Episode 473: Aleks Rybchinskiy on Pain, Trauma, and Inner Work for Health and Healing
Child: Welcome to my Mommy’s podcast.

This podcast is sponsored by Joovv red light therapy. I’ve been a fan of red light therapy since researching it years ago, and have been really grateful for my red light devices the last couple of years as I get older and want to be proactive about keeping my skin looking young! With stress and travel, I felt my skin getting less smooth and elastic than it used to be, so I upped my red light use to help my skin feel its best! I also notice the benefits for recovery and sleep as I’ve gotten into more intense workouts. Light is such a vital part of the cellular energy equation in the body and red light therapy is an easy way to get this vital piece. Since many of us spend so much time indoors, we often don’t get enough light. Spending some time outdoors each morning and using red light at night are my go-to’s for making sure my body’s light exposure is optimized. Learn more and see the light I use at joovv.com/wellnessmama. And they’ve built in an exclusive Wellness Mama discount at above link!

This episode is sponsored by Levels Continuous Glucose Monitors. I have been experimenting with this continuous glucose monitoring system for the past few months, and I’ve learned so much personalized data about my body’s own response to different foods, even to workouts, to sauna, and to when I don't get enough sleep. I’ve been using Levels, and this has made a significant difference in the way I track my glucose data, and especially as it relates to diet and fitness. Levels is cool, because in addition to providing you with the continuous glucose monitor sensors, their app interprets your data, scores your individual meal, and allows you to run experiments across different inputs like diet, exercise, or even fasting protocols.

They're backed by a world-class team, including Stanford-trained MD, top engineers from SpaceX and Google, and a research team that includes legends in the space like Dr. Dominic D'Agostino and Dr. David Perlmutter, both who have been guests on this podcast before. Health is so personalized, and this has given me a way to know the best foods for my own body, and it’s helping me get enough protein and carbs while still maintaining weight loss. Levels is currently running a closed beta program with a waitlist of 100,000 people, but, as a listener, you can skip that line and join Levels today by going to levels.link/wellnessmama.

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Katie: Hello and welcome to the "Wellness Mama" podcast. I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com and wellnesse.com. That's Wellnesse with an E on the end. And this podcast goes deep on things like pain and trauma and the inner work we do for health and healing, taking a holistic approach. And I'm here with Aleks Rybchinskiy, who is the co-founder of Primal Fusion Health. And they specialize in wellness education and primal integration, and especially how all of the areas of life, physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual, all interact for health. And he's a master C.H.E.K. practitioner and neuro-semantic therapist, with over 15 years of clinical experience. He's worked with celebrities, pro-athletes, and people in all walks of life. And he guides his students to live in harmony with themselves and with others addressing all of those areas at once.

In this episode, we talk about his own experience of actually medically dying and what perspective he gained from that. We go deep on the mind-body connection, how this relates to things like pain and movement, and talk about something I mentioned before, the book, "The Body Keeps the Score," about how trauma and pain can semantically store in the body, and so much more. Definitely, a wide-ranging episode, and there will be a round two with him that goes into some of the deeper stuff we didn't even have time to touch on today. But without further ado, let's join Aleks. Aleks, welcome. Thanks for being here.

Aleks: Thanks for having me.

Katie: I have a feeling we're gonna go in a lot of directions today. But to start, I have a note in my Google Doc that you died when you were three in a hospital in Ukraine. And I would love to hear a little bit more of that story.

Aleks: Well, Ukraine is all socialized. And so you know, that's you know, a fun benefit of your parents being able to you know, take time off to take care of their kid. So it turns out, I got laryngitis and that laryngitis spiraled into my lymph nodes being extremely swollen. Then they took me to the hospital. And I have no recollection of this. Up until I did a lot of inner work and started seeing glimpses and snapshots of moments of that, and also combined with...so my parents won't tell me the story. So Sara actually prised information out of them in casual conversation. And I found out through her telling me more information.

So I was in the hospital and they gave me sleeping pills. And when my mom asked the doctors why they gave me sleeping pills the answer they gave her was, "We wanted to let you get some sleep." And my mom was like, "I'm not here to sleep. I'm here to make sure my kid is okay." And so a couple hours later, they found me completely blue and they had to take me to the ER. And actually, the story would have been left there if my grandmother didn't work at the hospital, because in Ukraine, things are a little bit different.

How it works in Ukraine is once you go into the ER, the parents get sent home. So it's not like people's experience of the ERs here where, you know, they're able to stay in the waiting room, wait with their kid to make sure everything is okay. No, this is like, "Hey, we'll call you back when you get home." So the moment...
they got me back, what ends up happening is they find me with a trachea and I talk like a robot. And I can only imagine what went through my parents' minds.

So while I was in the ER, no one really knew what happened until after my parents were curious why I came back with trachea, why it escalated to the way it escalated. And so my grandma went and started...who actually passed away in November. And so she started digging and found out they gave me sleeping pills, they had to trach me, they had to give me adrenalin to the heart because I flatlined for several minutes.

And yeah, my parents would never have known because that's how the system is over there. And if it wasn't for my grandmother being nosy and wanting to really find out reading the paperwork. And so yeah, that's how the story has been written so far. And I almost drowned when I was one so that's a whole other story. I almost drowned in an ocean on vacation so that was fun.

Katie: Wow. And even though it sounds like those things are maybe pre, like logical memory, I know that they can be like a very much an emotional impact from experiences like that. Do you feel like that shaped your perspective later on, especially now that you're unpacking some of those things as an adult?

Aleks: One hundred percent. I've wondered why my perspective has been different than most people's. I've gone through a lot of I don't even wanna call them mental health issues because I feel like that's like a big buzzword that gets leaned on a lot. But I went through a lot of struggles mentally to grasp why I feel different when I communicate with other people about their experience.

And so dying gives you a whole different level of being on this planet where every breath you take is amazing. You know, people get up in the morning and they arise and they go, "Oh, it's Monday." I'm like, "I'm glad to be alive," you know. From knowing the story I'm like, I should have died back then or you know, but tides turned to my direction. And I'm like, every time I'm breathing, everything in my body is happy. And so even during the hard times, I know that too shall pass and then I keep moving through because I remember...actually, an interesting thing that I'll share is dying is very peaceful.

Dying is one of the most pleasant experiences that you will ever go through. So when people are afraid of dying, that actually act of disconnecting from your psyche and your body and being everywhere and nowhere at the same time and feeling the presence of everything is overwhelming and it's so beautiful. So now I'm patient. I'm like "Oh, there's always time to die."

So that's been my biggest takeaways how interesting life is. Knowing that it could have gone in any direction, but I'm here now. And yeah, I think that's how it shaped it. And bringing back a lot of the things from the other side I would say where my brain tends to be tuned differently.
Katie: I share a little bit of that experience in the birth of my third child. I hemorrhaged and he was born via emergency C-section. And after he left the room, I like flatlined for a minute and had that kind of indescribable experience you mentioned of just like being aware that I wasn't in my body at that point, and the kind of that...and I actually now have the words memento mori on my wrist, which means remember that you will die.

And there's actually some interesting data about how, you know, we are afraid of death like you mentioned, but actually thinking that and keeping that in our awareness tends to actually bring happiness as well. It's kind of a contradiction there. But thank you for sharing that story. That's a beautiful perspective.

And I feel like from there to jump into some other topics that won't be quite as deep, at least to start with. You come with a wide variety of expertise. In the researching for this podcast, there are so many topics that you can speak to. And I'd love to actually start with the idea of biomechanics. Because a recurring theme on this podcast in the last couple of years has been very much the mind-body connection.

And I ended up processing a lot of trauma by using somatic therapies and reprocessing through my body things that I thought were just emotional. And so that's something I've heard from a lot of other people that they're kind of in that similar place and trying to understand. And I know this is also an area that you do have quite a bit of expertise. So to start broad, can you kind of walk us through...I have a quote from you in my notes about "When you unkink the hose, the water flows." But walk us through the idea of biomechanics and we'll use that as a jumping-in point.

Aleks: So the whole body osteopaths...and I'm pretty sure it's osteopath, so I'm gonna stick to that for now until someone corrects me on it. But there are certain ranges of motion that the body functions better in and in neutral. And when I say neutral, I mean, not a flatline. So there's 15-degree curvatures that happen through the body that come from the base of your skull all the way to the coccyx in your tailbone, as they call it. So there's 15-degree curvatures happening at all times. And that should be maintained when we are in our resting position or standing position.

And because the foramen where the holes where our nerves come out of and our arteries and veins come out of, that's the optimal opening for them to function. So that way, when you move from neutral to the position, let's say it's picking up your child or putting something on a shelf, or it's moving the couch, you're not staying there for a long time. So the same analogy is we're not sitting behind a desk at all times. That's why ergonomics are extremely important to restore our biomechanics, so that way everything flows correctly.

And a lot of times people are trying to fight this idea of time, they're running out of time. And so they start moving improperly and then their body develops impingements, nerve pain, musculoskeletal pain. And they go try to get those treated, but no one ever addresses that their curvatures need to be addressed. Their pelvis
needs to be in the proper alignment, their neck, and even their cranium, everything has a little hole that it passes through.

And so if those things are squeezed, like for example, I like to use the example of the vagus nerve. A lot of people have studied it, a lot of people know about it, and how it controls the digestion. Well, the vagus nerve is part of your cranial nerve. Your stomach tells your brain what's happening. Most of the time...everything outside of the cranial nerve a lot of people may have experienced this where they put their hand on a stove, and then they lift their hand, and then the brain goes ow, hot. But it's not the simultaneous action.

So that's because there's relays that go okay, well, before we tell him it's hot, we need to make sure that his hand leaves the stove so we don't burn ourselves. But the cranial nerves go directly into your brain and the vagus nerve being...I can't remember if it's the eighth or the 10th one goes...I think it's the eighth goes through your atlas which is your C1 vertebrae, which is your very top spinal segment that your skull sits on.

And if your atlas is rotated and misaligned, what ends up happening is it impinges the way the current goes to the organs that it controls. Because your vagus nerve controls your digestive system, amongst other things. And a couple of other quirky things like your gag and your burp reflex and can't remember what other like choking reflexes.

And so if you have a misaligned atlas which is your C1 vertebrae where your skull sits on, even if you're organic food, you're detoxing, you're drinking enough water, you're doing all of the things properly, taking the right supplements, let's say, you're not getting enough current to start those systems. Like the same way as if you don't have enough current in your battery power in your battery to turn that start over, turn your engine over, your car's not gonna run because there's not enough current to start that car over.

And it's the same way. A lot of people suffer with digestive issues, and different nerve pains, and all kinds of unexplainable things because of the structure. The bones are very unforgiving. And your bones will literally lay on your nerves, veins, arteries with no remorse. Because they're inanimate, everything else makes it move, your brain makes your muscles move and pulls on your musculoskeletal structure.

So if you unkink that, you're gonna notice that your body is delivering nutrients, oxygen, and it's circulating at a rate that it's actually allowing itself to repair versus staying stuck and building up lactic acid, and building up toxicity. And building up...almost like going to vacation, and then coming back and now you have twice as much paperwork because you didn't get it done before you left.

And then people become confused as to why their bodies aren't functioning properly. Well, it's they're getting backed up. And because they're inside, we can't really see it versus like if you're in a house that someone's
hoarding, you can clearly see all the junk in the room. But it translates into things like your hands are going numb, or your skin is not the way you want it, or your tummy is bloating, and your back starts hurting and you can't quite control certain muscles and your body will lock up. So it shows up that way if you keep it stuck for a very long time.

Katie: That's so fascinating. And it makes sense in light of that. And I love the idea of the car starting and not having the energy to turn over. What is the process like to begin to unpack some of that? Because I feel like often, especially the conventional models of care, things are addressed sort of in isolation. And this seems like very much a whole-body approach. How would someone begin to start to unpack that?

Aleks: That's tough because you know, there are so many practitioners practicing many different modalities. And there's a big scarcity mindset that I've noticed in the practitioner world where it's like, I need to keep my client because then if I don't, then they may not come back and I'll lose this thing. And there's just always thought around loss versus how can I help the person? And you know, that's why I've been studying Paul Chek for almost 12 years now. And he has...that I found one of the best approaches to looking at the body holistically.

And what I mean holistically, I mean mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically being stones unturned. And so you have to be well-read to be able to see certain things. For example, people will ask me, "Why is no one talking about dental stuff," to make sure...well, if your mouth has to be in a specific alignment, and have enough forward growth. And you know, a lot of us weren't breastfed or we don't eat right and that's gonna stunt our development of our mouth. Which is a whole other conversation. I don't know if you wanna let me get into that.

But we need to make sure that whoever you're looking to get help from is looking at other aspects of your life as well. But most people if they don't know that there are practitioners out there that can literally grow your whole jaw floor without cutting it open. And there are dental implants work as an example. You'll go well, I don't know what to do with this so I'm gonna pretend like it's not there. And then when someone comes around, you'll go well, yeah, it's a problem. And you sound almost like a fatalist. Like, your life's gonna end. You know, sorry, we can't do anything about this.

So the best thing to do is treat your care like you would a mechanic. Because if you take your car to a mechanic, they don't fix your car, and they go, "Actually, you know, let us try again." And you're putting money into a mechanic that isn't making progress, that's where you have to try someone else. And a lot of people get stuck behind I really like this person or, you know, we have a relationship or something is like...you know, they're giving me something, they're giving me a friendship or I like their family.
But what they're doing is they're also spending money in a place that's not returning a service. And I'm constantly telling people that I don't care if you like me, I know you will because I'm a very likable human being. But it doesn't matter if you like me to me or not as long as I'm giving you the truth, and making sure that you're getting the best care possible and then you're moving in the right direction so one day you don't need me.

So it all depends on where the person is coming from. Like, there are so many resources on food. Like, you have to make sure you're eating the right food, you're getting it right, correctly sourced, and in the right quantity too. So playing with all those things is not being afraid to you know, try a little bit more, try a little bit less. Research about detox symptoms. Hey, I'm feeling this way. Does anyone else feel this way? A lot of this is gonna take more responsibility to take care of your health because as most of us know that we can't put our responsibility into another person's hands until we find that person that can fully take care of what we need, but also not take our power away is most important.

A lot of practitioners and a lot of people want to give you the answers, versus teach you how to not need a person anymore. And that's huge for me. I wanna make sure that even if the process takes three times as long, I know in the long term, I'm thinking about this person. When they're 60, 70, 80 years old, that they'll be able to grasp their health when I'm doing something else. Or they're in another country so that way, they're constantly not relying upon me to be their answer.

So for me, this is more of also an educational system. So finding someone that...here's a good cue, if you ask a question, and someone gives you a firm absolute no, with no explanation, that's usually a red flag to me. That's saying that this person doesn't wanna look into an area of their life, or study, and they're sticking to their modality.

And when I refer people to other practitioners, I always get to know the practitioner, or I give them a disclaimer, like, "Hey, I don't know this person. So tell me what your experience of them is." And if they do other things that could interrupt my clients' or patients' progress, I have to be very specific. You're going there for this and here's why. And everything else that they're doing is wonderful, but it's not for you right now. And you can dabble with it if you like, but I don't recommend it and I give them reasons. And then I try to educate the person as much as possible.

So looking for someone that is willing to take the time to explain, and not only would their explanations make sense. Because people aren't stupid, really. You know, they have a inherent sense for truth, even if they deny some of it, but inherently they know the truth. And that's what we're really looking for.

And you should be able to see a result within a week, of two weeks, of three weeks, depending on the circumstance of, you know, if someone has potentially a herniated disc. Like it could take 500 days to treat a
herniated disk. But the person should be seeing progress through this, you know. Or the other thing is...this is where I'm all over the place because you should be able to explain the pain because you've seen it so much.

Like a herniated disk when someone comes in and they're in pain, I go, "This is gonna hurt real bad because there's gonna be a point where," I describe it to them as like, "Your hand is stuck in a rock between two rocks. And for you to pull your hand through those rocks is gonna hurt. And then once your hand is free, your hand stops hurting." They go, "Oh, that makes sense." So as we centralize their disk, it's painful but then there's a moment of ease where everything becomes painless. And they're like, "Wow, oh, I see what you mean now."

So, like doing something for 15 years now over and over and over again, you're able to speak on it a little bit. So those are some guidelines as to how to find someone good. And don't be afraid to...because you like someone you wanna support someone. If you wanna support someone donate. But if you wanna really get help you have to find the person that's willing to look at you as separate from themselves and make sure that your care, and your success, isn't a reflection of...isn't a validation to the therapist.

I'm gonna explain that again. Make sure whoever you go to see that they're not being validated by you getting better because I see that a lot. They're so willing to give you the answer to make sure that they look smart. I'm calling a lot of people out and this is a good shadow time.

Katie: And that's such an important point. I've talked about that before in relation to just like physical healthcare. And I've used the term you know, we are each our own primary healthcare provider, and we should find practitioners who can be good partners in that. But at the end of the day, the responsibility, the ownership lies with each of us. We can't outsource that.

And I think to your point, this is a really good point. It also applies to mental healthcare providers, to spiritual healthcare providers. We each have to take the ownership of those things and find those pieces that are gonna work for each of us, but also be willing to step away. Or I've said, you know, I fire a doctor, if they're not a good partner in that.

And in any of these cases, you're hiring someone to help you. And so to your point, like if they're not helping you, find someone who is going to help you. And I love that you brought up all the aspects of that because I think in the western model often, they get talked about in separate pieces. And there's like the physical side of healthcare, there's mental health, and then there is spirituality.

And I think my lesson has been in the last couple of years learning just how intricately all those things overlap and how we have to take a whole-body kind of whole-person whole...all of those aspects approach. And I have a note also as well about like, pain being a teacher, and pain arriving with increasing volume if it's not
addressed. And I think maybe that ties in here as well. But can you talk about, like, you mentioned pain in the aspect of like, there can be acute pain when someone is in that process of healing, but kind of like pain as a teacher and it reoccurring?

Aleks: I mean, pain shows up whenever we're not in alignment with what we're supposed to be doing. I remember being a kid and trying to put a fork in an outlet and blew the fuses out of the house, and caused me some pain and pain to the house as a silly example. But it was telling me that this is not a good idea. But if we've spent years collecting and ignoring pain in our bodies, to unwind that is going to be also painful. Because these tissues are so ischemic, they have no blood flow moving to them. And that repair process hurts.

And I tell people a lot. Your first day is gonna hurt probably the most because these tissues haven't been touched maybe ever. And everyone gets their shoulders massaged so they're used to some pressure. But when you start working on muscles in the armpits and the thighs, and the calves, or inside between bones that people have...or the front of the neck, for example, that have never been touched before, it's like trying a new food where you're like, I don't know how to process this. I've never tasted this taste before.

But after the first time, people go home and they come back, and there's a chance for blood to go in and do its work and clear up some of that lactic acid and toxicity. A lot of people for example you know, they may not poop for a couple days, and then they'll have the best bowel movement of their life, and then it starts up again. So there's like there's a process to it.

But to speak on the pain again, this happens mentally, emotionally, spiritually, physically, right, if you're doing a squat and your back hurts, okay, we need to change something probably shouldn't push through it. Or we're compounding these issues and making things worse for our body as long term because we're building something called n-grams. Which are basically, each muscle has its own sequence of movement, and to fathom how everything moves in perfect unison with each other.

And so when you take all those sequences of movements and you put them into one pattern and we label them, squat, deadlift, bench press, or pull up, we have them all labeled, and our body takes those words and it sequences our muscles to create those actions.

So if you have pain in your life, or in your squat, let's say as an example, your body will always try to avoid pain. Whether it's good for you or not, your body will tell you hey, when there's pain, we're gonna move, which changes your n-gram and that is gonna be the fastest thing that will change your patterns in life. And I see that a lot in the spiritual movement.
What's happening now it's hey, everything has to be good vibes or I'm moving away from this pain. Instead of looking at it, understanding it, or even better inner standing what's going on with the situation in your life. And when you do that you become the creator of your life versus a saboteur, or a victim, or a child who doesn't want to participate with their lives because it does take work.

It does take time to lay on a foam roller. It does take time to research about what things...I mean, people spend time listening to these podcasts to make sure they're getting the best information every week and it takes time to do so. And if people don't take that time to invest into themselves, no one's gonna do it for them. Because as we're talking about, you're gonna go to someone, and if you don't know how to pay a good practitioner, you're gonna either get more pain, or you're gonna get pain in your wallet from having to spend all this money. And then when you finally find someone that's really able to take care of you, you can't afford them.

And I speak to this because this is what's happened to me many times with people. And pain is another way of looking at what in your life needs to be changed outside or inside. Sometimes you can't change what's happening outside so you change what's happening inside. Sometimes you can't change what's happening inside right now because there's too much chaos so you change what's happening outside.

Okay, maybe I find a new separate group of friends and then realizing that you are the emotional blanket, the sponge for all of your friends and it's taking a toll on your mental health. And you know, I constantly say you're the product of your five closest friends. So whoever you surround yourself is going to be who you're going to become. If you're not stable and secure enough in who you are to be able to overstep your boundaries.

And that's ultimately what we're trying to create a person that is so solid and stable in their own values and dream that no matter where they show up, they won't bend to their environment. Because they are the creator. They have so much responsibility in their own self and will to carry out what the beauty they see in the world. Hey, let's go out to a bar. I actually I'm gonna go paint because that creates less pain in my life. So that's how I see pain and I always have to look at it and most of us don't wanna look at it.

Katie: I think often their reaction is to move away from it rather than to lean in and learn from it. Certainly, definitely instinctually for a lot of people. And from researching you, I think something else that's really unique in your approach that I think is super interesting to delve into is kind of looking at the...as you put up macro to micro to macro. And so I'd love for you to explain what that means and how you integrate this into your approach.

Aleks: When you look at things from only a microlens. So let's say you go to a general practitioner, as an easy example and they say, hey, you have this. We need to refer you to a specialist, which is a micro. So they only focus on your knee, or your bowels, or your elbow, or whatever the case is. But they don't end up talking to...
each other. Then something else goes wrong after let’s say...then you get a medication to have this subside. But then you go back to your general practitioner to re-evaluate and they go, "Well, how’s your knee doing?"

Well, knee is doing great, but now my back hurts.

Okay, well, then let's take care of that. And then hey, now your back hurts. Let's send you to a PT. And then none of these people talk to each other which is a shame. They take notes, but they don't have a conversation. They spend you know, 10, 15 minutes with someone and they're like all right off the door. Because how the system is created it's almost like a revolving door and they have to or else the doctor or practitioner can't sustain the business. And it's tragic that that's how they're set up.

They have to see 30, 40, 50 people a day, in an 8-hour window or a 12-hour window to make their practice work so they can pay off their bills and all the expenses, and feed their family after all that. So when you're looking at like...let's go back to the body. When you're looking at an emotional level, you have anger. You look at it as anger, and you look at it on a macro level which it's how it's affecting your body, it's affecting my personal relationships. Unless, let's say unless I workout. Oh, that helps. I can work on my anger...I don't have to work on my anger, all I have to do is work out.

And then your body goes hey, but when we work out we have pain. Yes, you emotionally feel better but now your knees hurt because you're overdoing it. And then you do that enough and then you find out, huh I actually don't feel better unless I work out. So what happens if I take a vacation and they don't have a gym? Oh, anxiety, anger, pain comes back. So by looking at things on micro levels, and not seeing how they act at a whole level.

So the idea behind this is going okay, well you have anger, you're angry about something. Now you have to dissect all the areas in your life. Okay, well, where am I angry emotionally? Where am I angry mentally outside and inside? Where am I angry...is there something in my body I'm angry at? Is there something in my thoughts? Are my thoughts angry? What am I angry about?

And you look at everything on a microscopic level, and then you bring everything back together and look at how they impact each other. So then you go back and you go, well, how is me exercising and letting go of my anger, how is that helping me with my knee pain? Hmm, actually, it's making my knee pain worse. So that's looking at on a macro level.

On a micro-level, anger I can manage with exercise. Okay, cool but after I exercise now my knee hurts. So now if you go to a knee specialist that you keep sticking to the micro-level. And now let's say you go hey, my knee hurts I don't wanna exercise, but now I'm angry. Okay, we gotta zoom out and go what else can we do? If I keep exercising, my knees are going to get worse. And my doctor or my physio or my trainer says...or my massage therapist says you can’t sustain this long term.
And the other option is now we go to take some meds or some anti-inflammatories or some NSAIDs and I feel better short term but I can't live like this forever. So that's when we have to zoom out and go okay, well, is everything that I'm doing coherent with each other, in harmony with each other? What can I do to supplement some things that make everything work together swimmingly because that's how I practice. Going okay, well, how does this...what's a biohack? Does this biohack interrupt any other things? And if it does, then we have to reevaluate this biohack. Does this supplement interfere with other supplements?

I'll give you an example like Kombucha is wonderful for your gut. Micro-level, you go great, I'm gonna stick to that. Macro-level, you zoom out and you go, oh, this person has a terrible fungal infection or a yeast infection. And now they're sitting there going Kombucha is good for me because they've only studied micro levels and they've not associated the two together. Thinking that if I pour Kombucha, which is fermentation and sugar on top of an overgrowth of fermentation and sugar in my body, it's going to create problems.

So we have to look at things from a macro level and go well these two don't interact right now. When this one is gone, then we can introduce...you know, when the fungal infection is gone, we can introduce Kombucha. Okay, what do we need to do to get rid of the fungal infection? Oh, Kombucha has to go for now but I like the taste. Well, the fungal infection has to go first.

So it's constantly almost like a gas pedal where you press the gas, but you have to hit the clutch, hit the brake, you gotta slow down, and you gotta back up, you gotta look around, stop at a stop sign. So there's constant...it takes a lot of work, and it's constant but eventually, your body gets into harmony.

And then you'll notice your body becomes more sensitive. And that's when you'll hear oh, it's a blessing and a curse. But it's not a curse. It's the awareness that you asked for. Most people ask for awareness, an increasing of their consciousness, and then realizing that they're seeing all the pain that they're ignoring. And then they call it a curse. It's not a curse. You know, it's responsibility knocking on the door.

And a lot of people don't wanna hear that because you know, they have a lot of busy lives and you know, it's tough. It's tough to not have the resources being taught to you right away. It's tough to process that these things are hidden from us. Or maybe even not intentionally, but overshadowed by so much bad information, and misinformation, and micro information that don't relate to the macro of your health, of your existence, of your know, your human experience.

And it's almost like one of those toys. I see this visual of a toy in my head, I'm sure you've seen this where it's like three different sections. And there's like a head section, a body section, and the feet section. And you're kind of swapping out different sections and like an alligator body with hippopotamus feet, with the stork body. And then you're kind of switching between animals and you're not really in harmony with who you are itself.
because you're looking at each specific thing too long without zooming out and seeing how it affects the big picture.

Katie: That's such a good analogy. And two things that came to mind in what you were just explaining is the first being like you know, everybody wants higher consciousness and to expand and all this. And then inevitably, they then become things that you're more aware of and/or test. And I had a mentor recently when I was kind of frustrated with some of those things, he's like, "Oh, well, that's cute. You thought you were just gonna upgrade and not get tested? Like strength is built under load." Just like with physicality, you don't just get muscles you build them and like, this is part of that process.

But also, I love that you brought up that idea of personalization. And I think that goes back so much to the idea of each of us has to go on this journey of figuring out, like you just said, the micro and the macro for ourselves because there are so many confounding factors. And it will be difficult for any one practitioner to know exactly what we need, we have to take responsibility in that process, as well. And I very much hold the belief that we can learn something, I say from every interaction, every person, every approach.

And especially in the health world, there are so many people with so many approaches and I think there's wisdom in all of them. But also an understanding that at the end of the day, often those people figured out what worked for them and that's wonderful. But now they're trying to give that approach to everyone else. And there's going to be adjustments there. But often, I feel like practitioners can get very attached to that outcome, like you mentioned, and think that it's gonna work exactly the same for everybody. Whereas we each have to start then the personalization process and figuring out which of those pieces...

Aleks: Spot on.

Katie: ...yeah, exactly to build. I also think that there...I have a feeling you're gonna have a great perspective on this. But there is this very big component of the unseen side and the inner emotional side, and even the spiritual side when it comes to health. And that was certainly an area that I ignored for a very long time. And I had the diet dialed in, and exercise, and supplements, and all of those things. But there was this huge emotional component that I wasn't addressing, that ended up being an underlying core thing tied into all of my health problems.

I think we're at a wonderful time where this is being talked about more. And we're starting to understand at a deeper level like the mental-emotional connection to health. But I think also, it's an area where there's still a lot of learning to be done. Because so much of what can deeply impact us, perhaps impact us the most are things we can't see. And we can't necessarily quantify or put data to, or measure with a wearable. But I know from what I know of you that you do a lot of inner work with people as well. And I would guess that often those are the things that maybe have the most profound impact.
Aleks: What I like to start when I say...before I even have this conversation is if we take a pie chart, to kind of like prep the audience for this. So we take a pie chart and we cut it into four pieces, and we label it mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual. And we agree, okay, there's 25% of each. People can grasp that. Then we go okay, well, when you look at physics past Newtonian physics and the atoms are 99.9 to the six or seven decimal percent space, and so they only contain about .00 to the sixth or seventh decimal matter. And we are atoms which make molecules which make up cells and so on.

So then when you take that pie chart and you actually implement how much physical matter actually exists, and we participate with, it's less than a percent of our whole existence. And it's hard to you know, see the emotions on a screen. You can tie yourself up to a or hook yourself up to an electroencephalogram, or some kind of EKG, and you can think about how it impacts you and you can see it show up on a piece of machinery.

But you can't really cut someone open and find their love, or how much love they have for their children. Or how much insecurity they had, or how much pain that they carried from their childhood, you can't find that. You can't open up someone's brain and find their mind. Their mind is separate from the brain but the brain is what allows the mind...it's almost like a conduit for it to function. Like the same way, you can't cut open a dancer to find the dance inside of them.

And it's really important to...you know, we're conditioned to be in this physical world. And everything is physical, everything is...you know, we're conditioned to authorities, you know, A equals B, you know. If you need to learn something you go to school, and then the authority is the teacher. You know, you get pulled over, the authority is the officer. You go to the doctor, the authority is the...or you go to the doctor, the doctor is the authority.

And so we're constantly conditioned to receive a result. We speed, we get a ticket. We go to school we get a grade. We go to the doctor, we get a pill or a prescription, or a referral. And they'll take care of your problems instead of looking at it from our perspective.

So especially if you want entertainment, what do you do? You go to Instagram where you get an Instagram of dopamine every time you log on. And TikTok watching your time go away. It's told to us right to our faces and it takes some practice to be able to operate in this world without being you know, consumed by it.

And so you have to have that conversation before we even start talking about how your organs are actually the vessels that process your emotions, and they're stored in the body. And I don't know if you've read the book, "The Body Keeps the Score." I mean, that's Gabor Ma Tei right.
Katie: I don't remember who wrote it, but definitely that was a really profound book for me.

Aleks: It's something Score van der Kolk it might be him, or he is writing...he wrote the.....

Katie: Yes, Bessemer van der Kolk, yes.

Aleks Yeah. him. Okay. So most of what we experience on a moment-by-moment basis truly doesn't exist. We perceive it through the way the light hits and reflects the matter and that we interact with the matter because it's slowed down enough that we can't pass through it.

But the same way, as...I know a lot of people can relate to this. How many times have people left the relationship and felt amazing? How many people have experienced a breakup and they felt like their heart was falling apart? It's even built into our conditioning of how we speak. When we get butterflies, where do we get them? We get them in our stomach. Anxiety lives and processes through the stomach. Anger processes through the...and joy process through the liver. And it's funny how it's calling the liver because you live, it's either your joy or you interrupt that enjoy with anger.

So if we live only on the physical model, we're gonna ignore 99.9% of our existence. But that can't be seen through a physical lens. We have to be able to feel it. And the more we get in tune with who we are, the more we will project onto the world. And the more we have success with finding out who the person in front of us is, and how we can best guide them. Because if you're...you know, if someone's going through mental-emotional stress in their relationship, and you go to them, and they're gonna give you the relationship they wish they're able to take. They wish they were brave enough to go through.

Versus that's when we talked about in the beginning, it's really important to have the practitioner know who they are and not be reliant on your success. To add in what you were talking about how someone does let's say veganism, or carnivore, or keto, and they're like, this is the best thing, I'm gonna tell everyone. Even though if they're not doing well it means you're not doing it right, obviously.

And it's getting past our own conditioning and finding out what works for us, and getting past our own emotional heartaches and our own emotional pains. Because I don't know how many people I've seen with shoulder pain that also have anger issues. I can't even tell you how many people I have had with back pain that have fear issues because your kidneys they process fear. It's the adrenaline. You know what happens when your kidney processes all the water? And this is a nice little timeline, the kidneys process all the water in your body.
What happens when you're scared out of your mind. What happens? We all know about the sympathetic nervous system fight, flight, freeze. What happens when some people get scared so bad they urinate themselves? Fear overrides your kidneys and bladders natural function and it goes, “I'm consumed with fear and I need to show that to who I'm in front of.” Maybe they'll have some empathy because I have no words for them. So it lives through us every single day.

And like we were talking about macro and micro, it's completely separated from the system of health. And if you want to get your mental health treated you go here and they have a system. And if you want your emotions treated, you go here and that takes care of that. If you want your body treated, that goes here. And if you want your spirit well go to a church. That's where that gets treated, or wherever your religion sends you to. So they're all separate.

But when you go to a church, they're not asking you about what you're eating. If anything, you go to a church, you're gonna find a basket of doughnuts sitting right there. And then you're wondering you know, why you're all hyped up and anxious. Well, the analogy I like to give people is when they're in the office, and I go, here's how food impacts your emotions.

You know, you're sitting here in front of me competent, and clear-minded, and present and they go, "Yeah." I go, "Okay well, what if I gave you 20 teaspoons of sugar what would you do? And I told you to calm down, would you be able to come down?" They go, "Probably not." I go, of course. So now if we drip that in through our system and our blood sugar's up and down all day because we don't know what's harmonizes with our body, because we don't know what gas we're putting into our system, of course, we're not gonna be able to manage our emotions. Of course, we're not gonna be able to manage our thoughts.

For diet, I use the same analogy with if you were a big diesel believer and you told everyone that had a gas car to put diesel in the car, everyone that has a gas car is not gonna have a good time, their car won't work. It's a different fuel source. But they're the same belief systems, right? Gas is gas, fuel is fuel, but it's not all built the same. And we all need it in separate quantities with different tanks and different times.

And it impacts how everything that we can't perceive because our physiology is cluttering our non sensory organs, which is the feeling of how we love our hearts. When we interact with someone's field, I feel that they're a good person. But if you're too hopped up on sugar, or you're too hopped up on, you know, your back hurting, you're not gonna be able to use your heart because it's a more subtle system to be able to feel what you can't put your hands on, or taste, or smell, or hear, or touch. I think I missed one, it's okay.

So we need to be able to clear our system of static and manage our body before we can even perceive. But even people when they're at their heightened senses, they can still feel something is like this person is not safe. But how do you know that without knowing that? So then we start to dive into that because if we're
seeing our world as fear, and as panic, or as a perpetual pattern that's reoccurring, even though it's not because we haven't observed it anymore, but we're projecting it onto the world as we're observing, then life becomes a little bit more challenging. And then, as we talked about the pain teacher shows up. So if you don't clear what a person's dream is, or their values are or where they're moving in life, it's going to impact your physiology 100%.

Katie: "The Body Keeps the Score" was such a really enlightening book for me. And it helped me start to kind of unpack some of those things. And since sharing my own story of trauma actually on this podcast in Episode 309, I've received so many letters from listeners who have gone through much more difficult things than I had been through and just heard so many stories from people. And I think like, there's such a key here when it comes certainly to health but truly to all areas of life.

And I know you've talked about this before kind of the journey of healing trauma and how that actually can be such a gift and have a positive crossover into so many other areas, as well. I'm curious, like how you help people with that, beginning in that process of processing trauma? Because certainly since sharing my story, I've received so many questions from people who want to go on the same journey and to start to unpack and are willing to sort of shine that light now on their own trauma and start to unpack. So where do you have people start for that?

Aleks: I start where they're ready. So if you end up working with us or anyone works with us, we give people like 200 pages of paperwork. I mean, it's a lot. It's intense. But we take all that paperwork and we start seeing what's not being written, what is being written. And through conversations with someone you can see based on the structures of where they are, where they identify with society, how they see themselves, how they see the world, you can slowly introduce certain things by allowing them to talk about them with curiosity.

It always has to be in a room where there's no judgment. There has to be no judgment because anytime there's judgment, you need security to share what you're feeling. But if you're not secure, that's why you have trauma in first place. You're not secure with what happened and you're trying to hide it from the world, yourself, or you don't know how to hide it and it's everywhere. So depending on what trauma it is, it's learning how to actually...Paul Chek called it surrounding the dragon. If you can't face the dragon head-on, well chip at its heel, chip at its back, you know.

Sometimes people cope with trauma with eating and that's their coping mechanism. So what do you do? Like that analogy we used a second ago or a little bit ago where we talked about hopping someone up on 20 teaspoons of sugar, and not being able to think straight. First, you know, they come in and they say, "Hey, my back hurts." And they go okay, even though you've read through their paperwork, they're telling you things that they don't even realize they're telling you because you're a space where there is no judgment, there is no criticism about this.
And they start telling you things. And how many times I've heard, "I don't know why I told you this. I've never told this to anyone in my life" is I probably could...if I got $1 for that I probably would never have to work again. So you start by going okay, well, this may be too tough to talk about because you might say you know, hey, how's your relationship with your dad doing? You know, and they may react in a not pleasant way. And you go, okay, note that is a button that we need to pin later. We need to work on other things. And then so okay, what are some obvious things?

Once again micro, you look at their macro, they're in pain. Micro, okay, what can affect their macro? Okay, well, we need to make sure that anything they're eating is not increasing their inflammation. So finding out what kind of food intolerances they have, making sure they're cutting out foods that don't serve them, making sure we play with rhythms and timings.

And yes, we look at poop and make sure their poop is, you know...well, without telling you all the different stages of poop and getting graphic with it, making sure they're nice, brown logs at least removing a foot of material a day that's brown and healthy. And we start paying attention to their poop you know, hey, focus on that.

Okay, your goal,...and usually we meet where people are excited. So if they're excited about managing their diet, cool. Focus on that, focus on that. And then we start over time implementing hey, this could be...you know, let me tell you a story about my life. And they start identifying with the story. Oh, this story is happening to me. Ultimately, I know what they're going through and so I used all the different ways except going at it directly.

Some people are better at it than others, some people you can ask them straight to their face. Is this something you've experienced? And they're like, yes, that's why I'm here. But a lot of times, I would say 80% of the times it's the deep-seated trauma that they have conditioned to themselves that they can't talk about or else they can't function, we have to work around it many, many ways over and over and over again. And it takes time. It could take a year, it could take two years.

But ultimately, when they face that dragon without us telling them what to do, telling them what their problem is because that disempowers a human being completely. If you come to me and you're like, hey, how do I do this? And I put it together for you and you're like, great okay, now, what's my purpose in life? I guess I'll go do this thing. Oh, what's my dream again? Oh, here's your dream. Okay, I'll go do that now. And what are my values again? Okay, here are your values, okay well, it's kind of no fun stuff to life anymore.

And hey, my body is not reacting the same way anymore. You know, my poop is off, what do I do? My breathing is off, what do I do? Hey, my relationship isn't going...what do I do? Do this. So instead of teaching the person how to go through certain steps, and go through the process, and show them that the pain actually
is the gift to be able to see the beauty in life. How can you empathize with love and how would you be in love without knowing pain first?

Or you don't appreciate love, maybe you grew up with love, and your parents were love and your surroundings were love. And then you find a perspective of the world being harsh, and the world being mean, and the world being difficult. And you're living in that and succumbing to that. And one day, you've had enough and then you remember how pleasant love is, and how much you valued and appreciated when people did good things for you and shared that with you. But before you were like that's life. You had no perspective. So pain gives you empathy, pain gives you compassion for those who are struggling, who need help. And you remember you were there at one point, you remember that you were struggling. And without that pain, you could never really, truly connect with other people.

Katie: Yeah, that's such a good reframe. And there are still so many directions I wanna go with you. I'm hoping you'll be open to a round two sometime soon. Because like we didn't even get into like shadow work, and archetypes and so many areas I wanted to go.

This podcast is sponsored by Joovv red light therapy. I’ve been a fan of red light therapy since researching it years ago, and have been really grateful for my red light devices the last couple of years as I get older and want to be proactive about keeping my skin looking young! With stress and travel, I felt my skin getting less smooth and elastic than it used to be, so I upped my red light use to help my skin feel its best! I also notice the benefits for recovery and sleep as I've gotten into more intense workouts. Light is such a vital part of the cellular energy equation in the body and red light therapy is an easy way to get this vital piece. Since many of us spend so much time indoors, we often don't get enough light. Spending some time outdoors each morning and using red light at night are my go-to’s for making sure my body's light exposure is optimized. Learn more and see the light I use at joovv.com/wellnessmama. And they've built in an exclusive Wellness Mama discount at above link!

This episode is sponsored by Levels Continuous Glucose Monitors. I have been experimenting with this continuous glucose monitoring system for the past few months, and I've learned so much personalized data about my body's own response to different foods, even to workouts, to sauna, and to when I don't get enough sleep. I've been using Levels, and this has made a significant difference in the way I track my glucose data, and especially as it relates to diet and fitness. Levels is cool, because in addition to providing you with the continuous glucose monitor sensors, their app interprets your data, scores your individual meal, and allows you to run experiments across different inputs like diet, exercise, or even fasting protocols.

They're backed by a world-class team, including Stanford-trained MD, top engineers from SpaceX and Google, and a research team that includes legends in the space like Dr. Dominic D'Agostino and Dr. David Perlmutter, both who have been guests on this podcast before. Health is so personalized, and this has given me a way to know the best foods for my own body, and it's helping me get enough protein and carbs while still maintaining weight loss. Levels is currently running a closed beta program with a waitlist of 100,000 people, but, as a listener, you can skip that line and join Levels today by going to levels.link/wellnessmama.
But out of respect for your time and for the listeners' time, I would love to ask a couple questions I typically ask toward the end. The first being if there's a book or a number of books that have had a really profound impact on your life and if so, what they are and why?

Aleks: One of the first books that I've ever read was "The Alchemist." Actually, it was "1984", which is one of the first books I've probably...was the only book I read cover to cover in...what's it called? In any kind of school. I'm not a big reader which it blows kind of people's minds are like "How do you know this stuff that you know?" And I'm like...I used to tell them I've read like four books up until like I don't know five years ago and now I'm making it an effort to actually read books and sit in the morning. Because I learn better from interactions like this. You tell me about your life and while you're talking, I am absorbing things through my consciousness, through my psyche. But another book that...do we only say one or three books? How many books do we say?

Katie: Any that have had a profound impact?

Aleks: "The Law of One," it's an intense book, I almost hesitate saying because it will kind of blow your psyche apart as to what you perceive in life. And a book that reaffirmed a lot for me after I died was "One Mind." I think his name is Larry Dossey. And he shows how so many different experiences in life, how they are actually, we're actually one mind, one collective consciousness. And he's showing it over and over again in the book. And so I'm like, how am I thinking about something and then I see it?

And so it helped me affirm like, okay, I'm not going crazy. We are actually a collective network of consciousness. Even the internet is an externalized mind network. Everything that's in our brains is on the internet now. And you can tell if you go on Facebook or Instagram, and you have people's thoughts plastered all over it. So those several books were very profound to me or either affirmed to me what I'm doing is...I'm not going crazy, which is great.

Katie: "The Law of One" is a new recommendation on this podcast. I'll make sure that's linked in the show notes as well as the others you mentioned. And "The Body Keeps the Score" which we already talked about earlier. I think a great one and a starting point especially for anyone who knows and is aware of trauma, that's one I would highly recommend as well.

Aleks: Have you heard of "It Didn't Start with You"?
Katie: Yes. In fact, that has been one of my recent reads. I'm glad you brought that one up as well. I'm just starting to delve into that world. Can you give a quick overview for anyone who's not familiar with that one?

Aleks: Yeah, it shows people how your trauma...I'll give you one of the most profound examples in the book. And it shows how whatever you think you're going through, actually didn't even start with you. It started with your mother. But how did it start with my mother? That you can grasp. But then how did it start with my grandmother? And how is that passed down from so many generations? What is this karmic trail that's following me from the way we perceive the world?

And so in that book, they talk about how when you're in your mother's womb, or in the eggs, your mother... Let me start over. When your mother was in your grandmother's womb, at about...I can't remember if it's five weeks or five months that the woman has developed all of the eggs that she's ever going to have in her life. So while she is in...your mother's in your grandmother, you are one of those potential eggs inside of your mother which is in your grandmother.

So while your grandmother is experiencing life imprinting on your mother, also imprinting on your mother's eggs, which you are gonna be here one day, on top of that now when we look at...since if it's your grandmother being pregnant, then how many of us have grandparents around here right now? So that means she's also being imprinted on by her parents and also her grandparents.

So there's five lineages right there of trauma experiences being passed down through our mental emotional states, through our psyches, and being imprinted on the generation before almost five generations previous. Because when you get raised in a tribal society, you get raised by your grandparents.

So your mother while she's you know, having...is pregnant with your mother, while you're in the egg in your mother's body she's also probably being helped by your grandparents while your parents are working her parents are working. So it gives you like, a working concept of how you can start addressing karmic ancestral traumas that have occurred through our lives. It's a beautiful book, it's intense, especially if it's a new concept to you or to people.

Katie: I'm really glad you brought that one up. That will definitely be linked in the show notes as well for you guys listening. I highly recommend it also. Very, very fascinating and definitely deep worth delving into. And you mentioned people working with you. I will of course have that link in the show notes as well but just give us a quick overview of where people can find you online.

Aleks: They can find us at primalfusionhealth.com, they can find us at the primalpride.com which is our community site. Our Instagram is health.performance.engineer or at primal_fusion. And then feel free to
reach out we're very accessible. And we enjoy making sure that people get taken care of and are linked to the right area and making sure that their care is at the utmost. And yeah, we have a...Sara and I have a bleeding heart for people. So whatever people need, they can reach out and we'll do our best to make sure we can help.

Katie: Awesome. Well, thank you so much for your time today. I look forward to hopefully a round two. And you guys check out wellnessmama.fm for show notes with links to a lot of the things we talked about, as well as to your site so people can find you. But thank you for your time.

Aleks: Thank you.

Katie: And thanks to you guys, as always for listening and sharing your most valuable resources your time, and energy, and attention with us. We're both so grateful that you did. And I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of "The Wellness Mama podcast."

If you're enjoying these interviews, would you please take two minutes to leave a rating or review on iTunes for me? Doing this helps more people to find the podcast, which means even more moms and families could benefit from the information. I really appreciate your time, and thanks as always for listening.