

## HHM - 40 Getting Started in Holistic Health Coaching w/ Pooja Chilukuri



David Sandstrom 0:00

Here's a sample of what you'll hear on this episode of holistic health matters.

Pooja Chilukuri 0:05

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David Sandstrom 0:28

Welcome to the holistic health matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential in spirit, mind and body so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, naturopathic doctor and biblical health coach, and this is episode number 40.

David Sandstrom 0:50

This episode is brought to you by my book, the Christians guide to holistic health. getting educated on natural and holistic health is time consuming and can be expensive, not to mention, overwhelming. I want to help you with that. My book will put you on a fast track to the vibrant health and vitality you've been looking for. By the way, many of my recommendations won't cost you a nickel. They're free, because a lot of my message is simply aligning our lives more fully with the Word of God, that doesn't cost you anything. If you'd like to avoid, overwhelm and get some biblically based holistic health information that you can implement right away, go to my website, David Sandstrom.com forward slash book, you can learn more and pick up a copy today. If that doesn't work, you can go directly to Amazon. It's available there in paperback, Kindle and audible.

David Sandstrom 1:43

Today we have in the show Pooja Chilukuri. Pooja is a nutritional therapy practitioner, a health coach, wellness educator and a published author. She's

written a number of Christian books, Pooja is committed to helping individuals balance their nutritional deficiencies and help them cultivate healthy habits with ease to help prevent or reduce the damaging effects of unresolved chronic health challenges. Pooja, welcome to the show.

Pooja Chilukuri 2:09

David, thank you so much for having me. Thank you.

David Sandstrom 2:12

Well, it's my pleasure. I appreciate you taking the time. I know you're a very busy person with your health coaching practice. Tell me what was the inspiration behind your Holistic Health work?

Pooja Chilukuri 2:23

I think the inspiration, David was based on a very personal journey that I was on with my own health situation. And it has to do with a wake up call that I got one day in a doctor's office. So just to back up a little bit on, I was very, very active as a young mother. I was also very active in my church, we were involved in all very different, all different kinds of ministries. And at the same time, I was working a full time job. So I had a full plate. And I certainly wasn't paying attention to my food habits, my lifestyle, self care, nothing, none of that. And that was also the time in my life, David that I was really struggling with my faith. I was experiencing burnout with my church ministry involvement. And I didn't feel like I could say no to things because this was an expectation that had been set up. You know, when we live under that guilt, or that stress of trying to please everybody trying to expectations that people have very common, yes, and also a very quick way to lose your health. Yes, but unfortunately, that was also a time I disconnected from my spirit. And I was on my way to becoming an atheist. So that was that element going on. So just losing my faith, losing my health, like everything was just coming together like the perfect storm. And, and I think I received some help from above, or I don't see how I would have started my health journey. I think the first thing that happened is I had a nervous breakdown one day kind of like a meltdown. And this was at home. And this was me really struggling, you know, between atheism and between wanting to get back to my faith. And when I had that nervous breakdown that day, I felt somebody was there in the closet with me. This was at home. And I was alone. And I had shut the door because I was crying and I didn't want my children to hear me. And so I was alone in the closet. And I felt this overwhelming presence as if somebody touched me. There was nobody there but I felt the touch. And then I felt it all over the left side of my body and it went down like waves of gentle. Something like an electric. It wasn't like a strong electric current, but I have no words to describe it. So the closest word that comes to my mind is electricity. But it wasn't shocking. It was very gentle. Okay. And I had peace and I felt really

loved. So that, you know, the whole atheism thing went out the window because I thought, look, there is somebody here in this closet with me. And this being really loves me. And I just took a chance. And I just called up Jesus because that was my faith. And as soon as I said the word Jesus, I felt like heat, and just this tangible, warm presence, and I really felt like I was getting an answer that he's real. And so I really had that moment of awakening where I had to do some soul searching. And long story short, this happened over many days. So I don't want people to think that it was instant. But you know, the struggle and the soul searching and trying to reconstruct my faith. But one of the results of that is that I exited my corporate job, wow. And decided to go study health and nutrition, and just trying to heal myself, you know, with both prayer as well as food and lifestyle. Because we need all aspects. We need all aspects. That's what makes it holistic. Yeah. And so I decided that once I was done with my complete my studies, I wanted to share that with others, because I realized very quickly that I wasn't alone, that there were a lot of people suffering from chronic health conditions. And people just didn't know where to start sometimes. Because if you try to Google questions, and the answers you get are so confused, yes. Especially when it's health related. People have opinions, there's all kinds of stuff out there. So that's why I found that to kind of just streamline everything and go get that certification.

David Sandstrom 6:37

Excellent. Excellent. I love that story. That's really good. You know, this is Holistic Health Matters. So I firmly believe that we are spirit we have a mind. And we live in a body and all three parts to a person are interconnected and interdependent. And I personally believe that the Spirit is the foundation. And it starts with the right relationship with Jesus Christ, when we come into that personal relationship with Jesus, and we, we put him on the throne of our lives. That's our starting point. The Bible says, that fear of the Lord is your knowledge of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. So that's where we start. And because our spirit is the highest, most noble part of our being, when it's connected to God, the spirit will animate our minds in healthy ways. And our minds should be in submission to our spirit that's in submission to God, the Spirit, Holy Spirit, and our minds will animate our brains, and our brains run our bodies. So we have a connection there. And the connection goes both ways. As well, if we have, if we have something wrong with us physically, then that can affect us mentally, emotionally. And that will affect our spiritual condition as well. So we really need to address the whole person, if we're going to really address our health challenges and do it well. We need to address the whole person. So it sounds like you're you're there, here. You've done that. Been there, done that. And now you're telling people about it. So that's great. I love it.

Pooja Chilukuri 8:04

Thank you, David. I couldn't agree more with you, you know, the spirit is so key. And the mind does run our bodies and vice versa. Our bodies talk to our minds, too.

David Sandstrom 8:14

Yes, yes, absolutely. Yeah. So you know, there is a well documented Mind Body connection in the literature. But as I just said, it's more than just that. It's a spirit Mind Body connection. Yeah, it's it's, it's important to talk about that, of course, the physical is very important, right, what we eat, what we put in our bodies, how we treat our bodies, in the amount of activity that we incorporate throughout our weeks. detoxification is all super important. It's foundational, even if we could, let's talk a little bit about how you deal with nutritional deficiencies with your clients. What Why should a client even care about nutritional deficiencies?

Pooja Chilukuri 8:48

That's a great question, David. And one of the things that I found in the last 10 years, is nutritional deficiencies can sometimes really mimic chronic health conditions. So for example, I work with someone that had chronic headaches, and he thought he had migraines, and he was taking medication for migraine. But it turned out that he was chronically dehydrated. So that was kind of for him, it led to a misdiagnosis. So just getting to have the electrolytes and the water. It took some time, but his headaches went away. Awesome. So that's just one example. But he is sometimes people have low mood for feeling depressed, there's no energy, there's no motivation. And sometimes that can end up in a diagnosis for depression. But it could be that the person is really deficient in B vitamins in magnesium and having a lot of sugar in their diet. So sometimes when we're not eating a balanced diet and getting all the nutrients that we need, our body starts showing symptoms. And some of those symptoms can be very similar to diseases, and so it's hard to tell them apart. So that's why I always tell people the first place you want to look. is a nutritional deficiencies. Are you sufficient? Yeah. And then you can, you know, work from there. And if everything's okay there, then you would definitely want to check it out.

David Sandstrom 10:12

You know, I want to talk about water for just a minute. You mentioned that guy got rid of his migraines. It was migraines. Right?

Pooja Chilukuri 10:18

Yeah, he that's what he was told. But yeah, I'm just thinking that it maybe wasn't.

David Sandstrom 10:22

Okay. So he thought he had some serious, difficult to resolve condition, when all he needed was some water. We shouldn't underestimate how important good clean water is. and hydration is the body. I mean, we're about two thirds water as far as our bodies goes. And we need water for all kinds of things, including brain function, and detoxification and lubrication and digestion. I mean, it's used for a lot of things. And people shouldn't underestimate something as simple as being properly hydrated. How that can really turn your health around. It did for that gentleman?

Pooja Chilukuri 10:54

It sure did. Yeah, it's the easiest thing. You know, water?

David Sandstrom 10:58

Yes. People are always looking for the complex, actually, sometimes it's some really low hanging fruit.

Pooja Chilukuri 11:02

It really is. Yeah, that's terrific.

David Sandstrom 11:04

So they work with you, as a practitioner, you can help identify those things. what's the what's the top advice you have for individuals who work with

Pooja Chilukuri 11:13

people that I work with, the first thing that I tell them, David, is that they're not alone. So never to try, you know, when you're working, and you're bringing in changes into your life, and you're doing it, I always ask them to get support, like whether it's from family or community, something where someone and somewhere where they are being supported with the changes that they will need to make. And to let them know that it's not hard to really break it down into tiny, small steps. And when it comes to nutrition, that's the tiniest step that someone can take is to maybe just start weaning themselves off of all the chemicals and all the food additives that we have in the processed food. And that's the only step they can take at that time when they're starting. So I will not ask them to make overwhelming changes if they love breakfast cereal, but if they're eating the cereal that has 15 chemicals, then maybe we work towards eating cereal that has none, or maybe one or two, you know, so bringing the changes and and baby steps. And always finding other people that will support you that are like minded. Really

David Sandstrom 12:21

Excellent. Excellent. I think that's really, really great advice. You know, a lot of times when people find out the nominee, airline pilot, I'll get the question, oh,

I've never met an airline pilot. So tell me, what's it like having all that responsibility? When you go to work, you have 200 people's lives in your hands? Isn't that very stressful? And the truth is, it isn't. Because we grow into that responsibility. And when you learn how to fly, you take baby steps, you know, you learn how to fly straight and level first or how to start the engine, or just do the simply do the pre flight inspection of a small two seater airplane we used to train in, and you master or actually master is kind of a strong word, you gain competency in the little skills. And then you move on to the next lesson. Right And the same is true with and you're not gonna find yourself in the captain seat of an airliner, until you've mastered many lessons, and you've got years of usually decades of experience before you get there. So you don't really feel the pressure. It's not like you're thrown in there going into the lion's den, you grow into that responsibility a tiny step at a time. And I think the same is true with art with the changes we need to make to our health and wellness, our lifestyles. One small step that you can easily conquer that failures is so simple and easy that failure is not an option, like maybe drinking an extra glass of water in a day. You know, start there, and then start to build, gain competency in that skill. Make that your normal routine and then build upon it. And it's gonna take a while take a while It took a while to get to where you feel today. And it's gonna take a while to get to how you want to feel. But that's how you do it.

Pooja Chilukuri 13:57

And also, David, I think a lot of times people don't even know how good it feels when we start weaning off. And when they start becoming aware. Oh, I feel better, and it motivates them to do even more. Yes, so I think that's

David Sandstrom 14:11

Yeah, absolutely. And you can you can easily get overwhelmed if you try to do it all at once and you do the little things you start to feel better. That's more motivating and you've you build up steam you build up momentum.

Pooja Chilukuri 14:23

Absolutely.

David Sandstrom 14:23

Yeah, that's great stuff. When it comes to health and wellness Pooja, what are you most passionate about?

David Sandstrom 14:34

So you've decided to make some improvements to your health and well being. You're listening to shows like this where you can get information that can help take your health to the next level. The trouble is getting educated and implementing effective strategies is time consuming and can be expensive, not

to mention overwhelming. That's why I wrote my book, the Christians guide to holistic health. In my book, I've taken 20 years of research and actually variances a natural and holistic health coach, and distill that down to what you need to know, to maximize your health potential in spirit, mind and body. It's my contention that we maximize our health potential by aligning our lives more fully with God's design for spirit, mind and body. My book, the Christians guide to holistic health will put you on the fast track to the vibrant health and vitality you've been looking for. By the way, many of my recommendations won't cost you a nickel, they're free. Because a lot of my message is simply aligning our lives more fully with the Word of God. That doesn't cost you a thing. If you'd like to avoid, overwhelm and get some biblically based holistic health information that you can implement right away, go to my website, David Sandstrom comm forward slash book, that's d A v i d, s, a n d, s, t, r o, m, as in mike.com, forward slash book, and you can learn more and pick up a copy today. If that doesn't work, you can go directly to Amazon. It's available there in paperback, Kindle, and audible. Let's get back to the show. When it comes to health and wellness Pooja, what are you most passionate about? for health

Pooja Chilukuri 16:21

and wellness? David, I think I'm most passionate about people taking back their power. I know that sounds like so for example, people don't realize how much how much control they do have over their bodies and over the choices that we're making on a daily basis. So one of the things that I love doing when I work with my clients is I put them as the experts, I always tell them, I am not the expert, you know your body, you know your life, you know, everything that is there about you, my job is to just bring it out of you. And so the things that I'm passionate about when it comes to the body is many things like your digestive system, that that topic always gets me excited because people can eat the best diets. But if they're not digesting very well, then it's not working for them.

David Sandstrom 17:13

Well, you know, we used to say I'm sorry to interrupt, we used to say you are what you eat. But that's actually not true. You are what you absorb? Yes. Right. So if you're not breaking that food down efficiently and absorbing it through the gut lining, you are not going to be putting that food to good use. So we need to have a digestive system that's working well. In order to absorb the nutrients properly, we want to get it in just the right form we want we don't want the the gut wall to be too permeable and get large protein particles floating around in the blood, that will cause all kinds of issues, inflammation, for sure. autoimmune conditions, even. So you want the gut lining to be healthy, you want the gut micro Flora to be in good balance. And you want to be able to have proper enzyme production and enzymes in your food as well as exogenous enzymes in the body. As well as bile production. You know, there's a lot that goes on to to to

assimilate food properly and put it to good use. It's not just what you put in your mouth.

Pooja Chilukuri 18:10

No, no, and the digestive system is so important. And also what else is important is the bio individual. We're all different. So I'm really passionate about working with people to figure out what works for them next, what is it that they can do and enjoy? Because food should be enjoyed? Yes. You know, that's very key. I think it's a beautiful gift that we all have. It's nourishing, but it should also give us pleasure. That's what I believe.

David Sandstrom 18:38

That's really good. You know, a lot of people when they find out, I'm a certified nutritional counselor, they'll ask me the question, well, what's the best diet? You know, what's the healthy food? And the answer to that is? Well, it depends. You know, we're all individuals. The Roman philosopher Lucretius said, One man's food is another man's poison. And we're finding out that that's is really there's a lot of truth there. I talked about this my book, the Christians guide to holistic health. There's are studies in the literature that say coffee is pro inflammatory. And then this other side is to say no coffee is actually anti inflammatory. Well, how can they both be right? Well, the truth is they are because they had different participants in their studies. If they ran the same study with another set of people, they would come up with results. We're all individuals.

Pooja Chilukuri 19:27

Yes, absolutely. So that's, and that's one thing. I'm really passionate about making sure that whatever we're doing, it fits that person.

David Sandstrom 19:36

That's great. That's a good thing to be passionate about. Because that's what people need help with. You know, I mean, we can, as you say, we can get a lot of information off the internet, but it's easy to get overwhelmed. And just because an eating program or a certain food worked well for one person or supplement, doesn't mean it's going to work the same way in your body. We're all individuals and that's why it's best to have someone who's been down this road before works with people and can help you be a health detective with that Sherlock Holmes hat on him and be a detective that looks beneath the surface to find out what what's going on with you, what works for you what doesn't work with you, we always we all know that we have to give our bodies more of what they do want, and less of what they don't want. And that's sometimes it's a process. You can't just read a little book.

Pooja Chilukuri 20:22



Yes, that's right.

David Sandstrom 20:24

Excellent. So Pooja, if someone was just starting out in their health journey, and having trouble making the necessary changes, what advice would you have for that person?

Pooja Chilukuri 20:37

If they're having trouble making the changes, I would ask them to really, there has to be something that they could do, which is very, very easy for them to do. So it's going back to that very, very tiny step. So if the tiny step is difficult, can we make it even tinier? So I really would like to work with that person to figure out what is that first step that they can do? Absolutely no brainer without thinking. So we'll look for multiple options. Like, you know, for me personally, when I was on that journey, my kids had a fit, because I was starting to throw out all of their favorite foods out of the pantry. So wasn't working.

David Sandstrom 21:16

I know, I know, that problem went down that road.

Pooja Chilukuri 21:20

And so I, I really had to take a deep breath and say, Well, what is it that I can do without fighting with them? Now, any hindrance, any battles, and I realized very quickly, that just sitting next to the food, that that same food in the grocery store on the same shelf, just sitting next to it, we can always find a different version. And so I started there. Was it ideal? No, it was still processed food. I switched out goldfish for some similar cheese parts that had no colors, no preservatives, no additives. So you know, it wasn't ideal. I wanted them off of everything junk. Yeah, but it was the it was the one thing I could do easily. So I always tell them to not feel like I try to help them not feel any shame or judgment. Yeah. because like you said earlier, David, you described it so well, we have to grow into things. Yes. And nothing happens in nature overnight, right? And habits that we've built over a lifetime isn't gonna go away in the blink of an eye,

David Sandstrom 22:22

right. And that's true with the individual. But imagine how much so that's even more expanded into a family. So yeah, the classic, you know, the mom reads a book or goes to see a health coach and learn something about nutrition comes home, we got to throw everything in the pantry out, we're starting over, we're turning over a new leaf, and the family's gonna stare at her like she's lost her mind.

Pooja Chilukuri 22:46

I've been on that.

David Sandstrom 22:49

So yeah, a step at a time finding some healthier ingredients that can add maybe a different flavor, but add flavor to the food and not destroy your health in the process, you know, eliminating, or at least reducing as much as we can genetic modification. And non organic foods, it's pretty impossible to eat 100% organic, I don't think it can be done. But whenever possible, you know, or as much as your budget will allow. That's a good place to start. You know, and you don't have to do it all at once. Either you just one food at a time.

Pooja Chilukuri 23:23

I always tell them make one little change. And if you can make 12 changes in a year. You're good. You know, like that's a lot of changes. Yes. But one change a month even Yeah, one tiny, tiny change

David Sandstrom 23:34

on Right, right. And as we said earlier, as you pick up steam, you know, maybe it's one change a month to begin with. But then you can turn it into one change a week. As you pick up steam and gain confidence and you're feeling better. You have more motivation. 52 changes in a year. That's a lot. That is a lot of progress.

Pooja Chilukuri 23:50

That is a lot, David, and are you? I don't know if you're familiar with Dr. Prpchaska is the model of change. He says the 30 steps of change. You know, first we're just contemplating and then we you know, we wake up and we make those changes, then we get into a maintenance mode. And then we may even have a relapse like you go back to your old ways. And that's where I want people to know that even if we slip even if we go back to our old habits, but we're still not the same person. Yes. So there's going to be that momentum, all that practice, all those little changes we made has changed us. So now you know so I always ask people to know that that there's no judgment there's no shame. And that's why it's so important to surround yourself with like minded people listen to these kinds of podcasts, you know, just just have that support around you.

David Sandstrom 24:41

Yeah, absolutely change. The Bible says iron sharpens iron, right. Get around people that sharpen you know, don't don't hang out with people that are bringing you down. You know, you might have to be acquaintances with some of those people. But as far as letting them into your inner circle and making them close friends, probably not. I mean if you're if you're committed to growth,

spiritual growth, mental emotional growth, physical growth. It's best to hang around people that are like minded and understand those things and want to do the same things you do, because you'll lift one another up.

Pooja Chilukuri 25:13

Absolutely, yeah,

David Sandstrom 25:15

that's really huge. And you know, I've been doing a little research recently on relational connectedness. And it's, it's even more significant than I thought. You know, there was a study, I mentioned this one of my book that it was a meta analysis of it covers something like 60 years, and all of them hundreds of studies, a massive amount of people like million, like 300 million people are something ridiculously large like them. And they set out to the worst case scenario, lifetime, single men would die 17 years younger than married men. And that's not just good marriages, that's all marriages. And women didn't fare much better. They died 15 years younger. And Bible says, I believe it's Genesis 2:18, it is not good for the man to be alone. So it's really nice to see modern science catching up with that biblical declaration that's been around for 1000s of years. There was another study, this one was published and Harvard health news in I believe, was 2010. They found that positive relationships were beneficial to your health, but a lack of relational connectedness was detrimental. And they said, lack of relational connectedness was about equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and worse than sedentary lifestyle, and obesity, for your health outcomes. So I mean, people know that, you know, smoking cigarettes is bad and said your lifestyle and obesity is bad. But how many people know that a lack of relational connectedness is worse than all of that.

Pooja Chilukuri 26:47

David, that doesn't surprise me that's going back to feeding our spirit and our soul. Right? Yes. And we were designed for relationships.

David Sandstrom 26:55

Yeah, that's really tough. So if your problem is loneliness, and you know, you're suffering with whatever health challenge, you fill in the blank, trouble with your way to trouble with insulin sensitivity, metabolic syndrome, those kinds of things. You could switch to 100% organic diet tomorrow. But until you work on the root, cause the loneliness, those things aren't going to change. So it's really important to address the whole person I've, you know, I feel strongly about the

Pooja Chilukuri 27:27

height, though you do. And it's true. I mean, that's how it looks. We're not just one thing. Yeah. Yeah, that amazes me that we're kind of, I always think of it like, we're a trinity to the mind, body spirit. Absolutely.

David Sandstrom 27:41

Well, we're made in His image, right. And God exists in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That's our belief. And we are made in His image. So therefore, we also are tripartite beings. We are spirit, we have a mind and we live in a body as the whole person. You know, when I was a practitioner, I'm going to share the story with you real quick. When I was a practitioner, I was doing mostly nutritional counseling. But I was making the same mistake that a lot of practitioners make. I called myself holistic, but I really didn't know what the term meant. I focused almost exclusively on the physical and I all but ignored the mental emotional components to a human being I now No, that's folly. You know what I was living in. Back in the mid 80s. Living in Fort Lauderdale. I was a Miami dolphin fan. And I used to love to go to the games and at the time, the quarterback was Dan Marino. And the senior the head coach was Don Shula. And I heard Don Shula say on a on a show that they had and televisions called the Shula show. He said, you know, the first time I saw Dan Riedel play, I said to myself, he's got the best arm I've ever seen. And I'm gonna build my team around this guy's arm. And that's exactly what they did that heart, a couple of great wide receivers, and they could rack up some points really fast. It was beautiful to watch and loved it. But as good as Dan Marino was, he had the quick release all all the ingredients to a great quarterback, maybe one of the best two, or three or four quarterbacks that ever played the game. He doesn't have a Super Bowl ring, he never won a championship. The dolphins found out that you can't win a championship on a single component to a great team. They had the passing game, but they needed a running game. And they needed a defense and the dolphins had neither and they couldn't win a championship. The same is true with our health and wellness. If we focus on one part of healthy person, the physical, that may not be enough to build a championship vitality, we've got it all acknowledge that we are spirit, we have a mind. And we live in a body. It's all interconnected with what affects one part of our being by necessity will alter the others for good or bad. So that's my story.

Pooja Chilukuri 29:45

And that's a great story, David, and why did you were saying that the word that popped in my head was harmony. No, it had there has to be harmony between the three just like there's a unity in the Trinity. Right. Yes. Excellent harmony.

David Sandstrom 29:58

I like that. I like that. harmony like a like a symphony orchestra? Yes, yeah, we are complex beings, you know, it's just nutrition is just not that simple

relationships are not that simple. And our spiritual component is not that simple either. I'm going to I'm going to do some upcoming episodes in near future, I'm going to do a series of podcasts, solo episodes on the spiritual component to health, if you're listening to this now be looking for that because I feel passionate, I need to I need to produce those shows, because I really want to do a deep dive into what the spiritual component actually looks like. And I think it's an important topic.

Pooja Chilukuri 30:37

I will look forward to that. So Pooja,

David Sandstrom 30:40

I want to ask you another thing. I know that you were raised Hindu, correct? And you became a follower of Jesus Christ. And then you mentioned earlier, you you walked away from the faith, you were leaning in impressing into atheism. That's a pretty, that's a pretty abrupt turn. And then you came back to the faith. Now, what happened to your health, when you were in that fallen state when you're walking away from the faith?

Pooja Chilukuri 31:05

Well, I think, because my I was disconnected from my spirit. At that time, I had been already serving for 17 years in various kinds of ministries. And there was a burnout physically. But the reason my spirit, I was disconnected from this, because I was spending most of my time trying to fulfill other people's expectations. And I had lost my connection with God, my quiet time. You know, that is, I think, where we get the most nourishment from. And I had replaced that with the voices of a million people around me constantly trying to, you know, what they considered was God's will for me, or what they wanted me to believe, rather than trying to take the time to spend that time with my own personal reflection and meditation. So naturally, my spiritual gas tank was running on empty and the engine just burned. Yeah. And so when I was that disconnected from myself, it was just really hard to think about God, like I remember one morning, I just woke up, and I felt like there is no God. Like, there just can't be because my idea of God was awful. It was a very distorted image of God, David. And that image crept in and built up over time, because it was as if, you know, God was no longer the God that I had met, when I had become a Christian from Hinduism, because that Turning Point happened to me at the age of 19. And that was a physical healing and a very sweet voice. And it's a really long story. So I don't want to take up all the time. But that's what made me switch from Hinduism to Christianity. But unfortunately, instead of following that voice, you know how Jesus said, My sheep hear My voice, John 10, and they will not Yes, or they will not follow another will, instead of following. After my shepherd, I was following after everything else that appeared to be that it was Christian, or that it

was, you know, the name of Jesus was certainly attached to it. But it was a very strict, very legalistic environment that I was in. And my image of God was completely skewed. So it went from this loving God, who has given me grace to a very strict and punishing God.

David Sandstrom 33:25

You know, can I interrupt? Yeah, who wants that? Right? I just need to add one thing, because sometimes when we use that term, legalistic, some people say, What do you mean by that? And what we're just talking about is adding rules and regulations into your life, these layers of rules into your life, that God doesn't necessarily require. You know, there's things you know, we know the 10 commandments, right? Well, most of us know, do not steal, do not lie, do not commit adultery, these are things designed for our wellness, our, our well being in mind. But when we start saying things like, you know, well, I have a conviction that I'm not gonna since I'm a married, man, I'm not going to have lunch alone with a woman. And if you do that, then there's something wrong with that. Oh, wait, wait, that that is not in the Bible, okay. And we can't put that on somebody else. If you have a personal conviction, that's great. But you can't put that on somebody else. That's legalism.

Pooja Chilukuri 34:20

Yes, David. And another example, which I faced was if you're not in church, every time the door is open, that means your faith is weak. And so that was a too much pressure. You know what I mean? Because church was church was open a lot. And so if you weren't there all the time, then you just weren't being faithful.

David Sandstrom 34:38

Well, you know, there's a perfect blend between the spirit and the mind because one of the things I talked about to address with our minds, our mental emotional component is identifying and correcting limiting beliefs. So you had that limiting belief there that hey, if you don't get there every time the church doors are open, you are you're just a no good Christian. You are You are not living up to the standard and that's just simply not true,

Pooja Chilukuri 35:01

right? That's not true. Yeah, cuz the heart is more important claim the transformed heart is more important than my external I could do. I can fake things right, but only God knows what's inside my heart.

David Sandstrom 35:15

So yeah, the Bible says, above all else, guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life. And that's proverbs 4:23. But a lot of people that are familiar with the verses

that preceded that, and that's Proverbs chapter four, verses 20 through 22, my son, give attention to my words, incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your site, keep them in the midst of your heart, for they are life to those who find them and health to all their body. So there's the connection between the spiritual component and the physical component. God says, Hey, if you ponder my word, and use and you meditate on it, guess what? It's going to have a positive impact on your physical vitality in that great I mean, I just love that passage.

Pooja Chilukuri 36:07

Absolutely. I love it too. David, I didn't realize like I've always heard the one about gotcha hunt. But that there was that one before that I have to go back and yeah,

David Sandstrom 36:16

it's it's really good when you tie it all together, you know this, there's more to a person than just the spirit or the mind or the body and addressing them all together. I think this we're gonna have to call this episode a holistic health because a lot of time there. So Pooja, I want to I want to talk just a little bit about the inspiration to your book. Now you have a number of books, but what's, what's your your best seller? What's the one that you sell the most are you most proud of?

Pooja Chilukuri 36:43

Well, the one that sells the most is my memoir. And then there was Jesus, and it has my whole story, my entire spiritual journey. Very good. But I guess the one that I love the most is the unveiling Jesus series that I've written. It's a couple of devotional books. And I guess I really love it because it was part of my own healing journey. From distorted images of Jesus, I was moving towards a much healthier version of who He really was and what he came and taught. So just spending time with God and listening to his heart gave rise to those two books. So those are more special for me personally. Excellent,

David Sandstrom 37:22

excellent, very good. If someone wants to get ahold of you books, what's the best way to do that?

Pooja Chilukuri 37:29

The best way is to go on Amazon,

David Sandstrom 37:31

go to Amazon and say and spell your name for the listeners for the wh m community.

Pooja Chilukuri 37:36

Yes. My first name is Pooja P. Oh, J. A. And my last name is chilla. Curry. c. h. i. I. UKURI.

David Sandstrom 37:50

Okay, very good. And what's your website?

Pooja Chilukuri 37:54

It's Pooja chicory.com. Okay.

David Sandstrom 37:56

Very good.

Pooja Chilukuri 37:57

And yes, the books are available there too.

David Sandstrom 38:00

All right. Pooja, aside from your books. Do you have any book recommendations for the listeners?

Pooja Chilukuri 38:07

I really love this book because it changed my life. David 10 years ago when I was trying to reconstruct my worldview, and my faith in God. And this book is called soul repair. And it's by an interventionist, his name is Jeff van wandering. And he really walks you through all the toxic ways and distorted ways that we can be in relationship to God. It's really well done. And I think if you're trying to recover from a bad church experience, or if you're confused about your relationship with God, because like you said, David, you know, when the Spirit is well then the body will

David Sandstrom 38:46

Absolutely. io the oundation is secure, the building will stay upright.

Pooja Chilukuri 38:50

And he really helps you walk away from having a codependent toxic relationship with God into a much more healthier gray space. That sounds to everybody's interest. Yeah.

David Sandstrom 38:59

Okay. We'll definitely link to that in the show notes. Well, is there anything else you'd like to add Pooja before we say goodbye?



Pooja Chilukuri 39:05

No, I just want to thank you for inviting me and giving me the space to share my story. It's my

David Sandstrom 39:09

pleasure. It's a pleasure speaking with you.

Pooja Chilukuri 39:11

You too. Okay, I

David Sandstrom 39:13

hope you enjoyed that episode with Pooja Tila curry. She's got a real passion to incorporate her faith in Jesus into holistic health coaching practice. And I think this is a great episode for someone who's just getting used to the idea of a faith based holistic approach to health. As I said earlier, in the episode, I'm going to be creating a series of episodes where I'll take a deeper dive into what the spiritual component to health really looks like. But if you know somebody who's just getting started in this journey in a faith based, biblically based approach to addressing their health holistically, I think this is a great episode so if you know someone, please share it with them. I would appreciate that. Don't forget this episode is brought to you by my book, the Christians guide to holistic health in those pages. I gave you detailed instructions on how to maximize your health potential by aligning your life more fully with God's designed for spirit, mind and body. If this biblically based message is resonating with you, what are you waiting for? Go to my website [DavidSandstrom.com](http://DavidSandstrom.com) forward slash book in order your copy today. For more, go to David Sandstrom calm. in the show notes for each episode, you'll find links to all the resources that were mentioned, as well as a full transcript with timestamps that you can download for free. In addition, I always include a content upgrade with each show, which is a free download that is designed to help you go deeper with that subject. Once again, thank you for listening, and I'll talk with you next week. Be blessed

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