



EPISODE 956

Why Women and Men Age Differently and the Secret Benefits of Menopause

With Guest Dr. Mindy Pelz

You are now listening to The Model Health Show with Shawn Stevenson. For more, visit themodelhealthshow.com.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to the Model Health Show. I've got a question for you. Do you think that there's a difference between the way that men age versus the way that women age? Now, this might be something that you never thought about, but I think the answer is gonna be something super obvious. Yes, there are significant differences between how the sexes age. Now, with this being said, what does it look like to age like a girl or age like a woman? Today more than ever, there's emerging science and conversations happening around menopause and women's health. Thank goodness. Super important. Thankfully, this change is happening. Now with that being said, this is also a place for us men to be aware and supportive and help to push this education forward and keep this conversation growing and getting bigger because it matters for us all. Now, this could be of course, in the context of a relational thing, something that our significant other might go through with perimenopause and menopause, and they might wanna put our, put their pause on us and we're like, why?

I didn't do anything. Okay. And we are the ones who need to pause and reflect and to understand and to support what's going on. And with that said, now I'm not advocating anybody. Put no pause on nobody. Okay? But this is something that can affect us relationally, you know, with our, with our mothers, with our sisters, with our significant others, our daughters.

So being aware that this education is massively important today, but also there's so many misnomers and complexity that we need to just push to the side and focus on how can we support our loved ones. And in that, providing today a masterclass on in our society that is often forcing opposition against aging healthfully, how can women age like a girl, age like a woman in the version of that is expressive of health and of empowerment instead of the opposite, which has come to be all too common. And so with this, I have on one of the world's leading experts in this subject matter, in women's health, in hormones, in metabolic health, and she's put together this incredible masterclass on this subject for all of us to enjoy today.

Dr. Mindy Pelz is a New York Times bestselling author and a globally recognized voice in women's health hormones and aging. Through her top rated Resetter podcast and her YouTube channel, she's reached hundreds of millions of views and listens collectively, and she's leading a movement to reframe Menopause is a time of awakening, not decline, and

helping women to step into the most powerful chapter of their lives. Let's dive into this conversation with the one and only Dr. Mindy Pelz. Dr. Mindy Pelz. So good to see you. Thank you for coming to hang out with us.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Oh, thank you. I love being here. It really feels like home and I just, I feel like the conversation that we're about to have, we would have if we were out to lunch or it is just really beautiful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So thank you for having me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course. It's my pleasure.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I wanna start off by asking you, what does it mean to age like a girl.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It's a good title, right? It's funny because I just wanna point out that I didn't just pick that title because I have this like a girl brand. I really wanted to look at aging from a new perspective. So here's the core of what aging like a girl means, is for so many women, we get caught in our adult life doing everything for everybody else. And all of a sudden we're trying to look a certain way. We're trying to act a certain way. We're fixing everybody's problems. We're taking care of everybody, and we completely lose ourselves.

And what I saw in the research for this book is that when we go through menopause, our brain rewires itself and all of a sudden we start to think about ourselves again, very much like we did when we were little girls. And so a lot of what I'm wanting women to do is take back their little girl. Take back that essence of who you were before you, the world beat you up and told you, you needed to act a certain way. Like the opportunity menopause gives is a moment to bring her back. That playful, charismatic, curious little girl that didn't play by society's rules until she became an adult. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, this is so good. I'm so excited. You actually talked about in the book this transformation and you know, good friend and colleague, Dr. Lisa Mascon.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Fun fact. The Model Health Show was the first major podcast that she ever did.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Oh, really? Amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So really helping to get this message. About women's health out in a bigger way.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I'm grateful for that. But you share some insights from her as well. But also you talk about this change that happens in the female brain.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Going into puberty that kind of sets the template for the next few decades.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Can you talk about that and then the change that happens at menopause?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. So we need to look at puberty and menopause as bookends to a woman's life. So when we hit puberty, one of the things that we're not aware of is that there are two brain changes that are happening. One is estrogen comes in. Estrogen all of a sudden makes it so that the right and left hemisphere of a woman's brain start to become more accessible to her. We actually have a thicker corpus callosum in the female brain, and

estrogen stimulates that, that part of our brain, which is the highway between the right and the left brain.

So that's really important because what happens once estrogen comes in is we start to think about people's feelings and emotions, and we pair that also with logical planning and goal setting. And we're always using the right and left brain together when we, when our hormones are in full form. Sounds amazing. And it is, but it means we take, we take into consideration what you think. And that's the beginning in postpartum, or I'm sorry, in puberty. That beginning, brain starts, it starts to form, and all of a sudden we don't care about our own what we want. We care about what everybody else wants, and that's a function, right?

That's like a function of estrogen changing our brain. Now the second thing in what Lisa taught us all and just blew me away with, and I had to go follow that up with a bunch of research, was that when hormones go, when a woman has different hormonal swings. And what will happen is the brain will actually change itself. So at puberty, those neurons that kept you attached to somebody else, like a parent for your survival, all of a sudden those neurons get pruned away. And it's making room for new neurons. And the new neurons that are forming at puberty is are independent neurons, because with a menstrual cycle comes the possibility of pregnancy with the possibility of pregnancy comes parenting.

So the brain had to change itself to prepare itself to be able to be a parent. So it's really interesting when we look at the Bri, that brain change because anybody who has a teenage daughter knows the pain of being pushed away by your teenage daughter when she's all of a sudden 14, 15, 16 years old. That's part of the evolution. The brain rewired itself so that she can start to be more independent. So we have one bookend that starts this brain change for women. Then you fast forward to menopause and all these hormones go down and all of a sudden the brain changes itself again. Which is really like how cool is the body?

Like you have a major dip in hormones and the brain that's not just causing you suffering. That's actually purposeful. The brain now rewires itself for its next job. And you know what its next job is in men in menopause is leadership. And so here we are like living this world where

women are so scared of aging, they are freezing their faces and trying to keep thin and they wanna, you know, keep youthful so you'll love us. But what we are not talking about is the fact that her brain is actually rewiring itself to become a better leader, not to be tossed aside because she has a wrinkle on her face.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is such a revelation because for years and the messaging and well intended telling people, telling women, put yourself first.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Make yourself a priority.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Why is that so hard for you to do? And we can finally understand, like this isn't just like some kind of character flaw.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is a adaptation, this is changes in the brain. This is program changes in the brain. Now of course that can swing to an unhealthy place.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Of course.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But it's understanding that this is what's real. Yeah. It's what's normal, what's natural.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And we can find a healthy way to work with it instead of against it.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right. You bring up so many good points in that statement of we ask women like, put yourself first. Stop doing it for everybody else.

But what we don't realize is the day we started our period and estrogen came in all her glory, is the day we started to build what we call a relational brain. A brain that is always thinking about everybody else. Like for example, with an influx. And estrogen comes an influx of oxytocin. And women actually have more oxytocin receptor sites in their amygdala than men. And so what ends up happening is to calm our fear center. We tend to go more towards a tendon befriend response, which is, I'm having a bad day, I'm gonna come home and chat with you about it. I'm gonna gather my girlfriends about it. I'm gonna get in community because we need that oxytocin to start to calm us.

So you take that developing brain in puberty and you mix it with a society. And this is why I put in the book about Carol Gilligan's work. Carol Gilligan needs to come back into vogue. She's in her eighties and in the 1980s, she studied the differences between boys and girls. And what she found out was that if you asked a boy and a girl at the age of, let's say nine, if you asked them both what they want to eat, they both will tell you, I want this. You ask 'em that same question, 11. The boy will be like, I want this. And the girl will start to like question a little bit like, eh, I might want this. By the time you ask that same question at 13, the boy will still tell you what he wants and the girl will say, I don't know. What do you want? And it's this combination of estrogen stimulating, this relational brain mixed with society's conditioning, that you are a good girl, you are worthy if you are selfless.

And that was Carol Gilligan's work was like, was proving that society is conditioned girls to feel worthy when they give their lives away. And then amazing men like you and my husband's like this too, come and they're like, what do you want? Don't you know, put yourself first that we don't know how to do that. We don't know, like our brain has been conditioned for so many years to take care of everybody else. Our brain has been conditioned that if I look a certain way, you'll love me. If I act a certain way, you'll love me. But menopause changes that all, it all changes at menopause.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright. So many, so many amazing things have already been cracked open. We gotta go back. When you mentioned the onset of the menstrual cycle, puberty, again, the body being prepared essentially regardless of the age to have a baby.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And we know now that age where puberty, the onset of puberty takes place in the initiation of the first menstrual cycles happening. Younger and younger and younger. And so when we're talking about aging like a girl, we're dealing with different circumstances. And you talk about this so beautifully in the book, that the menopause of the woman today is different from her mother and her grandmother. Things are changing. Part of that is the early onset.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Which we can..

DR. MINDY PELZ: Everything moving.

SHAWN STEVENSON: . Getting to moving, why that is. But a big part of why that is also affecting women later on in life as well and making this process much more turbulent.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so you're helping women. A big part of this is of course the understanding, the mindset piece. But also looking at the practicality and the practical conditions.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That women are dealing with that is making this unusual as far as aging like a girl.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It absolutely. So on the, on the menstrual cycle movement, I want to call it of age, yeah. We're like seven year olds are getting their period. Now that's environmental. I just wanna point that out, that there are massive estrogen mimics out there in beauty products and foods in plastics, and so all of a sudden the a girl's cycle is starting earlier, which

is interesting because it does make you wonder how, if actually the brain is catching up with this new earlier menstrual cycle.

Whole nother book, whole nother discussion. But then that means women are going into menopause earlier. So we're starting to see women going into menopause in their early forties, mid forties. Well, the average time to go into menopause is 52. So this is not great for us to move this whole menstrual cycle to an earlier age. This is a toxic environmental byproduct that is, we should all be worried about. Now as far as our grandmothers and our mothers, I spent a lot of time actually talking to my mom as I wrote this book. And, you know, and I, and actually two of the collaborative editors on this book were, one of 'em was 10 years older than me.

And so I spent a lot of time talking with her about this book. And the messaging around menopause has rapidly changed for our mothers and grandmothers. You didn't talk about it. You didn't talk about it. I don't ever remember my mom being like, I'm in menopause. I can actually track and think about it now of these times that I'm like. Yeah, God. Like when I got married I could, I could think about some of her attitudes and I'm like, yeah, I think she was probably in menopause. My grandmother definitely didn't talk about it. So those women suffered in silence and then as little as like three years ago, four years ago. We started talking about it and in the last three to four years we've been talking as a culture about menopause, but I don't think it's doing women good.

I think we have gone from a cultural hush to cultural chaos, and this is why I put this book out because what I'm really concerned about is we're throwing more half tos at women now. I got a long list of half tos that I've gotta do through this turbulent neurochemical change in my body. I just spent the last 40 some years playing by society's rules and now I've gotta eat more protein and I've gotta lift more weights and I've gotta find the right OB to get me the right HRT, and I've gotta make sure that I've got all, you know, that I'm testing for my heart and my brain. It's overwhelming, and I think we need to have some kind of better conversation about what's going on. That's why the brain was such a powerful one for me. It's like what is going on is you are redefining yourself and your body and your brain is preparing you for a new role in life, and that is what's going on.

So why, you know that new role? Maybe you will decide to be a bodybuilder and maybe you need to eat more protein and lift more weights. Maybe you'll go back to work and decide to have a new career. Maybe I'm hearing a lot of women that are like, peace out. I'm going to another country. I'm gonna go live by myself. But that didn't happen for our mom and grandma. That didn't happen in another, they just sat quietly, obediently paying attention to what society taught them, making sure they didn't rock the boat. But this generation of menopausal women are rocking the boat and, and it's just chaos out there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's got me thinking about a six Flags boat ride that we, that we used to get on.

What I found to be my personal favorite when it comes to red light therapy, and I actually keep this device right on the arm of my couch at all times. It's a portable device and it's designed by an incredible physician and inventor, Dr. Vivian Chen, and it's registered with the FDA and it provides both red light therapy and near infrared light therapy in one device without the damaging UV rays. The wavelengths and radiance have been verified in third party labs and it meets the IEC safety standards for electrical and EMF safety. It's literally the Swiss Army knife of red light devices. It's lightweight, it's portable. I actually have mine right here, and again, it's portable. This is always on the arm of my couch and I travel with this as well.

It's great for post-workout recovery for my son who plays AAU basketball. Host game, so we got a lot of uses for it when we're traveling as well. But again, it's great for skin health and so many other applications that we've already covered. Again, if we're talking about an aspect of the human body and a certain treatment that we want to undertake. We gotta understand certain things can be just a few minutes, a couple times a week. Certain other things can take months of consistent use to see notable difference. But truly, there is nothing else like the Lume box. The Lume Box is the very best red light therapy device. Again, it's like a Swiss Army knife. Super easy to use. And Dr. Vivian Chen, the inventor and incredible physician as well. She's also one of the most intelligent, most insightful, and also most generous people that I've ever met. She's absolutely amazing, and she shared with me that for my family, my friends and my community, she's going to be giving.

\$260 off of the loom box, so you can grab your own loom box right now by going to thelumebox.com/model. That's T-H-E-L-U-M-E-B-O-X.com/model and you're going to automatically receive the Shawn model code that will get you \$260 off. It's an incredible opportunity, again, to own your very own science-backed red light therapy device. Head over to thelumebox.com/model.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It tends to swing from one extreme to the other.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Well said. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so we wanna find that boat. We wanna find a good rhythm.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Have some smooth sailing. Take place.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, you being in this field and being a leader in this field, we're talking decades of experience, but also talking about these issues in a, in a very widespread way. And now again, it is wonderful that so many other voices are getting involved. It's important, but we've gotta have a place of peace and clarity.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And just slow down, pump the brakes a little bit. Yes. And like, let's zoom out and look at things.

DR. MINDY PELZ: I love that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And then also we can zoom in on little bits and pieces.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But, and this is one of the great things about the book, is that we have this broader understanding, and you keep going back to this, I would say it's a mindset piece, but it's just directing us to something that is so real and timeless. And in particular, you know, and, and bringing to light the grandmother hypothesis. Right? Yeah. And understanding that this isn't the end.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is the beginning of a chapter that can be your best chapter.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's talk about that a little bit.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. So there was one statistic that really prompted this whole book, and it was a statistic I saw about seven years ago. And it was that the most common time for a woman to commit is between 45 and 55. When I first saw that statistic, I was like, that's a, that's a mistake. Like that woman has a family. That woman has a career. Like why would a woman wanna kill herself at 47 years old? Like she has an established life. And so I started to follow that, those breadcrumbs, which led me to the next statistic that I learned, which is if a woman's lucky, she will spend 42.5% of her life post reproductively.

Okay. Like you don't have, men don't have a whole organ system that shuts down and you continue on living. Like think about it, if an organ system shuts down, usually pretty much the body, the, that system's gonna die. And for every other mammal, that is the truth. Except for humans. We live the longest post reproductively. So that led me to try to understand why the body would do that. And that's when I found the grandmother hypothesis. And I always have to point out that the grandmother hypothesis is not about turning everybody into grandmothers. It is about doing what I did with fasting, which is going back to the primal years and going, how was the body designed?

We know it was designed to live past its menopausal time. So how did they treat those grandmothers back in the hunter and gatherer days? Well, find out that those grandmothers became leaders of the culture. And what happened in cave life was that the healthy, strong men and probably some of the strong female teenagers, maybe even some of the strong grandmothers would go off to get a big animal kill. They came back with a kill 3% of the time, which is one day outta 30. That's not enough for the clan to survive. So while they were gone back at the cave was the pregnant woman, the nursing woman, babies, people who couldn't go out and hunt for food. So the who ha, who took care of her, who fed her, the grandmother.

So every morning the grandmothers would gather around the tribe and they would go off for seven hour treks every single day. And they would start to forage for food and bring food back to the tribe so they could feed the fertile mom, the mom growing a baby, the little kids, and feed herself while everybody sat back and waited for the big animal kill to come home. So it was the grandmother who silently hung out, taking care of everybody, making sure that she had, that everybody was well fed. So the brain that needed to rewire itself to do that job is still in us today. So the grandmother hypothesis is like a little peek into how we were designed, just like the, we solved the weight loss problem by introducing the concept of intermittent fasting.

We started to show that, oh, you have two, two metabolisms here. So that was from looking at the primal evolutionary biology. Why aren't we doing the same with menopause? So when I went back and looked at that, I was like, wait a second. There is a huge design change that's happening. There is a movement of this woman going into a place of leadership, but that's not how we look at it in our culture.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. You said two metabolisms, just for people who aren't familiar with this.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. I'm sorry. I know I'm picking up our last conversation.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: We have a sugar burner metabolism that gets activated when we eat food and we have a fat burner metabolism that gets activated when we fast. And when you learn how to metabolically switch between those two, then all of a sudden you start dropping weight more efficiently, combined with a good diet, of course. But it's, you know, what I saw with fasting and the millions of women that started fasting like a girl, was that was the key because they were failing at every diet and then they just took their diet that they liked the best, and they paired it to a 15 hour fasting window because they tapped into this other metabolism, and now they, now they're dropping weight.

SHAWN STEVENSON: One of the obvious things, or maybe not so obvious, but you're covering a lot of bases in this book. But one of the things that you're really known for is that nutritional expertise and advice, and I wanna ask you about this. You have these categories you talk about estrogen's girl gang.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right. And so one of these has to do with glucose and this relationship with menopause, with metabolic health as well. So can we talk a little bit about some of estrogen's? Girl Gang, let's talk about glucose. And you talk about some deficiency symptoms. And you also talk about some lifestyle tools as well.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. So I like to make everything fun. Like why? You know, like the first time I learned hormones, I started to look at the, like a Dutch test. The first time I read a Dutch test, I was like, this is so boring. Why don't, if we just change the names of all these hormones and molecules, people would understand them better. And so I started to change 'em just within my own clinic. So I look at estrogen as not acting alone. Estrogen is definitely the diva of all hormones. She's the queen. She shows up and everybody's like, oh, she's here. She's gonna release an egg. She's gonna stimulate the brain. She's gonna help make sure that the neurochemical system is okay.

And every month that a woman has a cycle and estrogen comes roaring in all these, the body behaves and the brain behaves. But she didn't do it alone. She had a whole crew that she

stimulated, and that crew is what I call estrogen's girl gang. And in it are these really important neurochemicals and we can get into this like dopamine and serotonin and oxytocin, estrogen stimulated all of those. But what, to your question that is really interesting to my fasting brain and all these women that wanna lose weight as they go through menopause, is what's not being taught enough is that when estrogen started to go away, all of a sudden that whole metabolic system changed. Your body becomes less sensitive to glucose and insulin.

So let me make this really practical. That meal you ate at 25 over and over again, maybe it was the pizza and beer night at 10 o'clock that you did. If you try that at 45, you will gain weight so fast. Because estrogen, as she declines, change the way glucose and insulin operate in our body. That's huge. You and I were talking about YouTube, I don't know if you have this on your YouTube channel, but there are certain topics that everybody wants me to keep talking about. And the one that everybody wants me to keep talking about is menopausal belly fat. And that is not because you're cursed. That is because estrogen started to decline and you became more insulin resistant and nobody gave you the memo.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So now if you're 45, you have a couple options. You one, well, one option is you could live with the weight. You could just be like, okay, this is who I am. Now the second option is you can clean up your food system, which I think you and I would both strongly agree. Yes, you should do that, get off the ultra processed foods. But the third option, and the one I'm bringing forward so loudly in this book is you've got, now you have to fast. This where fasting might've been an option before, not an option. Once you start to go into the menopausal years, because you are moving into decade after decade of more insulin resistance, because as estrogen goes down, you're gonna become less insulin sensitive.

So what's in your toolbox? How are you gonna help that moment? And unfortunately what women do is we don't think it's something else out there. We think it's our fault. So we start thinking, I didn't, I didn't, I'm, I must be undisciplined. I didn't get the right diet. I must, there's, I'm not exercising.

And we start to think that the weight gain is our fault. But again, you didn't get the memo. The memo is estrogen helped you become insulin sensitive, and she left the building. And when she left, she took insulin with her. And now when you eat, you have all this glucose rolling around in your system and your body doesn't know where to put it, so it put it in fat.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So why specifically does fasting help with menopause related weight gain?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah, so what fasting does is, let's say, let's use an example that people can understand. Let's say you sit down on a Tuesday and you eat a hamburger and fries. And all of a sudden you don't exercise, you don't move to use that all that glucose that came from a hamburger fries, we'll throw a milkshake in there, and a milkshake in there, and you have all this glucose in your system. When you were in your younger years, what would happen is that insulin would be released from the pancreas and insulin would look at all these glucose molecules and say, you know what?

I'm gonna help move you into the cell so you can energize these cells. I'm gonna make sure that you do your job here. There's a lot of you, but it's okay. I'm gonna get you into the cell so you get activated. That's what your younger self did. When you moved into menopause, what happens is you have this huge meal, but the pancreas is not getting the message it needs to actually make more insulin.

So you have all this glucose swimming around in your system. This is Alzheimer's, this is, where's that glucose going? Going up into the brain. It's going around the belly. It's going in the back of the arms. It's going in your face. It's going everywhere because the body doesn't know how to use it. So when you fast, what you're telling your body is, Hey, there's no glucose coming in here for a little while, so you're gonna need to go find what you stored years ago, or what you stored three days ago. So it's a way of accessing and training the body to go after this storage area of all this extra glucose.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It's, and it's free.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's free too. It's something to not do.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. And also, you know, there's so much science on this now, again, this has been known for decades. But now it's just a big part of the health conversation if you wanna improve insulin sensitivity.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. I mean, because what you're doing is you're giving your body, your metabolic system a break from the influx of glucose. And you're, you're nudging it and saying, Hey, so I need you to go figure out how to burn fat. I need you to figure out where you stored all the extra glucose that I gave you over the last 30 years. And so it's like a, you're sending a message to your metabolic system to switch. Switch over to fat burning and start to use that excess in a new way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Love this. So we talked about glucose, another member of estrogen's, girl gang, you said earlier. Dopamine.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Dopamine, yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's talk about that one.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. So, it's so fascinating to me that estrogen stimulates dopamine because check this out, dopamine, estrogen hits her peak during ovulation. So why would we need dopamine then? Like, why, you know, like why would the body all of a sudden then have a high dose of dopamine? Well, we wouldn't be sitting here if a whole bunch of people didn't decide to reproduce.

And so there needs to be motivation that kicks in so that we can actually feel motivated to go and actually want to reproduce so that the species stays alive. So estrogen and dopamine have this very intimate experience with each other. Wherever she came, dopamine went. Now dopamine is motivation and one of the things that I noticed when I, in my clinic, was all these women coming in, very, very successful women, really in shape.

Women that were like, I don't feel like working out anymore. I'm not gonna clean my house. I used to be a neat freak, not a neat freak anymore. I don't wanna drive the kids everywhere now. I don't wanna be like climbing the corporate ladder and also be at home trying to take care of my family. Something's happened to my motivation, and that's when I started to study this connection. And when estrogen drops, so does dopamine. And when dopamine drops, your motivation starts to drop. Your moods can drop too. And all of a sudden, lethargy kicks in. Now all you gotta do is listen to that comment, go to Instagram and you will see meme after meme after meme, just saying, with these women, they're like, I can't do it anymore. Well, a big part of that was because dopamine dropped. So your motivation molecule is not hanging around as much. So in the book I talk about, if you want your motivation back, you're gonna need to find very creative ways to bring dopamine back into the picture.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Like what is some bits and things?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Well, okay, so dopamine loves novelty.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Now I spent a lot, I spent a really long time trying to understand what's the difference between novelty and new. Do you know the difference?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Fancy word.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So novelty is something unexpected. So you do something new. That's, that feels very unexpected.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So it's, it's new and it has some uncertainty.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It has some uncertainty in it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So what I taught my patients to do, and I'll tell you a story about what I'm doing right now, is women, when they go into menopause, need to go and seek new activities. Go learn something new, change your routine up, change your look. Maybe you're gonna cut your hair short or decide you're gonna do something completely different to bring dopamine back. And that will actually energize you. And if it's something that's a little unexpected, then you get that extra burst of novelty and all of a sudden dopamine comes in. Here's what I did. I started, we didn't talk about this. I started learning how to surf. And so I live in Santa Cruz right now.

I was pushed out of LA because of the fires, and so I hunkered down in Santa Cruz and one of my neighbors is a 52-year-old woman who's been surfing and she said, Hey, you should come with me to go surf one day. And so I went out there one day, completely suck at it. Do you surf?

SHAWN STEVENSON: No, I don't, no.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It's really hard. So I go out there, first day, everything is new. I don't know the people out there. I don't know how to catch a wave I don't need, you know, I kept not even thinking about standing up. The whole experience is new and I suck at it, which was important. And I came home that day and my husband looked at me and he goes, why are you smiling? And I'm like, that was so fun. I don't know what goes down in the ocean out there, but you get tossed around and I'm paddling, I'm using my body trying to get to the waves. There's so much to learn. And so I just kept going out and kept going out. I've been doing it for about two months now.

I go out every day that I'm in town and every day is new. Every day is a new wave set. Every day is a new pack of people in the lineup. Some days I can catch a wave, some days I can't. But I always, every single time come out happier. And I was trying to understand why is this thing that I suck out, suck at making me happy? And it's because it's novel.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm-hmm.

DR. MINDY PELZ: And it's a completely different thing than the days I was seeing patients at 7:30 in the morning or the days that I was driving kids to school at 7:30 in the morning. Now I'm out doing something completely different at 7:30 in the morning. And that's bringing dopamine back in.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is, I love this. It's so smart. But it's also, if you think about that change. And it's a, it's a change in your roles. It's like giving yourself permission to attune to your nature. Which is like, right now, I'm transitioning, I'm changing. Let me give myself permission to change and do some things differently.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? Just like, and there's so many, there's so many things. It's like, you know, of course it's like the tale of two cities, the best of times, the worst of times. But one of the best things about today, if we have, we have more access.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yes, we do.

SHAWN STEVENSON: To novel experiences. And you might find that thing that you fall in love with.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. Yeah. And it's, I've been, I, this might be one of the, my more favorite parts of the book because I watched so many women come in and they're just like, I'm depressed, I'm bored. I don't, nothing in my life is giving me joy. Well, you're gonna need to mix your life up. And I'm not saying like, blow up your marriage or leave your career.

How about you try something new so you can bring dopamine back into the equation? And I was actually sharing this with one of my closest friends who I've known forever. I was sharing what I had found on dopamine and estrogen, and she's about three years older than me. And one day she calls me up and she's like, Hey, guess where I am? I'm like, where are you? She goes, I'm on my way to Lake Tahoe. I hired a fly fishing guide and I'm gonna go learn how to fly fish for the next two, two days. And I said, I didn't know you liked fly fishing. She goes, I didn't either, but I read about it in a book and I heard you talk about how I should be doing novel activities.

And so I thought I'd go give it a try. Well, oh my God, after two days she called me, she was buzzing. She's like, same thing. I sucked at it, but I was out in nature and I learned something new and I had a new experience. So let's put that in context of what's happening in the culture right now, where people, women are like, I'm depressed, I'm unmotivated, I'm irritable. Maybe it's time to change. Maybe we need to mix it up. Maybe a new version of you is trying to emerge. Maybe something you wanted to always do as a child you can actually have time to do now. And when you do that, you bring dopamine back in and all of a sudden you start to feel happy and motivated again.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So let's go to another one of Estrogen's, girl Gang. And you, we've got so much of this mapped out, illustrated in the book, but I want to ask you about creatine.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah, let's talk about this one. Well, so another thing I saw in my clinic was all these type A women that were pushing themselves working out, and they would come in with these injuries. Like they would come like limping in the front door of my office. And I would always say to them, have you thought about cross training? Have you thought about resting? And if you tell like a type A like motivated woman that she should rest, like that's the worst thing you can say. So these.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The audacity?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah, the aud, what do you mean take a day off? I don't even know what you're talking about. And, but it was happening literally to a subset of women in my practice,

and that subset was the high achieving overworker outer that was in her late forties. So I started to look into what's going on with the musculoskeletal system.

Well, estrogen, once again, stimulated collagen and creatine. So when estrogen goes away. You don't, you don't have as much collagen and creatine in your natural system. So you have two options. You can change how you work out, which I do recommend. I don't, I'm not a fan of Spartan racing or CrossFitting for postmenopausal women. I think it can be a little hard on our joints. But that's a personal preference. But what I do think women should start to do is actually supplement in with collagen and creatine. Now creatine is interesting because the research is now showing it's not just for muscles, it's also for the brain. And you've got a brain that's rewiring itself and it could use as much nourishment as possible.

So adding in creatine every single day, it's not only gonna give you that muscle power, but is gonna really help with your brain power in general. But again, you know, if I'm looking at Instagram, I'm just seeing all these people doing creatine, but I don't really understand why. And it's because when estrogen started to decline, she took creatine with her. She's not stimulating creatine, so that's why. Makes sense, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So it, this isn't creatine's, not just a fad, a nutritional fad. It is a nutritional necessity for the postmenopausal woman.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's a bar right there. That is a bar. Alright, I'll ask you about one more. I wanna ask you about BDNF.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. So BDNF is brain fertilizer and it helps with cognition. Cognition is your ability to hold on to new information. So another trend I saw a lot in my clinic and I experienced with myself was women who no longer decide wanted to read. And when I asked my patients, why don't you read anymore? They said, well, I can't keep my focus on the book and I can't seem to hold the information in.

So when I looked into what does estrogen stimulate when it comes to cognition, I found so much research showing that estrogen stimulated this miracle grow. It's like a steroid that goes into the brain and it makes the neurons really ready to hold onto new information. So anytime you wanna learn something new, you need BDNF in your system and estrogen brought her along and now estrogen's gone.

So you don't have as much BDNF. So your ability to hold onto new information goes down, but we're back at your lifestyle. You can bring BDNF back in and one of the ways you bring it back in that I love is weightlifting. So we're now, we're killing two birds with one stone. Let me lift some really heavy weights, which is considered definitely a, a crucial part of the menopausal experience is to start lifting heavy weights. But the brain component of that, that's not being discussed, is that when I break down muscle. There is a metabolite that gets released that goes up into my brain and tells my brain to make BDNF. Now you also can get BDNF from fasting. So we're back at why should menopausal women fast? One of the reasons is to get yourself some BDNF because estrogen's not stimulating her anymore.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ooh. So there's, it's like checking multiple boxes.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Fasting and lifting weights.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Those two things. You're talking about those myokines. You got it right just from the muscle contraction. And this relationship with BDNF is so fascinating. This speaks to another thing you cover in the book, which I was so happy to see why our ancestors rates of Alzheimer's was incredibly rare.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It was incredibly rare to find Alzheimer's, whereas today, this is, now, it's right around, it's like number six, number five or six.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Leading cause of death in the United States. It's one of these.

Unbelievably, like at this point to say it's a silent epidemic is crazy because again, it's so high on this list of issues that are ending our lives, but it is a, it is a long suffering involved in this as well.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. And for everybody of involved, not just the person, the people around too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so with this relationship with BDNF, that's, I would, I would assume is gonna be a part of this that you focus on with this section was called Primal Memory.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But outside of the nutrition domain, which we're gonna, of course we'll talk more about that, but you talked about some knowledge sharing practices.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Can you talk about that a little bit?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. Thank you for pointing that out because this is one I really wanna bring back into the culture. So if we look at the daily habits of our primal ancestors, the grandmothers. And, in the book I talk about an interview I did with an anthropologist who's a champion of the grandmother hypothesis.

Her name is Kristen Hawks. And we, she actually lived with a modern day tribe called the Hadza Tribe in Tanzania and watched their whole lifestyle. So to say that the grandmother hypothesis we were living longer than they did in the hunter gatherer days is a small part of that conversation. 'Cause Kristen's lived with all these grandmothers who are, who are living into their eighties and nineties in this track.

What happened every single day. Every single day, the grandmothers gathered to go out and forage for food, so they went into community. They had a purpose. Okay, what are the neurochemicals that they stimulated? Just from those two things, they stimulated dopamine, serotonin, and oxytocin. Three members of the girl gang that they actually every day gathered with these women to go out and forage for food.

Then when they got the food. They came back and what they did is they sat tubers are a big part of what they forged for, which is sweet potatoes, hickma, sunchokes are my, one of my favorite tubers. And they came home and they peeled the tubers and started to boil them to prepare them for eating. In that actual process, what they were doing is storytelling and sharing knowledge to all the little kids in the tribe who wanted to hear what their stories of their younger life. Okay. That sounds like a very sweet little grandmotherly experience, but let's unpack it neurochemically. When the grandmother is sharing a story, she is actually making her brain secrete acetylcholine.

Acetylcholine is a member of the Girl Gang. So I don't know about if your mom's still alive. My mom's 86, she tells the same goddamn story, over, and over, and over again. And for until I understood acetylcholine, I was like, oh God, she's got like 12 stories. It's all she tells are these same 12. But what I realize now is that every time she told that story, she was having to dip into the hippocampus to find that memory. She was having to make sure that she secreted enough acetylcholine, which is the neurotransmitter that helped her go grab that memory. And when we were little and she told that story, she was actually, and this is a really cool part of the grandmother hypothesis, her sophisticated language. Which is more sophisticated than a five-year-old when she was using words that five-year-old brain hadn't heard, that five-year-old brain was starting to grow.

So when we look at knowledge sharing, this is something we have to bring back into our culture. We have to look at our wise elders and say, teach us. Talk to us. Tell us how it used to be. What did you learn? And in doing that, we are helping their brains. We're helping them start to stimulate the part of the brain that Beco turns, you know, plaquey and goes into an Alzheimer's state.

We're also causing that brain to actually stimulate acetylcholine. We're also in this knowledge sharing, helping develop the young brain who's learning a more sophisticated language. Nowadays, knowledge sharing happens on the phone, knowledge sharing happens on the tv. Why are we not having knowledge sharing happen within families? And if we bring that knowledge sharing back, everybody wins. But especially the menopausal woman, because she's now having to share a story with you because she wants to. But there's a neurochemical upside, neurochemicals that she lost when estrogen went away and it keeps her brain sharp.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh my gosh, this, I love this. I love this.

Have you noticed that a lot of skincare products are now adding green tea extract to their ingredients and for good reason? A review of 20 studies published in the Journal Skin Med revealed that green tea is effective in reducing acne dermatitis, warts, keloids, rosacea, and many other skin issues. This is incredible, but the biggest benefits were seen when green tea is consumed versus being utilized topically. And the very best source of green tea is matcha green tea. Now matcha is out here heavy in the streets. People are becoming matcha, girly, matcha boys. Alright? But the traditional matcha is being distorted a little bit.

It's being Frankenstein up a little bit, but the traditional matcha is absolutely overflowing with unique benefits, including benefits for our skin health. Now here's the rub. There's a ton of different pseudo matcha out there, low quality matcha. And for myself personally, there's only one matcha that I drink and is quadruple toxin screened for purity and is 35% higher in L-theanine, which is clinically proven to help to reduce.

Stress induced skin irritation, absolutely amazing. The only matcha that I drink is the Sun Goddess Matcha from Pique Life. Head over to piquelife.com/model and you're going to receive up to 20% off their phenomenal Sun Goddess Matcha plus all their other award-winning tees. And in addition to up to 20% off, you're also gonna get access to a free starter kit that includes an electric frother.

Now I'm about that froth life. I use my frother every single day. And to top it all off, you get to try Pique Tees risk free with their 90 day money back guarantee. So again, head over there,

check them out, piquelife.com/model. That's P-I-Q-U-E-L-I-F e.com/model for up to 20% off. Plus some other amazing bonuses. This is the real matcha. This is what matcha was always meant to be. Nothing added, no preservatives, no funky sugars, no artificial sweeteners, just the very best matcha green tea in the world. Head over there, check 'em out. Piquelife.com/model for up to 20% off. And now back to the show.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It, just, again, it makes so much sense. It's just being who we are, you know? And obviously we're living in an environment where those types of behaviors are becoming more and more endangered.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Oh, so well said.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And we have the ability to, and what's so important about this is that our lives depend on it.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Our species depends on it.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Absolutely.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And

DR. MINDY PELZ: yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Simply acknowledging and make, and we culturally normalize grandparents, our elders being able to share their story, be able to share their experience, be able to share. Wisdom.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. Wise counsel. Yep. And value that. Unfortunately, we're kind of trapped in this matrix of valuing stuff that is petty, you know?

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Just like all this superficial stuff. We need this, it's gonna help us to be more resilient against that petty, superficial stuff.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yes, yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. So I love that you brought this. Incredible feedback loop. You know this circle of life because it's helping the children to develop their brain.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Their vocabulary, that's their insights, but also the power of those stories. Yeah, the power of the wisdom from somebody who's been through stuff and figured some things out, that's priceless.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right. I even found some really interesting research that showed that they think our sophistication of our language, which is kind of funny because I don't think of our language as sophisticated, but if you go back to the hunter and gatherer days, they probably were very simple in how they spoke to each other.

You know, language had to develop at some point somewhere along the human evolutionary path. And they are actually saying that our ability to communicate right now with the level of language skills that we have actually was because of the grandmother. Because what she did is she took her more sophisticated language, her more sophisticated experience of life, and while she was cooking, she turned around and she taught, told those stories to her, the children that would listen, and it grew their brains and everybody had a neurochemical experience that was beneficial for their brain development.

We don't, now we're like, oh, I'm gonna make dinner. I'm gonna put the TV on. You know how many, like when my, when my parents come over, they're 89 and 86, when they come over to our house, phones go down, TV goes off and we're playing games. We're communicating. And

now whenever they tell a story, I ask more questions because I know if I can ask more questions, I'm forcing their brain to exercise going into that memory bank.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So we've really, that family unit

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Is really important. And understanding how to lean into our wise elders is more crucial now, I think, than ever.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh wow. Wow. Wow. Just thinking about the experience with my grandmother, you know, and just even my first recollection of writing, you know, just being able to, like, she had this, gave me this Garfield like writing book to like learn how to do my letters and things like that. And also just she had this, uh, ability to create magic, like magical moments. Right. And I remember conversations, you know, later on, like my mom was like, my, my mom said this to me about her mom. Like she wasn't like this when she was my mom. Right.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Oh, right. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And it's just that evolution as well of being able to do certain things differently than you might have done previously. Right. And so that's a, one of the greatest benefits with grandparents is like they are expert lovers.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, they have this ability to, um, express this, this, this. Feeling of joy and truly see the child. Right. Whereas like, again, it's not intentional with parents, especially today. Like it's just a lot going on. So it might not see like really feel seen.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Grandparents have this ability to make you feel seen. Make you, you feel like you matter. Not that parents don't, but it's just like this extra. Capability.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If that makes sense. Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. And if you look, pull behind the scenes, the neurochemical changes that are happening and everybody, as that connection is going on, you would no longer think it's a waste of time to hang out with anybody that's older than you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It's like, and that's why I love this idea of storytelling. Like we just don't, we've lost the artist storytelling. We've, we've handed it over to tv, we've handed it over to movies. But there's something really magical when you're, when you're deep in conversation about telling stories of different ways in which life taught you something. That's where we all start to learn. But that's where there's this massive neurochemical shift going on in the body, and we just don't give it enough credit.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Oh, so good. Alright, I wanna ask you about this, because aging like a girl is very different today and this is what one of the things you're highlighting and, and creating a roadmap so that this becomes, again, normalized. Part of this disruption, part of this turbulence, part of this complexity is highlighted in a section of the book you titled, the Toxic Dump of Menopause.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Please talk about that.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. And I so appreciate that you are pulling that out. It's one that needs to be discussed. So, hopefully everybody knows we live in the most toxic time in human history and the toxic barrage, whether it's from air pollution or pesticides or dyes in our food

or plastics that are wrapped around our food, all of that, your body has to understand what to do with. And so the liver filters it, but because the barrage of toxins is so great, there's a point at which it can't do that. So what it does is it starts to store all those toxins in the body. Well, one of the most difficult types of toxins for the human body to get rid of is, are heavy metals 'cause they're heavy.

So the body to can't, doesn't can't ex get 'em out as easily as plastics. So it stores those in tissues, mostly the brain, but also largely in bone. Now, this one's really interesting because lead especially gets stored in bone. And when you go into your perimenopausal years and estrogen goes up one day and then she drops down the next, and then she's up, and then she's down. That's the natural progression of estrogen's exit. She's up, she's down, she's up, she's down. That wild ride, she goes on actually triggers these toxins that are in our bones, in our muscles, in our fat, in our brain to come out into the bloodstream. And when they come out into the bloodstream, usually where they'll get recirculated back into is the place where you have the most fat.

And one of the places we have the most fat is the brain. So those toxins start to go up into the brain and they start to create the memory loss, the mood challenges. They also go to the gut and they'll affect serotonin production. So what I, why I wanted to put that in there is my whole practice, like at the last 10 years of my practice was like 90% of it was detox. Because all these women that were coming to me in perimenopause that were like depressed and anxious and irritable and losing their memory, we would test their toxic load. Nine outta 10 times, their toxins were so high, and when you detox them, the mood came back. The memory came back, the vitality came back.

So it's a part of the menopause conversation that really needs to be discussed because you don't know it's there until estrogen went on our wild ride and then all those toxins came out. And then, so like, I'll use myself as an example. My biggest heavy metal was lead. And so all of a sudden at 43, I was skinny. I was becoming so forgetful. I was in the middle of conversations at 43 and I'm like, I don't know what we're talking about. And when I went to go test my heavy metals, my lead was through the roof and I detoxed lead. And literally as I got the lead out, like I stopped saying, I stopped saying, what were we talking about?

I stopped looking for my keys. I knew where they were all the time. All of that memory and mood challenge, all of that went away when I detoxed the lead. And so we're like storage containers. We're holding onto all these toxins, and this massive hormonal shift is dumping that all out. And those toxins are all going up into the brain. And we're not talking about the detox. That's why I put it like the toxic dump of menopause is serious and it's real and it needs to be addressed. And the last thing I'll say on it is that remember, cells have receptor sites. So if I'm 45 years old and I'm taking hormone replacement therapy, trying to push these hormones into my cells so they can activate them, if I've got lead and mercury and arsenic and thallium, by the way, thallium causes hair loss.

Big reason why women are losing their hair as they go through this process. Thallium is a byproduct of secondhand smoke. And so all of a sudden all these toxins are coming out. They're sticking in those receptor sites and now your HR T's not working. Your thyroid medication's not working 'cause there's no entry point for those hormones to get into the cell because they're blocked by toxins. Does, does that make sense?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course. Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: It's crazy. I mean, my clinic became, up until the end, it became literally a detox clinic for perimenopausal women. And I watched so many women's personality change memory come back because they went into a detox program and started to work with this, with all these heavy metals.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Obviously this has levels of complexity and reach.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But are there some simple things that people can do just to again, help the process a little bit. You started off by saying. You know, we think most people know we live at the most toxic time. No, most people, they don't think about it.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: They, we are just in it. I hope we're just swimming in.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That we're talking billions. I almost said thousands, billions and billions of tons of newly invented chemicals every single year. Just like we're swimming in this stuff at this point. It is a very different environment, so I don't think people really understand.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And oftentimes don't relate their manifestations of different health issues to that exposure. And so with that being said, what are some things that people can implement, consider maybe on a regular basis or semi-regular basis to help their body's detoxification pathways because our bodies are very good at figuring stuff out.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. They are.

SHAWN STEVENSON: If we give it the conditions and ability to do. So can you share.

DR. MINDY PELZ: So, okay, so this the free, let's start with the free stuff because detox can get crazy. You wanna make sure your detox pathways are open. So are you sweating every day? Are, are you improving circulation every day? Are you walking every day or moving? So your circulation is going. Are you going to the bathroom every day? You need to have a bowel movement every day. So we need to make sure that you're just naturally getting rid. Your body can get rid of those toxins. A trick I always tell women is look at your armpit and look to see, do you have a pit or a puff?

Because it should be a pit. It's not supposed to be puffy outwards. If it's puffy outwards, that's stagnant lymph, that's a lymph pathway that is not detoxing toxins outta breasts. So you really, you wanna get a loofah when you're in the shower and you wanna make sure you're really working on armpits, inguinal area, your gut. You can take a loofah and go over the top of your gut, the, you go for walks, sweat. Sleep is also another form of detox. Our brain

actually shrinks at night so the cerebral spinal fluid can come up and wash the brain and get rid of toxins. So you need to prioritize sleep. So those are, those are free things to do.

The second part that I would say for menopausal women specifically, you gotta go look at your beauty products. You gotta, you gotta understand if those are endocrine disruptors. And there's great apps out right now, like there's a Think dirty app, it's a cute name, and you can scan all your products and you can see if they're toxic or not. So get rid of your, the toxic beauty products, other simple things, you know, get off the plastic water bottles, turn towards to more towards glass. You know, obviously those kind of things are, are pretty simple. Then we get into, do you, do you eat fish?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I do. Yeah.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. The, so fish is an interesting one because our waters are polluted.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It's complex.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. And so I can even tell you for myself, 'cause I've been doing a lot of blood work this year, I started to bring tuna back into my diet and my mercury levels started to go back up. And so I, that's part of why I was detoxing this morning is I gotta get those out. But it's, it's, it's a bummer 'cause I really like tuna. But know the foods that have more heavy metals in them. So there's an awareness there. And then there's all kinds of detox treatments. Everything from carella you can get is an easy binder. You want things that combine to these toxins activated charcoal, you know, is amazing. Take two activated charcoal before you go to bed so you, so it can hold on to all those toxins while you're sleeping.

And then from there you can, you can go crazy and I mean, what I did this morning was an IV detox so people who are really into detoxing can go that direction. But what, what I found in my clinic is that most people aren't aware of this toxic dump. And it's, it's there a lot of women, and I think this is, this is a really important one to talk about because I don't think we're talking about it enough in the zeitgeist, is what do you do with the woman who tries HRT and she doesn't get a result?

She's not feeling better. Well, is it possible her toxic load is so high and she needs to go through some detoxing and then get back on that HRT.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm. Right.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Those are like the nuances that we need to start talking about.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right. We tend to just go all in on one thing.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Instead of looking, again, this is a very complex and unifying body.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What are the basic principles of health and performance and just all this stuff working together, doing the stuff it already knows what to do.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's check those boxes, make sure that they're checked.

DR. MINDY PELZ: That's right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And coupled with our new innovations and or before we get into anything new, right? So listen. Oh my goodness. I could talk to you forever. You know, we, we love this.

DR. MINDY PELZ: I know, I love chatting with you. I love hanging out with you. I know.

SHAWN STEVENSON: There's so many incredible things in this book. Outside of that, you know, some of the other things that you talk about, exercise the menopause way, reclaiming your mood. What is the neurochemical state of freedom? What are some ways to embrace and enhance this? But in closing, in this conversation, I want to ask you about, you've got a couple of appendices here.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Ooh, thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And this one is a man's guide to supporting the woman you love through menopause. Please talk about that.

DR. MINDY PELZ: What'd you think of it?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I mean. We don't get a manual on this stuff either.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know? Yeah. And I've got many stories now of people in my life, who have been with their significant other through this transition. And one of them sat right there in that chair and he said, like, I don't, I don't know who she was.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, like I just kept on loving her through it, but, you know, she seemed like a different person from day to day.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah. Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And, you know, just to have some acknowledgement and guidance on our part, I think it is priceless. It's invaluable. One of the other things that you shared. The book was this staggering statistic about divorce during menopause. And you know, a lot of people, again, we're just walking into this blind. We have no idea that this is going on or this might be a key reason or foundation on what's, what's happening here. And I just, I appreciate

the acknowledgement in a strange way. Because you really need the acknowledgement, women need the acknowledgement and the support. How do we do it?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's why I asked 'cause I wrote it. I wrote it to men knowing that a lot of women would read this book, find themselves, have all these ahas, and then they've tried to turn around and explain it to their husbands and would fumble. So I'm like, let me create an appendix that's written just to men so that can, a woman could just say, Hey, can you just read the appendix? And hopefully that would open up a conversation. So, that's why I wanted to know your opinion, 'cause you're a man. I wanna know like how I, the first person to read my, that appendix was my husband.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm.

DR. MINDY PELZ: I was like, how does that sit? So, a couple statistics and things we need to think about. 70% of divorces after 50 are initiated by women. Why? That's a question. I think I'm not sure we have answered yet, but something's not, I think a lot of women get to this point of their life and they're like. I don't know the, there's parts of this marriage that aren't working for me anymore. But since we haven't been talking about menopause and we haven't been talking about this transition in a positive way, then a lot of women are too embarrassed to say that certain parts of their life and the certain parts of the way that marriage works doesn't work anymore.

So the most important thing is that a woman expresses, Hey, this doesn't work for me anymore, and that a man hears her. So I'll give you an example. My, I used to not care about a clean house. I had too much on my mind. We were the house that every kid was at. So the kitchen was always dirty, and then it would clean up and it was always dirty. And I just loved having people in my house. And then I hit 50. I didn't love that anymore. I didn't like all the people in my house. It was keeping me up at night. I didn't like the mess in the kitchen. And all of a sudden my family is looking at me and my husband. They're like, what is wrong with you? And I'm having this moment of like, I told you I want that countertop clean.

And the, and to your friend's point, who are you? Where did this come from? And thank God in the research of this book, I had new language. And one of the things I would say to my whole family, but especially to my husband, and I'm, I still say it. I know I used to like, not that didn't bother me, but it bothers me now. I have changed, my brain has changed, and can we have a conversation of what it would look like to have a cleaner house. That feels so much more collaborative and open than I've told you a thousand times to not put your clutter on the countertop that shuts down the conversation. So what my husband and I have done is we use new language with each other.

I will say often, I know I used to be that way. I'm not that way anymore. And my husband, oftentimes, when we sit down to dinner, he'll say, me, say to me, tell me something new. You're discovering about yourself now. Which is a beautiful opening to like, well, I, I learned like the other night, I'll give you an example. I was coming down here to LA for a bunch of podcasts. I came by myself 'cause I didn't really need anybody with me. I think my husband was like, are you gonna be lonely? Do you need somebody? So he asked me about four times, are you okay going by yourself? You're okay going by yourself? Finally, on the fourth time, I said, can you stop asking me?

And I said, let me tell you why. My mom used to do that to me all the time. She would always make me second guess my decisions. And I just learned that the other day. I just discovered that about myself. So you're triggering that in me and I'd really ask that we, that you, I already told you, you have to. And I said to him, you have to remember, I will tell you what I want now. I am not passive aggressive. I'm not putting my sleep, my desires and sweeping them under the rug. Remember me, 56-year-old me is going to tell you every single time what she wants, so don't ask me four times in a row. And he was like, okay.

I've never heard you say that before, that was really helpful, thank you. So we do a lot of new version, old version, and. I try to express my change as positively as I can. One thing I do wanna say that I think is so important for men to hear, and I, and I really, if I could find a way to get this into every man's heart. I have sat with more friends who have left their marriages that did not want to leave their marriages. And the reason that they left was because they tried to get their husbands to understand this change they were going through, to

understand that their needs became different, that their desires were different, and their husbands were the ones that got left. Were like, I don't understand what you're going through.

Our marriage is great. Our life is great. You've changed. I don't understand what's going on. And the husband didn't come on the journey with them. And some of my friends I've sat with that were like, with tears in their eyes, they're like, I wish, I wish I could have gotten my husband to understand this change. And that is why I put an appendix, because women are not becoming this new version and then turning around and thrown a finger at their, at the men in their life. They're asking that you come on the journey with them as we're all exploring and learning this together. One, one of my favorite quotes that my husband and I use all the time is from esther Perel. Have you had her on your podcast?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I haven't. I know. I know of her word.

DR. MINDY PELZ: She's phenomenal. And she said. That most adults will fall in love two to three times in their adult life. For some adults that will be with different people and for some adults that will be with the same person. And so my husband and I, all like almost every day, talk about the new marriage that's being created, not the 30 year marriage that we've been in, but the empty nest marriage with the postmenopausal Mindy that is actually now being created and we are rebirthing the marriage in a new way. And that I think will really help save a lot of relationships if we can have that sort of attitude to it, to this.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. This is so good. This is just good for my soul. Thank you so much for sharing your voice on this. And, there was a moment. I just wish that I could have been one of those kids coming over to Mrs. Mindy. Mrs. Do they call you Miss Peltz?

DR. MINDY PELZ: No. You know what? I have a thing 'cause my husband's last name is Hall. And they call me Mrs. Hall. And I always tell them, you know what, the only people that call me Mrs. Hall is when I check into a really fancy resort and they pamper me and they call me Mrs. Hall. So if you're gonna call me Mrs. Hall, then you need to, you're gonna need to pamper me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Pamper me.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Otherwise I'm Mindy.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love it. But just because of the welcoming energy that you have and just, you're so thoughtful and insightful and I'm just grateful, like. Again, there are few times that I say this on the show, but this is one of those times. I love that quote. There's nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come. Aging like a girl, the time has come. Where can people pick up a copy?

DR. MINDY PELZ: Thank you, Shawn. I really, I really, I really appreciate that. I feel really seen in all your questions, really. It's just been beautiful, so thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Well, but you can find it anywhere. You know, you can, you can go to Amazon and all those places and age like a girl.com and we've got some giveaways. But what I'm gonna really put out there is that you support the independent bookstores. And there's two ways you can do that. You can find your local independent bookstore and you can ask them to order the book, or you can go to bookshop.org and it'll come from an independent bookstore. But we're living in a time where corporations are taking over everything and these independent bookstores, our mom and people whose livelihood belongs, you know, depends on us buying books. So if you have a good indie, buy it there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome. Great advice to end everything with.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I appreciate you so much. Can't wait to talk more.

DR. MINDY PELZ: Thank you, Shawn. Appreciate you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Of course, the one and only Doctor Mindy Pelz, everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value outta this. If you did, please share it out with somebody that you care about. Keep this conversation going and expanding. And listen, we got some amazing masterclasses and world changing, world leading experts coming your way very, very soon. Just make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.