**Welcome to this month's talk on an autoimmune disorder.**

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This is a subject very close to my heart as over the years I've struggled with autoimmune disease myself.

Hidradenitis Suppurative (HS) (hi-drad-uh-NIE-tis Sup-yoo-ruh-TIE-vuh) is a skin disease that causes painful, re-occurring bumps that may leak fluid, and scar when they heal.

HS is often mistaken for other skin conditions including acne, boils, cysts, and folliculitis.

For me this meant sore, often egg size or golf ball sized lumps that look like boils under my breasts, under my arms, in my armpits, in my groin, and for many people between the buttocks and on the perineum too.

The disease started when I was in my teens, with one large painful lump that remained for a few weeks, that seemed to come and then go, and then come and then go, (REPEAT) I thought I had acne but, then things got progressively worse.

The swollen lumps associated with HS may spontaneously rupture with a strong-smelling discharge. Then they heal and then reoccur. These lesions often fuse into dermal abscesses which continuously leak pus and can be really hard to heal.

Fistulas can also form, leading to development of excessive tunnels under the skin known as sinus tracts.

These cause inflammation and infection, then can travel deeper and become more widespread. For me, and many other sufferers we're left with thick painful scar tissue that limits movement in affected areas. I have also experienced itching, burning, and profuse sweating.

HS impacts quality of life by causing psychological symptoms, such as depression, anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, social isolation and problems with intimacy.

***Who'd want to have sex with me when my breasts and private parts are covered in sores.***

It's estimated that just 1% of the population are affected by HS.

There has been very little research into why it happens, what makes it worse and if there are genetic predispositions, no one has ever been able to tell me why I have this.

The general advice is don't smoke, being overweight can make it worse, people with acne, or polycystic ovary syndrome may also be at greater risk, people with a biological parent with HS, and African American women aged 40 and under have the highest risk of developing HS.

**If Clients come to you with this weight management and smoking cessation hypnosis may be really helpful.**

HS tends to start after puberty, it can persist for many years and worsen overtime, with serious effects on your daily life and emotional wellbeing.

Experts think it could be connected to hormones, genetic predisposition, cigarette smoking or excess weight.

HS is not caused by an infection or being unclean, and it can't be spread to other people.

Over the years I've read so many things and out of desperation have tried so many things. Rubbing potatoes on my skin, wrapping myself in onion skins, rubbing cloves of garlic on various parts of my anatomy, fasting, changing my diet, cutting out gluten, cutting out dairy, cutting out nightshades, allergy testing, antibiotics, multiple prescriptions, creams lotions and potions.

Over the past two years I've been using clinical hypnosis and have been absolutely delighted at the positive results that I've experienced myself. When I started using clinical hypnosis on myself, I was at stage 3 so facing immune-suppressive medication and surgery.

At this moment in time, I've been officially downgraded to stage 2 but believe that I'm at stage 1, as, I no longer experience such intensive flares. The sores I experience are very small and quite manageable.

I still get a little fatigue, aches and pains, from time to time. However, I'm aware of my secondary gains, it’s quite handy to have a flare up if I don’t want to do the washing up, make tea or can’t be bothered to walk the dog. We are all beautiful works in progress.

With HS your body produces too much of a protein called TNF-alpha this along with other inflammatory proteins seems to increase inflammation throughout the body which in turn can cause abscesses underneath or on the surface of your skin.

**Humira** is an autoimmune suppressant. It works by targeting and blocking TNF-alpha, thought to contribute to symptoms of HS.

Many patients do see meaningful results with at least a 50% reduction in the number of abscesses and nodules. These medications work by suppressing the immune system. While these drugs may be effective in treating symptoms of various inflammatory diseases, they also put users at greater risk of serious and even deadly infections or cancers.

Humira is often injected, which brings more risks and possible infections.

All users must be tested for TB before starting to use Humira as it can cause an increase in bacteria, for example, legionella and listeria bacteria as well as other nasty side effects.

The good news is that research shows great benefits from hypnotherapy for all autoimmune diseases, and I certainly have benefited from it too.

# Interesting facts

**Let’s examine some interesting facts about Autoimmune disorders.**

* Autoimmune disorders occur **almost exclusively** in developed countries.
* About 10% of the world’s population suffers from one of, the more than 100 autoimmune diseases.

**Let’s Put the problem into perspective**, the prevalence and cost of autoimmune disease is greater than cancer, heart disease, and diabetes combined, and it's one of the top ten causes of death in women under the age of 64.

* People in underdeveloped countries without modern amenities like cleaning, water, washing machines, flushing toilets, and good healthcare, don't really experience these diseases. **It doesn't make sense**, except, if you look at the difference in lifestyles.

**We live in a busy modern society, we don't have great ways to manage stress, we sit a lot, live sedentary lives, do little to work with, or exercise our bodies, we have little time to relax, and have not been taught to pay attention to what our body tells us.**

We jump in the car instead of choosing to walk, we buy most of our goods in one place rather than walking from shop to shop, we have little time to sit and relax with friends and family.

Certainly, in developed countries our food is more processed, and we are exposed to more chemicals and pollution as well.

* The dramatic increase in toxicants in our environment, diets filled with sugar and simple carbohydrates, an over-emphasis on antibiotics, and an under-emphasis on basic stress relief practises, Well **it's not surprising that we are facing an autoimmune epidemic.**

# Some Autoimmune disorders.

**The list of autoimmune diseases is long and growing**, and includes Hashimoto’s thyroiditis, Graves' disease, type one diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, multiple sclerosis, celiac disease, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, eczema, psoriasis, even chronic Lyme disease, and some types of heart disease have recently been classified as autoimmune.

**Symptoms range from frustrating to debilitating and may show up years before a diagnosis is made.**

Profound fatigue, insomnia, brain fog, body aches and pains, numbness and tingling, hair loss, swelling, and stubborn extra weight, are among the most common complaints.

Hypnotherapy has been shown to be very successful in helping patients resolve allergy issues. Autoimmune diseases are very similar to allergies. **Allergies involve an unacceptable immune response towards something external to our body such as food, a bee sting, or pollen.** With an autoimmune disorder **it's something within our body** that causes an abnormal reaction in our immune system.

This reaction causes our immune system to attack or fight the body itself.

**Deepak Chopra says that every thought, and every emotion you experience touches every single cell in your body.**

**So, what do you think happens to your body when you constantly feed it negative thoughts, well it probably experiences a negative emotional state, which then leads to either physical pain, illness, or discomfort**?

One of the major contributors to **inflammation and autoimmune disease** is our emotional and mental wellbeing.

We need support our clients to **reduce inflammatory lifestyle factors.** Add in nourishing ones, balance health, make proactive choices, and **breakdown transformation or change** into actionable and manageable steps.

We can help our clients to reduce their toxic load of processed foods. We can advise them to remove toxic chemicals from their homes, and personal care products.

Most of all we can guide them in addressing toxic stress, encourage and support them to add the good stuff for example, eating real whole foods, prioritising sleep, and adapting easy daily relaxation practises.

In other words, we can support our clients to give their bodies, what their bodies need, and it will repair, restore and even thrive.

**As hypnotherapists we have the keys to reversing autoimmune conditions helping our clients to reclaim their health.**

Milton Erickson once said the subconscious mind is like a warehouse of resources. Most people go into the warehouse with a little flashlight rather than turning on all the lights.

In other words, we have a choice in what resources in our unconscious mind we want to use at any given time.

**So why not use the ones that will empower us or heal us the most?**

# Today’s presentation

**In this presentation today I'm going to focus on, listening to and working with, our body and how that strongly relates to the mind, and the use of hypnotherapy.**

**I’ll also include some basic information you can share with your clients to empower them on their healing journey.**

For the past two decades functional medicine, a whole person based scientific approach that addresses and resolves health challenges at root cause level, has begun to address autoimmune disorders.

Autoimmune disease is not a one-way street. There are now many methods that reverse and prevent them.

While autoimmune diseases appear to be numerous its easier for us to think about them **as just one disorder** **with countless variations** **based on the unique genetic vulnerability that your client may have.**

**Every autoimmune condition is an immune system challenge driven by chronic inflammation.**

What functional medicine shows us is that working at the root cause level, and discovering the source of the inflammation, we can find the keys to recovery.

**There are six categories of causes and keys to recovery.**

These can be remembered with the acronym

F. I. G. H. T. S. which stands for:

Food, Infections, Gut health, Hormone balance, Toxins, and Stress.

Food **is how we get terribly sick, or it's how we can restore our health. So, let's start with food.**

We humans were hunter gatherers eating fresh, Whole Foods harvested or hunted in the wild. There were few grains, no pesticides, no herbicide's, few processed foods, and no genetically modified foods.

The topsoil teamed with beneficial organisms, plants grew in a natural place, and trace minerals were recycled back into the soil for next year's season.

Plants and animals provided nourishing, nutrient dense food, and I would imagine chronic disease was virtually non-existent.

Fast forward to the industrial revolution, which eventually brought in mass agriculture and machinery for large scale production to feed growing populations after World War Two.

**Now** vast quantities of processed cereal grains like wheat, corn, rice, and soy provide a cheap and easy source of calories. Fast, frozen and packaged foods are a very efficient way to provide people with food which is better than foraging for sustenance.

**But convenience has come at a cost.**

As we've become great mass producers of grains oils and animals,

**we've also gotten really sick.**

A return to health for people with autoimmune disease often follows a return to more traditional ways of eating. **This doesn't mean that you have to sharpen your spear and roam the wild to find your own food** although, metaphorically speaking that would be the right direction to go with.

There are three invisible but powerful sources inside you the **epigenetics, the microbiome, and the mitochondria**. Each of these forces’ responses in real time to the foods that you eat daily.

To understand the epigenetics of food let's imagine it's lunchtime and you’re eating a burger. If your burger is made with typical GMO produced, antibiotic laden meat, cooked at high heat, and industrial oils, and comes with a bun, you've just turned up the volume on your disease promoting genes.

But if your burger was from an animal that had been 100% grass fed, had been cooked in ghee, on a medium heat and perhaps wrapped in organic lettuce, you might have just turned the volume down on your disease promoting genes.

What you choose to eat also directly impacts your microbiome. Sugar and processed foods feed non beneficial fungi that produce **mycotoxins and yeast infections**, whereas probiotic rich foods like fermented vegetables, feed healthy promoting bacteria which maintain beneficial microbial balance.

With each food decision your client chooses, instructions get directly delivered to your body, harm or heal.

You've heard that food is fuel well your Mitochondria are small but mighty factories in each of your cells, that turn the food you eat into energy.

Your Mitochondria produce 90% of your cellular energy so they're definitely mighty. The number and deficiency of your mitochondria reflect a microcosm of your health and wellbeing.

When your mitochondria function well, you'll feel better and have more energy. The opposite is also true, when your Mitochondria experience harm inflicted by stress, infections, toxins, and SAD foods, your energy producers are given reasons to go on strike.

# SAD Foods are:

**Gluten** the number one Autoimmune food trigger it’s been implicated in at least 55 diseases in a review papers by the New England Journal of medicine.

**Processed fats and oils**. Most vegetable oils are highly processed, inflammatory fats. They are produced using toxic chemicals and contain a high ratio of Disease promoting free radicals, linked to heart disease, cancer, obesity and autoimmune conditions.

**Sugars and sweeteners**. Excess sugar in all forms glucose, sue crows, and fructose harms immune system and promotes inflammation, leaky gut, obesity, cancer, and art immunity.

**Dairy**, many people with celiac disease or gluten sensitivities are also sensitive to dairy, specifically to the dairy protein casein.

**food additives and chemicals**. Many added chemicals used to alter flavour colour and texture and extend shelf life, a link to cancer and autoimmune disease. Anything with preservatives, artificial flavours, colourings and chemicals, **including MSG mono sodium glutamate and artificial sweeteners**. Conventionally grown fruits and vegetables often contain pesticide residue which may increase the risk for developing autoimmune diseases. Unfiltered tap water often contains **toxic chemicals including fluoride, chlorine, chloramine, lead, pharmaceutical drugs, other substances known to interfere with immune function, disrupt hormones, cause inflammation and risk cancer.** The recommendation is to avoid toxins in your food and water to the greatest extent possible.

**You are not only what you eat, but you are also whatever you ate.**

**Conventionally raised animals** are often mass produced in concentrated animal feeding operations in order to produce the fattest animals as fast as possible, often with antibiotics and hormones. If that isn't enough they're fed grains which usually genetically modified, laden with pesticides and herbicides and spoiled by toxic mould. Yes, that's right mouldy grain causes greater weight to gain fattier meat.

**Corn.** that contains a type of gluten which resembles the gluten in wheat and can cause a cross reaction in people sensitive to wheat gluten this means that bodies mistake corn gluten for wheat gluten and it has a similar immune reaction and can lead to autoimmunity.

**Soy**. Avoid conventionally grown soy for good if you can ideally, however, fermented soy products are easier to digest.

**White table salt.**

**Are also not helpful we recommend that you avoid processed white table salt and replace it with refined or raw sea salt**.

* **Identifying and eliminating suspect foods is important.**

They say one man's food is another man's poison. When it comes to autoimmune disorders and food sensitivity this old adage is spot on.

Suspect foods can be harmless to many, but harmful for some.

Clients are likely to be very familiar with food allergies, as people will have severe reactions with food allergies. These can be verified by a lab test that reveals elevated immunoglobulin E antibodies. I like to think of **E** for **Emergency.**

More common are food sensitivities, which appear on lab tests as elevated immunoglobulin **G** antibodies I call these **Grief** antibodies.

Food allergies trigger immediate reactions, food sensitivities often produce delayed reactions sometimes not impacting for hours or even a week. **So, what can we recommend?**

# The 30-day food holiday.

**I recommend that clients who are working with me have a 30-day food holiday** particularly if your clients are struggling from autoimmune issues and have troubling symptoms like digestive problems, brain fog, headaches, fatigue, or aches and pains. Then a 30-day food holiday maybe the most profound experiment that they'll ever do.

**The first step** is to select the 30 days which are going to be do-able for the food holiday.

This is a time where the client takes a holiday from any suspect foods and possible food triggers.

**The second step** is to shop ahead, for a wide variety of yummy organic foods, that they will enjoy eating for those 30 days. Things like wild fish, turkey, chicken, good proteins, lots of organic veggies, good fats, things like extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil, and other fats like avocados and olives, different fermented foods, low glycaemic foods, herbs and spices, and pantry items like apple cider vinegar, and bone broth. It's a good idea to shop for dairy replacements, organic decaffeinated tea, lots of water, pure water, and sweeteners like stevia.

**Step 3 plan ahead** with your meal options and food holiday recipes looking at autoimmune paleo diets for recipes **free** of dairy, eggs, sugar, grains, chocolate, coffee, nuts and nightshades are all a good idea.

**Step four** get everything from your kitchen your house your office that are potentially suspect foods. Remove the temptations even get rid of those hidden stashes of chocolates at the back of the cupboard.

**Step five** would be to then observe and pay attention to how your clients are feeling perhaps keep a food symptom tracker and

**step six** then would be after 30 days to start very slowly reintroducing foods one at a time in small amounts.

The clients may want to reintroduce foods in a particular order it's always useful to get support from a nutritionist as this area really isn't our area of expertise.

**Step seven** if they do experience any negative reactions to stop eating those foods immediately and

**Step eight** congratulate yourself on managing the food holiday and hopefully your client will have found out which are the food triggers for them.

The second part FIGHTS is the I this stands for clearing infections.

# Clear infections

Many experts believe that if you have an autoimmune condition, you almost certainly have an infection too. Growing scientific evidence indicates that chronic infections from bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi are big contributing factors in the development and exacerbation of autoimmune conditions.

Our immune system is our armed forces, its responsible for protecting us from harmful invaders. When it functions properly, we are resilient against infections. With an inflammatory lifestyle, a diet of simple carbohydrates, sugar and refined grains, poor sleep, minimal movement, excess stress, and environmental toxins, our immune systems get run down and doesn’t operate well.

In short, modern lifestyles are burdening our immune systems as a result they are prone to immune dysfunction and infections.

**Chronic inflammation causes the immune system to stay reactive all the time.**

The next area to enlighten clients on is their gut.

# I recommend clients look into healing their gut.

The gut is the seat of all health, even 2500 years ago Hippocrates now known as the father of modern medicine observed all disease begins in the gut.

Since the late 19th century when Louis Pasteur popularised the germ theory as the cause of disease, western medicine adopted the belief that microbes are a primary reason why we get sick.

While antibiotics have had a profoundly beneficial impact on society, helping to wipeout many infectious diseases, it's only more recently been understood that the collateral damage done by the overuse of antibiotics maybe one of the greatest threats to our health and wellbeing.

**It's useful to know what the gut is.**

# Defining the GUT.

The gut is often shorthand for the whole digestive system. When people refer to the gut in terms of health and disease, they are usually referring to the intestines, both small and large.

The large intestine is often called the colon, the small intestine is a flexible passageway approximately 22 to 23 feet long and an inch in diameter, its piled like a plate of spaghetti in the middle of our body.

Tucked into the lining of your small intestine are thousands of tiny finger like projections called Villi (Vil-EYE) These villi absorb nutrients and are the home of your immune system.

They protect you from unwanted invaders most of which are in the things that you eat and pass through your digestive system.

The small intestine is arguably the most important barrier between you and the outside world. Looking after this barrier is crucial for maintaining your health. Healing my gut lining was a game changer for me.

Your large intestine also known as your colon is only about 5 feet long the large intestine earns its name thanks to its wide 4-inch diameter. It's also an important part of your immune system as it hosts the largest microbiome in your body, a vast ecosystem of microbes made up of mostly beneficial bacteria, fungi, parasites and bacteriophages viruses that infect bacteria but harmless to humans.

# So why do we need to heal our gut?

A question that is often asked particularly when we're dealing with skin issues or aches and pains and if the client doesn't have an inflammatory bowel disorder like IBS, Crohn's disease, or colitis.

The simple answer is **if you have mysterious or unwanted symptoms anywhere in your body, you also have got issues, whether or not you can feel it, in your gut.**

It turns out that Hippocrates was right

**So, why didn't my doctor tell me this?** Well, my doctor probably didn't even know about the good scientific evidence connecting the gut with a wide range of chronic health issues.

This information is fairly recent and still emerging. It’s useful for you to know that 75% of your immune system is located in the gut anatomy and autoimmune conditions are immune system problems not body part problems.

Antibiotics, antacids, and prescription medications, birth control pills chemotherapy and radiation, concussion, excessive alcohol or caffeine consumption, genetically modified foods, Heavy metals, Infections, Stress, pain relievers, poor sleep, smoking, fizzy drinks, both regular and diet, SAD foods, toxins and unresolved emotional trauma. All add to an inflammatory lifestyle and keep your gut flora imbalanced and your gut lining leaky.

It's useful to take a gut health assessment, I will add the one I use to the notes and references. If you want to know what I used to heal my gut I am happy to share that information too.

Then we get the the H in Fights.

# Hormones

It's easier to fix your hormones than to live with the misery of imbalance.

Like a Symphony where all instruments play in harmony, when your hormones are balanced, everything is in tune.

You feel good, look good, sleep well, wake up refreshed, you’re energetic, your clothes fit, your immune system is strong, your metabolism is optimal, and your nervous system is steady too.

That's because everything is connected and working together a feel good, equilibrium called hormonal homeostasis.

If you're dealing with an autoimmune condition on top of a busy life chances, are you feeling pretty stressed, and when things are out of balance you don't have the energy, you used to, exercise feels harder, and you notice your muscle mass may even decline, perhaps you've even gained a spare tyre around your middle, and good grief perhaps your breasts are drooping or even growing.

While it's true that hormones naturally decline with age, a modern lifestyle has sped up the decline.

Hormones may be tiny molecules, but their impact is huge.

They are involved in almost every function of our body, including regulating appetite, cravings, digestion, sleep, resilience to stress, immune function, tissue repair, reproduction, stamina, moods, cognitive function, and whether or not we develop immunity.

**If your client is feeling tired all the time, it's a good idea to recommend that your clients go to the doctor, they may run a standard thyroid stimulating hormone test to cheque that thyroid function is all working well.**

Hormones are the chemical messages of the endocrine system, which is made up of dozens of glands, including the hypothalamus, pituitary, adrenals, pancreas, thyroid and gonads or ovaries in women, testicles in men.

Hormones are the bodies way of communicating to distant sites, instructing cells to, among many other things develop at puberty repair damaged tissue, regulate your blood sugar, fire up your libido, handle emergencies, and stabilise your mood.

In response to signals from the brain, hormones travel through the blood stream to bind to receptors on or inside cells in a perfect lock and key formation.

Hormone imbalance happens if your glands don't produce enough hormone the key, or if your receptors, the locks are jammed up with synthetic, foreign, or toxic chemicals.

All it takes is 1 hormonal imbalance, to negatively impact the rest, and a downward spiral of health problems may follow.

While we have dozens of hormones the star players when it comes to autoimmune issues are **thyroid, cortisol, insulin, and the sex hormones: progesterone and testosterone**, Other important players include DHEA and vitamin D which you may be surprised to learn is a hormone.

There are six big hormonal imbalances contributing to autoimmune and other chronic diseases.

1 **high insulin**- Excess consumption of carbohydrates and sugar drives insulin resistance.

2 **high cortisol**- Common symptoms of high cortisol are feeling tired but wired, edgy, or anxious, anxiety, palpitations, trouble sleeping, salt cravings, dizziness when you stand up, low blood pressure, sugar cravings, because your body can't regulate your sugar properly.

3 **oestrogen dominance**- When oestrogen levels are high the liver produces high levels of thyroid binding globulin a protein which binds to thyroid hormones in the blood, preventing them from getting into cells. Common symptoms of oestrogen dominance in women are heavy menstrual bleeding, menstrual cramps, breast tenderness, bloating and puffiness, weight gain, ovarian cysts and endometriosis, fibroids, migraines, rosacea, insomnia, brain fog, anxiety panic attacks or depression, decreased libido, gall bladder issues or no gall bladder. Common signs of oestrogen dominance in men are fatigue, loss of muscle mass, urinary tract issues, reduced libido, erectile dysfunction, anxiety depression increased belly fat, enlarged breasts.

4 **low thyroid**-Is complex and I could write an entire book about it but common signs of low thyroid are weight gain, where last resistance, hair loss including the eyebrows, poor concentration, brain fog, Constipation, feeling tired on working, cold intolerance or sensitivity to cold, depression or anxiety, joint aches and pain, try skin, hair, or brittle nails.

5 **low vitamin D**- Vitamin D deficiency may be the biggest undiagnosed health problem in the world thankfully it's the easiest to fix. The best way to determine your vitamin D levels is with a blood test.

**6 Low DHEA**- The foundation hormone known for its immune protective role and association with a long life is DHEA. The two big reasons for DHEA decline are ageing and chronic stress.

And the biggest contributing factor to both premature ageing and chronic stress appears to be inflammation.

In the FIGHTS to help client with autoimmune disease we also need to look at toxins.

# We recommend that clients Minimise Toxins

**Our health is the sum of our relationship with the environment what we eat, drink, absorb, think, breathe, put on our skin, and how we live and where we live.**

Unfortunately, the environment is becoming ever more toxic we are becoming more and more saturated with toxins each passing year and we're getting sicker and sicker than ever, and earlier than ever, it may be surprising for you to learn that fewer than 5% of the chemicals used in everyday consumer products are tested for safety in humans before they are released into commerce.

I recommend practising a precautionary principle and consider all toxins to be guilty until proven innocent.

I switched up my household cleaners for more environmentally friendly cleaners, old fashioned cleaners, and have written A blog on how to make your own cleaning products if you want to have a look at it do let me know I shall give you access to that too.

**Finally, the S of course I am talking about stress.**

We must address stress, when you can maintain a level of inner tranquilly, no matter what is happening around you, you can avoid the damage that stress causes to your health.

No one escapes stressful events. We share common human burdens of illness, life disruptions, or loss of loved ones.

Thankfully our bodies are built to weather those storms and most of the time we emerge whole, whatever form stress takes, physical, mental, emotional, or traumatic. We are designed to withstand it and even thrive or grow from it in small doses.

Unfortunately, it's all too common for many of us to experience longer lasting and more damaging effects of stress whether it's a traumatic or a shocking event.

# Stress

**When you can maintain a level of inner tranquilly no matter what's happening around you, you can avoid the damage that stress causes your health.**

It's not the size of the stress that matters so much, it's whether we adapt to it or not.

So, A stressor is a thing or an event that's stressing you out. It can be real, perceived or imagined.

Acute stress is a feeling of emotional distress, pressure and sometimes excitement that lasts up to a month and usually doesn’t cause lasting damage, unless it's frequently repeated.

It could be the pressure of big deadline. Or a public speaking event, An unresolved argument with a loved one, or a tax return.

Chronic stress is the grinding kind of stress that lasts longer than a month and can lead to mental, emotional, physical breakdown and chronic disease.

Chronic stress may come from unrelenting daily demands having a chronic illness or caring for someone who does, persistent feelings of hopelessness or helplessness, sleep deprivation and or unresolved traumatic experiences from childhood.

Your **allostatic load** refers to the level of wear and tear chronic stress impacts on your body. Allostatic overload is harmful and can lead to disease. Examples include excess belly fat, immune system suppression, or acceleration of heart disease.

The top six stressors are money, work, family responsibilities, personal health concerns, health problems affecting family members and the economy.

**We have loads of tools to help people reduce, rid or manage stress.**

We can also recommend things like getting regular and gentle exercise and taking proper rest.

# Childhood trauma

Studies show that people who've experienced two or more challenging or traumatic childhood experiences increase their likelihood for admission to hospital with an autoimmune disorder by 70 to 100%.

People that were cruelly treated in their youth have shown very high levels of systemic inflammation during adulthood sometimes up to 20 years after the negative experiences have occurred.

People who had difficult or stressful childhoods have shown prominent levels of inflammation when they're older.

So, finding out about their past and the circumstances of their life while they were growing up may be helpful too.

# The problem with labelling.

With any diagnosis of a medical problem or challenge there's always the difficulty of labelling.

Labelling can bring about some great benefits, however, it can also worsen symptoms and hold people in their unwell states.

Doctors often have a habit of labelling clients, and this often makes it more difficult to heal. Doctors also very often tell clients with autoimmune disorders that they will have their illness for the rest of their life.

We should never underestimate the power of this suggestion and it can inhibit recovery.

Remember the law of concentrated attention while labelling is a way of getting help, it also brings the client to concentrate on their idea of being sick.

Also, we begin to create a set of thoughts and beliefs about our own health.

People begin to live the label that's been placed on them, perhaps saying things like “I'm too tired to do this, so I can't do this.” “I'm not capable of doing this.”

**Part of any initial consultation should focus on finding out what self-statements your client is making to themselves and helping them to write a new script.**

Create some auto suggestions with them that focuses on health and Wellness, on energy, on vibrancy, or simply on the opposite of what they suggest that they've been feeling or thinking.

**It's important to use the clients’ words and not yours, so asking them “What would the opposite of that be?”**

This can be a great way to find out or create affirmations or statements of autosuggestion.

**These affirmations should be read and repeated every day.**

Affirmations have been shown to stimulate the areas of our brains that make us more likely to bring about positive changes in relation to our lives, how we feel about our lives, and our health. It's also a good idea to suggest to your client that these affirmations are read or said to themselves as soon as they engage in any old beliefs or behaviours.

Even though the label itself may have negative impact, and keep our client in a state of disease, **we do want** to have realistic expectations.

Some clients do have diseases that cannot be cured completely, they may have unchangeable medical difficulties, let's not offer false hope, but look at creating assistance, a sense of control, step back a little from the thing that used to bother us, or stop us from doing something, and think of it more as something we just experience and no longer battle with.

**There is now a great deal of clinical evidence that suggests hypnosis can alter the immune system response. Even the journal of psychiatric research suggests that pleasant imagery was an effective intervention for reducing chronic pain and fatigue during a 28-day study.**

# Food and hypnosis?

When it comes to food there is a great deal that we can do, we can guide our client to make better choices for them.

* We can help them with weight management.
* We can recommend that they take a 30-day food holiday from those suspect foods.
* We can reinforce or build positive associations with those brightly coloured fruits and vegetables that are full of vitamins and minerals. These foods nurture the body and are **real medicine** for the body.
* We can support our clients to listen to their bodies and respond. One of the things we need to teach our clients to do is to listen and respond to ‘feeling hungry’ or ‘not feeling hungry’ sensations, just like we did when we were a baby.
* We can bring about mindful eating, In TCM they recommend chewing your food 100 times. Possibly a little too much however bringing about mindful eating, enjoying each mouthful, chewing well and resting between mouthfuls to check in on if you are still hungry is very helpful. Mindful eating can also help clients to tune into what they are choosing to eat.
* Hydration is massively important as water helps to carry oxygen to the body cells, which results in properly functioning systems. it also works in removing toxins from the body, so drinking more of it could help prevent toxins from building up and having a negative impact on the immune system.

# Hypnosis and Infections?

**We can use what we know about psycho-neuro-immunology.**

In a study at Washington State University a group of volunteers were given hypnotic suggestions specifically to boost their immune systems. Another group received only relaxing suggestions or no suggestions. Their levels of T and B cells (special defence cells) were measured. **Those who had received hypnotic suggestions showed significant increases in their levels of protective cells.**

Columbus Ohio researchers have determined that hypnosis and related relaxation techniques can **actually prevent the weakening of the immune response that often follows periods of acute stress.**

Studies also suggest that hypnosis may even **slightly enhance the immune status** in some people compared to similar individuals who don't use these interventions.

There have been several studies they have looked at immune status and how hypnotherapy can improve it and further research is currently being done to determine if the frequency of the technique, how often it is practised and hypnotic suggestibility of the individuals tested, also plays a role in immune status.

*Results show that individuals who practised self-hypnosis continue to have enhanced immune function there's much research that shows that the immune response can be maintained if not enhanced.*

# Gut health and hormones Hypnotic interventions?

Healing metaphors work great for healing the gut and balancing hormones.

The control room technique,

The inner pharmacy,

Self-hypnosis and a reinforcing audio would be great to help with getting rid of infections and boosting the immune system too.

I also like the journey to the gut, healing things on the way through the digestive system. Brilliant for IBS too.

After we have looked at lifestyle issues, we've made recommendations about food we've checked that there are no infections we've advised that they reset their gut health checked to ensure that their hormones are in balance that we've advised them on removing toxins from their lives and we've looked at ways to help them to reduce or manage stress…..

# Reprogramming the immune responses.

**Our aim is to reprogram the immune responses.**

Get to the root of stressors, create resilience and better responses to stressful situations, change the client’s belief system, reducing the impact of labels, and change their language patterns. Then promote a sustainable and healthy lifestyle.

# Healing childhood trauma.

For me the deepest healing was in reframing troubling childhood experiences and rescuing and reclaiming my inner child.

It is useful to find out if clients suffered from any physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse or neglect in anyway. it's also useful to know if anyone in their home how difficulties with any substance misuse or if their parents or caregivers had any mental illnesses or if any of their family members were incarcerated.

For me regression therapy was deeply healing, but before you consider any regression approaches be sure that you are very clear about what you want to achieve. Re-living negative experiences is often not helpful, and recalled memories are often false, or confused as the memory stores snapshots of sensory information.

It may be more beneficial to focus on the here and now using more generic clearance techniques with the suggestion that you're clearing away the debris or the pain or the damage from the past.

Thank you!