do think that there is always some kind of trauma slash stress trigger and stress. Even overstimulated, I mean, that's stress for some people. Exactly.

And I do think that managing our stress, calming down our overactive fight or flight is one of the keys to, you know, feeling your best. I definitely noticed, when my life gets a little bit more crazy, I get a bit a more tired and that's like my early warning sign.

You better get that back under control if you want to stay feeling good, So, do you find that there's one key thing, and you just mentioned bouncing the nervous system, the fight or flight, parasympathetic and sympathetic, but do find there is one thing that as a health coach, you really have to focus on because it's something that most people don't realize is important in fibromyalgia?

Yeah, so there's actually a few things. I mean, I think it's super important that you look at your sleep and your thyroid and you're adrenals and look those neurotransmitters and nutrition and all of those things But underneath all of that, and the answer that nobody wants to hear, I guarantee as you're listening to this, you are going to not like what I say, it's our self-care, our Self-management.

And that self management, that Self care, caring for yourself, is the motivation behind everything, right? I discovered that I kind of treated my body like it was, you know, that printer that didn't work.

And I kinda would cuss at it and like smack it around and, like, force it to do what I wanted it. I was the only one that's broken three or four printers.

But I treated my fibro body that way, right? Because it wasn't doing what I wanted it to do and it was responding the way I want it it respond. And so I would push through things instead of resting when my body was clearly telling me I need rest, but also just that motivation of why we do what we.

Why are you taking your supplements every day like you should? Why? Are you going to bed earlier than maybe you want to? why are You choosing that food instead of this food, right?

And it all has to come from this place of Looking towards our healing. I'm not talking about, I can't do that because of fibro. What I am talking is I choose to do this so that I feel better and focusing ahead on our health and on

healing and really making those choices that lead us to that future instead of to the other future that we don't want.

I think self-care is crucial. And I shared this on an interview or two that I'm kind of guilty because I am really focused on the biochemistry and the physiology.

I love all that. So it's about nutraceuticals and very judicious use of prescription medication if needed. But also I do realize the importance, and more so today than ever before, over the last couple of years, everything we've been through, just the important to making time to nurture yourself.

If you don't do that, I think that you sabotage your trajectory, where you can get.

Self-Advocacy, Education, and Empowerment

You're only going to get so far because if you're locked in that stinking thinking or that woe is me, that's not to step on anybody's toes. I'm the worst patient in the world.

I don't get sick very often, but when I do, my wife will tell you I am the biggest baby. So, I totally understand. But we have to accept where we're at and then decide, okay, what do I need to do?

And then do it. And one of those challenges, I think, just changing your diet and people really kind of, you know, and I understand it's hard. It's not easy, but if you have an illness like fibromyalgia, You've really got to be vigilant about what you do and what don't do.

around, you know, based on the parameter of what's going to get me closer and closer to getting my life back. And focusing on like choosing health, you know.

I remember sitting at one point and just like I had a headache, I didn't feel good, and you, know, trying to decide, okay, what am I having for dinner?

And this thought went through my head of, well, What do you want to feed? Do you Want to Feed the Sickness, right? Or do You Want To Feed The Health? And do I want to choose things that are going to move me towards health?

Or am I going choose the things, that maybe aren't? Now, just to be clear, there is totally a place for Netflix binging and eating a pint of ice cream.

Just to say. But, you can't do that every day. Right. And we've got to make the choices that move us closer to health. I think this is one of the things that I love so much about working with clients as a coach is that you hear things like this.

You've probably heard several people talk in this summit about making changes like these, but at the end of day, you go home and you say, How do I do this?

And that's where we really help people as coaches. We can dig into your life and say, okay, so what if you did this and this, and give you ideas and actually make it really practical so that you can make those changes.

Have you seen that there's a particular issue, a hormone issue that you think is common across the board, the fiber? I'm thinking of one, two right now, actually three, I guess three.

Is there some commonalities with fibromyalgia that look at hormonal deficiencies and fibromalgia? A hundred percent. Thyroid is one of the absolute first things I talk to clients about in my training programs.

I actually spend a whole module going through, you know, your thyroid, what it does, how to read the labs, all of things. And it's so funny because I could really honestly count on one hand, the number of students I've had who did not have a thyroid issue.

Now, most of them did not know they had one, right? And probably about half of my students have ended up being diagnosed with Hashimoto's, which is autoimmune thyroid.

So for me, and that's part of story too, I have Hashimoto's. But that is like the key thing that I find that People aren't looking at, they're not running deep enough labs.

They're just running a TSH and thinking that's enough and it's not. So that the first biggie, but you know, all of these things do play a factor, right?

Like all our hormones, nutritional deficiencies, like all those things play factor. So I find about 70% of my patients have a problem with their thyroid, either that's not been properly diagnosed, maybe the beginning of Hashimoto's thyroiditis, this autoimmune disease, or they're on the wrong medication.

And in the summer now, one of the days I do a specific deep dive, I think it's a 20-minute video, all about thyroid. Then I interview some people about the thyroid issues as well.

I think it's so important that we share that information that most people are not getting the proper testing because as you know, if that's the case and we can get them on the right protocol for their thyroid issue, it can be a real game changer for a lot of people.

Absolutely. And you've got to realize that fibromyalgia, fibro is an amplifier. So it takes anything else that you have and cranks the volume up. Whether that's you got a bad neck and you It cranks that up, but also something like thyroid disease, like all of those symptoms are very similar to fibromyalgia, right?

Joint pain, muscle pain fatigue, all these brain fog, I'm not talking about fibro symptoms as I list those, i'm talking thyroid symptoms. So if you have that thyroid issue and you and have fibomyalgio that's amplifying it, right?

And we treat part of it, it can bring that amplification down, right. So if we can take the thyroid piece out of the equation, then there's less there for fibromyalgia to amplify, brings your pain down brings, your fatigue down.

So this over amplification, that's a common theme in a lot of the interviews. You know, it's what we see in fibromyalgia, they're revved up. So part of their nervous system is on high pillar alert, the sympathetic.

The calming part in their system, is the parasympathetic is pretty much dormant. And so for me, typically the first thing I kind of look at is balancing their neurotransmitters, their brain chemicals.

Neurotransitters are all over your body, but looking at serotonin in particular, if they are really have some anxiety issues and a lot of those with fibromyalgia do because of this over-amplication of the nervous system.

I find I got to settle that down first because if I try to give them some energy, which they all want, it backfires.

Stress, Nervous System Overload, and Key Hormones

Yep, serotonin was a big thing for me. I was on, at one point, three or four different things that affected seratonin. You know, a couple of antidepressants, tramadol, which does a little, you know SSRI.

And then, and I still was low. So, you know, since then I've done some genetic testing and I know my body just doesn't make serotonin well. So that's a huge piece of it.

But for me, the other neurotransmitter that was a massive game changer was norepinephrine. Because nerepinephrine is the part that actually makes me want to do the things I need to.

Right? That's that motivation piece. And so for me, I can always tell when I need to, like, get better about taking my supplements or maybe make an adjustment.

When I just kind of don't feel like doing the things that I know I needed to do, my norepinephrine is off. Unfortunately, there's not a really go-to test for fibromyalgia.

The FMA test, I think there is some debate about that. I personally think that it's a test that can be beneficial, but there are still some debates about it.

But what we do see is across the board, is that those of fibromyalgia tend to be low in serotonin and in, as you mentioned, the other neurotransmitter norepinephrine or adrenaline.

And seratonin is a very calming, relaxing hormone. It's your happy hormone, it helps raise your pain threshold needed to help you get in that deep restorative sleep.

Norepinephrin, on the neurotransmitter that gives you drive, ambitions, zip, go-to, it too has some pain blocking abilities as well. But what I have found is we don't get that serotonin level up first, calm everything down, if we try to get the norepinephrine level of too quick it backfires.

It's just too much. So I usually start people on 5-HTP and some other key things synergistically that go with that. The thing I've developed called the Fibroformula.

But eventually then I look at, okay, can we get them on L-Phenylalanine or S-Adenosamethionine and CME, which are stimulating, but only after we've calmed everything down.

And then, then and only then would we try that? Yep. Yep, and that's exactly the pattern of my journey. First we discovered the serotonin, started on 5-HTP.

That's one supplement I never let myself run out of and then moved on to the others. Absolutely. Because we are so revved up. We are stuck in that fight or flight.

I'm sure every person listening, if I talk about laying in your bed at night with your mind all of a sudden thinking of the million things you need to do, Right?

Like we all can relate to that. And so I think part of that too is, and you know, you were asking about what hormones, cortisol is another huge one there because we end up with our cortisol at the wrong times and in the right amounts.

So getting that straightened out was a big piece for me as well. Now, you mentioned self-care, so we're talking about nurturing yourself and self care.

Well, can you give some examples of things that people could do on their own that would benefit them day in and day out with this condition? Absolutely.

So there's two things I would recommend that are super easy that you could start right now. The first one is to start tracking your steps. You might already be doing this, maybe you're wearing an Apple watch, have a Fitbit, you know, keep your phone on you, whatever.

But I want you to think about those steps differently. What I wanted you do is think what number of steps, where do you feel good, right? So if you are feeling exhausted, look at your number steps.

That's too many. right? But in that sweet spot where you feel good, how many steps is that? And start using that as your maximum and start thinking about budgeting your steps, right.

So early on when I was really sick, first diagnosed, my maximum was honestly about 2000 steps. That's the number two and three zeros, not 22. And I figured out that, you know, going to Costco was like 500 to 1000 steps So, you know, in the afternoon after work, if my husband says, hey, let's go to Costco, I could look at my pedometer and know whether I should say yes or no, because I can look and see, do I have the budget for this?

Right? And of course, your steps will change over time as you get better. You'll naturally add more steps. But as a way of budgeting your energy, and it's not perfect, right?

You can spend lots of energy like us sitting here doing this under the bright lights that uses a lot of But I have no steps, so it's not perfect, but it still a better way than just blindly guessing where that line is of when I've done too much.

So that's the, that my first suggestion is to start watching your steps. Start thinking about budgeting, using your. And then the second thing is I haven't exercise in my book called the joy list.

There's even a podcast episode where I go through this, um, start writing down the things that bring you joy. Write down things that are things you can do, things, you cant do like if you love gardening, but you cannot do it right now, still put it on your list because we can start figuring out how to add aspects of that back to your life.

But with fibromyalgia, we get so focused on what we cant' do and we start feeling like our whole lives are like this massive taking away of things. Right?

So we've got to be a lot more proactive about adding in the joy of life. And you know, the right at the very top of my list is rubbing the belly of happiness and joy, which is petting my cat's big fuzzy belly.

You know? I mean, it doesn't have to expensive. It doesn' have take a lotta time. But really recognizing what are those things that bring you joy and how can you add more of that in?

Because life isn't about like waking up, suffering through the day, going to sleep and doing it all over again, right? Like we've got to add that joy back in.

And that helps us then increase our capacity for, okay, now that I'm feeling a little bit of joy, it makes me want to go out and maybe do some of those thing that maybe are a bit harder.

I love that. And Eleanor Stein, I know if you don't know of Eleanore Stein and Dr. Stein. She mentioned in her interview, Dr Doge and his research about the neurotransmitters that are wired together, fired together.

We set up this pattern that is creating this pain that really is hyper, you know, it's produced in an accentuated way, should not be that way. And we have the means just by our thinking things that we can do.

We can change how those nerve signals are being released over a period of time. It's fascinating research.

Self-Care Strategies: Steps and Joy List

about halfway through his book, and it's really a great book. I'm so happy that she recommended it. But it goes along with what I've said, I know you say as well, is you've got to change this conversation in your mind.

That's where you first of all, just recognize that. And then start taking those steps. And I think that's beautiful that you've, you, I talk about the our power or finding that, that gratitude, where you're grateful.

You know, yeah, it's a bad day. Uh, if you don't feel good, but you know what? The sun's out, whatever it is, just finding something to be grateful for and going with that.

Over a period of time, Just that energy alone can start to make permanent changes in how you experience pain or any of the symptoms of fibro. Absolutely.

The more we focus on something, the more that's what we see. You start seeing red cars everywhere. So if we start being grateful for my cat sitting on my lap and purring, right, then we start seeing more things that we can be grateful for.

And I think so often with any type of illness, particularly a chronic illness we get stuck in this loop where we Start seeing what's missing, right? What's being taken away?

what we Can't do and the more you focus on those the More that that's what you see. So we have to kind of purposefully shift that back and in the process We also are often changing our thinking from more of a, almost a victim mentality where something is happening to me, right?

Fibromyalgia happened to be and, you know, these things with my doctors happened too me and I had no control to more than empowered mindset where we're actually making choices for our lives and we have more control over lives.

I might not be able to have control when I have my next flair, but I do have over what I how I choose to think about that, what I chose to do around that.

And how empowered I am with my doctors, with family. There's a lot of choices we can make. Yeah. So speaking of choice as we wrap things up, I want to ask you, What have you found to be probably the most important four or five, six things, whatever it is, half a dozen things in changing the diet?

Are there particular things that you encourage your clients to steer clear of? some things that are just, they're absolute no-nos. What are some of the potential game changers in people changing their diet?

Yeah, definitely. So when I approach diet with my clients, there's really only two goals. Number one, avoid the triggers. Don't eat things that make you feel bad.

And that can be different for each of us, right? Like there are some common ones I'll talk about in a second, but we all have our own things too, and then the second thing is making sure you've got the building blocks.

Right? If you really want your body to heal, you've got to make sure it's got the tools to do that. Right. Like if you want to build a house, You've gotta have the lumber.

So if our body's going to heel, make you're eating enough protein. You gotta make all the right nutrients. avoiding triggers and having the building blocks you need.

And in terms of like some specifics there, the main specific for building block is protein. We need more protein than the average bear and most of us don't get it enough at all.

So if you can do one thing in your diet, start focusing on how much protein are you eating and how can you add more in. That might mean having a protein shake or, you know, maybe you sprinkle nuts and seeds and cheese and I don't know what on everything that you eat, right?

Like just find little ways to add more. As far as what not to eat. There are a couple biggies that are no-nos for everybody. The first one is glutamate.

So like MSG, monosodium glutamine. They did a study at OHSU in Oregon where they were looking at the effects of glutamate on fibromyalgia patients. And the people who got plain water were fine.

Every single one that got the glutame had a fibroflare. Some more severe than others. One person even ended up in the ER, I believe, but glutamate 100% for sure is going to make your symptoms worse.

The other biggie is artificial sweeteners.

Diet, Protein, and Common Food Triggers

You're better off having actual sugar, although you shouldn't have too much of that either, But it is a better choice than like NutraSweet, Splenda, those kinds of things.

Those will definitely make you symptoms worst. So there's one do and two don'ts to start with. But when I'm working with my clients, we really talk about like their situation and their diet, right?

Because if you have somebody who's already, you know, maybe they're eating meat and potatoes, I talk to them a whole lot less about how to add protein inks, they are already doing that.

but if I am talking to somebody, who mostly eats, bread, pasta, then we're going to have a different conversation, right? So those are some things there to kind of get you started.

Well, I think it's important to highlight what you said about the protein, because that is so important, cause that's where the amino acids, the building blocks of protein.

These amino acid sequences, these chains of amino assets are what make the neurotransmitters, what makes some of the hormones, including thyroid, by the way, as well as serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine, gamma-immunobutric acid, glutathione.

I mean, you have to have these amino-acids, and if you're deficient in them, Uh, one of the things we see in fiber managers across the board, they're deficient in tryptophan, which would turn into serotonin, L-phenylalanine which turns into norepinephrine, some of branch chain amino acids, isoleucine, leucene, um, a few others that are really important for, for as you, as, you say, kind of like the building blocks to be able to make these hormones and make the body work like it's supposed to so it can repair itself.

And that was something that I learned. kind of in the very beginning of really working the fibromyalgia, just the importance of amino acids. And that's why I'm a big believer, not only in monoamino therapy, single amino therapy like a natural drug, even though it's a supplement, and then also combinations of the amino acid, which are in my fibro formula, because without that, you don't It's hard to get enough of those amino acids, it's almost impossible.

So I think it has been a really important part of my practice. No one's really brought that up, so thanks for sharing that. It was a huge key for me. I can look at several points in my journey where it was like a bigger step forward than others, and discovering this piece was one of them for my, absolutely.

Tammy, this has been great. We'll have to do it again. I'm going to get you to come on my podcast. Speaking of podcasts, Tammy where can they go to find out more about you and in particular about your books in the podcast?

Absolutely. So the podcast, it's got a super hard name. It's the Fibromyalgia podcast. If you just go to wherever you like to listen to podcasts and type that in, you'll find it for sure.

But we also can be found at fibromialgiapodcast.com. We do post, You can listen online there. so if you're like podcasts, what's that? just goto fibormyalgiaponcasts.

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You can just go to books in the menu and you get a free download of either of those books there. And pretty much anything you need from me, You'll be able to find at fibromalgipodcast.com.

Great. Hey, thanks so much. This has been great. I really enjoyed spending some time with you. Thanks so much for having me. It's been a blast. Thank you for tuning in to Dr.

Talks. We hope today's episode has enlightened and inspired you on your path to optimal health. Each day is a new opportunity to make choices that empower your wellbeing.

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matter to you most.