

Dr. Keesha Ewers Interviews Niki Gratrix

April 2017

DR. KEESHA: Welcome back to the Women's Vitality Summit: Caring For Yourself, Body and Soul. My guest for this segment is Niki Gratrix. She is an award-winning nutritionist, mind/body expert, and health writer, helping people to optimize their energy. Welcome to the Summit, Niki.

NIKI GRATRIX: Thank you very much for having me. It's great to be here.

DR. KEESHA: I'm so excited to talk to you, because I know we've shown up in some of the same circles, talking about the connection between emotional trauma and current day health. I want to launch right into that, because I think this is such an important subject, particularly for women to hear. Here's where I want to start. What is emotional trauma to begin with?

NIKI GRATRIX: Wow. That's a big question, because really, what can traumatize one person doesn't necessarily traumatize another. Emotional trauma is a subjective experience. A trauma is essentially anything. At the time an event happens, we don't have the resources to process and integrate it. What essentially happens during that event is we tend to shunt it into the subconscious mind, as though you're storing it for later. Unfortunately, there are very clear signs that show it does affect our body as well.

It's as though our body remembers and stores that memory. There are epigenetic changes, and it's all stored in the psyche. I call it a detonation button. What that means is, you have an emotional charge. Other people, events, and things that happen later, can trigger it. You might find you're particularly reactive to certain things, items, people, events, where you can trigger into something. If you've had emotional trauma, you might find you have a tendency to have low-grade anxiety, depression, a sense of apathy, or grief all the time. Those are essentially the stages of trauma.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross was the great hospice worker. She laid out the stages people should go through. When an event first happens, we tend to go into shock. After that, we're in denial, and then we get very angry about it. Then if we move through those stages, we might go into a grief stage where we come to accept it's ultimately happening. We can have a tendency to get stuck at any one of those stages. Of course, we can have more than one as well. That ends up blocking us.

DR. KEESHA: It's not linear, right.

NIKI GRATRIX: Right. It's very prevalent.

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DR. KEESHA: Okay. One of the things I found when I was doing my doctoral research on this, was the impact of held onto emotional pain on female sexual desire. A study came out after I'd done mine, looking at the impact of held onto emotional pain on health. That was called the A study. The adverse childhood experiences study, right? We know it's undeniable, as you said. Science has shown us we do have this impact, and now we have scanned images of the brain that show brain changes with trauma.

One of the things I uncovered in my research was it isn't just the big Trauma. Where you think about sexual, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, along with neglect and things like that. That's what the A study looked at. We also have this lowercase T trauma, which is called daily stressful life events. Those things actually make the same changes in the brain as these big capital T traumas. Sometimes people will tune out and say, I don't have any sexual abuse, or I wasn't abused. I've heard my patients say I had a great childhood, which I am always so glad to hear. Then they've got these things going on that have some carnality around them. As I start delving in, they have this cognitive belief that they're overwhelmed, they have too much going on, or they're over stressed. That actually has the same impact as one of these gigantic ones. That's fascinating.

NIKI GRATRIX: As a nutritionist I also think a lot of people don't. You can ask so many people, how's your diet? They say, great. As a professional, you look at the diet and think, let me give you some feedback. I talk about the ACES study, the adverse childhood event studies a lot. Just to remind people those are events that happened below the age of 18. The studies started in the mid 90's. 17 ½ thousand adults responded to a survey. 67% of those adults said they'd had at least one adverse childhood event. As you mentioned, they looked at things like parents separating, divorce, domestic violence, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. They missed out on things like being a victim of bullying and racism, things like this.

DR. KEESHA: Rejection on the playground.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yeah. They also missed out the facts. Don't forget, trauma is also inter-generationally inherited. A person can look back at their childhood and say I don't have anything. Well, how were your parents and grandparents? It shouldn't be controversial anymore to acknowledge things like third generation survivors of the Holocaust victims, with the same physiological, psychological changes as their grandparents. I'm saying this because the bottom line is nobody seems to be unaffected by emotional trauma. The other thing I talk about as well, is that study you mentioned is

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such a huge study. I'm always trying to share the data because it's phenomenal, that they had a criteria of emotional abuse. I think it's the kind of cup that holds so much more than the others.

First of all, it relied on self-reporting. Again, how was your childhood? Great! How do you know that parent or that caregiver that responded in a particular way actually was appropriate? We also have highly sensitive type people as well. There's a group in the population that's a little bit more sensitive, and there's genetics that show a subsection of the portion of the population have differences in how their process thinks, like serotonin. They're able to spot their cortisol response.

How can we classify it? You didn't have an ACES, but it might have been something more minor than that. Your constitutional makeup meant that it did traumatize you. What are we talking about when something traumatizes? We're actually talking about epigenetic changes in the brain and the body, as you mentioned. An actual switch in genetic expression that switches on that fight/flight response. The reason I always harp on about childhood is just because below the age of 18, our brains are much more impressionable. It tends to affect us more, but it lowers our resilience to all of those daily stresses that we're facing in adulthood. I talk about ACES a lot and people always ask about adult trauma. Yes, of course. That's important as well. It's the culmination of things that happened. I just don't think anybody gets through childhood without something happening. On top of that we have our adult stresses that are all chipping away at the same thing.

Unfortunately, if we've had unresolved trauma in childhood, we're more certain to attract more trauma in adulthood. That's because the body likes time to release and recharge. It's just like the story of the woman whose father was maybe abusive towards her mother. So she marries an abusive husband, and then she keeps having abusive partners. There's a pattern that is triggered. So yeah, it's fascinating, I just think it's the most underexposed risk factor contributing to quality health conditions today. I don't think enough people are talking about it.

DR. KEESHA:

I agree. This sounds like you're talking my language out of your mouth. This is exactly what I say. I think it's really imperative that people hear this is no child left behind. That everyone's going to come out of childhood. Not only are you more impressionable below the age of 18, but your brain's not fully formed until you're 26 years old. If you don't have a good guide to say this is why this happened, this is what's going on, really process it with you, then you're going to make up stuff up. You're going to make up meanings to attach to your experiences. You'll carry those

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meanings with you into adulthood as beliefs, and they'll inform your behaviors.

As in who you attract, what you do, you know, and how you respond to your stress. It just keeps on going in the same pattern. This hyper vigilance that's formed in childhood, and response to these stressful situations is what sets your adrenal glands and your entire endocrine system up on the patterns that we have called muscle memory. Wherein you just keep doing it that way.

NIKI GRATRIX: Exactly. That points towards my background, and my specialist area. I spent five years building a very large clinic, specializing in treating chronic fatigue syndrome. This was including the entire spectrum of illnesses that included chronic fatigue, adrenal fatigue, burnouts, even overlapping into fibromyalgia, and so on. Right from the beginning when we started that clinic, it was in London, and we had patients in 35 different countries.

We had to have a functional medicine nutrition division, and we had a psychology division. We knew from the outset that something like chronic fatigue, which is an extreme version of adrenal fatigue, and those types of things, were going to require a multi-factorial approach. I talk about the links with the number of ACES you have in childhood, is linked to all the types of chronic complexity. If you basically have many ACES in childhood, you have an increased risk of 7 out of the top 10 causes of death, right? I don't know if you've already shared that kind of data.

DR. KEESHA: No, go for it. I've mentioned the ACES study, but it's splattered throughout the Summit and in my writings. Still, if we want to dive deep into the ACES study, I think it's fascinating.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes. I think it's a slam dunk. We'll talk about data. So, 17 ½ thousand people, and they looked at the data and found this. If you had many ACES, you have an increased risk of seven out of the top ten causes of death. People with six aces had a twenty year reduction in life span, compared to people with no ACES. If you had four aces, you had an increased risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, two and a half times higher hepatitis risk, four and a half times higher depression risk, and a twelve times higher risk of being suicidal. Alzheimer's was 400%, it was 4.22 times higher. If you had eight ACES, you had triple the risk of lung cancer and a three and a half increase in risk of things like heart disease. Specifically, the female dominated illnesses like chronic fatigue and autoimmunity. In chronic fatigue I call that the poster child of illnesses that women get. Most prevalent people with chronic fatigue. If you have

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ACES in childhood, you have a 600% increased risk of chronic fatigue. You can look it up.

Fibromyalgia is also in that group, in that 60% of all women with fibromyalgia have been found to have had sexual abuse in childhood. What we found is that it eludes to something you said in my work, when we were looking at chronic fatigue, for example. If you've had ACES, you've had trauma, and you have this heightened fight/flight response. Some of how that expresses is in more subtle behavioral changes. We started to look at personality typing. We definitely found there was a high prevalence of people, we call them the achiever types, anxiety types, perfectionists, and giver types. This was based on a personality type system called the eniogram. We also correlated it in mainstream data, so we could clearly see that something happens to you. Like you said, it actually changes people at the identity level, and their belief system.

For example, if you were excessively over criticized as a child, and then maybe neglected, you may respond to that by becoming a super achiever. What that means is that you put your health & well-being on the back burner. It also happens with what we call the giver types. There's so many people with adrenal fatigue type issues, and the giver types, they tend to be women. A little more in that direction. They're the helpers, the carers, the many practitioners, and the mothers. Again, they had something where they didn't feel good enough.

DR. KEESHA: I did too.

NIKI GRATRIX: I was one, yeah, I'm a giver kind of perfectionist, but giver side, the healer. The wounded healer. We're all wounded healers as practitioners, you know? To teach what we need to learn. It's the givers that are such an amazing group of people, that they're the ones who will put everybody else's needs before their own to such a degree that they don't take care of themselves. Their own health goes on the back burner, they're not getting the time, the rejuvenation time, the rest, the digest detoxify time, that they're not doing that. So, those kind of, the identity level is so critical. I always share as well, it's just interesting that the ACES study started at Casa Permanente, in an obesity clinic. They started to find out by mistake, they had a high dropout rate. It was doing really well, and then people were dropping out. A 55% dropout rate.

They decided to investigate, and found out by mistake that the people who were dropping out had a recorded high level of sexual abuse in childhood. One woman summed it up when she said the extra weight I have is a protection mechanism against unwanted male attention. Here we have an

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identity level, a personality issue, which is sabotaging your best intentions for health. So, we think about weight. All the women's health summits out there, it's always about diet and everything. Okay, but what about who somebody actually is? Who they are in the world? What's been their subjective experience through life? Which is dictating their behaviors? Which is crucial to where they're going to be compliant on a nutrition program, or a supplement program anyway?

We would find people would use their personality types that they are. Like being an achiever type, or a perfectionist, you'd see them approach their protocol to recovery from things like fatigue in the exact same way. The giver type would never spend enough time honoring the protocol. The achiever type was expecting to get better in 5 minutes.

DR. KEESHA: The corners together, yeah.

NIKI GRATRIX: Exactly. I'm just so glad we're talking about this, giving it attention, and highlighting it.

DR. KEESHA: I wasn't just looking at fibromyalgia or chronic fatigue, I was looking at people I was diagnosing with autoimmune disease, and what I found in my study, were fives and sixes on the eniogram. I'm also certified in eniogram, I use it all the time.

NIKI GRATRIX: Hooray! I did not know that! Awesome. I can't believe I didn't know you did that. That is so useful. I talk about the eniogram all the time.

DR. KEESHA: Me too.

NIKI GRATRIX: I'm setting it up to help people. It's just a tool, isn't it? A fantastic tool.

DR. KEESHA: For our listeners who don't know, NEM means nine gamine pictures. Picture of nine different ways that you create your behavioral strategies and to get your needs met when you're a child. Whatever you've had positively reinforced, you positively reinforce yourself, where you wind up as sort of a command center for how you approach the world. So that's why your partner, your boss, your sister, brother, daughter, son, or whatever, don't see the world like you do.

It's because we have these different ways that we're motivated in the world with our energy. However, you were just mentioning on the other side of the eniogram, the heart and body side. With that said, on the other side with the mental side, the hermit or the observer, the five, I find that everybody that I've interviewed as a five has a history of trauma.

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NIKI GRATRIX: Sixes, too.

DR. KEESHA: Yeah. They're a loyal skeptic, and they're worried the Earth might not actually be there at the very next step they take. It's always worst case scenario thinking. That's a history of trauma, too. As I went through I realized that for every single enio type, there is a strategy for dealing with trauma. The 7, they don't even want to put their toe in a sad feeling because they may be engulfed by it. So it's like bright shiny objects, and going around to avoid the very processing of the history of trauma.

I thought, wow, this is amazing. How we all come out of childhood with these different strategies to deal with what it was we experienced when we were kids. There's always a shadowed side, and always a light side, and when you learn the eniogram, you're able to identify the shadow side. No one is running you. Let that go from it, which is so fantastic. Now I am very good at self care, and I do lots of it. I'm able to express my needs and my anger. I don't take everyone else's agenda first, but I was very ill too, when I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. I have a history of sexual abuse. Learning the ACES study was nothing new under the sun for me. At least science has finally started to make this connection. It's fantastic.

NIKI GRATRIX: Totally. What was interesting is that with the ACES, the clinic that I founded, we did get published in the British Medical Journal Open, where we were looking at all these types of things. Now that was a pilot study, and they're going to go on and do a randomized control trial. What's great about the eniogram, just so people know, it's another personality type to insist on. It's not a system that's looking at external behavior. That's what I love about the eniogram. It's categorizing by the why. Why people do things. Not what they do.

So it's who you are, that identity, that has so much more depth to this one. Most of the time even psychology just treats the inner subjective state as a black box, and just reduces the person down to external behavior, so we never go into the deep state of self-awareness. It's like a great undiscovered country, isn't it? The great final undiscovered country.

So who we are as people has gone undiscovered, and unfortunately most people don't turn inwards and look until they're brought to their knees by some kind of something that's happening in adulthood that they can't deal with anymore. It's interesting because I know there's a lot of general stress out there. The amount of emails we have to do, there's so much going on in our lives. Most people when we talk about stress do just go as far as that. The superficial level. I love when people say, you're a stress expert. I

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said, let's talk about what we mean by stress. I'd say the vast majority of stress is stuff that happened in childhood, the stuff we inherited.

All of that is in terms of how it shapes our behaviors, and is attracting patterns that are happening in adulthood as well. Actually, all of that is the majority of it, and it's the most destructive. It's some of the stuff that's basically when your endocrine immune system is reset.

DR. KEESHA: Well, how we perceive our stress is the thing, right?

NIKI GRATRIX: Exactly.

DR. KEESHA: Five people can have the same events as they line up. It's like I always say, my life purpose or my dharma is what I'm doing when I'm so busy. I'm not overwhelmed by it because I perceive it as being in the flow of the universe. I perceive that this is what I'm here to do, and what I'm meant to do, so it doesn't feel stressful to me. Another person doing those same activities that doesn't feel that same way and perceives it as overwhelming will then fire off the entire endocrine system, to say they're a zebra being chased by a lion now. It's individual. There's not one level of stress that takes you over the bell curve. Every single person has their own perceptions, and it's your perceptions that send your neurotransmitters off to tell your body what to do next.

I think how you perceive your world is the most elegant piece of how to solve stress in your life. This is why I love the eniogram for this, because you can tell how and why. Like you said, it's not this personality type quiz where you're stuck in these little holes. It's actually very three-dimensional, and in fact there are fifty-four types. Not just nine, it goes into sub types. It goes into wings, where you connect to when you're stressed, or when you're in your great virtue place. There are all kinds of dimensions to this. You can learn so much about yourself, and gain freedom. My whole thing is freedom to feel fabulous. The freedom is what we're after. Freedom from our childhood behaviors that have us trapped in our minds.

NIKI GRATRIX: Exactly. It's all about these addictive behaviors that we all have. When you know you should be doing something, or shouldn't do it, and then you still find yourself doing it even though you rationally know better. That's the science, and it's not just the big destructive health behaviors. It's often the more subtle ones. It's all the times that we, on a cumulative basis, don't get enough rest time daily. Things like this, I call them daily reset rituals. You've got to reset the amygdala. So maybe you wanted to talk about that.

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DR. KEESHA: Let's talk about it, because this is all about caring for yourself, body and soul. What are your reset rituals, Nikki?

NIKI GRATRIX: I have five steps I always talk about. One of them I call, daily reset rituals. It's not the whole picture of what people might need to resolve trauma, or a health related issue that's related to trauma. Still, it's a fundamental part of the reconditioning of it. Essentially, it's anything you can do for twenty minutes twice a day or longer that's going to put your body into a safe space. I know we use the words relaxation response. Relaxation is such an overused word, and underdone in reality. We don't experience it enough.

I try to explain. It's a safe space. It's a feeling state. It's a conscious being state of feeling safe. When you're in that state, you go to send the message to the amygdala that everything's okay. It's like, calm down now. Everything's okay. If you think about all the messages most people have sent to the amygdala most of their life that are the opposite of that, we built neuro pathways into the wired but tired. The wired stress response. We're going to have to do some daily stuff to reverse that. Now, what exactly do people do? Again, it's going to be subjective, because it depends on what people enjoy doing. I always talk about the big four. The big four are the Eastern based practices like yoga, meditation, tai chi, chika. They just have loads of data behind them. Don't they always say, the biggest science studies behind some of those interventions.

Well those that actually show neurogenesis. You can build new neural pathways. It's in the research to reduce inflammation, and literally stimulate stem cells to regenerate by doing recharge rituals. Which are whatever it takes to put you into a safe space regularly. Those are the big four. Still, it could be other things like time and nature, walking in nature, everything creative and fun that you enjoy.

Could be a massage. Could be a nap. Could be just resting. Could be some kind of creative pursuit like art. It's all the right brain stuff. It's got to be something where you're not feeling like you have to prove yourself. It's not competitive, you can't fail at it, it's just pure time for you, whatever that may be. Maybe it's sex. Maybe it's something else. Maybe it's dancing. Maybe it's more or less physical.

DR. KEESHA: People say they run for this, you know. Do you use your watch, and go against your own personal record? That's not it.

NIKI GRATRIX: They like competitive yoga or something.

DR. KEESHA: I know. Are you really checking your ego at the door, or is this kick-your-

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ass yoga? You've got to think about this. Are you taking yourself by the throat and wringing it out, or are you really dropping in and allowing yourself this nourishing experience?

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes!

DR. KEESHA: Anything in competitive moment.

NIKI GRATRIX: I know. I think it's a sign of the times. I think people have forgotten about what that is. I've noticed that especially more so in the US. I mean, I probably heard it by accident from the UK.

DR. KEESHA: Oh, definitely. The US is full of this. We just elected a President who actually symbolizes it.

NIKI GRATRIX: I know! It's the achiever. Oh my gosh, it's the achiever. I have to say, I see that in so many women. I'm a member of many women's groups now. It's the embodied spirit of women. This embodiment of what it means to express being and feeling relaxed. I think that's another thing, actually expressing. One of the things I do is belong to a live embodied spirit female group. Where we all can share how we're feeling, whether it's that we're having trouble expressing ourselves, challenges from the past, or things that we've repressed ourselves. I was just in class yesterday, and every single woman started telling their story about how they've become a man to survive, and how they were now having to learn how to undo that. Mostly women from the military backgrounds. A woman was saying, I was in the military, and I just kept hanging out with guys all the time. I'm not bashing guys here. It's not about that. No, it's that us women, we need to be the ones that reclaim it, because at least we have a clue what it's about. We kind of know at least where we're not, and where we should be. Whereas guys, one of the women in the greats said to me, as women we need to feel good to do good. We need to feel good first, to then do. With men, it's not always like that. They do, and then feel great. We've got to feel good first. What do we do?

You're either a human doing or a human being. We just constantly forget that. As far as the sport thing, women have been saying I'm looking after my body, and then they're doing bikini competitions. Listen to everything to see it. Everybody has to let go. Learning how to let go of that. So, connect back to how the feeling is in the body. That's because one of the things that happens when we just need expressions of doing this, is we're not connecting to how we feel. We get disconnected, and that's when the stress rises. That's when we start to just feel hollow. Then we need to find things to fill the hole, which might mean stimulants. Maybe food, we're

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going to stress eat. I don't know, stress over sex. We have to go and preen ourselves excessively because we just feel empty inside. All of that inner disconnection.

DR. KEESHA: You've got a black hole that needs to be filled. That's the place. It can be anything, and you can actually do what I call bastardize any activity such as sex, adorning yourself, exercising, or nourishing yourself. You can bastardize any of those, and make them into unhealthy habits that are actually self-care.

It's coming back to that. I call it mystic medicine. It's bringing that part of you that is the God-centered part, located in the heart. Get back in touch with who you really are at court. You're not a woman, a mom, a sister, a daughter, or a professional. You're not any of those things at core, at your essence. Those are roles that you're playing. Then, get in touch with how you can infuse your roles with that energy. We can get cut off from that when we have trauma. So that's always about reclaiming your light. Bringing yourself back to remembering who you really are. That's the core of all of the therapy that I do with people. You've forgotten who you really are. I think it's all about that intentional place that you're coming from.

NIKI GRATRIX: I think it's at the center of overcoming any kind of illness as well. Every single ailment and disease there is has this emotional component to it.

DR. KEESHA: It does.

NIKI GRATRIX: Ultimately being disconnected from source. Another word for it that I use as well, some people might not know what word you're talking about when we're talking about this feeling, it's a sense of it might take some time to actually even breathe that in and learn to every feel that again. That's because most of us may have been brought into the world not even knowing what that is, and never having a role model for it. Or, being guided to it so that a lot of us are very lost. That was how I started. I was totally lost. I came into the world having no idea. A set of traumas and banging myself against brick walls, and finding out who I was by just bumping into things in my life, and getting it wrong usually.

DR. KEESHA: Which is just describing a toddler learning how to walk. I mean this is exactly how we as humans have to become the wise female elders that we will eventually be. That's all part of the human experience. That's why there's a message, whenever I talk about the ACES study that I want to make sure is really clear. That doesn't mean that you're labeled into having a chronic illness, or this is an excuse for your depression. No, this is just

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illustrating the pathway, and giving you a way of understanding the linkage that happened in your brain. Now here are a whole bunch of tools that you can use. Re-synapse, right?

I just want to backpedal and say, amygdala, for our listeners who don't know what that is, that's your reptilian part of your brain. That's all about survival. Now you can move into the frontal, pre-frontal lobe of your brain, which is that executive function. That adult part of your brain so you can make choices about how you spend your energy, and how you go about your life in a way that's in congruency with who you are as an authentic human being.

NIKI GRATRIX: That's it. I think what's brilliant about this whole side of things, is that it opens up this whole extra toolbox. A whole additional toolbox of things that people can look into. I speak on this topic at a lot of summits, and a lot of people, they never even consider who they are emotionally having any relation to that. The great news is, I lay out the bad news. Which is what I say, here's all the correlations. Here's the great news. It's reversible. Totally reversible. Here's all the tools.

DR. KEESHA: Right. Yes! We're examples of it.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes. This is it. This is what we're living the embodied version about. So, then just getting people, we're aware of the steps of helping people to start the exploration process. That might start by doing their own ACES score and just finding out about that, or also finding out what they inherited maybe in the family lineage as well, and start journaling. If they've never done that before, start journaling. Start writing down what happened.

Was there more than one event? Did they have somebody to talk to about it? Did they notice behavioral patterns changing from the date those things happened? Who did they become as a person? Check out the eniogram. Which type did you think you may have evolved into as a result of it? Then, in the process of that awareness, the freedom comes, because awareness itself can heal. There's many other things you can do. You can go for other specific types of trauma therapy, but step one is awareness right? Just, awareness.

DR. KEESHA: I actually want to not brush over that. I required a lot of therapy, when I had deep trauma. I do tell people trauma related therapy tools, such as EMDR, brain spotting, or clinical hypnotherapy, all of these are really important tools if you find you can't do this as we're talking about it with these different steps. If you find you're getting stuck and you can't move out of this, a professional helper is essential.

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NIKI GRATRIX: Okay. So this is extremely important. I reiterate it as well, especially with the recharge rituals. We had this all the time with the chronic fatigue people as well. You find yourself, do the ritual, feel good when you're doing it. If as soon as you come back out of it, you go straight back into the stress responses yet you're still triggered by the same thing, most definitely. The fantastic thing is, again, there's great therapies out there that are really supportive. You mentioned EMDR. What works for one person doesn't work for another.

DR. KEESHA: One therapist to another therapist, right?

NIKI GRATRIX: Explore who you relate to. Explore the journey. Look at testimonials. Have free chats with the practitioners, so you can see if they resonate with you or not. There's semantic experiencing, EFT, there's so many. That's the good news. I don't want to say too many in case people feel overwhelmed, but that's a good thing to know. With my five steps I've got explore, which is when I start to do the awareness work. Step two is the recharge rituals. Step three is professional help that we just mentioned, looking into that. Step four, as I always say, if you're looking at recovering from an illness, don't throw out the biochemistry. That's important, too. Do look at things. If you've got leaky gut, or you need to go see a functional medical practitioner, nutritionist, atropath, or even a mainstream doctor for certain things. Don't throw that out. That's important.

DR. KEESHA: This is why I do both. I became the emotional psychotherapist after learning the medicine part because I started seeing, you can't separate these.

NIKI GRATRIX: It's crazy. There's so much to it. Once you have a chronic illness, that's traumatizing.

DR. KEESHA: Right. Absolutely. People get so traumatized about their health status, you know?

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes.

DR. KEESHA: Drama.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes. More additional drama. Again I have to say, I'm not trying to not follow the medical practitioners because they're amazing, but we haven't incorporated this enough yet. We saw stages of chronic fatigue it would go through, and I saw amazing medical doctors identifying chronological stages of illness. They were defining it by the expression of immune

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system cells, and things like this. So, because I had a claim where we had both two divisions, we found exactly the same chronological sort of stages. We could see it was being driven by the stage of trauma they were at. Just look at the biochemistry like this, you're not looking for the other causes. So the issue to me is how can you ever treat them honestly without looking at the stress state of the patient? Who they are in the world?

DR. KEESHA: This is why you will have all these people listening to the summit who have their own long term chronic illnesses. Who have been to functional medicine doctor after functional medicine doctor trying to heal their leaky gut. Who are so frustrated when they can't get their thyroid under control, or their pancreas under control with blood sugar, or their hormones, and they're having horrible PMS or menopausal hot flashes, and they can't get it under control. That's because it's not at the end of a diet. It's not at the end of a supplement bottle. It's not at the end of one therapy technique either. It's the combination of all of it, and then remembering who you are. I love that.

NIKI GRATRIX: That's amazing. Yeah, you're amazing as well. That was it. You just summed it up. Multi-factorial approach would be who you are.

DR. KEESHA: It shows that. There has been study after study saying there has to be that word, multi-factorial approach for healing trauma.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes. The issue we've got in complimentary medicine is that people say they're holistic, and everybody has a different definition of what they mean by 'holistic'. Just because you're a nutritionist, does that really mean that you're practicing holistically? Are you treating the whole person, if all you're doing is just looking at diet? What's really obvious to me very quickly is, there's been a multi-factorial approach, meaning psychology, spirituality, and energetic bio-chemistry.

I think it's a huge missing piece, and there's a lot suffering out there. People are finding at the later stage, I don't know about you, but they tend to be the ones that come into us, are the ones that have been to like fifteen different doctors. All the natural medicine ones as well, they say this helps me, that helps me. I'm just still not well.

DR. KEESHA: They've spent thousands of dollars, and they're mad and frustrated by the time they get to my office and say, I'm not spending another penny.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes. So, it's a journey, isn't it? I have my five point star. I mentioned my last frustration. It's just because, and I'd be very interested in your input on this, too, but I found this to be enormous. The last step to recovering from

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trauma is you have to address if it's relevant, current relationships. Relationships with other people. I've seen so many cases where somebody is doing brilliantly. They might have even done their emotional trauma work. They've really had a lot of courage dealing with that. They've got the diet under control, they stick by it, they're doing great. Then I often see if they're still not there. It's usually because there's somebody still around. They're still in an environment that is living with an energy vampire. It gets into a bit of a blue area. I just say, we're going to break through this period. I don't care if it's a mother, father, husband, son, or daughter.

Often they're the ones that can be the energy vampires, and it comes another step of difficulty sometimes to then learn, recovering from illness might ultimately mean you have to learn how to communicate your boundaries. For example, with the giver types, they're met with the classic types. They don't actually take in other people's emotional toxicity and decide to process it in their own bodies. So many of them do that. They're the empaths, very often, attempting to take on everybody else's stuff because they love them.

DR. KEESHA: I did a webinar about this. Why? That's because I had to learn it.

NIKI GRATRIX: I've seen so many women. Women and men, there's men out there who've done that as well. That group is significantly important, but this always goes to, not even learning how to write boundaries around us. Also, I believe it's sort of that culture, and even mass consciousness. You know, we can't realize sometimes we're actually in a toxic culture environment. There's some of these very competitive corporate environments. They're set up to make you fail. They're set up to make you attached to external things that are going to make you feel sick and ill. Look at the culture and the media saying how we should portray women. You have to be this perfect thing. It's ultimately really toxic. We can have toxic friends, they're the ones that are stuck in the know, all the time.

Unfortunately, this is hard for some people to accept, but people who've been emotional traumatized, they can be energy vampires too. They can be the victims. The way that I talk about trauma with people is, we start connected to the source. The trauma disconnects you from some source, so now you don't have an inner sense of safety and connection, and you have to find external things. Even women who are out leading their sexuality. What are all the ways and all the things we do to get attention, and to feel like we exist? Whether it's overworking to try and show that we're succeeding in our job? Approval seeking, people pleasing? Everything that discounts who we really are because we got disconnected from that. So that you know we don't live in a vacuum. I think that's the other thing I

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found, I'm at the stage with a lot of my patients as well, is I've fully now realized just how important it is that we acknowledge the environment we're in. I also ask about a center of gravity where our emotional resonance is. When you get rid of the energy vampires who resolve your own trauma, you feel really happy and joyful on your own. There's a ceiling, because you're still on Planet Earth, mass consciousness exists, and all souls are connected.

I suppose it helps to remember that, and to be aware of it as well. Sometimes it means we need to be more cautious, when we're out in a very busy crowded environment. We might want to go home and do some clearing work, and things like this. Tony Robbins said who you hang out with is who you become. So sometimes I see, somebody needs to get divorced. Just need to leave the husband, or the husband needs to leave the wife. I've seen that as being a part of the journey. Sometimes it takes courage to do that.

DR. KEESHA: It always takes courage to do that.

NIKI GRATRIX: Huge courage. Sometimes it's a taboo area, but sometimes you know it might be, somebody would have never thought. What are you saying? Maybe my Mother is old and needs care. How do you tell someone like this is really draining your energy? When you talk about those things, solutions can appear. Something you never even considered. They just thought they had to be the carrier.

Well, suddenly other people started to appear, or financial support started to appear so that they could get help with things. Sometimes it's the practical things that needed to come in, but a lot of times we don't, we just think it's our duty. It's a duty bound thing. Naturally, especially if it's a parent. Quite often the essence, the source of the parent, actually wouldn't want their child to be sacrificed about things anyway. It's a very delicate conversation. Yes.

DR. KEESHA: We're running out of time. My angels are agreeing with you. Isn't that amazing?

NIKI GRATRIX: Yeah. Wow. Yes. I've got it as well. Yes, it's beautiful. Yeah, the tiling, the sun is here.

DR. KEESHA: Thank you so much for all of your wisdom, actually just a tiny part of your wisdom in this last hour. It's been amazing. We have all your contact information and bonus on our bonus page for the women's vitality summit, and I just so appreciate having a soul sister out there who talks about these

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things too.

NIKI GRATRIX: Yes, it's amazing. It's been a really great discovery. So, thank you so much for having me and also, thank you for doing this. It's such important work, well done, and I hope everybody's going to really enjoy the summit and get a lot out of it, so thank you.

DR. KEESHA: Thank you.