

Caspar ([00:00](#)):

Today's short story podcast is dedicated to a few different topics that are pretty important. Trauma, stress, emotions, and aging. To help us out we're bringing on Mary Heaven, who's a board-certified and licensed acupuncturist practicing out of Connecticut and specializing in cosmetic acupuncture and Gua Sha. If you don't know what that is, it's a natural facial therapy that repairs the way the skin ages. Her work is deeply focused on treating psychoemotional disorders, such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, as well as musculoskeletal conditions, lymphatic health, and reconditioning the nervous system. In addition to acupuncture and Gua Sha, she offers other holistic service such as cupping, something I know very well, and other anti-aging facial treatments to promote natural healing and empower your life. Something that is totally on board with what we believe in at Innovative Medicine. Mary, welcome to the podcast.

Mary ([00:55](#)):

Awesome. Thank you so much for having me Caspar, so excited to be here. Hello everyone. I'm so excited to be sharing this space with you all this afternoon.

Caspar ([01:05](#)):

Yeah, no, it's, it's, it's an exciting, I think topic because it relates to so much of what's going on right now. And before we jump into this idea of how trauma stress emotions are really impacting us and even how we age and showing up on our skin, I was hoping you could start a little bit about your own healing story and how you actually healed from not just chronic Lyme but also thyroid cancer.

Mary ([01:29](#)):

Yeah, so it has been quite a journey, 20 years in the making. Right as I was starting my freshman year of college I started getting a lot of panic attacks, brain fog, anxiety, fatigue you know, a lot of those typical subset of symptoms that nobody really knows what's going on with. You doesn't know how to help you. It was after a few times going to the hospital in Rhode Island where I was going to college and just intuitively feeling like my homeostasis was rocked. Something was really wrong. My mom found a Lyme specialist in Connecticut because I grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut, that it's a area that is completely wooded and it is absolutely rife with deer. And so many people in my community have been you know, rocked with Lyme disease. So my family doctor actually had said, when I went to him with everything that was going on, he was like, I think that you possibly have Lyme.

Mary ([02:36](#)):

So he started treating me empirically, you know, their typical gold standard. We're gonna give you doxycyclin for 30 days. You know what treatment is great. If you know, you got a bullseye and you just got the bite, but I didn't have a bullseye ever. So I don't even know when I could have gotten it, it was probably some time when I was a kid and playing manhunt in the woods in my neighborhood. I ended up going to a Lyme specialist, got treated for an entire year. I had to withdraw from my freshman year of college. And again, this is in 2002. You know, started doing some of the cutting edge therapies early on IV immune drips, homeopathics, you know, ozone IVs. And you know, I made a pretty swift recovery from that, but the faculties and my thinking in my brain kind of never really came back online.

Mary ([03:29](#)):

And when I say brain fog, that's pretty like diffuse. But the experience I had with it was feeling like I was in a dream every single day. So I just kind of had to accept that as like my current reality and hope that it

would go away at some time. And I was like 19 years old. So you know, started back at school. Long story short after a long story you know, I was in the corporate world and I started getting sinus infections all the time. I was 24 years old. I couldn't get out of bed in the morning. I had no idea what was wrong with me. Saw another specialist. He tested my hormones, a complete adrenal failure, insufficiency. Mitochondria was really, really low. I also had Epstein Barr virus, candida, you know, I was put on antibiotics for a year.

Mary ([04:20](#)):

It decimated my system. So I ended up getting chronic sinus infections and most sinus infections are as you know, fungal. So I really started to do my own research because I quite frankly was tired of not feeling well and being so young. And I kind of became my own doctor and a little bit dissuaded from the Western medical paradigm and feeling like I wasn't being heard. And after doing a litany of tests, kind of like, this is as good as it gets. Like we don't know what to tell you. Like, you know, go have fun, or the invisible illness, we don't, we don't see anything wrong. So yeah, start to my journey was just doing a lot of research in wellness and going to healing practitioners. I got really, really big into acupuncture and made a swift recovery found out I had Hashimotos, started taking medicine for that.

Mary ([05:16](#)):

And when I turned 30, I ended up leaving the corporate world and wanted to not just have a job, but to really pursue my life passion and work. So I went to three year program for a master's of science in acupuncture, and it's pretty much catapulted from there. And a year post graduation, I was about to open my private practice in my hometown out of Greenwich, Connecticut practicing acupuncture and the same doctor who found, you know, or who postulated that I had Lyme found a lump in my neck just doing a, a palpatory exam. It was February. I had a few you know runny nose kind of sore throat and turned out that it was thyroid cancer. So moved through that, had my thyroid replaced. And I then, you know, learned a lot about the gut-thyroid connection and H P A axis and started working with a naturopath to go after some of the candida and SIBO and get insufficiency that I know you know, probably led to the toxicity in the thyroid cancer. What I wanna impart here is that it's really, truly all related. And a lot of times when we go through things like this, we feel just so disenchanting and so disappointed. And what I wanna share is that this isn't happening to you, it's happening for you. And if you stay with the path and believe and have faith and let yourself heal, you'll not only heal, you'll come into to a whole new version of who you are.

Caspar ([07:01](#)):

Yeah, no healing is, is absolutely transformative. And going through everything you did, as you just spoke about is transformative and anyone that's been through chronic conditions and any you know type of disease, knows about stress and, and knows about the negative emotions that circle that. Could you talk a little bit about now, the mechanisms, everything you've learned through your training as a healthcare practitioner, a acupuncturist about the mechanisms of how that stress, that trauma is impacting us and aging us.

Mary ([07:38](#)):

Lots to say on that, but let's just talk about our modern day age. 2019, I coined a term 21st century posture. What does that mean? All of us have our shoulders up to our ears. We're rolled forward. Our necks are tight. Our jaws are clenched. Our bodies don't feel safe. When we talk about the nervous system, the nervous system does not know how to differentiate between a stressful email and being

chased by a tiger. The same response mobilizes within the body. The adrenaline starts to cascade through the bloodstream, the cortisol boosts up. Short term, we need this response. If a tiger is in fact, chasing us, it's going to save our life. Our blood is gonna pump to our limbs and it's gonna help us to run like hell from the tiger. Problem is when it's not a tiger chasing us. It's just this email.

Mary ([08:33](#)):

It's just, my sister said something not nice to me. It's just, this is stressing me out. It's just, it's, it's not just, it's cumulative on our system. And one of the first areas of the body to receive a deficit of the blood flow is the gut. And there you go, whole subset of gut issues. The gut is completely connected to the face. The gut is, is what's gonna feed our Chi our life force energy, our blood, and think about what is supplying the nutrients to our muscles, our tissues, our fascia, it's that Chi and it's that blood. And when those become deficient, not enough Chi to move the chi, things start to stagnate. So then we start to see the lymphatic system just get congested. What does that lend itself to? And in terms of the face and aging, our faces are gonna be puffy and to boot.

Mary ([09:35](#)):

When we are under, you know, bouts of stress, we see a decrease in the fibroblastic activity. The fibroblasts are a fiber that are responsible for building the collagen. The collagen is the plumping factor to the skin and scientifically speaking, fibroblasts don't function in the sympathetically dominant state. What is sympathetically dominant? It is one of the two states that exist under the autonomic nervous system. Sympathetically dominant is known as the fight-or-flight reflex. Simply put when you are in fight or flight, your body halts collagen production. So if you've ever heard someone say, I've had a stressful year, I feel like I've aged 10. There's a lot of merit to that. Technically you have, and how this relates to the current world that we're living in; everybody is over the top with their stress levels, even pre-pandemic. I treated hundreds of patients and nobody had the basic wherewithal and reserves within them.

Mary ([10:41](#)):

They were tapped out and now our levels of anxiety, the trauma, everything is like bubbling over. So, you know, I wanna say that healing, the nervous system, healing our trauma, which is a whole nother conversation, at least getting our systems regulated is crucial to every single facet of our healing and our wellbeing. And very specifically, when it comes to aging. And the thing that I don't wanna see happen is, you know, a flux of people looking in the mirror and feeling bad about who they are because of this wrinkle, and this is happening. And then they just run out to get the quick fix and the Botox.

Caspar ([11:28](#)):

Yeah. I wanna jump into Botox in a second, but you're absolutely correct. There's too many false tigers right now, constantly attacking us. Sympathetic system completely burned out and that's gonna age us and that's gonna make us look it too. We're all looking a little bit worn. I think these days, we're all tired of it because it's constant. I mean, the fear factor of everything out there is, is really a lot. And, you know, if you look even beyond the stressors out there, so many people are walking around with emotional baggage and that's showing on their face and you posted a beautiful image the other day on Instagram of the emotions in the face where it shows literally disenchantment and other things. Can you talk a bit about that and how we have this connection between our face and our emotions, and it's not just, you know, sad, you're showing it quickly with a frowny face. We're talking about years of holding onto emotions showing up on the face.

Mary ([12:28](#)):

Yep. So our face and I hope this comes as no surprise at this point is a storehouse of our emotions, it contains all the stories of our happys, our joys, our sads, and when we get wrinkles our face is telling a story, any wrinkle, what fundamentally, what is a wrinkle? A wrinkle is a contraction in the muscle. What causes a contraction? Well in part stress, and think about the response that your body does. Think about somebody going through trauma. What do you imagine their body doing shelling up? What am I doing? I'm in contraction, our muscles are doing the very same thing. The facial map that you just spoke of actually was created by my late teacher, who I had the pleasure and privilege of studying with Lillian Bridges. She studied with her grandmother. She's Chinese, she's like a Chinese shaman.

Mary ([13:23](#)):

She studied facial reading with her grandmother. And then she went on to bring through all these teachings around the face, our trauma and our emotions with, you know, the lens of psychology behind it. And what's interesting is Lillian said the original face is best described as an individual's essence. Our Essence is something in Chinese medicine known as our Jing. Our Jing is our ancestral, what we call Chi. It is what you are born with, and it is your absolute life force. And it's what dictates like your aging and your overall constitution to be able to withstand the difficulties of life. Yes, you come into this life with this Chi already. You cannot restore it once it has been depleted. And what depletes your Jing? Chronic stress. Where does the Jing show up? In your face. The Jing is related to our kidneys. The kidneys are the water element. And one of the most crucial facets of, you know, defying our aging and keeping our muscles and our tissues healthy, is water. It's the fluidity in our facial structure. We dry out like prunes when our water reserves are depleted.

Caspar ([14:49](#)):

And don't the kidneys usually show up right around the eyes and above the eyes. Right. Where a lot of people usually have some issues and go towards the Botox type of alternative.

Mary ([14:58](#)):

Yes, exactly. The stagnation. And you know, this can show the kidney insufficiency, adrenal insufficiency, but bags under your eyes. What are the bags under your eyes? A lot of times it's congested, lymph. Where does the lymph for your face drain it drains into the axillary node, right above your clavicle. And if you think about it your arterial blood supply for the face comes from the neck as well. We're all walking around with our 21st century postures. What does that mean for us in a larger scale? Our face isn't getting any of the arterial blood supply moving up, and it is not getting any of that drainage moving down, not to mention the lymphatic system. It doesn't move on its own. It's gotta be manually stimulated. So through things like Gua Sha, you know, facial stimulation, spiked jade rollers, or I'd rather say grooved, not spikiness. You are actually creating that gentle fluid motion, but you're also working through the tight taught muscles in the face and creating a pathway so that when the fluid is ready to actually drain, it has a pathway to move. And just so you know, when we talk about the face, we've got 43 muscles in this thing, guys like and you know, we get knots in our necks, our backs and our shoulders. We get them in our face too. So we have got to restore this flow.

Caspar ([16:32](#)):

Yeah. It goes both ways, right? When, when you restore that flow, when you work on the face itself, it's working on the emotions, it goes both ways. Hugely. And then you work on the emotions, it shows on the face, right. And it goes back and forth. And we learned that, yeah, we we've applied different

lymphatic drainage types and something called Phyto5 therapy from Switzerland that applies different essential oils and stimulates. And it's not just about you looking better. It's about addressing emotion, stress, all of that. So you gotta look at it in a holistic viewpoint. And that's why I think as Carnivore MD loves to say, Botox is bullshit. He goes around, kale is bullshit I love that guy. Well, I got some beef with him cuz everything is. But yeah. And I, I can't say nature is. It gives us so much, but I will say this Botox is bullshit. Go into that, go into that a little bit. Cuz I know so many people that are on the holistic level, spiritual people and then do Botox all the time and it's like, come on. So get into why Botox is bullshit.

Mary ([17:36](#)):

All right, let's go there. So I can speak to it on many fronts again. So our faces storehouse our emotions. It's ultimately a portal to our heart guys, okay. So if we start to unlock this wisdom, we're gonna connect with ourselves in a deeper way. Also beauty and true healing. It doesn't come from a needle being injected in your face. It comes from the softening of your body, the reconciliation, the coming home to your heart. It, that is the true essence of the radiance that is gonna have someone stop you on the street and say, what have you done? You are glowing or I'll have what she's having when it comes to Botox. Please, please, please, please think twice because Botox is a toxin, it's a neurotoxin. It is a small inactive form that is and small inactive form of botulism.

Mary ([18:30](#)):

Botulism guys is a disease that attacks your nervous system and seizes your muscles. It's horrible. It's it's not something I would wish on anyone. So the reason why that works is when we have the contractions in the muscles, like I said before, causing the wrinkles, Botox works and it's like a one and done the first round and then you keep going back every six weeks. We'll get into that. We're stopping these you know, contracted muscles, we're creating paralysis, lucidity, and taking them out of their contractile state. And when you start to do that, your your face and your muscles are gonna atrophy. Would you want any muscle in your body to atrophy? Would you want your arms to atrophy? You know, do, do you wanna halt the blood flow? So it's actually number one, truth, be told Botox is accelerating our aging, it's creating tissue trauma, it creating muscle weakness.

Mary ([19:33](#)):

And then not to mention what happens when you tell something to stop moving, especially in the name of the face, in the name of all like lymph that we were just speaking of. Stagnation. You start to see exactly, exactly. And a friend of mine that I was having a conversation with a few months back, she got the dysport injections in her crow's feet reframe as Lilian Bridges my amazing teacher would say those are not crow's feet. Those are joy lines. It shows your capacity to smile with your eyes. So she got the dysport and then she was like, you know, I always notice that I get bags under my eyes. When I get that, why is that? I'm like, you've told your muscles to go to sleep, honey. Like you've told this to stop moving. And so, you know what your body's really intelligent and it listened to that directive. And so it stopped moving. And as a result, you're getting the static fluid accumulating under your eyes.

Caspar ([20:35](#)):

Yeah. And you know, to go back to just how toxic it is when my father was in medical school, they only applied Botox in people that were highly spasmodic, right. Parkinson's everything to completely seize up the arm, but they knew it was a very heavy toxin. Why you'd use that electively in the face, like doctors back then that would blow their mind that they're seeing today, you know, the use of this so prevalent

and said to be so safe when there's so many things that, that are red flags there. And again, total bullshit.

Mary ([21:11](#)):

Yeah. And I know that this might be a little bit controversial. I'm willing to get into it and don't wanna have people get after me. I also wanna say to people not putting you down, if Botox is your jam, I just wanna give this information to you so you can make your own informed decision. But a lot of the doctors I think are doing Botox on people because they don't even know how bad the side effects are. Why do they not know? Because the people who are funding the studies for Botox are the people who have the money and they are, you know, in part with big pharma and one of the top grossing pharmaceutical brands, or it probably was pre-pandemic is Allegra. What does Allegra make? They make Botox. So why you're not seeing the studies is because they're not being published and in the beauty world and magazines, why are you not seeing an adverse reaction or, you know, what Botox does or how it's bad because some of the biggest funding for these publications is Allegra.

Caspar ([22:16](#)):

Right. I, I mean, listen, you could always follow the money trail and you could always look into the true science of it all, not the science that's being put out by people that make the money off of it. And you could see, and, and like you said, I mean, everything you're saying here makes sense that this stagnation, this injecting of toxins, this emotional disconnection that it's causing and us not prioritizing health. And just trying to get that quick fix to look, and I gotta be honest with a lot of people that get Botox. You could tell you gotta a frozen face. You're supposed to smile, supposed to have those, you know, joy wrinkles that you put 'em there.

Mary ([22:52](#)):

Real expressions.

Caspar ([22:53](#)):

You know, I, I kind of wanna down up now and, and wind up a little bit and start to offer not some, you know, scare tactics to everyone to be fearful with, but what can we do? We're in year two now we're all under massive amounts of stress. We're dealing with some types of emotional baggage there. What are some of your tips? And what's the advice you would impart onto the audience to say, here's how you could stop that. Here's how you could actually reverse aging and take control and empower yourself.

Mary ([23:25](#)):

Yeah. So to repower yourself, number one, keep it simple. This is isn't about adding more to dos to your daily regimen. Let's take a look at your nutrition, your water intake. Are you putting minerals in your water to anchor in the hydration? What's the quality of the water you're consuming? Is it spring water or is it coming from a tap or a plastic bottle? Are you moving your body? How's your sleep at night? I'm also a huge proponent for salt baths to clear energetic fields and to really restore that kidney energy and calm the nervous system. I just really implore anyone to identify something that really brings them into their center so that they feel grounded. What is it that makes you feel really good about you? Do more of that because we need to take the body out of this ratcheted up fight or flight state.

Mary ([24:21](#)):

I also highly recommend acupuncture for regulating the nervous system because one of the first things that acupuncture does is works to down regulate that sympathetic dominance, again, the fight or flight, and it brings you back into the parasympathetic state, the rest and digest. And that's the only place you can truly heal from. And then also the Gua sha sculpting facials to really release the tension in the face and areas that have frozen, not even from, you know anything other than our own fears, because when we close off these areas of ourself, we start to disconnect with our own intuition. So it's really about coming back into your center, coming back into your core and holding your frequency.

Caspar ([25:07](#)):

Absolutely great advice. Mary, I actually want to continue with a few extra questions, but I do wanna end the podcast session of this so we could post extra stuff afterwards that the audience could see, but where can people learn more about you? I understand you're making yourself a little bit more available now by doing more virtual things telemedicine. So tell us where can we learn more about that at yes.

Mary ([25:27](#)):

So you can learn more about me on Instagram @mary heavenacu or my website, Maryheaven, acupuncture.com. Awesome.

Caspar ([25:38](#)):

People, go check that out and, and do understand that it's all about the emotions, the trauma, not finding the quick fixes, but actually taking control and you will see that manifest on your face and, and, and how you age. So Mary, thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and coming on.

Mary ([25:57](#)):

Thank you so very much for having me. I hope this conversation was helpful for everyone and it's never about fear. It's about moving back into love, guys. Let's heal. Let's take better care of ourselves. Let's make this just a great year.