

EPISODE 50

“KS: “Do you like your partner?” is also a big question. You know, do you like the person, you know, you’re having sex with and trying to procreate with? Is it an enjoyable experience? Because that orgasm builds a lot of chi and can make a baby and if you’re just kind of going through the motions and “ovulation time, let’s go”, that’s not really sexy and that’s not really chi-inducing.

“There’s a typical PCOS who has weight gain, facial hair, missing periods, but now we’re seeing a lot more of PCOS in thin women and with no rhyme or reason or A-typical PCOS. And I think that’s definitely from hormones, you know, severe environmental imbalances.”

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:48.0] AS: You know battling food and your body doesn’t work. You want to love and accept yourself. And because you’re insatiable, you want results too. And wouldn’t you know, you bring the same intensity to your life, wanting to maximize your time, potential, and experiences you have here on this beautiful and wondrous planet Earth.

Fair warning, it will be a rollercoaster. But for those insatiable, that’s your prime time to thrive. We’re here to say “YES!” to the hunger of wanting it all. I’m your co-host, Ali Shapiro, a health coach who helps people end the losing battle of dieting, and find a truce with food.

[0:01:29.1] JB: And I’m Juliet Burgh, nutritionist, fitness expert, and a co-owner of Unite Fitness Studio Franchise.

[INTRO MESSAGE]

[0:01:37.1] JB: Welcome to episode 50 with Kara Szumski, *Acupuncture For fertility, PCOS and Anxiety*. So, what is acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine and how can this 5,000 plus year old form of medicine support your hormone stress and immunity? We had the amazing Kara dive into this and went beyond our expectations. Ali and I always joke that Kara is a medicine woman or maybe a witch doctor or I even say, “she’s like Jesus”, jokingly.

But something about what she does is miraculous, although she'll just say she's a regular gal with the right tools and knowledge. Listen in as we talk about energy, or in Chinese medicine we call it "chi", and how this is the factor in supporting your fertility and anxiety, we can't wait to share this episode with you.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:22.4] **JB:** Hello Kara, hello Ali.

[0:02:24.8] **KS:** Hello Juliet.

[0:02:27.2] **AS:** Hey Kara.

[0:02:27.4] **JB:** I can barely contain my excitement right now. I've been waiting for this podcast probably since we started podcasting.

[0:02:33.5] **AS:** Yeah, we were like, "We have to get Kara on. We have to get Kara on!"

[0:02:36.3] **KS:** Wow, I feel honored.

[0:02:37.6] **JB:** So we have Kara on the podcast, who is an acupuncturist and also practices traditional Chinese medicine? I want to make sure I get that right.

[0:02:45.5] **KS:** I have a masters in acupuncture in oriental medicine.

[0:02:47.8] **JB:** Oh my gosh, so amazing. I'm always in awe of all that. It's like my dream. If I could go back in time, that's what I would have studied. Maybe one day I will still do that. But both Ali and I have had experiences with Kara and I always recommend my clients to see her in the Philly area to get treated and I myself am still a patient of yours and I just can't speak highly enough about what you do and...

[0:03:10.5] **AS:** How you do it.

[0:03:12.4] JB: And how you do it. You know, people ask me about you and I always say like, “I don’t know, she’s like Jesus, she’s like a healer. I don’t really know.”

[0:03:20.3] AS: Mary Magdalen. There were women in the biblical times, let’s remember that.

[0:03:24.5] JB: There’s something so magical about what you do and how you heal people’s bodies. So I just am so excited for you to talk to our listeners about oriental medicine and acupuncture and what it does. So, let’s open with that. What is acupuncture?

[0:03:39.0] KS: Okay, first, I’m not Jesus and I’m not magical. As much as you guys want to believe it, that’s very sweet. I’m very honored to be talking to you guys about acupuncture and oriental medicine. So, what acupuncture does, it’s a 5,000 year old tradition and an observation of the human body and it uses specific points to use the body’s own energy to heal itself. When the body doesn’t have enough energy to do that, that’s when you bring in the Chinese herbs and tailor made formulas for your individual client or you suggest different nutrition or different exercises so it’s four pillars; it’s acupuncture, Chinese medicine, nutrition and then martial arts.

[0:04:20.0] AS: Oh, I didn’t know martial arts was part of that.

[0:04:22.0] KS: Martial arts is where acupuncture began. So, thousands of years ago, your teacher, your sensei, your master would also be your healer.

[0:04:33.4] AS: Wow, oh my god, I love that because I think — no, because, you know, at the end of the day, health is at your farmer’s markets, it’s out in nature and we think it’s in the doctor’s office. It’s like, why did we ever — I mean, I used to think it was in your doctor’s office, but why? So it’s just interesting to think like, “I’m going to go to the sensei.”

[0:04:50.3] KS: Yeah, I’m going to go to someone who has studied under somebody else for a very long time and have practiced the four pillars and, you know, is trying to find their way and their balance and using a patient’s own energy or a student’s own energy to heal themselves.

[0:05:07.1] JB: What about this, like how are you attracted to this? How did that start for you?

[0:05:12.6] KS: I have always been — I was an East Asian studies major and Japanese language major and I was always interested in Asia and I went to Japan, I was teaching on the JET Program and I got hit by a bus while I was living there. I was in a lot of pain, I was very miserable and I tried acupuncture, it just totally changed my life.

[0:05:30.0] AS: Wow. You know, what's interesting, just to go back to the sensei and you're saying — well, no, because I think this is very different how we approach like you have intimate experience with this and when we go to doctors or nurses, we don't expect them to necessarily walk the talk, right? Whereas in Chinese medicine, it was based on people who lived this and breathe this and could bring intimate experience. I'm not saying that everyone, you know, we're all on our path. No one's at "perfection". But there's a different type of knowing when you have done this for yourself.

[0:05:59.2] KS: Right. You're never going to find the ideal. Like that is an unattainable ideal. They even say that in a lot of Taoists and Confucianism, Buddhism, that's the goal but don't expect to get there.

[0:06:14.7] AS: Right. Well and the paradox is, the less you expect, the more you'll get wherever there is. But life is a flow, right? My Master's thesis was actually on the yin and yang archetypes, which are — yeah, and how we put health into a hyper masculine war narrative, which is really trying to get us to be more yang, when what we really need to do is heal the yin and go on a heroine's journey, not the hero's journey, or metaphorically hitting the yin. So I love eastern philosophy. It just makes sense, you don't have to have faith, you can see actually in real life.

[0:06:45.1] JB: So while we have Kara here, and because you and I always refer to the yin and the yang, and I am 100% sure that people are like, "What the fuck are they talking about?" Right? They think of the symbol, right? That people have tattooed on their ankles. So what is yin and yang, Kara?

[0:07:02.6] KS: The yin and yang is the light and the dark and you can't have light without dark and you can't have dark without light. So you always are kind of — they are always converging

and they're always one within the other. Something that is really yang is sunshine. Outside, the back, your back where the sun shines on, male and then the yin is night time, feminine, the soft under layer of your body, that's yang and everything has yin and yang. There's male and femininity, there's also energetics of both those things. Acupuncturist's goal is to bring that into balance.

[0:07:38.8] AS: Yeah, and I think for people, just to give you a sense, if you hear night time or the softness in feminine, I mean, we devalue the yin in our culture and often we think, "Oh, I'm getting soft," like that's a bad thing. Or many of us were entering the yin season of the winter and autumn and people can't handle that stillness, that cycle of that. It's something that we don't value in our culture.

[0:08:05.0] KS: It feeds your fire, so you have to do both.

[0:08:07.7] AS: Right, we love the fire, we love the go-go-go, the type A.

[0:08:12.4] KS: America is a very fiery culture, we love all of our caffeinated drinks and all of our energy drinks and...

[0:08:20.3] AS: Productivity.

[0:08:21.6] KS: Yeah, and ambition and like how hard can I exercise and how many marathons can I run? And that's great for some people, but it's not appropriate for everybody at ever time in their life.

[0:08:32.7] AS: Yeah, so what do you see, when people come to you, what do they think is wrong and what imbalances do you see?

[0:08:41.2] KS: Well, I think the number one thing that people come in and they give me a list of western diagnosis and I think that I listen of course because they want to tell me and that's their story. But I don't need the name of their diagnosis because I'm doing it based on my education which is Chinese medicine. Looking at tongue, pulse, abdomen, and health history. Just how are they feeling, how do they look, what their body type looks like?

Are they like down and tired and there's different colors in their face and as soon as someone starts walking to my office, I'm already diagnosing them. How they walk, how they look, do they go for a hot drink, do they go for a cold drink? Are they late, are they panting? So you're already diagnosing.

[0:09:23.6] JB: Sorry, I'm thinking about myself a little bit. I have a lot of yang energy guys, I need yin.

[0:09:34.2] KS: She does. So I see people — so that's the one kind of misconception. But they're like, "Do you want to look at this? Do you want to look at this?" I'm like, "I'll look at it and, you know, that's interesting but you know, I'm going to treat based on your symptoms and how they fit into my modality."

[0:09:51.1] AS: That's a really important point for listeners because let's take something that everyone's heard of, breast cancer, right? You get a breast cancer diagnosis and yet what they're finding is, last time I heard there was four types of breast cancer, right? So even though everyone's getting — and I mean, I'm not super familiar with breast cancer treatment but someone might get a diagnosis too of Lupus and MS or IBS or depression and you think you're getting this one thing, but there's all different imbalances based on who you are and I think that's a real shortcoming of western medicine.

[0:10:24.1] KS: Right. We look at the person, who they are today coming into the practice and I've seen, you know, I treat people with breast cancer and it will be totally different from one patient to the next. There are some similarities kind of tying through, depending on the treatment that they're doing but I never go in saying, "Oh, it's breast cancer, it's going to be A, B or C." Some acupuncturists are like that but they're not fully trained, in my opinion. They haven't gone through the full course and haven't gone through everything from kind of the root system of it to modern day and the theories and pattern diagnosis.

[0:10:58.9] JB: Have a lot of things changed over the years with acupuncture? I know it's thousands of years old, but have there been new findings and, you know?

[0:11:09.3] KS: The newest things in acupuncture are actually the research that acupuncturists are doing to prove the 5,000 year old methods and that western research and design is finally catching up with eastern methods. That's what's exciting and there's a lot of great — you can go on to the Cochrane Review and if you're curious about acupuncture and with anything and results, it can break it down into laymen terms and it's really cool and it's really fascinating and it's just another tool for my patients so they feel comfortable with me and they know that it's not just magic or hullabaloo. That it's actually, you know, an ancient art that is being proved that works time and time again.

[0:11:52.3] AS: So when people say, "Okay, I'm going to look to this ancient art," what are they usually — what complaints are they usually coming in for?

[0:11:58.8] KS: So the thing is, it depends on the day. I see a huge — I don't...

[0:12:02.8] JB: Like, Monday's are anxiety but Fridays are usually cancer patients — no.

[0:12:07.8] KS: You laugh, but that's what happens is, I'll walk in one day and my first client will come in and be like, "I have a frozen shoulder," and like, "Okay." Then I have another patient who I have been seeing for anxiety, and they're like, "I have a frozen shoulder." It just kind of goes on the theme of the day. I'm a general practitioner, I see a lot. I see everyone in their 90's to, I had a patient who is two months old yesterday.

I see a lot of families and so I'm a general practitioner and there are acupuncturists and Chinese medical doctors who specialize in certain things. I guess if you said I had a specialty, it would be pregnancy and mental health issues but, you know, I'm happy to see — and physical stuff is very easy for me and like aches and pains and stuff like that. So I see a wide range of ailments.

[0:12:54.5] AS: Let's talk about pregnancy, PCOS, which seems to be sky rocketing a lot.

[0:13:01.5] JB: By the way, that's when you hear about acupuncture a lot when people finally decide to go try acupuncture, often times it's for fertility reasons.

[0:13:09.7] KS: Right.

[0:13:10.0] AS: Yeah. So what's your view of — I mean, why are we — underlying I know PCOS is blood sugar control. What would you look at from an eastern medicine standpoint of the challenges?

[0:13:22.2] KS: So for PCOS or anyone that comes in for fertility issues, the person comes in and I do a complete health history and I look at their Chinese medical pattern and see where it's coming from and then look at factors. Nine times out of 10, it's stress and anxiety. Stress about getting pregnant, anxiety about getting pregnant. A lot of guilt and shame over having past abortions and now trying to have a family and then a lot of the women I see are what's called idiopathic, that's the western diagnosis, is there's no reason for their infertility.

So that's where Chinese medicine really shines and acupuncture really shines because I'm meeting you where you're at, we're going to see where you're at, and kind of see what's going on but a lot of times it's a lifestyle change because we got to get some yin yoga because they're so young and runners and this and, "I have to work out and I have to," — and I'm like, "You need to calm it down."

Because you need the yin to kind of build blood and be able to hold a fetus and if you're eating nothing but raw, very low calorie diets and doing 20 miles a week, you know, it's kind of hard, you have all this guilt and anxiety, that energy's not going to flow to your uterus and the energy's not going to flow and you're not going to be able to build the chi. Because if you don't have enough energy for yourself, you're not going to have enough energy to support an embryo.

[0:14:39.3] AS: That's so...

[0:14:40.3] JB: To that point, when I'm thinking about somebody coming in with those issues, you're telling them, "Okay, you need to do something like yin yoga and you need to start eating more warm cooked foods and nurse your body," and then they're riddled with anxiety because they're like, "I'm afraid of gaining weight and blah, blah, blah." So that's where acupuncture can also be useful because then you do treatment to calm down their anxiety so that they can actually go do those things.

[0:15:06.0] KS: Right, and just like talking to them and letting them know that, “This is who you are right now and this is who I’m treating and you need to let go of the past and let’s just see what you’re doing and just try it for a couple of weeks and let’s see where you’re at,” and “do you like your partner?” is also a big question. Do you like the person you’re having sex with and trying to procreate with, is it an enjoyable experience? Because that orgasm builds a lot of chi and can make a baby and if you’re just kind of going through the motions and “ovulation time, let’s go”, that’s not really sexy and that’s not really chi-inducing.

[0:15:39.4] AS: That’s so interesting because we’ve had a doctor Kelly Brogen on our podcast and she’s a good friend of mine. But she wrote a piece about — she midwives people through depression naturally, through diet but also the emotional things and she said she has an 80% divorce rate in her practice. Like the depression and the anxiety. That like floored me. I was like, “Wow.” I mean, for you to even ask that, I was like, “Oh my god, I never thought that people might not actually like their partner.”

[0:16:09.6] JB: They don’t want to be asked that question, I’m sure.

[0:16:11.5] KS: They do not want to be asked that question.

[0:16:16.6] JB: They find delight in something that they are trying to not think about. Because everyone’s trying to go through the motions of, “All right, this is where I am in my life, I’m at this age, this is what I should be doing.”

[0:16:23.1] AS: Well, especially for fertility. I’m curious if you think 40 is really the cutoff or, I feel like when you go to New York, people are like, “I’m just getting started, 42. I’ve got like 8 years.”

[0:16:35.1] JB: So true. Being from New York, it’s so true.

[0:16:39.1] AS: I’m like, “How do you have the energy?”

[0:16:39.6] JB: My friend’s moms were all in their 50’s, 60’s as well, it was wild.

[0:16:44.6] AS: I feel like a spring chicken here at 38.

[0:16:48.5] KS: Well I'm 42, so...

[0:16:50.8] AS: So what's your thoughts? There's so much you just said I want to ask you about, but what do you think about age first?

[0:16:56.6] KS: I mean, it's all genetics. Or they would say in Chinese medicine, it's your prenatal chi. It's what you were born with, it's what you come in with and so it's really up to nature what you're putting into your body, are you taking care of yourself? Are you being thoughtful and caring in your patterns and your lifestyle, do you have a loving relationship? And then do you have what prenatal chi or genetics we would call it, is the similar thing in western medicine. Do you have good genes to support it and can you have a baby later in life? But Chinese medicine, we can't promise you that, but we can show you the path that would work best for you at that moment.

[0:17:36.2] AS: I love that, because everything in the health field, people want to make it seem like there's one size fits all but everything requires context. The people who really know what they're talking about, your answer when you ask they will always say, "It depends."

[0:17:48.9] KS: Right, "Or there's an exception to every rule." Yeah.

[0:17:52.6] AS: So back to this mental anxiety and like that contributing to fertility but also you said you treat a lot of mental health issues. I'd love to hear more about that because I feel like today, everybody that I hear is like, "I'm anxious or I have anxiety," and I know that depression for women shows up often as anxiety. How do you view that or?

[0:18:13.2] KS: It depends on the person of course, but it's basically you know, the energy, your chi, not going down and circulating through your body and it's getting stuck and kind of circling through your head again and again and again and it can cause a few different patterns and so you know, we got to move all that energy down and kind of get things flowing again. Because if it's not flowing properly, it's going to get stuck and it can cause like overthinking, OCD, worrying, panic and, you know, just a lot of times simple breath work and telling people how to breathe can really change their lives without medication.

[0:18:51.1] AS: I remember when I was getting acupuncture from you and I don't know if you remember but you're like, "Have you ever taken a breath?" You're like, "You're diaphragm is like," — I was like, "I thought I was breathing," but it was like this huge wakeup call. You were like — I felt like I had diaphragm shame.

[0:19:09.9] KS: No, I didn't mean to shame you but I do a lot of times I'll put a book or something on someone's lower abdomen below their belly button and tell them to breath 50 times into it and make the book or something move up and down and tell them to do that at night to calm themselves down, it really helps.

[0:19:25.9] JB: It's when amazing when I haven't been to yoga in a while and I'll go to a yoga class and I just get into that deep Prana breath work and then I get so dizzy. Like I feel like I'm going to pass out and I'm like, "Wow, I have not been giving my body or brain oxygen like this." It makes me really think about how short I've been breathing.

[0:19:48.0] KS: Well, you know, anxiety and depression, I mean, men suffer from a course but I see a lot more women than men in my practice and it's from having over-scheduled, trying to have it all, trying to work, raise kids, be the yummy mommy, look this way, look that way, cook dinner, go to work and then also get to the gym and do everything. It's like, there's not enough time in the day and it just her and a husband and two or three kids and she's like, "I'm having panic attacks," and I'm like, because and I'm like, "Because you're overstretched and over scheduled and something has to give, you can't — that kind of push is new to our society."

[0:20:23.6] JB: Those expectations are out of this world, they're not...

[0:20:27.4] AS: I always say, it's like you think climate change, you think the world's just heating up externally, it's in your body too.

[0:20:32.5] KS: Yeah, absolutely.

[0:20:34.2] AS: So what do you think gets people's chi stuck? How can listeners — I love that book idea for people, especially sleep is a huge one. But how can people get that chi that's kind

of racing and that racing mind, and I know my clients always talk about that, like the overthinking, the over analyzing. What are some tips that you use to help people?

[0:20:54.8] KS: Well I use needles of course and...

[0:20:56.8] AS: But don't try that at home.

[0:20:58.1] KS: Don't try that at home. What I tell people is to breathe in for four and out for eight and do it for five minutes because it evokes the parasympathetic response. So if you're panicking for stress or pain, it calms everything down and it really helps and I was doing it, my son Sage broke his arm in soccer saving the goal the other day and we got into the car to go to the hospital and get X-rays and he started — I was like, "Sage, I need you — it's totally cool to cry of course, but I need you to breathe in for four and out for eight and I need you to get that gutter wall kind of pry because it's going to make it hurt worse." By the time we got to the hospital, he was relaxed.

[0:21:35.8] JB: Wow, that's awesome.

[0:21:36.9] KS: The doctors were like, "What did you give him," and I was like, "Arnica, homeopathic for bruising and trauma, which I keep on me at all times," and I'm like, "And we were breathing through it," and they all looked at me. But the nurses were cool, they knew what I was talking about.

[0:21:51.4] AS: The nurses always know.

[0:21:52.8] KS: The nurses do, yes.

[0:21:54.5] AS: Oh my god, I remember when I was really sick, the nurses were the people who got me through. I mean, they were the ones who were like, "It's going to be okay and..."

[0:22:02.3] JB: Do you think that maybe it's because they have less, I don't want to say they have less stress than the doctors but less...

[0:22:08.6] AS: More, I think. They have to put up with the doctors.

[0:22:11.4] JB: Pressure maybe, is the word?

[0:22:13.9] AS: They are — a lot of my clients are physicians and nurses, so I don't want to say doctors and my clients are wonderful physicians. But there's a medical hierarchy and I think that makes stress. I think that puts a lot of stresses on the nurses and they do most of the thing, they do the tending, they do the mothering, right? Which is a lot of work. It's the, "You've got a bruise, you need to," — it's not just coming in and giving orders and that's not what all doctors do. But the nurses have to do the labor part of it, from my experience.

[0:22:42.4] KS: They also do like the positive care and the loving and the kind and the sweet and a lot of them have done a lot of therapy on how to calm down patients and talk to patients, especially in paediatrics.

[0:22:53.1] AS: Yeah. So I want to go back a little bit to this emotional stuff. You know what? Because I think this is really important because I, the past couple of years, I've been studying functional medicine now for around nine years and I know it's like super trendy and we support it here, but I don't think functional medicine does enough. I don't think it acknowledges that emotional piece.

When you were talking about fertility and trying to get pregnant and, you know, women having guilt over abortions or worried that their biological clock is running out, whatever it is, what have you see? To me, I wouldn't say exact percentages, but I feel like most healing anymore will be ineffective if you don't focus on that emotional stuff.

[0:23:35.4] KS: I agree with you, because you have to look at the whole thing. You're not just your womb or your cervix or your vagina or your blood or, you know, your hormones, you're everything. So when someone comes in for fertility, I don't promise them that I can get them pregnant. I promise them that I can put them as healthy as they can get, and that's all I can promise them and a healthy body usually can support a baby and then if that doesn't work then go and get tested of course and I love allopathic medicine and thank goodness for it.

My view is natural first and emotional — what's going on in your home? What's going on in your life? What's going on at work? Are you surrounded by love and support? Are you running from meeting to meeting and stressing out all the time and all the energies by your head or over your head? That's not going to come down to your womb to support that and give it the blood that it needs.

[0:24:28.1] AS: For mental health too, do you have any stories of like it being so emotional and someone sharing something and...

[0:24:34.8] KS: I have so many stories.

[0:24:35.9] AS: Tell us. Because I think people should hear more of these.

[0:24:39.5] JB: Well I want to share one personal story really quick, because it's really a profound thing that happened to me when I was in Kara's office. It was just a regular old day in my world, but except I was having extreme panic and anxiety and could not pinpoint where this was coming from. So Kara and I were working together and then I realized as I was on the table and she was treating me, that was the anniversary of my dad's death and so that was what we had to work on, that was where all the panic and anxiety was coming from and I remember you had, was it called the golden needle?

[0:25:12.1] KS: Gold needles, yup.

[0:25:13.1] JB: "I'm getting the gold today" and you put it, it was on my near my heart, and you said to me, "This may evoke a lot of emotion." Within five seconds, I was having like the most guttural cry I have experienced in like years. It was the most wild thing, it was like my body just — it was like a balloon was popped and everything just let loose and afterwards I was like, I felt amazing.

[0:25:41.3] KS: Yeah, you came in and you're really upset, and you had a lot of grief and you were — so we started talking and to go back to what you're saying, why do people come in from? I make people cry every single day. I will just walk into the room and there's something about me and my energy that just, I opened up the door and then people let me know what's

going on and I always figure it out and there's certain treatments for certain things and that's why diagnosis and pattern diagnosis is really important to see what's going on in the person's life and how you can help them.

A lot of times, people have old grief that they haven't let go of and it's kind of preventing them from moving forward. There's no coincidence that you came in on your father's death and you were freaking out and, you know? But we were able to figure that out together and then work on it and help you let go. I mean you'll never not grieve your father and miss your father, but you know, you can move forward with his memory.

[0:26:32.0] AS: See, that's what's so magical to me. No, but Juliet didn't consciously know this is the day, right?

[0:26:38.9] JB: I didn't go in there with like, "Oh, I'm having a bad day because it's the anniversary." It really wasn't even — it wasn't in my conscious mind at that point.

[0:26:47.2] AS: But your body somehow knew it was that day. That, what is that? Someone tell me?!

[0:26:55.4] KS: Your body holds on — it has a muscle memory, it has spiritual memory, it has all this memories and it's stored and it comes up and if you keep trying to press it down or deny or not think about it, you know, not on purpose, whatever. But, you know, in our culture, it's like "move through, soldier on, suck it up, let's go". There's no space for grieving and healing. Your body pulls it down and shuns it to other places until there's a place they can release it and a lot of times when people come into my office because I'm open or I'm listening and asking questions, they remember what happened and what's going on and then we can do treatments to let it go.

[0:27:32.2] JB: Would you say that crying is a good release?

[0:27:34.8] KS: Yes.

[0:27:36.9] JB: I think we need to talk about that more with people because I really don't think that people cry enough.

[0:27:41.6] AS: Oh my god, I remember when I first started health coaching and people would cry, I'd be like, "No, it's okay," because I was so uncomfortable and now when I see people crying, I'm like, "I'm here." I just let it happen because I know it's so healing.

[0:27:52.9] KS: I tell people I'm like, "Leave it here, I'll clean it up."

[0:27:56.4] AS: Oh, I love that. That makes me want to cry.

[0:28:00.2] KS: Because I'm like, "Get it out here, you don't want to put that in your body, you don't want to hold that. That is something old and painful and, you know, you got to let that — you've got to release that or else it's going to sit in your body and not in a good way and I can't tell you how that's going to sit in your body, everyone's different. But it's not going to be beneficial. So if you release and cry and allow yourself to cry and grieve, that's great."

Also, you don't want to be crying at every whip stitch and weeping in an appropriate times and that can happen if you kind of tell yourself to "suck it up" and "soldier on" and "I'm okay". Then you'll be at the grocery store and you just start losing it because you've been shoving it down and then it just bubbles over and explodes out.

[0:28:35.9] AS: Do you think that unresolved grief is part of why people are so in their heads in anxiety? Would that stop the chi from...

[0:28:42.6] KS: That's one reason why people are in their heads and things aren't flowing. I mean it's grief, it's not supporting their spleen and eating lots of cold raw food and, you know, studying or on their feet too much and not resting enough. There's a lot of reasons why you can have it. There's also times where you're just that's who you are. I mean, you've got to work with who you are.

[0:29:04.1] JB: Yeah, let's talk about food a little bit, especially because you're always pushing that with food, the yin and the yang in food. She's always telling me to eat cooked food, which I know it's good. I love green smoothie bowls everyone

[0:29:17.7] KS: They're good.

[0:29:18.1] JB: But, it's not good for everyone and it doesn't fit everyone's constitution. So can you talk a little bit about different bodies and what you see with food and how it's affecting people?

[0:29:28.1] KS: So the main thing Chinese medicine is talking about eating seasonally and eating what's growing at the time. So we're coming up to winter so you want to eat the roots that have been growing and the burlap root and things that grow in the winter, that's what you want to eat and you have to cook those things because they don't taste good raw. So you have to even cook then your body can process them and absorb them and that's the kidney energy that yin energy, that really deep winter energy of hibernating and pulling back and getting more rest and staying warm and staying cozy and not outside driving and going so hard all the time.

So it's seasonally and locally and in different parts of the world, that's kind of what you go to. I see a lot in my practice, people really into the raw food movement and the vegan movement, which is great for some people but that's really cold in Chinese medicine and if people are really cold to begin with, they're always cold, they have bad digestion, they have diarrhea and then they're putting cold food, your body can't process it. Because it works so hard to break down raw food, you're not gleaming good nutrients from that food. So if you are a cold person and then you start eating soups, it helps calm your digestion and if you start drinking ginger tea, that warms it up.

I tell people, "Eat warm for just a couple of weeks then you can go back to salads and everything, but see how that changes your digestion. Play with it, are you getting gassy, are you getting the grumbling in the belly? Are you more fatigued because your body has to work so hard to breakdown that raw food, when it's 30 degrees out and you know, you're wearing a short jacket because it's cute and no scarf and no hat?" I see this all the time and they're like, "I don't

want to eat — it's hard to do that." It takes a little more planning and I'll give you that, but aren't you worth it?

[0:31:19.8] AS: I feel like raw food, when I was like learning about it, I felt like it took so much effort much more effort. You had to have a dehydrator and all that.

[0:31:27.4] KS: If you're doing fancy raw food.

[0:31:29.7] AS: Oh you mean, just like if you want to grab carrots and...

[0:31:32.7] JB: I mean yeah.

[0:31:33.1] KS: But the thing is, raw food is great for really hot people and people who are having...

[0:31:38.3] AS: Climates.

[0:31:39.7] KS: Yeah, hot climates and, you know, it's not — there's not one thing that's good or bad. But, you know, traditionally, if you want to — we're coming in to winter so cooked foods, warming foods and you know, more beef and veal and stuff like that. Red wine, whiskey. Things that are very warming to the body.

[0:31:59.7] JB: I had to tell you Kara, when Mackey and I were away, we went to upstate New York we stayed at this bed and breakfast and he said he was getting a little bit of a cold and then we went and got like hot apple cider and I said, "We have to put whiskey in this," and he was like, "Yes, Kara would approve." He's like, "This is medicine right now." I'm like, "It is."

[0:32:21.4] KS: It is, and one or two shots is fine. When you start going to the other side, that's a whole different thing and it's depleting. Yeah, go food first. You'd be amazed of how well it works if you do the warming stuff or, you know, I also say, if you're starting to get a sore throat, boil an onion and drink the water, it becomes sweet and it's very — and it taste good to you.

[0:32:43.3] AS: Isn't it, in Chinese medicine, it's kind of like how you eat and be in one season sets you up for the next?

[0:32:49.1] KS: That's correct, yes.

[0:32:50.9] AS: A lot of people go all winter, they don't slow down, they eat all the cheese, which is cooling. I guess it depends on the person but then they come to spring and they're like, "Oh, I have spring allergies," and it's like...

[0:33:01.6] KS: Correct.

[0:33:02.5] JB: I know Ali you wanted us to talk about this and I don't want to forget and you bring up a perfect Segway to it but over in August, Kara does this thing called the garlic treatment.

[0:33:11.8] AS: Oh, yes!

[0:33:12.5] JB: Explain what that is because that's setting people up for fall/winter, right?

[0:33:16.2] KS: Right. What it is, my teacher, Dr. Xiaoming Cheng in Boston taught me how to do this, taught our whole class how to do it, where you take slices of garlic and put it down every process of the back and like combs of mug wart on top of it and then you pull it off as it's getting warm you do that down from the neck, C7 all the way down to the sacrum.

It helps kind of — the vertebrae is connected to every organ in the body as well as every emotion. So it's signaling to the brain, because garlic breaks the brain barrier, to boost the immunity of the entire system. So you do it in August because you want people to sweat all the toxins out but if you ask Dr. Chang, he'll be like — you know, you're like, "Why August?" And he'll be like, "Who are you to question 5,000 years of medicine?" It's a funny answer, but I realize that's garlic was harvested. It's traditionally in most places the hottest month and you want to sweat it out.

[0:34:13.3] AS: So it gives you like a Bunsen burner.

[0:34:16.1] KS: Yeah. You know, you taste like garlic, but then what people realize is that they get set, they may get sick but they recover really fast. One of my clients, her husband had the swine flu and she took care of him and she got nothing and she was always susceptible to everything. Or people are like, "My allergies weren't that bad this year," or, "My digestion's been a lot better." Different things.

I mean you just can't go whole hog and go crazy and expect the garlic treatment to work. It helps support a healthy lifestyle to give you the best health as possible and you do it only in August and I put it up on my website and within two days, it usually sells out that Juliet can tell you I was working seven days a week in August because I've been doing it for nine years, I didn't want to be like, "Oh, by the way, there's this really awesome thing, but I'm sold out, sorry." I was seeing people in my backyard under a tent and I was seeing my normal patients...

[0:35:11.5] JB: That's because the mug wart smell is so strong that if you do it in your office, it smells like you have a Marijuana factory.

[0:35:19.5] KS: Correct.

[0:35:21.5] AS: I'm totally coming to Philly in August, I want to do it. So is it because you're sweating out all the toxins now your immune system is set up to take care of what it really needs to do?

[0:35:30.2] KS: People get a sore throat afterwards, so it's stimulating the B and the T cells to activate and that's what fights off viruses.

[0:35:30.2] JB: Can people support themselves by just eating raw garlic, for those out there like, "I missed the boat"?

[0:35:46.1] AS: And can I do it November and December?

[0:35:48.9] KS: You cannot. It's very interesting, I had a client who had HIV and after every garlic Sunday, his numbers would be so beautiful and so his doctor was like, "What are you

doing?” He’s like, “I’m doing the garlic treatment.” So his doctor and they both asked me if I would do it four times a year, seasonally. So what we did is I would go to his house, we did it in August, numbers went up and then I went to his house and he warmed up his house and we did it inside and he kept warm and covered and everything like that. Only August did his numbers ever go up.

[0:36:18.0] JB: Interesting.

[0:36:18.2] AS: That’s so fascinating. Who are we to question 5,000 years of Chinese medicine?

[0:36:23.6] JB: This is where when you’re like, “Tell me Kara, I will never know.” None of us will know, there is some mystery.

[0:36:35.0] KS: Mocks builds chi and builds blood and garlic is a natural antibiotic also breaks the blood brain barriers, so that helps too. So using all those things together supports the system.

[0:36:47.4] AS: It’s just so fascinating. Nature is miraculous. Why do we not — we just don’t even value it, it just makes me so frustrated.

[0:36:57.5] KS: The thing is, I really feel like you need both, you need eastern medicine and allopathic medicine. Or Ayurvedic or — you know, you have to live more of a natural life and try natural first before you start doing the crazy stuff. But I’m really happy those doctors were there when my son broke his arm to cast him and know that it was like, you know, buckle fracture and if there was anything displaced they could surgically fix it. But you need both and you have to respect your local area and your nature, so I like both.

[0:37:26.7] AS: No, I do too. But I just think that we don’t value the natural cycles.

[0:37:31.1] KS: I agree with you, I think we’ve come — I think we’re getting back there, but I think we’re so far away from what we need to do and that’s why, back to the fertility people’s hormones are being completely hijacked.

[0:37:42.5] AS: Yeah, can we go now to PCOS because that is — a lot of people who have PCOS struggle with infertility but it's also...

[0:37:52.1] JB: Weight gain as well or hair loss or hair growth. The things they don't want, yeah.

[0:37:59.2] KS: Polycystic ovarian syndrome, yes. So again, with Chinese medicine, we look at it that people come in with certain conditions and certain patterns, you do certain things and so you want to see who — there is a typical PCOS who has weight gain, facial hair, missing periods. But now we're seeing a lot more of PCOS in thin women and with no rhyme or reason or A-typical PCOS. I think that's definitely from severe environmental imbalances.

[0:38:32.7] AS: Do you mean like environmental toxins from parabens, and sulfites or do you mean air pollution, water?

[0:38:40.0] KS: Yes, all of it, yes. I have a lot of clients so the first thing I'll be like, "Do you use Tupperware?" And they're like, "Yeah," and I'm like, "Get rid of it, use glass." "I know." Everything's like — they're like, "It's BPA free," and I'm like, "But there's still BPS in it," and there was a big campaign to get all that out but there's still this other PPS in there that's just as dangerous. We don't know enough about it to say it's okay and...

[0:39:02.2] AS: What else haven't they discovered yet? That's what I'm always thinking. Like BPA is probably the least of it.

[0:39:07.4] KS: Right, you're absolutely correct and if you start going down the rabbit hole, it gets very scary and very depressed. But anyway, it's kind of, you give them tips like, "Okay, what's your bedroom like, is there airflow? Can you get an air filter, change the air filter or can you get an air purifier just for where you're sleeping? Are you cooking whole foods?" Especially women with PCOS, the main thing is protein and greens and cut out all the grains and it doesn't have to be forever but you got to cut out that processed crap because it's not serving your body. Your body is hoarding all of this chemicals and it's not releasing it.

[0:39:45.5] AS: I found, because I've had some clients with PCOS and they do need a little bit of grains, whole grains.

[0:39:51.3] KS: Whole grains, but for a couple weeks to a month, depending on the person, I think it's nice to give their body a break to get out the inflammation because I see a lot of times with PCOS, a lot of inflammation or in Chinese medicine I see a lot of heat.

[0:40:03.0] AS: Interesting. Is that the same with Endometriosis? I have a client who has that.

[0:40:06.6] KS: No, that's so different.

[0:40:07.9] AS: Can you talk about that for a little bit?

[0:40:10.1] KS: Again, it's very different, you know, it depends what's going on. Is that genetic endometriosis? Is it form, you know did it start later in life? Was there a trauma? Any of this things in Chinese medical view can be set off at any time because of different things, whether they call it external pathogens or internal pathogens or prenatal chi, post-natal chi. How are you taking care of yourself? What were you born with? What's your environment right now? What's going on in your life, or what happened when you were developing and starting to go through puberty? Where we're living? It's very interesting.

[0:40:41.1] JB: This is why when you meet with someone for the first time, your intake is how long, when you're talking to someone for quite a while?

[0:40:47.0] KS: I talk to someone for quite a while but I usually notice that I get more information where they'll give me kind of just the surface stuff and then once I get them on the table, that's when the good information comes out.

[0:40:58.1] JB: Do you have a lot of patients, first timers, that they're really scared of the needles?

[0:41:03.2] KS: Yes.

[0:41:02.1] JB: So talk a little bit about that because I think that that is still, for our listeners out there who are like, “This sounds really great, but it just needles, no way.”

[0:41:10.1] KS: So it’s not your typical needle and what I always, I tell my clients like I showed them what it looks like and I usually use the tiniest needle I have and just show them how it feels and I’m like, “Listen, we can try one needle right now, let’s demystify the acupuncture for you and see how it feels,” and people are always surprised you know that it feels good or they don’t feel it at all and then they start relaxing immediately.

[0:41:36.5] JB: Yeah, that was me. I mean, I’m someone who faints when they get their blood drawn. I have to like look away and be laid back in a chair, I can’t sit up. So for me, going to acupuncture, that was the scary part, “Oh, needles. Oh my gosh, I’m terrified of needles. I’m going to get dizzy and faint,” and then I think you did that same thing where you were like, “I’m just going to put one.” I didn’t feel the one, I didn’t even know you did that. It doesn’t feel like any much of anything.

[0:42:00.0] KS: I feel most acupuncturist are happy to show you a needle and show you what needling feels like and do one needle on you to get you comfortable. So to everyone listening, just call and say, “Listen, I’m really scared,” and you know, I’ll be like, “Oh, no problem. If you don’t like it, you get to leave,” and I say no charge. Because if you’re not comfortable, I don’t want you to be here. I want you to be with a healthcare practitioner who supports you and does what you want them to do and if that’s not me, that’s okay.

[0:42:28.9] AS: I want to go back to endometriosis, PCOS and you just mentioned trauma like it was this kind of — how does that overlay? Again, we’ve had a podcast episode 12 with Dr. Dana Bodenheimer about, there’s not big T, little T. Trauma is trauma. How has that — what do you mean by that that can lead to endometriosis or PCOS?

[0:42:53.2] KS: So again, I’m speaking in Chinese medical terms, I’m not speaking in western medical terms. So if there’s something wrong with what we call the lower gel, the uterus or you’re having painful periods, there’s a reason why and it doesn’t have to be just the physical mechanism. It could be something that happened that you’re shutting down and the chi’s not moving through it. Do you know what I’m saying?

I had a woman who she had a very traumatic rape and her vagina always was, she said, locked up and in spasm and it's a muscle and everything like that. So I did a couple of points to help release it, not — on her foot, it was on the foot. She started crying and releasing it and she felt it literally loosen up because she had just locked it down and she had all sorts of problems and fertility problems and wasn't enjoying sex.

Of course she was going to therapy. Acupuncture's not a cure all. Everyone works together and in that instance, she had done all the therapy, she had gone to see — she's gone with counselors and she had gone to her OBGYN to see if there was any physical things and this just kind of the hail Mary. She had put in all the ground work and a couple of treatments and it was really beautiful to see and it changed her life.

[0:44:09.0] AS: I like that you said she did the ground work, because I think our psyche has to be ready for it and so all that stuff helped and I think that's really important for listeners to realize. We can't quantify emotions, we can't give you a blood test to show you the emotional baggage you're carrying around, which we all are. Yet, that has to be a part I think of any treatment plan.

[0:44:30.4] KS: I agree and the thing is I tell people I'm not a therapist and I don't, you know, "I'm not a therapist, I'm not trying to handle this."

[0:44:37.7] AS: But you're therapeutic.

[0:44:38.9] KS: I'm therapeutic, but if we're kind of opening this up, I want to make sure I'm sending appropriately sending you a therapist or a psychiatrist or someone who can help you kind of unpack all this or unload this. So when I'm dealing with people with very intense mental health issues, I always make sure I know the therapist, the therapist I knows me and that everyone's on board.

[0:45:00.1] AS: Oh my god, I love that. That's how healthcare ideally, that's where we're moving towards, there was a team and you know. It's not like, "This is what the doctor says," and we all just kind of do that.

[0:45:09.6] KS: I get very nervous when someone's like, "Cure me." I'm like, "Nope, cure yourself and you need a team, I can't do it all."

[0:45:13.6] JB: In my ideal world, there would be a team and they would all be talking to each other.

[0:45:19.2] AS: Yeah, I think in everyone's ideal world. What do you think about birth control, Kara? Because I feel like a lot of people I know who had PCOS or Endometriosis, their doctors put them on birth control and we actually know that often makes the situation worse. Their symptoms maybe masked but I'm curious what you think about that.

[0:45:38.6] KS: Again, it depends on the person and you know, it also depends on what they want to do for fertility, you know? So are babies in their future? Are — what are they thinking about? So hormonal birth control can really kind of affect people's fertility and I had one teacher who said it was poison and that if you ever want to have children, you should never ever take it.

Now that's a little extreme and he was a man. I believe in women's right to family planning and however you want to do it, that's fantastic. Nor should you pay for the birth control in your 20's you know. But I do suggest to a lot of my patients, I ask and how long they've been on it and if it's longer than 10 years, I'd be like well, when there's an appropriate time, it might be time to take a break to give you about just to see what your body can do and give your body a chance to get those hormones in balance and everything like that.

Then I've seen people who are on the pill, they have severe endometriosis that every period is horrible and that the pill has saved their lives and they take the pill and they only bleed four times a year and it makes their life a lot better. So you've got to waive what our people are doing...

[0:46:45.9] JB: That's the case by case basis though?

[0:46:47.0] KS: Yeah.

[0:46:47.8] AS: And, acupuncture would still support those situations.

[0:46:50.7] KS: Oh absolutely. I see a lot of women who are like, I take it,” — what’s it? Seasonique? Or Seasonelle? Or whatever and they have severe — and I’m like, “All right,” you know? I try to support people wherever they’re at. I never have heart naturals like “you have to be this, you have to do that, you have to do this”.

[0:47:04.8] AS: I’m the same way.

[0:47:06.6] KS: I’m like, “Well, what do you want? How far do you want to go with this? Do you want to do some allopathic, some acupuncture? Do you want to — are you just here because you hear it’s good for fertility and you want to boost your chances?” Which a lot of people come in for me for that and they don’t want to hear about anything else. Some people are like, “I’m doing natural, 100% of the way,” and I’m like, “All right, let’s go.”

[0:47:27.1] JB: How much of the Chinese herbs do you think are making the difference with the acupuncture or one versus the other, or do they have to go hand in hand?

[0:47:37.5] KS: I would say Chinese herbs when used appropriately are amazing and fantastic. But I like acupuncture and getting people to eat the appropriate diet for their body type and their pattern type. I always start with food first.

[0:47:51.4] AS: Yeah.

[0:47:52.3] JB: I love that you’re talking body type because Ali and I always talk about that and there aren’t — there isn’t just one size fits all body type out there. As you know, women are always trying to strive to be like these live, thin...

[0:48:06.9] AS: “I can survive on a smoothie.”

[0:48:08.1] JB: Yet ripped now, right? Because we have to be ripped too.

[0:48:10.8] AS: In your world. Strong is the the new sexy, apparently.

[0:48:16.5] JB: Yeah.

[0:48:17.9] KS: The thing is, that body type also changes through your lifetime and different things, like Juliet can tell you is after the birth of my second child and Ali can tell you, it took me four years to lose 40 pounds. But I just kept — you know, and that's who I was and I was like okay, I got to be me. I have to look at this and do my best every day and I still you know, strong and active and then sometimes I have back issues that I can't do as much as I want and you just have to do your best and look for yourself and, you know, find three cute things about yourself and just go forward your day.

[0:48:54.4] AS: I think that's — what you're talking about is surrender, right? I always tell my clients like in the Wizard of Oz, right? The movie was like two and a half hours. It's one of the longest movies and like until Dorothy finally — the Wicked Witch of the...

[0:49:08.9] JB: Have you never watched a Stephen King movie.

[0:49:10.4] AS: No, I'm not into...

[0:49:12.4] JB: It's two and a half hours is not that long. I'm just thinking of the double VHS that came with the Stephen King movie every time you'd get it.

[0:49:18.6] AS: You just said VHS. For our younger listeners, there was this thing called a VCR.

[0:49:23.8] JB: I'm the youngest one here.

[0:49:25.9] AS: Yeah, but people listening they'll be like, "What's a VHS tape?" There used to be this things called VCR's and you would throw this big clunky tapes. But, you know, the Wicked Witch of the West is like, "Surrender!" and then Dorothy finally has to just get the broom from her and after she does that, the movie's over in 15 minutes. But she was avoiding her the entire time and I think we do that with everything, we wear ourselves out rather than just — and I'm speaking here too, it's just like, you are where you are and there's some research, I want to

look more into it, but if you really accept where you are, you actually heal faster. It's almost like some of that stress of resisting is you're adding to the issue.

[0:50:04.6] KS: But it goes back to the yin and yang, you have to do some work.

[0:50:07.5] AS: No, I mean, surrendering to the work that you have to do, not the work that you want to do. No, surrender is like, surrender to me does not mean resignation. It means like, "Okay, this is like," — when I was struggling with my weight, I finally gave up and I was like, "I've got to focus on my health." It wasn't what I wanted to do but it was like, "I'm not getting anywhere. I would have probably gotten somewhere by now," and healing my gut was a very slow process and it's like, it was a lot of work and it wasn't work I would have originally chosen to do.

But just rather than being like, "No, I want to count calories." I was just too tired, otherwise I probably would have. But I had just given up completely. So I do want to ask you a little bit about Chinese herbs, because I'm starting to like learn about herbs and general. I'm just curious, can you give us kind of a — you know, acupuncture helps, I loved how you said it helps the body basically release stored energy or use its best resources...

[0:51:05.3] KS: Signal to the body to heal itself and puts it in a homeostatic mechanism. So if it's out, if you have diarrhea or constipation, it's going to bring it back all into balance.

[0:51:14.7] AS: Yeah, so what are the herbs? Give us some high level of this.

[0:51:17.9] KS: All right, so let me — the Chinese pharmacopeia is enormous and vast.

[0:51:24.3] AS: You mean you can't explain it in 30 seconds?

[0:51:27.0] KS: I cannot. But it's mostly, you know, it's plants, different parts of plants, roots, also some bones and insects and shells and some formulas call for urine, for a six year old boy, which I do not use.

[0:51:44.7] JB: Urine from a six year old or for a six year old?

[0:51:47.3] KS: From a six year old.

[0:51:49.1] JB: Wow.

[0:51:49.9] KS: Yeah, I mean, this has gone back way back in the day when you didn't have certain things.

[0:51:52.4] JB: Can't question it!

[0:51:53.4] Ks: Well, we don't use it anymore and there's certain bones that you won't use anymore because endangered species and all that stuff and I try to also — I'm always thoughtful of my clients who are vegan, for political and you know...

[0:52:09.6] JB: When you say bones though, are you talking about because there's collagen that you can derive from bones and there's different nutrients. I'm taking collagen right now, I got it form you actually, the medical grade collagen.

[0:52:20.7] KS: Yeah, it's from a bovine cow.

[0:52:22.3] JB: It's amazing because I have a lot of tendon issues and ligament issues.

[0:52:27.6] KS: Yeah, it's a ground up bone, it's really good. This is the time, kidney season, bones and the season of kidneys about bones and sexual maturation and hair and all that stuff. So you want to eat stuff that supports that including bone or bone broth. But yeah, it's a huge formula, and for every formula, because you know, traditionally, people would look and there's still people of course who do this. I do mostly patents just because a lot of my clients are more compliant with that but boiling these herbs, like double boiling them and having them for three days and doing it again and again for specific patterns based on your specific diagnosis, based on the person in front of you at that moment is when you use Chinese herbs.

[0:53:10.6] AS: It's not like this — I was just going to say, there's a lot of teas or now you can buy supplements that say Chinese herbs. I would just, my gut is probably don't even go there.

[0:53:21.2] KS: Go to a Chinese herbalist and have them diagnose you and take what's appropriate because it's really hard to self-diagnose, to look at yourself and be like, "This is what's going on with me," because you have a cloud of view of who you are. So have a professional do it or have a professional — you know, some of those teas are great and I also suggest to my clients like, "Oh, go get this, this is great for you at this moment." I get people who get really locked into certain things and certain formulas and I'm like, "You know, you've been taking this for a while, it's time to stop taking it." Because the goal of Chinese medicine is to, for most conditions, to stop taking it and to treat the problem, the symptom that you're having, the root of the problem so it doesn't come back.

[0:54:03.4] JB: Yeah, when I think about a couple of my clients that have actually gone to China and have seen herbalists there and the different concoctions that they are given to go home boil and make and it just looks like bags of leaves and different herbs versus what you were saying because you have more pill form and things that are, as far as in our western culture, a little bit easier to swallow, literally. I think, at least for me, I know my compliance would not be good at all if you're like, "Here's a bag of bark," basically, that you know — because that's what it looks like.

[0:54:36.2] KS: It probably is.

[0:54:38.1] JB: It has a strong smell and you know?

[0:54:40.7] KS: Yeah, it's an acquired — I'm really used to the smells and the tastes and I like them and, you know? But our western palette is very bastardized and you know with foods and too much sweets and stuff like that. So Chinese medicine tastes horrible to them but I can get kids to take chines medicine no problem.

[0:55:01.5] AS: Interesting. That's so interesting. Start your kids early.

[0:55:06.9] KS: Yeah, get a good acupuncturist and herbalist for your kids.

[0:55:09.6] JB: Well we talk about, on the show, just the idea that in your meals, you should be aiming to get different types of like taste for your palette. Like bitter and tangy, pungent. Those aren't things that you're going to find...

[0:55:24.5] KS: That's a very Chinese medicine because you're getting the five flavors, the five taste to balance out all the organs. Because every organ goes with the flavor and so you want to balance that palette out and then if you have a problem or a disharmony with one of those things, you want to eat more of one thing. Because you said it Juliet, I'm always trying to get you to eat warm, cooked foods because you're so young and so fiery and I want to really support your yin.

[0:55:52.1] AS: I'm just thinking, you know, there's this thing called emotional freedom technique and they say that it works because it hits on acupuncture points. What do you think about that?

[0:55:59.7] KS: I find it derivative of acupuncture. I think it's great, listen. A lot of things, a lot of acupuncturists and herbalists get very upset when people kind of take our things and may get for themselves. But, you know, it's getting people healthy at the end of the day, that's what's really important.

[0:56:16.2] AS: Yeah, my view on that though is, I mean, at least with the work I do, I want to do the emotional healing work so you don't need EFT. I think we should have some sort of — but that's my opinion. I mean, it may be a great bridge tool but I haven't done it that much. I tried it once in a couple of times and then I was like, "I'm not going to keep up with it." I didn't feel enough benefit to keep up with it, but that was me. Everyone's different.

[0:56:37.7] KS: Everyone's different and I just try to — I've been doing this for such a long time that I try to never poo-poo anything else and someone's like, "Oh, I really like that." And I'm like, "Oh, as long as you like it, is working for you?" People come in with the list of western medications and I'm like, "Oh, are you happy that you're on all the stuff?" And they're like, "Yeah." I'm like, "Okay, great, let's go from here," and you know? But one of the hardest things I have to do is kind of people come in with side effects and co-morbidities of their western medicines and they want me to fix it and can be quite difficult.

[0:57:06.9] AS: Oh my god, especially because I think the more medications you have, how do you know what's interacting with what and are you detoxing appropriately and, oh my god.

[0:57:16.0] KS: Right, they have seven different doctors and the doctors aren't talking to each other and one medicine counteracts another medicine and does another thing and on top of it and all they care about is whether or not they can get an erection or not.

[0:57:28.9] AS: Wow. I'm just sitting — well no, I'm sitting here thinking like the hypochondriac in me is like, "Oh my god, that's terrifying. This person has no idea like the Russian roulette they're playing," and you're like, "All they care about is an erection."

[0:57:41.4] KS: That's all they care about yeah. Or they have a headache or constipated.

[0:57:44.9] AS: Yeah.

[0:57:45.5] KS: Constipation is the number one.

[0:57:47.7] AS: Oh, so what do you do for that?

[0:57:48.9] KS: Well I do acupuncture and then I talk to them about diet and a lot of times people who are constipated are very hard to change their diets. They don't want to hear about fiber and green...

[0:57:59.4] JB: They're very stubborn and stuck? That makes sense

[0:58:03.0] KS: And only want to eat white bread and cheese and you know, that there's nothing else out there and they don't cook but there's nothing out there for them. I'm like, "Well, you know?" They're like, "Well you tell me, you show me." I'm like, "Well, you should really do the work. I'm kind of busy here with the acupuncture practice, have you met my friend Juliet?"

[0:58:21.9] AS: I think Juliet's going to be like, "You've got to own this."

[0:58:24.6] JB: “Have you talked to Ali Shapiro? They would love to help you with your food and where to find it and all that stuff.”

[0:58:31.3] AS: If they’re willing to take on the responsibility. I think that’s another big thing. Often times in western medicine, people assume the doctor’s taking the responsibility with the prescription pad. But when it comes to different modalities like all the ones that we practice, I’ll meet you half way but I can’t want this more than you do. It isn’t going to work?

[0:58:51.2] KS: I’m not a nutritionist, you know what I’m saying? I can only talk to you from the Chinese medical standpoint, I can only talk to you from my base. If you need something else, you need to go to somebody else and talk to somebody else. I can’t be everything to you.

[0:59:04.1] AS: Oh, right, of course. But I think we’re all in that web if once you learn to eat better then you’re like, “I want to do, I want to exercise,” and then you’re like, “Oh, I want to do acupuncture.” You start to — I like exploring all of it and then kind of seeing, there’s like almost too, I think like a reason for everything too. Based on where your health is and what your goals are and all that kind of stuff.

But I do think with how out of sync we are with the natural way of being, it does require a lot of different practitioners to check in with or you know? Not that it has to be your whole life. I want nutrition to take a back seat. I believe health is the vehicle to this great ambition, fulfilling the meaningful life. But you do have to put some effort into it, it doesn’t just happen, just like any kind of success.

[0:59:52.4] KS: Right, I agree.

[0:59:53.3] JB: The last thing, Kara, that I wanted to talk about today, because it’s become so popular with the Olympics and I just had a client text me the other day and say, “Hey, what do you think about cupping? I have plantar fasciitis, can you send me somewhere where I can get cupped?” I just think that’s interesting that people are seeking out cupping and they don’t really know what it is but because they see Michal Phelps got cupping, now everybody wants cupping.

[1:00:17.6] AS: Kara’s cupped me before.

[1:00:18.9] JB: Yeah, and I've received cupping from you but I don't get cups every time and it seems to me that you only do it for a particular thing and it goes hand in hand with the different treatments that you're giving.

[1:00:29.7] KS: You are both correct. It's called an adjunct therapy. So you do it in addition to your acupuncture and your moxibustion, which is the burning herbs and if someone needs to be cupped, you cup them as well. I had quite a few phone calls of people like, "I just want to come and get cupped," and I'm like, "I do acupuncture so it's appropriate for you, I will do it." But there's a lot of massage parlors and places in New York that will just cup you.

[1:00:54.4] JB: Yeah, and physical therapists are doing it now I see.

[1:00:56.6] KS: Physical therapist will do it. That's against someone borrowing from acupuncture to make it their own, but I think that you know, acupuncturists really know cupping.

[1:01:05.6] JB: What is cupping?

[1:01:08.5] KS: So cupping releases the top layer of the muscle, it's myofascial release. It also brings the blood and energy to the area that you want to bring it. Also, the skin is the largest lymph drainage system, so it detoxifies your body without having to go through the whole system. It's also a diagnostic tool because it tells me where things are really getting stuck on the body, and as I said at the beginning, is that every vertebrate is connected to an emotion and an organ so we can see where things are really kind of sticking.

Because the darker the color that comes up in the cup, the more severe that chi stagnation or blood stagnation. There's lots of different cupping; there are fire cups which I love where you use fire to create the vacuum with a glass cup and then you put it on. There are suction cups which I use with a lot of my clients because a lot of my clients have a healthy fear of fire and aren't ready for the cupping.

[1:01:57.2] JB: Healthy fear of fire.

[1:01:58.7] KS: Totally fine. Then there's the rubber cups which are good for sliding cups where you're moving it down the whole thing. But you know, there's different channels and we learn where to cup and where not to cup and what's appropriate, what's not appropriate and also, who is it appropriate for? Because if someone is really deficient and exhausted, cupping is not going to feel good for them and actually make them very tired. If they're living a toxic life and then you're pulling out these toxins, they're actually getting more toxic and not feel good.

[1:02:27.9] AS: Yeah, people need to realize that they have to be supporting themselves if they're going to detox. I remember when we were cupping and like Carlos would we like — because it leaves all this like you know, bruises and everything on your back and he's like, "People are going to think I'm abusing you." And I'm like, "No they're not."

[1:02:45.4] JB: Perfectly circular abuse.

[1:02:47.6] AS: I know.

[1:02:49.8] KS: We don't call them bruising, we call them Sha marks or like — the Sha is like that energy that comes up in the cup or when you're doing the Gua Sha out or the scraping. I guess the PT's call it Graston, yeah. It's all from acupuncture.

[1:03:09.4] JB: I love that.

[1:03:12.8] KS: But it really works.

[1:03:13.6] AS: Kara, this has just been so wonderful and I think people now really will have a view of what acupuncture is for and to really consider those, especially for women, the entire reproductive cycle. Even if you're not — if you're done getting pregnant, if you want to get pregnant, if you're struggling with PCOS, endometriosis, or any anxiety and the connection there.

[1:03:33.9] KS: Also, any acupuncturist is going to tell you, come in seasonally, come in once a season, just to get a tune up. You take your car and get a tune up, your acupuncturist, if you like

acupuncture, can give you a tune up and maybe see something that you haven't seen and stop something before it becomes an issue. That's where acupuncture really shines.

[1:03:53.4] AS: Prevention.

[1:03:55.2] JB: Yeah, the other thing that I love about it, and this is for me because mostly I'm coming in for anxiety and having been diagnosed with a panic disorder. But the ability for me to be able to get on that table and for one hour be completely calm and still and not feel fidgety, not feel anxiety, is an incredible feeling to have if you're somebody who has never able to really be still.

[1:04:20.4] AS: That's a great point because I think people might hear this and I could never calm my mind for an hour but there's something about the acupuncture that just — I feel like it goes...

[1:04:30.6] JB: It's honestly like a drug-like effect.

[1:04:33.3] KS: It's points that I do specifically for anxious people to calm them down so they'll lay on the table and most acupuncturist will do it like, because we look at you and see that you're anxious, we want you to calm down and be able to lay there and relax and let the chi do the work and so we help facilitate that a little bit more than just getting on the table.

[1:04:52.3] JB: It's awesome. I always think of the Sex in the City episode where, Charlotte has all the needles, "Dr. Moon, help, help!"

[1:05:01.9] AS: Charlotte, we all have an inner Charlotte.

[1:05:07.0] JB: Kara, thank you so much and you know you'll be seeing me soon.

[1:05:10.0] AS: Yeah, and where can people find you Kara?

[1:05:11.9] KS: I am, I'm in Philadelphia and my website is www.easehealing.com. So you can check me out and there's lots of great acupuncturists all over the country and just call them and

talk to them and, you know, just yeah look up acupuncture.com, look for acupuncturists in your area and just talk and see who you connect with and who you feel good with. That's the person who is right for you.

[1:05:34.7] AS: Who you'll feel comfortable crying in front of.

[1:05:38.1] KS: Right. I don't think people always feel comfortable crying in front of me, but it just ends up happening and it's usually men because they're taught not to cry and so I walk in and just I release it all.

[1:05:47.3] AS: That's amazing that you can hold the space for that for people.

[1:05:50.6] KS: It's my pleasure. I get to do a job that I love every day and I get to hear "thank you" and "you helped me" so much and it's just such a gift.

[1:05:57.7] AS: I agree, it's the best feeling in the world, I love being in this part of a wellness world.

[1:06:02.9] KS: Right.

[1:06:04.0] AS: Thank you so much Kara.

[1:06:06.7] KS: All right, it was nice talking with you ladies.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[1:06:09.4] JB: Thank you so much for listening to the Insatiable Podcast. We hope you enjoy today's episode. You can connect with us on social media. Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @julietunite and Ali @alimshapiro, M stand for Marie. Please feel free to also e-mail us any questions. We would love to hear from all of our listeners. You can reach us on ali@alishapiro.com and juliet@unitefitness.com. We'll see you next time.

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