

Caspar (00:00):

Our guest today initially appeared on our show to discuss thriving in a toxic world. Now she's back to discuss thriving in the face of adversity. Drawing from her new book, unexpected. She shares her story of battling through her life's twists and turns and the profound lesson she's learned along the way. This is the story of finding resilience with Dr. Jill Carnahan. Dr. Carnahan, great to have you on again.

Dr. Jill Carnahan (00:24):

Great to be here again. I love your energy, love your show, and delighted to talk to you this morning.

Caspar (00:29):

Thank you. Trying to match your energy here and the energy that was throughout the book, which is incredibly positive. And you know, it's in the face of you telling these stories about adversity, survivor of breast cancer, Crohn's disease, toxic mold, illness. And so, so much of the book was really accorded into this idea of resilience and faith. Yeah. Can you talk about that a, about how those two elements are kind of missing in a lot of medicine and how you instill that in patients as well?

Dr. Jill Carnahan (01:00):

Oh, what a great question. You know, years ago when I had the idea for the book, I was all about environmental toxicity and mold related illness. And what happened is I'm like the Guinea pig of illness and I go through a lot of these things and I finally accepted my soul's journey as a healer is to experience. And through experience I get such a profound and deep understanding of the process of healing from cancer, from Crohn's, from autoimmunity, from mold. And then and then is what you're talking about. And then is the relationships, the childhood trauma, the way we show up in the world, the way we view the world, our mindset. And these I found are some of the most powerful healers and absolutely the foundation of resilience. So what I had to do is really dive in and as you know, I got really authentic with my own experiences with dating, with going through a divorce, with dealing with my own, you know acceptance of myself, loving myself, understanding intuition and how I view, I mean I have a strong faith in God and that's the truth about me.

Dr. Jill Carnahan (01:56):

But I know that not all readers will share that. So what I do is try to meet the reader where they're at and show them that there's both left brain right brain, science and faith, masculine, feminine. And we need to combine these energies for the very best of healing. And we can think of it as science is that analytical ability to figure things out by problem solving, looking at the data. I love that I'm a bioengineering background, but what with my own health and with healing patients is actually faith. Which again, for me, it's a strong belief in God and a greater power, greater purpose. But even if you don't share that, that faith is how do we deal with the uncertainty of life? Like truly right? We all have all these things that surround us, like insurance policies and you name it. And they all give us the assurance that we have control of life, but that is the complete BS, right? As far as the the uncertainty. So if we can embrace the fact that life is gonna throw us curve balls, that uncertainty is inevitable. That's part of the faith, that's part of knowing the resilience is really knowing that any curve ball that comes my way, I'm ready. I've got it.

Caspar (02:56):

Yeah. You've done a great job in it. Also illustrating that it's not an either or. You talk about Newton being a man of faith as well and this idea of collaboration between science and faith that can really work

together. And I find a lot of medicine is an either or, it's either this way or this way. You can't have both. Whereas I think in life of course there is a duality to everything and there is this beautiful partnership in, in this. You speak about prayer, you speak about spirituality, all these things. Do you find that patients sometimes when they're talking about their medical conditions, have a hard time bringing that into their lives?

Dr. Jill Carnahan (03:34):

Yeah, you know, my job is just to really as the healer create a container or a space where number one, that person walking in the office for the first time feels complete unconditional love and acceptance. I think the problem if we go, I hate the word religion cuz I'm not religious at all, but I, but the problem with religion in the past for many people is there's judgment and there's this box that we fit into. None of us fit in a box. I'm the least of the box fitter kind of people. And so when I create a space for someone to come in and just be themselves and like I'm just there to hear them and accept them as they are, all of a sudden we can go deeper because the true value in life, you know, the blue zones, I love talking about the blue zones.

Dr. Jill Carnahan (04:12):

These five or six areas in the world, Italy, Greece, Japan, Loma Linda and Costa Rica where they found the highest percentage of centenarians or people over the age of a hundred. And one of the core things is a belief in something greater. And they have all different religions, right? But they have this greater purpose, this sense of meaning. They have great deep relationships and none of them are have a list of supplements, you know, a mile long like I take. That's not part of it. Part of it is connection with human beings and connection at that soul level with friendships that are lifelong and a belief in meaning and purpose in knowing what am I here on this earth to do and is there a greater thing that's kind of guiding and directing my life? And so back to your question about patients is when I just open that up and I don't, again, I don't frame it or say that they have to think how I do, but I just say, does something give you greater meaning and purpose?

Dr. Jill Carnahan (04:58):

Because, and when we have health goals like say we wanna, you know, lose weight or whatever, the only way those habits will stick is if we attach them to something that has greater meaning. So for example, a 70 year old woman who's like, I can't walk very well, but if I can improve my physical fitness, I can take walks with my dog and my granddaughter or you know, those kinds of things that matters to her. So I have to attach my goals for her healing to something that actually matters. Because otherwise those are just things that we have to get up and do the workout or we have to get up and stretch our bodies and they have no meaning or purpose. So every health goal should be attached to something that actually has greater meaning and purpose in our way of coming into life and what our soul is here to do.

Caspar (05:38):

Yeah. Purpose driven medicine is such an intriguing concept, right? Because once you give so on purpose, then you give them this will, this enthusiasm to get better cuz they wanna see through that purpose. So it gives us so much power. Another concept you brought up that I found very interesting is intuition. And you credit a little bit of this to living on a farm. Yeah. Do you think it was that kind of connection and being in nature because that's what I see in myself, you know, when I'm around and we're always in such a information age where so much is coming at us, it sort of dulls my intuition when

I go out into the forest or something, it comes back a little bit. Do you credit that with you building your own intuition, living on a farm, being in nature a lot? Doing things in nature?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([06:22](#)):

Absolutely. And it's so interesting cause I kind of have this curve as many of our journeys in life are. I grew up and I was a super creative, intuitive, highly sensitive person. And I was in this family of German Swiss bioengineer, you know, very, very stoic kind of mechanical science-based and all of that. And again, I credit both sides are equally important. And then I went in, in, in around brothers on a farm where you're tough and you're resilient and like that's built into the genetics, right? Because you have to be to survive on a farm. And then around brothers and boys. And so I had this sense of like, I didn't really have a sense of self early on. And what I did is those pieces that were more artistic and creative and feminine and intuitive, I suppressed to some extent cause it didn't fit, it didn't really fit in.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([07:04](#)):

But I did grow up like running around on the farm, playing outside, helping mom in the garden, you know, growing fruits and vegetables like very, very attached to our earth and our soil. That was just how we grew up. So I had that in me. And then medicine, medicine almost beat it out of me because our medical schools are so masculine driven, so analytical. And again, there's nothing wrong with that. But what happened in medicine is the culture of medicine, at least our allopathic conventional system, trains out any sense of intuition as a value, as a something that could give you information. It's basically like there is no value in your intuition. It is all science. And that's where I'm here to say no, it's both. So after medical school I started like this percolating up, oh wait, wait, I have this sense of something like, oh this patient, I think they have mold exposure and it's more of an intuitive sense as they tell their story and then I prove it with a science.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([07:52](#)):

But I kept over and over and over again running into the fact that my gut instinct was right on 100% of the time. And so I was like, wait, I can trust this. So I had to kind of relearn. And back to your point of how do we get there, if you're an intuitive being, which we all have some of that and you wanna culture that, getting in touch with nature, our world right now, we're off the ground. We're on either high-rise buildings or a building that's, you know, we're not touching the earth. We're usually away from nature. We don't, I mean, unless you're camping and living in a tent, you're not like laying on the ground, sleeping on the ground. We're not waking up with the sunlight and going to bed at sun, you know, when the sun down like our cultures before us did.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([08:28](#)):

So we get out touch with the natural bio rhythms of the earth. And those are some of the things that actually allow us to really touch base with our sensations. Because also the science-based and the masculine feminine is do we live above our neck? I did for 40 years, I lived here in my mind and my mind was a way to figure things out when I started going down in my body and saying, how does that feel? And I, you know, you walk into a room, you can feel this. And even if someone's not highly intuitive, they walk into the room and if there's been someone like either an argument or someone angry, you can feel that when you walk into the room or if you walk into the room and there's like so much joy and happiness, those things, you know, before you walk in, if you touch base with your body, the kinds of people you're gonna meet, the kinds of situations you're gonna be in. And often we kind of suppress that. So we lose touch with those pieces of data that are actually in our bodies.

Caspar ([09:16](#)):

That's wonderful. I often tell patients that sometimes, you know, people just randomly reach out to me and ask questions. You know, sit with yourself for a little bit, hold your heart, you know, sit, just stay, go in, maybe even into nature. Ask yourself that a few times. See what comes up for you. Cuz I will never be able to give you a better answer than your own intuition. Especially not knowing you.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([09:38](#)):

And you know, one thing I've taught and I, and learned myself is first of all what you said, I literally will somebody in the morning when I'm meditate, hold hand, one hand under the heart, one hand on the stomach, close my eyes and touch base. I don't truly meditate, I do more lucid dreaming. But I can imagine these scenes and visions and for creatives like you and I, sometimes that lucid dreaming is another way to tap into the subconscious and like what else is possible. Often I'll literally ask myself a question and then just meditate or think on it and something will just almost like a, like I said, a lucid dream and I'll get answers and images and things. But before we were taught that, that has no value. The thing I was gonna say though is expansion versus contraction. If I just say that, you know, like what feels like even when you breathe in, that's expansive, that feels really good to me.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([10:21](#)):

Contraction might be, like we said, we go in a situation and we just like, ooh, this doesn't feel good or relationship, right? So many of us hang on because we're fearful of being alone or there's some other reason and we know intuitively this relationship doesn't make me feel great, or this relationship makes me feel amazing. We all have friends like that, right? When we go in their presence and we get away, we, we spend an hour with them and afterwards we're like, oh, I feel so good that that's a friend I want in my life. And so these things are actually, if we touch base with how our body feels, we have great knowledge in that.

Caspar ([10:54](#)):

You mentioned we're both creatives, we're both also highly sensitive people. I myself definitely am. You know, it, it can be seen as a curse, but you say it's a superpower. Can you go into that a little bit?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([11:06](#)):

Yes. So I literally read two books that changed my life. One was quiet, the Hidden Power of Introvert in a World That Can't Stop Talking, which I love that subtitle. I right. And then she went on to write Bittersweet, which is another one of my favorites. But that book, and I read it in my thirties and I was literally crying because like I thought I was an alien, right? Like I thought it was this freak that I didn't fit in in this world and there and like this, his secret inside me, right? There's something wrong with me. And then the H S P book by Elaine Aaron, which I mentioned in the book, both of these books allowed me to realize, wait a second, this is actually number one, a normal variant of humanity. I'm not an alien. And then number two it's actually a superpower and here's what it is.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([11:47](#)):

So bottom line is the highly sensitive person is one who lights and sounds and noises and conversations and smells and lack of sleep and everything affects us to a greater extent. And so I would walk through the world, be like, why am I so sensitive? For example, eighth grade girl slumber party, everybody would stay up all night and drink soda and eat junk food and like, you know, they'd have a blast. I was like fallen asleep on the floor, passed out at like 10 30 and then they would, you know, make fun of me and

I'd wake up and the next day I'd get sick, like I could not handle a slumber party. And I was like, what is wrong with me? Finally my mom was like, you can't go anymore, Jill. Every day, every time after the slumber parties you get sick. That was a clue of my highly sensitive nature because that amount of loud noise and overnight and no sleep and lots of girls, I didn't know I'm, you and I are sensitive to the energy around us.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([12:33](#)):

And whether that's the environment in a city where there's lights and noise and sound and smells and pollution, or whether it's the emotions of some human being that's really negative or really pessimistic, we can feel that and it affects us. So the gift there is we actually see details and things in the world. We see patterns that other people miss because that sensitivity also allows us to see things at a very deep level and understand patterns. Like we might just, I would love to go to a party or a conference or a room and just watch. I bet you do the same, just watch people or years ago the malls, right? And you just watch and it's like fascinating to meet human behavior. Cause I'm like watching, I'm like, I bet they, and I could make all kinds of inferences that were probably right about their relationships, about their health, about all kinds of things, right?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([13:19](#)):

I'm watching them, I watch their behavior and even this gift in a clinic, when I'm sitting across from a patient, most of the time I'm listening and I'm just watching. And usually an expression, a grimace will allow me to say, oh, tell me more about that, what happened in your childhood? Because I'm watching and seeing things that no one else is seeing. And by watching those little clues and then using my intuition, I can come to conclusions and solve problems that no one before that has been able to. And again, I know you can relate. So it really is as we embrace this and then the piece of that about embracing it is saying, I'm not an alien. I just need better sleep. I need to take care of myself better. So I go and kind of now with competence saying, you know what, I, sorry guys, I'm out at 10 o'clock. I need to get a good night's sleep. And instead of apologizing for my sensitivity, I'm like, no, no, no, it's okay to be high maintenance if you're high performance. That's my favorite line.

Caspar ([14:07](#)):

Right? That's a good one. And it's so true. We have to first care about ourselves and how we're gonna give back to the world and understand our own limitations. There's nothing wrong with being highly sensitive and it is truly a superpower. Yeah, I've definitely witnessed that before. You talk a bit about you know, eating in general, very clean, organic, you know, non-toxic, non mold, all these things. But you also talked about specific carbohydrate diet and that, how that helped you. Can you go a little bit into that? Cause a lot of people hadn't heard of that diet before.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([14:37](#)):

Sure. So breast cancer 25 got through extensive chemotherapy. Three drug, which destroyed my gut. And that's where the Crohn's comes in. Six months later I was having cyclical fevers, abdominal pain, bleeding, diarrhea. And I woke up in the ER after I, I passed out. I was working in the ER, passed out in the ER, woke up in the ER as a patient. And then I went to surgery that night for an emergency. I had an abscess infection and came out the next day, doctors like you Crohn's disease. So I was like, what in the world? I just got over cancer. But it makes sense because of the chemotherapy creates more permeable gut, permeable gut in someone with genetics that cause Crohn's, which I have, means that my microbiome, when it started leaking into the bloodstream through the permeable gut, triggered an

autoimmune response which created an abnormal response on the lining of the gut where my body attacked my gut lining and there is Crohn's, so what do I do?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([15:27](#)):

Right? I saw a gastroenterologist a week or two later to get the diagnosis and figure out what to do. He gave me a really depressing spiel. He said, this is lifelong, it's incurable. You're probably gonna need immune modulating drugs and steroids all of your life and maybe part of your colon removed. I'm like, great. And then I, I ended with this. I was like, you know, doc and I was purely innocent and I didn't know any better. I just like, you know, does diet have anything to do with it? I wanna do what I can. And he did not pause. He just like, Jill diet has nothing to do with it. But back to the intuition, even at 26 years old, I was like, that doesn't seem right. Like, how in the world can diet have nothing to do with the gut?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([16:04](#)):

So I was like bound and determined to prove him wrong. And I went on a search and I found Elaine Gottschall's book that's from the like seventies or eighties, it's not a new book. And she talks about specific carbohydrate diet for treating ulcerative colitis. She first found it in her daughter. There was another doctor, I can't remember his name, who showed her. And then she started writing about it cuz it really completely put her daughter into remission. So bottom line is this, with Crohn's and colitis, I know this well. Now often there's overgrowth of bacteria as we mentioned, especially SIBO, small intestinal bacterial overgrowth and SIFO, small intestinal fungal overgrowth. In fact, what many people don't know and doctors do, but they don't put it together. The Crohn's panel we do on any lab is actually anti candida anti, Saccharomyces which are yeast antibodies.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([16:48](#)):

And it, it determines the severity of the Crohn's. So if you have anti yeast antibodies in your body, which means you have a colonization of yeast, the Crohn's is more severe. And again, docx are checking. These things are called ANCA or AS CA, AMMA, et cetera. And they're like, yeah, those are antibodies. They're not thinking that those are actually yeast antibodies, so maybe we should treat the root problem. All that to say the specific carbohydrate diet eliminates certain disaccharides or double molecule of, of carbohydrates that will feed the SIBO and the SIFO. So it's almost like a type of FODMAP diet where you're eliminating the precursors that are gonna trigger those, that overgrowth of bacteria. And so it works really well. And my story was I went on this, didn't know any better. I also went off gluten, which I didn't know that trigger was there too. And within two weeks my fevers, my symptoms were gone. Now it took me a couple years to really heal from Crohn's and I consider myself today, I don't have it anymore. It's cured. So.

Caspar ([17:46](#)):

Beautiful. Yeah, food is medicine. We believe that too. Now aside from the book, you also have a documentary coming out about your life, super exciting. And it's called Dr. Patient. Can you tell us a little bit about that? What it was like even creating a documentary about yourself?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([18:01](#)):

Yeah, so this is the intuition. So crazy. I sat on 2021 January 1st in my meditation chair. And we were working, I was working on the book and actively involved. And I realized with the pandemic, all of a sudden people were switching from books to screens, right? And my goal is not to sell a hundred books.

I mean a hundred whatever million books, let's say that. But it's to reach people and impact people. And so the impact was my heart and my goal. And I really sat there and I was like, just the intuition. I need to switch to screens. I need to do a documentary. Now, granted, I have no clue, I have never had any experience with making a documentary, but it was this intuition like, I need to do a documentary. So I was like, well, anything I put out into the universe, either something comes back and it starts rolling or it just falls flat on its face and there's no harm.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([18:45](#)):

So I started meditating, praying about that, made some calls within seven or 10 days. I had an executive producer, a producer, a director, like this whole team. And they were all like, we love this idea. We're all in, all we need is a budget. So then again, I have a lot of faith and every everything, I'm like, no problem. You know, someone will give us a million dollars for if it's, if it's the right thing. So then I just started, you know, we talked it up, we can't create a budget. And within about three months I had a call and it was again, something I had not instigated about a wholly different topic the investor's on a call. He happened to be a very wealthy man that was interested in functional medicine. And I, my intuition was like, pitch the documentary. So I did. And within two weeks he flew out, he's like, here's a check for the whole amount for the documentary. So then in the last 18 months I had been filming here in Colorado in different locations and just filming the story, it's, it follows the book a lot cause it's the story of my life. But the bigger picture is functional medicine, integrative medicine, this idea that there's more out there for patients and really opening that up to the world to know that there is more, more than just standard medicine.

Caspar ([19:51](#)):

It's beautiful because you went from intuition, manifestation, acting on it, believing it, and actually seeing it through. So can't wait for that. When is that coming out?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([20:00](#)):

Well we are looking for distribution right now. So it's in film festivals and that if anyone wants to see the preview, it's up, it's doctorpatient movie.com and you can watch the preview and see what's happening there.

Caspar ([20:11](#)):

Awesome, awesome. I mean your story is a powerful one and I kind of wanna close this out with something I read in the book and, and give you a last chance to kind of share a little bit on it. But this is one of the most significant misunderstandings in medicine you write. Incurable doesn't mean healing is not possible. It simply means there is not a drug that reverses the condition. And I find that really empowering and completely agree with you cuz too many people hear incurable and that's it. They turn off any idea of being healthy again. Can you leave us with just what you'd like people that read this book to take away, if there was one thing that they could take away, what would that be?

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([20:54](#)):

So it's my story, but the secret is it's your story if you're the reader. Because what I want, and I, I literally day after day in writing my prayer, my intention was that the reader see themselves in this journey and see that they too, I'm not unique. Number one, everyone has a story. Number two, everyone suffers. And if you are out there listening and you've either gone through something recently that's been really hard or you're in the midst of it right now, or it's coming, that's only three choices because we're

humans, we're on this journey and this journey is unexpected. We don't know what's coming, right? So my goal for the reader is to see that they too can be as resilient as I am with overcoming and that I can empower them to believe that anything is possible. Because as you and I know, when you look at the world with this delight of what is coming, what's next, what's unexpected and the real title I use unexpected cuz it really encompasses so much, it's unexpected miracles.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([21:57](#)):

It's like, what can we, and it's when we view the world with this delight and excitement about what's coming up, what's possible, what am I capable of, how can I overcome this? It opens our subconscious and it opens our mind to see possibilities and see solutions that we never knew existed. And everyone has that power, not just me. So for me it's empowering the reader to believe that anything's possible and my story is just a guideline or, or kind of a framework to put their own story in. And I hope more and greater come after this with the stories that we hear of transformation through the readers of the book.

Caspar ([22:36](#)):

No, it's a beautiful book, beautiful story, and yes, you do find yourself connecting with it in many ways, seeing the parables and connections all around. So congratulations on that, Unexpected again. And we'll look out for the documentary. So thank you so much.

Dr. Jill Carnahan ([22:54](#)):

You're welcome. Thanks for having me. As always.

Caspar ([22:56](#)):

It's stories like Dr. Jill's that restore hope and after a new path for taking control of your own health and wellbeing, check out her book Unexpected, finding Resilience through Functional Medicine, science and Faith. And until next time, keep writing your own miraculous healing story.