Introduction and Guest Background

Welcome to this episode of the Reverse Alzheimer's Summit. I'm so excited to introduce you to my friend and colleague, Christine Shaffner. She's a board certified and private doctor who has helped thousands of people recover from chronic or complex illness through online summits.

Her Spectrum of Health podcast network of Eminence health clinics and renowned online programs. Doctor Shaffner goes beyond biological medicine, pulling from all systems of medicine and healing modalities, helping her patients to reclaim their wellness and reveal their brightest light.

Yet she also trains providers. And I feel so fortunate to have her here tonight. Thank you so much for joining us. Oh, thank you so much for having me.

So I know you have what really made me want to reach out to you was that you have a brain hygiene guide, and we are here to talk about the brain, how to prevent and even reverse cognitive decline.

So you where do you start when it comes to healing the brain? Yeah, it's a great question. And I'm so glad that you're doing the summit because, you know, I feel, you know, in modern life our brains are increasingly more and more in trouble.

Right. And, you know, with the work you do, I think all of us, you know, who love this work. We want to support our patients and aging gracefully and having, their outer years be some of the best, most rewarding time of their life.

Brain Health Checklist: Mouth, Sinuses, and Lymphatics

And I think it's so heartbreaking to see so many people in an increasing rate lose the ability to, you know, connect in the way that they know how to utilize all their wisdom that they learned, you know, throughout their life.

And so I, I'm really I'm grateful for the work you're doing. And I think it's so important. And if you're listening on out there and, don't have any symptoms, I think all of us have to, you know, be aware and all of us have to live a lifestyle of being aware of the things that I think we're up against in what I call the modern terrain.

Right. So we live in this time that we are just unfortunately assaulted by, you know, a lot of environmental factors that, over time can be, bio accumulate in the central nervous system.

And the peripheral nervous system can be what we call neurotoxins. And neurotoxins, I think are at the root of a lot of, the neurological symptoms that we see today.

And I'm happy to go through that. So I, you know, when I think about healing the brain and recovering the brain, I, you know, do my checklist. And one of the things that we can't ignore, especially with my view of, I'm, I'm studying and educating people about bio regulatory medicine.

And, and this is a form of medicine that came out of Europe. And it's really, just another lens to look at the body. But the, the premise of bio regulatory medicine is that the body is always trying to self-regulate and heal no matter what's going on.

And so if we have the states of disease or imbalance, something is interfering with that capability, for the body to regulate and adapt and be resilient in light of life, stress and so, you know, again, whenever we're thinking of the brain and our overall health, I know that you probably have educating about this too is about the dental connection.

And so we just always, you know, that's one of the first things I just ask people about their dental history. And we just do that, you know, checklists.

Have you or do you have amalgam fillings, you know, so if you do have we help you get rid of them. If you have them, that's step one. But we need to also support that.

Neurotoxicity. That's a bio accumulated over, you know, a lifetime of the amalgam and help to reduce that. And we can talk a little bit about that. We look at root canals and we look at cavitation.

So we're looking at basically either disease kind of necrotic bone or root canals that can harbor infection. And we know there's a huge oral connection in the oral microbiome.

And I know that they've been linked to certain oral microbes to, cognitive decline. So it's a very important connection I feel. So we look at the mouth, I also look at the sinuses.

And I know you study with doctor medicine and, you know, the whole, you know, connection between and how Alzheimer's and that our environment impacts our brain in so many ways.

So it's not only the environmental factors of mold, but also what can, disrupt the, sinus microbiome. Right. And what can that, basically create what I think of as sinus dysbiosis, whether that's bacterial overgrowth or fungal overgrowth.

And then just think of anatomy. Right. And the sinuses are so close to, you know, basically there's an entry way into the brain through the sinuses. So we know we can get mutations, you know, into the brain through the sinuses.

And so if we have kind of a factory of, this biotic flora that could be, leading to brain inflammation and, cognitive decline. So I'm thinking of those things.

Heather, you know, when I'm going down my checklist, I'm like, okay, what's going on in the mouth? What's going on? The sinuses? I don't want that to interfere for the deeper work that we need to do.

And so, the next big thing that I'm really a big proponent of educating people about is, the lymphatics system. And when we think about brain health, we think about the lymphatic system.

So a big key of, having a healthy brain and recovering someone's brain is making sure their lymphatic system is basically draining and working well. And, especially at night when we sleep.

And this is why sleep is so important for many reasons. But we need to have these, basically very deep, basically deep sleep and REM sleep in order for our combat system to work.

And that is, and I can describe this in more detail or, or not, but, this the, the notes is that our brain shrinks at night and lymph bathes our neurons and remains waste.

And if that's not happening, then we can have a buildup of amyloid beta or other toxicants or microbes that are going to create, over time, neurodegeneration.

Neurotoxins and Heavy Metal Exposure

And so, that is the backdrop that I'm always looking at, you know, mouth, sinuses, detect system, lymphatic system. When I'm thinking about, okay, what's next?

And I know I can talk, you know, keep going on and on. And so I, I'm happy to pause and then we can talk about, you know, what gets into the brain that really disrupts, you know, communication networks and leads to unfortunately, neuronal cell death and, cognitive symptoms.

But I'm so glad that you get you're bringing these things up, right, because it's absolutely critical to brain health that our gut health is good and gut health starts in the mouth, starts in the sinuses.

These are all connected. And so thank you for just like, highlighting that, our friends and colleagues are also on here. Chip Whitney is a medical doctor who talks extensively about oral health and the connections between dental health and brain health.

And so head on over to his talk on this, on this summit. And then also, doctor Tom is talking about the lymphatic system in, in lots and lots of detail.

He teaches on this subject. So anybody who's interested can dive into those subjects in more detail. And I want to keep going with you on the next steps of what we can do.

And it sounds like you're alluding to maybe some toxins that can start to interfere with cognitive function. So go for it. So we and so when we look at, you know, the you know, again, the things that we're bombarded with that can become a neuron toxins.

And so neurotoxins have an affinity for neurons. So they're called lipophilic. So they're fat loving. And again and basically embedded in neuronal tissue or, you know, our brain essentially.

And when that happens that can, bio accumulate over time and that disrupt communication networks in the body and disrupt cellular function. And then you see basically this, slowing down, transmission of neuronal signals and, slowing down of cellular communication.

And it just leads to the slowing down and breakdown of communication. And, you know, there can be, you know, essentially neurons die. And that leads to, you know, these symptoms, obviously. Right.

So there's some even buckets that we look at. And heavy metals are obviously a back end, you know, that we look at when we're thinking about, healing the brain and recovery in the brain.

And and we think about I've already mentioned, mercury. We know mercury is a known that our toxin affects astrocytes. That can create a lot of inflammation in the brain.

We know lead is a big one as well led. We even test our children, you know, when they're, you know, very young for their lead levels in the blood. Because we know that that can damage their IQ once they're, you know, get lead in the brain.

So letters, you know, very, important to look at. And I want to highlight aluminum because aluminum I think is a very important heavy metal to be aware of.

And we're really kind of in this age of aluminum. But, there's even a documentary called The Age of Aluminum. It's made in Europe. And, and it, essentially talks about how we're, you know, in our food system, it can be in our water.

I mean, our medications, potentially even our and aluminum can be, highly inflammatory and it can be, definitely, when it gets into the brain, it can be associated with symptoms, on the autism spectrum as well as, you know, Alzheimer's and cognitive decline.

There's a professor Chris Exley out of the university, and he's looked at postmortem, the brains of patients with Alzheimer's. And they had a statistically significant more aluminum in the brain.

And so aluminum, can create what we call neural vascular inflammation. And it can be, you know, very, again, creating a lot of, inflammation and, leading to cognitive decline.

So I think aluminum is something to be aware of. How do we get rid of aluminum and how we get things out of the brain? I'll maybe talk about that together with, you know, detox strategies.

But it's something to be aware of. And, you know, again, just, you know, feel empowered to just start looking at in

your life and how you can reduce exposure, because that's a really big part of, you know, treatment and try to reduce exposure as much as possible.

So, you know, heavy metals are, you know, very important. And then, you know, I also think when we're thinking about, I to go into different directions, let me just go to the toxicants right now.

So we got heavy metals. We also have, you know, I think, I would consider electro smog, environmental toxicant that can be a neurotoxin right now. So we think about cell phones and Wi-Fi and things that have is highly interconnected and going to make our life really exciting a lot of ways.

But they don't come with, cost right. And I think that we're learning more and more how they can disrupt, you know, our brain health through the work of Doctor Murray Paul and his work with looking at, you know, how the increases a lot of something called peroxide nitrate that can be highly inflammatory in the brain.

And also, can deplete melatonin and go to final levels. So, you know, thinking about, you know, that, glyphosate is a, active ingredient around on and there's so much awareness, over the last, you know, seven or so years around, this molecule that is really, you know, ubiquitous in our environment.

And really, I think, part of our trade that is leading to a lot of the illnesses that we both see on a day in, day out basis. And then glyphosate can obviously disrupt your gut microbiome.

Environmental Toxins, Pathogens, and Detox Support

But there is, a doctor, Stephanie, center, and, Anthony Sampson wrote a book or wrote a paper rather about the connection that, you know, it's it's like, you know, we can look at all the mechanisms, right, Heather, of one of these things.

But really, the real life situation is the combination of these things and the synergy, you know, you know, the standard Bastian. Right. Doctor present, one of the founders, he often says one plus one doesn't equal two anymore.

Right. And we're in this just toxic soup that, you know, glyphosate alone, aluminum alone, electro smog alone. Fluoride, you know, we're we're not in that.

We're in this combination of all these things. And so I think, that's why, you know, I think the costs are so much higher at these exposures. And that's why we're seeing such a rapid increase, in the, in our society, neurological illnesses.

So glyphosate, I, can, you know, basically affect the pineal gland, through a complex set of mechanisms with aluminum. And then, so we think of metals, electro smog, herbicides, pesticides.

There's other persistent organic pollutants. There's, microplastics. That's a whole other world that I'm learning about. And I'm, you know, trying to educate myself about, and then, you know, there's the role in the world, bio toxins that are actually produced by, pathogens or opportunistic pathogens in the, in, you know, in our ecosystem.

And when they get into the brain that can also, you know, be a source of toxicity in the brain as well. So that is going to be things related to Lyme and co-infections.

There's a lot of links with mine co-infections to cognitive decline, viruses. There's a ton of research around how viruses, retroviruses and even parasitic infections, of course, mold.

We talked about even, you know, yeast, can get into the brain. And so, you know, it's this combination. I mean, I, I feel like I see a lot of patients and I treat everybody uniquely, but I'm always looking at the lens of, okay, how do we reduce their environmental burden?

How do we support their immune system, reduce pathogenic, their pathogenic burden, but also recover their immune system through the work? And in the backdrop, of course, of, you know, making sure that, you know, as natural past, you know, their lymphatic system is working and their organs of elimination is working, and we're supporting them so that they, you know, become more and more resilient because we can't we can't live in a bubble.

You know, I, I, I'd like to believe that we can and I hope in our lifetime, in our kids lifetime that, you know, we make some really important changes, you know, on a societal level.

But this is where we are, and we just have to, really trust in our capacity to be resilient and adaptable as much as possible, rather than be armed with information that's actionable, like where we can take information and make a change to do it right tonight.

Doctor Tom O'Brien was saying like, dive in fully, don't dip your toes in. But when you learned that these things could be potentially harmful, eliminate them from your environment.

And then our body has this amazing wisdom and this ability to get rid of these things. But if we can make those decisions to stop allowing them in and then to upregulate our ability to get them out, the body is incredible what it's capable of and really, really can heal.

So it huggies, it sounds like you're going in the direction of what to do about it. Yeah, I don't know, happiness in spite of knowing all this. Right.

You know, it's like you listen to all this and you're like, oh my goodness, right. You know, how how do we get through this? But you know, again, my patients teach me every day that what's possible.

And I know you see this too, that in spite of great stress and great struggle, there's always a way to recover and heal. And I'm just in awe of that. And I think that's a big part of, you know, this experience on the planet and being in all of our capacity to heal.

And so, you know, again, I alluded to, you know, okay, everyone's going to get a biological Dentons. You have a great talk on that. You know, we want to make sure that the, you know, sinuses are taking care of.

And I really have been, you know, passionate about educating people on sleep and making sure that we're getting, you know, healthy sleep because it's so critical for brain health and so some of the things that I love to think about is how to have a safe sleeping location.

So with the, kind of bombardment of electric smog, it's hard to kind of, you know, we can share by. But if we can create a reduced environment in our bedroom and that we're getting those hours of sleep, hopefully, too, that, you know, we're getting less, EMF stress while we sleep.

And so turn off your Wi-Fi router at night. Don't, fall asleep on your cell phone, you know, on your hand. You know, distance is your friend in a lot of these, you know, circumstances and these, stresses.

So just be cognizant of that. And then, I'm a big fan of melatonin. And melatonin, of course, helps with our circadian rhythm. But I feel like a lot of things that I mentioned, affect our pineal gland.

And so I think we live in a militant and efficient time where because of all the stress that was affecting our pineal gland, we're probably in a reduced output.

Melatonin, if we didn't, you know, if we lived in a different time. And, you know, also, we need our, gut microbiome to make melatonin and, you know, our mitochondria makes melatonin.

So I think there's a lot of factors where we have a reduced, production. So melatonin can be a really great, tool for circadian rhythm, but it's also a neuro detoxification tool.

So I have really, been humbled and surprised at how well higher doses of melatonin work to help heal people's, bodies and their brain. And we can use suppositories to buy here as a 50mg suppository.

And then that pill has a 200 and a 400 milligram, as well as my nose. And and so these are just some companies just to check out that, that you can actually get that, you know, over the counter.

I always recommend if you're going to use the higher doses and melatonin to do that with trained, you know, provider because of, potentially either side effects or what that gets in motion.

And if you're not combining melatonin with, really great strategies to help clear weight that starts getting eliminated in the body, you can have that melatonin hangover that, my patients have taught me that that is actually, a detox reaction because when we appear melatonin with like a DMZ or binders, that can be, you know, essentially, reduced or lessened.

So, melatonin is your friend, work with somebody who is skilled in that job. Lawrence. He has a book all about melatonin and high dose melatonin. So if you're interested, check out his channel.

The name again is Doctor John Lawrence. He wrote I think it's, the melatonin miracle, but he has a company called Midas. And so, people can check that out.

And then, also when we're thinking about sleep and circadian rhythm, I also like the use of Gaba.

Sleep, Melatonin, and Brain Drainage

We had a, topical Gaba formulated by with mercury, Shira, that, we apply topically and that can really help with, people falling asleep and getting better deep and REM sleep and, Gaba has a great effect to, also detoxing, the brain as well.

So we want to, definitely make sure people are sleeping well. And then excuse me. And then when we think about sleep, we think about the panic system.

So before bed, I usually had people open up their, and, especially around their cervical lymph nodes so their brain can drain at night. And Marco, who I mentioned, we also created a cream Mathias Kotlin flow.

And we had people put it on their neck at night. And that helps to decongest those cervical lymph nodes so that the lymphatic system is highly connected.

So one areas, constricted or congested or stagnant, that's going to not allow, you know, other for systems or basically areas to drain. So we always open up the neck to help drain the brain.

And of course, you know, if there's any other little of congestion in the body that will have an effect. So, so again, you know, sleeping, you know, convenient location making sure you're getting good deep and REM sleep.

And then I, you know, again, use melatonin as a lot of my Durham detoxification strategy. And then the, I mentioned aluminum and aluminum, can be bound and eliminated in the body through binding with silica.

So, there's silicone based products that you can use, some therapy, of course, is going to be helpful. My amateur bath actually works. And so that is a great tool that I have.

You know, my patients use, as well. And that can be a home tool. So that can be again, another support. And then, you know, this goes without saying and I'm sure you, have already educated people, but, you know, the foundations of health often get overlooked.

But having the, you know, clean water and making sure you're drinking, you know, non fluoridated water and, you know, a good filter that that helps to get all the chemicals out of the water.

You can, you know, use just basic things like the Berkey or you can go to a really high end in a system like Spring Aqua where it filters the water and put puts minerals and structures in and puts hydrogen.

And, you know, you can, you know, choose your adventure with water these days. But water is, you know, really important. And I you know, Michael, you know, for this talk is really how do you, you know, make sure you're not adding to your exposure with water.

Of course food. We know about this. And, I have, the regenerative agriculture movement. I think we can learn a lot from recovering the soil and in recovering our bodies.

I think there is, absolutely a link in that. So looking at regenerative, agriculture as, you know, a really a great food source. And then, you know, other things.

I know you and I were talking right before we got on about, you know, Joe Dispenza and on meditation. And, you know, I think we can't ignore that right at all with the conversation, of recovering someone's brain health, I think, where I my passion lies, a lot of is educating this other aspect of ourselves so we can live a whole way of, you know, disconnected from if we don't make time for and when we start tuning into meditation and kind of, yes, it can support our, autonomic nervous system.

But, you know, I, I look at it from my also this other lens, you know, when we can get into, especially, what has been, you know, sharing through the work of hard math and that this connection with what we call heart brain coherence.

And when we get in those states of really gratitude, love appreciation, you, you know, we're wired like our physiology. Those states were actually wired to heal.

And so if you can have a gratitude practice, and a meditation practice on a regular basis, you know, our heart has the strongest electromagnetic field, that is generated within the body.

And actually, there's more information going from the heart to the brain and to the brain to the heart. So I don't think we can leave the heart out of the equation when we want to recover the brain, because I think the stronger and more coherent the field that's generated from our heart is on a regular basis, that actually has an effect on regulating our brainwaves.

And this is the work of, you know, heart math and things. And so that's an area that I'm, deeply interested in curious and passionate about. And so, you know, I, I just want to make sure that, yes, we have to look at all these physical things in there.

Yes, they have a huge impact on our health. But I think that when we open ourselves up to looking at the body through this other lens, there's a whole other, toolkit, you know, that we can use.

And, you know, that's the, you know, the language, I would say, of the bio field. And that's the language of light and same frequency. And I there is a ton of tools, I think, that are more and more up and coming around that from, you know, neurofeedback to, you know, I have a light helmet in my office.

It's, you know, red, an infrared light that penetrates into the bone, and gets into the brain, you know, sound is, profound. I just love experiencing myself and studying sound.

And then, of course, there are all these frequency technologies getting more and more, you know, press and more and more out there and, you know, help us with our assessment process and also, balancing the body through the language of frequency as well.

So, you know, my my hope and my thought is that it's the integration of these tools that these, you know, tools and the, you know, the world in bio field science meets the world of functional medicine.

Water, Food, Meditation, and Heart Coherence

I think that we can really recover our health, you know, more, elegantly, more quickly and also, as again, bringing that meditation piece into the, you know, the conversation, I think, you know, we we just get more in tune with ourselves and our, higher self and our, our spirit.

And I think ultimately, that's what it's all about. Where do you see patients struggling to implement this? Yeah. You know, I think, you know, our like, you know, our job, you know, both of us and know we have this whole huge toolkit.

And then, you know, I think half the battle is, you know, meeting patients where they're at and making sure that we're giving them the right things at the right time, that they feel empowered and not overwhelmed.

I often say, well, don't be patient. I'm going to overwhelm you when I'm sorry. And but don't worry, we're going to just I'm going to get it out and then we're going to have to just like break it down, you know?

And so I, I do feel, you know, that, a few things I sometimes I think, when people come, they don't maybe understand, you know, we're just in that, society where we want to fix it, right?

Fix it. Get rid of this, tax, someone be better. And sometimes, it takes a little time, you know, for them to understand that really, the more that we integrate, you know, like meditation or looking at emotions or trauma, like, that's not just like, let me get better and then deal with that, but that's actually part of like what needs to be in the equation to get better, you know.

And so everyone's got their own path and, and process with that. And that's great. You know we we meet people where they're at. But I think you know for patients it's everyone's different.

I think with some of these like these there's more education. So there's less, feeling like isolated. How do I explain this to my family? And oh my gosh, how am I going to do this?

I think, you know, awareness is increasing there. But I think, you know, it's just, you know, really getting into a routine and rhythm and understanding, of course, cost.

I mean, that's a horrible thing about this. Medicine that we're in that, you know, I'm, you know, it's very expensive, often to do a lot of these things.

And that's why I also love meditation, because everybody can. You know, access that and you know it, no matter where people are with their finances, I, you know, I want to make sure that there's more and more tools available to everybody, but it's just where we're at.

I mean, I have an all cash practice and it's just I couldn't even function if I took insurance. Right. So, you know, it's just I always say to my patients, it's like, you know, we're we're not supported.

You're not supported, but we're changing the paradigm. And hopefully, you know, this changes and in our career. But but yeah, I mean, there's a lot of, there's a lot of, you know, a lot of places where people get stuck.

But that's okay. That's I think, you know, what our role is ultimately is help to people how to meet people, where they at, where they're at. Always offer them tools and insights.

Because there's always going to be something to do. You know, there's never I mean, I, I don't knock, what I've ever had a patient visit where I'm like, well, I don't know what we're going to do, and I can do anything today.

You know, it's like there's, you know, we it's exciting, right? Because. Excuse me. Neurologists are the most brilliant people, but they have like four tools, right?

And so we have all these tools and that's, that's exciting. You know, the, this medicine. Really exciting, very hopeful. And also we get results, right?

That's the other piece that's really exciting about it. And why why you and I don't give up. Right. We keep going despite these obstacles. We want to share with patients that there is hope and there is real healing on the other side.

So what what advice would you give someone who feels a bit overwhelmed by all that there is to do? Yeah, yeah. It's great. It's a great question. You know, I also I, have a couple sayings, right, that you find yourself in, you know, every day.

Right. And, it's one day at a time. And then there is very much trust the timing. Right. So I'm a big believer and, you know, we start out and we, you know, really come up with a plan.

And then we have this dynamic conversation, especially as things unfold. You know, how to adjust to, you know, the plan to how people, you know, make sure that they are going at the speed in the pace that they need to to heal.

And I think that, you know, the, the thing that I'm trying to integrate in my practice more and I know you have a lot of tools of this too, is like, how do we bring community more into the conversation?

Patient Challenges, Community, and Closing Resources

And part because I think the more support that people have, the less overwhelmed they feel. And the more that they feel that they, you know, their, you know, whatever they get done on the day is enough, you know?

And, you know, sometimes it's the conversations or the support that gives them more momentum that day. Then, you know, the supplements or, you know, whatever it is.

Right? So, we're really exploring and my office like how to, you know, bring people together to support each other and, you know, have community along, you know, this process because I think it's right.

I think it's, you know, an overlooked part of the, the puzzle often. So healing, I mean, it's a big part of why I created Marama, which is the residential care facility for the elderly that we have.

And we've seen over and over again the power. It's so hard to quantify, but you just see the connections being made between the residents. To have that peer group, to have those people they can relate to and talk to and share with and celebrate with and look forward to things with it just it really creates this compelling future that sometimes and we're isolated and stuck on our own and just sort of in this riot of perpetuating, whether it's self-pity or just not feeling great right then, and confusion and overwhelm, we don't have that community or there's, there's coconspirators and there's this creation of a compelling future.

It can be very demoralizing. And then that perpetuates the illness. That alone will do it. So, so thank you for bringing attention to that value and importance of community.

Now and I love what you're doing. And I, I completely agree with you that, that vision of the future and that connection with our purpose, no matter where we are in life, I think is a really big part of how we're wired and how we keep going.

Yeah. Well, it's been a pleasure to create community with you here tonight. Thank you for joining our Reverse Alzheimer's Speakers community and sharing your insights and wisdom.

I want to make sure everyone knows how to find out more about you and what you have to offer you. Thank you. I, I have a website. Doctor Christine Sharpe, intercom.

And you can find out more about me and my practice and my podcast. It's called The Spectrum of Health. And then

I have a clinic in Seattle. It's called Eminence Health, and we have, you know, in person.

And we also do telemedicine. And I also have an office in California. So you can find out more on eminence.com. Wonderful. Thank you so much for the passion and energy that you bring to this work.

It's really it's infectious and a privilege to to know you. I think you have an.