

DR. KEESHA EWERS: Welcome back to the Woman's Vitality Summit: Caring for Yourself, Body and Soul. This is Dr. Keesha Ewers, your host for the Summit and I'm so excited to be talking today to Elaine Glass, who is a seeker for the deep meaning of life and inner peace.

She intuitively knew that finding quiet places within her own mind and environment would allow her to hear her truth and to help others to do the same. Elaine graduated from Northwestern University and chose a profession in dental hygiene and practiced that for 30 years. She heard challenging stories from thousands of people that she worked with. Her own personal story continued with many years of giving to others and then neglecting her own needs which led to losing sight of her own purpose. She reflects back to those times and believes she lost her ability to get quiet and listen. Welcome to the Summit Elaine.

ELAINE GLASS: Thank you Keesha. It is so wonderful to be here with you today.

DR. KEESHA: I always circle back at the beginning of each of these interviews to the word "vitality" which is the whole purpose that I did this Summit. In my patients that I see in my clinic and the women that I teach and work with I am seeing this real big drain of vitality in our current culture. I always ask each one of my expert panelists on the Summit what they see as one of the biggest drains for women's vitality.

ELAINE GLASS: I believe that we as women are givers and we give and give, and we give because we're nurturers. When we have children, we give. When we're married, we give. We totally forget about ourselves. So that is a total energy zap and energy drain. When we forget about ourselves we forget about why we're here on this planet. What are our purposes? That's what I feel is a big zap in energy to most women.

DR. KEESHA: I couldn't agree more and, of course, vitality from the Ayurvedic perspective is really your life force. In Sanskrit it's called ojas. Whenever we are engaged in outward doing and not replenishing ourselves on the inside with nourishing food, nourishing thoughts, nourishing practices and lifestyle choices, we're actually draining the very thing that keeps our pizzazz going, our juiciness. Really it's the battery that keeps us nurturing. So I think often in our culture women don't realize that they're burned out until they can't give anymore to anyone else and that's really late in the game to notice that?

ELAINE GLASS: It is late in the game and so many times it's so late that marriages and relationships fall apart and sometimes you get to a literal breakdown because you're on a fast track. You're so able to manage that fast track because you've become accustomed to it, but your body will catch up to you. Your body will one day just say enough is enough.

DR. KEESHA: That's what happened to me. I wound up at the age of 30 with rheumatoid arthritis, which is an autoimmune disease, and I see this with women with autoimmunity. Autoimmune disease is you attacking yourself. Eighty percent of all autoimmune diseases are held by women and I don't think it's any coincidence that what we're talking about today is why we see autoimmune disease on the rise. It's our bodies finally saying "If I have to turn up the volume and get your attention this way I will. I've been trying to tell you in all these quiet, subtle ways and you're just not listening and so here. Let me give you a reason to sit down because you actually can't move forward anymore!"

That's definitely what happened to me. I had that autoimmune disease gone within a couple of months and haven't had it back, but it was a good, wonderful, fantastic blessing for me in my life and I'm curious about your story and what brought you to this understanding of the necessity of really tuning in and listening. Do you have a personal story that the universe had to knock on you a little hard to get your attention?

ELAINE GLASS: Yes. And you're right. We all will come to that point. Mine was that little whisper and a knock on my body's door saying "Slow down, you don't have the energy you used to have." What I found was I did have Hashimoto's thyroiditis. That is an autoimmune disease as well, but just attacking the thyroid. That's a wakeup call to get healthy and get better nutrition. What I found intuitively that really helped me a lot was finding my quiet because you're a busy mother – I was working full time as a dental hygienist, as you had mentioned, and I was giving, giving, giving and ignoring my own needs. But my magic golden nugget was addressing the thyroid and finding the quiet that I needed so desperately.

DR. KEESHA: Now one of the things that I don't think many of our listeners will know, and it's not common knowledge in conventional medicine, is that these autoimmune diseases are reversible.

My husband had Hashimoto's when I met him and it was gone within a couple of months of changing his lifestyle and learning to understand that it isn't just about food. We in functional medicine teach proper diet and proper nutrition is so important. We always say start with food, but when you go deeper it's also understanding the patterns of the reactions that you have to your world that were developed before you were even six years old.

We develop this stuff really young; our strategies to feel loved and get our needs met and then we take them into adulthood. Our brains mature at the age of 26 and if we're not super intentional about retraining and redoing those programs that we created up until the age of six, then we're going to be on, what I would call, factory default settings for the rest of our lives and recreating patterns in our lives that just keep going.

I think autoimmunity is the repetition of the pattern that we haven't noticed until, like I said, we're asked to sit down and take a quick look at them. So when you are encouraging people and women to get quiet and to listen, what are some tools that you give them when you coach them for coming from that frenetic fast paced environment that is really celebrated in our culture? We are reinforced to be productive, aren't we?

ELAINE GLASS: Exactly. It's not always easy at first. It wasn't easy for me. I'll go back a little bit before I answer that question. When I was doing dental hygiene and for 30 years listening to people's struggles, not only knowing them personally in their personal lives, every time I walked in, as you do, you read over someone's health history. You know the medications they're on and so you begin to see the patterns that you talk about. You begin to see the patterns and you connect the dots between their physical health, mental and emotional health.

So I began to see these patterns and then realized that I sort of have patterns too. But mostly what was happening in those 30 years was I saw suffering and illness and a lot of it was due to people just so busy and not really knowing their purpose in life and not really getting quiet enough to find it and hear it. Then I realized I think that might be me too, because I was having rumblings of curiosities outside of the dental world. But it's scary. It's scary to make that jump. It's scary to trust, when you do quiet, the voice that you hear.

To answer your question, what I tell people is really in your silences is where the greatness is revealed. We can run and hide from it all we want, but if we just sort of embrace it and know that only good will come out of that knowledge that we hear, then we're more apt to really be comfortable in that space.

For me, what I did was I was guided to a labyrinth that was close by to my house. I don't know why I was there but I just started walking this labyrinth one day and it was so wonderful and beautiful to follow the path. Once I would get to the center of the labyrinth, I began to sort of hear my own soul's voice. It was very strange at first. I didn't know what to make of it and so it lured me back the next day and the next day. Keesha, I literally walked this labyrinth for months. Really slowing down and calming my body and listening to the messages that were my soul talking to me. That's how I helped myself. It's also how I help my clients.

Now, you don't have to walk the labyrinth, but do find a place where you can walk. Where you can think. I mean really quiet your environment and be able to actually hear your voice again. It's really exciting when you do. It's fantastic.

DR. KEESHA: I think labyrinths are so powerful and I love your story of walking this day after day after day and getting in touch. As well as medicine I also am a psychotherapist and I

just saw a client today and I recommended a labyrinth. I said a labyrinth is as if somebody visualized a cross-section of the brain, sliced it and then put it on the ground.

When I was walking a labyrinth years ago, I realized it is just like the turns in the brain. Then you get into the center of it, what you could say is the bridge of the corpus callosum of the right side and the left side, and everything comes together. Then you walk back out. That's the integration part of what you got in the center and I love that. It's such a powerful way of solving tough gnarly problems that you might be chewing on over and over again.

By just releasing it and opening yourself to this emptiness; this void that then can be spoken into. I love these words that you should just always be an empty pot because if you're full then nothing else can go in. It feels like when you walk into the center of a labyrinth, going back and forth and back and forth until you get there, you're emptying your pot and I just love that picture.

ELAINE GLASS: It's so true. It's so very true. Trust that voice. When you get to the center of the labyrinth – when you get to the quiet space of your closet, of your bedroom, out in nature, your favorite path that you walk in Central Park, wherever you are in the world – whenever you get to that center, listen. Listen carefully because it is all there. It is all there. We take on so many of other people's opinions and attitudes and thoughts and ideas, and that's wonderful because everyone's got a message for us to learn from. But really, we ignore our own voice inside that's really trying to guide us and push through the noise that we carry with us.

The other thing I do with my clients is I literally go into their homes and we remove the clutter and we might help other family members who are bringing in noise and clutter and we really do clean up the noise. Not only in the mind but in the environment too because we all need that sacred space in order to get these messages.

DR. KEESHA: That's so true. I think a lot of women can resonate with this. Whenever I do couples counseling often women, and not to be gender-biased but it is very frequently the woman in a heterosexual couple, will be saying "If you would just pick up after yourself I could think clearly" and the guy is saying "I'm so tired of being nagged about having my socks on the floor."

We do process information differently as genders. I think many women understand that if their environment is not in order, they have a very difficult time processing. But not every woman is going to agree with that.

I love that you're helping people remove clutter. I think that if your environment is cluttered it's a reflection of what's happening in your mind. Whatever is within is without also, and as without is within. So I think it's such an important skill and blessing that you're helping people with this because sometimes the clutter gets so overwhelming they don't even know what to do.

ELAINE GLASS: That's right. The other thing I do that's really important that you may not think about when we're talking about quiet is actually expressing yourself. I think as women we tend to not express ourselves. We tend to not tell people what we need and we're so busy taking care of everyone else's needs that our needs are bottled up until we really explode.

What I do first with most of my clients is what I call a healthy quiet. So we get out the unhealthy quiet. It's about expressing themselves and when they sit down with me, I'm just listening. I'm just holding space so that they can express themselves and sometimes they'll talk for two hours. But it's the first time they've been able to. It's the first time they've been able to be in a space with someone who's totally listening, where they can express themselves and be heard. What happens is they begin to hear themselves, sometimes for the first time.

DR. KEESHA: Many women don't even know what they want and what they desire because they have been so focused on paying attention to everyone else's desires. So when the ball is served into their court – and I'm pretty direct about this – what is it you desire? You're unhappy with this and this and this, but what is it that you want? Often women will burst into tears in my office and say "I don't even know what that would look like. I don't know what I want. No one's ever asked me that." I think it's a gift to ask yourself what your desires are. Desire is such a profound word. It comes from the Latin word that means 'from the stars'.

So we talk about sexual desire. We talk about desires of all kinds and all natures and so many times I find women are disconnected from every aspect of desire unless it's retail shopping therapy. I love this pull that they have that's not actually doing anything for them on a long term basis.

ELAINE GLASS: I love this point that you're making so much. What I asked myself when I was first wanting to know what I desired was – what did you want when you were a youngster Elaine? What were your desires when you were little? Those are questions that I think really enlighten us because I always wanted to be a social worker. So there was something there that was guiding me to helping people.

What I did was I went into what was my family's business – my dad was a dentist, my brother, both my sisters – everyone was in the dental field. So that was the safe place to go because you know you can get a good education and get a well-paying job. But it really

wasn't following my heart's desire. I went to what was safe which is fine and it worked out just fine but we kind of go to what's safe.

What I also will invite people to do is what I did a few years ago – more than a few years ago now. It's been about six years. I created a yearlong 'out of my box' challenge. So literally took each month out of the year and did something totally out of my comfort zone. This was the year of a huge transformation for me and for most of my clients. I wasn't jumping out of planes. I was doing things that I would never have otherwise done without having this intention. It's really why I'm even here with you right now today. Because I did that year of living outside my box, I would really recommend it for people.

I followed my curiosities every month and said "I think this will be fun" and I did it. It sort of built and built, and I got a little bit more brave and more brave and it was fun. It was like I said, very transformational. I highly recommend it for women.

DR. KEESHA: I did this very same thing. When I was in my 20s I read a book that was called 'A Year to Live' by Steven Levine. He's since passed on, but he had written the first meditation book that I read and I loved it so much that I looked for other things that he'd written. In his book called 'A Year to Live' he pretended like he only had one year to live and he and his wife went into seclusion – basically on retreat with one another for a year – living their lives as if it were the last one. And I thought how powerful. What a great thing to do.

At the time I was working in intensive care units where people were on ventilators. It was a high turnover of life in this environment, so it was really rammed home that life can change in a nanosecond. You should never put off for later what you can do today with a healthy body, mind and spirit. Go for it!

I did actually jump out of planes that year. I was really afraid of heights and I learnt how to skydive. I don't do it today. After I had children I said "Well that's irresponsible" and I decided to not do it anymore. It was terrifying. But after I got out of the plane and I was on my first dive, it was so exhilarating to overcome this fear.

And I ran a marathon, you know. I did a lot of different things that pushed my own self-limiting beliefs of what I was capable of. I realized after this year that I could do anything. Anything. And I think that's a good thing to give yourself as a gift.

ELAINE GLASS: A lot of the clients that I do coach are going through divorce or are divorced and they've lost confidence in their abilities. They've been staying home with children and haven't really challenged themselves.

We were very well educated and then we had wonderful jobs and then we married and had children and we kind of stop challenging ourselves. It's sort of like putting our toe in the water and slowly beginning to challenge ourselves again and regaining the confidence that maybe we've lost through, like I said, not challenging ourselves or maybe having been with a partner that never supported and uplifted us. That's very common. These are exercises to really get out into the world and begin to gain self-empowerment. Certainly my year of living out of my comfort zone just exactly did that.

DR. KEESHA: It's powerful. I also wound up getting divorced. We had four children. My ex-husband and I are dear, dear friends, we love each other dearly. We have a number of reasons why we weren't growing together but one of the things is that he did not support my own growth in going back to school and the places I was going. Ten years after that he came to me – because we're parenting partners above all and so we're very supportive of one another as parenting partners – and he said "I'm so proud of you and if you had been married to me, this would not have happened, and I realize that and I'm so sorry. You had to leave in order to actually live your mission on this planet and to do what your potential is." I've really examined that within me, what kept that going inside of our marriage. He's a great husband now to a really wonderful woman and we're all friends and it's really nice.

You said getting quiet also means learning how to speak your truth and speak clearly and authentically and lovingly but with good boundaries and knowing what it is you desire and what you want to accomplish in this lifetime. I love that you're doing that.

ELAINE GLASS: The really cool thing that happens are the fresh ideas. They almost flood in to the point where you can't keep up with them. This happens in my meditation.

To get quiet we don't necessarily need to be sitting cross-legged on the floor. Really think about a place that you connect with. It could be a special place in your town. It could be a church. It could be a nature. It could be just in your own home in a place you've designated for quiet time. The ideas that will flood in will. It'll just flood you. I had thoughts coming in that, well, it was sort of crazy talk. I thought to myself "Are you kidding me?" I can't believe I'm guided to do this.

The one thing I thought was really crazy was I was guided towards reiki which is energy work. I know you are also a reiki master as well, but I'd never heard of reiki, didn't even know anything about energy. But it certainly made sense in that since I had been putting my hands over people in my dental chair for 30 years, I was very sensitive to their energy. One person led me to another person which led me to another person and there I was, becoming a reiki master. I enjoy that immensely today.

When you get quiet, you get ideas. They will guide you to people and the universe will support those ideas. It's really truly amazing and life changing.

DR. KEESHA: That's beautiful. Where I was going when I said if you're not speaking your truth, is energetically. It can manifest as thyroid disease. The fact that you had a thyroid problem and then you learnt to get quiet and you learnt to speak your truth and get healthy – I don't think people understand how powerful that is. That taking a synthetic hormone of T4 for your thyroid is not really curing the root problem and the true reason why things get bogged down in your thyroid.

So I've seen this over and over and over again, women's thyroids shutting down because they are not speaking and acting to their own integrity and their own truth authentically. Doing what someone else wants them to do. What their parents expect of them, their partner, their kids whatever it is. Do you see that in your practice?

ELAINE GLASS: Absolutely. I saw it.

I retired in September and now I'm doing full time coaching. What I saw in my practice and what I see today is that emotional and physical connection of illness. It's almost like there's an emotional connection to everything in our body. It's funny because I had Louise Hays' book 'You Can Heal Yourself' in my office for years. I was curious because I could connect the dots with peoples' physical ailments and their emotional health. So when a patient would leave, I would hurry up and open up the chapter to the liver or the eyesight or something that was ailing the patient.

DR. KEESHA: Think of bladder infections. I mean, you're pissed off.

ELAINE GLASS: There you go! Exactly. There's always an emotional connection. Always. So in the quiet we can hear intuitively and we know what our bodies need.

It's like I'm sure when you were pregnant you had cravings and your body told you exactly what you needed. It's the same within our quiet. Our intuition is always telling us what we need but we can't hear it unless we're quiet.

DR. KEESHA: So you practice meditation. I practice meditation too and I do want to say to our listeners that the September 11 group of speakers includes Ajayan Borys who does a guided meditation in his talk. He's been a meditation master for over 40 years and it's a really lovely talk he did for his interview. Meditation – what role does that play for you in your own life healing?

ELAINE GLASS: It really is the foundation to everything good. Everything joyful. It calms my central nervous system which calms every cell in my body which then enables me to have a clear mind and it enables me to be a great partner, a great parent and a successful and effective coach. So it really is the most important thing I do in the morning.

I do TM which is transcendental meditation. I've done that for about 21 years. It's 20 minutes in the morning and 20 minutes in the afternoon. My kids know when I'm meditating. It's like "Oh don't go in where mom is. She's meditating." They're used to it. It's also an example for them that they need to get quiet. You know kids today and even adults with electronics and everything that's keeping us so busy in our minds. I do think that being the example for your children hopefully will rub off. Meditation is huge in my life and that's a focus with my clients as well that I help them with.

DR. KEESHA: I can see and I can feel and I can even hear the eye rolling happening right now out there. I've encountered it so often with women just kind of saying "Are you kidding me? I do not have another minute in my day." Or I hear often "I cannot get my mind to be quiet. It's impossible." What do you say to that?

ELAINE GLASS: I understand that. I was also raising babies and now I've got teenagers – busy, busy, busy – but I don't think we can afford not to get quiet and have this time to ourselves. I certainly think that those 20 minutes will add up to doctors' visits or something that's coming and taking your time that's unhealthy. Anxiety and stress certainly would take up those 40 minutes a day. I say, just like anything, make the time, make the choice. This is self-care. Mothers ignore self-care so many times. Woman in general. So getting quiet really is your self-care.

I love this question. It comes up every time. We have to have thoughts that come through. That's what helps us get quiet and clear. When we sit down to meditate we have to have those thoughts coming through. They're the ones that will then breakaway and form new thoughts and then a new calm and then pretty soon you're really sitting there in such a loving peaceful place. But those thoughts are healthy. Don't be afraid of the thoughts coming through. They need to come through. Because you'll need to sort those out. And your brain does that for you. So that's the beauty of it. It's very effortless and it should be something that you really look forward to doing.

DR. KEESHA: That's what I always tell people. If you have no thought-form, no brainwaves on the EEG it means you're brain-dead. That's really not what you're aiming for. You're not really looking for a flat line on an EEG. You're looking for calm.

I don't know who counts all this stuff but it's said that 94-95% of our thoughts every single day are recycled thoughts. We've already had them. You've got 4-6% that could be new thoughts and they may not be worth looking at. They may be kind of silly thoughts that don't really lead to anything, but there may be some pearls in there also. If you don't allow that 95% to calm and settle to the ocean floor so that the others can rise, so you can actually look at them and have a chance at having some new thought, then you just wasted another day with recycled thoughts.

ELAINE GLASS: I also feel that in our society, quiet means lazy. Quiet means "She's taking a break and she really needs to be doing, doing, going, going." "She's a bad mother. She does this." And "She's a poor coworker. She does that."

It's shifting that mindset within ourselves first to give ourselves permission to say quiet is actually necessary to be able to do the other things that I want to do. Quiet is not lazy. Quiet is the biggest self-care that I can give myself.

DR. KEESHA: I often hear women say they feel guilty if they take time for themselves. How would you want to address that? Feelings of guilt for caring for yourself.

ELAINE GLASS: I think it's a generational pathology. I think that we saw our mothers and our grandmothers caring for their husbands and their children selflessly and not really giving themselves what they probably always longed for. So I think it's something that we've just seen in our families.

The guilt part – we all are in this world to not play small. We are in this world not to be in mediocrity. When we can find a coach, find a mentor, find anyone who can reveal, if we can't ourselves, our greatness, then we can latch on to something and really begin to believe in that and move forward with that idea.

DR. KEESHA: I agree. I just think that so many people sit on the sidelines watching the ballgame and judging the people on the field instead of getting in there and playing.

You mentioned also, something I call the 'crab pot' mentality, that once you are discovering your feminine power and why you're here and living to your greatness that the people around you may not like it so much. There's this knowledge that if you put a bunch of crabs in a bucket then you can leave the lid off because no one's going to escape from that bucket. If one crab gets up to the top the others pull him back in. You talked about that. Being judged as too big for your britches. Talk about that a little bit.

ELAINE GLASS: It's exactly what happened to me in my dental office. The last one especially was that I began to blossom into my true self. I'd done a lot of work, as I explained to you, with accessing this quiet and accessing my true self and being then able to express what I needed and people saw that happening around me over the course of a year or two.

The day that I actually decided to retire and to jump into coaching full time was a bit scary because I'm raising two children and I have responsibilities. I have complete faith in myself but the day that I walked in and said I was leaving and going onto what I knew were bigger and better things, everyone looked at me like "Oh boy. She did it. She made it. She's getting out. It's the crab that's actually been able to get out."

So many times they were trying to pull me down and trying to pull me down. People want to sit in misery together and I had had enough. I had enough misery. I had finally found the empowerment that I needed and I went for it. That's why we're here today. That's why I have these opportunities to speak with amazing people like you and share my stories. Because I was that person that got out and I wasn't going to allow anyone to keep me down.

DR. KEESHA: I had the same exact thing moving from nursing and going back to graduate school. Same exact story. I think that a lot of women experience this when they begin. I interviewed Anita Morehanie on the radio. She is the author of 'Dying To Be Me'. She said that she actually had to move from her community because the people around her would not accept who she was becoming and she had to start all over again.

I hear this a lot from women. Their frustration about how people can't just accept this new way they're eating or this new way that they're moving or what they're doing with their spiritual practice. "How come people have so much to say about this and they won't just let me be?" I always talk about the 'crab pot' mentality. I would just say to our listeners, don't let the crabs get you down. Nobody likes crabs. In all those ways we can talk about.

ELAINE GLASS: I also want to mention something that's really important and we sometimes forget about it and that is to use our imaginations. Really remember back when we were children and we were able to have these pretend conversations and imaginary friends and we thought it was perfectly fine and normal.

I would invite women to begin to imagine for themselves a world that might right now, if they're listening, be unimaginable. If I were to look back and project where I am today even five years ago, this is the unimaginable. But it became my truth and it became real life for me. But it really starts with imagining. Doing a vision board. Doing whatever you can so that your brain begins to think bigger and brighter thoughts than maybe they're used to.

DR. KEESHA: I couldn't agree more. It doesn't mean you have to be making a certain income or doing a certain profession or career. If it's being the absolute most happiest, most joy-filled inspiration as a mother, that is it. That was mine for years. If it's what you want in your career, then that is it. If it's what you want in any aspect of your life, it's just being your full potential of what you've chosen in this lifetime to be and not a contracted form of that.

So I don't want anyone out there that's a dental hygienist or a nurse to think that they're somehow living in a contracted life. That's not it. That's not what we're saying. Think about your dreams and if you're not living them because you're afraid of moving into a different realm, then these are the tools, as Elaine so masterfully teaches, that will help you to get the insight of what your soul is aching and longing for. What you desire.

ELAINE GLASS: That's right.

DR. KEESHA: So how do people reach you, Elaine, to be able to access your coaching?

ELAINE GLASS: I can be found on elaine.glass – that's my website. You can email me at elaineglass2@gmail.com as well. I love doing one on one coaching: in person, over Skype, whatever suits that person's schedule.

I love meeting new people and sharing what I know about getting quiet. My superpower is listening. I am really good at holding space for people and having them tell me their hopes and their dreams, what they're imagining for themselves and then sort of putting it all in a puzzle so that it's just a beautiful, beautiful life that we work together on. That's what I enjoy most.

I also do women's retreats here in beautiful Scottsdale, Arizona where the desert really is very peaceful. It's a wonderful setting.

DR. KEESHA: Beautiful. And on your speakers page we have a free gift for you and this information that Elaine just shared will be there too, to access her. Thank you for sharing just a tiny part of your wisdom in this time on regaining and caring for yourself, body and soul Elaine. We really appreciate it.

ELAINE GLASS: Thank you for having me.

DR. KEESHA: Thank you so very much. It was really great being with you. Remember everybody to live, laugh, love, keep on learning and be the most fantastic version of yourself, and until next time.

