

Julie Uhernik: Coming out of the ADHD closet

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SPEAKERS

Katy Weber



Katy Weber 00:00

I was so intrigued when you reached out to me, I think you probably, like many of us have a very fascinating story. You were recently diagnosed in December. Why don't you talk to me about what led up to you first thinking you might have ADHD in the first place and kind of walk me through how you ended up getting your diagnosis?



00:19

Well, I never in a million years thought ADHD, never. I have never been described as hyperactive at all. I'm lazy, perhaps, but not hyperactive. So I commute 50 miles one way everyday. So it's 100 miles round trip. And I listened to a ton of podcasts. And I was listening to another podcast. And the host was talking about his own case of ADHD, and, you know, the stereotypical vision of the ADHD kid and stuff. And I almost changed it because I was like, well, this doesn't apply to me. But I didn't really have anything else downloaded. So I went and listened. And by the end of it, I was like, Are you kidding me? You know, and it just explained so many things that I've been dealing with my whole life. It was like, my whole life just flashed before my eyes. So then that's when I went about getting a diagnosis. And you know, started doing all the research online, myself listening to the podcasts and whatnot. And I just, you know, with COVID, and stuff, it's really hard

to get into a doctor really hard to go through some of these processes. So I just went through an online company, and it came back with flying colors that I'm combined type. And I was like, Oh my gosh, my whole life makes sense. Now.



Katy Weber 01:53

Do you remember what it was about the podcast? You said it was the virtual couch? with Tony Overbay? What do you remember what it was during that episode? That was like the first light bulbs that started going off for you,



02:04

you know, he was reading through is something I've helped guide.org about all the different symptoms and how it's overlooked. Not only in adults, but in girls in women. And I really researched that more, and your podcast has been so helpful with that. Because I relate to all the women that have been on your podcast, I just find myself going Yes. Oh my god, you know, it's like, these are my people. So um, yeah, it was just kind of the list of stuff that he was going through, and the daydreaming. And I remember, you know, always being in trouble in school, I very much became a people pleaser, because I don't like to be in trouble. I don't like to fail. I don't like to be in trouble. So I've really always had to rein it in my whole life because I didn't want to be in trouble. And so yeah, just so many of the things that he went through as a list of symptoms with this help guide.org were immensely helpful.



Katy Weber 03:18

Yeah, I think when I made the connection between impulsivity, and hyperactivity, you know, because I was a very, very much the same way my therapist recommended. My therapist had been telling me I had ADHD for years. And I just like, it didn't register, because I thought immediately it was like, I'm not hyperactive. And it wasn't until I started making those connections about the hyperactive mind and what a hyperactive mind looks like, in terms of impulsivity. And that the impulsivity is what leads to financial problems and, you know, making the impulse purchases and like all you know, those were those light bulbs. I was like, Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, I have all of that. Exactly, exactly. Yeah. Did you take any online tests?



04:06

I did. I took a bunch of the online tests. And it was, you know, it all came back. You know, he say, kind of flying colors and stuff. So then I went to think it was ADHD online, because one of my favorite sayings is, ain't nobody got time for that if it is long and time consuming. No. So I went online and I did the ADHD online assessment and their psychologist licensed all of that and got my results. Well, then I took it to my primary and my primary and I have a great relationship. Because sometimes you go to doctors and they're like, Okay, what kind of drugs are you trying to score? And my knows that I really won't take something unless I know that it's it's something that I've really researched. So I gave her my results. And she was like, No, ADHD is a kid's disorder, you would have known him from the time you were a kid. She Wow, she was like, What did you pay for this assessment? And really, and again, luckily, we have a really good rapport. Because we can talk to each other like that. And I'm all No, I'm firmly believe it. I've done my research on this. And she's like, Okay, what do you want to do? I said, Well, I think I want to try a little bit of Adderall to see you know, what, what the effects are from that. And so she's like, okay, I don't have a problem with that. And she gave me that. And immediately, I could tell a difference. It's the instant release. And as soon as it wears off, I can feel it wearing off. And I don't know if this is common to people, some of the groups that I'm in kind of sounds like it is, I have songs in my head all the time. All the time I wake up,



Katy Weber 06:08

that's not normal. I didn't know that either.



06:14

I didn't know that wasn't a normal thing. And repetitive thoughts and stuff, and it shuts that off. And as soon as it starts wearing off, the songs come back. When I get really stressed out, I've always, I've always been one that I'll sing a song. I'm my big one is Indiana Jones. I'll go around the office gone done tonight don't. And they're like, settle down Indiana Jones. And so you can just tell when I'm really stressed out, because that's how it comes out.



Katy Weber 06:51

I love that. And you know, later in the day, you're like, the songs. They're back. Exactly. It's like, Oh, yeah, I noticed when I was on when I first tried a stimulant. I didn't take Adderall. I took vyvanse. But they're, I think the same family of stimulant. I noticed that right away that my brain was just so much quieter. I'm like, how do you explain that to people who don't understand that, you know, that feeling of just like there was that much less noise

happening. But I love that with the songs.



07:22

I think that was another thing with the Tony Overbay thing, just listening to the symptoms and going oh my gosh, everybody isn't like this. I know this was unique because I had no other frame of reference. This is how I've always been. And so I'm like, oh, no wonder sometimes people look at me strange. No wonder nobody else in the office is walking around singing Indiana Jones. You know, it just really clicked for me.



Katy Weber 07:50

Yeah. And I think also there's that sense of, for me, at least it was how much am I struggling? You know, because I felt like a lot of the time when I was researching ADHD, there was a sense of like, yes, everybody forgets their keys. Sometimes everybody gets distracted sometimes. But it's really a, how much you how much this is impeding in your life, or how much this is sort of, you know, taking you away from what you would otherwise be able to do. How much is this impeding your life? And I had that big question all the time, which was Yeah, like, how much am I struggling? I don't know. And I think that was what really hit me as in the pandemic was when all of the structure and all of my day to day planning went out the window that I was like, Okay, now I am definitely struggling. This is much clearer to me,



08:40

right? I think the pandemic was just huge in bringing this to light. And I'm getting older, and I've got some hormonal changes going on. And I changed jobs in the middle of the pandemic. And it was just really, really bad. until the point where I thought, Gosh, am I getting early onset Alzheimer's, what is going on because it's a funny story. But I bought a new car because I have this big commute. And so I bought a hybrid. And it's got all kinds of distraction features on it to pull you back like lane assist and all that. I thought I was an excellent driver until I bought this car and this car is just on me all the time. I mean, had it not been for this car, I would lock my keys in my car like every other day. Um, yeah, because it beeps when you leave the keys in the car. It gets you back in lane assist, and sometimes it even comes up with a message on the dashboard that says you might want to consider taking a break and shows me a coffee symbol. I'm like, that would be awesome if it would actually give me a cup of coffee and maybe a cookie. But it you know, but yeah, my car would be



Katy Weber 09:57

another 10 years. That's unreal. Great point, I never thought about that. Because our car when we have an electric car, and that one is just a button, you know, press on and off if you have the key fob on you. And it beeps if you leave the car on, when you start to walk away from the car, and that happens to me all the time, or I forget to leave the car off. Yeah, I spray it to turn the car off, and it's beeping at me. And I'm so grateful for



10:25

exactly because I you can't hear that it's running because it's got that, you know, battery. And no, I do that too. I walk away. I'm like, why are you beeping at me? Did I leave the keys did I leave the car on what So, you know, that was another big one that I had really started noticing. And then with this new job, there was a lot of it that I really had to focus on. I'm in, I'm in insurance, and I would really need to focus. And I would bounce from one task to the next. And I get a lot done. And I always have. But I really needed to focus and dig in and, you know, work on one particular thing for a while. And it was just, it was getting really bad.



Katy Weber 11:09

I've noticed recently there's something like the ADHD tax, I guess, when they talk about that, you know, like, what are the ADHD taxes. And I feel like my ability to get things done in a nine to five window is impossible, because I'm so distracted. And so often I will work from the minute I get up until bedtime. Because I feel as though I'm supposed to get a certain amount of work done that day. And because I'm always going off, and I've got my kids and this and that I'm working from home, like I feel like I'm in a state of working, quote unquote, the entire time of the day. And it's sort of just recently occurred to me how, how detrimental that is, you know, like how low that's you really need to be able to kind of shut off and turn off and or turn off that work side of you and then have your home side of you. And I think so many of us have difficulty working from home doing that. Because there's a sense of like, well, if I was blessed, distracted, I would be able to get X amount done. So then to be in a situation where you are actually at the workplace and to feel like there's a certain amount you need to get done, or there's a certain amount that you need to accomplish. Within that day, I'm not being able to do it explains why we're such Workaholics.



12:28

And I feel like I have to get all the things done. You know, it's I can't stand to have stuff that's not done. And with insurance. I mean, you're waiting on underwriters, you're waiting on different things. And it drives me nuts, because I feel like oh my gosh, I have so many things that are undone. And it's a lot of it is outside of my control. So I commute an hour in the morning, and then I work and then I commute an hour at night. And then a lot of times I'll do marketing and things like that in the evening, because I feel like I've just got so many things that are undone. So and then I also mentioned that I changed jobs during the pandemic. And I know it's something I've heard some of your other guests talk about, is needing to feel like you're an expert right away, I can't stand not knowing what I'm doing. And so changing jobs in the middle of the pandemic, that was really tough too. Because I went back to beginner status, and I found my anxiety and my frustration levels, my overwhelm, just kind of really escalating because of the changes in in the job.



Katy Weber 13:46

Yes, and I think that also, we hold ourselves to such high standards, because we are bright, and we feel like we should be able to figure everything out. And when you hit that point where you might be, you know, not not a whole, you know, not meeting your own expectations. That's when, you know, we start to get that, as one of my guests had called it the piece of shit syndrome, where we start to get really, really frustrated with ourselves. And then you start to question well, am I as bright as I think I am? You know? Because I hope I you know, I feel like I'm holding myself to all of these high standards, and then you add in aging, you know, being a woman who's aging, and then you know, then they start talking about estrogen and hormones. And I'm just like, it's dizzying to question, all of that I find certainly as I'm aging just being like, Am I no longer in the arena, you know, and and is is that a function of my aging? Is that a function of the fact that I'm an aging woman? Or do I have Alzheimer? Those questions that you don't have the answers to but yeah, that's a great point of really, I think we all have that in common And where we hold ourselves to incredibly high standards, because we are capable of so much. And so when you get those situations where it's like, Why can I do it sometimes, but not other times, that we start to get really frustrated with ourselves?



15:14

Well, and Brendan the hand, I don't know if you've ever heard of him, he talks about the wall of awful, where you just kind of hit this wall where you can't get past it. And I use a lot of horse analogies. If you've ever seen like the video of the horse that gets right up to the jump, and then can't make it over. My brain will do that I will get to words like nope, nope, nope, no, we are not doing that. And I may have done it 100 times. But especially if

somebody is pressuring me to do it, I kind of have a slow processing speed. And I need to be able to work things through. I'm an excellent trainer, because you give me something and I will break it down to the lowest possible denominator so that people can understand it. But if you press me to do something, my brain like goes into overwhelm and just shuts down, you have to leave me alone. And let me kind of figure it out on my own, and then I can figure it out. So with that horse that goes over a jump, it doesn't matter how much you beat that horse, something has changed, they smell something, they see something, whatever it is, they cannot get over that. And I really relate to that. Because unless you leave me alone, and let me figure it out. I'm not getting over that job.



16:38

No way. No,



Katy Weber 16:39

oh my god, I love that analogy that is so great. And it perfectly describes that feeling of like, sometimes everything, all the cards are right, and everything falls into order. And it's great, but I can't, I can't replicate that I don't really know what's happening or why. And then also like, the you brought in a bit of the sensory issues too, because one thing I've really realized, since my diagnosis was how many sensory issues I have that I had no idea I did about, you know, things in my face, or too many people talking at once or the ticking clock, you know, like all of these ways in which we have, like you said, like all of the the environmental elements have to be perfect as well. And not knowing really even what those are. Right. And you know, my husband and I go back and forth all the time that I'm deaf, I'm not deaf is either that my brain is over here. And he's talking to me over here. Or, you know, it's just that I hear him, but my brain doesn't process what he's saying. Because it's going a million miles an hour. So we've ruled out deafness at this point. Right, that is a great point. So now what what was your husband's reaction to this journey of this diagnosis? You know, and that's kind



18:00

of what I said in my bio is I haven't told anyone yet. Even your husband, and not even my husband? Because I feel like the reaction would be I knew it. You know, I knew there was something going on there. I am extremely clumsy. And that's one of the things that I look back on my childhood. and go, Oh, yeah, that was totally ADHD. Because if there is a crack in the sidewalk, if there's a pothole, if there's a stick, I'm gonna fall over it. And so he goes around going pothole stick, you know, he's like, pointing out all this stuff. And I'm like,

I don't need



18:48

you to do that. I'm



18:48

a grown ass woman. Next thing I know, I'm on the ground.



18:53

So you know, it just,



18:54

there's this whole part of me that doesn't want to admit to it yet. And I think a Bernie brown talks about it a lot. And she's like, you have to pick who deserves to know your story. And not that my husband doesn't deserve to know my story he does. I just don't want it to change the way he looks at me. Because I'm the same lovable goof laying on the ground that I've always been, you know, it doesn't change who I am as a person. The diagnosis has just really helped me to be a better me, I think, because I can look at things and go oh, yeah, that's, that's why that's why I'm overwhelmed. That's why I'm frustrated. That's why I'm on the verge of a meltdown. You know, it just helps me really to regulate that more. And I don't feel like I need to really tell anyone my story. That's why I kind of hesitated to Come on to your podcast. But the women that have been on here have just resonated with me so much that I thought, you know, if anybody that I know is listening to this podcast, then they're my tribe anyway. You know, they'll get me Yeah, they'll understand what I'm going through.



20:54

I know, you know,



Katy Weber 20:55

it's funny I, I, in a very ADHD moment accidentally outed myself with the podcast, I don't

know if I've actually even talked about I think maybe I've talked about this on this in one of the interviews. But you know, when I started the podcast, when it was coming out, I created a Facebook page and a website and Instagram and everything else. And I accidentally, I thought I was posting something on a Facebook page that I hadn't told anybody about, but I accidentally posted it on my personal Facebook profile. And so there all of a sudden, it was out, I have ADHD, and I've made this podcast, I hadn't told anybody for a lot of the same reasons, which is sort of like he's like you said, you know, it's, it's a matter of who needs to know. And it was my own personal journey. And I just hadn't really kind of thought about how I was going to come out of that closet. And there it was, I did it. And it was so funny to me at the moment, because I was like, there you go again, like impulsively blurting and hitting send, without thinking about the consequences. And I was interested, you know, it was interesting to me, because the reaction from a lot of people was to sort of private message me and say, Wow, you're so brave for coming out and, and that I, you know, this is I know people who have this or it's meat on my sister has this or you know, all these people who wanted to share their stories about it. And and so it's been interesting to me to be very public about ADHD, because I've noticed that a lot of people, especially on Facebook, because I think the people who follow me on other social media platforms have ADHD, I mean, they're, they're my people, right, Facebook, is my family and friends. But as we know, your family is not always your people. So, you know, a lot of the reactions that I've gotten on Facebook when I talk about ADHD struggles, you know, or some of the, you know, when I, when somebody has ADHD, and I post about something, like, Oh, I bought another planner, and it was it's what a waste of money because they never work, you know? And the people who have ADHD respond to that post, like, Oh, I know, right, relatable. And we all kind of like chuckle about this struggle of ours. But then the people who don't have ADHD react, like, Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't know you were struggling. Why don't you try this planner? Or why don't you try this? And they give me all of this unsolicited advice. And it gets me so angry because I'm, I'm like, like you said, like, you can't manage their responses, right. And these are people who genuinely care about you. And you have complicated, nuanced relationships with all of these people. But at the same time, like, I don't want your pity, like, Yes, I am struggling. But I don't want your pity. I don't want your advice. Like it is a really difficult relationship to have with people when they sort of jump in and start trying to help you and, and so I'm like, why are we venting? people with ADHD? Just get it? Exactly, exactly. They get that need to vent and they get that need to talk about our struggles, and we relate to each other. But it's like, yes, I'm struggling, but I'm not like capital S struggling, you know, when I was capital S struggling, I was not posting on social media, you know, those were the times where you feel like, you know, that those are the that's what I was really hurting where you know, was when I wasn't reaching out. So it's been a very interesting journey in terms of like, how you can and can't manage how people look at you and realizing the misconceptions so many people have about ADHD, and how so many people think of this,

like when I came out with it that I had been diagnosed, I think even the term diagnosis A lot of people think it's like a terminal illness. They're sort of like, I'm so sorry. Like, no, it's actually the greatest thing that's ever happened to me. It was before my diagnosis that I was really struggling. So I'm glad you brought that up. And I really did want to talk more about that stigma, the mental health stigma because it's sort of it's almost like we bring it on ourselves and a lot of that way, right? Yes,



24:53

yes. And and that was one of the things that I I did kind of say I wanted to talk about was that stigma because I grew up in a household where I had a parent with OCD. And if if, again, I'm not an expert, I'm only talking from my own experiences. But if you grew up in a household with OCD, a lot of the compulsion, so that person has are passed on to you. It was a hand washing compulsion, and, you know, that was a, you need to go wash your hands, and don't tell anybody, you know. And so it became like this little dirty secret in the household that we all kind of live with. And then, you know, when I look back at ADHD, and childhood, I'm older. So it wasn't really, really a thing yet. But my brother, I think it was talked about that he may have ADHD, it was kind of suggested, it was right at the beginning of the whole Ritalin phase. And so it was maybe suggested that he went on that, and it was almost like, a parenting flaw that you couldn't parent your child that you couldn't get your child to behave. So we had to medicate them. And there was just this whole negativity around it. This whole stigma is like, I am not medicating My child, you know, because you can't control your classroom. You know, just all of this negativity surrounding it. And now that I know more about it, I'm like, Oh, my gosh, if you could have just medicated me, because I think that was what I said to myself at the end of the Tony Overbay thing was, oh my god, this could have been medicated. I've been doing this my whole life and didn't have to. So you know, I think it prevents a lot of people from getting the treatment that they need and moving on with a perfectly normal life, you know, just treat it and move on with it. You know, like I said, it helps me to be a better me to just know what's going on. And so there can be a whole dark side to that I feel. And, you know, trigger warning, my brother ended up passing away from an opioid addiction, because we tend to self medicate. If we don't get the diagnosis that we need, and the treatment that we need. A lot of people self medicate. And, you know, that's how it ended up presenting and my brother.



Katy Weber 27:33

Yeah, that's such a great point. And it is so frustrating that I've interviewed many women and just hear about them in the Facebook groups as well who have met been met with

that same thing you talked about earlier with your GP of just like, Oh, are you just like you just want drugs? And to think about all of our journeys, and that feeling of like, Oh my goodness, this all of these struggles might have an answer and that Overwatch like that overwhelming sense of relief, when you think oh, this could be ADHD and then to be met with a doctor who says now, you know, or or questions, your own research and that so Now do you have? Do you have kids?



31:23

I do I have two boys. My older son, he may have some ADHD I sent him a video He's like, Mom, are you implying I have ADHD? And I said, No, I'm considering the fact that I have ADHD. And I'm wondering if you feel the same. I've always



31:41

just been,



31:41

you know, when you talk about the upside of, of it, I've always just been really fun, really spontaneous. Let's jump in the car and drive to Disneyland. And you know, just really impulsive things that I look back now and think, Oh, yeah, that was so ADHD. Um, but he's, you know, he kind of struggled in school and wrote, there's a lot of similarities between he and I. And so, but I didn't know how to help him. Because, again, I thought everybody was like this. I knew he struggled in school. I thought if there was something going on the school would evaluate and find out. And nobody ever said anything. Oh, he never got evaluated or treated or tested either. So I you know, that's my older son. And then my younger son, actually, I adopted, he's my brother's son when my brother passed away. And so, he has, he has some struggles, but I wouldn't say ADHD. So



Katy Weber 32:49

yeah. Interesting. Yeah. And again, like you said, When, if there is sort of that negative stigma, even when you said your son was like, What are you trying to tell me? Do you think, you know, aren't you? Are you saying negative things? And you are trying to make me feel bad about myself, as opposed to saying, like, no, like, there's an answer to all of this.



33:10

Right. And, and that's the kind of relationship that my son and I have. And so while he initially took it negatively, I'm like, No, the Indiana Jones music,



33:22

ADHD.



33:24

So yeah, that's, that's me and my kids. But that's kind of the upside to it is I've always just been really fun, really child like, you know, the amusement parks, I would take them to go play laser tag, and I would sit down and go, Okay, are you going to sit here and read this book? Are you going to make memories with your kids? So I would be in there playing laser tag with my kids. And I'd be the only grown up in there. And, you know, I a lot of that childlike kind of quality. And I think, I really think if you talk about superpowers, that's one of them, because I've just always been able to relate to I would say, I relate to kids and dogs, because they just kind of get me



Katy Weber 34:12

and horses I guess. Right?



34:14

And horses. Yeah. And so the whole horse thing. When I was growing up, I was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, children's rheumatoid arthritis. And I've always lived with a lot of pain. And so Gosh, 1986 I had a really bad horse accident. And I broke my pelvis. I broke the so many bones, this horse flipped over backwards on me and just broke everything. So I'm laying in a hospital bed. And they're like, Oh gosh, if she still has children's rheumatoid arthritis, this is going to be really bad. This is going to settle into these joints and and she's going to be crippled. So Um, and I don't know if that's the PC term, but anyway, um, so they ran all these tests and found nothing, nothing at all. No rheumatoid arthritis, no osteo, arthritis, nothing. So here I am with all these broken bones laying in a hospital bed, and my mother is mad. Because she's like, Okay, so how long have you been faking? I'm gonna, since you grew out of this rheumatoid arthritis to get out of doing things. And I'm like, I swear, I'm not faking. I'm not a hypochondriac, I really have all this pain. So jump forward, five, six years, whatever it is, and I end up in the emergency room, because I'm in

so much pain. I have been tested for lupus and Ms and all of these other things. And nothing, they could find nothing. They diagnose it finally, as fibromyalgia. And if you know anything about fibromyalgia, that covers like, everything from anxiety, depression, irritable bowel syndrome, low property values, you know, they just kind of throw it all in this bucket.



Katy Weber 36:20

And then mostly the diagnosis they give you if they have no idea what's wrong.



36:24

Exactly, exactly. But it made sense. Because I mean, I had struggled with a lot of these things all of my life. And so after you get that diagnosis, then anytime there's anything wrong with you really, it's like, that's just my fibromyalgia, you can be walking down the street and your ear falls off. And it's like, Ah, it's just my fibromyalgia, you know, so it kind of prevents you from seeking out any other treatment. But we talk about all the research we do. And sometimes I call it me search, because I'm always just researching what is wrong with me? What is going on with me? And you know, it was like, well, maybe I've got some childhood trauma. Maybe I'm just highly sensitive. Ah, you know, because I always felt like there was something that didn't quite fit into that Fibromyalgia bucket. And listening to Tony Overbay that day, it just clicked. I was like, Oh, my gosh,



37:23

what is it?



37:24

And so some of the medications that I had been taking for fibromyalgia, the anxiety, the depression, whatever, I've been able to either lower or eliminate some of those, because it was all stemming. Well, not all, because I still have the pain issue. But a lot of it was stemming from ADHD.



Katy Weber 37:44

Wow, that's incredible. I was just going to ask about what you know, what do you think now looking back? What are your thoughts about the chronic pain? Because I know I

mean, I've I've heard so many stories about the way in which anxiety manifests itself, you know, in terms of, I was convinced that it was sleep deprivation, because that was my experience, but also that sense of just self doubt, and not knowing what is the answer for any of these various struggles, creates, that sense of self doubt creates so much anxiety, but then ADHD, Bree, she was talking about being like the good kid, and how she had had all of this responsibility placed on her as a good kid and wanting and how the people pleasing lead to anxiety because of all this responsibility at a young age, and I had never made that connection before. And I was just like, I mean, it is so fascinating. And it's funny how you say like the me search. I've never heard that term, but it makes I so relate to that. Because I've often said like, My hobby is trying to figure out me like there is nothing in the world more interesting than trying to figure out all of these mysteries about me. Yeah. The the mystery illnesses to Why do I react this way? or What is it about my childhood, all of that stuff? So I'm curious, what are your thoughts about the physical pain element?



39:10

And, you know, I really I still don't know I still attribute that to Fibromyalgia because they can't find anything else. But I do find that when I could execute good self care. I work on getting sleep by you know, keep up with doctor visits, chiropractic, misu, that kind of stuff. That pain does subside. And Karen herb was on one of your podcasts. I reached out to her about nutrition because I think nutrition is huge too. I can't say that I do great with my nutrition. That's another reason why thank you and I are probably kindred spirits. I was reading your book and your you were a weight watchers leader. came to early 90s. Yeah, early 90s. I did the whole Weight Watchers thing because I've always struggled with my weight. I'm very impulsive when it comes to eating, binge eating, fighting with that my whole life always from one diet to the next. So, you know, I think nutrition plays a big part of that. And But yeah, I still just attribute that part of it to Fibromyalgia ik and fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome.



Katy Weber 40:33

Yeah, you know, I had a scare. Maybe like, five or six years ago, I started getting really bad vertigo. And it had gotten so bad, I couldn't drive anywhere, because I didn't know when I was going to get a wave of vertigo. And when I would get a wave of vertigo, I couldn't even keep my eyes open, because I would immediately vomit. And it was so bad. And I kept going back to the EMT, because I thought it had something to do with my sinuses, because I've always had sinus issues and just sort of assumed that that had to do with the sinuses, and they confirmed it. And I was losing my hearing, I was about to get hearing aids, which they also said probably wasn't going to help. But they didn't know

what else to do. I was on a diuretic I was I had to give up caffeine and chocolate and dairy and like sodium, and I couldn't I was on such a low sodium diet that I couldn't go anywhere, like I was so unhappy. And I went to the dentist and the dentist said, it's he said, let me take an X ray of your job because I think it might be your temporomandibular joint that I think you might have TMJ. And so he took an X ray. And sure enough, one of my joints, I had been grinding my teeth so much at night that one of the joints was jammed up into my inner ear canal. And the dentist said, that's this is what's causing everything. He said, as soon as we fix that, your your the ringing in your ear is going to go away, you're going to get your hearing back, you're not no longer going to get vertigo. It's all stemming back to the teeth grinding. And as soon as he said that, I thought of course, I've been grinding my teeth my whole life. And everybody has always said use those mouth guards that you get at the drugstore. And he said the mouth guards are the worst thing for you. Because all they're doing is just jamming that joint further up into the ear. And it was like it was one of those those come to Jesus moments where I was like, Oh, yes, that's it. And I went to the EMT and I said, you know, the dentist just told me that this is the this is gonna cure everything. And all I have to do is get this bite plate and it's gonna, you know, separate my jaw and he said, it's gonna heal everything. And the EMT was like, I don't I don't know, I've never heard of that. I don't believe it. And so I thought I had that moment where I was like, do I believe the EMT? Or do I believe the dentist and and so I went with the dentist and I got the mouth guard. Within 24 hours, all of these symptoms I had been struggling and suffering with were gone. My hearing was back. I've never had vertigo since I still to this day where a mouth, you know, as a different type of mouth guard in my mouth that keeps my jaw from grind teeth from grinding. And it was just like the greatest thing that ever happened to me. And I it was such an interesting journey. Because there were so many times where I needed to kind of advocate for myself in the doctor's office where the doctor was telling me one thing and i and i was like No, it's I'm pretty sure that's not it. And then finding that answer, and having everything be better. And it was the dentist like it was just one of those things, I never in a million years would have made that connection. And I feel like there are many, many women out there who who are teeth grinding and have no idea that that this is the cause of all of these other seemingly unrelated issues. And I'm like I wanted to, you know, I just wanted to advocate so much and get the word out and just be like, everybody needs to know about this whole TMJ thing. There's been so many parallels with the ADHD journey to right where you're just like, if my story can help one person, figure it out, it would be so worth it.



44:06

Well, and I think that's what was hard in this whole thing is because, you know, we go to one doctor, and we get one diagnosis, and No, it can't be that or it can't be this. And so you go to a different doctor, and they say no, it's this. And just really finding that

explanation is, is sometimes just so tough, you know, and you've just dealt with it for so long. And you know, I've had all of the the meltdowns and I've lost jobs because I haven't handled things well in the workplace. I've alienated people and I've hurt people's feelings, because I'm the world's worst about playing with my cell phone. And I really didn't even realize that I was doing it. It was more of a district I can be listening to you, I can be on a webinar or a conference call whatever and scrolling my phone, because it's like, my brain has two completely different sides to it. So I've really hurt people's feelings not even meaning to. And I just go back to the whole thought of, you know, if somebody would have found this sooner if I would have found this sooner. So many things could have been avoided. So it all comes back to just being able to get that diagnosis and finding a doctor that is really on your side. And when I say my doctor, and I have a really good relationship, we do because she encourages me to go and seek other professionals and other treatment. And you know, she will listen to me. So you've got to not only advocate for yourself, but find that physician that you have a good relationship with. And if you don't you have to change positions.



Katy Weber 46:04

Yes, that's such a great point. And you've now taught her what ADHD looks like, in a middle aged woman, too, which is something that she obviously had not been exposed to before. Yeah, that was another thing about that whole TMJ story was that I went to my GP and was telling her about this whole journey, because I had initially gone to her and she was the one who said, I don't know, go to go to an EMT. So when I went back to her and said, Oh, it's my jaw. She was like, Yes. Oh, that's so cool. Oh, right. And she and she was like, now I've learned something. And I'm like, Yes, that is a sign of a good doctor, the sign of a bad doctor is the EMT who is like, I've never heard of that. That can't be possible. Right? Right. So that's, that's great. And now you're helping your doctors so that if another woman comes in and says, I don't know, maybe this is ADHD, but I'm not hyperactive, she can be like, Well, actually, truly important. You know. One thing I have been asking all of my guests is, is if you could rename ADHD to something else, what would you rename it to? Because those four letters are so problematic for so many women?



47:13

Yeah. And, you know, I was trying to think of like something that sounded all scientific and whatnot, and I am a complete smart Alec and all I could really come up with was a fabulously unfocused, because that would be FSU, and I might be more apt to tell people, you know, I'm sorry, I just have a really bad case of FSU. So



Katy Weber 47:39

I can see the T shirts now.



47:41

Yeah, I just have a really bad case of fpu, which I mean, I know totally inappropriate. But I thought it was funny, because that's how I get it.



Katy Weber 47:50

I love that. That's fantastic. And now I know what to say to all of my relatives who tell me I'm so sorry. You're struggling. Yeah. Now, we have talked about some of the things that you love about your ADHD? How do you feel like this diagnosis has changed for you in terms of you how you look at yourself and your self talk?



48:17

Um, yeah, really, I've become a better advocate for myself. before when I would make a mistake, I would really start to beat myself up, the whole perfectionist thing would kick in. And now I'm more of Okay. Can it be fixed? Yes. Did you chop off somebody's frontal lobe in a brain surgery? No, you know, so just really gone out, okay, that you know, that it's something that can be fixed, let's put a system in place, because I think systems are really important. started using a bullet journal, I don't know how long that's gonna last, but trying to just write everything down, trying to come up with systems. So that doesn't happen again. And then, you know, really, rather than telling people that I have ADHD, I will just stop and use that horse analogy. Because if you push me, that's usually when I have a blow up when I feel like I'm controlled. And I don't have control of the situation. Example roleplay. I don't know about you, but I hate roleplay and being contracted with a new company, they want me to do roleplay all the time. And I finally just told them, I can't, I just I can't, my brain will not let me and I use the horse analogy. And I said, I get to this point, and I can't get over the fence. But here's what I can do, to try to work around that and I can tell them, okay, I can tell you what I would say to a customer, but I can't pretend that you are the customer. And it's just that little change that may It's a big difference. And it works for them, it works for me, I don't melt down. And so I've been able to advocate for myself more just in knowing really what's going on with me.



Katy Weber 50:12

That's such a great point. And I, you know, not only does it speak to how important this diagnosis is for our sense of self and our sense of self awareness, and how often I've said, the diagnosis itself is half the treatment, because like you said, like, it's, it's just knowing, okay, this is what I'm working with. And this is why I am the way I am. And so now I can start seeking a solution and start seeking ways to advocate for myself in the workplace, which I think like, using those analogies to explain what works and what doesn't work for you, when it comes to your employer, or people you work with is so much better than just saying, I have ADHD, because then you have no idea what they're thinking.



50:51

They're Exactly. It's like, Oh, we need to give her special treatment, or there's just things that she can do. No, I, I just need to come come around it from a different direction.



Katy Weber 51:02

That's great. And so you feel like it's has changed for you with this new job in terms of moving forward?



51:08

Yeah, it really has. Because before I would just, I'm really a crier. And when I get emotionally overwhelmed, I will just cry. And so I would start to express myself and put my truth out there to somebody. And the next thing I know is I'm crying. And it's not productive for either one of us at that point, because I've just kind of gone down that rabbit hole. And so yeah, it's really helped with that, for me to take a step back and go, you know what, this is what's happening with me, I can't do this this way, I need to do this this way. And they're usually pretty receptive to it. As long as the outcome is the same. I mean, I still have the same quotas, I still have the same goals. But if they just let me back up and go at it from a different direction, I'm



Katy Weber 52:05

better. Wow. So that's never occurred to me, because I am certainly a crier and unexplicable crier. So you know, like, you'll be having a conversation with somebody, and it drives me crazy that I will start crying, and I have no idea why. And then the conversation suddenly pivots to being about me crying, and no longer. I'm like, No,

everything is terrible, stop paying attention to the crying. It's just it's not a big deal. And I think that there's I think a lot of us actually have that issue with with inexplicable crying or being easily crying in situations like at the workplace, where it's really, really inconvenient. And it's really annoying. So, and you just sort of brought up something interesting to me, which is like, with self knowledge, with understanding, you know, who we are in certain situations, is that, is that helping with the crying? Is that what you're saying? Is that what I'm hearing like that, that, that the crying might actually be coming from the fact that you are reacting in a certain way that you don't understand or you're like, kind of tamping down some issues that you don't want to deal with right now. So that your body reacts by crying?



53:19

Yeah, it was, I think it was the whole frustration thing, because I didn't have the knowledge of what was going on to say, Look, I'm getting really frustrated. I need to come back and revisit this. And in a little while when I've had a minute to think over it because I would just dive in and plow in. And this is what I'm feeling. And this is what has to change. And I would just kind of like, emotionally dump on people. And then the frustration would take over, I would cry. And then you kind of lose all credibility, especially in the workplace. When you're in a professional setting, and there you are crying. That I just find myself apologizing for crying and the whole point of the message, no matter how valid it was, or how much that thing really needed to change. Exactly. It comes back to consoling me because now I'm crying and the whole message is lost. So you know, it's just really helped me to go Okay, this is what's going on. This is what I need to do for me. And I'll need to come back and revisit this when I've settled down



Katy Weber 54:35

or like you said it or feeling like it's unprofessional and therefore What's wrong with me? Am I unprofessional? So I definitely feel like we need to normalize crying in the workplace. Dammit. Right. I agree. Wow, no, that's really that was such a good point. I forgot about that whole issue of cry. haven't spoken about that much. But that is I think a big issue for a lot of us. And then having to work so hard to stop it when you know it's coming and like needing to escape and yeah,



55:09

I used to say you could tell what kind of a day I was having, because my trashcan was full of Kleenex and candy wrappers. You know, that was just the kind of day I was having. If it

was a bad day, I was crying and eating chocolate. Reminds me



Katy Weber 55:28

of the Kathy cartoons remember those? Yeah, exactly. So yeah, wow. Well, I Wow, this is Yeah, I think so many women are gonna relate to this story. You brought up so many interesting aspects of ADHD in women that I hadn't spoken about with some of my guests. So I really appreciate that. I'm so glad that I'm actually getting to the point now where I am interviewing women who have listened to the podcast and are responding to it and I get to hear your stories and I get to hear how you are responding to others because like I've said before, you know, the whole reason I started this podcast was because the first thing I did when I thought I had ADHD was type women, ADHD into the search engine of podcast because I love podcasts. And so I'm definitely hoping that's how you found the limited ADHD podcast



56:21

is it's definitely how I found it. And I just loved it immediately. I left you a review under grottoes mom, Groucho. Groucho is the horse. Oh, his name is Groucho. So



Katy Weber 56:38

I think I read it out and one of the guys I love that my day to you, I was like, ah, I love that. Yeah, I'm so glad I'm so glad because I love these conversations so much. And like I said, like there's so many light bulbs go off and I just find it so interesting, because everybody has like some little different part of their life that you're like, yes. Oh, yeah. So I just absolutely love holding the interviews but again, like when I started putting them out there I was, like, is anyone else gonna want to listen to me? They're great. They're really great. Oh, well, I'm so what I'm so happy that they helped out and that they are helping others and and that in turn, we've been able to hear your story too, because I know like you said, coming out is not always the easiest thing to do. And there are a lot of hindrances to being open about it, but I think your story will definitely help others for sure. Thank you.