

Lorne Brown:

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Welcome to Conscious Fertility, the show that listens to all of your fertility questions so that you can move from fear and suffering to peace of mind and joy. My name is Lorne Brown. I'm a doctor of traditional Chinese medicine and a clinical hypnotherapist. I'm on a mission to explore all the paths to peak fertility and joyful living. It's time to learn how to be and receive so that you can create life on purpose.

Today on the Conscious Fertility Podcast, we have Dr. Russell Kennedy, and I'm going to share a little bit about his background and I'm really appreciative that he's made time. He's actually, most you guys are listening, but he just came from the gym, so he's still kind of in his workout stuff. So he's living the talk of taking care of his body and exercising. And so Russell, thanks for joining me today and taking the time. I do want to introduce our audience to you because you're known also as the Anxiety MD and you're a bestselling author and an anxiety specialist, and you have degrees in advanced training in medicine, neuroscience, and also developmental psychology. But what I really like about you is you're not just all the conventional science, you're truly in integrative because you're also a certified yoga and meditation teacher, and you're also a professional standup comedian for over a decade, which is pretty cool. So quite a diverse background. For our listeners, he has an award-winning book called Anxiety Rx, and his latest online program is called Your Mind-Body Prescription for Permanent Anxiety Healing. And he combines the science of the brain with the more artistic body-based approach he learned through living at a temple in India taking psychedelics, which I got some questions for you on that one. Plus, he is a natural and gifted intuitive and he himself has lived with crippling anxiety for decades. And so Russell, welcome to the Conscious Fertility Podcast.

Russell Kennedy:

Nice to be here, old friend. How are you doing?

Lorne Brown:

It's good. It's nice to see you. We've spent many times at conscious circles together, so it's nice to be chatting with you and sharing with our listeners stuff about anxiety. And I thought you're an excellent person to talk to A, you've had Anxiety two, you've written a book on it, but a lot of people that wanting to grow their families often say they use the term fertility stress or even fertility trauma. And then as I shared with you off camera, we have a huge listening base that aren't even trying to grow their family. So people are just struggling with anxiety. But I think you don't even like that term anxiety so much. Do you have a term that you like to use for anxiety or you've

Russell Kennedy:

Listened to some of my other stuff? Yeah, I don't like the word anxiety. I don't think it has a lot of meaning to it. So if you're out with a friend for lunch and you say, I'm feeling anxious, that may have no idea what anxiety or anxious feels like, but if you say, I'm feeling alarmed, everybody's been alarmed. So everybody can kind of relate to it. And I really believe that the state of anxiety in our mind is really at its core, at its root, a state of alarm in our body. And that alarm typically comes from unresolved parental childhood wounding that was never resolved and is still sort of resonating inside our system. And to just jump right into it really quickly without going too much is like, I think what happens is that we experience a trauma that's too much for us to bear as children.

And that can be a relatively minor trauma. If you're really sensitive and a lot of us anxiety people are born sensitive, then it gets repressed or suppressed or whatever Freudian term you want to use into the unconscious mind. And as the body keeps the score, the unconscious mind has a representation in the body and that old trauma will get stored in your body and then it'll sit there and resonate for the rest of your life. And you had Steven Porges on in this process called Interoception, where the mind is always reading the body. If it reads that old alarm, that unresolved stuff in your childhood, being bullied, being abandoned, being abused, whatever, your mind will just make sense of that by creating warnings what ifs, worst case scenarios, which of course just makes the alarm in your body worse and you get in this alarm anxiety cycle.

And unless you recognize that that's the cycle you're in, you're always going to be in that cycle. So my work is showing people that what they consider anxiety of the mind is actually a state of alarm that's in the body. Now, of course, the mind plays a role, no doubt, but the ultimate cause is this old alarm that's stored in our body.

And if we keep trying to treat the mind as you know, we're just going to chase our tails, we have to get into the body, acupuncturist, great. We have to find some way of getting ourselves into the body because if we're not stabilized and grounded in our body, we're not going to get pregnant or our pregnancy is going to be filled with complications and that kind of thing. So the more grounded we can be with our younger wounded selves, the more we're going to be able to hold pregnancy determined, the more we're going to be conscious parents, and it just helps us all through our whole lives

Lorne Brown:

And we want to feel good. So let's unpack some of the things. So regardless, we just want to feel good. That state of alarm does not feel good. No, and it can shut you down and keep you from doing things, keep you from showing up as a spouse, as a parent, as an employer, or an employee as a friend. It really can interfere with your life. So I wanted to unpack a few things. One thing you said is there's this trauma that happened in your childhood, so you subscribed to the idea that a lot of the stuff that we experienced in adulthood is a result of something that happened in our childhood that gets stuck in the body. On an aside, really cool here, you mentioned, was it Beels book *Body keeps the score*, right? So there's the expression, your issues are in your tissues, right?

But Chinese medicines 2000 years ago talked about how the emotions are the number one cause of disease. And we talk about that. It gets stored in the tissue on purpose, like the channel system, it wants to store it on purpose until you can deal with it later. So we put it into channels and joints. So joint pain, right? Because if that negative charge energy, calling it trauma, but that negative charge energy, what it is in the body, if it reaches the organs, it can kill you. And so the goal of the autonomic nervous system of the body in Chinese medicine is to store it in places until you can deal with it, until you are resourced to deal with it. So it's just a neat thing how we're seeing today, how modern science is looking at this. And you talked about you can't think your way through this. So how do you look at this from, and you talked about body-based, somatic based processes. So where are you at with talk therapy for dealing with this kind of alarm and trauma, and what are the tools and techniques then that you are using and seeing beneficial or you feel your own anxiety? So can you share a bit?

Russell Kennedy:

Yeah, I think what helped me the most in healing my anxiety was somatic therapy, internal family systems, kind of really drilling down into those younger parts of me

that were hurt and we're kind of pushed aside because here's the thing, I think when we get hurt as children, as we grow into adults, and Neufeld says this, we grow older, but we don't grow up. So I think what happens is that that child in us gets ostracized because that child holds our pain. So the adult in us doesn't want to go back and visit the child because the child has all the pain and the child is looking up at the adult with their hands in the air, pick me up, pick me up, and the adult's kind of resistant. So the adult is resistant and so is the child. So that disconnection is what really fuels this angst within ourselves because we need to be connected within ourselves to feel whole, to feel purposeful. And if we don't, then we're setting the stage for addiction. Gabor talks about that this internal separation within ourselves really sets us up for this need to get something from outside of us to make us feel better. And really the core, without going too woo and too kind of flaky on this, is making this connection with yourself and finding that younger version of you and seeing them, hearing them, loving them, and protecting them. That's really what healing comes down to.

Lorne Brown:

It sounds like you subscribe well to what you call inner child work. And when you say separation, this is the idea then that when you were a child and you said something that also I want to emphasize that it sounded like it wasn't so much the situation, the trauma, but how sensitive you are that's going to determine how it impacts your body. Totally. And I've shared before, because I see this in my practice regularly when I work with my clients doing conscious work and we regress. One of the incidents that caused the abandonment issue for them was they were picked up late from daycare. For some people that would not affect them at all, but if you're sensitive, that could totally. So just want to let to our listeners, you don't need to have a big traumatic event. Now, there are certain events, sexual abuse, for example, from a parent.

I think no matter how sensitive or not sensitive you are, it's going to have a traumatic effect probably on that individual. So I just wanted to share, it's not so much the situation, but how you internalize it. As you brought up gte, he talks a lot about that in his latest book. I'm looking at Russell here in the back. He has this image from Burning Man, which I love this picture. I've seen this before where it's my head the way it's a sculpture, and we'll put this up on the lornebrown.com, the video part, but there's a sculpture of two adults back to back kind looking like they're in anxiety. And then inside the wired mesh of two adults, there's two glowing children trying to connect with each other, their hands. And it reminds me of how in relationships when we fight with each other, what ends up happening is

we each we're both regressed trying to get our needs met as four year olds we're not grown up. And so going into your, I had to bring up that picture because the separation that you're talking about, Russell, when you have these events as a kid, are you talking because we didn't get our needs met and now you're saying this is our opportunity as a grownup. So grownup Lorne or grownup Russell will connect with his inner child and give it the needs and the love that it did not get as a child. Is that kind of part of this process?

Russell Kennedy:

Yeah, so I think as I was saying earlier, I think we experience a trauma that's too much for us to bear when we're children. And the gradation of that may be quite marked. Some kids are quite resilient and can handle a fair amount of trauma while other kids are very sensitive and maybe the death of their goldfish is going to send them into despair. So it's really how can we find that part? Because what I do believe happens is we get overwhelmed. It does get offloaded into our body, and then that negative emotion gets translated into self reproach on some level, like self separation, there's this great saying that says, when you abuse, neglect or abandon a child, the child doesn't stop loving the parent. They stop loving themselves at that point. That's huge. Yeah. Oh yeah.

Lorne Brown:

Can you repeat that again? Yeah.

Russell Kennedy:

When you abuse, neglect or abandon the child, the child doesn't stop loving the parent, they stop loving themselves.

Lorne Brown:

It totally lies

Russell Kennedy:

From that point on. Basically you have this alarm energy in your system that feels terrible. And because we can't blame our parents, our parents are seen as omnipotent, especially when we're 3, 4, 5 years old, when our brain development is in its highest year, we start blaming ourselves. So we do this thing I call jabs, which is judgment, abandonment, blame and shame of ourselves. So we take these jabs at ourselves. So when we're three years old, four years old, five years old, and we're thinking that we're unworthy, we're not good in the way that we need to be, we start judging ourselves. And then when we start judging ourselves as unworthy,

that's when the split starts, the internal split. Because Neufeld says this, all anxiety is separation anxiety. And I add on there, and it's mostly separation from yourself. That starts when you're a child. So when you're five years old and you're judging, abandoning, blaming and shaming yourself creates a tremendous amount of alarm in your system. And in Chinese medicine, that alarm will get stored in your organs until you're ready to deal with it. Unfortunately, most of us go through lives without, we don't. I am not going to go back there. I don't think I want to visit that again

Lorne Brown:

Until it gets so bad that you're forced to as an adult. Exactly.

Russell Kennedy:

Exactly.

Lorne Brown:

Until you can't function otherwise you don't go back to it. So how would you respond to somebody that says they're listening to our podcast, somebody who's trying to grow their family, they're 39, and they're like, what are you talking about? The reason I have anxiety is because I've had miscarriages or I've had failed I V F cycles. That's not what has to do with my childhood. It's because of what's happening to me right now. How do you address that question?

Russell Kennedy:

I'd say 98% of people that go through anxiety and trauma comes from their childhood. So I'll give you an example of if you look at combat veterans in the United States, right? So a platoon or a company of veterans will go through the same firefight and the ones that have had childhood trauma are 90% more likely to show up with combat P T S D than the ones that had secure attached to childhood. So there is a predisposition to anxiety, and it may not show up when we're younger. It may show up with your first divorce or with a car accident, or I see that all the time. It's like, oh, my anxiety started when I had my miscarriage or whatever. And it's like, well, yeah, that was the inciting event, but you were kind of emotionally treading water up until that point. And that was the point that snap and human beings being the cognitive organisms that we are, we like to attribute blame.

So I was perfectly fine until my divorce. I was perfectly fine until my car accident. And then when I go into their history, invariably I find usually pretty significant trauma. I deal with people with chronic anxiety. So they almost always have significant trauma, but they will blame it on something in their current life, partners,

spouse, whatever, taxes, whatever. But it really has nothing to do what it's about. And there's this great saying in therapy that says it's not about what it's about. So when people come in and talk to you about is not necessarily, and you and I know this from G'S work as well, it's like you can almost always track back the original wound and go to what happened then what happened then that's just sort of reemerging now. And it just fit the same kind of pattern. If you were abandoned as a child and now your spouse is going off on a week long vacation with the boys, the same abandonment wounds come out, it's not him going off with the boys. It's the fact that your mother didn't really look after you and take care of you when you were a child.

Lorne Brown:

And this, in my conscious work, in my practice and being trained in hypnosis, a big part of it's always to regress. And so they come in with a current story. This is like you said, this is the reason I am having anxiety or we'll call it, I'm an alarm. And then by the second or third visit, almost all that people I've seen, they are working on something from their childhood. It's not about the baby anymore or the miscarriage. But what's interesting about this is we don't follow the story back, and this is going to get into your work now, is when we ask, just like when we're asking 'em to follow the feeling and when they follow the feeling, another narrative of story comes up from their childhood. And so this reminds me from your book and listening to you is you got to get into the body, you got to get into the feeling, and that can be uncomfortable. So you have to be willing to be uncomfortable to feel those uncomfortable feelings. And it sounds counterintuitive, but yet it seems to be the way to transmute or metabolize anxiety. Can you talk a little bit more about what you mean by you got to feel it or get into the body versus think about this?

Russell Kennedy:

Yeah. Well, I think thinking and worry and rumination and escape, it's a way of going into our heads because we don't want to perceive or feel that alarm energy that's stored in our body. So what we do is we increase the ante on the worry, we make the worries horrible, worst case scenario because we need it to be that bad to stay trapped in our heads. It's sort of a way that the unconscious mind uses to trick ourselves into feeling safe. Because as a child, all we had was to go into our heads. If we were in a situation where we're being abused, neglected, abandoned, whatever, we were powerless as children. So the only escape that we had was to dissociate into our minds and overthink or whatever, or worry or whatever it was. And we used that strategy because it worked a little bit as a child.

So we just keep riding that thing until the wheels fall off and then you're in your thirties and your forties and you're going through a divorce or you can't conceive, or there's a whole bunch of things going on because of this alarm energy that's dysregulating your metabolics system and everything. And you can't quite get into the framework that you need to be in a calm, thyroid based, hormone-based state to be able to be your best self, whether that be fertility or just your best self in general. There's a part of our brain called the insula, and it's sort of deep below the main fissure of the brain, and it's kind of like the weigh station between bottom up and top down. So it kind of translates the mind into the body and your body. I

Lorne Brown:

Just want you, so when you say top up and bottom down, you're talking head to body and then body to head.

Russell Kennedy:

Okay, yeah, yeah. So top down is when you think better so you feel better. Bottom up is where we use the body to feel better, breathing sensation, that kind of stuff. So when we're in this state where we're not connected to ourselves, and that tends to continue because we're stuck in our heads with worry and rumination. And the reason we worry is because we're afraid to go down into our body, but that's the

Lorne Brown:

Only place where we, it doesn't feel good,

Russell Kennedy:

Doesn't feel good.

Lorne Brown:

That's why we're afraid it doesn't feel good.

Russell Kennedy:

Yeah, it's the child in us that's still suffering. So the adult in us just wants to push that child away. But eventually, like you say, it comes out, people go through a crisis and they can no longer just keep pushing it down. So then sometimes they'll go on medication or go on a yoga retreat or whatever, and they'll feel better in the short term. But unless you actually go back and find that child and see them, hear them love them and protect them now in a way they didn't get back then you're always going to be kind of bailing water.

Lorne Brown:

And I'll share it. Some of our audience is new to this. So when you say find that child talking about your inner child, and now that's like so,

Russell Kennedy:

Well, sometimes I use younger self because people can really take issue with that term inner child. And to some extent I do too. It does sound kind of woo. As a medical doctor and a neuroscientist, when I say the term inner child, sometimes I want to have a seizure because it is so antithetical to how I was trained. So I'll often use the term younger self as well, but really that's what you have. And the people that I find that, this is the funny part, the people that I find that object most to the inner child term have the most inner child

Lorne Brown:

Wounding of course, but I'm not concerned about the cultural of conventional medicine, how, like you said, it causes you to feel like you're having a seizure because we know that that system's not complete either. And if people listen to some of the physicists that we have on here, there is a whole new understanding in science that a new paradigm that is happening, but it just hasn't really landed in our world where the world's still flat. But there's a lot of people saying, actually the world's round, so we're there. So I'm okay if you go woo woo because it will be considered mainstream somewhere in the next 10 to 20 years anyhow, with the inner child or the younger self. The way I explain it, and it's just an understanding for how I've used it for myself, is that you talk about the body as the subconscious, and there is all aspects of you in utero, fetus, three-year-old, they're all there and still alive in that subconscious. There's a part of you that exists within you. And when you go in and have that conversation or here and see and love this inner child, get their needs met, I think of it now, I'm aging myself because some of our listeners don't know what I'm talking about, but you remember CDs. I know Russell. It hasn't been a long,

Russell Kennedy:

Oh yeah, I remember eight tracks.

Lorne Brown:

So I remember I had eight tracks of my current two, but now we've lost 90% of our audience. And if you were playing a song for 40 years saying, I'm not lovable, I'm not enough, and then you take your burner and you burn a new song that I deserve to have it all, I'm worthy. The next time you play that song, it plays a new song. Even

though for 40 years you play the old song, once you burn a new song on it, you've burned it. And to me, when you go and do the younger cell or the inner child work, it's like burning a new program onto that child and the subconscious can't tell the difference from an inner and outer experience. So it just takes it in and then you as adult self now start to live as if you got that childhood. That's what I think is happening,

Russell Kennedy:

And I think that's certainly a one way of doing it for sure. And the other thing that I find too is it takes a while before that new program is overwritten, there's such a body memory and implicit memory of those old traumas that it takes a while before that, and this is my point, this is why I brought that up. There's a period of real transition when the old, I'm a piece of crap and no, I'm actually really healthy, kind, normal human being. As they kind of mix together, there's a period where people feel like I don't know who I am anymore. And I say, that's good, that's great. I'm glad because it means that we're moving out of that old familiar ego-based you that is causing a lot of your anxiety, depression, eating disorders, O C D personality disorders. We're moving away from that. So you're going to feel a lot balance. And that's the thing about therapy that people don't really understand is typically you feel a little more confused before you start feeling better.

Lorne Brown:

There's a journey basically. Yeah. And can you talk more about getting into the body again? The reason I want to talk about it, I find with people I work with and just my own personal experience at the beginning, it seems so counterintuitive to go in and experience that discomfort, but yet it seems to be what's needed to transform and metabolize the alarm.

Russell Kennedy:

And I think it's basically because we felt so alone and powerless as children when this was going on. There's a structure in our brain called the amygdala, and the amygdala is implicated at just about every fear-based reaction of a human being. And the amygdala never forgets. It encodes everything, but it has no sense of time. So something that if you were bitten by a dog at three years old, you don't even remember it. And now you have this death fear of dogs whenever a dog's coming down the street in your direction, that's the amygdala that encodes anything that's ever hurt you in the past. And the thing is, we have to go in there and treat this stuff at the same level that it's encoded. So this is why we're talking at the start of this about talk therapy. Talk therapy is important, but it's not going to heal you.

It'll help you cope. But to really heal, we have to go in and deal with those subconscious programs, those old wounds that are encoded in our brain and in our body that are maybe 30, 40, 50 years old. It's the amount of time that we spend really connecting with that part of us. And often we can do that through our body because I do feel that the body is a representation of the unconscious mind. If there's trauma stored in the unconscious mind, it will be located in the body. So what I do with people is I take them into a trauma, I put them into a relaxed state. I'm similar to what you do with hypnosis. And then we go into one of your traumas when your mother yelled at you for coming home from overnight or something. And then I say, okay, now scan your body.

See if there's an intense energy that you haven't been picking up on. It's like, well, it's kind of in my throat. It's like, okay, how big is it? Size of a golf ball, tennis ball, softball. It's kind of like a tennis ball size. Does it have a temperature? Does it have a color? It may not. So I drill down into all these things, and again, tracking back into the insula, which is this part of our brain that creates these body memories because I believe that that insula in our brain creates a state in our body now that was exactly the same as the state in our body back then. And the amygdala just reinforces that. So when we are walking down the street and we see that dog coming, the amygdala fires a message down to our brainstem that controls our body and says, we're in danger. We're in danger. And I bet you that feeling is exactly the same way now that you felt when you were three years old. And then we get the corresponding thoughts with that as well. So it becomes this self-fulfilling prophecy. So the underlying thing is if we can start changing that subcortical, that unconscious part of us that creates these programs, then we can start actually changing the root cause of the anxiety rather than just trying to fix our thoughts, which is just kind of chasing our tail.

Lorne Brown:

So when you get into the feeling part, like you said, you feel it in your chest or your solar plexes, you get them to kind of give it a shape, color, describe it. I think of two things that are kind of happening here. One is the reason I think this works is you're bringing awareness to it now versus just being in it and suffering from it. Yes, totally. There's a sense of awareness, and awareness is the light that can transform the darkness. And so that's why it's a little different than just when you're totally spiraling out of control. There is a sense of awareness, there's a little bit of distance as you witness this. And then when you get into it, it sounds like we want to interrupt because you have the body feeling and then the judgment and analyzing

can happen. And the goal here then is to interrupt that part so you don't get into the story and reinforce it, are we?

Russell Kennedy:

Yeah. Yeah. Sometimes what I'll do is I'll just get people to sit with that pain. I was working with a woman a couple of weeks ago, and she had a very narcissistic mother who watched, was always commenting about her weight and that kind of thing. And I said, well, where do you find your alarm? And I'm shortening this a lot. Said, well, it's in my throat. It's this hot burning tennis ball. That's why the tennis ball came up, this hot burning tennis ball in my throat. And I often see daughters with narcissistic mothers have their alarm in their throat because they could never really express to their mother what they wanted to say. So that energy is locked there. So I said, okay, let's just put our hand over that place because I do believe that that tennis ball that's in your throat is an element of your younger self. Put your hand over that. Just see if you can connect with her. And then I'll ask, did she have a nickname? It's like, yeah, her nickname was like Izzy or Sammy or something like that. It's like, okay, that's how you talk to her. It's like, Izzy, I've got you. We're together. And I know this sounds kind of woo, but it works. It's the only thing that's worked for me over 35 years of dealing with crippling anxiety.

Lorne Brown:

It works and it's simple. And so for our listeners, again, I'm a fan of simple, powerful, and effective and simple is often dismissed, right? Because it's simple. But we used to dismiss meditation and now we see how it affects telomeres and blood pressure and other biomarkers, and it was considered just a silly thing from the ancient traditional cultures. And now we see it's so simple. So this is simple talking to you yourself. I see it in my practice. It's my favorite modality, especially when it comes to reproductive health, because often people are wanting to have a child, but yet they're ready to love this child that they're going to have, but they can't love their

Russell Kennedy:

Child. Exactly.

Lorne Brown:

And attracts. And so if we can heal our inner child and start to love our child, this just transformation happens. And now they're okay whether they have child or not, when they come in, it's desperation. They have to have this child or life's not going to work. They come to a place where they want the child, but they're not attached to form outcome. They don't stop wanting it, but it's no longer a desperate need

overtaking their lives, and they want it, and they know they're okay if they don't have it because they have shifted that healing has happened with their inner child, that separation has been healed.

Russell Kennedy:

And ironically, that's when they conceive when they don't need it.

Lorne Brown:

Some of the miracle ones where I look at it and I'm like, this makes no sense. Yeah, we've seen some of those. So that's where we want to go beyond the materialistic world. And when they come in, they're saying, I'm looking for a miracle. And I go, well, I got my acupuncture laser and supplements. But if you're looking for a miracle, then let's add conscious work to it, because that's where we're going to tap into your, I think, your higher self or a big consciousness. But I can't explain what happens, but I can unsee what I've seen as well with some of the individuals that have transformed their lives. And again, they've transformed it. I facilitate, but they do it all. It's all their work. It's just amazing to watch these people transform their lives. It's incredible.

Russell Kennedy:

And sometimes the dys fertility is just the arrow pointing you back towards yourself.

Lorne Brown:

It's a wake up call. No different than a cancer diagnosis, a divorce, a death in the family. Our teacher that we went to years ago where we met Gila, Gallup, what's your wake up call? And so for a lot of the people I see could be fertility, I see people with severe pain and come in with anxiety as well, all different things. And it's their wake up call to go in and do some healing. Would you be willing, because people are listening to you and you've got your book and your online program, but it's always nice to know that you've done this, you can relate to the individual and you've had your experiences. Are you willing to share your history? And I know you talked about psychedelics a bit, so are you willing to share with our audience a little bit? Why are you the anxiety MD now?

Russell Kennedy:

Right. Well, I mean, it came back to growing up in chaos because my father was bipolar and schizophrenic, so I never really knew what was going to happen in my house. That was one thing. And the other thing was my dad was very loving, caring,

generous, smart. When he was present, he was amazing. But then all of a sudden I would just lose him to psychosis or depression or whatever. So over the course of time, being five years old, 10 years old, 15 years old, and seeing this happen over and over and over again and seeing his pain, I kind of withdrew from him because it just hurt too much to love someone and see them suffer so much. So the program that I got put inside of me is two things. One is this is all going to get taken away from you. And the other one is, it's not safe to love.

So that's really, and there is only love and fear. So if it's not safe to love, your world is going to be overwhelmed with fear, which is basically what I did. Now, I was able to take that fear and sublimate it into being a yoga teacher and a medical doctor and a neuroscientist and all that kind. But in a way, I'm just running away. I was just running away from my anxiety. And eventually it catches up with you after two divorces and that kind of thing, it catches up with you. So I had really crippling anxiety in 2013, I ruptured my left Achilles tendon, and it was kind of like the straw that broke the doctor's back. And I'm like, forget it. I can't do this anymore. I left medicine and I just collapsed. I just collapsed into anxiety. And it wasn't depression because I had tons of energy.

It was just that energy just drove me, but I wasn't getting anywhere anymore. And I was doing standup comedy and that kind of thing, which kind of saved me in a way because it gave me an outlet to focus this energy. But really it was about this disconnection from myself, this inability to really accept love for myself and for other people. And after a while, I just felt this emptiness, holiness. So that's what brought me to my friend who's a plant medicine specialist, not just psychedelics, like every plant, you go for a walk with this guy, and it's like, well, that's plantain. You can put that on your inflammation and stuff. He knows everything. So anyway, he saw what bad shape that I was in, and he took me on an L S D trip. And on that L S D trip, I was kind of shown, and I still don't know how, but I was told that my anxiety, what I was calling the anxiety of my mind was actually this alarm stored in my body and it was in my solar plexus.

It was sharp, it was purple. It pushed up against my heart, it pushed back into my spine. And from that point on, it was like, okay, well maybe I've been trying to treat the wrong thing. Maybe I'm trying to fix my thoughts when actually the root cause of this anxiety that I feel is in my body. And then that's when I started to expand stuff. That's when I started doing a lot of Gordon Neufeld work and connecting with inner child, understanding where this alarm kind of comes from. He says, all anxiety is separation anxiety, kind of I add, and it's separation from yourself. And I just sort

of slowly got this theory over the course of time that anxiety is much more to do with the alarm that's stored in your body from old unresolved wounds than it is the thoughts of your mind. Your mind is a compulsive meaning-making makes sense machine.

So when it reads the alarm in your system through interoception, when the body reads or when the mind reads the body, it has to do something with that, especially the left hemisphere. It's got to make sense of this pain. So it says, well, I'll never escape anxiety. I'll never find love, I'll never conceive whatever it is. And then you believe it, you created it, and it just creates this cycle, this alarm anxiety cycle that you can't get out of. And until you see that they're separable, until you see that the alarm in your body is separable from the thoughts of your mind, they're inextricably linked and it will trap you for the rest of your

Lorne Brown:

Life. And with your psychedelic experience, I heard you in one of your podcasts say that the psychedelics basically take off the brakes. And so if you have a lot of trauma anxiety, it could be a trip. I did a psychedelic trip and that was my experience. I went there for a, Hey, I'm going to hang out with bliss and love and life horrible. It was horrible. Oh yeah,

Russell Kennedy:

Someone, I can't remember who said this, but it's like, oh, no, I know who it is. It's Damon Shredder. One of the comics I used to tour with, I think he took way too much of It was either L s D or something. And it's like, I've made a terrible mistake. It's like, this is, and it was terrible for me, and I wasn't mean. I've done M D M A, which isn't classically a psychedelic, but ayahuasca, L s D and psilocybin. And I took them not to get high, but try and understand my anxious mind. And each one was terrible in its own. So it took me about two years to really recover from that experience of seeing the other side, seeing death in a way, seeing the bleakness of the blankness of the way I was living my life. And it took me two people think that, oh, I took a psychedelic and I was fine and everything. I don't drink anymore. And there are magical stories about it, but they're the exception rather than the rule.

Lorne Brown:

Yeah, I definitely, my same experience. I was so messed up after my trip. Trip one. Did you do five M e o d m T.

Russell Kennedy:

Oh, okay. Yeah. Okay. So that's basically ayahuasca.

Lorne Brown:

Knocked me on my ass and then psilocybin as well. But I still had the after effects of the, so it was just, and I didn't even come home. I spent four days at a friend's house to recalibrate, called my uncle, who's a brilliant scientist neuroscientist. He discovered part of the team that discovered the circadian rhythm back in the day. And I told him, I think I broke my brain.

He, what'd you do? And I said, I took these medicinals, these plant medicines. I took these plant medicines. He goes, what are they? And I tell 'em, and he goes, okay, first of all, those aren't plants. Those are drugs. I said, I referred to it again as medicinals. He goes, stop calling these medicinals. They're drugs. And then he shared with me it could take six months to a year for my brain to settle down, but they're not broken. I see you in there. And thankfully I feel for the people that don't have the means to do this, but I had the ability to take off some work. I have the tools, and then I have people that I know people like you. I just know people where I called in everybody, I said, you got to work on me. And it took months to kind of get my nervous system back. I couldn't sleep with the lights off for a while.

It was like the scariest trip of my life. And when I heard we met, because I went to Gila as well for some debilitating anxiety back in 20 11, 12 is when I started. And I couldn't understand why, because it didn't make sense based on my external life that I would have this in my body. And so I was just curious to uncover so I could not blame, not be a victim, clearly intended. I wanted to find and integrate. I wanted to use it to help with the healing process. Yeah. Yeah. That's not what happened. That's not what happened for me. And so I had these tools to really, and put me in my body to really regulate my nervous system because it became dysregulated, like, oh yeah, totally was for a while, pretty nasty. So my message here, just because we went on a tangent, is I think psychedelics are going to do some crazy healing, and it's done some amazing healing for people. I don't think it's for everybody, or you definitely need to make sure you have some good support and stuff because not everybody's going to get to dance with unicorns.

Russell Kennedy:

And we're relatively in the infancy of psychedelics. People go off. The funny thing about psychedelics is they're among the safest physiological compounds that there

are, but psychologically they're not. So I think we're getting into this thing that we're in this dopamine driven, immediate gratification society that, well, I don't want to go through two years of therapy. I'd rather have three or four nights on ayahuasca and cure myself that way, not realizing that, well, you could come out actually worse, and we have to do this in a controlled environment. And then, and screen people too. If you've got big time physical, sexual emotional abuse, the thing about psychedelics is they kind of paralyze the braking system in your brain. So you're going to feel all of that pain full force because there's nothing left to kind of buffer it. So in some people that's cathartic and it's healing and whatever, and I saw the other side and whatever. And other people, it's just re-traumatizing. So it's not a panacea is basically what we're saying

Lorne Brown:

Based on that, because you say it takes off the brakes, do you subscribe to the idea that people have transgenerational trauma then that it can be brought forward? Because some people don't remember anything bad in their childhood. I'm not talking that they don't remember their childhood. They just can't see anything really traumatic, and yet they have all this alarm going off in their body. So I'm just curious from your background, what's your thought on that?

Russell Kennedy:

Well, I think you can transmit trauma. I mean, it's starting to be seen now that the male sperm can transmit trauma to the offspring. So it's seeing the science of it, like the quantum physics of it. We're starting to see it in ways that we don't understand. So there's cases where for some reason, I'm coming up with this idea that sometimes people in transplantation, they'll get a heart transplant and all of a sudden they'll have this compulsive urge for pickles that they've never had before in their lives. So there's an energy that we don't understand. And then what the thing about that story is the person who died and donated their heart had this pickle fetish or whatever, or personality changes or whatever. So we have these things that were these autonomous beings. Our nervous system is like a blank slate. And I think we do come in with certain things, and I was talking about this in RAN Strategies' podcast too, about our kids.

Our kids are suffering, but it's not our fault as parents. I think there's this sense that we take agency and governorship over our kids and their problems, and sometimes our kids have a path that we can help shepherd them through. It's not our fault, but that's their path. And I have people that talk to me all the time, my child's got juvenile rheumatoid arthritis or juvenile diabetes, and they're in the hospital. It's

like, it's not your fault. It's their path. For some reason, consciousness has given them this particular incarnation of human being, and I'm still having a hard time figuring out a way of describing how trauma gets into people. But there's all sorts of evidence that it does. Right.

Lorne Brown:

The cherry blossom study mice, you talked about the sperm. That's from some Holocaust studies. We're just tagging the, I think the RRMNA and on the DNA, there's also, where was my thought here on

Russell Kennedy:

Inherited family trauma.

Lorne Brown:

Yeah, the inherited family trauma. If your child, lets, because we don't know, right? If they come into, as you said, conscious, they come in with this trauma that's been brought in as a parent, it's not their fault. However, it ties back to the very beginning. As a parent, can you love them? Can you see them? Can you hear them? Can you have compassion for them? How you're going to, you use the word shepherd. How do you shepherd your child in that's going through this is be the grownup, be the alpha parent. So they see you got this, so they don't see the fear in your eyes.

Russell Kennedy:

Exactly. Yeah, exactly. I heard the other day it's like you are a mosaic of your entire family. If you look back, you're a mosaic of that. And there are people say all the time like, oh, he's just like his uncle. He looks like him. He acts like him. I think there's these programs that are put into us that we believe we are these idiosyncratic individuals, but really a lot of our lives, a lot of our personality, a lot of our tastes, our likes, our dislikes are already pre-programmed due to us.

Lorne Brown:

What are some of the body-based therapies that you like? I've heard you talk about doing the inner child work and finding the discomfort on your body. You kind of mentioned acupuncture, something also to get you into your body. I'm curious if you have others you like. And I want to know if you've heard of David B's work on T R e, the trauma release exercise, but he's episode 38. If not, check it out because it's all about using the body and getting into a state where it starts to shake and tremor to release. Have you heard of his work as well?

Russell Kennedy:

Oh yeah. Yeah, for sure. I mean, if you look, Steven Por just talks about that too. If a gazelle gets chased by a lion and it escapes for about 20 minutes, it'll just shake and then it'll go off and do whatever gazelle's do after that. So I think there is that mechanism in human beings as well. The problem with that is human beings also have this tremendous prefrontal cortex. The gazelle isn't going to go, geez, that's the lion that chase me. I mean, it might, but the thing about human beings is we make these conscious structures, these worry structures that just don't allow us to heal so we can release through the body. But for me, the real true thing is finding that younger version of you, finding the child in you. Everything else to me is kind of like a passive structure. And that can be kind of controversial, but I think we really have to see, hear, love, and protect that child, find them, find their eyes, see what they're wearing, go back, have a picture of them, connect with them. That's how we heal. Everything else is kind of what I call passive. So the active way of healing is to go back, find that child, find their eyes, connect with them, help them metabolize their trauma, see them, hear them, love them, and protect them. Show them that you'll never leave them. That's how you heal. The other stuff is helpful and it creates the fertile ground for that. But unless that final piece of connecting with your younger wounded self is there, you're not going to heal. Now that's maybe controversial, but that's how I

Lorne Brown:

Feel. And so with that style, I like the work of John Bradshaw. Are there certain people that you like or styles? I recommend certain meditations for people to do inner child meditation, and we give them some language to connect with their inner child. I share with you, it's my favorite modality, especially when it comes to reproductive health. Your style of inner child, or are there any anybody that has shaped the way you work that was inspirational for you?

Russell Kennedy:

I think Neufeld for sure, Bradshaw. Just people that go back and really look at that child without being too afraid of the repercussions in the scientific community. Because science, this is one of the things about science is like if you look at neuroscience in the last 20 years, the advancements that we've made have been unbelievable, incredible. But very little of those neuroscientific advancements have actually led to clinical changes in that sort of patient doctor, whatever therapist room. So I often say science will help you cope, but it's really faith and connection that helps you heal. And we haven't yet been able to kind of drill down into what

love is, drill down into what faith is. I mean, we can do F M R I scanners and we can see that there's parts of our brain that in someone who's really adept at worship, who's really has a strong, strong, strong religious faith, we can start seeing structures in their brain that are, say, larger than the average person.

But we haven't really been able to really get the essence of faith or healing. And that's why we need both. We need science to help us guide us along the way. But the bigger factor in healing is faith in your own recovery. It's faith in your own self and faith in other people. Because I think the reason why we often become emotionally, physically sick is we've lost faith in our connection with other people, and we've lost faith in our connection with ourselves. So we heal ourselves by connecting with other people because our connection with other people shows us how to connect with ourselves, which goes back to motherhood and baby mothers and babies. You have mothers who are really connected, they show their baby how to feel. The mothers who are disconnected, the babies don't know how to feel, and they go through their whole lives disconnected.

Lorne Brown:

And this is that opportunity by checking out Russell's book and checking out his online program, you can start to heal yourself, heal your inner child as you are trying, or as you work through growing your own family. And then as we talk about on the podcast, you go from conscious fertility to conscious conception, hopefully to conscious pregnancy, to that conscious parenting where you consciously are helping your child get their attachment needs met so they feel seen, heard, and loved. So they don't need to turn to drugs and cutting and suicide and gangs as the age. And so they don't have to take psychedelics, Russell,

Russell Kennedy:

We did.

Lorne Brown:

They

Russell Kennedy:

Don't have to do what we did. Yeah, exactly. Don't do what we did.

Lorne Brown:

And that's why this podcast exists, and I'm bringing guests like you on Russell, is rather than going out and trying to fix the world, I'm sharing information so people can go in. It's really about everybody doing their own work.

Russell Kennedy:

And that's what it really comes down to is it's actually not that hard, but there's a tremendous amount of resistance to doing the easy things. That's the ironic part.

Lorne Brown:

Yeah. Yeah, the easy things. Russell, how did they find you? So you got your book, and what's the best way for people to connect with you to find out about your book and about your online programs and just because they want to connect with you?

Russell Kennedy:

Yeah, I mean, if you just search the Anxiety MD, all my stuff is the Anxiety md, not the Anxiety Doctor, but the Anxiety MD. And Instagram's probably the best place. It has basically access to all my programs in my book and all that kind of thing. So that's at the Anxiety MD. My website is [www the Anxiety md](http://www.theAnxietymd.com), so that's usually the best way to find me. Instagram is usually the most efficient way of getting me, but the website is also pretty good too.

Lorne Brown:

Perfect. Thank you very much, Russell. It was good to chat with you today.

Russell Kennedy:

You too, Lorne. Anytime.

Speaker:

If you're looking for support to grow your family contact Acubalance Wellness Centre at Acubalance, they help you reach your peak fertility potential through their integrative approach using low level laser therapy, fertility, acupuncture, and naturopathic medicine. Download the Acubalance Fertility Diet and Dr. Brown's video for mastering manifestation and clearing subconscious blocks. Go to acubalance.ca. That's acubalance.ca.

Lorne Brown:

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