

Clara Cohen: She went from being a fertility focused acupuncturist to starting a virtual application using AI in order to support patients. She could not help because financially they could not see her. That is intriguing, don't you think so? She basically is using her knowledge of years of practicing specifically fertility practice, and put all her little brain cells into an AI application.

And so I have so many questions for her and I wanna know, is this AI gonna replace us? Are we out of a job? This is the question of the day. Are you ready? This is going to be an interesting conversation.

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.

Welcome to the show, Kirsten Karchmer. I'm so glad you're here because fertility is one of my favorite subject, and you are such a wealth of knowledge because you have been doing this for a long time.

So before we start, can you tell us how long you've been practicing acupuncture? I know you're in Texas and everything behind why you chose to focus on fertility. I have so many question on where you went from there.

Kirsten Karchmer: Yes. So essentially, I got diagnosed with MS when I was 20.

I was doing my master's in linguistics at the time I was teaching at University of Texas and I was really sick and I was also doing the Korean Special forces training at that time. 'cause I had a job in Korea the next year. And I thought even though I was disabled, I used a cane. I couldn't walk without my cane.

And I was really sick. And one of my classmates from my martial arts class was in acupuncture school at the time. And she said, you should really go to acupuncture. And I was 21, 22 years old. I was like, that's like going to a psychic. I'm not going to an acupuncturist that's complete malarkey.

and she is like how much avarice you have to think the only thing that could help you is western medicine and it's not helping you. So I was like, okay, that's a good point. I ended up going to the acupuncturist and all the acupuncturists and healers listening to this episode.

You can appreciate this. I hide my cane, I fill out my paperwork, he doesn't even look at it. And he comes in, he starts just quietly feeling my pulse. And of course I don't know anything about Chinese medicine, so I'm rolling my eyes, I'm hemming and hawing this is such a scam. Such a jerk.

And all of a sudden he looks up and he's Chinese. He says, oh, you're so tired. And I was like, whatever. Everybody's tired. And that is true. Everybody is tired. He doesn't care, he keeps feeling my pulse. And he says, you cannot digest food. And that was really true watery stools every day, like five or six times a day.

And I was like, okay, that is pretty true. Then he goes back and he's feeling my pulse and he says, do you have muscle weakness? Now he hasn't seen me walk right? I said, actually, I have multiple sclerosis. And he starts clapping. He is clapping like crazy. That makes perfect sense.

That makes me so happy. And I was like, am I getting punked here? In what world is having MS or this explanation of it, something good? And he goes, no. It's very clear. When you were born, your body, your constitution was very robust, but your disease was very weak and nascent. But I was a competitive athlete, gymnast, tennis player.

I trained all day every day in the hot Texas ton. I trained until I threw up every day, right? Thinking spleen because I don't sweat.

Clara Cohen: Oh, wow.

Kirsten Karchmer: And so I would just over, I would overheat and the only way I could cool myself up was to throw up.

Anyways, long story long. He says, my job is to make your constitution stronger than your disease.

And then hopefully you'll go into remission. And then I did, took like a year, but in a few months I already started seeing changes in the intensity of my episodes, the time between episodes, all of those things. So I was really happy for that. How did I get so interested in fertility?

When you're in acupuncture school, your first year you're just learning patterns. And all of the associations between every symptom. There are so many associations for the menstrual cycle. And I was like, wow, this is so easy to diagnose women. They tell you all the secrets from their period, how much blood, the timing, everything.

And I was falling in love with the menstrual cycle. I was like, all this time we've been thinking the menstrual cycle is a curse. It's a monthly feedback tool. Now we might not like what it's feeding back, but it's better than not knowing. At least if we know, oh, I only have one day bleeding and I'm a vegan.

We know that's not working. And it's current incarnation doesn't mean you can't be a vegan, but it means you gotta do some supplementation or add some things into your diet to enrich your blood. And so I just became obsessed with that. This is before there were so many people on social media, I used to think I was the only person so obsessed with the menstrual cycle.

And that really got me to today. I got my license 25 years ago. I haven't practiced in a clinic in five years. But I helped about 10,000 women in my clinical career. And we've helped just in the last year, 16,000 women from conceivable, from our software.

Clara Cohen: Okay, so there's a lot to unpack here. First of all, thank you for sharing your story. It's really interesting to me because I always come from a perspective of TCM as well, and when someone shares a story. First of all, I always say to teenage girl patients that when you overexercise, you know that is going to be difficult during your teenage years 'cause you're growing, right?

But in TCM perspective, the spleen is connected to muscles, and exercise and energy, and suddenly you're tired. Your muscle are not helping you at all, and you overworked during a time where your spleen needed all the love possible. And of course, a lot of teenagers will.

Be athletes. Right. But women, and I've seen a lot of athletes or even Olympic athletes and often with women, they don't get a period, or it's very light, they're very blood deficient in TCM because the body can't keep up with both, right?

Kirsten Karchmer: The demands are just higher than the resources.

Clara Cohen: Exactly, right? So you eat as much as you can, and the fact that you weren't sweating to me is really definitely a blood deficiency as well. 'cause blood is fluid, so it made so much sense.

So it's fascinating how that shifted and it's amazing that you were able to get MS in remission and that TCM helped you. So I love those stories. It always makes me happy to hear that. I would love to hear if you do remember as a teenager, did you have a light period?

Did you have irregular menstruation?

Kirsten Karchmer: I barely even menstruate. Of course like I was so compromised.

What's really interesting is I was in remission till I went through menopause. I'm 57 now. When I was going through menopause, I started to have exercise intolerance around 45. It wasn't bad, but if I did any kind of hard exercise afterwards, I would crash like bonk, as if your blood sugar gets too low. I would feel was disoriented, shaky, confused, like hard bonk.

But if I would check my blood sugar, it would be normal. If I would eat a cake or drink a gallon of orange juice, it would not change it. If I ate a pound of bacon, it would not change. Like nothing I could eat or drink would get me out of the bunk. 'cause it wasn't true blood deficiency. I saw so many doctors, I saw TCM doctors, nobody could figure it out until about four weeks ago, I figured out what the problem was, that I have adult onset, PDH.

It's a new diagnosis and it's like one in 500,000 people have this condition where you stop making the enzyme. That converts carbohydrates into ATP or energy or chi. And what happens is when I eat carbohydrates, it produces lactate instead of ATP, which means the more I exercise it, the more that I eat, I would go into lactic acidosis.

But I didn't know it was lactic acidosis. And how I finally diagnosed it was with Claude ai.

Clara Cohen: Okay. Okay.

I'm 58, so I went through menopause.

I don't have any symptoms, but I went through the whole thing around 50 and it was very good. I was very very thankful and grateful for, how I went through it. But. What's interesting is I see and many menopausal women over the years, and it is very common for them to say, oh, I used to be able to eat this, like pizza or whatever, lots of carbs and have my energy and feel good.

And then now if I have more than one or two glasses or a lot of carbs, then I feel comatose tired. I get so many more symptoms.

And so when they switch to a lower carbohydrate diet, they start to feel better and better. So it's interesting that what you have is. Not common. But at the same time, I feel around menopause, women are very much more sensitive to a lot more in their environment.

And I think that also plays a role. So I'm glad you shared that 'cause I've seen it many times.

Kirsten Karchmer: I recently learned too, because I'm not on hormone replacement therapy, but Claude strongly recommended it because I have so much mitochondrial dysfunction that actually mitochondria are quite estrogen dependent.

Ad: Do you feel your TCM education truly prepared you to treat fertility patients in the modern world? I sure didn't. Back in 2004, when I finished my five-year TCM program, I felt completely inadequate and. Unprepared to treat fertility patients coming through my doors. So I decided to immerse myself in the fertility world.

I read many books, attended conference, took seminars, and met with reproductive endocrinologists in my area to learn and to really understand how I could truly. Serve my fertility patients. Today, I want to share with you my years of experience in treating female fertility successfully. This is why I created the complete fertility and TCM treatment online course.

I cover everything from natural fertility to I-U-I-I-V-F and addresses. Patients with BCOS or endometriosis who want to get pregnant as well. When you invest in my courses, you can download the PDF version of the slides. You can get four hours of continuing education approved, yes, N-C-C-O-M as well. For those of you who are in the states, you can access the course forever and I offer a seven day money back guarantee because I stand behind my product.

Now listen to what people who took this course have to say. I've just taken this fertility course and there is everything you need to know in details. It's really amazing. Thanks, Clara. Someone else said, I purchased your fertility course, and I would just like to say that it is fantastic. I'm already seeing such better results with my fertility clients since taking the course, and my understanding and confidence in treating fertility is also increased.

So thank you so much. Don't miss out on the opportunity to improve your skill and help your fertility patients. Go to [accuro academy.com](https://accuroacademy.com) and click the TCM course tab on the menu bar or check out the link. Show notes below. You won't regret investing in this course.

Clara Cohen: Really appreciate you sharing this. Now you mentioned Claude a couple of times and for my audience, because not everybody is AI versed, there are a lot of, large language model, which are basically like ChatGPT.

So if you've used ChatGPT, Claude is the same idea or Gemini for Google. There's a lot of those. And Claude is going to be another company. But this is where you can utilize it. You ask a lot of question, it'll look around the internet and try to, give you the best answer it can.

So it's a great segue because you have a clinic in Texas and your focus is fertility and reproductive health. And I wanna go into this in a minute, but before we do, you are one of the first acupuncturists I'm speaking with who actually utilize already AI to help her patients or to help patients in general, specifically with fertility.

And you started conceivable. So I want you to explain what conceivable is to acupuncturists that are listening and students. And I wanna talk about why you build an AI platform to support your patients. And the reason I'm asking this, because obviously AI is moving very fast and they are very polar opposite people.

People that love it, and people that just think it is awful. We're gonna have a lot of people in the audience that are gonna be polar f on ai. So my question is, why did you decide to do this? And explain what conceivable does for your patients.

Kirsten Karchmer: Sure. So just for clarification I am not a practicing acupuncturist anymore. In Texas, you have to be seeing patients 20 hours a week to keep your license. The reason that I started conceivable I read a study that less than 3% of couples could afford fertility treatments. At that time, it was probably \$4,000 to come to my clinic for three months. We had very high touch concierge care.

We made all of their raw Chinese herbs for them. We customized them, we did everything for 'em. Even when I was in clinic, I always had this feeling like all the people who are my patients had money. A few did not have money, but I knew that the sacrifice that they had to make to come to my clinic, they work at Walmart, they have a lot lower income than somebody who's an accountant.

Right? Part of that always really bothered me, and I didn't really know how to make it cheaper. You can just get your price so low, even at \$70 a visit, it still cost prohibitive for most people. \$70 plus some herbs, it is still \$400 or \$500 a month for most people it's then another stressor.

And when I read that study, I literally cried because all those years of feeling a little bit like I'm only helping people who can afford it and I don't feel good about that. And I've written two bestselling books, but still it's not the same. And so I decided I was gonna dedicate the rest of my life to figuring out how to make care for women.

Better than it's ever been imagined and almost free. So anyone who's listening about AI and they're like she shouldn't be doing ai, I am sure like half of you are like there's no place for AI in TCM and whatever. Imagine you do work at Walmart and you make \$45,000 a year.

They're never gonna get to come to you and you're never gonna get the opportunity to help them. And that's really sad because Chinese medicine is very transformative and. So we built a first version of this and it didn't have even the AI built into it, but basically trying to follow what I do with patients in my clinic, minus the acupuncture.

And we did a clinical trial. We had 109 women coming to see me and 109 women only using the app. I was board certified reproductive acupuncture. I'm like, okay, I'm pretty good. Not the best, but I'm pretty good. I should be able to get decent outcomes. And at the end of the study, the data analyst came into my office and he was sheepish.

Now we had seen so many pregnancies in the app coming up, but we weren't calculating or quantifying. And our goal was before we spent a lot of money building this, is can we build a piece of technology that's at least 50% as clinically effective as me? And if so, even at \$15 a month, even if it's only 50% as good as me, that will still help people.

It will help them more than a book will, and hopefully a lot. I said, what's the matter? You look sheepish. Didn't it work? He goes, oh no, it worked. It totally worked. We increased the likelihood of natural conception by between 150 to 260% in less than four months with no human interaction.

Remember IUI 11%, IVF 25, 40% depending on how good the doctor is and your age, and you know how well you're prepared. And I was like, wow. Did

she get close to me? Meaning, we had a little competition. He goes, no. And I was like, damn, not even close. He goes no. You misunderstood me.

She didn't get close to you. You got close to her. She outperformed you by 6%.

Clara Cohen: Wow.

Kirsten Karchmer: So at first I was embarrassed 'cause it was like this shitty app beat me. It's 109 women. It's not a small sample. It's not like 10 people.

You're like statistically insignificant or something. But then I remembered our beautiful statements of fact from Chinese medicine and it says, the good doctor treats the patient. The great doctor will treat society, but the master will make herself obsolete. And that is what I'm working on. And so I was really shocked by that.

But I was like, but how? Without acupuncture, how twice a week acupuncture and personalized Chinese herbal medicine, right? How could this be better? And what I realized is that when our patients come to us, we are the hero of the story. When you see your patient two years later and they're holding a baby, they're like, look what you did for me.

Clara Cohen: That's so true.

Kirsten Karchmer: They don't take the ownership. When they leave your office and you give 'em a handout or you're like, okay, I want you to eat more iron rich foods, more B12 foods. We gotta make some blood. Make sure to take your supplements, all this stuff.

And they're like yeah. And then they go back to life. Conceivable the app it's only for fertility right now, but we'll roll out in the next 90 days, pregnancy and postpartum, and then all the way age nine to 50, but just fertility first.

So what happens in the conceivable app? We do onboarding we ask her all the questions that we would ask in a consultation. We've spent four years going from a consultation that was 800 down to 22 questions and still be able to make a very clear Chinese medicine diagnosis that can be actionable. So you won't see any Chinese medicine in this app, but this app is all Chinese medicine.

Only acupuncturists will know, right? So it goes through the onboarding, it asks all these questions. It breaks that down into five categories. Those five categories present to the user. Energy qi, blood, hormones.

This is stagnation. Temperatures. This is yin and yang check-in and stress. Also stagnation, temperatures. Then it's able to generate what we call the conceivable score that predicts the likelihood of her natural conception.

Usually in apps that'll say, this is your high fertility. This is mean when you should have sex. This is a score on a one to a hundred. How likely you are you to conceive naturally in the next 90 days?

Clara Cohen: I know you have the 22 questions for symptoms and the temperature and everything else, but do you ask question about their diagnosis?

Let's say they were diagnosed with PCOS or endometriosis, or their, fertility test, their cycle. Is it regular, irregular? Do you ask all the question, including Western medicine test results, for example?

Kirsten Karchmer: Yes. So not a lot. So basically, have you had a fertility workup and what were the results?

Clara Cohen: Okay.

Kirsten Karchmer: And that's all that we need. We're not trying to be a medical device or a medical intervention, trying to stay away from the FDA at least until we, are a lot bigger. I don't need to actually know that you have A-P-C-O-S diagnosis to know that you have an irregular period.

You have hair on your face PCOS didn't exist. Endometriosis didn't exist when Chinese medicine was invented. The patterns that represent that, and in my opinion, that's much more clinically efficacious when we look at the books that we're using to teach people Chinese medicine, obviously we have to standardize it because you have to start somewhere because it's a wealth of knowledge.

the error that I see students mostly happen in early practitioners is they're like, oh, you have PCOS. That means you have spleen. qi deficiency and dampness. Maybe one in five women with PCOS have spleen qi deficiency and dampness. And so if you still have to make a diagnosis.

The PCOS diagnosis should only just be a a kind of Hey, look over here.

Clara Cohen: Had lots of PTs patients over the years that were very blood deficient and not spleen qi deficient and not damp at all. Like very dry, very thin, right? No extra hair, all that kind of stuff.

Yeah.

Kirsten Karchmer: Right, right. So it, identifies that and then basically we give her a score and then on the back end we diagnose it in Chinese medicine. We don't say it anywhere, but that's what we're doing. And then we created an AI virtual care team.

So that person gets me, the AI version of me is Kai, Kirsten ai. And we wanted to have a distinction. And then you have a chef, a nutritionist, a therapist. A data analyst and a supplement formulator. And so then they have a powwow and they're like, okay, what is the role of each person for this person?

What are all the specific things? If we can drill down to the most important areas to work on. So even if it's me, kidney, yang deficiency, spleen qi deficiency, blood deficiency, that's a lot to work on. What do you typically eat?

The nutritionist comes and analyzes that. What are the deficiencies? And what are the supplements that will make the most sense for this person's clinical presentation? And then you'll just get a list of the recommendations. We can personalize packs for you for \$109, which I think is the deal of the century.

If you're an acupuncturist You can do it from our website too. You can make your recommendations and send your patients to get their supplement packs from us, and we will give you a 20% rev share on it. And then they save so much. You still just to get about the same margin you would on your supplements.

But your patients get a much better price and what we found was that if we tell them to take six bottles of stuff, they're semi compliant, especially they don't take the right dose, and if we give 'em a pack with eight pills in it, they almost take it every day because in the app we ask them, did you take your supplements?

Yes or no? It's okay if you didn't. And we wanna know, are you taking our supplements? Are you taking somebody else's supplements? Because in the end we wanna be able to show. That personalized supplements work better than Amazon supplements typically don't work. They're super low quality.

And then oftentimes people are taking the wrong supplements. So she gets her menu plan, she gets shopping lists that connect to Instacart. We analyze her tongue with vision. Once a month sticks out her tongue, takes a picture of it, we

can analyze it. That goes into her Chinese medicine diagnosis, we have a wearable, so we have the first ring that is a non-invasive glucose monitor.

So it does all the things that Oura does for about half the price. It accurately tracks basal body temperature, which the Oura, I have not found it to be as accurate as I need it. And it can measure glucose and for people who are working on hormonal issues, anything in women's health and fertility.

Knowing your blood sugar status is really important and ours is not FDA cleared for a diabetic. So you wouldn't use this to titrate or calibrate your insulin. It literally just tells you, is it high, low, or normal? That's all we need.

Clara Cohen: Before you continue, I just want for my audience, 'cause I have people coming from all over the world. Ring is it looks like a wedding band and you keep it on your finger and it keeps track mostly of your sleep. If you're sleeping well or not. That's where they started with, exercise, they're adding more and more to it, but basically it's a monitor ring that connects to an app, right?

So what your ring is the same idea, but for blood glucose or for blood sugar level. Now my question, and it's the same with the oura ring, I just don't understand, and maybe you don't because it's not easy to explain, but how having something on top of the skin can tell you what your blood sugar is. You know what I mean?

You're not pricking, you're not going to the blood. So how do I know what my blood sugar is when I'm not going into my blood?

Kirsten Karchmer: So the good news is, if you think about it, remember our bodies are mostly energy. We're like 99.8% energy and .00002% matter. But we think that we're physical, which means we think that our exterior is less penetrable than we think it is.

And so the ring, the oura ring and our ring, they use light technology and it shines a light on the vessel. And when the blood sugar is high or low or normal and changes what it sees in the blood changes and it's able to, again, the technology isn't robust enough to say Hey, your blood sugar is 90.2 or whatever it is to say Hey, this seems too high, or this seems too low, and our ring is almost identical to the aura Ring does all the same things. It just does the glucose part and it accurately tracks temperature. So people who are trying to get pregnant or regulate their hormones will often wanna take their basal body temperatures, which is critical for me, for my work.

And they don't wanna take it. So we develop this ring so that they could wear the ring, we could check their blood glucose. And most importantly we are building a predictive analytics tool to predict adverse birth events. So as soon as somebody gets pregnant, they will actually get a risk score for adverse birth events and a program to do everything that we can to prevent them having some sort of adverse birth event.

But we'll be monitoring it both with the ring and we're building this cool face scan technology. It'll be out like in four or five months probably. So for the people who can't afford a ring, 'cause I'm always like, what about the people who really, don't have money, who, are taking care of an elderly parents?

Not that they have a good job, but there's no extra money. So this face scan technology in the morning, instead of taking your temperature, you'll go in and you'll just say, start my scan. And it asks you a couple of questions. What was your energy yesterday? How long did you sleep? Did you wake up rested?

And what's bothering you? What are you worried about? Just talk to me and you talk for two minutes. Why it's doing it. And it's like you get all illuminated, it's really cool. We can grab blood pressure, body composition, HRV, which is really important to me, VO two max stress recovery, all of these things just from this face scan.

We can grab all that data and then use that to predict adverse birth events or if they had a low risk, but maybe they had mild PCOS. And in month three she starts reading that her blood sugar is getting high. Her doctor won't check until month six or seven. That's three months of having high blood sugar that hurts mom and baby that we wanna circumvent.

And so the app picks that up and it sends a message to the chef and said, hey, Clara's blood sugar has been high last week. Let's up her protein, fiber and fat in a very specific way. Let's see if it changes. It sends another note to the therapist and says, Hey, Clara's blood sugar is up.

Let's see if she's more stressed. If she hasn't been talking to you, let's touch base with her. Let's measure her blood pressure and HRV and see if there's any way we can intervene. That's what I think women deserve for almost free.

Ad: Before we continue with today's episode, I wanna share something that honestly feels like a big moment for me if you've been following me for a while. You know, I've always said no to all sponsorships. I've been approached many

times, but I turn them all down because if I don't genuinely use a product or love it, I will never recommend it to you.

But today is different. I am super excited to introduce my very first sponsor. Drum roll please. Jane app. I'm also a Jane Ambassador, so this is a company I actually use and love. I am saying yes because I've used Jane for years in my own multidisciplinary clinic. Truly, it's the best practice management software and electronic medical record.

I've ever worked with before, Jane, we were using a clunky system that made everything harder than it needed to be. When we switched the entire clinic, felt the difference immediately. Jane is built by people who actually understand what it's like to be a practitioner. Running a busy practice. One of my favorite features is online booking.

There is nothing better than waking up and seeing patients booking their own appointment. Well, I was asleep. Your patients can book when it works for them and the wait list feature. Fills last minute cancellations automatically. I love that. I used to spend so much time calling eight to 10 people just to fill up one spot.

Jane also automates the things we never enjoy doing, like intake forms, reminders, confirmation. It honestly feels like having an extra assistant handling all the moving parts. You can focus on what really matters, which is supporting your patients and being the TCM rockstar practitioner. You truly are.

There are so many features I could talk about, but we would be here all day if you are looking for a system that brings more ease, more clarity and comment to your practice. I truly. Recommend Jane. You can check it out at jane.app/demo. And because you're part of the Acupro community, you can use my code `acupro one mo one month` when you sign up to get a one month grace period on your new account.

The link and the code are also in the show notes below for you. Now let's get back to today's episode.

Clara Cohen: We know it's an emotional rollercoaster when you're trying to get pregnant.

I could see that it's helping you and it's having your acupuncturist or your doctor with you every day trying to help you basically try to conceive the best way

possible. Right? I get the application part of it and it's interesting with AI because.

I think it's like anything new, everybody's gonna resist anything new. The industrial revolution was the same way. People were just resisting, having to go to work in factories because a lot of people lost their job, et cetera, et cetera. In this AI world, what is going to happen is that yes, there is going to be some interesting and maybe not great outcome like anything, but look what they're doing in technology.

It's the same with what they're doing for people that have lost their limbs, for people that have lost their hearing or their eyesight or for health purposes. It's really helping a lot of people in the health industry and it's being amazing for people that have struggled with different kind of health condition for so long.

So it is very useful. So I want everybody to listen and not feeling scared about it, but just be open to look into it and see, huh, it can help this or it can help that, right?

Kirsten Karchmer: what this AI is able to do is look at the intersection of every symptom. It knows how to boil it down into the right questions, right? We don't have to ask every questions. There's specific questions that allow us to get enough information to determine what we need to work on, and then aggregate that data.

In the Conceivable app, you're putting in data, you're tracking with your ring, you're taking your supplements, you're talking to Kai, and you're looking at the results. And then at any time you don't understand something, you just hit the button and Kai pops up and you just have a conversation with her, Kai, I don't know why I'm still not getting pregnant.

And she goes back and looks just like what you would say to your patient, right? You would look back through the file and you'd be like, all right, so we've been working together for three months and we've been working on improving your energy and your blood volume to make a better lining. But one of the biggest problems is your sleep.

And you're still only getting five and a half hours of sleep. And so let's just really dig in there. What is the real reason why you're not sleeping? And then the care team comes in and tries to solve that problem. And so it's really like a swarm of people who are like, all they want to do is figure it out and help you and make it as easy as possible.

I started this company actually in 2016, and I didn't know anything about anything.

I could barely work my phone and I was part of an accelerator and that accelerator helped me to connect with technologists and, build the infrastructure and everything. But that version failed. It was too early. I started doing what I called a conceivable report. basically I wrote up an interview form and they filled it out and I wrote them a written report, why you're not getting pregnant and what to do about it.

And then I kept evolving that until I had so much demand for it, I couldn't do it myself anymore.

Usually that's the point where you're like, all right, it's time to start building with proper technologists. I did build the first version of the app. I had a little bit of help from somebody. That version worked, but it was really janky. And so we actually pulled that one down now, we have a full team, ex apple developers, really good team.

Clara Cohen: Wow. That's really matching ancient medicine with modern world. I've done fertility for many years, right? It is one of my favorite subject. I love women's health and in my practice I've done it for many years.

I love that. So why would you say for new acupuncturist that let's say focus or wanna focus on women's health fertility specifically? 'cause there are a lot of people that really gravitate towards that. What would you say to them? Because they're thinking, okay, so am I obsolete because I'm gonna start practicing soon, right?

And so are you telling me that people are just gonna need apps and they won't need me anymore? What would you say to them?

Kirsten Karchmer: I would say that AI can never be better than a human. the human experience is very important. My focus is affordability. There will always be people who will use conceivable and go see you.

What I'm just most interested in now is making sure that everybody has access to something.

What you don't wanna be is the person that's never put your fingers on a keyboard. Playing with ai, I suggest if you are worried or you're intimidated or scared about ai, learn it. Know your enemy, right? When the world is all ai, you

don't wanna be standing there with one acupuncture needle and you'll be like, I don't even know what to do.

Use AI to do the things that you hate doing, because being in practice is redundant as hell.

You have to do a lot of the same things. Trust me. That's my recommendation at least start trying to find ways to automate.

Clara Cohen: I think that there's a lot of help that can be used for, like you said, repetitive task thing that you don't wanna do there.

There's a lot that can be implemented. However, I wanted to go back to the app one more time. If I'm a practitioner that obviously treat a lot of fertility, I love that you share that. The human interaction is so key because a lot of time the doctors doesn't have time to listen and the person will come and sit there and be emotionally a wreck because she's been trying for a year and nothing is happening and so being able to listen and to give some kind of comfort is so imperative.

I see the app to me in my head, as when you see patients and then either they go on holiday or they have a business trip or they can't come see you more than once a week or every two weeks because life and other things, even finance, like you said, it's like ear seeds. You put ear seeds and then they can acupressure them while they're away before they come back because they can't come as often.

So I see the app as something that they can do and have as a support in between session, let's say, when they come and see you. So that could be a good ear seed, kind of support. That's how I think in my head.

It's having support while they're not in your clinic. Does that make sense?

Kirsten Karchmer: Yes. And I think why the AI beat me. Was not because the diagnosis was wrong, 'cause the diagnosis was the same. Right. It's the time between treatments. There's a lot that they can be doing, but we have to equip them for that.

We tell them your blood deficient. Eat more greens and beets and whatever you'd like to recommend. And they're like yeah. But in the app, we basically make their menu plans for them every single day. And then we ask them to take a picture of it or just to say, I ate it.

If they go to McDonald's, take a picture of that so that then the acupuncturist can go back and look through those logs. Because, people are not that honest about what they do and don't do. They're like, oh I was pretty good with my diet. They don't tell you every little thing that they did, but then you can see and you're like, oh, I see.

You're having three glasses of wine every night and no judgment, but that is probably too much sugar and that's probably why you're not sleeping well at night. Kai will pick up on that too. But then also, not in this version, but in a quickly coming version, there will also be a section where the acupuncturist or clinician can talk to Kai as well, and that's basically all trained on Chinese medicine.

So say you're a person who just got outta school, you really don't have any advanced training in reproductive medicine or fertility. There's a lot to learn about fertility that you don't learn in acupuncture school, and you're like I know what the Chinese medicine diagnosis is, but I just wanna check it.

You literally can ask the person, can I go into your app and talk to Kai about your diagnosis? And then you can say, Hey, what's, Susie's TCM diagnosis and it will give you a report. She has spleen, qi deficiency because she has gas, bloating, fatigue after meals and sugar cravings, and each one this is the ranking of how severe it is. She has blood deficiency 'cause she has a pale tongue and she has one day of bleeding. She has kidney, yang deficiency. Her temperatures are low, colds, her hands, everything. Then you can say what points would you use for this?

It doesn't mean you have to do it, but you can at least get, oh, I didn't think about using that combination. Very simple combinations and then what herbs I would use. And then again, you can just use that as a feedback tool. You don't have to follow it.

but sometimes it's nice to have somebody else who knows,

Clara Cohen: So can the patient also access the information on what best points or formula would be?

Because then that gives me a self-diagnosis, Dr. Google kind of idea, which kind of scares me.

Kirsten Karchmer: they cannot see, they probably could if they knew how, but they don't know how because they'd have to get down the rabbit hole. We're just gonna tell them, this is for your acupuncturist to talk to us.

Because that's why in the second version of *Conceivable*, I got too concerned with the liability of prescribing Chinese medicine. Let them get their Chinese herbs from you guys, and we just provide supplements.

Clara Cohen: That I understand. The Chinese herb I think that has to be prescribed by practitioners for sure. Because people will take a formula because they saw it on Dr. Google and then

Kirsten Karchmer: on one TikTok.

Clara Cohen: Yes. And it'll be super dry. Super cold, and then they'll get so many issues with it. So I have a big issue of that.

But supplements I understand because it's a little bit of a different story, taking magnesium or whatnot. So I'm happy they don't have access to that 'cause that just wouldn't work for for me.

I appreciate you being here, Kirsten, and sharing that whole AI fertility, conceivable marriage because that is so different and obviously you're very innovative and you're the first person I've talked to in this podcast and I've seen doing something so intricate when it comes to basically putting together Chinese medicine and the new AI world or application.

So I appreciate you coming in, really sharing your journey, how it all came about, how that works. And we'll have all the links below in the show notes so people can check everything out and see what the app is about, because I think it'd be great for people to go and check the app as well and see.

It will be interesting to see what my audience think about it and if they wanna recommend it to their patients in the end or not. One way or the other. So I really appreciate you being here. Is there any parting words you would like to leave my audience with before we land the plane?

Kirsten Karchmer: My Advice for clinicians after so many years, is is that often we look too far outside of TCM for the answers to functional medicine, to just all kinds of different things.

You already have everything that you need to be extremely clinically effective. Get better at diagnosing, not diagnosing with functional medicine tests and all these other outside of TCM, it's not that there's anything wrong with those things. Chinese medicine is better than functional medicine.

The only time I would use functional medicine is when I've been working with someone for three months and there is something that is not moving. I just am like I know that the diagnosis is correct. I know what they're eating, I know how they're sleeping. I know everything and they're not moving.

That's where I'm gonna pay for a Dutch test. I don't need a Dutch test to know that you have adrenal failure. If your energy is a two outta 10, you have adrenal failure. And if you have adrenal failure, I know you have high cortisol. I don't need a test for that. This is what we learned in Chinese medicine to pay attention to the symptoms.

The symptoms will tell you everything. You just gotta figure out a way to organize them. And my last thing is I'm really trying to build a network of healers, of clinicians who are really interested in collaborating to bring Chinese medicine to more people, both at a high price point and a low price point to bring clinical validity, to bring interrater operability, to promote each other, because we're a huge network if all of us were promoting each other.

So if that's of any interest to anybody who's listening Clara, if you can put my email in there, just email me directly, just gimme your background. Tell me what was interesting about this conversation, and if there's a way you'd like to collaborate. I will say yes. My AI is doing everything else now, so I have time for this.

Clara Cohen: That's awesome. Thank you so much, Kristen, for coming and sharing your view, your creation and your years of knowledge and that is now helping many women. So thank you so much.

Kirsten Karchmer: Thanks. It's my pleasure.

Clara Cohen: 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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