

Jud Brewer

Jud Brewer: [00:00:00] we can turn toward our cravings. We can turn toward all of our emotions instead of resisting them or running away from them. And not only do we learn that they go away on their own. But we learn that we can coexist. We can be with these, you know, the less we resist them. The more we can be okay. With any strong emotions, which helps us really be with whatever, you know, whatever part of humanity we are in that moment,

Diana Hill: [00:00:27] You're listening to Dr. Jud Brewer on Psychologists Off The Clock.

We are four clinical psychologists here to bring you cutting edge and science-based ideas from psychology to help you flourish in your relationships work and health.

Debbie Sorensen: [00:00:48] I'm Dr. Debbie Sorensen, practicing in Mile High Denver, Colorado.

Diana Hill: [00:00:52] I'm Dr. Diana Hill practicing in seaside, Santa Barbara, California.

Yael Schonbrun: [00:00:56] From coast to coast. I'm Dr. Yael Schonbrun, a Boston-based clinical psychologist and assistant professor at Brown University.

Jill Stoddard: [00:01:02] And from sunny San Diego, I'm Dr. Jill Stoddard author of Be Mighty and The Big Book Of Act Metaphors.

Debbie Sorensen: [00:01:08] We hope you take what you learn here to build a rich and meaningful life.

Diana Hill: [00:01:11] Thank you for listening to Psychologists Off the Clock.

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Debbie Sorensen: [00:02:06] and we'd also like to invite you to a virtual book club with our cohost, Jill Stoddard about her book, Be Mighty that's happening in October. And if you go to our website and link to it through our sponsors page, you can get a 15% discount at checkout.

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Debbie Introduction

Diana Hill: [00:02:41] Hi this is Diana here and I'm excited to share an interview with Jud Brewer who wrote the book *The Craving Mind From Cigarettes To Smartphones To Love Why We Get Hooked And How We Can Break Bad Habits* I think the question is like which one should I talk about Cause I think you know it's like we get in of all don't we all have a than one one I think the question is

Debbie Sorensen: [00:03:10] like which one should I talk about Cause I think you know it's like we get in these automatic things and they're not always they're not always bad but they're not always helpful Right So I think when I was just paying attention to lately I love Too you know at the end of the day cook dinner and pour a glass of wine you know white wine in the summer red wine in the winter it just helps me relax me relax cook and I enjoy it But I think that yeah there are times when it does become a habit right So I might have a reason not to drink a glass of wine like a just so I'm not drinking all the time automatically but then also because you know I might have some work I want to get done later or something like that So I want to stay clearheaded Um but there's a lot of times when I start chopping an onion and I just want to automatically you know reach for a wine glass And so that's definitely one where it can become a bad habit not a bad habit It can become a habit become

Diana Hill: [00:04:08] habit Diana about you clearheaded Um but there's a lot of times when I start chopping to pneumonia and then I just want to automatically share or that you for a wine glass But uh

Debbie Sorensen: [00:04:18] us a juicy one us something juicy can

Diana Hill: [00:04:20] Yeah, a lot have been brewing up in the pandemic more than, more than usual. But I think for me, what I've been noticing more and more as just a lot of checking of my phone, sort of incessant phone checking at.

. Hopeful times as you, as you're talking about checking, your phone is not bad, but it's when I'm doing it, when I'm with my kids or we're in the car and about to go somewhere. And what I find is that the results, so habits. Occur in the sequence of there's a trigger, there's a behavior. And then there's the results. And the results of me doing that are actually quite unhelpful in the longterm because I end up either forgetting that I've checked that email and then not replying to someone, or I respond in the moment in this haphazard sort of jumbled that wouldn't be as effective as I've actually sat down and checked all my email at once. Not that you've ever received any of

Debbie Sorensen: [00:05:10] maybe one or two, one or two jumbled emails. emails on the go?

Diana Hill: [00:05:14] emails on the go. . there's been a lot written on this. Pattern of basic behavioral principles of trigger behavior reward. Charles Duhigg who wrote about the power of habits. James clear wrote a great book called *atomic habits*. That's really accessible. where Jed brewer is really helpful is bringing curiosity to this habit loop process I've gotten more interested recently in my own life. And in my practice looking at how to change that habit loop. Once you've gotten away it into more of a value spaced one.

And when you insert a values based behavior to the behavior, part of the habit

loop, you end up getting an intrinsically positive reward. It's actually feels really good to act on your values and it can totally shape the course of your habit. So creating a new loop of values based one can be quite helpful.

And I've actually written about that and created a handout for you. All I did go to drdianahill.com. You'll be able to find a writing exercise where you can shift your habit loop into a values based one,

Debbie Sorensen: [00:06:16] I think that's really important. You know, we were talking earlier about. are habits bad necessarily or not. And just this very morning, I had a call who was talking about a habit and said to me, is that normal? And I would respond by saying it, it doesn't matter if it's normal or not. What's normal, first of all.

But also the question isn't is this normal? I think the question is. Is this working out in your life or not, and that's where values comes from then, and so I think that's the question, right? Is how's this working out in your life? Is this bringing you closer to the life you want? And I think sometimes even a habit that's maybe neutral or a little bit on the side of taking out so way from our values might not be that big of a deal, but we can get into a real shame spiral around it.

Diana Hill: [00:07:02] A second habit loop, right? Because judging our habits can lead to that feeling of guilt and shame as opposed to what you're talking about, or just looking at our habits for what they are. Most of them. The cycle of a habit is unconscious. You're not really making the decision you don't really realize it until halfway through.

And to be able to make the wise decision in the moment is what matters. I know for me that the second habit loop of guilt is in going into rumination. it's really problematic and causes a lot more suffering than the initial habit that I was engaging in, in the first place. If I go into guilt, I missed the big picture of actually how to help myself out for the next time and not engage in that behavior.

Debbie Sorensen: [00:07:43] whatever your habits happen to be, and however they're showing up in your life, I think there's a lot to be learned from this episode with Jed brewer.

Diana Hill: [00:07:49] we also encourage you to check out his apps. He has three apps that are really helpful in shifting your habits. One is for anxiety and other one is for cigarette use. And the third is for eating and he's an affiliate with psychologists off the clock. So he's offering our listeners 20% off his programs, go to our sponsorship page to get the off the clock coupon code to get that 20% discount.

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Interview with Dr. Jud Brewer

Dr. Jud Brewer, is the director of research and innovation at the mindfulness center and associate professor in psychiatry at the school of medicine at Brown university. As well as the executive medical director of behavioral health at Sharecare. And he's also a research affiliate at MIT as an addiction psychiatrist, internationally known expert in mindfulness training for addictions. Dr. Brewer has developed and tested novel mindfulness programs for habit change, including both in person and app based treatments for smoking, emotional, eating, and anxiety. And we're going to talk

about some of those today, like the eat right now, unwinding, anxiety, and craving to quit. Programs. So welcome Dr. Brewer to the show. It's a real delight to have you on. I've been, uh, reading about you and listening to your voice. Read me your book over the last couple of weeks. And it's a real, treat because you do such a beautiful job of integrating, contemplative practice with neuroscience. So thank you.

Jud Brewer: [00:09:19] No, thanks for having me. I'm really excited to have this conversation.

Diana Hill: [00:09:22] it might be helpful for us just to land in the here and now. And I was listening to an interview I think it was back in April. And you were talking about. Just the strategies to get through this crisis and how to ground ourselves.

And now here we are, uh, starting out in fall, and we're in a really different place even than we were back in April. This has turned from a crisis management to chronic anxiety and stress. you take a unique perspective on that and how we can address, uh, anxiety and stress can you talk a little bit about that?

Jud Brewer: [00:09:55] happy to, and I think it comes from a combination. Probably if my, uh, my addiction psychiatry practice in my own personal mindfulness practice, which has been really informative. And also some of the neuroscience work that my lab does. So I guess starting with the latter, you know, it's been. It's been really interesting to look at the actual mechanisms that form habits.

And I think that in particular had got really fascinating around how anxiety can be perpetuated as a habit. One way I think about this. Yeah. From the scientific standpoint, is that right? We've, we've got the survival brain, that's there to help us survive. Right. And it actually learns in a very simple way.

Um, Through reinforcement learning, you know, it only has three core elements that trigger behavior and a reward. So, if you think about it from a pragmatic standpoint, you know, our ancient ancestors back on the Savannah where, you know, they're foraging for food and trying to remember where food is. So yeah. Find a food source. Uh, that's the trigger, the behavior is you eat the food. And then the reward from a neuroscientific standpoint is that your stomach sends this dopamine signal to your brain that says, remember what you ate and where you found it. So that was actually set up to help us survive. This is old survival brain yet in modern day.

You know, most of us have refrigerators. So, so we don't need to remember, you know, we, we know where the kitchen is. Yet, these mechanisms are still in play on top of this has, you know, more recently has evolved this neocortex, literally the new brain, which is there to help us think and plan, and that combination of the two.

It's not necessarily helping us out right now, you know, especially in, in this area age of, you know, really chronic anxiety. And I think it actually points to the core mechanisms of why anxiety is actually increasing right now because there's thinking and planning brain actually needs information. So the way it works in a nutshell is that it takes previous.

Uh, scenarios and it takes, uh, previous behavior. Right. And it says, okay, what, what it happened back then, and then it's simulates the future based on what

we've done in the past. Right? So this is where, you know, that saying what's the best predictor of future behavior past behavior. Right? So, so that's how our thinking and planning brains work.

The problem is that there's a huge amount of uncertainty right now. Right? So if you think of it at the beginning of the pandemic, we didn't know how contagious or dangerous this, uh, this virus was. So everybody was taking all these precautions, you know, like not touching mail, for example, cause they didn't know if this virus could last on mail.

Cause we just didn't know a lot of uncertainty. There are a lot of anxiety there. A lot of fear that was, you know, that was justified because fear is actually what helps us survive. We learned, Oh, if that's dangerous, don't go there. Yeah. The uncertainty. How has persisted, but it's just shifted in terms of, you know, wins are going to be a vaccine.

How long is this thing going to last? Can, you know, are my kids safe to go back to school, all this stuff. And that, that uncertainty doesn't look like it's going away anytime soon, even though we're starting to learn how to manage, uh, you know, the, the severe cases, for example, steroids are showing to be very helpful for preventing or for reducing mortality, things like that.

So we're getting mortality rates down in the hospitals. Yet for the majority of the population, that's not sick, there's all this uncertainty. So you can think of it this way. Fear, you know, old survival brain helps us learn, you know, like avoid danger, but fear plus uncertainty leads to anxiety and we don't see that ending anytime soon.

Diana Hill: [00:13:36] You know, I, I heard a talk by Joseph LeDoux who actually talks a lot about how this goes back to even just the protozoa. You know, avoids toxins and moves towards nutrition, but we have this unique thing yeah. About the humans, which is yeah. Capacity, as you said to simulate.

So yes, we have that immediate response of, I got to keep my family safe, but then we can simulate. The conversations I'm having with my kids yesterday? We were at the beach. When are we going to go to the beach and not have a police car there?

And, uh, everyone's masks on and have it be such an effort to just go do this thing. That was a daily activity and a stress reliever. So even the things that we would be turning to, to relieve stress or help us where things IIT aren't working in the same way that they used to,

Jud Brewer: [00:14:21] Yeah. And another way to just add to what you're saying is, you know, our thinking about brains don't stop. And so they go into these.

What if scenarios, you know, like what if this, what if that, what if this, what if that, and there's a, there's a fair amount of research. Stating back to the 1980s, TD Bork evac at Penn state actually showed that anxiety can get perpetuated in these same, you know, negatively reinforced, have a patterns, the same way that single cell organisms avoid danger.

The way he pointed this out was that. A negative emotion. Let's say fear. That's the trigger triggers a mental behavior of worry. A lot of people don't think of behavior as being mental, but in fact, we can have plenty of mental behaviors and that worry, even though it's not actually doing anything. It feels like it's doing something because we feel like we're in control.

We're worrying, you know, at least I'm worrying about this. Even if my worrying isn't going to help it. The problem is that that worry feeds back and then perpetuates cycle of anxiety, cycles of anxiety. So we just start spinning, you know, more and more and more in tightened down in these tiny little balls of anxiety.

Diana Hill: [00:15:30] So worry has this sort of subtle reinforcement. Quality to it that even you were talking about that trigger behavior reward there's yeah. Sort of false reinforcement to worry, but it doesn't, it doesn't work. It actually doesn't solve worrying. Doesn't solve any problems. There's this other component that , I want to dive into a bit, which is the self referential nature.

Of all of it. And some of the brain areas that are involved in anxiety that also get involved in that sense of me. as opposed to this, we, can you talk a little bit about that?

Jud Brewer: [00:16:02] Yeah, I'd be happy to my lab. Serendipitously fell on to some of these brain networks through studying experienced meditators. So I was curious, you know, this was about 10 years ago now. I was curious how experienced meditators brain. Brain activity was different than novices or people that hadn't meditated.

So we did a study where we compared brain activity of a novice versus experienced meditators. And we found, you know, the, the short summary of it is that there's this network of brain regions called the default mode network. And it's called the default mode network because it's what we default to when we're not doing anything in particular and what we tend to do when we're not doing anything in particular is think about.

Ourselves, you know, I regret things that we've done in the past. We worry about things in the future. So in particular, uh, cravings, you know, all sorts of drug cravings, chocolate cravings, gambling, cravings, those activate this default mode, network and rumination. So with depression, when we're ruminating about things, you know, that we've done in the past, that also activates this network, uh, when we are perseverating, which is basically just rumination about the future, you know, when we're worrying that also activates, uh, this network and lo and behold, We found that experienced meditators are deactivating this network.

And when we, when we had that first study published, we were, you know, we weren't quite sure if that was accurate or not. So we followed it up first. We did a replication study with a larger sample and it, and it replicated it. But we also started using this technique called realtime neuro feedback where we could show people feedback from their own brains in real time.

And that's really the only way to bridge this yeah. Between what's described as subjective or first person science in third person. So objective science. So we, we needed to line up people's direct subjective experience with their brain activity. And in several studies that we published, we found that those two lines up pretty nicely.

We even had Anderson Cooper from 60 minutes. Come in and try it out on camera. So anybody that's interested, they can just Google, you know, Anderson Cooper, I think meditation 60 minutes, you know, brewer or something like that. And they can see, you know, we ha we asked him to think of a time when he was anxious, uh, his posterior cingulate cortex, this hub of the default mode network

shot off.

It literally went off the charts above what we could require. Um, and you can see that on the, on the screen. And then we asked him to meditate. So he'd been practicing meditation for about a month at that point. And he was just paying attention to his breath and you can watch that brain activity just drop significantly. So it seems that these, uh, self referential brain networks are activated, you know, when we're caught up in things, when we get caught up in anxiety, when we get caught up in a craving, but they also deactivate, uh, when we, when we practice mindfulness and meditation, and one of the things that we got even dove into even more specifically.

Was what is it about the meditation or the mindfulness that is decreasing this brain activity? So we did a bunch of, you know, a bunch of experiments and looked at subjective experience, and we found that it was literally this feeling of, of getting caught up where people are. You know, when they're working hard, you know, when they're trying to meditate, you know, they're getting caught up in that, that effort that was activating the posterior cingulate cortex.

Um, when they were caught up in distraction, it was activating it just like other studies had found. And when they were letting go, when they were simply resting and awareness or getting curious about their experience, that's when the posterior cingulate. Cortex activity decreased. So it was really interesting. And this actually informed a lot of the work that we're doing now, which was, you know, to really zoom in on this, this experience of getting caught up. Right. And in fact, you know, we get caught up in anxiety. People know what it feels like when they're caught up in that anxiety. It feels like this contracted closed down quality of experience.

And when they let go, you know, simply by bringing curiosity to that moment, That helps them kind of unwind a little bit, let go. Um, and then that experience starts to expand a little bit, so we can even simplify this and pragmatically, you know, help people. We'll start to pay attention to their own direct experience without these very expensive tools, by noticing that that closed down quality of experience versus the opened up, um, quality of experience.

Does that make sense?

Diana Hill: [00:20:33] Yeah, I love that you use the word curiosity because in I'm an acceptance and commitment therapy. Practitioner. And , when you get trained up and act, you get trained. One of the things that Steven Hey says, is that. Instead of using the word acceptance with folks, use the word curiosity, and you'll get a lot further because when you say something like, well, maybe we should accept, you know, how the pandemic is impacting you right now . People are like, except I'm unwilling to accept. But if you use curious about the possibility that there's some outgrowths of what's happening, there's some changes that. Maybe it could be beneficial. it totally changes our relationship. And as you described, we moved from narrowed behavior and attention to more expansive behavior and attention

and that is key, to get people moving and more flexible

Jud Brewer: [00:21:23] Yeah, I, I totally agree. And you know, maybe I should accept. I think, you know, it's, it's a great example of how we add, you know, you've probably heard this term, we should all over ourselves. Right. So, you

know, if our therapist as with, Oh, maybe you should accept this, then we think of, Oh, that's one more thing that I can fail at.

And then we get more contracted as compared to. Oh, let's explore this or play or, you know, get curious about what that. What that feels like. And in fact, you know, curiosity, well, so let's geek out a little bit if you don't mind, but you know, if I had to pick one word and lose every other word in my vocabulary, that one word would be curiosity.

Yeah. It's a perfect mantra. And if you look at it, there are actually two types of curiosity that can also inform experience as well. You're probably familiar with this, but in case others aren't. I, uh, there was this guy, Litman, uh, who back in 2005, published a paper describing what's called as deprivation and interest.

And with deprivation curiosity, it, it tracks perfectly with this idea of, of, um, reward based learning, right? Operant conditioning, where. If there's, you know, we don't know the answer to something, then there, that, that triggers urge to go look it up. Right? And this is where are our weapons of mass distraction?

Our phones are terrible at actually perpetuating these cycles because we go look it up and then we get that reward. How, no matter how superficial or meaningless it is, we're like, Oh yeah, that was that movie star. I couldn't think of that person's name. Right. But that's that itch. And I think this deprivation is destination, right?

Once we get somewhere, once we get that answer where we feel better, but it actually perpetuates the cycle of, of doing that again. On the contrary or contrasting to that is interest curiosities. We're deprivation is destination oriented, did interest. Curiosity is about the journey. And so this is where we can get interested or curious about whatever happening in our experience.

And this is particularly relevant for things like cravings for food, or getting caught up in worry habit loops. Where we can encourage people to get interested in curious about what those sensations feel like in their bodies. And they can see, you know, Oh, these are, these are sensations that are urging me to do this thing as compared to some moral imperative.

I remember a patient coming into my office once. Where he's like, doc, you know, if I don't smoke, I feel like my head's going to explode. And so we just kind of map stood out actually on my whiteboard, you know, had him describe what his experience was, get curious about what his direct physical sensations were and how strong they were.

And so they, the intensity increased and eventually it peaked. And then it went back down there's wide eyed look, it's like, Oh, I said, well, what do you usually do at the top of that peak? He said, I usually smoke. Well, obviously he didn't smoke. I was at the VA hospital at the time. So we were on it smoke-free campus, right.

He couldn't smoke in my office. So he realized, Oh, these are physical sensations that I can get curious about. I don't act on them. They go away on their own. So you realize that these are, these are impairments. These are. You know, these are not things that I have to be personally attached to, which then links that even back to basics, basic Buddhist concepts, where they talk about impermanence, they talk about taking things personally and things like that.

And that curiosity can help reveal all of that simply by becoming curious about what's happening right now.

Diana Hill: [00:24:56] I think curiosity can help us stay with it too, because there's a component of curiosity. That's very much. About the hearing now, as opposed to that pre decided what's going to happen next. So the, you know, the concept of beginner's mind venturing into the experience of the beginner's mind. It's interesting because. I was thinking about, my brother in law to be is a segway designer. So he works with this robot. He works on the brains of the robot. And what he says is that when athletes get onto this thing, they try and make it balance.

And because they try and force it, the robot's supposed to balance for you. Can't let go of the fact that they have to actually let go in order for the robot to be balanced. But when children get on they're so used to letting go. That you just tell the child, Oh, let go. And the robot will do it for you and they can step on and zoom off the go.

So the better the athlete, the worse they do. And I think, as we become more, uh, experts in our lives are better at controlling things. The actually worse off we are when facing uncertainty, because there's so much that we can't control. And that's where really your offerings and mind trainings come in as an opportunity to have, what do we do when we can't, we can't control.

What's going to happen next.

Jud Brewer: [00:26:05] Absolutely. Wow. What a great example of that, where it's, you know, the irony where we're, the more we force things, the more we're likely to bang our head against the wall.

Diana Hill: [00:26:16] Yeah. The case for many, of our experiences, I was actually, I was fascinated by the smoking study, that where you talked about how. Cravings actually, didn't decrease over the course of four weeks of your treatment, but that, uh, people's relationship with the craving changed and how different that is than trying to impose something like a gold standard CBT, where we expect the symptom.

We want the craving to decrease. We want the thoughts to change. And sometimes that is not the case, but our behaviors can change even in the face of it. Are our emotions still being high.

Jud Brewer: [00:26:50] Right, right. And that highlights one of these other, you know, these little sayings around, you know, what we mean, resist, persists. And so when my patients resist a craving, whether it's for food or for a cigarette that that craving actually persists and it pushes back on them. Yeah. It's. If they can just learn to change their relationship to the craving.

This is like I KIDO where you use the energy of the craving itself instead of trying to push against it. You use, I use it to work with it, you know, and so we can turn toward our cravings. We can turn toward all of our emotions instead of resisting them or running away from them. And not only do we learn that they go away on their own.

But we learn that we can coexist. We can be with these, you know, the less we resist them. The more we can be okay. With any strong emotions, which helps us really be with whatever, you know, whatever part of humanity we are in that moment, you know, there's this, there's this great, um, simple equation that there's a meditation teacher, Shinzen young taught me, which is a suffering equals pain times resistance.

So, if you think of that suffering, um, the pain can be anything. It can be emotional pain, it can be physical pain. We resist that pain, right? So let's say it's a craving. The more we resist that craving, the more our suffering is going to go up. But the more we go and get curious about that craving then that resistance goes down.

The craving is still there yet. The suffering is not there. And so we can learn to be with them. That craving. And that's what our study showed was, you know, at four weeks, the cravings were just as strong people learn to with them, not resist them so that they could actually cut down on their smoking. And this is where we got five times the quit rates of gold standard treatment.

Right. So it was really working. We, we looked pretty months later. In fact that craving had died down on it's own. And the way I think about this is the analogy before fire, right? If craving is that fire. And cigarettes are that fuel for the fire. If you stop adding fuel, the fire is not going to magically.

Just go out in that moment. It's going to die down over time and the less fuel you add to it, the more quickly it dies off.

Diana Hill: [00:29:07] and the expectation for us to think our way out of the craving when we're experiencing one, if, I mean, I think everyone has experienced some degree of craving or wanting or feeling overwhelmed. The expectation that we're going to think our way out of that in that moment is. Setting us up for failure.

Right. And it's interesting cause I we're in fire country here in Santa Barbara. And one of the things that we made as part of our, our fire plan in our house, cause we had to evacuate many times is that there's three things that we do. If a fire happens, we grabbed the backpack, this under our bed that's prepacked and we grab our dirty laundry.

Then, and then we, uh, we grab any of my, my grandmother's paintings. Right? And so the dirty laundry Bryant bin was a technique that someone told me because they said, you're not going to have the wits to figure out what you're going to want to wear. But if you, but what if you take what you've worn for the week, you're probably going to be good.

Right. And so to prepare for my, for basically my prefrontal cortex to go offline, when there's I have to evacuate is a good thing. How do we do that? With, something like we're, we're overwhelmed, stress or anxiety. We're having a panic moment. We're about to yell at our kids, right? These are all examples of our, our stress systems.

Okay. Taking our prefrontal cortex.

Jud Brewer: [00:30:25] Yeah. So here it comes back to understanding how our minds work. Right? And so if we know that the prefrontal cortex is the youngest and weakest part of the brain from an evolutionary perspective, this is why. You know, cognitive therapies may not work as well as we all wish that they did, you know, cause we can't, we can't think our way out of a craving for example, and think our way out of anxiety.

Um, we know this, that, because our prefrontal cortex is the first part of the brain that goes offline. And when we're stressed or when we're anxious, right. There's this. This saying halt, hungry, angry, lonely, tired. That's when our prefrontal cortex, our thinking part of the brain goes offline. So this is analogous to the

firearm urgency, right?

When we, when that halt acronym comes up or when we're anxious, that's when our prefrontal cortex is not working. And we're going to go back to our old survival brain. So the question is how do we put out that fire, so to speak and the way to do that is to have help ground us in our direct experience what's happening right now, instead of getting caught up in worry or having our minds spiral out of control.

So one, you know, a couple of things that I, I teach people to do, whether it's through our unwinding anxiety app or through my, even in my clinic, is to help the, you know, we've got a couple of things, right. We can ground ourselves in our direct experience right now. And one of my favorites is through our feet, you know, our feet tend to be an anxiety free zone.

Right. So think of that as the, you know, the fire ring around, you know, it's less, we're less likely to have anxiety in our feet. Just like if you have a fire zone that where you've protected. That you know, from jumping or whatever, then you're, you're not going to have a fire there. Yeah. And so I have people just simply get curious.

This goes back to curiosity, get curious about what their feet feel like in, in this moment, you know, it's like they could even wiggle their toes, you know, what, what's it feel like when I wiggle my toes and stop wiggling them, what's it feel like with the pressure of my feet on the floor or in my socks and shoes, if we're, you know, or whatever.

And we can just ground ourselves in the immediate experience in the present moment with what's happening right now. Oh, what am I feet feel like? And we can even up that by asking, okay. Which foot is warmer than the other foot right now? Hm, which foot is warmer than the other foot. It doesn't matter what the answer is, but that actually taps into our natural capacity to be curious right in this moment.

So that's one practice that people can do. Uh, another is, uh, and this is a great one that we can teach to our kids. I put out a short YouTube video on this. If folks want this neuroscience behind it, we won't get into it right now, but this thing called five finger breathing. Whereas somebody breathe in.

They can trace up the outside of their pinkie as they breathe out, they can trace down the inside and so on. They can trace their hand as they take five breaths, they can do trace it back to the thumb, to pinkie 10 breaths. And that's a great way to help grow them, found ourselves not only in breathing, cause sometimes it can be hard to ground yourself in your breath, but we're also doing this in a multisensory real way.

So we're. Seeing our hands, we're feeling two different fingers and we're feeling our breath at the same time. And what that does is it basically takes up all of our working memory. Think of it as the brains Ram, the random access memory. If you use all that space up, then those worry thoughts don't have space to be in there. So after you do five or 10 breaths, even if those worry thoughts come back on, your physiology has calmed down. And so the thoughts come back and you're, and there's a mismatch emotionally, right? There's less emotional charge to those thoughts. And then we can say, Oh, those are, you know, those are just worry thoughts.

And we're less likely to get caught up in them again. So those are two practices that are very pragmatic and we can teach, you know, the five finger breathing is great to teach to your kids. And then. You know, bedtime, you do, you know, 10 breaths together or something like that. You can do it at meal times, et cetera, et cetera.

And a great thing to do is teach our kids to be our emergency GoTo. So like, if we're all freaked out, we can say, Hey, if I look freaked out, why don't you say, you know, Hey mom or dad, why don't you do five finger breathing with me? And then they can lead us through it. So they feel like they're in control.

Diana Hill: [00:34:48] I love the feed and there's so much, , um, an ancient practices about, about feet and rooting even sitting and rooting and a lot of the yogic, , practices. When I teach yoga and I ever, whenever I teach a tree pose, we always start with growing roots. So imagining that. Your feet are growing roots down too.

And anchoring themselves in the center of the earth and just like trees have those deep roots that then you can be more flexible and move around. if your feet are rooted, it helps with that ability to respond to and adapt to the adversity around us.

I'm fascinated that Johann Heisenberg who's at Stanford center for altruism and compassion teaches growing roots as part of the compassion exercises that he's using in schools or, with all the populations they work with there. So I love finding a place where you feel safe or and bringing curiosity to it there's this other component that I was appreciative that you write about, and that I think is missed a lot as mindfulness is brought in into the West so mindfulness is one aspect of sort of the eightfold path. There's seven other aspects of the eightfold path in Buddhism.

And yeah, you talk a lot about actually generosity and kindness, and those is actually. Being a new reward pathway. So not only breaking up the road pathway that we're in, but how can we shift to a different reward pathway that maybe

Jud Brewer: [00:36:11] Yeah, I'm so glad you asked that question because this actually gets back to some of the core neuroscientific principles about how we learn. I think of this as kind of a three step process. And so, uh, and this is what I teach. Some of my patients is. Yeah. The first they have to map out their habit loops.

Right. So we have to become aware of what's the trigger, what's the behavior, what's the result. But then step two. Do I have them ask themselves a question, which is what do I get from this? Okay. So from a Buddhist perspective, that question gets at the cause and effect relationship, right? They talk about cause and effect being really critical for basically everything, right?

So what's the result of our behavior. And the, what do I get from this helps zoom in on it. Okay. What's the behavior that I just did. And what's the effect of that from a neuroscientific standpoint, there's a part of the brain called the orbital frontal cortex, which actually determines and storage reward value of, you know, different behaviors.

So it sets up this whole hierarchy of goodness. Think of it that way. So, uh, what would be a simple example, broccoli. Okay. So if we eat broccoli, And, uh, our brain's gonna lay down a certain reward value based on calories and whatnot.

Then we eat some milk chocolate. Right. And so from a caloric standpoint, milk chocolate is more calorically dense and it's sweeter.

Right? So from a survival standpoint, our brains going to say, Oh, Chocolate higher than broccoli in the reward hierarchy. Right. That's why we feed our, we don't feed our kids dessert. And at the same time it's dinner. Cause they're going to, they're going to go for them. They're going to go for the dessert anytime.

So, uh, another, you know, just adding to that for me. If I eat chocolate versus dark chocolate. Oh, dark chocolate. Yeah, definitely. Right. So, uh, and for me, I'm never going to slum it into the sixties, right? It's gotta be at least 70%

Diana Hill: [00:38:07] but there's a point where you get too high and then you lose that, that sweet spot. It's like

Jud Brewer: [00:38:10] Yeah. Add ins Seesaw, a little bit of cayenne. You can nuance it a bunch. What our brain, this orbital frontal cortex is, is setting up this whole reward hierarchy. And so it's going to say when given a choice. Okay. If I get, I get a choice between milk chocolate and you know, 85% dark chocolate that's made by a certain brand.

My brain is going to pick that 85% every time. So the way we can actually capitalize on that is, uh, is by bringing awareness in again. So, uh, an example, well, let's go back to our smoking study, but this works also with eating, et cetera. When we did our first smoking study. When we randomized people to get mindfulness training, which they didn't know they're were gonna the mindfulness training.

And in the first night that of the group that got randomized to mindfulness training, we said, go ahead and smoke. And they looked at us, like, I thought this was a smoking cessation study, which said, no, no pay attention as you smoke and see what happens. And people started realizing, you know, I remember one, uh, one woman, you know, she wrote down, you know, mindful smoking.

So she was doing this mindful smoking exercise smells like stinky cheese and tastes like chemicals. Yeah. So what that, what she was pointing out there. Was that when she bought the reward value of the cigarette was not nearly as great as she remembered. Right? So that reward value actually. And there's a whole bunch of, uh, you know, math behind this.

There's a risk correlate and Wagner with these two scientists in the seventies to describe this whole reward value curve. And we can actually study this. My lab has studied this now when we have people. Mindfully eat or mindfully smoke within 10 to 15 times of people using, you know, these, these, this tool.

We have built it right into the app. We can actually measure a drop in the reward value where their behavior will shift from overeating or eating junk food to not eating those things are not overheating. And it will also shift from smoking to not smoking and what we see. Is that, you know, mathematically, we can model out that change in reward value.

So that orbital frontal cortex is kind of updating the reward value. So what what's updating is how much lower the old behavior is. So let's go to your you're pointing out things like kindness and curiosity. Once we start to see that these old behaviors aren't as rewarding, this opens up a space to bring in new behaviors.

And so we can then ask our brain or ask ourselves and pay attention. Well, what's it feel like when I'm kind to somebody, so let's compare kindness this,

right. So there might be some self righteous quality at the, you know, when, uh, you know, we, we yell at somebody for some reason, but if we really pay attention to all the results of that behavior, we can start to see, Oh, I don't feel good.

You know, it didn't improve my relationship with that person, you know, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. And we see how this, it can be really problematic on social media. Because we don't actually see the negative effects. So often when we're just having some time Twitter fight with somebody, cause we were like youth and then we never see the person again, you don't, after we, I told that person and you know, we feel, we feel self-righteous about it.

But if we look at that, there's this underlying quality of restlessness and actually of contraction. So my lab has actually studied these emotional States and we found that uniformly across the board. People report that anger actually feels contracted, right? It's it's a driven and contracted restless quality to it.

When you compare that to kindness and we've actually directly compared the two kindness, not only feels open, but it feels more rewarding to people. And it may be as simple as looking at those closed versus open States. Those closed States actually feel less rewarding than the open States. And those open States tend to be curiosity, kindness, joy, connection, you know, all these things that are actually you helping us.

Co-exist in a more harmonious way, but also in a way that's going to be more sustainable down the road. Right. We yell, set at somebody. We have to worry about if that person's going to come back and do something to us. If we're kind to somebody, what do we worry about that they might come back and do something kind to us.

Great problem to have.

Diana Hill: [00:42:30] I really appreciate how there's an overlap between your work and, um, compassion focused therapy. And Paul Gilbert's work in terms of how he maps out these three. Emotion systems, the systems of threat and drive, which have that narrowing of attention and behavior. And then the compassion soothing system that when we are mindful, when we're in present, but when we're interconnected and feel compassionate towards other, there's an openness and expansiveness and he often yeah.

Talks about the, the man on the porch with his guns who is seeking safety, but does not feel safe. Right. Does not actually feel open because he's alert, ready to shoot anyone that's coming his way versus the man on the porch with his dog. Right. And that's a different, that's a different state to be in and how we can use both mindfulness of the present moment in combination with compassion as well as sort of this more.

Bigger picture perspective of interconnectedness, of not seeing ourselves as separate unit, but rather that we are all interdependent. And man, are we learning that right now? More, more than ever, , what's happening in the brain there.

Jud Brewer: [00:43:40] we'd publish them the paper about five years ago on loving kindness in particular. So for those that aren't familiar with that loving kindness is a, is a meditation practice of basically just opening our hearts, you know, and there are ways to formally help people systematically do this through phrases, such as, you know, these are supportive phrases that help people open

such as, you know, May you be happy, may you be healthy? May you be safe from harm, things like that. And we can even direct those toward ourselves when we need that self-kindness as well. And what we found was that in contrast to, uh, well, let's just say what we found was that the default mode network. Which it gets activated again, when we're, when we're worried. Right. When we're, you know, when we're getting worried that might, we might not be safe for example, or in fact, the development network gets activated with certain types of romantic love. When somebody is very obsessed with their romantic partner. This is a study that was published. I think in 2011, I wrote about it in my book.

Um, where this group, it found that, uh, people who are in longterm relationships, you know, they, there was this passionate love scale, and there's this subscale of obsessiveness. And the more obsessed somebody was with their partner, the more posterior was activated because when you're, is it a really about that relationship or your partner, or is it about you?

Oh, I'm obsessed. And that quality of, you know, contracted, I want, you know, I'm obsessed with my partner. It correlates with these brain activation patterns. What we found with loving kindness, perhaps not surprising at this point. Is that those same brain regions get really quiet because we're not worried about ourselves.

And in fact, the joy that comes with being with kindness is just so much sweeter. Then, you know, then trying to hold on to the love or hold onto the relationship, uh, that it's, it's much more rewarding in itself. So we're not only seeing brain. Activation patterns getting quieter with loving kindness, but people are reporting that, that loving kindness just feels more open.

You know, I have a personal example when I was in residency training, I would ride my bicycle to the hospital cause I lived a couple of miles away and, uh, this was a New Haven, Connecticut and the, um, sometimes the cars were not as excited about me being on the road as I was. And so I, you know, maybe get honked at or this or that.

And you know, sometimes. Yeah, grumpy or whatever. I would give them a universal sign of displeasure or just something that was, that was provoked provocative. That wasn't that helpful. And I get to the hospital and I'd be a little firm, you know, in a half. And I was thinking, wow, this is not a great way to go and see patients.

You don't have a good mind state for this. So I started practicing, loving kindness, where whenever somebody haunted me, I would use that as a mindfulness bell to offer them a phrase of loving kindness. And then I would offer one to myself as well. You know, one for you, one for me. And I would get to the hospital.

I don't feel like people are like, wow, what are you on? You know, your, your name you're really good place. And then I realized have to wait for cars to honk at me, uh, to practice loving kindness is like any car that went by. I, we just offer, you know, a phrase of loving kindness and what that, what I found was that it was Oh, much.

More rewarding, but you know, for me to not be provoking cars, and also, you know, just for me personally, it just felt so much better than that. I, you know, it's like, wow, how can I tap into this all the time? And it became much easier to, to

be opening to this is kindness, not only toward others, but also toward myself, because I realized that beating myself up.

Really wasn't that helpful? It didn't feel good. I got it to a worse place. And in fact, you know, whatever it was, I, I wasn't okay. Put into learning from whatever that situation was. So, you know, you can think of this is, is a Carol Dweck growth mindset. You know, when we're in fixed mindset, when we're all closed down, those are moments when we're judging ourselves or we're beating ourselves up. We can't actually learn from that situation. But if I do something, like if I make a quote unquote mistake, And I I'm like, Oh, I made a mistake and I opened it that I'm actually in growth mindset so I can learn from it.

Diana Hill: [00:48:02] Yeah. You know, it's sort of this interesting thing that there's an addictive quality to, self-righteous rumination. and when I was reading that in your book, I was getting it, this, this feeling of like scratching, poison, Oak, it feels so good, but then it spreads all over your body and, That I think is, seems to be exacerbated right now at a time when there's a lot of political division, we could just bump into anyone and get on our diatribe about how this is bad. This is bad, this is bad. And it feels kind of good itchiness, but then afterwards we feel worse, uh, as well as the way in which we're using our technology. And I'd like to talk a bit more about the way in which we're using our technology that is unhelpful. And I don't want to be. To say we shouldn't be using technology, but ways in which you've designed technology, actually, to be helpful for us, that the very same material we can use and helpful or unhelpful.

Jud Brewer: [00:48:54] Yeah, I'd be happy to talk about that. And I agree, you know, I, I challenge anyone, you know, these days to try to navigate the city of Boston without a GPS, just doesn't, it doesn't work, especially as we've all become reliant on our technology. Forgotten how to figure out your directions. So, if you think about this from a clinical perspective, My, uh, my patients don't learn to smoke in my office.

You know, they don't learn to get anxious in my office. They don't learn to over eat in my office. And so I remember, you know, look at it and looking out of my, uh, my office window at the, I was at the VA hospital. We are on smoke-free campus. I'd see my patients. You know, it's like they have a cigarette one hand yeah.

In the parking lot. And they have, what do they have in their other end? You know, as Cornell West puts it, the, the, their weapons of mass distraction right there, their cell phones. So it's like, well, if people, you know, our brains are really set. Yeah. You have to learn things in context. So can I actually.

Help people learn things in context. , at the time Yale had patented some of my neuroscience work and, you know, startup , this startup company for us in an, in an incubator and we hired a, um, a documentary. It was a young woman. Uh, her name was Sue cheetah pub was right out of their school of management, who is a documentary filmmaker.

And she said, judge, why don't we use your evidence-based training and put this in an app? You know, this is back in 2012, you know, back when most people were never thinking about, you know, digital therapeutics, which is a term that was only developed just a couple of years ago, you know, can you actually deliver treatment through an app?

And one of my, um, one of my career mentors at Cathy Carroll at Yale was just starting to. Do studies in implementing cognitive behavioral therapy online. So I was thinking, you know, online sounds good phones don't even better. Cause everybody's got one in their pocket. So we said, okay, let's, let's develop, you know, let's, let's cut these evidence based trainings and put them into apps and test these, you know, and where they can get bite-sized training and get it right on.

You know, where in context. They don't have to come to my office. They don't need childcare. There's no copay, you know, all this stuff. And so we started with a smoking app, um, to see if that would work for smoking cessation. That's called craving the quiz. And I think you'd mentioned that earlier. And we actually, we did a study where we looked to see if we could actually change brain activity, you know, cause I'm looking for mechanisms to make sure this stuff works.

So we basically could bring people in. And this was in collaboration with Amy Jane's at Harvard, and she has a great paradigm where she puts people in fMRI scanner shows them pictures of cigarette smoking, or neutral cues and can measure their, their development network brain activity. and then we can randomize them again, you know, this mindfulness app or national constitutes app.

And then a month later we can scan the brain again. Long story short, we found that there was a direct correlation between the amount of posterior cingulate activity that was decreased, uh, and the decrease in cigarettes. Okay. But that was specific to the mindfulness group. The national cancer dudes app did not show that correlation.

We haven't found a, I know, I don't know what to say about that. Um, we even found a dose dependent relationship. So both groups completed about the same number of modules yet with the mindfulness training group. It was, the correlation was 0.49. It was almost 0.5. Whereas the more modules they completed, the better, they did no correlation again with the NCI app.

Not sure what to say about that. So here we're seeing direct mechanism. So we then said, okay. You know, smoking. Let's see if we can do this for eating same learning mechanism. It was long story short, a study led by Ashley Mason at UCF 40% reduction in craving related, eating and people using our eat right now. App mindfulness training helped them work through craving. Help them drop their, you know, the reward value of eating all this stuff. 40% reduction, 35% reduction in eating, in response to a negative emotions. Right? So it was actually tapping into that mechanism. Then we created this anxiety app called unwinding anxiety.

First did a study with anxious physicians. Uh, long story short, we got a 57% reduction in GAD, seven scores. These clinically validated anxiety scores. We replicated that in a randomized control trial that was funded by the NIH. Uh, where we got a 63% reduction in GAD, seven scores in people with generalized anxiety disorder, right?

These are the Olympians of worry. And we also found mechanistic ugly that they increased they're mindfulness. So they're non, non reactivity, the subscale of this 5,000 mindfulness questionnaire that increase mediated a reduction in worry that reduction in worry, mediated a reduction in anxiety. So we're here.

We're seeing mechanistically that increases in this non reactivity, which is what mindfulness trains people to do, reduces worry, which in turn reduces anxiety. Now, just to put this in context, this was compared to treatment as usual. So the treatment is usual group. I think they dropped their anxiety scores by about 15 or 16%.

So that's, you know, respectable in a couple of months, but you know, 63% versus 16%. Uh, there's a way to actually calculate, uh, what's called a number needed to treat. You're probably familiar with this. Others might be as well. I think if this is, you know, how many lottery tickets do you need to play before you win? And so for the typical medication for anxiety, then number needed to treat is 5.15. So you have to treat just over five people before one person shows a significant reduction reduces to, uh, you know, gets a remission, basically in their anxiety. So 5.15. With this unwinding anxiety app, the number needed to treat was 1.6. So you only need to treat just number one and a half people before, you know, somebody showed a significant benefit. So here are these digital therapeutics we're finding, you know, they're accessible they're, you can, you can make them very affordable. Um, people can, anybody that it has a cell phone or a smartphone can have access to these so that we can get this to people in geographically, remote areas.

We can reduce barriers. So this isn't just, you know, rich, white people, well, that can, uh, you know, can afford to, you know, do some treatment like this. This is something that can be available to anyone. And we're here. We're seeing both mechanistically and empirically that these, that these programs work. So we're really excited to see that, you know, we can actually help this whole field of digital therapeutics move forward.

Through evidence based mindfulness training programs, but all of that goes back to mechanism. It goes back to really understanding how our minds work and then learning how to work with our minds that way.

Diana Hill: [00:55:37] I love that, you know, I was watching you, as you were talking. And one of the things that I like to do when people are talking is. see where they light up and man, you let you laugh about that. And you can tell that this is something that you're incredibly passionate about and probably is pulling together a lot of, um, your life's work and your values that are being lived out in this work.

And I'm curious about that. Like, what is the meaning behind this work for you in a deeper way?

Jud Brewer: [00:56:04] Oh, what a great question. Well, as a clinician, and I'm sure you can relate to this. It's great to see when my patients are doing well. You know, and medications, I trust I've prescribed medications. They just don't do a great job. I mean, for some people, and it probably depends on genetic polymorphisms, whatever.

Some people benefit from things like SSRI for anxiety. But the majority of people, they really need to learn how their minds work. And so it's really gratifying to see patients do well. . But the other thing, even more personally is, you know, as a, as a physician, I took this, this oath first do no harm. Mindfulness training is much less likely to cause harm for people, you know, in terms of side effects and things like that. And there's no, it's not zero risk.

And certainly for some populations, especially if folks with a trauma history, et cetera, they need to work with us, you know, skilled therapist that, that has a training with that. that aside This training is helping people live better lives. And as kind of a side benefit, as compared to a side effect, they're generalizing this to other aspects of their life. So they are finding that when they are, you know, when they learn mindfulness, they're kinder to other people. And so we start to see this spreading effect where, you know, kindness is actually spreading in the world, simply through somebody coming in, whether it's through an app or, you know, to my clinic or whatever.

Where people are learning to live, not only, you know, more calm and peaceful lives, but more connected and kind lives where that kind of, yes, it's spreading to others. And that's really, you know, what did Martin Luther King jr say? And is, is, this is a letter from a Birmingham, Birmingham jail. He was talking about, you know, we will meet your hatred with kindness and we want a double victory. And he says that kindness will be the salvation of our civilization. And that's, I think that's really what gets me up in the morning is that, you know, I personally have benefited so much from learning how my mind works, wanting these, these mindfulness practices all the way back to the Buddhist psychology. But really this is the only thing that makes sense to me, you know, is like to live my life this way too. You know, it it's so gratifying. To just be in service of others, just through simply helping them understand how their minds work and then watching them blossom when they realize, Oh, this is, I can actually live a better life simply through bringing awareness.

And letting my brain take care of the rest because kindness feels better. You know, generosity deals better. There was something, there was a sutta that even from the Pali, Canon, where the Buddha talked about, you know, if people only knew, uh, what generosity feels like, they wouldn't go a single meal without sharing it with another, you know, like that's how, how powerful this is.

Diana Hill: [00:59:06] I'd rather have a potluck than a catered meal any day, I think what I heard or what I was spotting. And you was both this, , really true desire to help people and spread that in a, in a broad way, as well as that value of curiosity that you were talking about, that you're trying to foster in others, that it really seems that that's showing up in your, in your professional work as a scientist as really true open-minded curiosity of where is this going to take us, as opposed to that predetermined.

, practice that I think that sometimes science gets caught up in,

Jud Brewer: [00:59:41] I don't think anybody's ever asked me that before. So it's really nice to get to reflect back on why I did this work. So thank you.

Diana Hill: [00:59:50] you can just tell where people get excited. Like their pay starts to increase and you can feel like behind their eyes were having this imagery, outfitting, this mental simulation of the process of creating. I could, I could feel it. I mean, I could feel it energetically with you.

And I imagine that's been the case for you across your career. I mean, I know that you sort of get into whatever you're into and then you're onto the next thing that you're into. It just keeps on developing, but, I'm kind of fascinated by, by you as a person. , how did you do medical school and meditate two hours a day?

Jud Brewer: [01:00:20] , Yeah, well, medical school is really where I started

getting into it. Um, I think it was when I was in residency when I started doing, you know, ramping up the practice, uh, or maybe right after residency. Oh yeah. I was started doing two hours straight as a way during my smoking study. And that was right after residency, but I have to say, you know, I, I can be so much, I'm so much more efficient and focused.

With this practice. I can't imagine what I would be like if I didn't, if I hadn't been introduced to mindfulness early on, so

Diana Hill: [01:00:57] yeah. It's your roots. I mean, I think that's what it becomes I think, especially for people right now that have had a mindfulness practice or a spiritual practice or whatever, Their deal is maybe even an exercise practice. They're like regular walkers. Having that as something to root back into is incredibly helpful

And when, when you're going through stressful stuff, your, you went through the MD PhD program. it's a different kind of stress, but it's super high stress environment. Having that as a foundation, I think makes complete sense, but maybe you couldn't have done it if you didn't have that, or maybe you would have needed like a serious addiction to get through it.

Jud Brewer: [01:01:32] Yeah, that's true. I think about as you're, as you're talking, how in the world, do you do all that and not get caught up in the. The cycle of, , ambition and self promotion. And there's so much of a view that's out there right now. also so much of your heart, that's behind this. How do you practice that in your daily life?

Diana Hill: [01:01:56] Like not get hooked by your phone pictures of you basically.

Jud Brewer: [01:02:00] well, it comes back to awareness and curiosity. There's two sides of the mindfulness coin when I've paid attention. And I see what it feels like to get caught up in self promotional stuff. It just, it just doesn't feel very good. Yeah. I can see from your facial expression, you know exactly what I'm talking about.

It's like, Uh, I guess I should post this on Twitter cause I'm supposed to, but it's like not, cause I'm excited to, you know, it's like, I'm happy to post, like if I read something on Twitter, that's, especially if it's about kindness or something, it's like, I'm happy to repost that or retweet or whatever it's called.

Cause it just feels good to spread that. But it's like when I have to promote myself, it just, and honestly it's like, you know, If it's going to get out there, it's going to get out there and me pushing. It just doesn't feel authentic and doesn't feel rewarding enough that I'm going to do it. So it's like, I'm gonna let it, I'll just put it out there and see what happens.

And I just can't actually force myself to do it anymore because it just turns my stomach. It just, it's just not worth it. I'd rather live a life of obscurity. Um, you know, and just simply, there's plenty to be curious about. You know, so I can, I can be curious in obscurity and not, you know, not try to get my theories or my name out there and be much happier than spending my entire life.

Just trying to get people to listen to what I have to say. Boy, talk about not, not being rewarding. You know, that's, what I love about this stuff is I don't have to worry about there's no John's theory of anything. This is like, This is just basic stuff that's been around forever. You know, I can be like, Oh, BF scared.

Oh, the Buddha, Oh, you know, Eric Kendall, all these really smart people figured this stuff out and I'm just applying it and helping people live better lives through it. It doesn't have to have my name on it at all. And in fact, the more I spend time trying to get my name on something, the more energy I waste that I could be using, helping people.

Diana Hill: [01:04:09] it's so interesting. Natalie was helping us get on the call this morning. And uh, I was talking to her about this heat wave we're having here in Santa Barbara. And last night we went to the beach, like at five o'clock. It was still. 90 degrees. And I took my to my, actually my partner had to drop me off because you can't park at the beaches because of Cobain.

So he dropped me off and, you know, kind of threw us out there and we were swimming and there was this, a man who was probably in his seventies, swimming with his dog and. As I was watching him swim in the ocean at five o'clock with his dog, I was like, this is what life is about. And then I turned to my kids and I was watching them.

And I was like, wait a minute. This is what life is about. Right. And then I had to go check my phone because part was coming to pick us up and I don't want to get lost in the ocean. And, you know, he has to drive. He literally has to drive by and we have to jump in and I go back to my phone and I open it up and I push the email button.

I got an email hero's do you know dr. Judd's bio blah, blah, blah, to read on the air. And then I'm like reading through the emails and all of a sudden I had lost it. Right. I had lost it. And because you, because of your work and because I've been listening to you and reading about you and you know, this is also something I practice outside of the Jed brewer preparation.

I was able to put the phone down. And go back, but I know that there's been a lot of times when I've been at that same beach and probably been on my phone for 50% of the time and missing out on the man with the dog, or maybe my own experience that who knows when it's our last. Right. So, I appreciate your ability to take these complex.

I mean, you're talking complex neuroscience that you're doing day in, day out.

This is not, um, Simplified stuff, but being able to really weave it together with your own personal practice and Eastern practices, and then translate it for us in this really tangible way that we can now get on our phone and use.

And maybe if I were on my phone and using one of your, yeah, it would have said get back in the water instead of check your email. I appreciate that. And it's a really a wonderful way of using technology to help many. and I think that we really need that right now.

Thank you. Is there anything that you want to leave us with

Jud Brewer: [01:06:14] I would just say, stay curious, stay curious. And that's really all we need.

Diana Hill: [01:06:26] Well, we'll link to all your stuff as we're obligated to do, and we will post pictures of you and graphics and do do some of that footwork. But I do encourage people to check out your, I think it's like 10 million viewed a Ted talk and your website and all of the free resources that you offer there as well. I think that you'll start off in a journey where you can just keep on unpacking

more and more and more they can help us out. we'll link to all of that as well.
Thank you and take care.

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Jill Stoddard: [01:07:08] We'd like to thank our strategic consultant, Michael Herold and our interns, Katy Rothfelder and Melissa Miller.

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