Podcast Intro and Cycle Issues

Warmth is such a critical part of this equation. Keeping our feet warm, keeping our abdomen warm. And it doesn't matter what phase of your life you're in.

Cold feet is a huge catalyst for issues in our reproductive system. Welcome to Take Back My Brain with Lori Hammer, where real healing starts in the brain.

I'm Lori, a functional nutritionist and mom who's walked the path from anxiety and burnout to clarity and calm. Each week, we're going to dive into brain-based tools like amino acid therapy, gut health, fasting and faith to help you reclaim your energy, emotions and sense of self.

Hello and welcome back. I am really excited about today's interview because do you have cycle issues, like your female cycle? Do you feel like things are chaotic, painful, emotionally unpredictable?

You get your period and then you don't and you do and than you're like, what is going on, right? And you've been told this is just part of being a woman and I want you to know I disagree.

And so my guest today also disagrees that your menstrual cycle is a rhythm. And we need to embrace that and we to learn to live with it, navigate it. Love it and I know some of you are going, no, Laurie, I don't love my cycle.

I now we're going to talk about that, right? We're gonna talk that because we are gonna get sciency. The menstrual cycle is a neuroendocrine rhythm governed by your brain, your ovaries, stress hormones, metabolic health.

What Cycle Alchemy Means

So all of that comes into play and today We're going to talk with Adrienne Irizarry, and I'm so excited to have her here because she is a psycho alchemist.

I know you're like, I don't know what that is. Well, we're gonna talk about that. And she uses sound, subconscious repattern, energetic medicine to influence that hormonal regulation.

That's a mouthful, but I am so exited to dive into all of this. So Adrianne, thanks for being here today. Thank you so much for having me, Laurie. It's pleasure to be here.

So good, so good. So tell everybody what a cycle alchemist is. Yes. I have been struggling with how do I articulate all of the magic of what it is that I do.

And I've landed on cycle Alchemy. Really what is is, is I work with all the seasons and cycles in a woman's body, in woman life, and in women's lifetime.

And in preparation in some cases, but generally right around the time young girls begin their bleed, I work with all of the challenges that people experience around their bleeding years with disruptive PMS and PMDD, period cramps, irregularity, heavy bleeding, and so on and forth.

I worked with people who were struggling on their fertility journey or if they just mindfully want to prepare. for getting pregnant ahead of time, I help them do the groundwork so that they can get pregnant when they're ready to.

I specialize in fertility for 35 and older because I find that that is a population that often is rushed into assisted reproductive technology like IVF.

And their body might not actually need intervention, they just might need the right types of love and support. And so I work in that area. Then I worked in everybody lately's favorite area, perimenopause.

You know, what is happening? What is going on here? Please tell me. Yes, exactly. Or stop the bus. I want to get off. Why are you stopping right now? So I tend to find myself working in those places and spaces where people go to their doctor, they get their labs, their lab's look quote unquote fine or normal.

And then they're not given any action steps. So they were up Googling, why am I half in and half out of the covers at two o'clock in the morning? I'm, is this perimenopause, right?

So like I tend to work where often there isn't something measurable. Sometimes there is, but from a Western quantifying standpoint, there might not be a discernible reason why something is happening.

And I, I work in that space. Which is challenging and I am sure rewarding at the same time. I know me personally, you know, I've struggled with some hormone things over the years.

I feel great hormonally right now, except we were just talking at the beginning, and I'm like, well I didn't have my period for six months when I thought, oh, am 52, it's gonna be done, then it came back.

And I was like oh I guess we're not done. Then it was 90 days. Now for the last three months I have had it for every 28 days, so I don't know what's going on.

But I mean, for me, personally the period is fine. There's no issues, all things there. So my body's just like eh, we think we'll have some now.

Seven-Year Female Life Stages

which is fine, but I really struggled in the past, like bad, bad cramping, a lot of PMS, to the point where when I was younger, before I had kids, well, even a little bit while after, when was in nursing school, and I took hydrocodone the first day of my period every month.

And because it was so bad like I couldn't even function. It got worse after I kids again, then it got better once I figured out some stuff and took better care of myself.

It can be life-altering. I know people are like, I hate half of the month. They hate how I feel half in the months. And we're told, well, that's just being a woman.

It's not. We have not been listened to. There's a huge disservice, in modern medicine, towards women and their cycles. an SSRI and I do a lot of hormone testing and stuff and i see women who don't have any estrogen barely any progesterone no wonder they were stressed and anxious and depressed right nobody's addressing their root cause issues or they're just thrown on thyroid meds and well so sorry that's just the way it is um so i love the fact that what you're doing so um kind of dive into like you said you were working in all these different seasons of a woman's life can you kind Yes.

So I'm an East Asian medicine practitioner, so I'll actually do it in kind of a nature-based way, which I think will land with people. I know that that's what about what I do that really landed with me at the beginning.

Sure. We're in our fire years in the very beginning of our life. Just think about the sassiness of teenagers, if any of you resonate with that. I know that I'm in that season right now.

They are particularly spicy, but it's all about self-discovery and figuring out who they are and excitement and adventure and being exposed to different kinds of experiences.

The body is working on the maturation process during that timeframe. this can look like girls having a cycle and then not having one for a few months and it arrives again and they look a little different.

I've seen an increasingly scary number of girls starting their bleed between 9 and 11. Well, some of it is environmental, right? There's a lot of hormones and garbage in our food and in food systems, but some it just straight up stress.

And it's like this awful collision of nutrient deficient foods that are either because of farming practices or processed things or access to things that actually affordable because groceries have gone through the flipping roof.

It's like a collision of that and stress. They have school stress, but then they have social stressors that are… You and I grew up in the generation where if we did something dumb and embarrassing, it passed after a few days instead of being on social media and living in infamy.

So, there's a very different level of stress and anxiety and social stigma today that makes this developmental age even more of a pressure cooker than it was before.

So there are a lot of reasons for that. The spleen chi is responsible for the regulatory energy, being able to control the opening and closing of the uterine artery, to be able let blood down.

So like if they're bleeding too early, usually there's a spleen she deficiency of some sort. There might be more there. But, you know, that's kind of the fire years of your life.

Chinese medicine doesn't actually recognize that women reach their full sexual maturation or their adult development until they reach 21. So depending on when somebody starts their bleed, often there's like a five-year practice period where the hypothalamus pituitary ovarian access is like trying to figure out its communication loop.

You're on the opposite end of it, Lori, where it's… And sometimes it goes up, we're going to keep playing this game of telephone. It's great. And then other times it's like, maybe not this month.

That'll be fine. We're starting to change. So the fire years last until about 21, then rate around 21 for women. This is all assigned at birth females.

Right around 21, you enter your Earth years. So think about that Mother Gaia energy, right? Like that birthing forth kind of energy. That's really the heart of where we bear children.

Our periods are pretty regular at that point. They should be relatively asymptomatic at There's just this natural rhythm of where our body is matching the lunar cycle.

Our cycle comes every 28 to 30 days. It should come without any PMS and pain and brown blood and all of that kind of stuff. There are lots of reasons why that doesn't occur in today's world.

And then we go into our middle years at 35. So this is where we're, we can still have children, but it isn't as much of a focal point biologically in our body.

And so how we spend our vital energy starts becoming a vocal point.

Perimenopause and the 35-Year Transition

so 35 and 42 is, it's like the next two big benchmarks because women's bodies move in seven year cycles. And then 49 is where Chinese medicine recognizes that that transition through into menopause and post-menopausal is going to take place.

The average age in the U. S. right now, anyway, statistically, is 51 for making that menosposal transition. So as we move through the seasons of our life, we're literally moving through different elements that have different focuses.

So like, we're very focused on childbearing, childrearing this home and hearth kind of energy in our earth years. And then when we move into our mental years, We start going from pouring our vital energy or archi into the

creation of life, and we start wanting to turn it more into creation our life.

And there's a big energetic shift that happens there. And it's not that we don't want kids and we want to take care of kids, but we start thinking about things like, well, I didn't finish my degree because I got pregnant in college.

I want I want to change careers altogether. Like I've had life experience, I don't feel aligned with what it is that I'm doing anymore. I wanna do something that lights me up inside. I wanna go on girls trips.

i have missed so much time with my friends because we were all raising our kids and we we're all busy and now we have more space to be able to do these kinds of things together.

So there's a shift in that energy as you go through and you see those shifts reflected in how the cycle shows up as well. Yeah, I love that. I'm thinking about those cycles you're talking about every seven years.

And I think there's the wives tale every, seven-year itch, like in marriage and stuff like that, and I there is some validity to that as you go into cycles, you kind of just have to reevaluate things.

Seven being the perfect number if we're looking at it from a biblical perspective too. Like, what is the completion of this? And then there's another start kind of a thing going on there.

So that's really fascinating. I feel like I might be a little bit behind. But I just started going to girls trips, you know, the last couple of years.

It's all good. Let's talk about that perimenopause because it's kind where I think a lot of my listeners land right now. That's going start about what time?

It actually starts right around 35. Okay. So men's bodies move in eight year cycles. Really? Yep. Women's body's move and seven year cycle. You know, growing up how like girls matured faster than the boys.

Well, there's actually a biological reason. There's a logical reason that I didn't know that. That's really fascinating. Yeah. Men, when they reach 40, they start having some of their energetic transition that we start seeing at 35, So 35, you might not be like, and the change can happen a couple of years on either side.

So like 35 is the benchmark. I didn't really start feeling my 35 transition until I was like almost 38. But I also working in a cyclical way at that point too.

And so I think I already had kind of embraced the fact that I was a female body and not trying to push it in a testosterone linear male dominated world kind of way.

So I started seeing this transition later, but a lot of times right around 35, we start being extended the invitation to re-envision how we balance things.

I'll give you a good example. For me, it looked like I could work an entire week, I can work on an event on the weekend as a vendor, do a show, be a speaker, whatever, and then I start right in with the work week and go through and really not have a day off until the following week.

Now, right around 37, almost 38, my body went, girl, we really need to reevaluate this. Because I remember I had worked that week and I prepped for the show on Saturday.

I did the Show on Sunday. Woke up Monday morning and went, is there a license plate stamped on my forehead from the bus that ran me over? Because holy cow, am I tired.

And I remember thinking the whole day and like, why am I so tired? This is not normal. And then like at the end of the day, like I was kind of sitting with it and it clicked.

I'm like Adrienne, this is probably the beginnings of your Qi change, your vital energy change. You'll start to notice right around 35 that your stamina is different.

It's not bad, it's just different, It asks you to embrace pause in a different way. Pause doesn't have to mean veg out, sit on the couch, take a nap. it could, but it doesn' have too.

I'm actually going to get up from my desk, I am going go to the furthest water station to fill my water bottle just to give my brain a break, and then I will walk myself back to my desks so that I give myself five minutes of pause.

I go the bathroom, that's the farthest one across the floor, just so I stretch my legs, move my body, give a brain break and come back. I'm going to go for a 10-minute walk at lunch." It could be active rest, but it's the fact that a lot of times we push and we feel exhausted by the end of the day.

Our body isn't tired, our brain is, and then we toss and turn and have a hard time to sleep, which also tends to happen right around the same age and stage.

It could look like re-envisioning the rhythm with which you move through the world.

Teaching Body Literacy to Teens

And it really should because when we blow through 35 and we just keep pounding the pavement the same way and don't listen to those little whispers that our body starts giving us around, hey, it might be good to slow down or it would feel really good just to stop for a few minutes.

If we just blow through that, that's when I get the phone calls at 40, raise around 40 and people are going, what the heck happened to my menstrual cycle?

It was normal. And now all of a sudden it's a hot mess. She shows up whenever she wants to, and I don't know what's happening right now. So you have essentially overextended.

I like to think about it kind of like a bank account, like you have to put things into the bank in order to have things that come back out of it, right?

Otherwise, you're overdrafting the Bank account. So 35, when you are pushing and pushing, and pulling, but if you don't pause and you rest and don t give your days punctuation, debris, then you're not putting anything back into this account.

So instead of having your next seven year happen around 42, you start seeing it on two years on either side, the earlier side 40, where your body is going, girl, I gave you the signs.

You didn't listen to me the first time. We now need to have a really serious conversation. Right? I always tell my clients, I'm like, either you make the decision or your body is going to make it for you.

And that is really uncomfortable. Yeah. Yes. And it becomes the, it's not you, It's me conversation. Totally. Oh my gosh. Yeah, I want to pause here for just a second because I love what you're saying about, you know, doing the pauses, walking further to the water fountain or taking a day off or whatever it might be.

I really feel like We as moms, right, in this crazy world, and I feel like I model it better now than I ever have before for my daughter, but still work to be done, I will say.

But I look at our teens, our teen girls, and they are pushing, pushing pushing. And they have no clue even what a rhythm is. They have not clue, even how to listen to their body.

It worries me. I'll just be really honest because it's really rare that I have a teen that comes into my office that actually is menstruating the way she should be menstruing at that point in time.

And even into the early 20s, women are just not having their periods. Or if they are having them, they're so horrific that they can barely stand it. I would love to pause and hone in on that for a minute.

What do we need to change? to teach these younger generations so that once they hit 30, 35, I feel like there's going to be a whole lot more chaos than it was for you and me even and I thought that period of time was really hard hormonally for myself and i just don't want that to happen to that next generation.

Yeah, i really witness you in what you're saying there and Honestly, I truly believe that we can have an entire generation of young women that don't know what period cramps are, if we would only provide better education.

I have a program that I created called the Elchemist Toolkit specifically for this reason, because I was starting too far down river. Right? Like I had been starting to work with people assuming that they had some basic knowledge around you have two halves of your month.

There are four different events that happen during your menstrual cycle. each half of the month is kicked off by a small micro event. I assumed that people knew this, and I was banging my head against a wall going, oh my gosh, these people that are coming in, they don't even know how to count day one.

It's decimal, right? And so sex education in a Western culture, predominantly here in the United States, but honestly, I've heard this sentiment, because I work with people internationally, from international people in Western culture, that they got sex ed, right?

Don't put the P in the V if you don't want to get pregnant. Hey friend, just a quick break to remind you, if calming your brain is the missing piece in your practice or in you home, my Mind Thrive certification course teaches you exactly how to do that with targeted amino acid therapy.

So it's real science, real results, no band-aids. Enrollment is now open. Link is in show notes. back to the show. So we get the, don't put the P in the V if you don t want to get pregnant conversation, and we got the watch out for STDs use a barrier.

That's all we can get for information, really. They'll give us the anatomical rundown of here are the little boy parts, here the are little girl parts.

But nobody explains what those bodies actually need for them to function properly.

Menstrual Cycle Phases and Warmth

And I think it is one of the biggest disservices that collectively, you can have a body literacy age-appropriate conversation without bringing sex into it.

And, I feel like a lot of education that we're provided is only sex-focused with an abstinence-only undertone. If we teach them how it works, they will be inclined to use it instead of flipping the frame and going, it is irresponsible for us to not teach him how to us it because they're gonna use regardless.

Because they are at that age where if you tell them no, that's the one thing they gonna do. Right, right. So because this has historically been the way that body literacy education has been provided, particularly here in the United States, women don't know what they don' know.

They just, you know, a lot of people got the, oh, your bleeding the box of tampons through the door, the diagram is in that's how they learn how to, you know, period hygiene.

And there's a lot of families that aren't comfortable having conversations around bodies and how bodies work, male or female. It doesn't really matter, but there is so much more nuance in women's bodies.

And honestly, men would benefit from knowing how women bodies worked because they would be able to

understand that you're dealing with an infradian rhythm.

which is different. It moves not on a 24-hour hormone cycle the way a man's body does. In our case, a 28 to 30-day cycle because it's based on the lunar cycle, which 29 and a half days.

This is information we should have gotten with our first bleed and very few of us do. The different phases of the cycle have different energetic needs.

you're going to have more energy, you are going be more verbal, your face is going more symmetrical, and you will be better at planning tasks. Every stage you have gifts and things that need specific kinds of food and support.

In order for the period to arrive in a less symptomatic kind of way, just learning how to care for yourself during the bleeding days can completely change the expression of your entire month.

And this is just not education that we get at the beginning. It used to be intergenerationally shared. it stopped being intergenerational shared for a whole lot of historical reasons.

Then there was a reliance upon the public education system to provide this kind of education. And all it is is an anatomy lesson. Right, right. And so we're seeing epidemic levels of young people who are having, not to mention today's fashion trends do not help the situation because midriffs show.

There's no warmth there. That's like the perfect equation for tons of cramping. And so, you know, there's a whole bunch of things. They don't know that.

Yeah. Can you dive into some of that? Like, can you go through the stages and just give us a little tidbit of like, cause I know people are like I have no idea what stages are and what did she just say about warmth around the midriff?

Yes, absolutely. So I did a reel a little while back where I was like, where's the rest of my shirt? It was one of the most popular reels I ever did because I Was complaining about the fact that everything I could find at the store and I, was wearing a long line tank top underneath, like a sweatshirt that was dropped short.

And I like where is the Rest of My shirt. Like I want to keep my belly warm. And if you have had a child, no, like we're just not built for this kind of fashion.

Can I have the rest of my shirt now? But I make a joke about something that is really important. So warmth is such a critical part of this equation. Keeping our feet warm, keeping our abdomen warm.

And it doesn't matter what phase of your life you're in. Cold feet. is a huge catalyst for issues in our reproductive system. We have three really power player meridians from an acupuncture standpoint that go through our feet and ankles and are the control center for how our reproductive system shows up.

So if they're not warm and the circulation isn't moving well, you're going to create problems downstream, right? So keeping your abdomen warm, and keeping you feet warm is one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself all month long.

But if we're gonna talk about the phases, okay, so day one, of your new menstrual month is the first day of fresh red blood. Not if you get brown ahead of time, not if it just spots and spits and doesn't actually commit to a flow.

None of that counts as day one. Day one is the first day of fresh red flow where it actually commits to something more than just spitting on a liner. you should be having a period that is four to six days of fresh red blood only.

No brown, no clots, No cramping, no funny business. It should just arrive, gently increase around day two where that'll be day 2 into day 3 will be your heaviest time.

it will come down coast to the finish line somewhere between day 4 and day 6. That is what the standard should be. And a lot of people haven't been taught that.

So day one is how you start counting your cycles. If you ever have to have blood work done to find out your FSH, that is going to rise on day three. if you're not counting day 1 right, it will throw off any labs that you have done.

This is really important to know how to count. So, menstruation is the micro-event that kicks off the follicular phase, which is first half of your cycle.

The first-half of the cycle is yin or substance-building phase of cycle, this is where your follicles start to ripen in your ovaries and they begin the development process towards ovulation, in the middle of a month.

you are beginning to build blood-rich endometrial lining, that substance building process happens from day one through approximately day 14. Okay? If you're working on a 28-day cycle, the average day of ovulation is day fourteen.

That is not the case for everybody. Optimal ovlation is between day thirteen and day seventeen. because we have varying lengths in the luteal phase. But when we variable lengths our cycle, meaning one month it's 28 days, the next month that's 32 days.

Often that happens based on where your ovulation is taking place. Ovulation is the second micro event that kicks off the young phase or the progesterone dominant or heat phase of your cycle, the luteal phase.

So you ovulate that egg is only viable for 24 hours.

Nutrition, Movement, and Cycle Support

Your fertile window to get pregnant in is only seven to eight days. Okay. That is the window. The rest of your month, you cannot get pregnancy. How cool is that?

So when you ovulate, ovulation, like I said, if you're having a 28, 29 or 30 day cycle, it'll happen either day 14, 15 or 16. on average, right? We're assuming that the luteal phase is 14 days.

The lutial phase tends to be fixed. So the average is fourteen days or fifteen days, mine is thirteen, but it's always been thirteen. There can be some variability, it will be the same month after month, okay?

Which makes the arrival of your period, if you know when you ovulate, very predictable. So the luteal phase is all about warmth and heat, okay? So if fertilization takes place when you ovulate, your body wants to be a cozy warm nest for baby.

Right. Your progesterone level rises. If you're tracking your basal temperature, you basalt temperature comes up four tenths of a degree or higher, to confirm ovulation.

So that rise in temperature. That's where that heat piece comes in. So people usually feel pretty good in the first five days after ovulation and then it's that downward slope in seven days roughly before their period begins again that people tend to get more symptomatic.

Sometimes I'll find people will get symptomatic at ovulation. They think their period is coming. they are irritable, they're crampy. Like I just had my period and I feel like my periods going to come again and then ovulations takes place.

And then the symptoms went away and i stopped spotting and two weeks later my actual period came. That's a sign of an imbalance. I just want to kind of witness that this cycle doesn't look this perfect for most of us.

And then our bleed kicks off the beginning of our month again. So each of these phases needs different things. We

need warmth all month long. But in our menstruating phase, the more we eat cooked foods and not raw, we're not asking the body to give us more energy for the digestive process, you're saving it for bleeding process.

You're between warmth and that alone that can take down people's cramps. Using tampons makes people cramp because it's a plug product. It doesn't allow the full shedding of the lining.

So using things like menstrual cups, menstruial discs and pads, period underwear, that tends to be a really big shift in people's crampping experience right out of gate.

The follicular phase, it is about nourishment. Your body is building things. it needs dark leafy greens. The more you can actually eat your food cooked, the better your body can assimilate it.

You're actually adding chi or vital energy to your foods, which then is imparted in your bodies. So you're paying back into the bank account when you do it that way.

not eating things cold and raw and iced. I know for those of you who have smoothies and drink iced coffee, I suddenly became the most unpopular person out there.

You can feel it right now. Well, you don't know that I like her. It's true, it is really true. There's a time and place for a smoothie. Yeah. But I can tell when my body's just like, I cant do the cold stuff.

And it came to that realization that really, really helped me. They helped my energy all day long, not just even my hormone energy, but just my general energy.

All day, long when I didn't have so much cold. Yes. Because your body has to warm it up to be able to process it. Like think about the ambient temperature of your.

Right? Like it's in the nineties. And if you're putting something iced in there, it's nowhere's close to 90. It's kind of like being in air conditioning in the summertime.

If it is too cold, that can actually like damage your chi. So, ovulation is the bright, sunniest part of the entire month. This is where we should feel our best.

And I say should because I just witnessed the fact that not everybody feels their best at ovlation, but that's where you should to feel your best and have the most energy of entire the month, that where really you can kind of do anything.

If you're going to do personal records with lifting or running or any sort of physical activity, you are the least injury prone and you have the most energy to really be able to bust the reps out or to stretch what it is that you can do where earlier in the month you don't have quite as much stretch.

A lot of times you're going to feel really good to do those kinds of activities in early luteal phase. So when your progesterone first starts to rise, Progesterone peaks at day 21, so anybody who's had labs done, often that's another date on the calendar that is kind of an important one if you're having lab work done.

This is where we should see what your actual true progesterone looks like during the entire month is right around, sometimes you'll see it written as seven DPO, seven days post ovulation, or assuming a day 14 ovulation, it would be around day 21. Often that's where people begin to get the shift.

where they were feeling really great. Everything was awesome. They were articulate. they weren't having a hard time searching for words. And then all of a sudden, they feel like they crashed and burned.

Fill your brain. Exactly. Where did my words go again? My tongue worked yesterday, but it doesn't work now. That's very, very common. So then as we move through the luteal phase, you're going to be wired for planning tasks.

So if you have big project management, strategic planning, calendars that need to be built out, like anything like that, that is a really great time to put them in because your brain is wired that way.

It's a little harder to self-expressive, but you're really good at, and you become progressively more good, at those introverted tasks as you are moving towards menstruation.

So again, cooked foods, in this phase of the cycle, you want things that are going to help to move your circulation. ginger, making sure you're walking on a regular basis.

Like I said, warm foods, but we're also looking at warm spices and things like that. Yeah, more of a heat profile, unless you are perimenopausal and you get hot flashes and that's another conversation.

But you're looking to help create circulation and movement in your blood because you get symptomatic when things start to slow down and get stuck. And then menstruation is back again.

So there's different foods and practices, but you also have different gifts in. Your brain and how your brain works and what tasks are best wired for and things like that during these different hormonal changes.

Yeah, and I think it's really important to understand that because we can shame ourselves as women. We're like, what is wrong with me? And, you know, just having these guilty things, like I just don't have the energy to do that right now.

And there's more than likely a hormone reason for that. That kind of need, that will need to be addressed and recognized and embraced and all those kinds of things.

This, was fantastic. I really feel like that was helpful. What about us that are not? consistent in our cycle anymore. How do we navigate? Because we still have a cycle.

There's still a circle that we're going through as women, but how do navigate that when we are like, I don't know when it's coming? Yeah, that's a really great question and one that I get quite often.

I also get it in conjunction with while I'm on hormonal birth control. So how does that work for me? And the answer is the same, which is look in the sky.

And just follow the moon cycle. Following the Moon cycle is the easiest way to emulate this energy. And you'll find that I've had people who are post menopausal, like many years post-menopause all that are like, Oh, this must've been my bleeding week because I can feel that.

I'm a little less mode like self-motivated this week. and I, and it kind of want to hibernate a. So. looking to the lunar cycle, the new moon is the energy of your bleed.

It's the hibernating time, there's a least amount of light in the sky, and then as you go into the waxing moon and the light is growing in this guy, your energy level should grow.

The demands on your body can grow, what you're asking of your body can grow. And when you are talking about it from a later bleeding years, almost out of the bleeding year's standpoint, you, are looking at the fact that the change in progesterone and estrogen does affect the way that your brain functions.

Listening to the Body in Perimenopause

So it isn't as hard and fast in terms of like ovulation is the best time for you to be verbal. Well, you might feel more verbal a lot more of your month because testosterone is starting to become more a dominant player.

You may be feeling a little bit more like You have continuity in an exercise plan. So a lot of times I'll describe it this way. People like black and white.

They like to say, I go to the gym Monday, Wednesday, Friday. Cool. When you're a bleeding body, that's hard because Monday you might wake up with your period.

And you can't lift like you did before, or at least you really shouldn't be. When I see people in weightlifting forums and they're like, hype me up, girls.

And they are like oh, you've got this, girl. Go to town. You'll be great. I'm always the jerk that chimes in and goes, so what day of your cycle are you on?

And inevitably, it's day three. And it is because you're starting to get that FSH rise. You're like, oh, I got to go to the gym. I can do this. Just going to suck it up and push my way through.

But when you push, you are working. It's like swimming upstream against the river instead of going with the current where you will go further faster. You're spending a lot more energy trying to swim against the natural movement of things.

So maybe you have a Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule, but instead of being like, I must go to the gym and lift heavy, like when you're in your late perimenopausal, menopause, period of life, and even into the early part of postmenopas, when everything's settling, you might go Monday Wednesday Friday, But it might look different every time.

So you might go and you have energy, lift if you had energy. But if go, and your like, oh my god, I'm so tired right now, maybe just gently walk. You're still moving your body.

The key is to move. Yes, weight training is helpful because it's muscle tug on bone. It helps to build kidney chi from a Chinese medicine standpoint, but it helps with bone health and all of those types of things from like a hormonal perspective.

Your body isn't always going to have the energy to do it. And it's a matter of really being honest with yourself and telling the inner critic to sit down and be quiet when you're shaming yourself for not doing the thing.

It's more of an honoring. Let's flip the frame of it and think about it more as an honor of what your body actually has the capacity to and meeting her in that space.

instead of trying to force your way through it. Because when you force you way though it, you can get injured, especially as you're getting perimenopausal and older.

Being conscious of injury is very important. But we're also working with the energy that we have on board. So maybe it's walking, maybe its Qigong. Maybe it is lifting heavy.

It's showing up for yourself wherever you are energetically at that time. And that's true during your bleeding years too, but I find that there's a lot more sporadic unpredictability in the perimenopausal years because your hormones are rapidly changing.

So the important part is to make sure that you're moving your circulation. But it doesn't have to be crazy. It doesn' have an hour on the elliptical. If you normally go and you run, hats off to you girlfriend.

I had a running phase of my life. But I do have 30 to 40 minutes of Qigong in my body. I have walking for 30-45 minutes in the body, I put on a weighted vest and go for a walk.

Those things feel good to me right now. It is not fun for me at this stage. So just honor where you're at, because the movement is important. Making sure you are getting weight-bearing activity is very important, but that weight bearing activity does not have to look like a power lifter.

It can be soup cans in a fanny pack. It really does. Like for real, it doesn't have to be insane. And we have this go

hard or go home mentality in our culture.

It's not the case. If you look at any of the cultures that have high concentrations of centenarians, they don't go heart and go whole. They do not. No, They are very kind of themselves.

You're talking about go big or grow home. I started CrossFit, I think I was 44 at the time. And I did it for four months. I'm competitive and I can do it.

Yeah, totally can you do. Those are the worst four-months of my life. Oh my gosh, like at 44 I had no business where my hormones were, my sleep patterns, all those things.

It was horrible. I can't sleep because my body hurts so bad and it's not like I was so badly out of shape, but it was just too much for my. And, um, you know, I had, the younger instructors would be like, no, your fine.

You just got to keep going to get past it. I never got past her for four months. Like this is really stupid. I have to stop this because I was harming myself and my cycles were getting worse and I Was gaining weights.

Yeah, what's just muscle like no, no. No, it's it. It's not muscle Like I'm growing in ways that I don't want to grow and it was because my body was in such a survival mode like I totally tapped it out and Yeah.

II don' even like going to gym what I like to work on other people's sweaty equipment like the noise and so I decided kind of like after that I'm like I just I really like to work out at home I've got my own little things I walk or I run depending on the day the time of the month what I like To do I walked my dogs every day like you just have to decide like what is the best fit for you and it's not about having this you know buff six pack ripped and the women who have that, they look really beautiful, but I really do want to ask them, how do you feel, you know, emotionally or hormonally, all those kinds of things.

And some of them feel great. But transitioning into the season I'm in now, You were just talking about running. There was a period of time like I had no desire to run.

Now I have a desire run again and when I run, I actually feel good as long as I do it when i'm feeling good, right? So definitely feel the season shifting.

What else do you want to leave our audience with? Because this is a fascinating conversation. I think the thing that I would leave our audience with is your body knows what it needs.

And we have been taught that this thing, that lives on our shoulders, our head, or ego mind is superior to the knowing inside of our body. And we are taught that we have to move through the world in a head centric way in order to survive, in the best that we can be.

And the truth of the matter is your body whispers and your buddy communicates with you and learning the language that she's lovingly trying to communicate with in is the greatest gift in the entire world.

Sometimes you have to tell the brain to sit down and be quiet for a second and really just drop in to your body. For me, I'm an Aquarius. I live in my head.

And so I have to actually physically put my hands on my body, and I tend to put them over my heart to check in because it makes that brain-body connection for me.

So whatever it feels like to you and needs to be for you to, but if you think about some of those moments where you've had to make some really crossroadsy kinds of decisions, your body always goes, heck no, stop.

You're about to be hit by a moving truck. Like you can feel the adrenaline surge through your system and you're like, no it's going to fine because you try to rationalize it with your brain and then later on the decision goes really poorly and your like I should have listened to my gut.

Well, your gut is that knowing that intuition, it never ever lies to you. So wherever you are in your life right now, whatever phase and stage you're in, That knowing will always be a guiding light for you.

She will whisper to you and go, we're a little too tired for this today. I don't have enough energy for today, I feel great, let's kick ass today like whatever it is, right?

If you listen to that little voice and allow that to be the guidance system instead of rigid diet plans, rigid workout plans rigid thoughts and understandings of what you think you should be doing.

and guilting and shaming yourself into doing the thing, rather than just listening to that knowing, you will find that a lot of your symptoms really will come into better alignment.

You'll have a better relationship with your body, You will have fewer symptoms when you just listen to the inner guidance system. I love it. That is so good.

Thank you. Thank you so much for having me. This has been such a pleasure. So much fun. And thank you for listening as well. I know that you know someone who needs this episode, so make sure you share it with that person or multiple people.

Thanks for listening to Take Back My Brain. If today's episode helped you connect with hope or direction, I want you to follow the show, leave us a review, and share it with someone who needs it.

And if you're ready to start your own healing journey, explore our courses and our coaching programs at lorihammer.com backslash store. So until next time, remember, you cannot medicate away a nutrient deficiency and healing your brain isn't just possible, it's Powerful.