



Episode 515: Dr Michael J. Breus on How to  
Energize by Understanding Chronotypes, Sleep,  
Fasting and Movement

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

This podcast is sponsored by Wellnesse, that's wellness with an E on the end. The brand I co-founded when I realized there just weren't truly natural alternatives to some personal care products that performed as well as many conventional brands. We've been sharing our popular toothpaste and haircare for almost two years, but today I'm excited to tell you about a new star in our lineup. The charcoal toothpaste that provides the same mineral-rich benefits as our original whitening formula with a boost of charcoal for extra whitening and mouth-supporting benefits. It's made without glycerin using oral microbiome-friendly ingredients to help your body create stronger, healthier, whiter teeth while you sleep. I love to use charcoal and whitening toothpaste on alternating days to keep my teeth looking and feeling their best. You can check out our toothpaste and all of our products at [wellnesse.com](https://wellnesse.com).

This episode is brought to you by PaleoValley- a family run company whose products I've loved for years. My family loves many of their products and their beef sticks and Essential C are daily staples at our house. But today, I wanted to specifically mention another of their products that I've been loving lately, which is their apple cider vinegar supplement. Apple cider vinegar is great because it can support: Breaking down proteins (amino acids) for better absorption, improving the blood sugar response supporting with satiety and cravings. The main ingredient Acetic Acid supports in extracting nutrients from food for use by the body. They combine Apple Cider Vinegar with other healing spices (turmeric, ginger, cinnamon and lemon) for added benefits for digestion. Studies also show that it can be helpful in increasing stomach acid to better absorb food, in supporting weight loss by helping you eat less, help with muscle cramps and improve glucose and insulin response. But the taste of straight-up apple cider vinegar is pretty strong, which is why these capsules are so great! The added spices give it an extra digestive and immune kick and I find this one especially helpful this time of year when I'm trying to shed the few extra pounds from the holidays. Check out this ACV supplement and all of their products at [paleovalley.com/mama](https://paleovalley.com/mama) and use code `mama15` at checkout for 15% off your order!

Katie: Hello and welcome to the Wellness Mama podcast. I'm Katie from [wellnessmama.com](https://wellnessmama.com) and [wellnesse.com](https://wellnesse.com). That's "wellness" with an "E" on the end. And this podcast is all about how to improve your energy and energize your life by understanding chronotypes, body types, sleep, fasting, movement, and a lot of other aspects. I'm here with sleep doctor Michael Breus who is double-board certified, a clinical psychologist, and a clinical sleep specialist. He also, as we talk about in this episode, is one of the few people in the world to pass medical boards without going to medical school. And he's an expert resource for most major publications. He's done hundreds of interviews each year and he's been in private practice for 23 years now. He's also been named the top sleep doctor in most areas.

He's a wealth of knowledge. He is been on my podcast before to talk specifically about sleep, and in this one, we talk more about energy, what the different energy types are, what the energy scale is, ways to increase your energy, how different body types have different expressions of their energy and how to improve them, the way that movement affects energy and how it's different at different times of day, different body types, how and when to fast, things like caffeine, melatonin, and his top tips for many aspects of life. It's always a

fascinating episode with Dr. Breus. I know you'll enjoy this one, so let's jump in. Dr. Breus, welcome. Thanks for being here.

Dr. Michael: Thanks for having me. I'm excited to be back on "Wellness Mama."

Katie: Well, I love chatting with you. I'm excited for this conversation too, and I have a lot of sleep and energy and health-related questions that we're gonna go into. But first I just have to bring up this one topic you and I were just talking about offline, which is that you are one of very few people in the world to pass the medical specialty boards without going to specific medical school for those. So if you could just give us a brief recap of how that happened and what you did because it's amazing.

Dr. Michael: So it was kind of a funny story. So it was my very first job and my boss said to me, "Hey, Michael, you know, we've figured out your salary. We figured everything else out, but it's a one-year contract. And at the end of that one year, you have to take and pass the medical boards in sleep medicine." And I raised my hand and I said, "Dr. DeMarini," I said, "I'm excited to start this new job, but I'm a Ph.D., not an M.D. Those are medical boards." And he said, "There's a three-year window and we're in the last year of the window. So you take them, if you pass them, you get a job for the next year. If you don't, you're fired." So I was like, "Okay." So I went home and I told my girlfriend who is now my wife.

I was like, "You're not gonna believe this. I got the job. I'm so excited, blah, blah, blah." And I said, "But I have to take and pass the medical boards." And she was like, "Michael, you know you're not a doctor, right?" And I was like, "No problem. Nobody's ever gonna do that. I doubt anybody could ever do it." About a week later, she turned to me and she was like, "Are you gonna do it?" I was like, "Do what?" She's like, "Are you gonna take the medical boards?" I said, "I don't know. I never really thought about it." She's like, "I think you could pass." That was all it took, was her giving me the challenge and the confidence to say, "Hey, I think you can do it." And I'm one of 168 people in the world that have ever taken and passed the sleep specialty boards without going to medical school.

Katie: That's so amazing. I love that. Like I said before we started recording, it's on my bucket list too. Although I might have to actually go to medical school to be able to qualify, but it is on my list. And you obviously have a specialty in many areas. You're known as The Sleep Doctor and you do so much specialty in sleep, which we've talked about before. I'll make sure our first podcast is linked, for you guys listening, in the show notes. It was awesome. Dr. Breus is a wealth of knowledge, but you have a new book coming out that I really wanna go deep on because I think this is a synchronicity obviously with sleep, which you're gonna explain really well, but also this is an area that it seems like almost everybody has struggles with right now, especially, and especially this time of year, especially this past two years, and that is the topic of energy. And I think even within that, even broad terms are often misunderstood. So though it seems basic, let's start with, in general, like what is energy on a biological level and in maybe a bigger level, if there are more applicable definitions ask.

Dr. Michael: Yeah. So great question. So, you know, with sleep, it's pretty easy to define. We have sleep stages, we have sleep cycles. We can measure EEG, things of that nature, but measuring energy is not always the easiest thing in the world to do. There are a lot of different exercises that you can measure your metabolic output. That's one way to measure energy. But what I decided to do was think through the different types of energy. So we have eating energy. So that's fuel, right? We have moving energy because a body at rest has a tendency to stay at rest whereas a body in motion has a tendency to stay in motion. So we like the motion part of that. We have emotional energy, right? We can talk a lot about that, about how different situations from an emotional standpoint can make us feel energized or quite frankly, zap our energy.

And we have resting energy, which is a little bit different than sleeping energy. I wanted to make a distinction between those two because there's now data to suggest that non-sleep deep rest, so just lying there in a dark room can actually be rejuvenative and help you get more energy. And so what I decided to do was take those four types of energy and really take a look at how they work from a biology standpoint, but also from an emotional standpoint, and be able to give people better ideas as to how to, number one, see how energetically consistent you are throughout your day, number one, but number two, if you do have those highs and those lows, how do you kind of take the lows and bring them up to the highs?

Katie: Yeah. I think that's a perfect diving in point because I think for most people, energy is just a general term of like, "Oh, I don't have very much energy today. My energy's low, or I feel very energetic," but it's...

Dr. Michael: Well, and I was also gonna say that one thing is that people have a tendency to notice their energy when it's low, not when it's high, right? And so in the very first chapter of the book, we have people learn what an energy scale is. And so we use Gunnar Borg's Ratings of Perceived Exertion scale. So this is a scale that's been used in exercise physiology for as long as I can remember, 30-plus years. And it's a 0 to 10 scale where you think about yourself energetically, like how much energy is it gonna take for me to exert to do this particular activity, 0 to 10? And we have people look at that energy at five separate times throughout the day. To be clear, it takes one minute. You just put some alarms on your phone and kind of mid-morning, before lunch, after lunch, before dinner, and then before bed, we have you take these ratings just to kind of get an idea of where are your energy highs and where are your energy lows because most people really don't think about it.

Katie: That's a great point. I probably only notice when I'm low energy and I think often people also think of energy as just like emotional energy maybe. So I'd love to hear a little bit about the distinctions and how you think of emotional versus physical energy and/or any other types and how we would look at those differently.

Dr. Michael: So emotional energy is one of my favorite topics. So I'm gonna start with that and then I'll break down the other ones if that's okay. So when you look at emotional energy, I think it's so fascinating because an emotion can cause you to feel great joy, it can cause you to feel great sadness, great anger, or great anything, right? And so when we start to think about those things, how can we identify times where we have low energy from emotion? And so I call this the emotional vampire situation, right? And so... And you know who these

people are, right? You've got them in your life. I've got them in my life. Hopefully, we're not married to them. But these are people that literally suck our energy from our system. So they're either always negative, they're pessimistic a lot of the times. Maybe they have a lot of difficulties themselves and they're trying to seek something out in terms of their own health, but at the end of the day, they have a tendency to pull energy from you or not be able to allow you to express good, positive energy.

And there's lots of things that you can do. Number one, you got to identify who these people are. Number two, don't spend too much time with them. Holy cow. I mean, these people are gonna suck you dry. So limit the amount of time that you spend with them, number one, but number two, try to spend time with them at your highest energetic points of the day. That's what those energy rankings do, is they allow you to know, "Oh, my energy is high at let's say 11:00 in the afternoon, so here's what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna work with that individual who I know can be a little bit draining because my energy is already high."

Another thing we teach people how to do is if you do have one of those interactions and you're feeling kinda low, there's a lot of things out there that you can do to actually up your energy. A big one, comedy, laughing turns out to be a fantastic thing. So my son sends me jokes all the time. He thinks they're hilarious. To be clear, some of them are actually quite funny and I try to read them every once in a while and if I'm having a low energy moment or a low energy day and I read a joke that came from my son, it turns my energy around like that, right? Because it's somebody that I care about who's sharing something that they think is funny and is also, it's funny to me as well. So you can see how that moves you from a low energy point almost immediately to a high energy point.

Another example, my son is easy-to-use examples from because he's my teenager who tends to be the least energetic of my children at any given moment. Music. Music, music, music can... I mean, think about it. If you're driving along and your favorite song comes on, you just start bopping around and your entire energy profile changes dramatically when you do something like that. So as an example, my son, when he was living at home, he's now in college, we gave him... We said, "You're the morning DJ. So you get to choose the music that goes on every morning for the entire house. Can't turn it on until 7:00 a.m. because we don't wanna wake everybody up too early, but you get to pick it." Well, number one, I actually got my kid to wake up at age 17, which was pretty impressive in and of itself. Just to be clear, for folks out there who have a hard time with getting their kids up and down, and we'll probably talk about that at some point in time, you know, it's not an easy thing.

So he would play the Beastie Boys. You have to fight for your right to party every morning at a volume of 10. And I have to tell you something, the whole house loved it. We were bopping around having a good time dancing up, but it's that whole idea of being able to change your mood literally almost instantly with something like laughter, something like music.

And then the third area that I really wanted to kind of take a second on is kindness. A lot of people don't think about it, but when you're kind to somebody, it changes you. It changes you fundamentally and it makes you

feel better not only about the kind act that you're doing, but about yourself as well. And I think that also changes your energetic component from maybe being not so good to being significantly better because once again, you're helping another human out. So emotional energy turns out to be one of those areas that we really do a lot of discovery and we help people identify, hey, who are those emotional vampires or those emotional vampire situations in my life and how to avoid them and really stick in some good tactics to avoid that slowly creeping down of the energy.

Katie: That's great. I feel like there's... I've never met anyone who's like, "Yeah. I don't need more energy. I'm fine." It's like a universal thing almost. And that makes sense about emotional vampires. I'd probably add to the list that watching the news is probably a great way to zap your energy because you're gonna get that fear-like stress response immediately. So I'd love to hear about that. And also, you mentioned teenagers being lower energy. I'm also a mom of teenagers now, so I'd love any tips on, well, A, why are they lower energy, and B, how do we help them?

Dr. Michael: So let's talk about teenagers first and then we'll talk about the other one next. So with teenagers, here's the one thing that everybody out there can remember. And I know we've got a lot of moms who listen, both new moms and moms that have been around for a little while. So this will hold true. But specifically with teenagers, one of the things that happens is there's a shift in their internal circadian clock. So what happens is, and I don't know if you've noticed this, Katie, but in both of my teenagers, they like to stay up late and sleep late. I mean, if it was up to my son, he wouldn't go to bed before 2:00. My daughter never goes to bed before 1:00 a.m. They both sleep until about 8:30, 9:00 the next day because they don't have classes too early, but that has really changed them because what ends up happening is they stay up late, and then if they do have to get up at a normal time, they are dragging. I mean, dragging it.

So one of the things that we really try to do is look at from a biology standpoint, okay, could it be something that's going on from their circadian rhythm? Next, let's be honest. Most teenagers are not too into nutrition, right? They're interested in grab-and-go, soda, sugar, candy, whatever, right? And while... Don't get me wrong, there are plenty of teenagers out there who have got ideas of good health and good nutrition probably based on things that their mom and dad or people in their lives educated them on, but we see that circadian function changes. We see that their diet doesn't necessarily help them more energy high and then crashes with energy drinks and caffeine and things of that nature which seem to be abused more during that period of time.

Also, unfortunately, for some teenagers, if they do get involved with substance abuse, alcohol in particular, that can have a dramatic effect on their sleep as well. So there's a lot. And then, of course, there is their schedule, right? So lots of teenagers have doing sports. So they might have sports before school where they have to get up really, really early. Remember, teenagers need to sleep early in the morning, not work out early in the morning. So there's a ton of reasons why we see teenagers really kind of laying around and not getting the sleep that they need and that's really something that we wanna kind of focus in on. I can't remember what the first part of the question was.

Katie: Oh, about like the new cycle and emotional vampires and...

Dr. Michael: Yes. So I love your idea. And one of my recommendations for people is that they have a media diet 90 minutes before bed. You don't need to watch any... You don't need to know how many cases of COVID there are in the United States before you go to bed. Is it gonna really change your...? You know, all it's gonna do is freak you out, right? So at the end of the day, what I tell people to do, tape your favorite, funniest show, not serious, not dramatic, not murder, you know, mystery, but a funny show. And that's what you watch before bed. Me personally, I like Seinfeld. I like the old issues of Seinfeld because they're pretty tame. They're also pretty funny and you're out like a light.

Katie: It's funny. I think my teenage son actually has a lot of similarities with you. He's a Seinfeld fan right now and he prefers the comedy. But I remember from our first episode, you talking about teenagers and how they really do need to sleep later in the day, especially within the school system lets them. And we homeschool for a lot of reasons, but that's one I really thought about, especially as they were getting older and we have a rule in our house, like you never wake the sleeping baby. You also never wake the sleeping teenager. And so for them, they don't start school till 9:00 usually, which is perfect for homeschool, but that was a big priority for me, is like I have much happier teenagers, I think, than I would have if I was getting them up at 6:00.

Dr. Michael: A hundred percent. And that's actually one of the biggest advantages of homeschooling. I mean, there's a lot of advantages of homeschooling, but the schedule is certainly one of them. And also during the pandemic, you know, we had a lot of kids able to sleep a little bit later because there wasn't a commute to school, but I have to tell you, having them be able to be in school has turned out to be much more important than I think many people actually ever thought. So, you know, it's been an interesting ride for sure, but yeah, stay away from the media if you can before bed.

Katie: And I know from your work that movement is also a big component here and you mentioned this, but I'm sure there's a lot of intricacies about types of movement, timing of movement. And also how I think often we think, "I need motivation and then I'll do something." But often it's the action that creates the motivation. So I'd love to hear how movement relates to energy and how to optimize it.

Dr. Michael: So, first of all, movement is arguably one of the most important factors because remember, a body at rest has a tendency to stay at rest. A body in motion has a tendency to stay in motion. And now, the movement schedule that we have... So here's what's fun. Remember how I told you that we have people monitor their energy at five different times throughout the day? So what they do, they do that for about seven days and then we flip the script. And so we say, you know those times that you've been looking at your energy, you know, you set the alarm in your phone for five times during the day, now we want you to use those same times to move. And so one of the things that you mentioned is motivation for movement, right?

And so here's the thing. We base this on something called your body type. So if you... I know we've talked a lot about chronotypes, and those are our genetic... For folks who don't remember, those are our genetic sleep schedules that are built into our DNA and our hormone schedules and things like that. One of the things we haven't talked about yet is the body type. So if you go way back to high school and you think about your high school biology, you might remember that there were three body types, one was called an endomorph, one was called a mesomorph, and one was called an ectomorph. So you have to kind of go back into the memory banks a little bit to remember that one.

But if you think about it, remember, ectomorph is the long and lean people, so a little bit on the thinner side. The mesomorphs have more of an athletic build, more of a V shape to their body. And the endomorphs have more of a rectangle, a little bit on the thicker side of their body. Here's what we know, is if you identify your body type, which we can do quite easily, we then assign people movements that their body type likes, right? And so here's the thing. If you're an endomorph, a little bit on the thicker side and I turn to you and say, "Hey, we want you to go run two miles." You're not gonna wanna do that. You hate running because it's not fun, and it hurts your joints, and you're not ready for it and things like that. So we have other movements. So what we do is we create movement profiles for each person based on their body types, which has never been done before, which is kind of cool.

So the five different times turn into different movement types. So the very first one that you have every morning is called stretch. Makes kind of sense, right? You've been lying in bed for a while, you haven't been moving a lot. Your body really needs to stretch. So everybody gets the same movements, stretch. We have different variations of those stretches for people who are more advanced and more beginner at it. The second movement is called a shake. So you ever notice how when a dog gets up, what do they do? [vocalization] Right? They do that crazy thing and they... That actually felt kind of energetic when I did it right there. So they do that shaky thing, right? That actually helps you quite a bit. It helps move blood actually out to the distal areas, which is also helpful to bring it back and start to feel more energetic. I have people do this for five minutes.

You can do a shake your arm, shake your head, shake your butt, shake your legs. But shaking actually can help quite a bit energetically. That one would happen right before lunch and then right after lunch, we would do a bounce, right? So what is a bounce? Could be jumping jacks. It could be a mini trampoline if you've got one of those laying around. It could just be skipping down the lane. Yes, you heard it here, The Sleep Doctor definitely skips down his driveway. Many people have made fun of me in my neighborhood these days because I am doing my skipping right after lunch. But again, this bounce really gives you a whole kind of energy because what's happening? People are stuck on Zoom. They're sitting there all day long. Remember, guys, sitting is the new smoking. We do not wanna sit. We want to get up and we want to move. And so bouncing can be super helpful.

The fourth area we call build, and this is actually where you use a major muscle group. So you might do pushups. You might do sit-ups. You might do deep knee bends, but it's something where you use a large muscle group. Now, to be clear, this is not exercise. This is not you working out. You are not gonna have a



sweat from any one of these five movement times, but this is time to kind of work out the kinks, kind of get your muscles going, and keep yourself from getting too stiff and too solid.

The final movement is actually called balance. And we do this before the end of the day. A lot of times we have people doing things like a tree pose from yoga or something like that. And we like that because at the end of the day, when you're trying to do a tree pose, which is standing on one foot with your hands clasped together, you pretty much can't think of anything else and that helps settle your mind and help you get ready for bed. So those are the five different movements that we ask people to do. You only do them for three to five minutes apiece, and again, you set your cell phone at the same times when you were checking out your energy, and guess what? You will start to find that your energy starts to increase pretty dramatically at all five of those landmark times, right? Next thing we're gonna talk about maybe is intermittent fasting and how the fuel to your body can actually shape your energy as well because I have a feeling you're gonna be asking me about that one next.

Katie: You read my mind on that. And I'll say a quick tip, one of the best things we've ever done for years, we replaced our coffee table in our living room with a mini rebounder. And so everybody would just bounce constantly. And now we have a big outdoor trampoline and we have a gymnastics mat down our hallway. So we're pretty much all bouncing throughout the day, but that's an easy way, even if it's rainy to just kind of incorporate some of that.

Dr. Michael: I love that. What a great idea.

Katie: But I do wanna talk about fasting, but first, I would love to know... There's all this debate in the fitness world of exercising in the morning versus exercising at night or in the evening, you also mentioned teenagers shouldn't be working out when they first wake up, but what are the pros and cons of different timing of actual exercise?

Dr. Michael: So we do that based on chronotypes. So, remember, the movements that are in this book are not considered exercise, but we do talk about daily exercise. So to be clear, everybody out there should be doing about a half an hour of exercise every day if they can possibly help it. Exercise depends upon what type of exercise and what you wanna do. As an example, if you're a cardio person and you wanna do 25 minutes of cardio, then that's not a bad idea to do based on your chronotype. So as an example, if you're an early morning chronotype like a lion, you are gonna wake up early and run. But if you're a late-night chronotype like me, like a wolf, there's nothing you wanna do less in the morning than run, right? And so finding those particular times is actually quite easy. We have them in the book for each one of the chronotypes so people can know exactly when to exercise. Some people, again, based on your chronotype, exercise in the morning is fantastic. Me, personally, there's just no way. The only thing I hate more than mornings are morning people. They're just too damn chipper. So the last thing I really wanna do is be lifting weights or going for a run at that particular stage.

Katie: I am a wolf as well and I've noticed my hormones tend to be much happier, especially when I work out in the afternoon, which does lead into the next question, make it harder to fast and do a fasted workout if you're not working out in the afternoon. But I know just from my own reading and from your work, that food is a big signal of circadian biology and not just what we eat, but when we eat makes a big difference. And there's certainly a lot of popularity of different types of fasting and time-restricted eating protocols right now. So how do those interplay with sleep energy, chronotypes? Walk us through that.

Dr. Michael: Absolutely. So this is the biggest thing that we really learned, I think, in the book. So when we... I've been an intermittent faster for about five years and I love it. I've done time-restricted eating for quite a while. And one of the things I noticed early on was that it didn't work really well for me. I can't eat breakfast. Let me just be honest with you. I'm a night owl, okay? There's nothing worse for me in the... I like breakfast food to be clear. I love eggs, and pancakes, and all that kind of good stuff, but eating in the morning is just not for me as a night owl. And so I've always shifted my time-restricted eating based on my chronotype. Then I actually found some literature behind it that proved that it was actually more helpful for you because again, your entire internal system, your chronotype modifies all of your hormones, so your eating hormones, your sleeping hormones, all of the above. So if you eat within your chronotypical timeframe in terms of when you're intermittent fasting, that can be very helpful.

The second thing that we learned had to do with body types. So remember we were talking just a moment ago about endomorph, mesomorph, and ectomorph, it turns out that those distinctions help us learn how long we should fast. So follow me here, the ectomorph, which is our long and lean person, they're lean. We don't need them to fast for extended periods of time. So they'll eat for 12 hours and fast for 12 hours. Our mesomorphs who may wanna lose a little bit of weight but are certainly interested in having more energy during the day, what they end up doing is they end up fasting for 14 hours and feeding for 10. You notice how their fast is a little bit longer, because they're a little bit bigger in terms of metabolism being slower. The endomorphs who are our biggest group of people who have the slowest metabolism, they're gonna fast the longest period of time, which would be 16 hours, and feed for the shortest period of time, which would be 8 hours.

This is just a starting point for people, but a lot of people ask me all the time. They're like, "Michael, I wanna do this intermittent fasting thing. I don't know when and I don't know for how long." Now we have the guidelines based on your genetics. So it's not like I do pull them out of the air. Your genetics tell us your chronotype, your genetics tell us your body type, let's use that as kind of our secret weapon to be able to figure out when to intermittent fast. Now, intermittent fasting in and of itself is a great energy booster. Based on something called autophagy. So autophagy is where our body actually redoes the entire part of the cell based on your fast. And so, you're fasting, fasting, fasting, which means you burn up the carbs that are in your stomach, and then finally, when you burn through all of those, then your body starts to burn fat. And when you're burning fat, number one, you have much higher energy because you actually get better energy from burning fat than burning carbohydrates in you as a human. But number two, you're slimming yourself down and getting yourself closer to the weight that you're kind of looking for. So there's a lot of benefits to doing intermittent fasting, especially from an energetic standpoint.

Katie: And you've mentioned and now explained somewhat the different body types. I'm curious, can we change our body type, or is that set in stone? And also, do we see similarities or like correlations between chronotypes and body types typically or can they be across the board?

Dr. Michael: So it's really interesting. So we did a survey, so we've had over a million people take my quiz, the chrono quiz, that we talked about last time. And so what we did was we sent out to about 5,000 people about I think it was like 1,200 people in each category or 1,250 people in each category and we asked them about their body types. It was really interesting to learn what was going on. So your first question was, can you change your body type? It's really, really hard. It's genetic, it's kind of in you, and it dictates the speed of your metabolism. There are ways to speed up your metabolism that has to do with what fuel you put in your body, when you put it in your body, and we go into all of that in the book, but generally speaking, it's tough to change your body type. That's okay though. We can work within that because all it's telling us is the speed of our metabolism and then we can counter that based on the other speed. So we can't change our body types although I know plenty of people wouldn't mind being able to change your body type. Don't worry. You can still be as thick or as thin as you wanna be within that body type based on your energy level.

Katie: And I know we talked about it in-depth in the first interview, so I'll link to that one and put the quiz so people can take the quiz and find out themselves, but for anybody who's not familiar and maybe hasn't heard the first interview yet, give us just a brief overview of the different chronotypes so people have kind of a passing context for that.

Dr. Michael: Absolutely. So chronotype is a term that you might not have heard, but you've definitely heard of the concept before. If you've ever been called an early bird or a night owl, those are chronotypes. Now, my contribution to the literature is we've known since about the '70s that there were three separate chronotypes, early birds, people in the middle, or night owls. By the way, the people in the middle, we used to call them hummingbirds. I'm not sure why. My contribution was I found a fourth chronotype that I call a dolphin. And so I changed the vernacular because I'm not a bird, I'm a mammal and I wanted to choose one that actually fit the chronotype.

So lions replace early birds. I mean, come on, who doesn't wanna be a lion, right? King of the jungle, wake up earliest in the morning. These are the people that wake up between 4:30 and 5:30 in the morning on their own, by the way. Crazy. It's not my gig for sure. These are the COOs of a company. These people usually think somewhat in the military sense and go from step one, to step two, to step three, very conscious in their thinking. Very health-conscious, usually good sleepers, and people who work out on a regular basis.

Next are the bears. They replace the hummingbirds. And, by the way, being a bear is the best. About 50% of the population is a bear. And these are the people that go to bed around 10:00, wake around 7:00, and most of life works well on their schedule. 9:00 to 5:00 schedule works perfect for a bear.

Night owls, we now call them wolves. You and I are lone wolves. If we ever decide to hang out, you know, next time we see each other, you and I will probably be the ones that are up somewhat late, hanging out and chit-chatting while other people may have gone to sleep, but we also have a tendency to be artists, and actors, and musician. My most creative people are my wolves. And so we have a tendency to see them... By the way, wolves hate making lists and if they do, they go from step 1, to step 12, to step 47, they have no rhyme or reason. Makes perfect sense to us, but it makes no sense to anybody else out there.

The dolphin is the fourth category, and that represents my insomnia patients. Lots and lots of people have got a genetic form of insomnia that we help identify as well as help out in the book, in "The Power of When" and in "Energize!" What's cool about this is when we put the 5,000 people together, we didn't just get four different chronotypes and three different body types. We actually came up with what we call a power profile and believe it or not, there are some people that didn't really fall into certain categories. Yeah, there were body types in all four chronotypes, but the amount was kind of interesting. As an example, if you're a lion, right? That early riser, you have a very unlikely to have a slow metabolism. Kind of interesting to see some of these things kind of come out in the data, but it's all in the book and it's cool.

Katie: It is cool and very hopeful. I know my mom learned a lot from that. She's more of a dolphin type, I guess. And so she always felt like she never fit the "rules" of all the other types. And that gave her a lot of context. And that was really, really helpful, I think.

This podcast is sponsored by Wellnesse, that's wellness with an E on the end. The brand I co-founded when I realized there just weren't truly natural alternatives to some personal care products that performed as well as many conventional brands. We've been sharing our popular toothpaste and haircare for almost two years, but today I'm excited to tell you about a new star in our lineup. The charcoal toothpaste that provides the same mineral-rich benefits as our original whitening formula with a boost of charcoal for extra whitening and mouth-supporting benefits. It's made without glycerin using oral microbiome-friendly ingredients to help your body create stronger, healthier, whiter teeth while you sleep. I love to use charcoal and whitening toothpaste on alternating days to keep my teeth looking and feeling their best. You can check out our toothpaste and all of our products at [wellnesse.com](https://wellnesse.com).

This episode is brought to you by PaleoValley- a family run company whose products I've loved for years. My family loves many of their products and their beef sticks and Essential C are daily staples at our house. But today, I wanted to specifically mention another of their products that I've been loving lately, which is their apple cider vinegar supplement. Apple cider vinegar is great because it can support: Breaking down proteins (amino acids) for better absorption, improving the blood sugar response supporting with satiety and cravings. The main ingredient Acetic Acid supports in extracting nutrients from food for use by the body. They combine Apple Cider Vinegar with other healing spices (turmeric, ginger, cinnamon and lemon) for added benefits for digestion. Studies also show that it can be helpful in increasing stomach acid to better absorb food, in supporting weight loss by helping you eat less, help with muscle cramps and improve glucose and insulin response. But the taste of straight-up apple cider vinegar is pretty strong, which is why these capsules are so

great! The added spices give it an extra digestive and immune kick and I find this one especially helpful this time of year when I'm trying to shed the few extra pounds from the holidays. Check out this ACV supplement and all of their products at [paleovalley.com/mama](https://paleovalley.com/mama) and use code `mama15` at checkout for 15% off your order!

And even though I know our first one was on sleep, I feel like sleep is an increasingly top issue for pretty much everyone right now, especially the last couple of years, it seems, to make that worse. And I know, like I said, we went in detail on the first one, but can you also just give us, since you are the sleep doctor, some good sleep hygiene rules to start from?

Dr. Michael: Of course. Of course. So number one, everybody should be waking up. Notice I didn't say going to bed, waking up at your chronotypical wake-up time. If you don't do anything other than buy my new book, you should definitely go to [chronoquiz.com](https://chronoquiz.com) and learn what your chrono... You like how I slipped in the buy my new book? Go to [chronoquiz.com](https://chronoquiz.com) and figure out what your chronotype is. Here's the good news. I send you information. I teach you the best time of day to drink coffee, alcohol, wake up, go to sleep, but that is my number one rule, is wake up at the same time every day, including the weekends. Yes, I know there's lots of people out there who are saying, "Oh, Dr. Breus, that stinks. I don't wanna wake up at 6:30 on the weekends because that's the time I wake up during the week." Do it anyway.

The more consistent your sleep is, the more your body knows when to sleep and when to wake up. A lot of times, what happens to people on the weekends is they go to bed late and sleep in late, go to bed late, sleep in late. What do you think the body wants to do on Sunday night? Go to bed late and that's why Monday mornings stink is because people constantly want to sleep in. So number one rule, wake up at the same time, seven days a week based on your chronotype.

Number two has to do with caffeine. Super straightforward. Just stop caffeine by 2:00 p.m. Most people don't know that caffeine's got a half-life of up to eight hours depending upon how quick a metabolizer you are. So if you stop at 2:00, eight hours later, at least 50, that's 50% of the caffeine is out of your system. Here's a really scary one, Katie. That quarter-life of caffeine when 25% of it is still in your system is 12 hours. So if the last cup of coffee that you drank was at 9:00 in the morning, 25% of that is on board 9:00 at night. So do me a favor. If you can, step number two, stop caffeine by 2:00 p.m. at an absolute minimum.

Step number three has to do with alcohol. I tell people all the time there's a really big difference between going to sleep and passing out, right? We don't like the passing out. We like the going to sleep. So in that case, we ask people to stop drinking, limit yourself to two alcoholic beverages, have two glasses of water, and stop your alcohol consumption three hours before bed. This way you can have a nice glass of wine or spirit or beer with dinner, enjoy yourself, but not have it affect your sleep.

Step number four is a big one and it has to do with exercise. So I want people exercising every single day, seven days a week if you possibly can, assuming that your doctor has cleared you to do so. But the thing you got to be careful of is if you exercise too close to bedtime, you can actually increase your core body temperature and make it tough to fall asleep. So exercise daily, but step number four is to stop exercise four hours before bed.

Step number five is a great morning time ritual. I call it my three 15s. So right when you wake up, you take 15 deep-centered breaths. So big arms, bring it around like this, bring it forward so that your hands are clasped in front of you, 15 solid, deep breaths. Next walk outside with a glass of 15 ounces of water. Remember, sleep in and of itself is a dehydrative event. You must drink water in the mornings, not coffee as your first beverage. That can be very, very helpful. And 15 minutes in the sunshine. Now, you're gonna wonder to yourself, "Michael, 15 minutes in the sunshine, really? You're the sleep doctor. That's what you're gonna tell me to do?" I am, and there's three distinct reasons why. Number one, 15 minutes of sunlight is the exact amount of time that your body needs to produce vitamin D. So you can get your daily dose of vitamin D.

Here's something for everyone to remember. Most people are deficient in vitamin D, 94% of COVID deaths. Let me repeat myself. 94% of COVID deaths are in people who are vitamin D deficient. So you need to get outside and you need to get some sunshine. I get it, we're walking into winter. It might not be the easiest thing in the world to do. It's better if you're actually physically outside than if you stand by a window but if all you can do is stand by a window, because it's so cold, stand by a window, but get that sunlight.

One of the other things that the sunlight does that people don't know is when it hits your eye, it turns off the melatonin faucet in your head. This actually helps get you away from brain fog. So number two reason to get sunshine in the morning is to eliminate brain fog. The third reason is one that almost nobody knows about but is super important. When your brain turns off your melatonin faucet by getting that sunshine, it actually sets a timer to reset or reinstitute melatonin production approximately 14 hours later. So here's the issue. If you wake up at 6:00 one morning, 8:00 one morning, and 10:00 the next morning, your timer gets set at different times. So the consistency of your wake-up time and the consistency of your sunshine will work perfectly in your favor for better sleep.

Katie: Can you use the sunlight part to hack the wake-up time or is it really that important to wake up at this... Like, I'm thinking for people who wanna sleep in on the weekends, if we got morning sunlight at the same time but maybe slept a little later certain days, does that help or is it really that important to get up at the same time every day?

Dr. Michael: If I could pick one thing, it would be get up at the exact same time. I'd say you can give yourself 15 to 20 minutes difference. So if normally you wake up at 5:00 and you don't wanna wake up at 5:00 on the weekends and you wanna get up at 5:30, I don't think I care, but you really don't wanna go much past that because your internal clock will definitely know. And, by the way, since it is winter time and, you know, we might have listeners who are up north or in other countries where there's lots of, you know, darkness that's

going on, you can actually buy a lightbox. So I use a lightbox whenever I travel. And I used it in mornings here if the sun hasn't come out yet. You can get one on Amazon for like 100 bucks. It's called a GoLite, G-O-L-I-T-E. I have no association with them, but it's pretty cool.

Katie: And I know it varies based on chronotype, but I've also heard advice that if we can get up right around sunrise every day, that's supposed to be very beneficial. Is that true for all chronotypes?

Dr. Michael: Every chronotype, it's actually pretty true for because what happens is, is when the sunshine hits the rods and cones in your eye for the first time, it starts to prime them. And then as the sun fully comes up, that rods and cones fully come online to it. Believe it or not, one of the best things that you can do every morning is watch the sunrise.

Katie: And that's free. Even if it's not necessarily the most fun for those of us who aren't naturally the morning type people that I know.

Dr. Michael: Exactly.

Katie: And I know you mentioned like food timing being very important and fasting, and especially in the morning, and also to avoid eating right before bed. What do you think is the golden window of how long to leave before sleep and also, are there certain foods that are better or worse at night?

Dr. Michael: So I have a tendency to like to stop eating within two to three hours of bed. It takes about 90 minutes for your stomach to clear whatever's left in there and start working its way through your digestive system. So if you can, I would avoid eating anything within about an hour to an hour and a half before bed. But you don't wanna go to bed hungry either. So if let's say you had a light dinner and you're still, you know, your stomach is a little kind of itching at you, what do you do? So this is gonna sound cuckoo, but it really works, is if you're not fasting during this time, right? Because a lot of people, if you're a lion, you would be fasting during this time. If you're a wolf, you wouldn't be, you want about a 250-calorie snack. You want it to be about 70% carbohydrates and about 30%, either protein or fat. So you might be saying yourself, "Hold on a second, Michael. Carbohydrates before bed, what are you thinking?"

So here's what happens. When you eat carbohydrates, it spikes something called serotonin in your head which calms down the cortisol which has been running around. That's that fight or flight hormone that's been making you do all the different things that you're running around doing right before bed. So that's why we call them comfort foods because they make us actually feel comfortable by producing serotonin. So that 70% carbs can be helpful. So what is an example of that? Like some rice cakes with some nut butter on it, right? Or some avocado, or an apple with some nut butter, something that's got a decent amount of carbs. Again, you

wanna keep your snack to about 250 calories if you can. Other things are, you could do a protein shake where you can exactly measure your carbs and things like that. Once again, just to give your body what it's looking for just before bed.

Other things or foods that are very positive for sleep, any of the omegas. So if we're talking dinner, fish is a great one to help with sleep. Also anything with any of the B vitamins in it. So leafy vegetables, kale, magnesium that we find in kale is super good for sleep. But to be really honest with you, Katie, you'd have to eat like a bushel of kale to get enough magnesium. So people do need to think about different ways to supplement their magnesium. I personally use a recipe called banana tea. So most people don't know it, but bananas are loaded with magnesium. And we talk about this a good bit in the book, of different foods that you can have. But believe it or not, the peel has three times the amount of magnesium as the fruit itself.

So no, I'm not gonna ask you to eat the peel. What I am gonna do is say wash off the outside of a banana, cut off the tip in the stem, cut it in half. So far, all you've done is wash a banana, okay? You've got these two halves with fruit in them. Drop them into three cups of boiling water. So far I'm only asking you to wash off a banana and boil it just to be clear. After about five minutes, the banana will turn brown and you drink the water. It's loaded with magnesium. As my daughter likes to say, "Dad, it's very banana-y." So you really have to like the banana flavor to enjoy it. But what's great about it is it doesn't interact with any medication. It's great for seniors. It's great for kids. I have one mom and she makes it at the beginning of the week and pours it into popsicle molds and she gives it to her kids at night for dessert and they're out like a light.

Katie: That's a great tip. And probably mixing a little like raw honey and even a teeny bit of salt in there could also help with this.

Dr. Michael: Absolutely. Well, and raw honey, in particular, is one of my favorites because it's difficult for your system to digest raw honey and it'll keep your blood sugar stable longer. Not good for diabetics though. If you're a diabetic, this recipe is bad for you because of the high glycemic index. In that case, I would argue that you wanna try guava leaf tea. Not guava fruit and not guava juice, but guava leaf tea. There's some data to suggest that it'll help keep your blood sugar stable.

Katie: That's great to know. And it makes sense when you explain the carbohydrate thing, why when people are stressed, they tend to crave, like, carby foods like chips, or chocolate, or things that would be a good source of that for the serotonin. It also makes me curious, those are great natural sleep aids. And I'm gonna definitely try those tips, but what are your thoughts on sleep supplements in general? Especially, I've seen so many with melatonin now even for kids and I'm just curious about that because I'm very hesitant with that, especially with kids.



Dr. Michael: Good. Ninety-nine percent of all children have plenty of melatonin on board. Melatonin in Europe is used as a contraceptive. Let me say that one more time. Melatonin in Europe is used as birth control. Okay? So we know it has an effect on young women. I can't think of anything worse for a young female developing menstrual cycle to then have melatonin instituted when it's not necessary. So I personally never ask moms or dads to use melatonin in their children. Anybody under age 18, there is one caveat, and that is kids on the autism spectrum. There is a significant amount of data to show at large dosages, which is three to five milligrams, that that can be helpful for those children. We don't know 100% why, but we do know it can be helpful. If you notice what I said about large dosages being three to five milligrams, that's kind of interesting because 95% of melatonin is now sold in an overdosage format.

The appropriate dose is between a half and one and a half milligrams for adults based on the data out of MIT which I believe. And so people are taking way too much melatonin. You know, you asked me about sleep supplements, melatonin, in particular. I have a different theory than many other doctors out there do.

Step number one, blood work. Okay? I wanna know what your body is doing right now before I start sticking other things inside it. So I look at vitamin D, I look at iron, I look at melatonin, and I look at magnesium. Those four things all affect sleep dramatically. Go to my website, you'll see blogs on all of them so you'll understand it. Do that first. Then if any of those are deficient, fix that first, right? Then see what goes on. So once your body's got enough magnesium, enough vitamin D, iron, and melatonin in it, maybe that was the biggest problem.

And you don't have to be taking something for the rest of your life. You just need to eat foods that are high in those areas and supplement your nutrition accordingly. That's certainly one area that I have with people, but let's say you did the blood work. Everything looks good, your magnesium is fine. Your melatonin looks good. All of those things are good. What do I recommend at that point? You really need to think through what your sleep-related issue is. So as an example, if you have a hard time falling asleep, something like valerian and hops makes a lot of sense because we know that data, when those two are combined together, that can help with falling asleep. However, if your problem is staying asleep, that's when melatonin could actually be very valuable.

So without saying too much, I have my own line of supplements. It's called Sleep Doctor PM. And we have two versions, one to help you fall asleep and one to help you stay asleep. So it's very interesting. We actually have one that you can take in the middle of the night without any next-day grogginess. So I've created a formula that mimics many of the pharmaceuticals in terms of hitting those same receptor sites but with 100% natural ingredients. And that's really what we want. Last, last, last resort is to put somebody on a sleeping pill. But just to be very clear with you and all of your listeners out there, for anybody out there that's currently taking a sleep aid, there is nothing wrong with taking a sleeping pill. That is a discussion between you and your doctor, okay? That is not something that you're gonna have over a podcast. And you should talk with your doctor, if you become uncomfortable being on a sleep aid, never, never, never cold turkey yourself off of it. It's a really bad idea. Talk with your doctor and see if you can use a taper schedule to come off of it. But again, I have a

tendency to use pharmacy as a last resort or to break the cycle of insomnia then get people off drug by three to four months.

Katie: And you mentioned magnesium in relation to the banana tea. And magnesium's something I've been talking about for a long time since I figured out how helpful it was for me and just reading the research about how many different ways our body uses and needs magnesium...

Dr. Michael: Three hundred ways or something crazy like that. Yeah.

Katie: And how most of us truly don't get anywhere close to enough. So is this one that you think can be helpful for people to specifically supplement with and any advice around that?

Dr. Michael: Absolutely. So me, personally, I take magnesium every day. I do drink banana tea. I don't drink it every night, but it definitely is helpful depending upon again, your magnesium levels and kind of what's going on with you. Personally, I take something called MagSRT. It's by a company called Jigsaw Health. I love them. I know that their stuff is super clean. That's the supplement that I've been using for magnesium that I recommend to everybody out there.

Katie: And I know we touched on this a teeny bit in the first interview, but I would guess there's a lot of couples out there who have partners with mismatched sleep types. Any advice for navigating that and/or for parents who have a bunch of kids in my case with all kinds of different sleep types?

Dr. Michael: Yes. So do not worry. You can still stay with your partner even if they have a different chronotype than you. We talk about that a lot in the book, just different ways from a relationship standpoint. But one of the things that I oftentimes tell people is, look, have everybody in your house take the chrono quiz so that you know what everybody's chronotype is, then you actually have the secret key because you'll know if your daughter... Let's say you've got a teenage daughter. Well, I'll give you an example of my teenage daughter. I've been trying to foster my relationship with my teenage daughter for years and one of the things I learned is if I went in in the morning and I said, "Hey, Carsen, you know, what have you got planned for today in the morning time?" Here's what I would get, "Ugh. Leave me alone." Right? But if I walked in when her energy level was higher based on her chronotype in the afternoon because she's a Wolf chronotype, guess what? I'm in there for an hour and a half asking the same question.

I can't think of anything more important than the relationship between me and my daughter. And so, for me, the chronotypes have become a communication tool. And so learn the chronotypes of your partner and all the members of your immediate family and you will start to also know, when are they gonna be in a good mood? When are they gonna have energy? When are they gonna be in not such a good mood? When are they gonna,

you know, need to eat? All of these different things, become really important for you, especially if you're the person who's kind of running the household and dealing with all of the kids and that kind of stuff, it can be very, very beneficial.

The other big thing to remember is everybody doesn't have to go to bed at the same time, especially when you're talking about a couple. So a lot of couples think, "Well, if we don't go to bed together, then that means something about our intimacy or something about our relationship, even sleeping in the same room." Let me be clear. Your sleep is not a part of your relationship. If you sleep in a different room every night because you sleep better, that does not make your relationship bad. That does not mean that you have less love or intimacy in that relationship. It just means you wanna get a good night's sleep so that you can be able to be intimate with that person, so that you can care about what they're saying and things of that nature. So there's lots of different options. I've got some couples where she's an early bird and he's a night owl and what he'll do is read a book while she falls asleep and then walk into the other room after she's fallen asleep. All kinds of different options that you can do based on your chronotype.

Katie: I love it. And as we get close to the end of our time, another question somewhat unrelated that I love to ask is if there is a book or a number of books that have had a profound impact on your life and if so, what they are and why.

Dr. Michael: Absolutely. So I keep a couple of them close by. One of my favorite books, I actually have it right here is by Eckhart Tolle and it's called "The Power of Now." It's an amazing, amazing book to teach people how to stay positive in the present tense. That's one of the ones that I'm really... I've been playing around a lot with lately. And then what's another...? What's the other one that I'm reading lately? Oh, I started reading this one actually. I met this gentleman... It's called "Spaceman." And I met an astronaut who had written a biography. I'm a big biography fan. And so I love reading about how successful people became successful. My favorite biography honestly is Andre Agassi of all people. If anybody gets a chance to read the book "Open," it's amazing. One of the best biographies I've ever read. But I'm kind of a biography junkie. I like learning about other people's lives and seeing what they did.

Katie: Awesome. I'll link to all those in the show notes at [wellnessmama.fm](https://wellnessmama.fm) so you guys can check them out. And lastly, where can people keep learning from you and any parting advice for the listeners on any of these topics?

Dr. Michael: Absolutely. So if you wanna buy the book, go to [energizemyself.com](https://energizemyself.com) or Amazon or wherever books are sold, it should be just about everywhere tomorrow. So we're super excited about that. If you wanna learn more about me, I'm on every form of social media you could possibly imagine. My handle is The Sleep Doctor. And doctor is all spelled out. So Twitter, and Facebook, and Instagram, and believe it or not, TikTok as well. I've become TikTok famous. I have a video now that's got on 1.5 million views for what do you do if you wake up in the middle of the night? So lots and lots of places to find me and, of course, my website is [thesleepdoctor.com](https://thesleepdoctor.com).

Katie: Well, you are ahead of me on the TikTok trend. I haven't figured it out yet, but I will definitely follow you. But to reiterate your own advice, let's not watch you on TikTok in the few minutes before bed.

Dr. Michael: Exactly.

Katie: Too much stimulation, although I'm sure there's also some good like humor and fun facts that will help with the energy thing. So maybe we'll start with TikTok and Michael Breus first thing in the morning.

Dr. Michael: There you go. I love it.

Katie: Dr. Breus, you are such a pleasure to talk to. Thank you so much for being here for round two. I am excited for your new book and I'll make sure it's linked in the show notes as well, but thanks for teaching us today.

Dr. Michael: Thank you. You know, I enjoy your company so much, Katie. I'm glad that we're personally reconnected and have an opportunity to share with each other because you've got such a great crowd of people and you do such an amazing job with them. I have so much respect for all the stuff that you guys are doing. So thanks for having me on. I'm excited to be part of the "Wellness Mama" journey. And if people wanna learn more, check out the book.

Katie: Thank you so much. I feel the same way about you, so much gratitude. And, of course, gratitude and so much thanks to all of you for listening, for sharing your most valuable resources, your time, your energy, and your attention with both of us today. We're 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.