

CC: My guest today has 1.5 million followers on Instagram and is such a sweetheart.

You are gonna love his energy. We talked about his journey in the acupuncture world and holistic medicine world as well, because he doesn't just do TCM or acupuncture. He's very well-rounded because he leads from the heart, he leads from his intuition, and I love that. He's in Guatemala right now, but he's a Canadian. You are gonna love this conversation. There's so much to unpack. Are you ready?

Let's go.

Welcome to AcuPro, a show dedicated to making Chinese medicine and acupuncture. Easy to grasp and fun to learn. Hi, I am your host, Clara Cohen. I support practitioners and students and 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.

I'm so glad you're here. We have been connecting online for a long time now, and you are an amazing Instagrammer. You have over 1.5 million followers at the time of this recording on Instagram. You're also on TikTok, and you make great content. Interesting videos because it's not just about TCM or acupuncture, but it's about energy healing and a lot of other complementary medicine. First of all, you're in Guatemala in Central America, which I'm like, oh my God, this is so cool. Before we talk about how you ended up in Guatemala, I would love for you to start at the beginning, how you ended up doing TCM studying TCM?

KR: What really kicked it off was, I did four years in the Canadian Army and right away I knew I didn't wanna be there and I was like, Hey, I'm just gonna do my four-year contract and get out. And even before I got in, I applied for the Navy, and I was like, I just wanna travel, and why not get paid for travel?

I was a college dropout, couldn't afford school. And my last year I was a vehicle technician and just going through the motions trying to finish and I had this 14 foot fall near death experience. And at the time I was like really buff, a lot of muscles, zero flexibility. I couldn't even sit cross leg it without falling backwards. And I was pulling this container, out of the back of a truck that was parked on top of a container, like an unloading dock. So we were 14 feet from the ground and I pulled really hard and the wall of this container that I tried to pull, snapped. And with that force I flew outta the back of the truck. I'm free falling through the air. I'm gonna die.

And all this went flash through my brain as I'm free falling through the air, staring up the blue sky with some clouds. And then I just felt peace rushed over me. And I was like, wow. It was a good life. I was a hundred percent sure I was gonna die.

So all these memories started flashing through my brain and, and DMT released a powerful release of DMT. I hit the ground and I didn't die. If I wasn't so tight with my muscles and had so much tensity in my body, my body would've shattered. But because I was weightlifting for a good eight years straight, that held me together. And that kind of set me on a path. So when I got outta the military, I was on disability for back injury they helped me pay for school and they gave me a few options after my testing. And one of them was RMT, which is like a two year massage program in Canada. At the time I was getting into yoga, doing personal training and trying to heal my pain, and I decided to do that schooling because it was the most aligned with what I was doing. But I really didn't wanna massage people at all. I did wanna learn the anatomy and I did want to learn what they learn because, massage therapists in Canada have actually more anatomy than medical doctors.

You live in Canada, so you know, they're quite well educated.

I have a lot of experience with psychedelics in my life. I started using them very young, had a very hard childhood and, used them to numb myself. during that time I was becoming sober from using drugs for over a decade. Alcoholism. And I smoked weed for 17 plus years, almost daily, even when I was in the military. I go to this Ayahuasca ceremony and I'm in so much back pain.

I'm becoming spiritual, religious, starting to read the Bible and have a relationship with God. I wanna have a relationship with God. I wanna figure out balance in my life. And the shaman laid out some. Oracle Cards so I picked it. I was the last person to go. It said Healer. And I'm like, oh, that's weird. when I read the meaning of the card, it was literally two minutes after I said I wanna have a relationship with God. Then I. Pick this healer card, and then it said, God works through you as a healing angel.

You have healing abilities. Everything is divine and in perfect order. Something clicked in my brain I think I just found my purpose in life. And then from that moment on, , I'm dedicating my life to being in service of humanity through healing.

I knew why I was here on earth and I was ready to take on life. I've never felt such gratitude and peace and excitement for life I had a purpose finally. . And ever since that moment . I took every single course I could get my hands on. I did, a year of holistic nutrition. I went to India to study Ayurveda. I did neuro kinetic therapy, functional range conditioning, anything

related to body work. And I realized , all the crazy childhood traumas that I had to do trained me for where I'm at in life and trained me to hold space for people.

And I wanna study acupuncture 'cause you know, it's hard on the body to massage and I'm getting good results too. I'm getting a lot of results and people are coming back and i'm like, Hey, there's something here.

The first time I ever got acupuncture, I was camping with some friends In Algonquin on a lake and I was with a couple naturopaths and they were both gonna just gimme some acupuncture.

So I sat down and it's like sunset and we all ate some psilocybin. put some needles in me. And when I was sitting in the meditative position getting needled, I seen these flashes in my subconscious, in my mind. And it was the channels. So first they did LI 4 and I seen the whole LI channel light up in my mind. I think they did the four gates. They did liver three after. And I seen the liver channel pew like that. And then every time they did a needle, I seen these channels light up then. just got attacked by a swarm of mosquitoes. We all did Sunset Lake Country, and I have all these needles in me and I really want to keep them in me because it's feeling amazing.

But yeah, we all had to take the needles out and then run into the tent and hide. fast forward another two or three months and I start acupuncture school. And start studying the channels. And I'm like, oh, I've seen these before. Like this is cool. Then in school, I just started having these amazing things happen to me. , went to Ontario College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, it was a really good school. I had a amazing mentor, studied 25 years in China, he was legit doing some pretty crazy needling stuff.

I get to school, eyes are all bloodshot and I'm flush in the face, red cheeks, a lot of wind in my neck, stiff neck, like just classic TCM symptoms. And he just put, needle in the sensory line in the skull and just twirled the heck out of it.

And then all of a sudden everything just instantaneous. Eyes went from bloodshot to white it just drained everything. And I just felt normal. And the wind drained from my neck as well. Acupuncture is the real deal. This is my favorite modality.

CC: I'm gonna stop you right there before you continue 'cause I love your story. But before you continue, 'cause I could see how passionate you are and how excited you are, I'm gonna unpack the first part before we get to the TCM and post TCM, right? I love first of all that you're vulnerable enough to say that you've had some tough time and you've done a lot of difficult things like being addicted to different product, alcohol, et cetera, et cetera. , I really

thank you for sharing that. That's not easy to share. The first thing I also wanted to talk about is the fact that you went to an ayahuasca ceremony. And I know that a lot of people that listen to this show, many know what that is, but a lot of people may not know what that is.

Right. First of all, I wanna know where you went. I have a friend who went to Peru a few times. She went to Costa Rica a few times. She's done it in BC as well. , but basically it's plant medicine and it's psychedelic. where did you go to do ayahuasca?

I think a lot of people may not know what exactly ayahuasca is. I've never done it. I have a little bit of a, something I have to work on control issue and so, so I've never even smoked marijuana.

KR: I've been working with it since, 2015, and the first time I did it was in Mexico. The second time I did it was in Canada in Ontario. And this is the time where I had my life changing experience. And since then I've probably done it about 20 times. I've been working with it here in Guatemala as well.

It's a psychedelic medicine where it basically cleans you out. It can help clean, you from the inside out and that's why it helps you purge. 'cause you can then release these things that you know, you might've been holding onto your whole life. , it helps you look at things differently and, . your perception is different of something, then you may never be the same. And usually this happens in really beautiful ways because it helps you realize things that are not easy to experience and realize. And sometimes it just lifts that veil and cracks open your hearts and, that's what it has done for me in a big way.

That's awesome, and I love that you also shared that when you had acupuncture with the naturopathic doctor in Algonquin Park. So if people don't know what Algonquin Park is, it's a big park in Ontario, north. Of Toronto, and I've been there in May when it was swarming with black flies. So I get the mosquito thing 'cause it was so crazy.

We went camping and canoeing and I had never seen so many black fly in my life. Like I couldn't eat, and I remember thinking, I'm never going back there again. But everybody told us you went there in May. What a bad idea. So that's kind of funny. But while you. Were needed.

You felt obviously energy and you saw the meridian. That's an experience that most acupuncturists or people that work with acupuncture have never seen or have never felt like I've felt the meridian all along the path. Many times, but I've never seen them in my mind, or there's never been, you know, vision of them.

So I love that you did, and the reason you did is because I think you're really open to experiencing things without being scared. I think that gives you the advantage. 'cause a lot of people, like for me, ayahuasca scares me. So with you, if you are open to it, then you're gonna experience a much beautiful picture.

So I love that you shared that.

Ad: Did you know I created three books to support your TCM journey? Often I'm asked Clara, what's the difference between all three? Well, they all have fun, colorful visual to make them much more easy to grasp and understand each concept. So definitely not your TCM. Typical boring dry books. They are available in hard copy and they ship all over the world.

But if you'd rather the digital version, they all come with video links to compliment them. And can be downloaded on any device. My first book, acupoint, made Easy. This is the orange one, covers all acupuncture points, function, location, depth, and angle of insertion, including special points, categories, extra point, cupping, moa, and all my clinical pearls.

My second book, Chinese Medicine Made Easy, which is my green book, covers all TCM Foundation. Diagnosis. Yes. Including tongue and pulse with lots of colorful visual to help you grasp specifically observation right case studies and my digital fillable intake form for you to use with your patients. My third book.

Chinese medicine treatments made easy. That's my purple book. Covers all TCM treatments for 160 syndromes, including acupuncture points, herbal formulas, diet ear acupuncture, and many other TCM tools. So you can have that book at your fingertips every day in clinic. It is a must. For all practitioners. I provide sample for each of my books that you can download to see if this is really truly what you were looking for, because I want you to be happy with what you investing in.

When you invest in any of my products. You can check out the links to all my books, initial notes below, or go to my website, acupro academy.com, and on the menu tab, click the shop tab and get your copy today.

CC: I'll let you continue with your journey into the TCM world.

KR: I went to school and just started incorporating it into my practice basically. I already had a really, really powerful body work practice and just adding in the needles into body work that I do and I work with these medicines in practice as well, just compliment each other so well .

I had a lot of back pain in school, still in back pain, and my mentor who I had mentioned, he put a three cun needle perpendicular in, L five S one , being an anatomy nerd, I'm like, how does that even work?

Isn't there intervertebral disc ? What's up with that? Doesn't that puncture an organ? Because that is deep in a very sensitive area.

But that really helped my back. acupuncture's, just so deep Chinese medicine is so deep and I feel like, don't even scratch the surface of it

I actually kind of fell off of like the Chinese medicine diagnosis. And I'll just intuitively put needles , where I believe they need to go. And just trust. And the results have always been fantastic and really powerful. and the body's just so smart and it just like realigns itself basically.

CC: It's interesting because I've been told many time, and I absolutely go about this all the time, is that your intention with your needling is more important than the points you're selecting. So the way you have your intention, you decide, this is where , I wanna needle this person. Your intention makes a huge difference because it's energy exchange, right?

So I love that you use that because sometimes people feel, specifically, new practitioners are like, oh, I don't think I have the right diagnosis. I'm like. Follow your intuition. , what do you think this person needs? However, I feel like sometimes. People think with their brain too much, not with their heart.

So the brain gets in the way and it gets stuck and it doesn't know what to do. Instead of going, well, what does my heart feels right? And we forget that your intuition will make a huge difference. I appreciate you sharing that.

Now, how did you go from there? To where you are now in Guatemala. And by the way, we'll have the link in the show notes below, but Key is in Guatemala and has a beautiful, beautiful retreat center, which is called Maestro, which I love that. The Maestro. , I think that's so cool. And the pictures look amazing.

I mean, it's. Beautiful and it's peaceful and it's basically a healing center. So can you tell me how you got from where you were in Ontario to Guatemala?

KR: I finished school and I knew I didn't wanna live in Toronto. , I love ocean, I love mountains. That place doesn't have. Have either.

I love BC so much. So my plan was to move to BC so I get to BC. And then I had an offer to go to Switzerland to go do some treatments and ceremonies. So I flew to Switzerland and got an offer to move there. Hey, I'm moving to Europe.

And then I packed my bags, and went to Europe. But then while I was in Switzerland working I just kept getting these like really loud, loud signals to, to move to LA. I'm listening. I hear you like super loud ones and I decide to. my things, go to LA

And that didn't work out. I was having a lot of hard times with finding a place to stay. And just getting pushed in other directions. And, I went back to Switzerland. I worked there for a while then went to Canada for a little bit to visit my family and then I went back to LA then I had an invite, to go work in Brazil and an invite to go to Lake Atitlan.

And so I come to Guatemala I flew into the lake and you can take a small propeller plane. the lake. And the second I flew over the mountain to the lake seen it.

I just got this big jolt in my body. I'm supposed to move here. I dunno why. So then I came here, spent two weeks, went back to LA, got all my stuff, got rid of my place, came back to Lake, Atitlan with all my stuff.

My intention was to simplify. To focus on my craft. So I have a full modality in my head. I have this thing I created called channel Flossing that I have yet to share with the world. And all these things that I'm just so excited to share, but I've just been traveling and spreading myself thin and trying to get grounded and find the right place to do it.

Then all of a sudden I seen this Facebook ad for this center. That, , cost \$1.2 million and I didn't even have six figures in the bank and I just went to look at it. I'm just curious. 'cause it was like this beautiful mandala in the ceiling and, and this spiral staircase, and it was like the most beautiful staircase I've ever seen. , one thing led to another and I decided to. Put my life savings down on a non, non-refundable deposit and trust that, this place was meant for the work that I do. Which I felt in my heart that this place is really meant for the work that I do. Like it has a sound dome and a dark room, and a beautiful temple. It's just like prepared the work that I do.

CC: I think it goes back to that card you had when you did the ayahuasca in Ontario where it says healer. You went back to that, right? Like being in a retreat in Guatemala, that feels like home. That feels what you wanna do. Then that's the healer card. It's like, okay. All those things I've learned, all those places have been, I can gather all that information and utilize it here with all the modalities.

And just make it a beautiful retreat. 'cause sometimes, just like you did, a lot of people need to get away from where they are in order to heal. They need to go somewhere else, like a retreat where you are in Guatemala, to kind of start their healing journey because they need to be removed from the environment in order to.

Allow themself to see something else. So I appreciate you talking about this and the risk you're taking because yes, you're right when you don't have all the savings right now you are also looking at if anybody wanna invest or donate to help you grow the center, then we'll put the link in the show note for that as well.

'cause I think that's important if people wanna contribute, can you tell me what modalities will be used when people go there?

KR: it's gonna be the home base for bio culture and holistic university, which, is really exciting. So the bio culture guys are retreats that is, a mixture between a brand or multiple brands, some creators and guests.

And then they have this really cool experience where you work with a brand, you create content, you hang out with a bunch of other creators, and there's some guests who get to enjoy that experience as well. every retreat's different by whoever wants to co-host it. Like they bring their own magic there. As for me, I'm hosting , a breath work ceremony, as well as like some movement practices. , abdominal massage there's gonna be ecstatic dance and stuff.

And then at Maestro Valley. My main mission in life basically has been to, help train more competent healthcare practitioners. Because when I was in a lot of pain

and actually I was able to. Go see a bunch of practitioners because I was ex-military. I had, insurance and I probably got to spend, tens of thousands of dollars of insurance money seeing chiropractors, physiotherapists, massage therapists, doctors, like all the practitioners.

I've seen them all nobody could help. I was getting told opposite things. I was leaving. Angry and worse off than I was before I went there. I wishing I could get my time back. And I was also not in the full head space of taking ownership of my pain too.

So that taught me a lot of like, your life is your responsibility and you can't expect someone else to heal you. That is your job. And so this was good, good training for me, , but it also made me realize that there is a lot of incompetent healthcare practitioners out there. In every single, modality, physiotherapists, chiropractors, massage therapists, acupuncturists.

When I go see someone, when I pay a hundred dollars for an hour, \$150 for an hour to go see somebody. I want to leave feeling better than I came. And that's not always the case.

They save up money to go see someone, and then they get a bad experience the first time they ever go. It's like, well, they can judge a whole modality on that one experience. It's like, oh, I've gotten chiropractic before. I don't like it. It's not good. And they'll judge all chiropractors on this one practitioner who's not good.

And that can happen for any, so my mission is to. Hold space and help train more competent healthcare practitioners in this world. And Maestro Valley is my home base to do that because the style of work that I share, it is effective, it's proven effective. And I know that if other people are doing this, it's gonna be effective from other people as well.

Over the years, I've probably gotten close to a thousand messages of. people asking if there's someone who does what I do or help from me and, I want more people to have access to, really good healthcare, and, healing to be more accessible for people.

CC: It's a great mission to wanna have healing accessible to more people done by people that are loving what they do and do it in a way that's very intuitive, as well as intentional, which I think is really important as well. So I really appreciate you sharing this, and we'll have the link below if you guys wanna check it out, because I think that's such a great idea.

The holistic university retreat, because I think when we come outta school, we feel very lonely. Most of us don't have any mentor or anybody. This is why I started going online because my students needed a little bit more, and then eventually I found out that.

A lot of people all over the world needed some support because they were by themself on the acupuncture island, that's such a great thing you're putting together.

Any parting words for people that are listening and my audience, as you know, is acupuncture students and practitioners as well. , I would love your parting words.

KR: Just follow your heart , trust your feelings. Feeling is the highest form of communication. Just trust it and go for it because, we gotta take risks. It is the only way to achieve the things that you desire the most is to take risks.

So just trust your heart, trust your feeling, and just go for it because you know what's the worst that can happen..

CC: That's a beautiful way of finishing the podcast. I love it. Trust your heart. Follow your gut. I appreciate you being here and everything you're doing online, offline for practitioners, for patients, for everyone. 'cause you have such a great energy. I love your energy.

It's very, very sweet, very giving. So I really appreciate you being here. Thank you so much, Key. I wish you the best in beautiful, beautiful Guatemala. And maybe you never know, one day I might just show up there..

KR: That would be so amazing. And thank you so much for what you do, because you really helped me through school. I used to watch your videos and I mean, still do, your five element theory video on YouTube and, and you just make it fun, your energy. And you really helped me through school, and I know you helped so many other people. So from the bottom of my heart, thank you. 'cause, it made a difference, a positive impact in my life.

CC: I'm so glad. Thank you, Key. Have a great rest of your day in beautiful Guatemala.

KR: Thanks, Clara.

CC: Thank you so much for spending your time with me today. I truly hope you benefited from this episode, and I would love for you to share it with a friend that may benefit from it as well. Follow the show, live a review, and if you want more, go to my website, acuproacademy.com. I have tons of resources there with treatment protocols, case studies, free courses, and so much more.

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