

CC: Can you believe it? It's the last episode of 2024. I started January 10th. I can't believe it. It's been weekly fun to connect with you through the auditory way.

I remember how nervous I was to interview each guest. This is why I started with friends first. Much easier to have a conversation with someone you know than strangers. And then I started reaching out to other people that I think could totally Bring so much value so you can benefit from the knowledge and wisdom.

And then eventually six months into it, people started to reaching out to want to be on the Acupro show. So that was so cool Because I ended up meeting so many TCM rock stars that I had never heard of before that brought so much value. Today's show is all about the most downloaded guest episode.

Last week's show was all about the most downloaded solo episode. Today, it's all about the best guests. And if you've missed any of those, and you absolutely love this conversation, the link to each of the episode features today will be below in the show notes.

In this compilation, you'll hear the insights and wisdom of each of those most downloaded guest episode.

I'm not sure why some episodes get more downloads than others, because let's face it, I have no idea what resonates with everyone, but But for me, I learned so much from each of the guests, and it was a privilege to truly connect with each of them.

I truly appreciate you listening to the show every week, or even watching the conversation on YouTube. It's been such a great journey. When I first started a year ago, I didn't know where that would lead us, but I wanted to say, thank you. I am so grateful for your support, your feedback on the podcast and how many of you absolutely love it.

I wanted to read you a review that someone left on Apple podcasts because it really touched my heart. I am a TCM student. It is astonishing. Clara has helped me immensely as a student by explaining how to properly connect, diagnose, and treat as a studying practitioner.

I was so exhilarated to hear she has made a podcast because now I can listen on the go and make even more connection with my studies. So happy to be here listening. Thank you so much, Clara, for being one of the best teachers I of my generation and for many generations to come. That makes me so happy.

Thank you so much for leaving this review because it really reinforced why I do what I do, which is being able to help you connect with TCM in a deeper level so you can grow, learn, and in turn Change lives one patient at a time. So this always makes my day. , and if you are listening on Apple podcast, please leave me a review.

I read them all. And I am absolutely grateful for each and every one of them.

I'm looking ahead to a new year with so many more guest and solo episodes where we're all gonna learn so much more. And the reason why Chinese medicine rocks, it's because we're constantly learning, even after 20 years, 30 years, the learning never stops.

And that is one of the best features of TCM. So without further ado, let's look back at the most downloaded guest episode. Happy holiday, wherever you are in the world. And again, thank you so much for being part of the AcuPro Show. You are a TCM rockstar.

Welcome to AcuPro, a show dedicated to making Chinese medicine and acupuncture easy to grasp and fun to learn. Hi, I'm your host Clara Cohen. I support practitioners and students like you in changing the world one patient at a time. My goal is to share my passion for TCM and empower you to achieve superior patient care.

I love to showcase the amazing benefits of acupuncture because after all, acupuncture rocks!

The most downloaded guest episode is number 45, which happens to be my TCM idol, Dr. Yvonne Farrell. She literally gave a masterclass. So here's a little bit for you. And the link to the entire episode is below. If you haven't listened to it, I would really highly recommend you do because she blew.

Me and everyone that listened away. One of the most popular episodes in 2024 enjoy.

CC: for anybody that's listening, the book that Yvonne wrote goes really in depth when it comes to psycho-emotional pain for the eight extra vessels. So we're not going to discuss the whole book, but for some reason, when I was in school, I don't know why gravitate towards was the Chong.

I don't know if it's because it was related to the spleen and stomach and to me, like digestion and those meridians is really something that I connect with. Yeah. So can you share a little bit of what's the role of the Chong Mai when it comes to psycho-emotional pain? Most times when we learn the eight extras in school, we learn them in those nuclear pairs, right?

YF: So like spleen four with pericardium six, lung seven with kidney six. And that is a good way to look at them when you're talking about location on the body. If I put lung seven and kidney six together. Then I get the front of the body, I get the chest, the abdomen, I get the lungs, I get the uterus, an anterior presentation.

All the resources can be directed in that way. But that explanation doesn't tell you how the psyche unfolds from an 8 Extra point of view. So to understand how they come into being is to understand how human beings come into being. And so, it all begins with the Chong Mai. The Chong Mai is the source of everything.

It is undifferentiated yin and yang. It has everything in it. Right? It has the sea of blood in it, it has the sea of yuan qi, it has the sea of the twelve primary channels, the sea of the five zang and the six food. It has everything in it. But it has everything in it in a state of oneness, in a state of unity.

And when you come into the world to live a life from birth to death, you cannot live in unity. You have to embrace polarity. You have to embrace the nature of yin and yang. And so, the Chongmai gives birth to primal yin and primal yang in the form of the ren and the Du mai. And the reason we have points on those channels is because those two channels are the source. It's the resources, the yin and yang, that provides for all the postnatal function.

But those resources come from the chong. So Jeffrey Yuan, when he's describing the chong, says the chong is the blueprint. Right, it's the blueprint for what it is to be human. The Renmai are the building materials that you use to build a life. The Dumai is the construction team that builds everything so that you can move through life from birth to death, which is a really great.

A visual example of what those three vessels do. It's important to remember that they're not really three separate vessels. If you look at their pathways, their pathways all overlap. They're the same vessel in three different aspects. So when I look at it, I look at it as if these three vessels are a coin.

The Chong Mai is the metal that the coin is printed on. Heads is the Renmai, tails is the Dumai, but it's all the same coin. And so when we look at these three as the resources for life, we can begin to see from a Chiang Mai point of view that what we have is the beginning of your curriculum. And so psycho emotional distress that comes out of this comes in two forms.

It either comes from previous generations passed down. Right? Trauma that couldn't be resolved in one generation ends up in the bones, in the jing of a person, and then gets passed down through the DNA to the next generation. So, you may have depression or anxiety that runs in your family. And I'm not saying just your mom had it or just your dad had it, I'm saying generations back.

Therefore, that anxiety is not really yours. You are invested in it because it feels like it's yours, but it's really not yours. So that's a sort of Chiang Mai emotional impression. Chiang Mai is the birth of your existence. And so when the Chiang Mai is out of balance, people are in existential crisis.

They don't remember who they are anymore. They don't remember why they're here, right? So they've lost a sense of purpose in life. So they might have anxiety. They might have depression. They might have sleep disorders. They might have a lot of different emotional disorders, but those disorders have a unique pattern around them in that the experiences that the patient is having are accompanied by this sort of, who am I and why am I even here anymore?

So it's a deep suffering that feels very existential in nature. On top of that, it's the sea of blood and emotions reside in the blood. So if you have emotional distress, blood is involved. If you have chronic, ongoing, Unremitting, intermittent emotional distress. The Chiang Mai is part of that. So it's a source of everything.

I have some students who really get connected to the Chong Mai. They really identify with the Chong Mai. They want to learn all of the eight extras. And then they come to me and say, I don't know what's happening. I keep doing Chiang Mai treatments. Well, that's okay. You're just doing source treatments.

Even Jeffrey, when he talks about, you're looking at a patient, you can't figure out what to do, you know it's an 8 extra thing, you don't know where to start because there's more than one thing involved, you either start at the beginning or you start at the end. So you start with the Chong, or you start with the Daimai, right?

It's like the Alpha and the Omega. We start with how you come into the world, or we start with how you stay alive. It's a powerful tool for emotional distress, but the quality is very existential in nature and that's part of the intergenerational trauma because the intergenerational trauma evokes these emotional situations or conditions, but they're not yours.

And yet they feel like they're yours because you're having the experience.

CC: This is like a full masterclass right there. Thank you so much.

Podcast number 15 was a friend of mine. Who's a naturopathic doctor, not an acupuncturist, but she talked about gut health. And this is Dr. Alex Dragon. And we looked at the differences between naturopathic medicine and Chinese medicine when it comes to gut health, it was a fantastic discussion. Enjoy.

Can you talk about the gut mind connection?

AD: Yes, totally. And actually bringing it back to what you said before about. TCM, all the emotional problems that lead to internal problems or stress, right? Chronic stress and emotional issues lead to problems or imbalances in the body. I think that TCM being such an old. Medicine, form of medicine, conventional medicine is now catching up and being like, oh yeah, there is a gut-brain axis.

This does exist. And so the way I think about it is like a bidirectional highway between your brain and your gut. You're sending messages from your brain to your gut and from your gut to your brain.

So you have this highway and there's certain things that can block that highway. So sometimes this is hard to figure out because a lot of people with gut problems also have anxiety or stress or

emotional problems, and. Teasing out what came first is very hard. So we have to work on both sides. We can't just work on the anxiety or the stress or just the gut.

We have to do both at the same time in order to fix the problem.

So with gut-brain access, there are certain things that can reduce its function or your ability to receive those messages. So something like. Skipping a bowel movement, right? So I think about kids who are out of their routine or they don't like to go to the bathroom at school or they go on a field trip and they feel the urge to go poo, but they don't because they're not comfortable.

It's super common and I find this pattern a lot in patients where they say that they had a history of that they didn't want to go elsewhere. They were only comfortable in their own home and that. Shuts down the messaging from your brain because your gut is saying, oh, we're not releasing, and then your brain says, oh, okay.

I'm gonna reduce that signal then. And so that actually creates this pattern of constipation. That's really hard to. Reverse. So that's just one, one example of how things can block that highway. Stress for sure. Any type of emotional stress. As you say, when you're about to go and do a talk or teach a class, you feel that in your gut.

That is also gonna change the signaling from your brain to your gut. And so if we think about gut health problems, the most common being IBS, right? So bloating, pain, constipation, or diarrhea, a lot of that is not just about the food, it's about the emotional aspect and finding your triggers. What is it that triggers you and.

Are you always in a sympathetic state? So then we think about the nervous system and the two sides of the nervous system, the sympathetic and the parasympathetic. Parasympathetic is rest and digest. Sympathetic is go. Adrenaline. So a lot of people in our day and age living in a city, working full-time parents, are always in a sympathetic state and you're never digesting in that state.

And so some things that you can do to actually put yourself more into rest and digest are deep belly breathing. Taking a breath before you eat. Don't just shove it in your mouth and eat super quickly. Chewing your food, smelling your food before eating, because your digestion actually starts in your nostrils and your mouth.

So those are the kinds of things that I coach my patients to do, is to work on the nervous system as well as the lifestyle and nutrition aspects in order to apply both to fix the gut brain axis.

In TCM is the same way, sometimes we don't know where it all started, right? Is this a spleen sheet deficiency that created dampness or excess dampness that created the spleen sheet deficiency? And students ask me all the time how do I know which one it is?

Sometimes we don't and we have to treat both. So it's the same as naturopathic medicine. When someone comes and sees you and they didn't come for gut health, they came for something else, right? Maybe insomnia, maybe fertility issue, or menstruation issue.

CC: can you give us one, what the perfect poop looks like the perfect stool and what to look for when they are not perfect?

What does that mean? If your poop is super dry and looks like pellets, or it's runny, or it's green, or it's floating, or it's sinking or whatever, can you give us some details on the poop journey?

AD: For sure. So the first thing we need to know is how often your bowel movements are happening, right? So the frequency, is it every day? Is it multiple times a day? Sometimes people with severe conditions can have up to 20 bowel movements a day. That's not normal. So one to three movements a day I would consider normal.

But then you have to look at the consistency. That's what you were saying. Is it dry? Is it like deer pellet, rabbit pellet, hard poops, or is it pure liquid? So we want something in the middle. Usually we compare it to a snake or something smooth that's all together. A nice big sausage full volume. So you should feel empty after you have your movement.

You shouldn't feel like. I feel like there's still something in there that I need to push out that's not a complete emptied bowel. If you are having pellet poops, and the way we assess this is by something called the Bristol stool chart.

People could look that up. Gives you an idea, one to seven of what your poo looks like and. Why it's that way. We're looking at dry little pellets that usually indicates constipation. It means the stool is inside of your colon for too long, and the job of the colon is to extract water.

So the longer it's in there, the more water is getting pulled out, the harder it is for you to evacuate it. And then you go towards the end of the scale, which is more looser movements, and that could be for various different reasons.

So sometimes it's inflammation in the bowels. You have ulcerative colitis, or Crohn's or celiac disease, or you have a flu. And you're having diarrhea. It could be lack of fiber. It can also be underlying constipation. Now, a lot of people don't think that constipation means, oh, I don't go every day and I'm having pellet poops.

You can still have loose stools and have underlying constipation. It's our natural rhythm. Our body wants to get rid of waste.

And so a lot of people go through this cycle of no bowel movements and then all of a sudden diarrhea and then no bowel movements, all of a sudden diarrhea. That's actually constipation. That's the consistency. The color is also important, so usually brown is a good color, not too dark, just a nice regular wood colored brown.

If your stool is too light or gray, it can indicate liver problems or gallbladder issues. So you wanna get that checked out. With your doctor? I would say most abnormal colors you wanna get checked by your doctor. The color of stool is really important. If there's red, bright red, usually that's blood.

And if there's black, that's also blood that's coming from upper GI tract. So there's lots of things to look for in the stool. And if we think about the last thing that I ask people outside of color, consistency, frequency is are you seeing mucus or undigested food? In the stool. 'cause that gives us an idea of your absorption and digestive capacity.

How well are you actually breaking down food?

CC: That's awesome. I love that because it gives me a perspective from your naturopathic medicine view. And so I'm gonna share the TCM view for everyone as well. So for us, the little rabbit pellets dry. That's a yin deficiency because it dries the fluid. So that's usually a yin deficiency when there is unfinished feeling.

I love that you talked about this, 'cause people think, oh, I went to the bathroom, but it's not, you feel like you voided everything and when they say, no, not really, for us, that's a liver cheese stagnation. It's not moving properly. Straining is also a li stagnation and having loose stools. Or that is usually a PLE sheet deficiency.

Although, like you said, if it's acute, it could be a cold, then that's an external pathogen, like dampness heat, damp, cold. But if it is. Undigested food in the stool in TCM, it would be a kidney yang deficiency because there's not enough fire to cook the food kind of thing. So it goes right through you. So that's a different perspective, but at the same time, just like you in naturopathic medicine it's abnormal.

It's not right, and it's not the right way. And I'm really glad you mentioned the fact that people think constipation means that you have dry stool. But no, if you don't have a bowel movement for three days and then suddenly it's like diarrhea, that is still constipation because you didn't have a bowel movement, so I'm glad you mentioned that as well.

Podcast number four, which came out at the beginning of the year was with my friend, Dr. Jeda Boughton. Jeda and I went to school together, graduated together. So we know each other well. And this is why I did this with her at the beginning of the year, because I was so uncomfortable doing interview.

And I was so scared. It was much easier to do it with a friend. And Jedda is the third Disorder expert and you are going to love her episode because she also has a thyroid course on acuproacademy for you to benefit from because so many patients have thyroid issue in practice. Listen to Dr. Jetta.

JB: In society. Regardless of what the stats are, a lot of people have suboptimal thyroid functioning and don't even know it, and there are a lot of other diseases that can affect the thyroid. And then the thyroid affects many functions within our body.

My practice. Because I have seen for many years a lot of thyroid patients and I have a specialty or a focus on thyroid. I see a lot of it. And the other piece of the puzzle is that I do a lot of fertility work. So a lot of fertility work is about optimizing the thyroid. So even if a patient doesn't have a lot of clinical signs of the thyroid being off, there's often a piece.

Of the fertility puzzle that is related to the thyroid. So optimizing the thyroid even if you're not necessarily using thyroid medication, but just helping manage the body in general and helping optimize the thyroid can help with fertility. So for me, I'm seeing a lot of thyroid patients.

CC: Do you see a lot more hypo or hyper or a lot more women versus men, or do you not see any difference?

JB: I see a lot more women and a lot more hypo.

CC: Yeah, that's what I thought and because I do see a lot more of Hashimoto's and hypothyroidism. And then can you explain the relationship, like what disorders or are connected to the thyroid that, influence each other in general?

JB: I always explain to my patients that the thyroid is like the thermostat in your body. So let's say you're sitting in a room and the thermostat's not working, and all of a sudden it turns on and it gets really hot, and then it turns off and it gets really cold, and it's man, I can't get this thermostat to stay on any one temperature.

So when we look at hyperthyroid, it's making the metabolism go faster. So it's almost like. The room is getting hot. Your, the room being, your body is getting super hot. Cells are going really fast. Cells are dividing really fast and it's gonna affect everything, all your functions, your digestion, your energy, your sleep, even the way you think weight gain or loss.

How your cells divide, how strong they are, how strong, hair growth, nail growth, it basically everything. If you were living in a room that was too hot all the time, it's like you're running a marathon all day long, even while you're sleeping. And then the opposite is true for the hypo.

You're in a room that's cold all the time, so things are sluggish and just not moving the way they should. Cells aren't growing or dividing the way they should.

Everything's affected by the thyroid. And when you look at . Hormones in general, and our adrenals and our ovaries, and how our adrenals and our pituitary and our thyroid interact with each other. A lot of times things like adrenal fatigue will lead to thyroid issues. Then there's the autoimmune component.

Components of it. And sometimes it's hard to know what came first though, the chicken or the egg, , because so many things are affected by it, and so many things affect the thyroid. And and when I'm looking at triggers for affecting the thyroid, sometimes it can be a high stress or traumatic event.

I find a lot of people who work night shift or are off of the circadian rhythm and we look at in Chinese medicine about being right with time and sleeping when the sun is asleep, being awake when the sun is awake. And when we go against that for too long, it can affect that thermostat.

I see that a lot. People who do weird shifts, overwork Are in high stress environments. Even someone who's been in, say, had a whiplash, that can be a triggering environment, just even trauma to that area, to the neck, to the throat, or trauma in general because think about how trauma or stress of affects the adrenals and then the adrenals can't support the thyroid.

CC: This is exactly what I was thinking about is that when you said there's a lot of stress, then it depletes the adrenal, and of course the endocrine system is all related, right? We look at the body as a whole, but the endocrine system is the reproductive hormone, the adrenal, the thyroid, like all those

Hormones are going to play a role with each other, and if one of them is outta line, then the other ones are gonna get affected. So I see this too a lot of patients that are PCOS or polycystic ovarian syndrome also have some issue with either adrenal or thyroid, right. specifically hypo, do you see that as well?

JB: Oh yeah, for sure. When you think about PCOS as being a metabolic disorder, and in a lot of ways the thyroid is a metabolic disorder, so yeah.

I treat a lot of people who do night shifts, like nurses and police officers and bus drivers and taxi drivers

We do have a big nursing population and a lot of nurses have to work nights and it's really hard. You it's hard to tell somebody to quit their job or get a different job. And some people will, they'll recognize, okay, I need to get a day job doing nursing, and they'll, go work in community nursing or that type of thing.

But you can't always change everything about your lifestyle. The #1 thing is to be compassionate to people, to what they are able to do and willing to do and not adding stress

with your treatments. And I, if I tell somebody, I normally treat people once a week to start or depending, PCOS, I like people to come in once or twice a week.

But if that's gonna add appointment fatigue to them and appointment stress to them, the 1 compassionate place for patients to feel like they can heal is not to put that kind of pressure on them. Even though I will give them lifestyle and dietary advice, I always preface it with that, that we do things as you are able to. So rather than giving them 50 things to do by next week, I usually start slow. they might need to hydrate more.

They might need to actually eat more when they're at work. And sometimes they have busy lifestyles. They don't eat properly, so let's just get them eating at certain times and then work on what they're eating. And I like to people that, eat whole foods, eat lots of protein, some people don't eat

Any protein and some people only eat protein, so we wanna balance those things out. And to me it's like the important thing is eating lots of vegetables and particularly cooked vegetables when it comes to hypothyroidism. Making sure that their sleep schedule and they have really good sleep hygiene in terms of going to bed at a certain time and not watching TV all night or in, from their bed or, and trying to

Rest for a certain amount of time a day. Some people are gonna need more rest than others. Some people are gonna have trouble falling asleep. So we talk about different ways of doing different kinds of visualizations in bed, especially if they're waking up in the middle of the night. a lot of people are like, I can't meditate, and I'm like, you don't have to meditate.

Let's look at doing some visualizations while you're in bed. It's better than getting up or watching tv. It's really good practice for people just to, be able to do some breathing, do some kind of introspective work thinking and just resting. 'cause sleep is a, is gonna be a huge component of it.

And people will, some people will be like, I can sleep 12 hours a night and some people will be like, I can barely fall asleep. It's different for everyone.

CC: Yeah. And I like that you start slow because I think you're right. You don't wanna overwhelm a person that's already overwhelmed by the fact that they're probably tired or they don't feel good, and so they don't want more stress put on their plate because they probably got there because of the amount of stress already that they've had experience probably for many years.

AD: A lot of people know that I have three books. However, many don't that I also offer continuing education online courses. This is actually how I started Acupro Academy to support new practitioners. 📌

You can choose from TCM treatment for common mental disorders, fertility, pregnancy, thyroid disorders, but also specific ones like scalp acupuncture or cosmetic acupuncture.

Acupuncture online course. All these are pre recorded so you can watch them on your own time and since you have access to them forever, you can revisit the information anytime you need. You will receive a certificate with your name on it after you pass a multiple choice quiz. And if you're truly not satisfied, With any of my online courses, I offer a seven day money back guarantee as I stand behind my products and truly, truly want you to benefit from them.

So go check them out on my website, acuproacademy.com and click the TCM course tab on the menu bar, or check out the link in the show notes below.

CC: Episode number 13 is another friend of mine is Dr. Rebecca Stephens. I called her Beckie because we've been friends for many, many years and we actually practiced together for over 10 years. And Rebecca Stephens, if you've bought a course on Acupro Academy from her, you know she's amazing. This episode talks about cosmetic acupuncture.

And yes, she does have a course on cosmetic acupuncture, on the Acupro Academy and she also have a course on musculoskeletal pain.

Now this episode number 13 is all about cosmetic acupuncture, pretty, pretty, pretty, pretty naturally. Enjoy this little snippet into it. And the link to the full episode will be below.

What's the difference for people that don't know between things like Botox, an invasive way of, looking at wrinkles and aging and all that process versus acupuncture?

RS: It's completely different. And it's funny because sometimes students will ask me like, how do you compete with Botox with something like cosmetic acupuncture? And I said, you don't, it's completely different. It is just a completely different idea. So I guess if we're just talking about Botox no negative opinions whatsoever. Like, Whatever you wanna do whatever resonates with you, go for it. This is just completely different. So when you're thinking about how Botox is in a nutshell, kind of paralyzing things to hold them still to reduce wrinkles and whatnot. Acupuncture invigorates things. So it's the exact opposite. You're trying to invigorate the structures, energize the structures, really improve the circulation of the face to make the face look livelier, maybe Botox flattens the face a little bit. So two completely different effects.

Difference of course is that nothing is injected.

I think that's the biggest you're not introducing any outside substances into the body. Obviously when you do, there's gonna be a little bit of increased risk factors, so that's a big separation right there. Nothing injected. I think Botox again, long-term, I don't know how many long-term studies there are.

Have to think about the fact that you're injecting a neurotoxin. The muscles in your face are directly plugged in to your cranial nerves, so that's a pretty direct tap in that you might wanna be Careful with, right? cosmetic acupuncture, not doing that. More stimulating around them, trying

to nourish them, trying to nourish the nerves. Not going to have bad systemic effects. The bad effects from Botox have come from it making its way into your system and getting somewhere else. Obviously that's not going to happen with acupuncture. It's the circulation effect is systemic, but that's a good thing. Also, we're not too worried about the instrument we're using is pretty tiny. It can touch nerves without damaging them. Whereas if you touch a nerve with a hypodermic needle, it's got a cutting edge to it, you can cut nerves. And people have had problems from that, right? Severing nerves and then having face droop, eyelid, droop, those sorts of things. Not gonna happen with acupuncture. I think education on that is also really important, and no downtime. So right after the treatment, you might notice a few little speckles on your face from the points, but some of the other procedures where you might feel like you wanna wall yourself into your house for a few days and let you know, let your face look normal again before you go back outside. It's not gonna happen with acupuncture.

CC: Yeah, because then with cosmetic acupuncture, it's completely natural, it's safe, it's effective, and when you put needles, and it obviously relaxes the face, bring lots of blood flow to the area does. . It stimulate collagen as well.

RS: Yes, absolutely.

I think there's like a balance you can find with it, right? Some people do it very well. And just little bits here and there, but sometimes, yeah, absolutely right. Maybe sometimes it's like, Ooh, that went a little too far. I can tell that something's been done. And I think that's the beauty of the cosmetic acupuncture.

It's actually a little trickier to see that something's been done because it's just this all over effect. And a lot of patients like their feedback is more like, oh, my friends and family just tell me I, my skin looks better. I look more vibrant. They ask me what I've been doing. They ask me if I've been on vacation. That, those sorts of things. So, it's just a little bit more natural of an effect.

CC: It's interesting because, before I met you, I went and did a session of cosmetic acupuncture with . A friend of mine who just had taken the course years ago, and she said, can you come in so I can practice on you? And, I said, yeah, no problem. And if you've never seen a cosmetic acupuncture, there's a lot of needles on the face, like a lot.

RS: Yes. It takes a lot of needles to get that effect. But it is, it's very natural. But you feel it

CC: So one of the thing that surprised me is, know, I was laying there and she put all the needles in and then she left me, obviously for about 30 minutes to let the needle do their job and self-regulate for the body to bring lots of circulation and collagen and. When she came back and took the needles out.

One of the thing I have to say that I didn't expect is I felt very relaxed. Like my jaw was relaxed, I didn't know my muscle and my eyes could be tense, but apparently they were because they felt really relaxed. That's a really great side effect. Can you talk a bit about that?

RS: Yeah, there's so many. It's funny. Like effects, side effects. Which one do you put in what category? Because that's actually part of it as well. All the different things you're trying to do to the tissues. The points, of course, we know acupuncture works strongly with the nervous system, that's your doorway into working with so many other systems in the body. A lot of the points on the face are powerful zen points, if you will. They really relax which helps balance your hormones, which includes your stress hormones, balance your cortisol. And that's part of how you get the face effects too, right?

Like when you're relaxed your body system's working a little bit better, your circulation's working a little bit better, and you start to see it in the face but they also help your tissues detox and you don't really think about that, on a day-to-day basis. How much Junk. Sometimes you're hanging onto in your tissues and it's natural junk. Of course, this is just like metabolic waste products. They're supposed to be produced, but they're also supposed to circulate and leave and be broken down. And a lot of times when people are stressed or if their jaws clenched they're tense in their day to day, that stuff's not leaving.

And you can see it, it's like that skin starts to like, lackluster and you get, it gets blotchy and whatnot. So yeah, you can relax and detox the tissue. The tissue very quickly becomes a lot more healthy because it starts to metabolize a little bit better. You know, And the skin just becomes rejuvenated. So the whole relaxation effect is part of the big effects of, how it helps the skin.

CC: My next question, is educating the patient on what other things they can do to contribute to the outcome and successful outcome of Chinese medicine and doing cosmetic acupuncture.

RS: Absolutely, and I think that's actually one of its huge strengths is that it gives you this. Door, this open door to talk to somebody about their health. And you have to remember what kind of demographic you're usually working with, right? when people come in and they're willing to spend time and build this foundation and, really trying to make skin healthier. They're usually invested in. I'm willing to do a little bit of this work myself. So then you get to educate and you get to talk to 'em about diet, exercise certain supplements and herbs that might really help them out. And they're, most often more than happy to go on this journey with you.

CC: So do you explain to patients what are the damaging to the skin causes? What are they and how we can, avoid them so what are those causes?

RS: Just taking in unnecessary toxins into your body. Giving yourself a toxic load know, your body's preoccupied with. So if it's preoccupied with this toxic load that you're handing in every day, how is it going to properly nourish your skin and your tissues? And that's actually the fun thing about the cosmetic acupuncture as well is because it takes a while to get all those pins in. You end up having fantastic conversations with your patients as you're doing it, and it's just a big education session. And just every time they come in, you talk about it a little bit more and a little bit more education, and just sometimes people just need to be reminded of the basics. You

know that there are healthy things to do, but it isn't really until someone else tells you, especially somebody in a healthcare position like, you should really drink more water. This is a why, oh, right?

Yes, I should. Oh, okay, sure. I'll set an alarm on my phone, a couple to go off a couple times a day to make it easier. Those sorts of things, right?

CC: Yeah. Hydration. A healthy diet with lots of basically fat soluble vitamins, food, right? That is high on vitamin E and D and A, and all those vitamins that are gonna help us really have less dryness,

RS: Yep. And you relate all that stuff, all that healthy stuff directly to the appearance of the face. And people are in they're like, okay, yes, Sign me up. I will do that.

Exactly. And then obviously the amount of stress, because when we're stressed, it shows more on our face when we've had a lot of years of stress, it's gonna show up.

I'm so glad that's being taken a little bit more seriously these days and that's a newer thing that hasn't Has it been so long that people have been really taking it so serious and there are still, some people who kind of brush it off oh, stress is kinda like the afterthought of all the things that are bothering my health. But it's no, actually it's number one. and this is why. And again, you're just laying it out for them, right? Like the effect on your hormones and, and messing with the whole cycle from the very top of it all. that literally shows on your face.

CC: The last but not least, most downloaded guest episode. Was from Sandro Graca. I met Sandro online We've never met in real life, but he is such a wealth of knowledge He is everywhere online if you don't know him. He is part of evidencebasedacupuncture.org, which really what he does now is he researches acupuncture and he's all into the studies and the research that is done on acupuncture. We need someone like him to showcase the benefits of acupuncture. You're going to enjoy the snippet, but I would listen to the entire episode and the link will be below.

Thank you. Enjoy this one as well.

If you don't know this website, evidence-based acupuncture, you have to, because the work that's put into it is amazing for us practitioners to be able to share the, studies and the research that's in here with the world.

So we can show that yes, acupuncture is evidence-based. So I want you to take me back. How did that started? Where is that going? And the fact that you're passionate about this. I wanna thank you, first of all, grateful that you started this, but explain to us how did that happen?

SG: I didn't start the EBA project, around 2015. A medical doctor I know, right? A medical doctor who is a great acupuncturist as well. Decided to start evidence-based acupuncture. And the reason why it's called that is I'm already laughing.

People will know because there's already evidence-based medicine, With all its issues. And you know, nothing is perfect in this know that. But there's a play on words, right? There's evidence-based medicine. So why shouldn't there be evidence-based acupuncture? So his name is Barto Schmill Nicki, he's from Poland and he's a medical doctor to start with.

And then he trained as an acupuncturist as well. And he is a phenomenal acupuncturist. And it's interesting because I remember reading something that he wrote at the time about people going into his office. So imagine this as a GP or as an md, and you would tell someone. Not everyone, but when appropriate you would say, you should get acupuncture and I would recommend you to go and get acupuncture.

And people would say, 'oh, acupuncture. Do you believe in that? I'm paraphrasing here, his story, he used to say that he would get annoyed at that because it was like belief. It's a medical intervention. It either works or it doesn't work. It's not religion, it's nothing to do with belief. So he started evidence-based acupuncture around 2015. And to be honest, at the time the website was mainly in Polish. 'cause that was his language. And he was using Google Translate to put it into English. Things moved on in 2016. He got really involved in putting together the project that eventually became this big school it's one of those, one of those things that warms my heart to see that within our community, there's people like this. So it wasn't like, oh, it's my baby. I created this, so it's mine. It was like, I can't do it. I want someone else to take over the baby and you know, allow the baby to grow. And I actually remember when the conversation happened that he contacted someone who was Mel Cobbleman to take over, EBA.

This was in Rottenberg, so around May of 2016. And I joined EBA in officially in September of 2016. And that's the way that it then developed from then on. We always pay great respect to Bartos and to this day we see each other in, in conferences and everything. And there was one time I was thinking about when I said about calling it his baby and at one conference I was presenting And he was in the audience and I said you know, talked about evidence-based acupuncture, and that was his baby.

And he actually put his hand up and he said yeah, 'but the baby is now a child and growing and walking and you are the one holding the hand and moving.' And I was like, oh, that's a good analogy. When Mel decided to, having different projects on and with me continuing and. I love a team. So We got someone else to take over as executive director Lara McClure. Can I just say by the way, it exists because of people like you and everyone else supporting EBA through their donations, and membership, we make it through donations. EBA Connect is what we call it. And those people that are donating and supporting us are, really the ones that keep the project going.

CC: And you're absolutely right because when he was saying, oh, when patients say, do you believe in acupuncture? Right? There are still people in the world that will say that to practitioners.

And when you're a new practitioner and you come outta school, you don't quite know what to say, and you're like, yes, of course I do, but you don't know how to explain it so the patient understand where you're coming from. So having at least something that you can send patients, say, 'Hey, look at this research that shows X, Y, Z.

Look at, you know, today the research shows for pain or for,

Dysmenorrhea or whatever the subject is.' And I think that's very helpful to new practitioners because they don't have the capacity to be able to answer that question, and they feel like the deer in the headlight, you know, kind of thing.

Who goes and found all those studies, where do you found them? Who does the research? It must take hours.

SG: Well, to be honest, throughout time we get more and more people that sometimes just message us and say, Hey, have you seen this? So for me obviously having the filters online and knowing when there's a new paper that comes out, I think that the main thing is searching for the papers, and you mentioned this, already, there's a lot. of research out there, like, I mean, a lot. Okay. When I'm writing papers, I will always, respect the lineage where we come from. And the previous editor in chief of the Journal of In Integrative and Complimentary Medicine, John Weeks said to me in 2018 at our own conference, he said, Sandro, the research is out there, but who's reading it?

And I'll always remember those words. And it's true, there's a lot of information out there. What actually takes time and bringing this to the educational space, now, what takes time is to separate actually well done research that is interesting for clinical practice from the very beginning. Acupuncture is not different from any other medical expertise out there that has issues with research. You can name anything. So if you say that, oh, acupuncture has a problem with research because of, placebo. So does exercise, so does psychology. So what's your big deal? 'Oh, it has, because it's different when you're doing research in acupuncture and the interaction with a clinician.' so does psychology, so does counseling. So I don't like hiding behind that. So when I say looking for research that is interesting within the huge amount that is out there, what takes time is picking something that is more pragmatic that you read and you say, 'ah, I can actually use some of this information in my clinic. Because if it's a very, white coat type RCT where everything is super controlled and there's an inclusion exclusion criteria and you're only seeing this particular type of patients for that study, how can I replicate that in my clinic or even with the amount of treatments.'

I'll give you a practical example. Not that long ago at evidence-based acupuncture, we talked about a paper that was talking about acupuncture for endometriosis. And one of the issues that

was discussed, was the amount of treatments that those patients were getting and they were getting treatment every day. From the moment that they would get pain or that their menstruation would start. And I said, well, I couldn't do that in my clinic who's paying for this? Like, can they come they're in pain, they might not even be able to move. You know, Think about your typical endometriosis patient probably in bed holding a hot water bottle, really in pain. It was a very interesting research. But the thing is, can I replicate that in my clinic? And the opposite works as well. I'm very into that. And the people that I've read my papers, they know that I'm always pushing towards what you do in clinic. Can we replicate that So again, it works both ways and I don't like hiding behind any of those. So to answer your question, what takes time is to read them and. Pick which ones to post, but I just take it reading them as knowledge and information, I just love doing it.

CC: I love that you shared about the fact that so many people will say, well, there's no research out there because I get this on my social media pages all the time. Some people come in and they'll write oh, this is bs.

There's no research about acupuncture. Nothing is proven, blah, blah.' So I always say exactly this. I'm like, 'oh, you've read all the internet, the millions of website and all the research on the internet in language possible. And that's how you know, there's no research.

I'm thinking, how arrogant of you to say there's no research. There are so much done in other countries as well, or in language that hasn't even been reached because it hasn't been translated, right? So I always think it's funny when people say there's no research. I'm like, oh, so you've read it all right? Have you like, no, you haven't Call Sandro.

He's read all of them.

SG: Yeah. And it's interesting. My transition from clinic into research what you've seen over the last few years, overall with the amount of, more and more research being published, and by the way, it's not just the amount of published research, the quality of those publications and that work that has been done has also increased over the last few decades. We now know that from reading back and from analyzing those that you know that it's getting better and better. And one of the things that I say about my transition is that even, you know, I'm new in the research field, people asking me, for example, like they were asking you, you know, oh, research on in acupuncture.

Oh, is that, to find out if it works? And I'm like, no, it we're actually studying how it works. where We've really moved on from the, does it work to the how does this work and how does that work? And what if we change this and what if we do this and what if for this type of patient and what in combination with other things.

So it's really going beyond the premise of does it work to now we're really optimizing the fact that it works and optimizing in, different populations for, different conditions in conjunction with other things. And more and more you're seeing that in, particularly in my field with polycystic

ovary syndrome, where there's this big push towards disciplines working together there is that road of research in terms of really finding out how we can work together with other, interventions as well.

CC: Thank you so much for listening to this podcast, for being on this journey with me, I appreciate everyone that took the time to download, to follow the show, to like it, to leave a review. You are the best. Please let me know what you think I should do next year in the podcast.

Any ideas, you can email me, or you can DM me on social media at Acupro Academy, or you can leave it in the comments below if you're watching this episode on YouTube, have a fantastic day, no matter what, keep rocking it using TCM and I'll see you next year in the next episode.

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