

Lesson one, coming to your own conclusions. Now the most important goal in this entire mentorship is you developing the change in perspective to move from the mindset of treating clients to a place where you can suss out what's needed to be a great practitioner and to help teach people themselves how to do their own healing. We do this by learning, discussing, trying. No more elephants in the room.

Question every thought as to the why. Many have great knowledge that you filter through your own approach to see if it makes sense and is a good fit. I have delivered many hours of my own thoughts on how to do this, and these thoughts have a solid foundation in truths that I've personally learned along the way and I've explored with clients. You must now create your own standards for processing information to test it, to see if it meets the criteria for your growth and learning, and if it helps clients learn to achieve success by living their best lives in their own healing environment.

You know, I look back on this journey and I know that every single step along the way has been shining a light onto the art and the practice of functional medicine. Without this foundation of who you are as a practitioner, it becomes impossible to feel secure and to practice wisely. So, it is the same with dysfunction in the client. We must have a home base from which to start. So, we're going to take a few moments to recap on all of the instruction up to this point. Pulling it all together into one single space will allow you to get a bigger overview, step back to that 30,000 foot view and see the whole picture. Let's start with functional medicine.

What is functional medicine? The one major takeaway that I want you to understand about functional medicine. When you say those words, when you use this phrase, this is a concept. It is a method of practice. Functional medicine is not health care. It is life care. It helps people take care of their health on a daily basis. It puts them into their own healing environment where they stay healthy. It is so imperative that you understand this concept as you are practicing functional medicine. You know, if you look up the term for functional medicine, there are many different angles to what people believe it to be? Think about that. What does functional medicine look like to you? When we say that we are practicing functional medicine, these are definitely the core pieces. What it is, to recognizing that the body is built with the capacity to heal itself. That is the number one concept within functional medicine, that the body has the capability and the ability to heal.

We look to resolve root cause. We're not looking to treat symptoms, we are looking to and balance what is imbalanced. Functional medicine supports function in the body. Every time an organ does its job, that's a function. Every time a cofactor or an enzyme finish a process, that's a function. Functional medicine looks at the prevention of imbalance or disease. The major focus of functional medicine is on diet, lifestyle, and environment. These three things are the key components to help guide our clients from the place they are at to their healing environment. Functional medicine looks at the whole person. Sometimes coming into functional medicine, we still don't see that.

We don't understand that what is going on in the brain can influence the gut, and the gut can influence the brain. Trauma can influence the cell. These are much deeper concepts, but as important because it relates to the fact that functional medicine does view the entire body. Functional medicine also knows that each individual is unique, therefore each imbalance is unique to that person. What it is not. Well, functional medicine is not treating, is not diagnosing.

Functional medicine is not a model of conventional medicine. It is not based on developing protocols. Protocols are a method used in the model of conventional medicine. It does not look at disease only. Think about this. I've realized that these are just small words put together, but the impact behind them is significant. If we are only looking at disease, we get a new client, and we're only looking at the conditions or the symptoms. What else are we missing? We're missing their story. We're missing what function is actually happening and why.

So this is just a brief comparison of what it means to say when you are practicing functional medicine as opposed to not. Now there are very specific thoughts about the differences between conventional medicine and functional medicine. And the reason that we contrast these is not to cast conventional medicine in a bad light because truly it's an absolute must in acute and traumatic situations. And it's something that we should all feel very fortunate to have. But we're not trying to practice conventional medicine. We're trying to understand the art of functional medicine. It's completely different.

We just stated that functional medicine is not health care. It's life care. So put aside conventional medicine if your choice is to move forward into functional medicine. A couple more differences that I wanted to point out that I think are a very good way of highlighting the difference between conventional medicine and functional medicine is the source of disease. Now, in conventional medicine, they are taught that pathogens are the cause of disease, but we know that pathogens are not normally at the root of the problem. Now the poor state of health of the body is going to allow pathogens to live. So getting rid of them doesn't matter. We can get rid of bugs and pathogens and toxins all day long. If the body is conducive to allowing them to live there, they will just come back.

Pathogens and bugs might cause symptoms, but they wouldn't be able to live in a body that is functioning properly. And we're going to, in lesson two, take a deeper look into what some of the experts in today's world feel about how this applies. Another area of difference is diagnosis. Diagnosing a disease is looking at one specific issue in the body and it's using a label. Diabetes. We know what the label means. We know it's indicative of high glucose levels, but that's truly all it means. For us as functional medicine practitioners, we're looking at the why. Okay, we know that the glucose is high, but what is driving it high?

Is it the diet? Is it the lifestyle? Meaning, are they stressed all the time? Is it the environment? Are they full of toxins and infections? These are the major points that separate out functional medicine from conventional medicine. It is always good to go back and just ponder these very differences when you are continually speaking to people about functional medicine. It's good to have them top of mind. Now we're going to go over the five tenets that we discussed and they align with each one of the modules.

So tenet one, first do no harm. So you must get your own mind straight in how to be a practitioner in order to have consistent successful clients. Well what does that mean? How do I get my mind straight? This was the whole basis behind all of the teaching that's being done here in the mentorship. Perspective is everything. Many times I will meet with a practitioner and I see that they're more on the side of practicing conventional medicine while naming it functional medicine. Well, the only issue there is perspective. So when we get a perspective on what we should be doing for ourselves as practitioners and what we should be doing for our clients, that changes everything about our approach in all areas, even how we learn and take in and filter information.

As you work with clients, you have to learn how to use the data that you take in. And you must learn how the body works, how it functions. The real answers to helping a client improve their health are in that client's body. They have a story. They have a story to tell, you need to hear the story. We are very synergistic with that client. We are a partnership where we are each taking data and information from the other and using it to move the health of that person forward, all the while teaching. So getting successful clients starts with you. Getting the right perspective starts with you and that's why you're here. Tenet two, address the whole person from the standpoint of holistic healing.

Now our focus must be on the whole person. Everything around tenet two is based on a quote from Hippocrates, it is more important to know what sort of disease a person has. We must understand who that person is. We have to understand, back to that story, everything that that person is

bringing to the table and how they got here. Your boundaries and values matter when you are signing on new clients. This is also part of addressing the whole person, because we are addressing what the client is able or not able to do. What are they bringing to the table? We also must know when we are addressing the whole person, the role of stress in physiological patterns.

This is absolutely critical to know. Now, we've discussed this several times, specifically about how stress can turn the thyroid down, which turns stomach acid down, which turns bile down. These are the top three items that, I mean, I'm constantly looking for these in a client to make sure that they're functioning properly, because when they're not, we have nothing but downstream chaos. Tenet three, the healing power of nature. So we know that the body is always seeking methods and workarounds and adaptations.

It's all about homeostasis. This is all about how to keep you alive. The body will choose what it needs to do in order to heal and we must support that. Again, it's a very simplistic thought that we many times just brush aside, but I want you to think about this. From the time of conception, we have been growing as cells. Biochemistry has guided and driven that. And on birth, the body starts learning new things. It develops an immune system. Every single movement within the body is made to keep us alive. Again, homeostasis. These are the movements that need to keep us alive now.

Yes, we as practitioners, we can sit on the outside and we can say, well, what do you need for the future? And that's very good. But if we're on the outside trying to make our own determinations about what this dysfunction in the body needs, then this is what separates us from just a regular practitioner of functional medicine to a great practitioner. We're not trying to instill our own changes on the body, but instead we're letting the body lead us into decisions that are made that might be best for it. In other words, to help, allow, support it to heal. That's what it's already trying to do. It already knows what to do and we must stop and think. Are we asking the client or suggesting the client do something that will interfere with the body's capability of healing? This is a vital question.

Dysfunction that will grow out of not taking care of the basic needs of the body. There are things that must be in place and we've talked much about this. They have to be in place for healing to happen. Many practitioners will use supplementation to go around the healing process of the body. Again, that takes us back to the decisions that we make when we're trying to support a client. Learn the why behind the dysfunction. When you understand the why, and you understand the biochemistry, supporting the body's own version of healing becomes much more stable. Tenet four, fundamental healing. Seek, identify, and acknowledge the fundamental cause of the illness.

In order to do this, we must ask questions. This is our part, and this is a big part of your training here in the mentorship. Should we ask how to fix it before we understand why it's there? No, of course not. That doesn't help the client. And this is where we have to get very, very basic on what we're viewing with the client and how we understand the next steps in healing.

So what we call imbalance may not be wrong, it could just be the body making choices based on keeping you alive. So we might not like the fact that we see cancer develop. But was that a choice the body had to make in order to keep itself alive? Are your clients living in a way that is supportive of their actual healing environment? This has to be. We cannot get healthy by using the same measures that we used to get unhealthy. I mean there's just no other way around it. Symptoms do not cause illness. Symptoms are clues. They tell us about the illness or the condition or the disease. Keeping symptoms down or symptom repression, that's not health.

You can take any number of supplements to pretend that the symptoms are not there, but that's not actually healing the body. If a symptom is bad, again, is this the exact way that the body has had to adapt and protect itself? If we are not asking this question, we could be missing so much. Michael McAvoy pointed out something that I thought was brilliant. He said, my thought is that there are very

few mistakes in body chemistry. Everything is happening for a reason, for cellular preservation. When we only look at highs and lows and try to even them out with medications or with supplements, the results are often disastrous for the overall health of the client. to consider these words very seriously.

Tenet 5. Teach the principles of healthy living and preventative health care. So we do not cure the client, we educate them. This is not just a change in language here. It is also a change in meaning. It is a change in perspective. Because if we say, oh well I educate the client, but in our mind we still believe we cure the client, well then that hasn't helped anything, has it? So I'm asking you to please step away from being the healer and look at the client as being their own healer. This education must help them to understand their own health challenges and what they can do to find their own healing environment. The body is not sitting there waiting for us to save it. It is constantly seeking to survive and it has already made a plan of healing based on the adaptations that it must make to current diet, lifestyle, and environment.

Teaching these principles of healthy living include teaching the client about supplements. You cannot allow a client to believe that supplements are doing the healing. Make them believe in their body. When this person leaves you, you need them to have these tools in place so that they continue being able to take care of themselves. There is a huge difference between you telling the client what to do and you guiding the client and educating them with your knowledge. Module 6, the art of investigation and research. I have mentioned many times that we do not have a crystal ball. And it's okay because, believe it or not, as functional medicine practitioners, we don't need one.

We have all of the information at our disposal that we need to help somebody start taking the steps to improve their health. It's all right here. We don't have to pretend that we know something that we don't. Now I mentioned the critical thinker here. Now what does a critical thinker do? Well, a critical thinker will raise questions to the things that are unknown. They will question any statement that might appear incomplete, so to determine additional details about that event.

They will gather and assess all of the information that they take in. is to help come to very well-reasoned conclusions while all the time they're testing these conclusions against that relative data. Now, they will communicate effectively to allow answers to be forthcoming from the client and to inspire additional data to be remembered and given. This is what happens when we talk to the client and we have to be prepared to ask the questions that come up.

If you don't ask the questions, you're not going to get the data. But one of the biggest problems or trip ups is you do not know what questions to ask because you don't know what data is important. This is practice. Connections happen along with how the body works. And if we give credence to starting with the basics, we will not spend 14 hours learning general things about autoimmune conditions and instead we're able to apply our focus to the client case before us and the clues that we've drawn out from them directly through the questioning that we use for them. We cannot look at a low or a high marker and think, wow, that needs to be fixed.

Instead, we think, okay, that represents the client's current biochemistry and it's telling me what's going on in their life. Now what's the difference here? Well, the difference is that this is just a shift. This is not a diagnosis. It's not necessarily high or low out of range. It is a shift. It is a change in the biochemistry. And something caused that change. So we must dig really deep to find out what could possibly have made this particular cause and change for this particular client.

Never assume anything about what a client means, as their meaning and your understanding of their meaning could be in two different places. Always question. Always ask. Module 7, The Art of Fundamental Care. So what does it mean to create the conditions for change. This is such a powerful statement. We need an optimum environment for change to happen. Without an

environment that will allow this change to happen, it just won't happen. Could this be why clients are not able to get better? What is it about their diet, their lifestyle, their environment that could be holding them back.

So let's emphasize this statement again. We need an optimum environment for change to happen. That optimum environment cannot happen while they are still eating a standard American diet or while they are not sleeping or not having bowel movements, or, and the list goes on and on. We must make sure that each need of the cell is fulfilled to allow healing to happen. Being hydrated, having solid nutrient levels and good elimination on their own are not going to bring all the changes that we want to see for all dysfunction in the body. But here's the vicious circle. Without these in place, we have eliminated the capability of healing. As I've mentioned in Module 7, this is called the priority of cellular function. Supplementing with one nutrient will create an imbalance in the body and affect the performance of other nutrients.

Be aware. Think before you recommend. We get a supplement and we expect it to do something. If we can't qualify what it is or is not doing, then we're just guessing. We're just taking a stab in the dark. I mean, we may also be using the supplement because that it treats X disease or condition or symptom. Why are we not looking at the effect, or no effect, of this supplement? What kind of clue can that give us if it works or if it doesn't work? What can that effect tell us? Using omega-3s to decrease the pain of inflammation.

That won't keep it down forever. omega-3s to decrease the pain of inflammation. That won't keep it down forever. There is still something in the diet, lifestyle, or environment that created the inflammation, and that thing may or may not still be there. This is why we start with the basics to get these elements in line to eliminate possibilities. So another question to throw out, because we're talking about supplementation. Are you using omega-3s for the pain or for the inflammation? You might say, oh but it's both. But let's look at this a little further because this is about perspective, this is about mindset, this is about language. I have heard that omega-3s can reduce the pain of inflammation. I have heard that berberine can reduce glucose.

I have heard that certain probiotics can help constipation and diarrhea. These are very common statements made by practitioners. But what about these statements is actually addressing the cause of each one of these symptoms? What about these statements actually tells me that the practitioner is looking for the root cause. Nothing. Nothing. These statements lead me to believe that the practitioner is simply trying to treat an ill with a pill. So I'm going to put this question out there. No more elephants. Are we just a functional medicine society of triage junkies? I mean, that's a fair question to ask if all we're going to do is treat symptoms with supplements. Are we afraid to learn and to do the work that's necessary?

And if so, why? Where is our fear? These are very deep thoughts for contemplation. But they also give you a platform of showing the difference. Here's what one mindset looks like. And here's the other mindset. And you have to make that distinction. Am I the person that's still believing this? Am I the person that is still just wanting to treat symptoms with remedies such as supplements?