



**THE SPECTRUM
OF HEALTH**
— P O D C A S T —

Podcast Session #48

Your Best Sleep Ever

With Misty Williams

Misty Williams speaks with Dr. Schaffner about her experiences with surgery, fatigue, cysts, unexplained weight gain, hypothyroidism, thyroid nodules, and premature ovarian failure. After all of that, Misty's doctors told her they didn't have answers outside of drugs and surgery. So, Misty embarked on the arduous path of finding answers to reclaim her energy, brain power and figure, and she shares them with you today.

To find out more information about Misty's "Your Best Sleep Ever" Summit, visit: https://bestsleepsummit.com/?idev_id=20893

Dr. Christine Schaffner: Welcome to the Spectrum of Health Podcast. I'm Dr. Christine Schaffner and today I'm speaking with Misty Williams. At 35 years old, Misty founded healingrosie.com to provide high performing women with the resources and community to successfully confront the unexpected chronic health issues that women often experienced as they age. Misty just had me on her summit, Your Best Sleep Ever Summit, and we're going to talk a lot about sleep in this conversation as well as her journey. I hope a lot of women out there can be helped by hearing her story. We know that sleep is so important especially in this time of prioritizing our health and I hope you take away some great pearls today.

00:47 DS: Welcome Misty, I'm really looking forward to interviewing you today on the podcast.

00:53 Misty Williams: Oh I'm so excited to be here. Thank you, Dr. Christine.

00:55 DS: I know that we have many friends that are similar in our community and you're doing a wonderful summit that's coming up, Your Best Sleep Ever, and I was really honored to be invited, and we had a lot of fun with my interview. I thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to share more about your work, your healing community and the summit during this podcast today. So we'll just dive in.

01:20 MW: That sounds awesome.

01:22 DS: So we're really going to be talking about how optimizing your sleep can help you lose weight and have more energy. Who doesn't want those

things? I think in the last few years, people have been more and more mindful of sleep and how sleep is such an impactful tool to their health. People are starting to realize the importance of sleep, that this is a foundational part of their health and that we really need to prioritize sleep. It's no longer in vogue to have four or five hours of sleep and be workaholics. The successful people in life are now like Ariana Huffington, I know her book is promoting how sleep is such a critical factor for being more productive and more fulfilled and more healthy. So I think it's coming at a great time that you're sharing this information. And like many of us, your story started with a personal journey, and I would love for you to share that with our audience, how you found that sleep was such a critical part of your healing journey.

02:20 MW: Well, my journey started in 2011, so it's crazy to think it's been almost 10 years ago. I went in for a routine physical, and I had motherhood on my mind. I wanted to be a mother, I was single at the time and wasn't sure how I was going to pull all of that off but it seemed prudent that I should check on my fertility, so they did an ultrasound and found a cyst on my left ovary. The cyst was large, about the size of a cantaloupe, they wanted to remove it. So we scheduled surgery and it was supposed to be a simple surgical procedure, outpatient, 25 minutes, in and out, and I would have a follow-up phone call with the doctor, not even a full office visit, just to check on me and make sure things were okay.

03:07 MW: So, I figured it was a pretty basic procedure and they seemed to have a process that indicated this wasn't that big of a deal, so I didn't tell anyone except my roommate and my mom. Those were the only two people that knew. Went in on a Thursday morning for surgery and after the surgery was over, recovered and I had a tough recovery too. Recovered in this little room

that had basically a bunch of curtains up to divide different beds from each other. I found out that my surgery had taken two and a half hours, they found endometriosis when they opened me up, and spent an additional two hours removing scar tissue from my abdomen and three polyps from my uterus.

03:57 MW: And on their way out, unbeknownst to them and to me, they stitched up part of my small intestine. So when I went home, and about six hours later, I started vomiting and I continued vomiting for the next six days. I was unable to reach my doctor, i called my doctor's office on Friday, on Saturday, multiple times. Finally heard from a doctor Saturday night who was on call, knew nothing about my situation, told us that if I got dehydrated, I should go to the emergency room, I probably was dehydrated but I had no idea what being dehydrated looked like.

04:30 MW: And by Sunday everything is so swollen inside of my body. My abdomen is swollen, I'm very, very uncomfortable. And Monday, I was supposed to have that follow up appointment and my doctor didn't call. So I called about 30 minutes later and they said she'd gone home sick that day, apparently she didn't get any of my messages from the weekend. And on Tuesday, I was there at 9:00 AM when the doctor's office opened. I told the receptionist I was there to see a doctor, she told me to come back at 12:30, and I told her I wasn't leaving until I saw the doctor. And about 10:30, the doctor called, had me go to the emergency room over at Baptist. She felt really, really terrible that she hadn't gotten my messages and they took me back for an MRI and found that they'd stitched up part of my small intestine.

05:15 MW: So, I was admitted then, and ironically, especially in light of this whole sleep conversation, the nurse on duty came to me and said, "They're

really concerned. Your doctor's really concerned about your ability to sleep tonight, so I'm going to give you Ambien." And they gave me sleep aids for the next couple of nights, sent me home and I didn't sleep for over 144 hours. That's six days of not sleeping for a wink, which was terrifying. I remember just being so emotional, utterly exhausted, laying in bed night after night, begging God for sleep, not understanding why I wasn't falling asleep. It was very, very scary.

06:00 MW: I went back to my doctor two weeks later, and I was kind of in a daze at this point. Even after I started sleeping, I started having crazy brain fog and fatigue. I was exhausted all the time. I felt like my body had just crashed, and she told me that I had endometriosis, and I asked her what caused endometriosis? She told me that I could Google it, that they didn't know what caused it, that she could put me on birth control or do surgery if it came back. That really kicked off what has become the most unbelievable, not only physical journey of my life, but spiritual journey of my life.

06:38 MW: I felt like I'd been hacked after that appointment and I started looking for answers. I felt like I was on my own, because she wasn't able to help me and I couldn't believe that there were no answers. I started looking in the alternative health space for answers, and worked with a chiropractor whose first question was, "Tell me about your sleep." And that's when I really started learning about sleep, and this is obviously a really, really big conversation. I've learned so, so much over the years about sleep and the important role that sleep plays in our healing. But certainly I started out my journey having a terrible sleep experience and my answers to that chiropractor's questions were, "I don't sleep, I don't go to bed until 2:00 AM, I wake up in the morning feeling like I've been hit by a Mack truck." I kind of attributed that to, I

was sleeping, I'm in a sleep stupor when I wake up, and started learning things like you're supposed to wake up feeling refreshed. I'm like, what is that? I did not even know that was a thing. I couldn't remember ever in my life waking up feeling refreshed.

07:48 MW: So there's a lot to learn around this topic, and I started with getting to bed by 10:00 PM. It took me about six months to kind of recondition my body around sleeping and waking up. At about the six month mark, I started doing cold beds to support my mitochondria. And lo and behold, the cold beds were the last little piece that kind of helped everything to click in, and I started waking up not feeling exhausted in the morning. That was a very new, wonderful feeling. And my journey is full, probably there's way more to talk about than what we could fit into this podcast, but I've had lots of hormonal issues. Two years later, they improperly drilled mercury from my teeth, so I had all that mercury go up into my hypothalamus and down into my thyroid and it crashed my hormones. They told me that I had premature ovarian failure.

08:55 MW: No one connected the dots, by the way, on the mercury toxicity piece. It was a mystery--what's happened to you? I gained 45 pounds in four months while being fully Paleo and working out with a trainer, and I cleaned all the chemicals out of my home and had done all the EMF stuff. I'd even gotten meters and gone through and done tons of testing and turned off the WiFi and hard-wired the TV and the computer. Just all the stuff that you're supposed to do to take good care of yourself. And it's like, "Why am I suddenly gaining so much weight?" So it's been challenging for me as a patient, but also really empowering at the same time, because I think I did what a lot of women and men in our space are learning to do, and that's to really take

on this health journey as your own journey. This is for me to figure out, this is my life and my future and I am committed to creating the best life that I can. So yes, many, many colors to this conversation.

10:00 DS: Yeah. Thanks for diving in Misty. And your journey, it's like at every angle, it seems that you went through so much. But knowing you, and what you're creating and what have created, you've turned this into such a beautiful opportunity. And just to echo, a lot of my patients share your story. I'm not anti-conventional medicine in any way, but I feel like there's a time and a place for all medicine. What makes me sad is just how much people have to advocate for themselves, within the conventional system. We could unpack that for our whole hour, right? The pressures that doctors are under.

10:45 DS: I believe that doctors are great people and they went into medicine for altruistic reasons, but they are in a very, very challenging system that none of us probably would ever want to be part of. But it translated into really sub-optimal, very negligent care in your case, it sounds like. I know we want to talk about sleep, but I think there's an opportunity here to share a little bit about your journey from a female reproductive perspective. A lot of my patients have ovarian cysts and endometriosis. Did you have symptoms before this routine ultrasound or was it just the desire to get pregnant and check out your fertility that prompted this investigation? Given how much endometriosis it sounded like there was, did you have any symptoms?

11:36 MW: I did. I didn't know I had symptoms but I absolutely had symptoms. I had very heavy periods. From my very first period, my periods were seven days long, super heavy. I had severe cramping for the first four days of my period. I would pop Ibuprofen like it was candy. Every three or four hours,

I was popping three Ibuprofen, and I had no idea I was potentially creating issues for myself with Ibuprofen. I thought that it was very normal to have crazy periods, I thought it was just part of being a woman to have really hard periods. And my girlfriends and I, I remember in college, we would compare notes on who had the worst period that month. So I was absolutely having symptoms, but no doctor ever responded to my experiences as if they were symptomatic, so I just didn't have a clue. I did have the right surgery for endometriosis, which is called excision surgery, where they actually dig out the tissue instead of just kind of scraping the tissue which allows that root to regrow.

12:57 MW: I did have the excision procedure and I only have, I believe I'm being factual here--in nine years, I've only had two periods where I felt anything in my abdomen, and it was like on a scale of one to 10, I'd give it a one. Outside of that, I felt nothing. I would attribute that to first of all just cleaning up my abdomen but second of all, I started doing a lot of things right away to better support my hormones and it was really helpful. Endometriosis is very common among women. I remember feeling when I had that initial conversation with the OB/GYN who did my surgery, I remember feeling shocked that she would tell me that they didn't know what caused endometriosis, because I had heard of it before. I guess I just had this assumption that if you spend 12 years plus in medical school specializing in an area of medicine, that you're going to understand the disease. And what I've learned is that by and large across medicine, there's not really much of an understanding of the root cause of disease in the conventional sense. It's really more about symptoms. They kind of look at the body as this organism that presents symptoms and what can we do to alleviate the symptom. "Well, we'll just take out that gallbladder or those tonsils or that appendix or whatever." They removed my

appendix when I was 11, when I went in for a different surgery because it looked big. That was why they took it.

14:37 MW: So it's just a very different paradigm certainly than what I expected as a patient. I looked at doctors as healers and that's not really the paradigm of conventional medicine at all. They don't purport to heal, which is why my doctor told me at the time that they don't know what causes endometriosis, that's just not their paradigm. I think that's a really important thing, as women, especially as women have a harder go than men, our bodies are just much more sensitive to the environment than a man's body is as the perpetrator of the species. I think it's really important that women know that doctors are not necessarily healers unless that's their area of specialization. We have wonderful doctors in the functional medicine space, in the naturopathic space. Certainly, there's many branches of health, I would say, and not necessarily medicine, that care a lot more about healing. But I think if we can lower our expectation of doctors collectively and put ourselves into the driver seat of our own health, we're able to create a much better experience.

15:52 MW: That's what I had to learn the very, very, very hard way. I went through doctor after doctor after doctor, telling me that my labs are normal and things were fine. Six months after my surgery, they found nodules on my thyroid, while they continued to tell me that my labs were normal and everything was fine. And I'm freaking out because they found another thing that clearly pointed to the fact that I'm not fine. So again, years and years of that really, it ended up inspiring me. I found so many women struggling like I've struggled and it was really the impetus behind creating the Healing Rosie community, because I wanted women who were patients that were learning how to navigate and advocate, to have a place that they could come and get

support and know that they're not alone, and find tools and resources and strategies for navigating this journey. Because it's very confronting and challenging, especially as it typically hits you out of nowhere. Certainly it did for me.

16:53 DS: I love how you reflected on looking at your cycles. I'm a naturopath and we learn to look at the root cause of illness, and while we're an evolving profession, we're all really committed at looking at, "Okay, what is the reason why?" And not just giving people palliation or looking at just surgery, or medication. We have a big toolkit. And one of the things I think a lot of young women don't understand is that our period should really be a non-event as far as pain and PMS.

17:27 MW: Right.

17:28 DS: I think as women collectively since so many of us experience these symptoms, we just think it's normal {to have pain and discomfort}. I see a lot of women with chronic illness and Lyme disease and a lot of women that are in my office tend to have estrogen dominance and have some type of form of PCOS or fibroids or endometriosis. If you're a mom and want to educate your daughters or if you're listening out there, if you are reflecting on your monthly cycle and, I mean, this happens every month, right? So to go into such a symptom state every month is just not natural. There's a reason why it's happening and we'll get into that. I know you do so much great work for your community, do you have some insights for women who might think that they have endometriosis, like a checklist of how to get that diagnosed? When you go to the conventional world, there's not some obvious physical

signs on physical exam, but they will say, "Oh, we could do laparoscopic exploratory surgery." And so, what's the in-between? How can we get this diagnosis rather than just sign up for exploratory surgery as the only option?

18:46 MW: I know it's a scary prospect to have to go under just for them to check it out. I think if we can hold this whole space as...the diagnosis isn't what's important, what's really important is rebalancing your hormones. If you're having these symptoms, you very likely have an estrogen dominance issue, you can ascertain that from regular lab results. If you've got symptoms and your labs are showing estrogen dominance, then what you need to do is really work on rebalancing your hormones. One of my very favorite specialists in this area is Magdalena Wszelaki. She has a community called Hormones Balance, and her whole focus is on really addressing the estrogen issue. Now, what I personally did for my estrogen dominance is take progesterone. Progesterone re-balances that estrogen dominant state. I also take a combined supplement of DIM and calcium D-Glucarate to help thin out and support the liver in metabolizing estrogen so it doesn't build up in your system so much. I also cleaned out my medicine cabinet, my bathroom cabinet, really looking for those xenoestrogens in our environment that are mimicking estrogen and creating that estrogen-dominant state inside of our bodies.

20:14 MW: These chemicals that are estrogen like, that are in our lotions and makeups and all sorts of products, plastics. These chemicals actually, at the receptor site, will bind to our receptors and create all sorts of havoc in our bodies. So those are the things that I did to deal with my situation, there's also a lot of dietary things that you can do, getting more bitters in your diet. Broccoli sprouts are really awesome. But I would highly recommend Magdalena's work. I feel like she's done such a good job of really putting together

some great protocols around this, and she works with women on this all the time. She has really come up with plans that work, people follow her protocols and they get fibroids to shrink and nodules to go away. She's a pioneer for us, and I feel really grateful.

21:15 MW: She wasn't around when I started. When my journey started, there wasn't Dr. Anna Cabeca, Magdalena Wszelaki, and just so many of these amazing practitioners who have come forward to support women and who are navigating the specific women's health dimension of this conversation. I think the only thing I could find back in my day was Suzanne Summers and her bio-identical hormone books, which was something. It was a start, I was certainly grateful for it, but we're really blessed now that there's more pioneers that are blazing a trail for us.

21:54 DS: Absolutely. And I want to echo also about the mercury removal as well--In spite of a lot of education, people have amalgams and dentists unfortunately still place amalgams, which is insane to me. But as you mentioned, that was a source of exposure, but also a source of a lot of pain and suffering, since it sounds like they were improperly removed. Can you just land on that a little bit, because I still feel like we need to educate people there.

22:27 MW: Yes. That was super traumatic for me. I didn't know, I didn't connect the dots until 2018, the removal was in 2013. And I went five years, so it was like a total mystery. I was even going to functional medicine doctors, and none of them even asked. It wasn't uncovered as an important contributor to what's happening. So I started running my labs in 2011. By 2013, I had a history of my hormones. And then after they removed those amalgam fillings, everything bottomed out. My FSH was through the roof. And everything in my

labs looked terrible, but nobody asked about it. The solution was, well, let's put you on hormone therapy, which I am a huge fan of, by the way. I think as women get older our hormones are waning for a variety of reasons, and it seems, if we over-simplify this, that the number one reason that our hormones are waning so much is toxicity of some kind, whether that's viral toxicity, mercury poisoning, chemical poisoning.

23:39 MW: We have so much stuff that we're dealing with now that our grandmothers never had to deal with. So anyway, they put me on hormones and that was kind of the end of the conversation. It wasn't, "Let's figure out why her hormones have crashed." Perhaps there was like, "Well, she's down an ovary, maybe it's because of that." But I'd been down an ovary for the previous two years and had way better hormone levels, so why the sudden evaporation of my hormones? So I, as a patient, and there's a lot of women that feel this way too, felt like, okay I guess I can go on hormones, but I want to fix what's really wrong.

24:14 MW: And getting help for that journey was unbelievably challenging to me, and it's really only through my own education of what's going on in the body, and then kind of finding the people that have the awesome protocols and getting help from those people, that I have been able to manage my own health situation. Certainly, if people look from the outside at my lifestyle, my stress levels are really under control, I'm in a loving, supportive, awesome relationship. I've got lots of good things going on in my life. I eat healthy, I definitely have a regimen that's intended to support my health, I still have had challenges that I'm dealing with, I still haven't fully gotten all of the mercury and heavy metals out of my body.

25:03 MW: So I'm still working on it, but thank God I have hormone replacement, because without it, not only do you gain weight, but you don't sleep, which is the most miserable part of all of it, in my mind. You're not sleeping at night and then you're irritable and cranky during the day and suddenly you don't have the emotional reserves to deal with life in a patient way. And it impacts all of your relationships, and then things start to spiral, and it creates more stress and then the more stress depletes your hormones. It just turned into this vicious thing. So ladies don't be afraid of pursuing bio-identical hormones and PSA.

25:44 DS: I love it, love it. And we have to continue to make sure that we have these available to us as well. I agree, I think the point that you're making so clearly and that I see in practice too, is that if the hormones are imbalanced please treat them and support them, but let's look deeper as to why they're imbalanced and also clean that up in your life. Because if you just do the hormones and don't look at the mercury and all those estrogens and all this other stuff, you're not healing in the level that is possible for you. Your journey has put that all together.

26:19 DS: Well, let me just lean on one thing, just because I love to educate people too. You mentioned, Misty, and I completely agree, metal detoxification is not a sprint, it's a marathon, it's a lifestyle, and it takes time. If you have had amalgam fillings, or if you live on planet Earth and just have exposures to metals that we all have, mercury, lead, aluminum, arsenic, cadmium, there's a point in time of debulking your system from exposures, but it's a lifestyle. We're always exposed no matter how clean our lifestyle is, weather is a level of control that we just don't have, and we just have to accept that and just eat your broccoli sprouts and look at Magdalena's work and do all of these things

that we can do to live a healthy lifestyle. I always kind of take a step back when my patients are like, "Oh, I've already done chelation," and I'm like, "Well, how many sessions have you had?" And they're like, "Three."

27:20 DS: This is a longer process. I just want people to understand that and just be patient and gentle with themselves. So, Misty, circling back to sleep, sorry to derail us there, it's just that you have so wisdom that you've learned through your journey, and so many women are still struggling with everything that you've gone through. I just want to make sure people can see...

27:46 MW: Yes, the nuggets along the way. I love it.

27:48 DS: Absolutely. So you mentioned, taking us back to your journey, that you were up for 144 hours straight?

27:56 MW: Yes.

27:56 DS: Oh my God.

27:57 MW: 144 hours. It's unbelievable. And since then, of course, I didn't even know that was a thing, that people went that long without sleep. And since I've learned a lot, I didn't realize how life-threatening that actually was for me, to go that long without sleeping. I know one other person that went nine days without sleep, and there was someone in the Healing Rosie community that recently said that she experienced that kind of sleeplessness for two months. And in my head I'm like, "How is it even possible that you could be alive if you really went two months without a wink of sleep?" It's really unbelievable to me that we're experiencing this, it's so unbelievably dangerous

to our health. Sleep is when we detoxify, our body heals, repairs, restores, sleep is when we organize our emotions and memory from the day before, so that we don't lose our marbles.

28:55 MW: There are a lot of really important things that happen when we sleep. I'm thinking of my own journey, and the amount of money that I've spent on healing protocols to try to get myself better, the amount that I'm spending on supplementation and biohacking and all the things. If you're not sleeping, it's like this program that is designed to move you five steps forward in your journey, because your sleep is short, it's moving you only one-and-a-half. And you think of the time that you're investing and the money that you're investing, to get 20% of the results from your efforts that you could have gotten if you were just sleeping at night, it really turns this whole conversation around.

29:42 MW: Our number one job for ourselves as we advocate for ourselves and look to crack the code on this is how can we get ourselves sleeping at night. And whatever it takes to do that, do that. One of the points that you made in our interview, Dr. Christine, was around melatonin and how there's some controversy around, "Should you take melatonin long-term?" and, "If we're giving people melatonin, is that going to affect your body's ability to produce melatonin?" You made a point that I personally really resonated with, and that was whether or not there's a long-term consequence, there's absolutely a long-term consequence to not having it, to not sleeping.

30:22 MW: And at some point, you just have to make the decision that, "If I do have to supplement this for the rest of my life, I'm committed to doing that, because my outcome is sleep, my outcome isn't preserving my melatonin

production that's less than what my body needs in the first place." And that's totally, by the way, a theory, you guys. I think science is inconclusive around that, but people wonder aloud. I just think when I see the difference in how my body responds when I'm able to sleep well, it's just a no-brainer. I have pulled out all the stops in my life, I am a diva about sleep, I've got to get to bed at 10:00. We do these amazing events in this wonderful health space and meet amazing people and travel to wonderful places together, and I don't do the late parties, I love sleep.

31:14 MW: I say, I will see you guys in the morning, and I will be bright-eyed and bushy tailed, I will be on, I'll give you all the love and attention and whatever I can, and I'm going to sleep. I make sure that I get my sleep every single night, that's just something I've learned I don't mess around with. And, man, you should have seen all the stuff that I did to our environment doing this summit and talking to these amazing people who are so brilliant and just learning from everyone. We have room-darkening curtains now, I didn't have that before, we just swapped out our mattress for the organics bed by Intel-libed and got a ChiliPAD and it's amazing.

32:00 DS: I just got my husband a ChiliPAD. We just got it about maybe less than a week ago, and his sleep has already improved considerably.

32:12 MW: Lowering that body temperature just does wonders, we're able to sleep deeper when our bodies are colder at night. And I don't lay in bed shivering, by the way, I don't know what people's preconceived ideas of a ChiliPAD are. You can control the temperature under you, but then I've got blankets and a down comforter that I can pull up and make myself as warm

as I need to be, but there's just something about having this cold right underneath you that makes you feel "Oh, this sleep is so great."

32:43 DS: Yes, you feel so good. Misty, walk us through, what is your sleep routine? Maybe before we even go there, insomnia is one of the most common symptoms my patients deal with, and it can be anything from having a hard time falling asleep to waking up in the middle of the night and having a hard time going back to sleep, to waking up too early. So what is maybe a checklist of things to think about if people have insomnia--what should they start looking at in their life style or in their health? And of course, they'll learn more--please, please check out Misty's wonderful summit. But just some clues for people to start thinking about.

33:28 MW: Yes, sure thing. Well, insomnia, there can be a lot of causes for it. It's one of those things that I wish I could say, "Here's this check list of five things, and then it'll be cured." It was really interesting to hear all the different perspectives that these amazing experts and practitioners had on this conversation. A lot of us, just flat, are not managing our lives well. We are perfectionists and over-achievers, and we care a lot what other people think, and we're never enough. We're never enough for ourselves and we don't want to confront and look at that part of ourselves that feels like we're not enough, and we won't be loved. And because of that, we experience an unbelievable amount of stress, and our nervous system or sympathetic nervous system is tuned and vibrating energetically, way higher than is healthy for us. And so it's hard to come down at the end of the day.

34:32 MW: We struggle to land the body like a plane. There's so much cortisol in the body, it's like my six days without sleep. The reason I didn't sleep is

because my cortisol levels were so high that I couldn't make sleep hormones. My system was flooded and overwhelmed. So that's what's happening with the way we're living our lives, and I raise my hand as guilty. Certainly, all through my 30s, the amount of stress that I was putting on myself, I didn't even realize it. It's like the frog was boiled slowly. I was really accustomed to it. There were things I liked about it. So to say, "Misty, you have a lot of stress," I'd say "But I love it." My nervous system was tuned from a very young age to take on way too much responsibility. I think that's a really big thing that we have to look at, because there were some great protocols and I'm happy to share some of the things that I did learn about working with insomnia, that can be helpful. But there's only so much that you can do with a protocol if you're not managing your life well. And at some point, we've all got to look at that.

35:39 MW: So in fairness to this topic, I think that's where we have to start. And there's a lot of really awesome things we can do if we're dealing with insomnia. It could be a neurotransmitter problem, it could be something that can be helped with amino acid therapy. I did an excellent interview with Trudy Scott about insomnia and anxiety. And she recommended a protocol that she uses with her patients, using GABA and a couple of other things. She uses melatonin too. Melatonin is something that you talked about in your interview, Dr. Christine. Dr. Rodger Murphree works with autoimmune patients, and the very first thing that he does with these patients, first of all, those autoimmune patients very often have an insomnia problem. They have a problem where they fall asleep, then wake up and then can't fall back to sleep again. And before he does anything with these patients, before he even dives into all of the diet protocols and all the things that you know we can do for auto-immunity, the first thing he does is get people sleeping. Because you can't heal if you're

not sleeping. All the other stuff is negligible if he can't get his patients to sleep at night. So he actually outlined his entire protocol for us and what he does. Trudy shared her protocol too.

37:00 MW: So there's lots of practitioners that shared what they offer to their patients who are struggling, and there's a few ways to help. I personally have really benefited from CBD. I love CBD. I personally use Plus CBD if I wake up at night and have trouble going back to sleep. I'm really happy to say that it's been six months or more since that's even been an issue for me. And when I do have that happen, it's usually there's something that's kind of changing in my regimen, changing about my life that's creating that. Maybe if my hormones need to be dialed in a little bit more or something like that, I'll struggle with that.

37:46 MW: CBD can be wonderful. My partner has an old injury in his shoulder that for the most part, with some really great physical therapy and dry needling and a few things like that, he has under control. But every now and then he'll get a flare-up and that'll impact his ability to sleep, and so he uses CBD to help him sleep. There's also a melatonin formula that he's tried recently before bed that he just loves as well. So there's lots of things that we can do to support what's happening in our body. Some of us have just really compromised guts, and because of that, we're not able to make neurotransmitters and sleep hormones. That whole conversion process is interrupted because of gut dysbiosis, and certainly it's important to work with a great practitioner to help get all that stuff under control.

38:41 MW: But in the meantime there's things you can do. There's supplementation that you can take, and the majority of people will move the needle

just by incorporating the right protocol. But outside of things like GABA and maybe tryptophan and melatonin and CBD, personally I'm a huge, huge fan of minding your circadian biology. That's just this recognition that our bodies are wired to respond to light in our environment, and our sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system takes its cues in large part by light. And when we're exposed to blue light after dark, for example, we're looking at our screens, we're in these brightly lit rooms with these LED overhead lights that make it as bright as day, that's sending messages into our brain that it's day time, and so our body isn't moving into that parasympathetic state where it's down-regulating in all the right ways to get you ready for bed at night.

39:44 MW: So I started in 2012. I learned about all of this initially from Dave Asprey and Ben Greenfield. They have a lot of stuff on their blogs about it, but certainly there's a lot of practitioners that talk about this now. That was eight or nine years ago. So I put the amber glasses on as soon as the sun goes down. It's not dark out, it's just gray. And those amber glasses go on, we kill all the lights in the house. I have a few lights that have amber bulbs in them. So we do amber bulbs in the house, we don't do all the overhead lighting, close the blinds, keep the outside light from coming in, and that massively helps. In fact, I tell people all the time, this little trick for helping you get to sleep at night, and 100% every single person that has ever tried this has come back reporting improvements that they're raving about, "Oh my God, I'm actually able to fall asleep at night. I can't believe how much faster I'm falling asleep. Holy crap." So that's amazing to do at night.

40:50 MW: And another thing, it's like the reverse that is equally impactful, is first thing in the morning getting that morning sun on your face, because that's when your body begins setting the difference between sympathetic and

parasympathetic, it's all light signaling. So, making sure that you're going out in the morning and getting that sun on your face is just as important as making sure at night whenever you're moving into dusk and night time that you're putting those amber glasses on, and filtering out all of that blue light. So that can be super helpful if you're having trouble falling asleep. Some of the reasons that we're having trouble staying asleep at night, honestly, is because of this overexposure to light. It is a major, major needle mover. I just had someone post in the Healing Rosie Facebook group about their sleep, and she's so frustrated around her sleep. And of course, I ask all the questions, and one of them is, are you wearing amber glasses? And she's like, "I'm not wearing the amber glasses," because I talk about it all the time. "I'm not wearing the amber glasses." And I'm like, "You're doing all these other things, you are desperate for sleep and you are not putting a \$10 or \$15 pair of glasses on your face at night?" It's such an easy hack. So those are a few tips.

42:05 DS: I love those, Misty. I'm a firm believer in our circadian biology, and we have wonderful people who pioneer this, as you mentioned. I think that looking at circadian biology and the rhythms of light throughout the day get us connected to this natural rhythm that we're disconnected from because of all the modern conveniences in life. Maybe a year ago at this point, I had on my podcast a woman who's an architect, who specializes in circadian lighting. Also Dave Asprey mentioned to me that he is coming up with a new circadian light bulb as well. So I think we're only going to see more tools that are going to help impact our sleep using this non-chemical or pharmaceutical intervention. It's really exciting and I'm happy you mentioned that. In wrapping up, Misty, I have to ask you about the cold bath.

43:08 MW: Yes.

43:08 DS: Many people know about Wim Hof, of course, and that work and also that in naturopathic medicine there is the traditional contrast hydrotherapy and the cold therapy. How do you implement cold baths in your life and how did they impact your sleep?

43:26 MW: So I started doing cold baths for the first time in 2011. It was later in the year for me, and they're really not that hard. I would do a cold bath any day of the week over a cold shower. I'm in Austin, there's a lot of bio-hackers, achievers entrepreneurs, super performer people here that are doing a cold showers everyday. I think cold showers are torture. I've done them. It is terrible. It is not nearly as jarring, in my experience, to the nervous system to do a cold bath. So for most of us you want your cold bath to be around 60-64 degrees. You can do extreme cold therapy, and I've done it before, I've gotten the water down to 35 degrees. I don't notice a difference, honestly. If I'm dropping myself into 60 degrees or dropping myself into 30 degrees, there's a 45-second point where it's like, "It feels very cold." And I'm hyper-ventilating, but the body adjusts, just like when you jump into a swimming pool. You get in there at first and the water is cold, and then your body adjusts and it's fine.

44:44 MW: That's my experience. In the winter time, most of the time, just what comes out of your tap is fine. I went on Amazon and got this laser. Rodrick, my partner, would know what it's called, it's this laser that you can point at the water and it'll tell you the temperature. So I got one of those, it was a few bucks and helped me to know what the temperature was. But most of what's coming out of the tap is in the 60 degree range. When it gets really warm outside, sometimes that temperature will go up into the 70s. In the winter time you'll see it drop down into the 50s. Maybe if it's really, really cool

where you are, it's getting into 40s or 30s or whatever, but you can use tap water. You can also pick up ice if you want to make it a little bit colder. I just drop myself in, give myself the hyper-ventilating time and I actually let my body do that. There's something about the action of just breathing really heavily that calms everything down, and then I just bring a book, set a timer. 30 to 45 minutes in the bath. I go through seasons of this where it's part of my routine. I really should start incorporating it again, actually because of some bio-hacking stuff that I'm doing right now that it would be a great compliment to.

45:57 MW: But it's such an easy thing to do. I was astonished at the impact it had on my sleep, because I wasn't doing it for that. So it was completely unexpected and thrilling. Oh my gosh, me, who's always had such a hard time waking up in the mornings, to just like wake up in the morning and be like, "Bing. On." It's crazy! Wow, this is the thing. So yes, cold therapy is good for so many things. It's really good for your mitochondria, it can really support the body in healing, especially if you're in a really worn down state, your mitochondria are just exhausted from fighting viruses and being sick for a really long time. Cold baths are a really smart addition to everything else that you're doing because you're actually supporting the healing process in your body and being able to speed up a little bit, which is ultimately what we need.

46:55 MW: A lot of what happens, and this is right down your lane, Dr. Christine, you can talk about this way better than I can, but when our bodies get really run down, even when we're doing things to stimulate a healing process, it's like the healing process is moving along at five miles an hour, and the disease process is moving along at 45 miles per hour. There's no way that the healing process, because your mitochondria is so compromised, can ever

even catch up to how fast that disease process is going. So something like cold therapy is really, really beneficial. And there's a lot of other things you need to do whenever you're that severely compromised, but I love cold therapy for that.

47:39 DS: Yes. So many great points. I think it just has a huge impact on our autonomic nervous system and getting the body into a state of para-sympathetic.

47:49 MW: Reducing inflammation.

47:50 DS: Absolutely. And most people have access to cold water, so that is a good thing. So it's more of an accessible treatment. Misty, you've given us so much information, it's been so fun getting to know you in this way and interviewing you, since you interviewed me last time we talked. I know that you're giving so much value to your community, and we're really, really excited about your upcoming summit. Can you just share a little bit more about how people can find out about your summit and the work you do?

48:27 MW: Everything about the work that I'm doing can be found at healingrosie.com. We have a Facebook community that's thriving. We've got over 5000 women in that community as of the time of this recording. With the sleep summit I expect that number to grow exponentially. The last summit I did was kind of the kick off for this community, but it's a great place for people to come and just get support. "Hey, here's what I'm dealing with. What have you guys tried? What's working?" The community is very educated, actually. I was really surprised when this community started coming together to see that

there were a lot of people who were like me in the community that really enjoy contributing, making a difference. My goal with this community is for people to have a place that could come to get practical direction and ideas for dealing with their situations. Sometimes the practical direction and ideas is, who are the experts that help with this? I'm looking for a doctor in my area or how do I find a doctor to help me?

49:28 MW: Or how do I work with health insurance? There's a lot of big questions around this that impact your success on this journey that are outside of what's going to happen in the office of a really great practitioner. We all have to figure out how to manage or re-manage our lifestyles. And that's what this community does great, even though there's an acknowledgement that the conventional medicine can be really frustrating. I don't really love people complaining a lot about that, it doesn't help. It doesn't really serve anything. What we want to do is have a positive place to come and get the support that we actually need. Let's focus on what we can do to move the needle. There's nothing to be gained by complaining about what hasn't worked. So it's a wonderful community. Everyone is welcome.

50:16 MW: I believe you are going to have a link to the Your Best Sleep Ever Summit in the show notes here, so people can go sign up for that, it's a free event from March 16 through 20th, 2020. If you're listening to this after those dates, you're still able to go and get access to the summit and check it out. We will be releasing around seven talks a day for seven days. I think there are some days that we have eight. I think there's just over 40 experts. And then of course, we'll have encore weekend the following weekend. So I would love for people who are struggling with sleep and are looking for some insights and strategies, and really practical things that you can do to improve

your sleep to sign up. I love practicality. So in every interview I'm asking questions like, "Okay, tell me the protocol. What do we need to do about this?" And I hope that everyone is able to find the nuggets that are going to help them break through in this area, because when you sleep, you can heal, and that's really all of our goals that are on this journey. We're really looking for a better quality of life. And you can create that if you're sleeping.

51:28 DS: Absolutely, you've done such a fantastic job, and I'm really looking forward to seeing your summit as well. I appreciate you including me. And you gave so much great information today, so I really appreciate your time today, Misty, and getting to know you. I look forward to learning more from you.

51:46 MW: Thank you so much Dr. Christine. It's been a pleasure.

51:51 DS: Thank you for listening to the Spectrum Of Health podcast. I hope you enjoyed my conversation today with Misty Williams, please check out her summit. You'll see the link in the show notes, Your Best Sleep Ever Summit. I hope this can be impactful, not only to your sleep, but to your overall health. Be well everyone, I am thinking about everyone in this unique time, and please know that prioritizing sleep is one of the best things you could do for your health.