

Body Intelligence Summit™

BQ (Body Intelligence) in the Wisdom Years

Dean Ornish and Anne Ornish

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Alison: Welcome to the Body Intelligence Summit 2015 where top scientists, therapists, dancers, and body workers are coming together with you to discover the joy of embodied connection. We appreciate you sharing this information with your friends and family. Now your hosts, Gay and Katie Hendricks.

Katie: Welcome to the Body Intelligence Summit and the session that we're doing today with some folks that I bet you've been hearing about for years. I'm Katie Hendricks and I'm here with Gay Hendricks, and we're going to be discussing "Body Intelligence in the Wisdom Years" with Dr. Dean Ornish and Anne Ornish.

I wanted to tell you just a few things about them. They have a rich and extensive biography but I wanted to let you know that Dr. Dean Ornish's pioneering research was the first to prove that lifestyle changes -- not medication -- lifestyle changes may stop or even reverse the progression of heart disease and early-stage prostate cancer and even change gene expression, turning on disease-preventing genes and turning off genes that promote cancer, heart disease and premature aging.

Dr. Ornish is the author of six best-selling books and he's been recognized by many awards, including by LIFE magazine as one of the 50 most influential members of his generation and by Forbes magazine as one of the seven most powerful teachers in the world.

Anne Ornish is the co-founder and Creative Director of the Ornish Spectrum, a platform that helps people improve their health through personalized, scientifically validated lifestyle choices. She has over 20 years of advanced training in yoga and meditation and her series of guided meditations are featured inside Dean Ornish, M.D.'s best-selling book, *The Spectrum*. She was also featured on the cover of Yoga Journal in their July/August 2006 article.

We're so delighted to be here with you today.

Gay: That's a delight for us because like many of you, we've been hearing and reading Dean and Annie's work for many, many years and so it's a real pleasure to discuss with them the subject that we're working on, which happens to be a very fascinating month for us because we're just coming off the process of editing our new book which is *Conscious Loving at Midlife and Beyond* which will be out later

on this year, which has to do with reinventing yourself in the second half of your life. So we're really interested to talk about all of these things.

So just to open up things a little bit, speaking personally, I think, Dean, yours was the first book I ever read which really shifted my thinking about what medicine could be about, because -- I was just watching Bill Maher the other night. Katie and I were watching Bill Maher and he mentioned on the show that he'd never been to a doctor who asked him what he ate, which is kind of an amazing thing, but I wanted to just let you know, speaking personally, it was quite a revelation to me to actually see a mainstream medical doctor saying the kinds of things that you were saying at the time you were saying them.

Dean: Well, it was always hard for me to understand the things that seem so intuitively obvious to me were still considered radical heresy by so many doctors, not the least of which is that what you eat affects your health or that what you think affects your body, that our minds and bodies --

I was in Davos at the World Economic Forum a couple of weeks ago and was interviewed by Nancy Gibbs, the editor-in-chief of TIME magazine, and she said, "I want you to channel your inner critic. What were some of the things that you heard earlier in your career?" and I mentioned that when I was at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Harvard Medical School doing my internship and fellowship, I had one of the attending physicians there who was world-renowned, wrote the standard textbooks in his field, and he said, "Gosh, Dean, you really think the mind affects the body? What a stupid idea that is!" And I looked at him and I said, "Have you ever had an erection?" It's like things are just so obvious and I was still considered radical.

Katie: I bet that caught his attention.

Dean: And then in a sense, they are radical in the sense that "radical" means to get to the root of something, and that's really what our program has always been about, that even though we tend to think of advances in medicine as being something really high-tech and expensive and cutting-edge, that our, I think, unique contribution for almost 40 years now doing studies has been to show using these very high-tech, expensive, state-of-the-art measurements and scientific measures how powerful these very simple and low-tech and low-cost interventions can be.

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And the idea is that to a larger degree than people had once realized, these are the underlying causes of chronic diseases that are the major causes of premature death in this country: what we eat, how we respond to stress, how much exercise we get, and perhaps most important, how much love and support we have. It's eat well, move more, stress less, and love more, and the idea is that to

the degree that you're able to make these changes, there's a corresponding benefit. It's not all or nothing. But we were able to show that you could actually not only prevent but actually reverse so many chronic diseases.

There's an emerging field called "lifestyle medicine" which is using lifestyle to actually treat disease either in combination with drugs and surgery or often as an alternative to them, and not just to slow down the rate of progression but actually to reverse it so that instead of getting worse and worse over time, that many people can actually get better and better, and instead of -- when people get put on drugs to lower their cholesterol or their blood pressure or their blood sugar and the patient says, "How long do I have to take these?" the doctor usually says, "Forever." And we're saying, "Well, wait a minute."

Sometimes, when I lecture I'll show a cartoon of doctors busily mopping up the floor around a sink that's overflowing. It's like, "How long do I have to mop up the floor?" It's like, "Forever!" Well, why don't we just turn off the faucet? And again, the faucet is really, to a larger degree than people had once realized, are these lifestyle choices, and what we found over and over is that if you can make big enough changes in diet and lifestyle, that under your doctor's supervision you can often reduce and even get off these medications that you were told that you might have to take forever.

Gay: I wanted to also ask Anne. Anne, what was your entry point into all of this? Did you come in through the avenue of yoga? Could you say a little bit about that?

Anne: It's an interesting question and the weaving continues to happen there, but initially, Dean and I began working together when he had a lifestyle channel with WebMD. And so I became the producer of that lifestyle channel and that included creating content around the four equally weighted pillars of the program, stress management being derived from the yoga tradition being one of those pillars, which was a large extent of my background.

And so this is over 20 years ago. At the time, I think there's probably many people that are listening to this talk right now and struggle with being spiritual people that are very conscious about their mind, their body, their emotions, their spirit, and how they can find a livelihood that allows them to be in sync with that and not make compromises. So over 20 years ago, I can't tell you how meaningful it was for me to have met Dean and feel that I didn't have to make a compromise in my web production career and the actual content that we're delivering and the mission of empowering people to transform their lives.

So I was able to bring my background in yoga and meditation to the work that I was doing as a web producer, and then over the years have largely played the role of directing our digital platform and its derivations and at the same time

have created several hours of guided meditations and asana practices for the purposes of managing stress that's so well-documented at this point and it's contributing to chronic conditions. So I've been able to work in those parallel pathways. It's been very synergistic.

Katie: It is so interesting, Anne and Dean, that you both work together. Gay and I have worked together from the time we met each other, and we met each other really bringing my passion for movement and Gay's passion for breathwork together and wrote 20 years ago now a book called *At the Speed of Life*, which really focuses in our own way on the four pillars that you're talking about. So I'm so delighted to hear especially that things don't have to keep getting worse.

So I think for people who are in their 50s, 60s and beyond, the cultural norm is that you're basically going to just keep losing function until you disappear, and I am very interested in the specific ways in which you've seen that paradigm start to shift as a result of all the work you've been doing.

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Dean: Well, it's true, and I think that it's really empowering many people to realize that you don't have to have the steady life of decline, that you can what's called sometimes as "squaring the curve." In other words, you can lead a vigorous life and then when you're in your 90s or whenever it happens to be, then you just have a week or so where you die. You don't have the slow, steady deterioration over a period of decades, and I think that's --

I mean, the reason that Anne and I are so passionate about doing this work together after many decades of doing this is that it's really fun and rewarding to empower at this point many millions of people with information that can transform their lives for the better, not to blame but to empower. You mentioned earlier that we've shown that we can actually change our genes when you change your lifestyle, and so often people were told, "Oh, I've just got bad genes. There's not much I can do about it," and very educated people are often told that.

When President Clinton's bypass was clogged up about five-and-a-half years ago, even he was told, "Oh, it's all in your genes. There's nothing you can do about it," and I sent him an email and I said, "Well, actually, there's a lot you can do about it," and I said, "It's not to blame but to empower, because if it's all in your genes, then you're just a victim and you're the last person on the planet. You're one of those powerful guys in the world who should be a victim."

So we met and he began eating a whole-foods, plant-based diet and meditating and exercising and doing things like that, and I think whatever your politics, that really sets a great example for everyone. And we were able to reveal -- the studies that we'd done, for example, are not only showing that heart disease can

be reversed, but also that the -- we'd done the studies showing that in just three months of making these lifestyle changes, over 500 genes were changed and in every circumstance in a positive and beneficial direction, in effect turning on or upregulating the genes that protect us and keep us healthy and turning off or downregulating the genes, particularly the ones that cause heart disease, oxidative stress, inflammation, prostate/breast/colon cancer, diabetes and so on, over 500 genes in just three months. So our genes are predisposition, but in most cases our genes are not our fate, and that's very empowering.

We even published a study last year with Elizabeth Blackburn, who got the Nobel Prize in medicine for discovering telomerase and telomeres, the ends of our chromosomes that control aging, how long we live. As we get older, telomeres tend to get shorter, and as our telomeres get shorter, our lives tend to get shorter and the risk of premature death from just about everything goes up. But we found that instead of getting shorter, that we could actually lengthen them. In fact, it's the only intervention -- including drugs or surgery -- that's been actually shown in a controlled study to make your telomeres longer, in a sense beginning to reverse aging at the cellular level.

And so we've been looking at these very esoteric mechanisms using these very state-of-the-art, scientific measures that I alluded to earlier, and what's so interesting to me is that it's not like there's one set of lifestyle recommendations for reversing heart disease and a different one for diabetes, and a different one for prostate or breast cancer or gene expression or telomeres or whatever it happens to be, it's basically the same lifestyle recommendations for all of them, and the more you change, the more you improve at any age, which is a very empowering realization for people that understand.

So something as simple as a whole-foods, plant-based diet that's also low in refined carbs and sugar, moderate exercise, just walking half-an-hour a day, various yoga and meditation techniques to help up manage stress and re-experience an inner source of peace and joy and well-being, and perhaps most important, how much love and support we get from other people.

It's so easy to make fun of these ideas as being touchy-feely, and years ago I used to get defensive when people say, "Oh, you're so touchy-feely. You live in California. It's an altered state," and all that kind of stuff, and I get defensive and I say, "No, no, no! Look at our science. Look at our arteriograms. Look at our PET scans. Look at our radionuclide ventriculograms," on and on. And one day, I said, "It is touchy-feely. That's what makes it work so well. We're touchy-feely creatures. We're creatures of community."

I wrote a book about this many years ago called *Love and Survival* -- I guess this happened 17 years ago -- and it was reviewing what were then hundreds and

literally thousands of studies showing that people who are lonely, depressed and isolated, which I think is the real epidemic in our culture, are three to ten times more likely to get sick and die prematurely than those who have a sense of love and connection to community, in part because you're more likely to abuse yourself, in part through mechanisms we don't fully understand.

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And so even though -- when most people think about our work, they think about diet, and diet is important but it's probably the least interesting part of our work. What Anne and I are most interested in is to help people use the experience of suffering as a doorway and as a catalyst for transforming their lives for the better; because change is hard, but if you're hurting enough and people can say, "Look, if you're willing to make different changes, you can reduce or get rid of this pain," then the pain itself can become a very powerful doorway for transforming their lives for the better.

Gay: We see the same thing in relationship too, that we often say to people to use the difficult things that come up in relationships as a springboard to transformation, not as a propellant to get out of the relationship, because oftentimes the very thing that's most troubling to you has the most illuminating potential in terms of transforming the relationship.

One of the things I wanted to also -- Katie and I have often talked about how it's the small choices you make, and one of the things that I appreciate about your work, Anne and Dean, is that you focus on the choices people make, like the Clinton example you just gave was a perfect example of that, that he had been thinking of himself as the victim of genetics and was led to think that way, and to suddenly have a different way to go about it is incredibly empowering.

Katie and I were making a list before our conversation about things that we just choose to do on a daily basis, like I don't think either of us have missed a day of meditation in 30 years probably.

Katie: In 30-plus years.

Gay: Yeah, 30-plus years, and I just went to the gym this morning at 9:00 a.m., worked out for an hour, and I found that -- I just turned 70 and I found that for the last four years, doing a little bit of resistance training every week is like a big stretch for me. I was kind of a pudgy intellectual for much of life, and to now invent a body with muscles, that's a really transformative thing for me.

Katie: I know! He's become a hunk!

Gay: So I just wanted to ask you folks to float out some of the daily lifestyle choices you personally make that contribute to your sense of invigorating here in the wisdom years.

Anne: Thank you for the opportunity because this is one of our favorite topics.

Katie: Oh, good!

Anne: Yes, Dean and I have hit some milestone birthdays recently ourselves, and I think that we strongly feel that our best days are still ahead of us. I think on a daily routine level, we definitely pay attention to what we eat and -- I mean, there's no alternative there. There's such a rapid mind-body experience with food that that's very easy. We know what really energizes us and makes us feel spry and ready for whatever is coming our way.

I would say fitness is definitely in that as well, and to whatever extent we're able to take mindful moments throughout the day and return to the breath, sometimes have us time to take those three signal breaths that bring us back to our uneven keel, and that's very powerful. Sometimes we have the luxury of being able to do a full hour of meditation or yoga, whatever we have time for, but the importance is to realize that without guilt or shame that everyone needs to just do the best they can every day. If you only have five minutes, use those five minutes. It will definitely be meaningful.

But lastly, I do want to say maybe most importantly is I feel like the connective tissue and the glue for all of this is the love and support element, and Dean and I start every morning with the love and gratitude in our hearts, just really telling each other and our children, starting the day each day from that place of love and gratitude for getting to share another day of this life together and to let each other know how loved we all are, and ending every day in that way.

Then for Dean and I as a couple, we try to make time for more days than not each week, if not every day -- it would have to be because we were traveling or something -- but every day that we're able to, we carve out at least an hour to be together in ways that allows us to come back to that loving place and stay connected in a very intimate way, and having so many other couple friends that can see how happy and in love that we are, so this perpetual honeymoon, and they ask, "How do you that?" And I really think that it's making each other a priority, just as any other important meeting or appointment that happens in a day, is that we know that we are each other's priority and that we have to honor that every day in order for this magic to still be activated.

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So I think there are many different ways in which we'll spend that time together, but it's turning off the outside world and turning on the intimate world between

us. That in and of itself, it almost doesn't even matter what we do. Whether it's taking a bath or making love or just having a deep listening and connecting or snuggling time, all of that gets the same benefits of really the heart of our lives leading the way.

Katie: Yeah, that's so beautiful, and it sounds like you're talking about what is sometimes called in the literature "turning toward" which we have just found so important in our relationship and in our counseling of other people, especially if they're getting into the wisdom years, that the more that you make your relationship, whether it's with a primary mate or with close friends, making that a priority, and also we go in through the doorway of appreciation. So developing a habit of appreciating and looking for new things to appreciate really creates that magic of connection and that feeling of support.

So I really appreciate hearing the different ways, the different choices that you make, especially making your relationship a priority. We find that people, if they've been in a long-term relationship or they're in the wisdom years, that often the business of life and the things that need to be attended to, they give the relationship a backseat for "when I have time."

Dean: Right.

Katie: And what I hear you saying is that when you make your relationships your first priority, then everything else can really bloom.

Dean: Well, it's true, and part of what we're learning is that awareness is really the first step in healing. When you see the research showing that -- we tend to think, as you mentioned earlier, that the time we spend with our friends and families are like the luxuries of life that you do after you've done all the important stuff, and then you realize it is the important stuff, that there's nothing in medicine, not diet, not exercise, not even smoking that affects our health and our well-being and even our longevity as much as love and support, and when we realize that, then we can make different choices.

Now, clearly Anne and I choose to spend time with each other not just because we want to live longer but because there's no one I'd rather be with. It's just so much fun. And part of what I think we're both learning is that there's this big myth out there that with all these hookups that people are doing on Tinder or Grindr, all those kinds of things that the -- and growing up in the '60s and '70s with the whole Playboy philosophy and all that, and if it feels good, do it, that the more people that you can be with in a romantic way, the more fun you're going to have and the more free you are.

But part of what actually more and more people are beginning to realize is that when you fully commit to one person, not of the sense of limiting yourself or depriving yourself or the ball-and-chain but rather you can only really be intimate with someone to the degree that you can open your heart to them and be vulnerable emotionally, and you can only do that to the degree that you feel safe. So when two people, as Anne and I have done, make an invaluable commitment to each other, the paradox is that it actually creates so many more degrees of freedom, that rather than digging a lot of shallow wells that you never reach water, that you dig one deep one and you reach the wellspring, or having the same kind of shallow experience with different people that you have this incredibly rich and varied and intensely erotic and powerful and passionate experience that's continually varying with the same person, and it all comes out of that sense of trust and integrity and commitment.

It's a revelation for a lot of people when they realize that true freedom comes from being able to make that kind of commitment, to freely make that commitment, not because someone is forcing you to or something bad is going to happen to you, you're going to go to hell or those kinds of external things, but rather you realize that what you gain is so much more than what you give up. When you consciously choose not to do something that you otherwise could do, it imbues it with great meaning.

I mean, for example, from a dietary standpoint, all spiritual and religious traditions just about have dietary guidelines and they're often different from each other. In one religion you can eat this but not that, or after certain times of day, or after midnight but not before, or different times of the year or whatever, and it's like, "What's going on here? Is God confused?"

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And what I'm really interested in is this idea that when you consciously choose not to eat something, for example, or not to have sex with lots of different people, or not to -- whatever it is that you're choosing not to do, that on the one hand you could say that, "Oh, I'm depriving myself," and that's the big idea with diet is like why would you deprive yourself when you can eat everything that you want?

But if what you gain is so much more than what you give up -- I mean, I mentioned President Clinton earlier. When I met with him five years ago, I asked him the same question I ask almost everyone that I work with, which is, "Why do you want to live longer?" There's an assumption that people want to live longer. But there's so much depression out there that oftentimes people say, "Hey, I'm just trying to get through the day." And he said, "Well, I want to live longer because I want to walk my daughter down the aisle and I want to see my grandkids born," and now he has.

So that makes these changes meaningful, and if they're meaningful, then they're sustainable as opposed to feeling like, "Oh, I can't do certain things, or I can't be with certain people," to say, "Well, I'm choosing not to do that because what I gain in terms of my health, my well-being..." Even the intensely erotic pleasures that come from being able to open your heart and your body so fully to another person that you just can't do if you don't have that underlying commitment is really what makes it joyful, and if it's joyful and it's meaningful and it's pleasurable, then it's sustainable.

And likewise, our support groups are really based on the idea that they're not just helping people stay on the diet like most support groups. It's a safe environment where people make a commitment to "what goes in the group stays in the group." So anything that someone talks about, if they know that they have that same commitment, they'll feel safe, that they can make themselves vulnerable.

Somebody might say, "Oh, I might look like the perfect parent, but my kids are on drugs," or "I might look like I'm really successful, but I've been bankrupt for years," whatever happens to be, and instead of someone else saying, "Oh! Well, why don't you send him to a drug rehab program?" -- or whatever, just give them glib advice -- they'll listen. They'll focus on what feeling does that invoke in them and they might say, "Gosh, that feels terrible! I'm so sorry to hear that!" or "Gosh! My kid has another problem," or they might say, "I used to have a drug problem," or they might say, "I have other issues."

Just to be in an environment where you can let down your emotional defenses and talk openly and authentically about what's going on in your life without fear that someone's going to judge you or abandon you or give you glib advice on how to fix it is incredibly meaningful. We have people who have been in our studies more than 25 years ago and the study ended decades ago and they're still meeting once a month with each other just because it was so powerful for them to have that experience, which we used to get through our extended families, through our neighborhoods or a job that you've been at for decades, and many people don't have any of those things.

So that's one of the reasons that we're so passionate about doing this work. It's not just -- because even if you can help people reverse their heart disease, they're still going to die eventually of something, so what's the point, right? It's not just how long we live, it's how well we live, and by teaching people that the more compassionate they are with each other and with other people and themselves, the more loving they are, the more fun they're going to have, and by the way, they'll probably live longer too, and that we can use these high-tech, scientific measures to actually prove that is, for many people, a doorway into transforming their lives that goes way beyond just, say, unclogging their arteries.

Gay: Yes. One of the things that one of you mentioned a little while back was that awareness is the first step, and I wanted to have you talk a little bit more about how that shows up and how you see people -- like, for example, I've had the kind of awarenesses where I got a piece of wisdom and applied it, but then there have been other times in my life when I seemed to have to create a major crisis in order to provoke growth.

Like for example, I reinvented my body five or six years ago because I went one time to the doctor to have a physical and I saw that scale whiz past 200 and land on 218, and I had this panic because I was one of those people that never weighed themselves or anything like that. So that woke me up and sent me down a particular path. So I just wanted to elaborate a little bit on the whole process of waking up and awareness.

Dean: Sure. Well, the often quoted idea that crisis in Chinese is the same as opportunity is really true. Not that I would ever tell somebody who's had a heart attack, "Oh! What this opportunity you've had!" That'd be a good opportunity for them to give me a nice Hawaiian punch. But the idea is that pain can be a real powerful way of getting our attention.

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It's not something that I was trained to do as a doctor to help people use the experience of pain as a doorway for transforming their lives. It's really more like how do we kill it or numb it or bypass it. But it is that because change can be hard, but if you're in enough pain, suddenly the idea of change becomes more attractive. It's like, "Well, I'm hurting so bad but, well, I really just would like to change but, well, it's so hard. But I'm hurting so bad. Let me try this weird stuff."

And then when people change their lifestyle and they start to feel so much better, they often even say things like, "Having a heart attack was the best thing that ever happened to me," or "Being diagnosed with prostate cancer really was my doorway, what really woke me up." And you want to go, "What? Are you nuts?" and they'd say, "No. That's what it took to get my attention to begin changing my life," much as it was for you standing on a scale. You didn't have to wait until you got worse of it -- some people might do -- but that was your doorway.

Now, at the same time, information, as important as it is, is not usually sufficient to motivate most people to change. I mean, if it were, nobody would smoke. It's not like people go -- I'd say to a patient, "Oh, I want you to quit smoking. Did you know it's bad for you?" They go, "I didn't know that. I'll quit today." It's on every package of cigarettes. So information is important but it's not usually sufficient.

There's this whole quantified self-movement of, "Let's just measure everything," and so many of these iPhone and Android apps are really just about that. And there's some utility in that -- as for you, measuring your weight was something that got your attention -- but generally requires more than that for people to make sustainable changes, but awareness is the first step.

Katie: In that regard --

Anne: If I could just add one --

Katie: Yeah, please. I was wanting to hear from you on that, Anne.

Anne: A little game that I like to play with myself that I feel is pretty functional is assuming positive intent with the world around me, and so if something, some stumbling stone has come into my path, how can I relate to that stumbling stone as a stepping stone, and that everything is conspiring for my highest and I just have to -- if I can approach it that way and turn into it in that way, lean into it in that way, the world is my oyster and there is so much that we can provide from these life experiences in sometimes the most unexpected circumstances, but that if we choose to live our lives with that sense of positive intent about the people that are around us and the world itself, it's a spiritual thing.

And some people do feel jaded and that it's a zero-sum game and all of that, and those are usually the people who end up being taken down by a lot of chronic conditions. If you feel like you're a victim, then ultimately you will become a victim, but if you feel like a victor and that's your positive intent, then often that takes care of itself.

Katie: Yes. I was thinking as you were saying that, Annie and Dean, that how we experience that with people and ourselves is moving from criticism, the kind of chronic criticism and outsourcing of authority and approval, shifting from that into wonder, and how to turn off or shift that critical mechanism into curiosity especially as it relates to what's going on in your body as you're aging and different signals arise, how do you open up to continuous learning?

One of the values that's made a huge difference for us is putting a priority on learning something new. Even in my exercising, I just shifted from 20 years of pilates into more of this new, functional exercise where I'm getting my butt kicked and really learning a whole, new dimensionality, and it's been very exciting for my nervous system. So I was wondering too what are some ways that listeners can actually open an awareness that's more infused with positive intent, more infused with a kind of curiosity rather than a chronic, "Don't do this. That's bad. Do less of that"?

Dean: Yeah. Well, that's something we've learned over the years that I've written a lot about in my more recent books like *The Spectrum*, which is that what enables people to make sustainable changes is not fear and punitive approaches, which is so often how people are trying, "Put that cigarette down. You're going to get lung cancer. Don't eat that cheeseburger. You're going to get a heart attack," and it's just it's not --

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I mean, in the short run, fear is a great motivator but it only lasts about four to six weeks. After someone's had a heart attack or whatever, they'll do pretty much anything that their doctor or nurse tells them for a month or so and then they go back to what they were doing; because we're all going to die, that mortality rate is still 100%, it's one per person, but people don't like to think about that something bad might happen to them and so they don't.

It's why the adherence to Lipitor and other statin drugs are like two-thirds of the people who are prescribed these drugs aren't taking them just after a year even if someone else is paying for them and even if they don't have side effects because they're fear-based. "Take this pill. It's not going to make you feel better. Hopefully, it won't make you feel worse to prevent something really awful that you don't want to think about -- like a heart attack or stroke -- from happening years down the road."

But fear of dying isn't sustainable but joy of living is, and by the way, it's one of the reasons why I think that as powerful as Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" was, people got all excited about it and after a few months, people went back to what they were doing because it's just too scary to think the whole planet may implode, so people just tune it out. But while fear of dying is not sustainable, joy of living is, and the kinds of things that you've talked about, that you make these changes because they make life more fun, they make it more pleasurable, you can think more clearly, you have more energy, you have better sex, you can work without pain, you can do all the things that make life fun, what you gain is so much more than what you give up, and because these underlying biological mechanisms are so dynamic, you don't have to wait very long to see the benefits.

I mean, within hours your brain gets more blood flow. The latest studies are showing you can actually grow some new brain neurons in just a couple of months is your brain can get measurably bigger, particularly those parts of your brain that you want to get bigger like the area of your brain called the "hippocampus" that controls memory and so on.

So the more we're learning, the more we're finding what you're also stating, which is that what really makes these changes sustainable is not fear, it's love and pleasure and joy and a sense of freedom.

Gay: We wanted to ask you a question that we're asking everyone in these conversations, and that's given what you've talked about and thought about with us so far, what is the one thing that you'd like to leave us with today or a next step our listeners can do to make these changes in their own lives?

Dean: Well, as I mentioned earlier, eat well, stress less, love more, and move more. To the degree that you can do those things, there's a corresponding benefit. It's not all or nothing. If you're trying to reverse a life-threatening condition, you really do have to make pretty intense changes. That's why we're the first to prove that is because most people didn't go far enough.

But for most of your listeners, it's not all or nothing. What matters most is your overall way of eating and living. So if you indulge yourself one day, eat healthier the next. If you don't have time to meditate for an hour, do it for a minute. If you don't have time to walk for half an hour, do it for -- whatever you can do, there's a corresponding benefit, and then you can't fail. Even if you go on a diet, you're going to go off a diet, and you have all these toxic emotions -- I mean, the whole language of behavioral change has all these judgmental, moralistic, "I cheated on my diet. I ate bad foods. I'm a bad person," all that kind of stuff.

This is a much more compassionate approach. To the degree you can make these changes, you're going to feel better, you're going to look better, and in every metric we found, you're going to be better in ways we can measure.

Katie: And one of the other things that I'm hearing from both of you is that as you're doing these things that your experience in your body becomes so much more pleasurable that the motivation grows really from almost the first moment. And I was wondering, Anne, if you would share some of the resources that you have on your website that people could use to help sustain these kinds of changes.

Anne: Thank you, yes. Well, yeah, even if you want to just start exploring what it's like to have a plant-based way of eating, we have a recipedia that has over 200 recipes created by our in-house chef that includes cooking demonstrations and some other -- how to stock your fridge and how to shop at a grocery store or what kinds of staples do you need. We've got lots of great resources at the recipedia on our website, Ornish.com.

Then there's also a video library there that includes an hour of stress management, an hour of various types of fitness workouts that include a warm-up and a cool-down, and then there's over two hours of guided meditations that give people the opportunity to explore and really to discover all of these inner resources and to really galvanize their biofeedback that they're experiencing of

the cause-and-effect of their behaviors and in the most positive way. All the side effects are good ones.

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You might want to start just having the Meatless Monday, and use the recipedia to find some of your favorites like lasagna or a Caesar salad, but to do them knowing that all of the ingredients have been proven to improve our health significantly, even reverse chronic conditions. And then to -- you don't have to do the full hour-practice. There are mini meditations and mini, little asana sets that you could do in three minutes or five minutes.

So if you anticipate having some time during a lunch break or while your kids aren't around, whatever it may be, that you can insert those five minutes, and instead of them being a multitasking that ends up feeling more frayed at the end that if we can take those times to take care of ourselves, then we can take care of those around us and really flower our life experience.

Katie: Wonderful! There are so many rich resources that you provide. It's such a contribution both to people individually but I think also to the culture, and I want to celebrate your commitment and your perseverance over all these years in bringing a message of expansion and of the possibility of living a joyful life all the way through your life. I so appreciate you taking the time to share all of that with us today.

Dean: Well, you're so sweet. It has been hard, but it's really rewarding doing this work, and we took 16 years of review from Medicare before they finally agreed to cover our program. But now they are, and as a result, most of the other insurance companies are covering it. So we're really trying to create a new paradigm of health care that enables people to have the support and now enables doctors to return to our roots of healing, of why we went into medicine in the first place.

If you only have eight minutes to spend with a patient, you don't really have time to talk about what's going on in their lives, and at home, and at work, and at school, and in their diet, and their stresses, and on the relationships, and so on. But now, Medicare is paying for 72 hours of training for each person. So we're really creating a whole, new paradigm of health care, and we're partnered with a company called Healthways. Go to Healthyways.com.

Everything on our website, if you go to Ornish.com, is free. There's an online support group and community. There's recipes, as Anne mentioned, and guided meditations, and how to exercise, and all the research that we've talked about is there in its original PDF format.

So it's a conspiracy of love in many ways because we're really trying to create an infrastructure that for both doctors and patients enables us to really address the roots of illness, and therefore the roots of healing, to provide people the information and the support that they need to use the experience of illness or suffering as a doorway or as a catalyst for transforming their lives, and with it to transform the medical system. There's a convergence of forces that really make this the right idea at the right time, at the same time that the limitations of drugs and surgery are becoming increasingly well documented.

For example, the randomized trials have shown that stents and angioplasties really don't prolong life or prevent heart attacks in stable patients. The power of lifestyle changes through our studies and now others' is also becoming more apparent, and because of ObamaCare, the incentives are now aligned, because before, the more procedures and hospitalizations, the more revenue you generated. Now, it's more there are incentives for keeping people out of the hospital and for empowering them with information that they can use to transform their lives for the better. So we feel very fortunate that all these forces are finally converging that make this the right idea at the right time.

Gay: Well, thank you so much, Anne and Dean, for sharing your wisdom so generously with us, and thank you all for listening to the program. It's going to be a really powerful, whole summit on body intelligence and this is just one part of it. So we invite you all to tune in for the next session. So thanks once again, Dean and Anne Ornish.

Katie: Thank you for the inspiration, you two.

Allison: Thank you for joining us for the Body Intelligence Summit brought to you by The Shift Network. For more information about joining our global community dedicated to helping people awaken to their divine humanity and take inspired action, visit www.theshiftnetwork.com.

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