Introduction to Long COVID and Lyme

– Welcome to this episode of the Long Haul Chronic Fatigue Summit. I'm so happy to have with me, my friend and colleague Dr. Tom Moorcroft today, we're gonna talk about the intersection of long covid and chronic lyme disease.

This is the topic that is very dear to my heart and to Dr. Gordon's heart and it is in fact by Dr. Gordon and I are doing the summit myself Dr. Gordon.

And Dr. Moorcroft have been treating patients with complex chronic illness, particularly Lyme disease, autoimmune conditions, infections and environmental toxins for a long time. Now, what we've learned over the many years of treating these patients with complex chronic illness absolutely has crossed over with long covid. Welcome Dr. Tom I'm so happy to have you here with me today.

– Yeah, thank you so very much. I'm so excited. It's an honor to be here with you guys and looking forward to our conversation. – So am I. So let's start by having you introduce yourself to our audience. – Sure, I'm Dr. Tom Moorcroft the co founder and medical Director at Origins of Health and we're we started out calling ourselves an osteopathic wellness center. And really the the reason my wife and I both got into medicine was we saw that a lot of conventional approaches were necessary in certain situations, but most of the time they were actually sort of even constraining the the the sort of the you expressing your full optimal health and living your best life.

Dr. Moorcroftu2019s Lyme Journey and Recovery

And so we were really interested in learning how the body works and how we can really ignite self healing. And so for me, I was an outdoor person my whole life and I love nature and this is really what got me in the medicine because I, I just wanted to get paid to play outside, right?

And so I was at the University of Vermont and I'm learning all about ecology and wildlife management and the landscape, but all the adults I was talking to just wanted to talk and look at data and then do nothing. So I tried to figure out who I could talk to that would really be pumped and make a difference and I was like, oh let's treat the kids love this. So I took this AmeriCorps internship at the Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook New York and I started to learn how to better teach Children and make sure that my message was getting across through a proper assessment, but also just giving them, sharing my passion with them.

So I was stoked, I was playing outside as mountain biking all the time, was getting paid to do it. And then like one day my boss found me and she kind of had to shake me and asked me what was going on.

And she actually found me staring at a computer, blank computer screen drooling all over myself and then she goes, what's up, I'm like, I don't know, I thought I thought I felt fine, but the more we kind of sat down and talked about it, like my brain wasn't really working and I kind of had that joint pain and muscle aches and I was so tired and it was interesting, she was like, go to the doctor so I make an appointment a couple of days out to go see the doctor and the day before I see him, I have this rash that came out that covered 1/5 of my body and the long and the short of it was, he's like, hey, you've got classic Lyme disease, here's doxycycline, this antibiotic for 10 days, you'll be fine.

So for the first four days I laid on the floor shaking and sweating and like, couldn't go to the, I was 23 my parents had to carry me to the bathroom, I was in so much pain, but 10 days later I felt kind of good.

But over the next sort of four or five years, joint pain, fatigue and brain fog kind of crept back into my life and then I went to all these doctors and they're like, oh, you've got depression, you're bipolar, but it's the good kind, it's the type to that all the doctors and lawyers and then in the end I go to my, it was like, God, it was like six years into this and I go to my primary and I'm like, look, I've got this cry washing brain fog, horrible fatigue, the joints are killing me

and I'm newly married and like if my wife touches my arm with her elbow, if I fear a ceiling searing pain, go shoot out of my finger and then ricochets back up like Darth Vader, shove the lightsaber up my arm into my head.

And I'm like, this is not a great way to start a marriage, you know? And so anyway, like I just said, what do I have? And he goes, oh, I know I've got you covered, you've got chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia.

– Waste basket terms. – Yeah. And then he goes, so I have. So he gave me a diagnosis of my symptoms, which gave me no understanding of what was the cause of my, my symptoms and no hope to get better. And I remember a couple of days later, I'm staring at a wall for the second time now, instead of the computer screen on the wall and I go, I saw my entire life in front of me and I was like, there's this, this path over here which is dark and going down the same path that I'm currently on or I can look over here and I see I'm young, I'm in, deeply in love and I want to have a family, I love my dogs and playing outside.

I want to play ultimate frisbee. I want to play more, you know, mountain biking more skiing and hiking the whole nine yards. And I was like, this is happening right now. But there is no way in my mid twenties, I'm giving up on that. And so I just kind of in that moment said, hey, that's what my future must be like, that is the only future.

And within a couple of days somebody handed me a yoga DVD and I started and I could barely touch my shin, my kneecaps Within six months I felt of just doing whatever I could that day because some days I could barely even put the DVD in the, in the thing. I slowly but surely got, you know, my fashion started to open up, the energy started to move.

I started to detoxify. Then lo and behold my body taught me that Coca Cola is not a food group because I didn't know back then and over the next two years I just did whatever felt natural inside of my body, but that objective mindset on not the fear mindset and I listened to my heart and I was 75% better by the time.

Another coincidence, like the yoga DVD came into my life because as, as I'm sure, you know, for me and maybe the people listening don't know, I don't believe in coincidences. There's all these things we set up for our own benefit and the benefit of others. Somebody said, hey, you're scheduled to do a fellow your rotate your medical school rotation, three hours from home. So you have to stay up there, we just had an opening right down the road, 20 minutes, would you like to go meet with these people and I walk in every single person. Brain fog, fatigue, anxiety, horrible, just you know, joint pain and muscle pain.

She's an osteopath, teaching me hands on stuff, treating all these people with this weird mystery illness and this guy is a natural path, kind of sounds like you know, some other people I know who might be doing this summer and he's doing all these herbs and medicines and I was like at the end of the first day and like whatever these people have, it's exactly what I have, please help me. And that last 25% these two amazing physicians helped me get my my life back and that was over 12 years ago that I last did treatment and I've been symptom free ever since, so you can have lime.

And they also found out I had undiagnosed babesiosis which I could have died from because they didn't test thankfully I didn't, but eight years of untreated baby Zia and eight years of chronic Lyme disease followed by about 4.5, 5 years of treatment totally symptom free now so you can have really longstanding infections, you can get better and stay better.

And the reason I like to share the whole thing is I know the pain, mental anguish because they were like you're depressed, like no, I'm piste off at you because you can't tell me what's wrong with me and you're the one with the degree. But there are people out there, like all of us on talking on the summit who can help you and you can get better and then lo and behold the lessons we all learnt. We can apply to new things that come up that might have a different name than Lime and Ibiza. – Right, Right.

Thank you so much for sharing your story with the audience. It's so touching and it's such an example of really how to channel your inner warrior, your inner warrior for your joy, not to fight something else, but for your own life, for your own, your strength and you give hope to all these people who are suffering. I know there are many people watching today who suffer from chronic Lyme and also long Covid. So yeah, so, thank you for sharing that. So,

both of them are multi layered and complex is as you well know, right? And it's a mystery to solve this, unique for each person. But then the symptoms of long Covid in lime share some similarities. Let's dive into that.

Immune Dysregulation and Shared Mechanisms

– I mean, I think the thing is, like, I always remember I trained with a couple of really amazing people and certainly Dr. Gordon was one of the people who actually influenced me early in my career. So, it's always like, whenever I can, you know, be a part of something that you two are doing and he's doing, it just blows my mind. So it's just like thank you.

And and so I studied also with Charles ray jones who recently passed, but he's um for anyone who doesn't know, he's really one of these Avant Garde sort of talk about warriors. He was one of the original people who stood up for patients who are misunderstood and we didn't know what was going on with them and he started treating them even before we had a name for Lyme disease back in the early seventies.

I mean this guy has been doing this forever and he knew, so he was like the premier pd pediatric lyme practitioner who I really believe that if he was when I met him, he was in his mid eighties. So if he had been in his sixties and we'd probably have saw this chronic infection issue by now because he would have been able to incorporate all the tools that you and I have the benefit of.

But the reason I bring him up is he talks about it when we talk about infection triggered autoimmune encephalitis and we see kids with behavioral issues, we have this thing we call Pans and Pandas and you know, Pans is this pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome.

But when you break, he broke it down in a way that made it actionable and that's really where I think is important. He called it an infection induced or infection triggered autoimmune encephalitis or encephalopathy.

So brain inflammation. Now I go one step further and I would call it a toxin induced autoimmune encephalitis because it doesn't always have to be in your brain and your central nervous system. It could be in your joints, it could be in your gut. But if we look at it in that way, we have a framework of we have a toxin from outside of our body that's been introduced whether it's Lyme disease, Covid or even a food substance, you know, um or maybe E. M. F. Toxicity or whatever it is for your particular body. And then we know it may it doesn't always have to but it may trigger auto immunity. And that hyper reactive immune system is the thing I see that's really common, leading to some kind of inflammation between covid and like covid long haul, lime long haul, babies and martin, l a long haul.

And if you want to call it that for a moment. And that's what I think that what I was empowered by him learning is that when we break it down to its key constituents, then we can come up with an empowering treatment approach.

And that's really I think an important place to start. – Right. I completely agree with you about that immune disregulation, right? And the hyperactive immune system that we see. So we see autoimmune conditions, we see these hyper sensitivities and patients mast cell activation syndrome.

on one hand and on the other hand, we see this dampened immune system, they can't mount an appropriate immune response to kill an infection. And so other infections that are that have been able to lie dormant because it means they could keep it in check now suddenly they become active again.

– Yeah and I think this is a really key point you're bringing up is it's not it's really immune dysfunction. And so I was gifted by my parents in addition to, I didn't know this during the lyme journey, I found this out afterwards when I was helping my dad with health issues but I found out that he had low immunoglobulins and then I was like well I know that can be congenital and lo and behold, found out I had them and then found out my mom also helped me have that. But what's really interesting when we have low immunoglobulins, a lot of G. G in particular, a lot of people with low I. G. G. Fall into a kind of, it's a little bit of a grab bag, but it's a thing called common, variable immunodeficiency.

And so what I find is a lot of people think that that immunodeficiency is just low immune function but it's really dis regulation and my experience with different infectious exposures previous vaccine exposure is kind of before I sort of learned more about what my body really needed and and was medically educated, I was just kind of the person on the planet some things I would respond very well to and normally and appropriately other things I would have I would not have any response to it all and other category of things that I would have a ridiculously over the top response.

So that's the dis regulated immune system. It's not always lower. It's not one or the other. It can be one thing makes you go through the stratosphere and something else puts you in the ground – And then that's unexplainable in a way because it seems to be so random. But I think it's really about where the toxins as you spoke about meet the genes. So toxins can be from out from the outside and environmental toxins, Heavy metals, pesticides could be biotoxins from tick borne diseases or from other bugs. Right?

So that causes immune dis regulation and and then there's the genes they express and this is where it becomes so personal, so individual. – It's interesting too because you know when you look at the sort of that you know type that we see, you know like we see the external expression, it's like you've got this external environment acting on you which then changes your internal environment and then you have your genes. But in that whole picture there's one thing that you have a clear um control over which is your internal environment you can control some of what's put into you. I understand you can't, if you happen to have a mold exposure or you, you know, you haven't, you know, or, or you know whatever in your environment or like, you know when there's fires, you're breathing in toxins or whatever.

But the thing is you can choose the food you put in your mouth, you can choose your hydration. You can choose your movement which allows you to modify the internal environment and help your toxins move around and hopefully get out.

But you can also choose that energetic state and that emotional state that you live in. Now all of this is very complex and intertwined and interrelated to your genes and the environment that you grew up in because I certainly have a little bit of a hot spot that I and you know, easy irritability anger streak that I learn learned very clearly from my dad and I'm very clear that he and his brothers who are similar learned it from his dad. But that so, but that, so it's easy for me to fall into that and my wife can easily fall into being a little more quiet and reserved and not sharing her emotion.

But the key between with Jill and I is we both have that ability to take steps every day where we can exert more control than we did the day before to balance that out.

And so one of the things that um, and it's funny I I think about it when we do all these talks and like, oh the other day I started at the beginning with all this love and gratitude and mindset stuff and usually it comes in at the end.

But it's like it's where is it perfectly fit in? And it's like it is so key that this is the thing that helped me get better was that I always believed in myself.

And the other thing was when I shifted and I said yes to that yoga DVD after I had said yes to my future. I is something we talked about earlier, I believed even though it was really, really hard, I was worthy to receive that life I wanted and I was worthy to receive the healing and then I was able to just go, I can make these small changes that are going to make a really big difference in my life and I really want to empower people to understand early in our conversation that while we're gonna probably dive deep into all kinds of little nooks and crannies and things you could do in medical science and all this. The number one thing you can do for yourself is to believe in yourself and know that you're worthy to receive anything that you truly want deep in your heart.

Mindset, Self-Worth, and Internal Environment

You know when you get objective about it and we all have the right to live and breathe and really prosper on this beautiful planet and that's just bring that feel that in your heart, open your heart and feel grateful for who you are and give to yourself so that you can give to others because when you give to yourself, you receive the health and

the love and when you learn how to receive, then you're modeling this for your kids, your friends, your your partners and your and in the whole world and so this is how you can change your internal environment and then positively affect the external environment you're in. So you have your love protective health bubble around you and then you can share that with others because right now I I feel that's one of my jobs Nafysa is like I was not able to do that before, but now I can so it's my job to shine that inner light to other people to be a beacon.

And it's I heard this cool definite, there's two definition and I know I'm a little tangent in now, but I'm just so I love this, I heard this to great things the other day that I've been just so happy. They're so concise, love is the ability to accept another person for who they are without judgment and it's the without judgment part that just changed everything for me because I'm always trying to just like, you know, put more to that statement and it's just like let them be them and the other part was leadership is about empowering other people to achieve the goals that are important for them. And as a father, my goal is to always allow my daughter to grow into who she is and not make her who I think.

And I think it's so important in health that we look at those pieces as well because these are the everyday things that are in our lives that create so much damn stress and all you and you can start to change that stress by just saying yes, I am sick or yes, I don't feel well or maybe yes, I feel great and then say I am worthy of this and so much more – Thank you for sharing that.

I think that's very inspirational for our listeners and important because people don't talk about this part very often. I think the reason they don't just because they may not have experienced it themselves. Right?

So it starts with that, with that self love, that self acceptance and non judgment towards the self. And then when you start there, you can, you can bring it forwards to your family, just like you were talking about what you learned from your father, I can say I learned a couple of things from my beloved father too.

And so what I learned there wasn't beneficial, maybe anxiety or even a little anger streak. I've also learned, hey, I don't need to carry that on in my family tradition now as I, as I move forward into what I create doesn't have to be, what was passed on to me, I get to pick and choose what, what parts I want to bring forward with respect of my own healing and healing others. And – It's so key because the thing, it was funny, it's, it's like we're on the total same wavelength because one of the things that I wanted to also throw in here is Jill and I made a very clear decision that we wanted to break our family chains.

There's a lot of alcoholism, there's a lot of anger and a couple of things that I think that really came through for me is as I lost my father like six or seven years ago and thankfully the tumultuous nous was very at the very peak of love and gratitude as best we could do when that all happened. And it was, and it was good for him. I mean, and you know, we all would prefer obviously to be together. But one of the things I learned is that a lot of times when I was younger he was trying so damn hard to do the thing that I wanted, but he just didn't have the tools to get past the baggage that he had come with, but he was trying and a lot of times that trying, he fell flat on his face, but he tried so hard that it ended up hurting all of us.

But when I look at it doesn't take away that he hurt me, but especially when you, when it's a child, but it was like I as an adult could look back and I, you have the ability to go back and rewrite your interpretation of your memory because that man tried so damn hard to love me, Right? And to the point where there were times where he actually, the one time that I know that he did exactly what I had died for for 15 years of my life, I was unable to receive it because I didn't even understand it.

So I had to go, I went back, I had this amazing experience where I was able to see all this. And then I remember my mom, this is like this is one of the most important lessons I ever learned. My mom was always like, she was very much about the church and and and her religion and she wanted us to grow up and be saved that way.

But for me, my experience of the divine was more outside and playing in the world and being one with nature. And so I go on this five day hiking trip through the White mountains of New Hampshire, I come home, I can't wait to get on the phone. I call my mom and I'm like mom, I just had the best experience and she's like, did you go to church today?

Like, no, I was just in heaven for five days dude, – God's country, – Right? That's where the term comes from. And so, but I was like, and she's like, you know God Jesus the church there for you when you're ready to come back. And so over the next three or four years, we kept having this recurring conversation slash argument where I'm like, you don't understand it, that's my church, you have your church, that's mine, this is yours, that's mine. And you have to let me have what is important in my life because that's for me and we kept having this conversation and I was like, why can't my mom understand that? It is okay for me to have a different experience of the same divine principle and this amazing life and why can't she let me be me and why does she have to make me be her? And one day I go, wait a second, I'm trying to have my mom let me be me, but I'm refusing to let her be her and in that moment I just said in my head and my heart, I was like, my mom is like if my mom feels that that's the way she can protect and love me best, I'm fine with it. She never asked me anything about it again and we have the best relationship. I was like, so I stopped, I asked her to do something I was unwilling to do, I wanted her to do something for me that I was unwilling to do for her. And so that's why I never received it.

And so when I look at chronic infections and stuff it's like there's always this fight and I want to move away from the fight and I also want people to understand in their relationships both with their infection as well as their family, there might be room to change the thought process.

Not not the treatments, not that you're sick and you have something to do, but you could change your relationship with your thinking Of it. And also like I was saying with my dad you can change your feelings towards the memories because we know from neuroscience about 50% of all of our memories are incorrect.

So why don't you just rewrite a new story because chances are half of what you remember is wrong anyway. So rewrite the story because and now bringing it back to the one, I just like talking about love because we all could use a lot of it and the negativity around this pandemic has just got us.

I mean it just highlights where the world is going and we can change. But when you go to this place of the gratitude and accepting love and changing The way you think about it now your heart rate variability increases your parasympathetic nervous system goes from a fight or flight or frozen state back to love and healing and optimal gut health and then the next one is your immune system gets boosted and it costs you nothing and in fact you're probably gonna live like 20 years longer because you're not piste off.

– All right. This is key. What you just brought up right about how we do have some looping back to what you said earlier, how we have a level of control right now. Some people might be listening to say, oh, easy for you to say you're not in pain right now, but he was and I have to say so many of my patients also have this experience that you're describing and I see it the ones who who can embrace what's happening and know that they're on the path on the path to healing and they deserve a good life, they deserve health. The immune system calms down because of that because we know that stress causes is one cause of immune disregulation.

We sure have a lot of it these days. So to bring in that self love, that acceptance, even you talked about the relationship with the bugs. That's a big one too, right? Some people say I hate you bug and they're very angry with the bug there. There's negativity harboring in them and witnesses it's difficult. It takes longer for those people who hear – What's so interesting. And one key point, I just want to punctuate I also at the end of all this mindset and body movement stuff needed doctors to help me.

So and I am a doctor who helps people with medicines and herbs and other things too. One of the things that I think that's so important is when people ask why lime and even potentially covid but lime in general and and very similar infections have such an easy time getting into our bodies and getting into a persistent state is I think of the term dis ease where we hyphenate that word and we are in a state of imbalance.

The more imbalanced we are, the easier it is to get sick. But the other thing is these organisms do not fight. If you look at lime when it's opportunistic, we all say this when you have a soft spot, it's gonna go for it. But when you start fighting it, what's it gonna do? It's not going to fight, it's gonna hide and go to sleep. And then when is it gonna come out?

When you let your guard down or when you stop the treatment comes back out it does not fight reality. And I think

that one of the reasons that it gets a strong hold on us is the human being has this beautiful advanced brain but that advanced brain and the emotions that go along with it also allows us to make decisions where we say that the state that is currently the present moment is not correct and we can judge things and so we talk a lot about like fight or flight and freeze states in, you know, Polly bagel theory and chronic infections.

And basically a lot of us are familiar with the sympathetic nervous system, which is that fight or flight, you know, so sabertooth tiger pops out at our campsite, I am pretty darn sure I can run away really quick and I'll make it so I run.

So I flight or I'm like I'm feeling really strong today, I'm gonna beat him down today and I'm going but I'm pretty sure I can win right? And so then I fight the saber toothed tiger and that's our sympathetic and we need to kind of calm down when that situation with the saber toothed tiger is over and go into rest and rejuvenation, digest, food, poopy sleep and all that good stuff.

That's what we typically think of as a pair of sympathetic.

Reframing Illness, Safety, and the Bodyu2019s Response

But there's another state that we've talked about when Polly vagal really came out because some people get caught by the sabertooth tiger. Right? And so I think of it as the modern day sabertooth tiger is if you see an outdoor cat grab a chipmunk or a mouse. So you see the things running away, it grabs it now, it can no longer win, it can no longer get what's it do plays dead and then the cat gets bored, drops it and it run.

So we have this freeze mechanism where when we don't feel we can win any longer. We get into freeze and that the way to get out of that is actually the opposite of negativity?

It's safety, right? So there's two things and then it goes into covid pretty quickly. But to get out of this we talk about safety. But my problem with the word safety is in the middle of safety.

Our brain goes, but I am safe and I know I'm safe and I'm still sick and I but this is further back. This is a reflex, just like the reflex on your knee when the doctor hits it with a little thing with a little hammer is a reptilian mind.

Ancient brain reflex to protect you. And so what happens is I like to use the word familiarity because when you first have lime or when you first got Covid it was unfamiliar and it was not safe. But if you have chronic lyme disease, chronic mold illness m cast whatever or you've got long haul Covid.

That state of disease and not feeling well has become familiar, it becomes your comfort zone. So it's not safe but it feels to your reptilian brain the safest. So then when you and I come in or Dr. Gordon comes in we're like, oh do X, Y and Z. And they're like feeling 20% better.

Boom. All of a sudden that's unfamiliar. So they have to go back to being sick again, this is not a mental like you have a problem. This is a reflex where your body is actually trying to protect you, – Right. And how many times have you heard patients say I'm afraid to get better because I don't know what I'm gonna do when I'm better.

I don't know what it may be better. And I'm used to this, I know this, I'm afraid. Yes, I want to get better right that? – Right and it and it feels it literally like I see people come in and they're better.

They're panicked. And now I want to be really clear. This is not that you have a mental problem. You don't need a medicine for this necessarily. Now, sometimes the medicine may help in the process, but the thing is this is your and and this is the point.

I really love making your body please remember, your body is not betraying you. Your body in every single blooming moment is doing its very best to protect you and keep you alive. Now, the result of relying on a reptilian reflex, primitive reflex if you will for protection because evolution has not kept up with the changes in society because it's been so fast, may not be the one you want, but that does not mean your body betrayed you.

So many people get into this. My body betrayed me and that's almost like a whole new trauma in and of itself. Body is here for you Now when you work with people who know and understand this, we can help you move out of that state.

So unfamiliar into a or I should say this old familiar illness state into a more unfamiliar, but now becoming familiar and therefore safe wellness state.

We can help you make those strides in a way that works specifically individually for you. So you can get there. But it's so key, right? – It is so key for sure.

And just to just to recognize that, right? Your body is, it's trying its best. It's your bodies with you. Sometimes people say, I feel like my body's against me. I feel like it's fighting.

I feel like I'm in a fight with my body. But no, that's not the case. It's just doing its very best with what it knows to do. Kind of like our parents actually when we take it back to. – Isn't that really interesting? – Yeah.

– Yeah. And and when when and and again, it's kind of like that loving is accepting without the judgment. Now, accepting without judgment doesn't mean that if something's not right, that you overlook that. So if you have symptoms of a long haul covid you have symptoms of Lyme, I'm not saying that that's okay or that's good or find that you have it or that I want you to have it, what I'm saying is you can choose to supercharge its power to stay or supercharge its power to go, I choose the superpower.

Charge, its power to go because if I get angry at it now I can say look I'm I'm sick and tired of this ship. Like I don't want this, I'm sick of feeling bad when we have patients come in. We started doing this thing about a year ago actually we do a patient commitment and some of the commitment is committing to myself and my team that you're gonna show up and we're gonna all do our jobs together and that's good.

But the vast majority of our commitment letter or agreement is so that the patient can commit to themselves that they're worthy of healing even if they're not really ready to fully embrace that. And we let them tell us their story this many times. And then I asked them to release it to the medical record because it will be there forever locked safe and sound.

If you ever need it. If we need details, release it to me, I'll protect it. If we need details, I'll go get them and if I need more I'll ask you. But after that allow your story to be over here so that you can create an opening here to write a new story for yourself because I want people to move forward with their lives.

Not just stay on pause. – Right? That is beautiful because it is, it's time to rewrite the story. It's time to have a new a new beginning. In fact a very interesting thing.

I know some of my patients is at some point they tell me, you know what, I'm glad this happened and I see you're glad this happened, tell me more. And they say, you know what, I'm a better person because of this, I'm stronger because of this.

I can now help other people because of this. I'm now healed and I'm stronger. I have more self love and I tell them, you know, it's some at some point, so this is what a patient might be a little bit newer to me.

I tell them at some point you're gonna see there's a silver lining and when you see that you're gonna, you're gonna understand it. Most of my patients come out stronger as individuals because it's it's been a journey and they have rewritten their story. – Yeah, and it's interesting too, it's like I was very sensitive as a child. I mean, I literally remember like going, you can feel earthworms under the ground as you're walking.

You don't even have to stand still and I could feel sat moving and I was like, really, I'm a weird person and in some respects, in other words, in other groups in circles, everybody's like, oh yeah, that's normal. I felt so connected to the world and what I was learning in my parents approach to religion and their approach to training and me and everything and helping me survive was to turn that off and what I learned when I had in order to get better, I had to

reconnect with my natural sensitivity either reconnect with my natural connection to the, to the world.

So I had gotten to the point where it's almost like wrote and it was like once further along, I got it was almost like I was kind of doing the outdoor thing, but I wasn't actually experiencing it and living it.

And so what I find with so many people who get chronic illness, whether it's long, covid, whether it's chronic Barton Ella or whatever name it, they're like, I'm so sensitive, I can't stand it.

I'm too sensitive to everything. I go actually, some of that sensitivity could be that you're hypersensitive to something, but some of it could be, you're actually relearning your natural state and you're so trained out of it and and I love being sensitive because as soon as you embrace it then you can learn how turn the gain up and down.

So when you're in the mall, which I can't say I go to too frequently, I don't even know where the local mall is to be honest, it's like I got to turn it down a little bit and it's almost like your energy is it open?

Like a lot of us are m past and that's the other thing. A lot of people who get chronic illnesses are empathy, it's almost like we bring it in to protect others. So now we have to learn are and I'm not saying you deserve this. I'm not saying none of that shit, you don't and and well, I mean, maybe for me, I deserved it in a positive way because it changed my life, but you open up your energy to people.

One of the things that's people who are really empathetic and people who are very sensitive have to do is learn how to bring it in at the right time and then open it up again.

And that's one of the ways I got my energy back. I wasn't I was leaking so much energy with two things, one just leaking because my energy was so big and not I didn't have an energetic boundary, but the other one was, you know, I I'm just so blown away by my energy opening here that I'm like, I can't even remember the other one.

It was like, you know, it was, oh, my anger and my resentment towards like everything, because that's what I was trained and especially towards how I felt.

So, that's what I'm saying. If you change your your perspective, all it does is benefit you. It doesn't, changing your perspective will never make you forget that you're sick.

If you can forget, you have long haul covid, you can forget you have chronic line, then you don't have it. These things when you have the real, when you have the physical manifestations, you will not forget your way out of it.

Sensitivity as a Superpower

You know, – It's true. I tell my sensitive patients, which they all are of course, right? I've noticed this chronic illnesses. It is they happen to be the illnesses of people who are very, very sensitive happen to like we talked about before.

We don't believe in coincidences, right? There's a trend here, but I tell them this is your superpower, your sensitivity, it is your gift and this is a silver lining because you're going to learn how to hone in on it and control it as opposed to it mastering you. You get to master your superpower, – Right? – Right. And they do, – Right. They do. And this is like, the thing that drives me nuts in any kind of long haul or chronic persistent infection conversation is you're gonna have to deal with it. It'll go into like, remission.

I'm like, it's complete another crap now, some people will prove out that they can't fully recover right? But many, many, many more people than the internet makes it sound like and all the support groups make it sound like will get better. And if that number is not high enough right now, that's because we need to have more people listening to this conversation and pairing it with the treatment, the more conventional approach to treatment side as well.

– Right? So I'm gonna just take women to tell our audience that that Tom and I and Eric, most people on the summit do use conventional medicine and we use holistic medicine, we have those tools at our disposal.

We use them every day. And we use this piece that Tom and I are talking about today and the reason we're talking about it is because it's not spoken about enough and want to give you inspiration. – And I think like when you look at placebo in medicine we accept that the power of the mind and the heart are about 33% of all medical and surgical outcomes. Yet in conventional medicine we just throw it out the window and we control for it to make sure the medicine works 5% more so we can sell it to you. I'm like wait a second If I can get a 42% change in my cholesterol using a medicine or I can get a 33% change in my cholesterol using my mind with no side effects whatsoever. And it'll except for positive ones where my life changes. I know what pill I want and it ain't the one that's got all the side effects. And I just think it's so important.

And in my healing it was 70 to 75% of it was the mind body connection and taking action on it. And that's the other part I think is weird about this is where a lot of people are like oh you can't say it's just what you think you're right because it's what you think in the actions you take in that mindset.

So for me when someone handed me the D. V. D. I was like I tried yoga before doesn't do anything. But I had a sense the way the person presented it to me. They didn't know why they were giving it to me.

They had bought it for somebody else who couldn't tolerate doing it. And they go I woke up today and I knew I had to give this to you and I was like I don't even know what this voodoo is but I'm all about it then.

And so what was interesting was I turned it on and I started doing it and it was one of the videos where they taught you the sort of the original quote unquote power yoga.

And the problem was the movements and the breathing didn't line up to me in my sick state. I was like it still doesn't feel natural but he was onto something and I think he was trying to make it commercial and changed it. So I said let's go to the back and find out where he studied. And I saw ashtanga Yoga research institute in India then I figured out who had a something that could train me to do it.

And what I learned was that original yoga out of India was the thing that really worked because it wasn't about the movement that everybody thinks of empower yoga and ashtanga and the the physical it was my teacher said yoga is about movement on breath And he said if you ever get to the point where your breath is not full, you've gone too far and you need to back off now.

It doesn't mean some days you don't push just a hair to progress, but you put but you never push hard. And so I started to implement this in meditation and all of a sudden I could do meditation because I was trying to meditate now, I could just do it, I could just be there and then when I have a conversation with someone else, if I catch my breath being shallow, I pull back on it.

If I think about a conversation about Covid, I'm like okay is this is this a conversation that's going to change because and so I used my breath and as one of the indicators and I learned that that none of this is is a mission. I mean in terms of like I have to finish this but it's it's right action. And I learned that I don't have to try hard, I just have to try and I just have to do these things and be present in the moment.

And the other thing that's interesting too. I was just thinking that he's about Covid because one of the reasons I think it took off so much is the state of insane negativity, which is what I'm we're the micro so James Allen has his crazy book as a man think of that.

And it was written in the early 1900s, which is why he probably said man, but he does talk about women inside for anybody who he was not in 2022 or 2023.

Right? But anyway, he he um he has this long one chapter that the the cliff note version is the environment is but your looking glass and what I love is so what I'm seeing outside in Covid where I think that one of the reasons that had such a it has a purpose to but it it was theirs. It's showing me that my negativity allows things to spread.

Integrating Conventional and Holistic Treatment

It also has helped me understand that when we come together and I stopped fighting it, we can actually progress and we can make really. Because if you look at like the progress that's been made on long haul Covid when people work together. This is something we haven't seen before.

And for everybody who's piste off Covid and or lime Covid has actually brought us to a place where we can have a conversation about immune dis regulation and and people were actually looking at it going, oh ship this might be real. So all of this, I had a conversation earlier today with the family, their daughter had new onset seizures.

We confirmed that she's got Barton Ella and her neurologist is like, well, I don't know enough about this, but I'm now and I don't know what before was he just said now I'm open open to this possibility, – Right?

And see we we had the blessing of working with these patients these very complex patients for a long long long time and we've learned so much but I have to say people thought prior right that our patients were lying or making or just depressed or they thought doctors like us were crap or quacks, maybe a lot of them still do. It doesn't matter.

Maybe I am. I don't know okay. You know because I help my patients, you know get better, they get better. So but now this is seen less as quackery because this immune dis regulation. Suddenly there's research on these things when there was just minuscule research on it. Or there was just a little bit of research on how infections can cause auto immunity, right? So people will go to the rheumatologist and they're told well you have this autoimmune condition and here's a steroid and then that's all there is to it. And then they would come to people like you and me would say well it's likely caused by an infection or a combination of infections in toxins and stress in your life and they say, but the rheumatologist didn't tell me that, right. But I think the neurologist didn't tell me that but now now they're opening up to understand because they're reading the papers it's there.

I'm so happy that what we've hypothesized over all this time is now showing up in the research. – I think it's like what Dr. Jones, Dr. Gordon? You know us like all of our colleagues who why would we do this if there wasn't a mission of of sharing this health with other people knowing that that we didn't know enough. And so one of the things, so, and I think because we're leading with our heart, which is what I want everyone listening to start doing in all aspects of your life Because you will supercharge your healing and optimize your protocol now so you can do more, you can do a lot of work along with the protocol that you're taking and really, you know, amplify its benefit.

But one of the things is like I've seen in my career the last 15 years, a lot of the stuff that we didn't know 12 years ago, but we thought clinically because our doctors spent the time with patients to get to know them and figure out who was full of crap and who was telling the truth and who sounded like they were full of crap, but they were actually stuck in a free state and they couldn't get out of it and it wasn't like a pick up your bootstraps thing, but because we all lead with love and desire to share that love with other human beings and spread this now we're finding that a lot of those observations are now supported by science. The persistent forms and Lyman Barton Ella are supported the mold, the, you know, issues with multi boat buildings and exposure.

The issues around hyper reactive mass cells like they're all being born out and all these things that like we used to say, I think this science is catching up with and then that science is allowing us to tweak what we do because it gives us not only catches up, it gives us a little more. So when COVID happened, we knew how to treat immune disregulation from infection.

Now researchers have jumped on that bandwagon taken it and because it was such a big deal, they were able to get all these people. I mean we have some research groups that have over 36,000 people in research trials telling us what inflammation has to do with the vaccine with post Covid long haul Lyme, disease maybe an even chronic fatigue syndrome that may say you have this or this or you have this and this and this is like brand new stuff.

But we're getting because of Covid, we're getting the data that's going to change line. But because of lime and all the other things we talked about, we actually have the ability to to even comprehend how to treat, – Right? That's where I feel so blessed as a doctor because we've been doing this for so long. It's what we've always thought it's what we've done over and over and we've learned it from our mentors who did that hard work, like you were talking about life for what's what through their their clinical wisdom, we learned it, we did it ourselves. And now here's the research to back what we've been doing and it's it's very gratifying. I mean there that's this over lining of this

pandemic. Unfortunately, so many people had to suffer in – This pandemic. But oh we have learned so much and right, well, think about it this way. I mean, I'm thinking like Brown did that study where they estimated by the end of 2020 we would have about 1.9 million plus people with, with post treatment Lyme syndrome.

Closing Thoughts on Healing and Gratitude

And when you look at the research, you know that a lot of those people have chronic Lyme disease and I believe in post Lyme syndrome, meaning you can have non active infection symptoms and you can have active infection symptoms and you can have both at the same time, there's research and right, so I'm not saying one or the other, I'm saying yes and but you know, it's interesting, so if we think about it, we have people working to to help people suffering actively over two million people, we had a huge group of people who have suffered that then allowed and granted, I don't want them to suffer and we're all trying to move forward, like we said 100 times, but because of our experience with all of those people and trying to help, we knew how to at least get going in this direction in this crazy ass pandemic.

And then the crazy thing that just came to my mind, who is one of some of these drugs that we all thought we were wanting to use and some people said yes and some people said no.

And the government started yelling as it turns out that maybe one of the reasons they work when you actually look at the research because it was working and why and you look at the research is it could actually be because it's fixing the bacteria in your gut and not because it's doing anything to the virus. And you're like wait a second, let's look at science, – Right? Because we've been using certain medications to treat parasites for decades, at least two decades, right?

– And their immune modulators and now lo and behold they increase bifida bacteria lovers levels. Imagine that. – Exactly. Thank you Tom this has just been so great. Just so much fun talking to you.

Is there anything that you want to any parting words you want for our audience? – Yeah. You know, I just want to say thank you so much for listening and being open to a perspective that I learned through a really long, hard journey. And the beauty is as an as an osteopathic physician, we you know, we're we're taught about this, your body has this amazing self regulatory self healing mechanism and you truly are. And this isn't like the last 20 years of fancy marketing words back in the mid 18 hundreds, osteopaths were talking about this body mind spirit connection and we know that traditions all over the world have brought that in and our conversation tonight, I feel like really is about bringing the mind part and the spirit and the emotions and the humanness and the fact that we're human beings back into the picture of healing and how your body, when we focus on this can bring down inflammation, it can bring down, or I should say it can increase immune function, it can improve gut function. And the one thing I usually talk about and I didn't, so I'll just give it three seconds is a lot of times people have insomnia and then they're also trying to take brain detox is right.

Sleep is the number one time when your brain is detoxifying. So the best way to be able to get over your insomnia and to get deep sleep when you're recovering from these long haul symptoms is to calm your nervous system.

And the best way to get out of the fight flight or freeze is to bring yourself back to love and gratitude. And it all starts there and then you you can branch out to to, you know, healing and like I said, I've been symptom free for over 12 years and that's my sincerest wish for all of you listening and all your family members.

– Thank you so much. Tom what a what a beautiful message for everybody. And I know the listeners are taking it in, and I know it's going to influence their healing, So thank you so much.