



Transcript: #445 Intuitive Fasting with Dr. Will Cole

Dr. Wendy Myers:

Hello everyone, I'm Dr. Wendy Myers; welcome to the Myers Detox podcast. On the show today, we have Dr. Will Cole. I just love him so much, I love his energy, and we talk about intuitive fasting. He's written a new [book](#) called "Intuitive Fasting," and we talk about that and his thoughts on exactly what people are getting wrong about fasting. We talk about how to do intuitive fasting, how to try fasting again, if it hasn't worked for you, or if it was just too hard. We talk about the four foods that wreck your gut that you want to avoid. We talk about the health problems linked to poor gut health, and there's a lot of them. We talk about how poor gut health dramatically influences your mental and emotional health and why you also need to work on emotional trauma to truly heal physically. Lots of great info on the show today.

Dr. Wendy Myers:

I know you guys listening are concerned about your body's burden of toxins and how to detox your body. That's why you're listening. I created a quiz called heavymetalsquiz.com. It just takes a couple of minutes to take. Once you take that quiz, you'll find out your relative body burden of toxins and get a free video series afterward that gives you your results and answers your most frequently asked questions about detoxification. How long does it take? What's the best testing to do to find out your heavy metals? What type of supplements should you detox with? What works, what doesn't, do's and don'ts of detoxification, lots of great info for you at heavymetalsquiz.com.

Dr. Wendy Myers:

Our guest today on the show, Dr. Will Cole, is a leading functional medicine expert who consults people around the globe, starting one of the first functional medicine telehealth centers in the world over a decade ago. He's also been named one of the nation's top 50 functional and integrative doctors. He specifically specializes in clinically investigating underlying factors of chronic disease and customizing a functional medicine approach for thyroid issues, autoimmune conditions, hormonal imbalances, digestive disorders, and brain

problems. He is also the host of the popular "[The Art of Wellbeing](#)" podcast and was the co-host of Gwyneth Paltrow's lifestyle brand Goop's first spinoff podcast, "The Goop Fellas" podcast. He's also the best-selling author of "[Keto-Tarian](#)," "[The Inflammation Spectrum](#)," and the New York Times best-seller, "[Intuitive Fasting](#)." You can learn more about Dr. Cole and his work at drwillcole.com.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Dr. Cole, thank you so much for coming to the show.

Dr. Will Cole: Oh my goodness, thanks so much for having me.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Tell me a little about what inspired you to take on functional medicine, flip the switch on that, and start a virtual telemedicine clinic.

Dr. Will Cole: I've always been passionate about health. I've lived and breathed it in many ways since I was a teenager. I think, as a dad now of two teenagers, I think, "I was a really weird kid." I used to work at the Finish Line in high school, selling tennis shoes. I was 16 years old and used my paychecks to go to the health food store and buy the latest superfood that I read about, the latest vegetable, supplement, or whatever powder I was reading about. I was biohacking. There wasn't a term for that. I was just gigging out on health stuff. That evolved to me wanting to be formally trained on this and just immersed myself in getting people healthy.

Dr. Will Cole: Functional medicine was the best avenue to do it because I love science, labs, data, and getting to the root cause. It was the perfect synergy of the best of both worlds, in my opinion. The best of evidence-based medicine, which is looking at labs, and looking at data, and comparing a baseline with intervention, and seeing the data improve as you get somebody healthy, and the best of health, that wellness world, which is actually getting to the root cause, and not just covering it up with proverbial band-aids. I graduated from school and wouldn't shut up about functional medicine. I'd write about it; I speak about it online. This was 12 plus years ago, at this point. We started what we called at the time a virtual functional medicine clinic because it wasn't a language of telehealth, but it was people in different states and countries that needed access to this exciting healthcare field, and we were in charge of getting them healthy.

Dr. Will Cole: For the past 12 years, I've done the exact same thing, which is stuck in this room, but I love what I do because I get to talk to people just like we're talking right now, online, and we ship labs to them, and we get them healthy. We started one of the first functional medicine telehealth centers 12 years ago by accident, just because I was in Pittsburgh. A lot of people weren't in Pittsburgh, and they needed access to this field of healthcare.

Dr. Wendy Myers: You took this on the way before a lot of people because it's so much more convenient. So many people don't have access to functional medical care, or

even conventional Medicare, in some of the places where you're probably helping clients.

Dr. Will Cole: 100%. Most of our patients are in middle America. They don't have massive access to wellness at large, certainly not in functional medicine. We've been doing this for so long, and again, it wasn't anything other than just me seeing a need and seeing people that were in the middle of the country or in Mexico. We have a lot of patients in Mexico, or a lot of patients in Canada, that are in remote areas that want to run labs, want to learn about their health and want to get to the root cause. This isn't just a LA or New York thing; it shouldn't be. I love what I get to do. It's really a sacred responsibility for me.

Dr. Wendy Myers: What made you venture from conventional medicine into functional medicine?

Dr. Will Cole: I went to an integrated medicine school. I went to the Southern California University of health sciences, outside of Los Angeles, in Whittier. There are MDs, DCEs, acupuncturists, and Oriental medicine. They have a nurse practitioner school, they have acupuncture/Oriental medicine, they have doctor's chiropractic, and they have lots of different modalities within there. I knew I didn't want to go the conventional medicine route. As brilliant as many doctors are, they've really trained nothing in nutrition. I cite studies in my books that show the average doctor trained conventionally would fail a basic nutrition test. To me, it wasn't the path for me. If I was fascinated and obsessed with nutrition, wellness, and health, I needed to go down schooling and training that actually focused on that.

Dr. Will Cole: It was just different tools within the toolbox that I wanted to focus on. That's why, honestly, most of my colleagues within functional medicine actually are conventionally trained through the Institute for Functional Medicine and other similar institutes, which I'm also trained through them, too. I have to say when I started doing my postdoctoral training in functional medicine, and most of my colleagues were conventionally trained, they had to start from square one. Whereas it was a lot of repeat information for me. It was cool to hear it again, but they have to start from basically the kindergarten of nutrition, with a lot of these conventional doctors. I say that with respect. They're brilliant; they're just not trained in this stuff.

Dr. Will Cole: It was never a thing for me because I knew what I'd get out of the education, which is basically diagnosing a disease and matching it with medication. That's the training in the conventional model, and it just didn't interest me.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Yeah, it's just grossly wanting, for sure.

Dr. Will Cole: Yeah.

Dr. Wendy Myers: You're really big on fasting. Why are you such a big proponent of fasting, and what are some of the things that people get wrong about fasting?

Dr. Will Cole: When I mentioned being a teenager going to the health food store, I read a book called "Patient Heal Thyself." It was written by Jordan Rubin. I'm friendly with Jordan Rubin, and I tell him, 20-plus years later, "You changed my life with this book in the nineties." He said, "Thanks for making me feel so old," because this book is such an old, obscure book. It was before it was even published. It was a self-published, random book. He talked about how he used different things within health and wellness, but fasting was one of them. How he used it to heal, help heal, and be a tool to heal his autoimmune condition. It was ulcerative colitis, Crohn's, or some sort of inflammatory bowel issue.

Dr. Will Cole: That was my first awareness of what fasting was. Obviously, I knew about it from a spiritual side of things, too. The research is so fascinating to me. It's something that I've implemented in my own life since I was a teenager, again, a weird kid. But, for the past 12 years clinically, really getting to see labs and track a lot of N-of-1 experiments, just clinically getting to move the needle. Fasting is a wonderful tool to consider for anybody struggling with different inflammatory problems, gut health problems, metabolic issues, and fatigue issues. There's science and art to it. It's not a one size fits all, and that's another major aspect of why I love functional medicine. It is bio-individuality, and there's not going to be a cookie-cutter approach to anything within health and wellness. You can have the best thing in the world for somebody, and how it plays in somebody else's life is going to probably look different in how they do it, or even if they should do it at all if it is going to be a needle mover for them.

Dr. Will Cole: Fasting is certainly subject to that principle of bio-individuality. That's where I feel a lot of people go wrong, as they think that because they heard it on a podcast, they read about it in a book, or read it on a blog, that's the exact way they should do it. That's why I actually wrote "Intuitive Fasting," which is my newest book. That's why it's something that I've talked about for patients for so long. That concept of intuitive fasting, checking in with my body. Be your own N of one experiment, instead of thinking what one size fits all. That is the science and art of this, and I really think that people need to fine-tune it.

Dr. Will Cole: A lot of times, people will say, "That fasting thing didn't work for me," or "It's not for me," but they didn't give it enough time. To me, it's like saying that working out is not for them, and some people would say that, too. "Working out isn't for me." I was like, "No, you just didn't stick with it. Maybe you weren't good at it at first because it's something new," or someone's really metabolically inflexible, and it isn't going to be easy at first, just like when you've never worked out, and you go to the gym, it's not going to necessarily be easy. Or, you were doing too much, and you weren't doing the right thing for your body. That is the fine-tuning and optimization, I love figuring out for people. When you curate the best form for their body, at this point in their healing journey, it's exciting and works for them sustainably. It's a source of enhancement in their life, not some sort of arduous detraction.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Yeah. When I first started fasting, my first time, by 1:00 PM, I started getting a really bad headache, and I was like, "That's enough of that."

Dr. Will Cole: Yeah.

Dr. Wendy Myers: "I don't need to try that." That was very healthy at the time, and I'd been ducing, and doing all kinds of stuff. I can only imagine what someone starting with a standard American diet feels like when they first begin fasting. Can you talk about easing into it, maybe some tips for people?

Dr. Will Cole: Sure. There are so many different types of fasting, but the way that I explore it in "Intuitive Fasting" is a specific subset of fasting called time-restricted feeding, or time compressed feeding. That field of research in the scientific literature really isn't looking at any significant caloric restriction, and that's the conflation, I think, that some people make, as they think it's just dieting or cutting calories, and it really isn't. That doesn't mean that there may be a slight caloric deficit in some studies, and that may be a fringe benefit for people that have a calorie surplus. That certainly is a part of it, but that's not the main mechanism researchers are looking at. They're really looking at the modulation of the gut microbiome. Our gut microbiome, depending on the study that you look at, has a hundred trillion bacteria.

Dr. Will Cole: We have about 10 trillion human cells. We're about 10 times more bacteria than human. It modulates our immune system. Inflammation, which is a product of the immune system, most health problems that we face as a society are inflammatory. Your gut influences your brain; 95% of serotonin is made in your gut. Many things like anxiety, depression, and fatigue have a lot of gut-centric components to it. You're dealing with autoimmune issues, brain health issues, mental health issues, and hormonal issues, and a lot of hormones are converted in the gut. And, of course, metabolic issues like type two diabetes, PCOS, and weight loss resistance. Fasting, and when we eat, not just what we eat, but when we eat, has been shown, in several studies coming out of the journals, really has an influence on how this gut clock, this gut circadian rhythm, this microbiome circadian rhythm, can be reset by when we eat, not just what we eat.

Dr. Will Cole: Really, looking at how we can optimize what we eat, and when we eat, there's a lot of magic there. There's a lot of agency that we have over our health. An easy way to do it, super easy, is a 12/12. If somebody's never done fasting at all, this is the first time they've ever done it, and they are, "Okay, let's lean into it," I would say, looking at a 24-hour clock, and if you say a 12/12, that's a 12 hour eating window, and a 12 hour fasting window. That's very simple. Is it too simple for some people? Probably. But, for the real beginner/novice, I would say 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM. Just allow a couple of hours after dinner before you go to bed because you're going to want to be fasting through the night before you break the fast at breakfast the next morning. There's a lot of compelling research. Just that alone, just allowing a good night's sleep of not

late night snacking and binging, can really do a great thing to allow your gut circadian rhythm to reset through the night.

Dr. Will Cole: From there, leaning into a 16/8 or an 18/6, which is a 16 or 18-hour fasting window, and a six to eight-hour eating window, I find that most people, once they get past that 12/12, can really lean into that, and that really focuses on cardio-metabolic health. Really, there's a lot of research looking at improving your metabolism, improving your gut health, and improving inflammation levels in some studies. From there, you can dip even more. There's OMAD, which is one meal a day. These are different types of time-compressed feeding that I'm exploring in "Intuitive Fasting." These vacillating, cyclical, ebbing, flowing, eating, and fasting windows are not always the same.

Dr. Will Cole: They're intermittent. They're intermittent cycles of intermittent fasting, which I find, in a way, for someone that's metabolically inflexible, they're struggling with hunger, cravings, inflammation, gut problems, and fatigue, that is almost a proverbial yoga class for your metabolism. All that stuff that I just mentioned is the hallmarks of someone's metabolism being inflexible. Think of what I just said, with the different types of fasting, as a way to become more metabolically flexible, just like yoga allows someone to be muscularly, skeletally, just in their body, to be more flexible. It's a wonderful tool, but they should start off low and slow, and lean into there, just like you would with yoga. You wouldn't go and do an advanced yoga class overnight. You want to really start at the beginning.

Dr. Wendy Myers: You can, but you pay for it.

Dr. Will Cole: You're going to feel sore the next day. You're going to get headaches, you're going to get the cravings, you're going to maybe fall a few times.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Yes.

Dr. Will Cole: That's all right, too. There can be beauty in that, too, of figuring it out and then saying, "Whoa, that was a little bit too much. Let's take it back 10 notches."

Dr. Wendy Myers: Let's illustrate to someone exactly what happens in the body when you eat late at night. I think there are a lot of people out there that succumb to their cravings, who are watching TV at night, their Netflix-

Dr. Will Cole: Yeah.

Dr. Wendy Myers: And they succumb and eat their salty or sweet snacks. I know for me, whenever I eat late at night, now that I'm listening more to my body, the next morning, I'm always super hungry when I wake up, and it's not true hunger, but it's something that compels you to eat earlier than normal. When I don't eat after seven, I wake up in the morning, I'm not hungry. It always happens. What's going on there?

Dr. Will Cole: Your gut needs sleep. Your brain needs sleep as well, and your gut is your second brain. Your gut and brain are formed from the same fetal tissue. As I mentioned earlier, 95% of serotonin is made in the gut. A lot of dopamine is made in the gut. It's known as the second brain, and this gut-brain accesses the connection between the vagus nerve and the enteric nervous system. These things really repair through the night. You're not giving your body a chance to fully rest through the night, and it's in that digesting mode, impacting your blood sugar. It's impacting other hormonal signaling pathways, like leptin and ghrelin. When leptin, ghrelin, insulin, and cortisol are impacted too, blood sugar is impacted, because all these things are impacted, that's going to keep the body in that, the analogy that I use is kindling on the fire.

Dr. Will Cole: Kindling creates light, but it's short-lived, so you're going to have to put more kindling on the fire to maintain that blaze of that fire. In this analogy, it's your energy levels. It's your fuel for the day. You're going to need more kindling by the time morning happens because you're really stimulating and supporting this kindling burning mode, or sugar burning mode, as it were. The alternative is being more fat adapted, or in a fasted state, or keto-adapted; there are different terminologies for this. By not eating so late at night it's really supportive. If you have a decent eater that's not eating too late at night, you can measure on metric, using devices like a ketone meter or a breath meter, you can measure trace amounts of ketones, just from that 12/12 that I mentioned, just from a good night's sleep, not eating too late at night, eating clean foods, not too high in processed sugars.

Dr. Will Cole: Depending on how metabolically flexible you are, you can measure trace amounts of ketones, which means your body is the opposite of being a sugar burner, is being a fat burner. The analogy there is putting a log on the fire. You're more slow burning. It's going to be more sustainable energy. You're not going to get the blood sugar roller coaster of the hangriness, cravings, and fatigue, and that type of stuff that can happen from being always stuck in that kindling burning mode. There's a time in place to burn sugar; there's nothing wrong with that. Always having kindling on the fire, only having kindling as your source of fuel, it's just an unsustainable, oftentimes not enjoyable way to live your life.

Dr. Will Cole: By what you just said, by not eating too late at night, you eat clean, you've been experimenting with these fastings, that's allowing your body to produce ketones, which is known as the fourth macronutrient. We have protein, fats, carbs, and ketones. Ketones are this fuel source for our brain. It's not just a fuel source, but it's what's known as an epigenetic modulator, which means it does really cool things to our health. It's a source of fuel. It's the fourth macronutrient. Your body naturally produces this; the liver produces it. It passes through the blood-brain barrier. It's providing your brain fuel. It's providing your body fuel, your muscle's fuel. That's why you do not have those cravings in the morning, when you are dipping into this fasted state.

- Dr. Wendy Myers:** Let's talk a little bit about mental health and our mood when it comes to intermittent fasting. How does intermittent fasting, having a healthy gut, contribute to a better mood?
- Dr. Will Cole:** As I mentioned earlier, the connection between mood, the gut, and the brain, what happens in the gut influences the brain. They're bidirectional. Injuries to the brain can impact the gut negatively, and an unhealthy gut can create an unhealthy brain. We have to look at both sides of that gut/brain access and the vagus nerve to understand mental health and gut health. You want to know how fasting impacts brain health specifically, correct?
- Dr. Wendy Myers:** Yeah, or just how gut health, in particular, relates to mental health and emotional health.
- Dr. Will Cole:** There's a whole field of research looking at this. There's research looking at the gut/brain access, the microbiomes' influence on brain health, and how our brain works, and there's research looking at how inflammation impacts how the brain works. 75% of the immune system is in the gut, so inflammation is a product of the immune system. Both from a gut/brain access side of things in the research, from microbiome research, and this larger, inflammatory conversation, it's called the cytokine model of cognitive function. It's how inflammation and cytokines are pro-inflammatory cells. How does that impact how our brain works? It's that confluence of research in the scientific journals that's really exciting, and it's something that I get to see play out in people's lives all the time and really put this research in somebody's life.
- Dr. Will Cole:** When you're looking at the epidemic proportions of things, anxiety and depression, and all the different iterations of those things, those are inflammatory in nature. A major part of my work is really educating people on the fact that mental health isn't separate from physical health; mental health is physical health. Our brain is a part of our body, just as much as anything else is in our body. It's important not to relegate mental health as some sort of obscure thing. It's just this general, very fluffy phrasing, or it's completely made into the emotional, but it's not anything physiological. We have to realize that it is very much physiological and inflammation, and the modulation of the gut/brain access is at the central role of what research is looking at in things like anxiety and depression.
- Dr. Will Cole:** Fasting is one tool to sort out and to support resetting that gut microbiome circadian rhythm that I mentioned, that gut clock, where certain bacteria are higher in the morning, some are higher in the evening. A lot of times, and different studies are showing this, there are certain colony-forming units of bacteria, or yeast and fungus, the micro and the microbiome. Bacterial overgrowth, imbalances, or lack of good bacterial diversity are associated in the research with things like anxiety and depression, and not just anxiety and depression, but things like autism, ADHD, even schizophrenia, and more extreme neurological problems, to neurological autoimmune problems, things like MS as

well. We have to look at the far-reaching implications of what I'm talking about here.

Dr. Will Cole:

Fasting is a good way to reset that and help with bacterial imbalances. It's not the only tool. You're not going to fast your way out of and solve all of these problems, but it's one potential tool within the toolbox. My job in functional medicine is to find out what the most effective tools are? That may be one of them, but there's going to be a confluence of factors that really do the work in supporting these mechanisms that we want to support, IE, optimal brain health. Dr. Ayman, a friend of mine and a colleague of mine, says all the time that psychiatry is the only field of medicine that doesn't look at and measure the organ in which it's treating. I think that's a brilliant way of thinking about this. We can't think mental health is just a "chemical imbalance." What does that mean? Why is there a chemical imbalance? Inflammation can drive that chemical imbalance. The gut/brain access being unhealthy can drive that chemical imbalance.

Dr. Will Cole:

We have to look at the epigenetic components of what drives that "chemical imbalance," or neurotransmitter imbalances, or serotonin changes. 95% of serotonin, as I keep saying, is made in the gut. If there's a serotonin problem, why is that? It's not a medication deficiency. Let's figure out the mechanism of why we have the problem in the first place. That's not to say there isn't a place for medications in this area; there certainly is. We just, ultimately, want to look at the full picture and just ask the pertinent question. What is your most effective option that causes you the least amount of side effects? Why do I have this problem in the first place? Maybe the medications serve a purpose for a time, and some people need to be on them, but what's the long-term goal? Can we be integrative and thoughtful enough to see why we have this problem in the first place? That's really where we come in, in functional medicine.

Dr. Wendy Myers:

Also, the foods people eat drive inflammation and start this domino chain reaction. How do people focus more on foods that heal versus focusing on diet dogma, which so many people are prone to? They read a book, get super excited about this diet, and try it, and there are a lot of people on this merry-go-round trying different diets.

Dr. Will Cole:

Yeah, you're absolutely right. A large part of what I do, from an educational side of things for people, for patients first and foremost, but also in books, podcasts, and things like that, is really empowering people to realize that the food we eat influences our biochemistry. The food we eat influences our gut microbiome. The food we eat, as far as nutrient density is concerned, actually provides our body, beyond just the microbiome component, the raw materials that we need to make healthy neurotransmitters into lower inflammation levels and modulate our neurochemistry in a positive way, or whatever else we're talking about, our hormones, or our energy levels, or whatever we're what we're talking about. The saying of, "You are what you eat," science really reflects that. The foods we eat actually influence so much in our bodies.

Dr. Will Cole: It literally becomes ourselves, the foods that we eat over time. Every food we eat either feeds inflammation or fights it. People need to realize that there's no neutral food. There's no Swiss meal that's doing nothing for your biochemistry. There are things that are doing negligible influences, but it's doing one or the other. It influences your biochemistry, insulin, hormones, gut microbiome, and inflammation levels, to some degree or another, depending on the person and how much they eat something. Bio Individuality is really what we're talking about here. What I would say are the four things, what I call the inflammatory core four, these are the four food additives, or food ingredients, that I think pretty much any human should have less of, that's going to dramatically influence their biochemistry in a positive way. That's going to be added sugar; gluten-containing grains, like wheat, rye, barley, spelt, industrial seed oils, like vegetable oil, canola oil, and soybean oil; and number four would be conventional dairy.

Dr. Will Cole: You can have a nuanced conversation about all of these foods because there are better versions of wheat. There are better versions of dairy. There are better versions even of industrial seed oils. It's not all or nothing, but it's really looking at the amount you eat and the quality of those things you eat. The average person listening to this, by having fewer of those in their life, will start moving their health in a positive direction. Why is that? It's because, largely, it's helping your gut health repair, and you can focus on more nutrient-dense foods instead.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Industrial seed oils are so tricky. It's so hard to avoid those when you go out to eat. Even if you go to Whole Foods, everything is in conventional canola oil, which is just mind-blowing to me. We have all these miles of healthy food that is just soaked in canola oil. It's like, "Oh, that looks so good." It's really hard to avoid that unless you eat at home.

Dr. Will Cole: It is. It's funny, at my functional medicine telehealth center, we go on walks at lunchtime, and we were talking about this very topic yesterday. We were like, "there are a few restaurants around the country that really go above and beyond." The ones I'm aware of, there's probably more that I'm not aware of, but the ones that I'm aware of, I know the owners because they're so few and far between, and they're really going above and beyond. There's a Picnic in Austin, Texas that uses good oils. There's Town Hall and Rebel in Cleveland, Ohio. There are a few places in Los Angeles. Hu Kitchen was in New York, but now they're closed. There are a few places within the country if you live in the states that do this. Even if you go to True Food Kitchen, which I love, True Food Kitchen, they're bringing healthy food around the country. I really do love them. But they're using canola oil, too. I don't get it.

Dr. Will Cole: Whole Foods and True Food Kitchens, these places provide such good things. I don't know why they go so far, and they're like, "Yes, we're going to give you industrial seed oils." I'm assuming it's a cost factor. Maybe it's cheap. I don't know. I think a lot of plant-based thinking, actually, I think a lot of people coming

from the vegan community, and plant-based, actually are okay with the industrial seed oils. I see that in most of that thinking, they don't really take that into consideration, but I would, from an inflammation standpoint.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Yeah. How hard is it to just use olive oil? It's so plentiful, it's so abundant. I'm sure it adds up to the bottom line, for sure.

Dr. Will Cole: Yeah, probably.

Dr. Wendy Myers: In a lot of these high-end restaurants, the chefs wouldn't be caught dead using anything but olive oil, but most people are not able to go to those restaurants.

Dr. Will Cole: Definitely.

Dr. Wendy Myers: It's an issue.

Dr. Will Cole: It is.

Dr. Wendy Myers: We talk a lot about physical stuff, physical solutions, and physical health issues. What about trauma? This is something I'm talking more and more about, and I'm about to release my emotional detox program coming out. Actually, it should be out by the time this podcast comes out. It's very important to talk about this because it's something I think a lot of people are missing when they're looking for physical health solutions. What is your take on this and working on trans-generational trauma?

Dr. Will Cole: It's a major part of it. I talk a lot about it on social media because it's also a big part of my clinic, this bi-directional relationship between our thoughts and emotions and our physical health. As I mentioned, mental health is physical health. Mental, emotional, situational, current stress plus past trauma influences our biochemistry, spikes inflammation, puts the immune system in that hyper-inflammatory state, puts the nervous in the hypervigilant state, just as much as that food that's nutrient-dense, that's going to mess up your gut health, that sugary junk food. What I actually call them in my books, in "Intuitive Fasting," I call it metaphysical meals. You could be serving your body the best food, but if you're serving your head and your heart a big slice of stress every day, that's going to spike inflammation just as much as that junk food is.

Dr. Will Cole: You have to realize that these, what I call medical physical meals, your stress, your thought life, your mental and emotional health, influence your biochemistry. But it's a lot more open-ended. It's a lot more nebulous to say, "Clean up your mental health." It's easy to say, "Don't eat these foods because they're creating inflammation," or, "Really focus on these nutrient-dense foods." You can't just tell someone, "Don't have that trauma anymore. Don't pick that up anymore." That's completely different. We have to have a bigger conversation about that. Otherwise, it would just be reductive and completely pointless. The work is definitely in showing up, being consistent, and really implementing

practices, tools, and protocols that allow you to start to untangle that hypervigilant state that's keeping the body stuck in that sympathetic fight or flight stress state.

Dr. Will Cole: Physical health, mental/emotional health, we have to look at both sides of the coin. Trauma work, and things that are supportive of the parasympathetic, people have to see it like the meals, like breakfast, lunch, and dinner. What is your routine like throughout the day that's supportive of the parasympathetic? Your food should be supportive of the parasympathetic, the rest digest, supporting the gut-brain access. What are you doing on the mental/emotional meal plan that is really supportive of the parasympathetic as well? I see so many people reliving that past trauma or reliving that stressed state all their waking hours and even through the night. Their sleep is dramatically impacted by this, too, oftentimes. It's a major role, and another word for functional medicine is integrative medicine.

Dr. Will Cole: I'm working with trauma specialists, practitioners that are trained in EMDR, somatic therapies, and different modalities like this, even DNRS. If you've heard of that, the company is called Primal Trust. I'm working with all these practitioners in these different spheres. I serve as almost a clinical quarterback in many ways to bring the best team together and integrate them. That's where I feel like people deserve the best. It's not us versus them. It's not this disorganized, too many cooks in the kitchen. It's really organized, it's thoughtful, it's intentional, and it's streamlined to what's serving that person. What's going to make them feel good? It's such a major part of my clinic. It's not going to be out for another year, but that's really going to be the topic of my next book, is really that side of things. This is completely synchronistic that we're having this conversation, and I'm excited to hear about your program.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Yeah, it's been a long time coming. I'm definitely really excited about it. In my own work, working with patients, you reach a certain point with people working on the physical plane, and they just can't get past a certain point. It's that emotional and trauma aspect that really impacted them and prevented them from healing when they're in a chronic stress state.

Dr. Will Cole: So true. It's frustrating for the person and for the clinician that's trying their best. When you're only doing half a side of the coin, it is frustrating. When you bring them together, and I see this sometimes with patients that have done a lot of the trauma work, they've done the mental/emotional, spiritual work, they come to me, and they're like, "I need to fill in the gaps. My physical has to meet my mental/emotional work," that's beautiful. They've already started that journey on their own, and they just need me to run labs and really get their health, their physical health, to match their mental/emotional health, the other side of that coin.

Dr. Will Cole: Then, you have people that have done the opposite. They get their physical health well, but they need to support that parasympathetic on a

mental/emotional level. Sometimes, it's not linear in the sense that some people have done more work in one area versus the other, but regardless, we need to bring them together and be consistent with both. There are some people that haven't done either, and that's fine, too. Let's start from square one. I'm okay with that.

Dr. Wendy Myers: How does someone work with you? Do you have a team of people, and you see clients on an individual basis using telemedicine? How does someone get in contact with you and start working with you?

Dr. Will Cole: Yeah, we have different paths for patients. Everything's at drwillcole.com. It's the concierge telehealth model I've been doing for 12 years that's one on one. We have a consultation online, and we ship labs that you need. We integrate the best tools within your toolbox. We coordinate with therapists, trauma specialists, and all the functional medicine and nutrition staff. We build a team and the protocols for you on that level. All that information is at DrWillCole.com. They can just go over to the consultation page, and all the information is there.

Dr. Will Cole: About two years ago, a little over two years ago, right before the pandemic, I think we started it. We launched a group model. The Cleveland Clinic's functional medicine center, I don't know how they work right now, but traditionally, they've always done a group model, for the most part, which enables us at Functional Medicine to make things more accessible and more affordable for people. About two and a half years ago, I launched a group telehealth model here at the clinic to make it more accessible and more affordable for people. That's in addition, they could do concierge 101 or the online group stuff. They have their own individual coach, and they meet with me weekly on a group call like this, and it enables me to clinically monitor them, coach them, guide them, and provide them access to this information. They have an individual coach, but as you know, being in this space, and for anybody's job, there are only so many hours in the day. By being able to have it in a group model,, you can really make it more affordable for them.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Okay, fantastic. Where can people find you on social media and reach you that way?

Dr. Will Cole: Everything is at DrWillCole.com. I mentioned that. Everything is there with links to the books and all the podcasts. On social media, it's @DrWillCole, D-R-W-I-L-L-C-O-L-E, on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/drwillcole), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/drwillcole), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/drwillcole). I'm trying out TikTok, it's abysmal at this point, but I'm giving it a go.

Dr. Wendy Myers: Yeah, I'm trying TikTok, too, and it's pretty sad my TikTok channel. It's pretty sad. Dr. Cole, thank you so much for coming to the show. I'm so happy you've come on. I've really admired your work for a while. You have an amazing website, an amazing podcast, and even hosting one of the Goop podcasts as well.

Dr. Will Cole:

"Goop Fellas," Goop's first spinoff podcast was called "Goop Fellas." It's not going on anymore. During the pandemic, we just took a break from that. My books are all published by Goop, and they're very good friends of mine. The podcast was still great, and you can still listen to the episodes. It was hosted by me and Sheamus Mullen, who's an amazing chef and friend of mine, and it's amazing people. My new podcast is called "[The Art of Being Well](#)," every Monday and every Thursday, there's a new episode, and Gwyneth was on that show. Elise Loehnen, who was that Goop before, was on the podcast. All of the Goop people, I'm still in touch with them all.

Dr. Wendy Myers:

All right, fantastic. Yeah, there's lots of information you guys can consume that Dr. Cole has created. Again, Dr. Cole, thanks so much for coming to the show. I'm Dr. Wendy Myers. Thank you so much for listening to this week's episode. It's such a pleasure every week to bring you experts from around the world, to help you make those distinctions, to give you clues that can help you upgrade your health because you deserve to feel good. I'm privileged that you took your time out to spend this time with me. Thanks for tuning in. I'll talk to you guys next week.