



Conscious Life presents

TRAUMA SUPER CONFERENCE

Ancestral trauma healing

Guest: Jonathan Meenagh

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[00:00:10] Jaia Bristow

Hello, and welcome back to this Trauma Super Conference. My name is Jaia Bristow and I'm one of your hosts. And today I am especially delighted to be welcoming the wonderful Jonathan Meenagh. Welcome, Jonathan.

Jonathan Meenagh

Hello there. Nice to see you and lovely to be here. Thank you.

Jaia Bristow

Thank you. So Jonathan is an ancestral trauma practitioner who developed The Inherited Trauma Release Process. So we'll be talking a bit about that today. I came across you, Jonathan, because I've actually worked with you so I can speak directly to the incredible impacts of your work. But maybe let's just start with introducing what you mean by ancestral trauma and then we'll talk more about the inherited trauma release.

Jonathan Meenagh

Sure, that's a good place to start. So in the work that I do or the way that I can see trauma manifesting in people's lives and their systems, when people talk about their being in a difficult pattern of behavior or that they keep repeating things which are perhaps difficult or find themselves in situations which are difficult, or it could be perhaps, you know, suddenly finding themselves having been really creative for 20 years of life, suddenly losing all that drive or urge for creativity.

Usually it's incidents or something which doesn't have any kind of real genesis point in their own life. So nothing's happened to stop them from being creative or start them feeling really anxious or feeling stressed. Those kinds of things which are sort of popping out of nowhere and suddenly after months and years you start to find yourself not really enjoying life as much as you could do and having difficulty.

They tend to have some kind of ancestral connection, or there tends to be some kind of trauma a bit further back that is the origin for why you're experiencing these things again. The way it seems to work or the way that I can see it working in the work that I do, is that when something has

happened to an ancestor or a series of ancestors further back, the way they experience that trauma and that could be that they somehow lost a joy for life because of something that happened.

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It could be bereavement, it could have been perhaps some persecution or something really serious that took place or it could be a destructive relationship that over time just got worse and worse. The energetics of it seem to get inherited by the generations that come through next. Anything that hasn't been sort of finished or completed or almost dealt with in life, the sort of things that are taken to the grave, the secrets, the situations that were harmful for a family or difficult for a family, those are the traumas that tend to be the ones that get passed on to the next generation to resolve.

And they come in quite energetically. It's like the energetics that were felt in the midst of the trauma, and the trauma can be a long extended thing, it doesn't have to be an event, it can be a relationship that was 20 years long, that was really controlling, the energetics tend to get inherited exactly as they were experienced and so it could come back in as a relationship.

So in your relationships, your grandparents and quite a few generations back had a very controlling relationship, you find yourself reliving that controlling relationship with various partners that you're with. Or it could be something as simple as feeling abandoned and someone, again, further back feels really abandoned.

You don't necessarily feel abandoned, your life is kind of okay but you've got this constant feeling of people abandoning me, but there isn't really the context for it. So the way that I see the trauma is that it informs our experience of life now, and it directs us in terms of the decisions and choices we might make and how we interpret the world that we're living in and the feelings we have day to day.

And ultimately the ones that we don't have any agency over. We wake up in the morning, we would like to choose to be happy and like to choose to be doing things that are fulfilling and that feel good. But most of us wake up in the morning and for some reason we just don't feel great that day. We kind of walk through the day perhaps doing things which aren't particularly fulfilling.

And anything I find that tends to not be within your agency, so anything that you wouldn't otherwise choose to do, I usually can find a connection back into the ancestry and something that hasn't been completed or dealt with, and that's the sort of general theory of the process.

Jaia Bristow

Fascinating. And so is, this might be obvious, but is ancestral trauma and intergenerational trauma the exact same thing then?

Jonathan Meenagh

I think so. There's lots of different ways of describing it. Different practitioners will have different ways. For me, it's really just the thing, the events, that have happened to the people that have come before us. And the word trauma in this context, nowadays we talk about trauma as being

something quite significant, we call trauma wards trauma wards for a reason because something's happened to someone's body that's perhaps life threatening.

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I think there's a really large range here of things that can be problematic and that can create a problematic issue that can then come down the family line. And it can be as simple as a way of handling a certain situation where perhaps people fly off the handle and the family has a history of getting angry whenever certain situations happen.

Some of it's learned behavior, of course, but there appears to be others which is almost like an instinctive inheritance of how to react and what to do in a certain setting, which, when the trauma has been addressed further back, it actually frees you up. You change your behavior. Your attitude in certain situations changes. It's like what you inherited has no longer got a place and it can be released.

Jaia Bristow

Interesting. And so I really hear, then, that this ancestral trauma is often when we feel in ourselves like we're having a trauma response, but we don't really know where that trauma has come from. And in this conference, we tend to define trauma is quite a broad word because we've seen, through speaking to many different experts, this is now our third edition of a conference where we've spoken to so many people, that trauma isn't just about an event or a hurt, it's the way it gets stored.

And so often we talk about the way it gets stored in the body, but I hear that in your line of work, it's the way it gets stored energetically as well, and how then that can be passed down. And we might have these patterns or these issues in our life which don't quite match our existing circumstances. And so the question is, like, what's going on? So I'm curious to hear a bit more about how you first got into this work.

Jonathan Meenagh

That's all really good questions. So I'll talk a bit about my experience and how I came in and I'll try and keep this brief. When I was young, I always used to collect things to sets and I used to collect sets of toys. And then when I got a bit older, I started collecting sneakers. And sneaker collecting now is something that lots of people do. It's not something to be embarrassed about. When I started collecting sneakers, it was a bit of an oddity...

Jaia Bristow

And when you say sneakers, you mean the shoes, right? Like trainers, sneakers, shoes?

Jonathan Meenagh

Yeah, that's right. And so I started collecting them. And when I got collecting, I really got collecting and I collected many thousands of pairs of sneakers and they got out of control. And really it was a proper full, I would say, addiction in terms of not being able to stop it, not being able to control myself, the urges to buy more, that kind of thing. It was pretty difficult.

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Now, my friend had said that it sounded ancestral. There was something here that wasn't logical. I don't want to be spending this money on trainers. I don't want to be doing this. So I went to see an ancestral trauma practitioner who specialized in family constellations, which is the basis that I kind of created my process with.

And she very quickly identified that my grandparents had been from two different religions. In Northern Ireland, which is home to the Troubles, being from two sides of the Christian faith wasn't really particularly acceptable back in the day. So when she married him, she got excommunicated from the church. And she didn't really see very much of her brothers and sisters after that.

And so what I'd done is I'd effectively picked up a need to bring things back into a set. Rather than bringing the family back into a set, I was bringing shoes to a set. So I collect everything to a set. But with trainers, you can keep collecting until the cows come home, you will never fill that set. So when I was a youngster and I was collecting toys to sets, I could complete that set and I'd be happy, but not with trainers.

So at the moment it would be seen, the pattern vanished instantly. And that evening and, in fact, a day later, I was starting to sell them off again. It was completely transformative. So that was my entry into this. And that's where I then developed the process. And as I was working and learning it, I could start to see the ancestors connected to the traumas in people's lives.

So rather than having to work through the usual constellation process where you talk through family trees and things like that, when someone presents with me, I just get shown the positions in the ancestral tree where the traumas started and what you're holding for the ancestors. That's probably not an answer to your question, but that was...

Jaia Bristow

No, I love it. It's super interesting. And I see the logic between having this trauma of these two separating divisions in the family and that need to bring things together for wholeness, for sets, for completion, for unity, for balance. I get the logic behind that. I think probably the question on everyone's minds right now is how did this person who trained you or who worked with you make that connection?

And I've worked with you, so I know how incredibly well it does work. But as I hear you talk, I can't help be like, this all sounds really wacky. I'm not sure I'm buying any of this. This just sounds like some money making scheme, right? So how does it work and why is it real?

Jonathan Meenagh

100%. And I would not in any way fault you for that, for that statement. And my background is public health. I trained as a public health scientist, and I'm very much about evidence based outcomes and things in medicine. So, you know, for me, going into this, I was really, incredibly reluctant and it was really through desperation, actually, to try and find a solution that I thought, I'm just going to give this a try because I might as well try it.

And that's what led me into it. And I couldn't believe the results. And it was something I was like I can't get over how much of a change that has brought in me. This is slightly esoteric, so it's not

necessarily for everyone. So I don't require anyone to change their opinion about the world or about spirituality or about energetics or anything else.

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I just ask people to come with an open mind, and an open mind that actually you're part of a bigger system and you come from a family that has existed and has many experiences and there's many lineages and you've received your life through that family and that you're all still connected. And although they might not be here, there's a sort of energetic connection between you all and you share that system.

It just so happens you're alive today and you're carrying the weight of the family experience. That's probably the best way of putting it. And there's quite a lot of that that you can resolve for your family and work out for your family. And you do that day to day. And you have your epiphanies and we all go through various issues and things which create resolutions for ourselves and often those resolutions are resolving things for our family.

In terms of this esoteric side, I'm trying to find almost new language for this because I'm really reticent to use the usual language of psychics and that kind of thing. I don't think it's particularly helpful because most people, when they go and see someone who works on that kind of level, it's always about what's going to happen to me next and am I going to meet someone three years down the line or whatever.

I don't think that is particularly helpful, but what I can see in this work is that there's, in terms of the shopping trolley of energies that you're carrying around with you, you can kind of create a balanced path for yourself. And actually when you attend to some of these things, it's almost like what used to drive you, what used to inspire you, or perhaps what used to propel you into some negativity or into jobs which were perhaps not great for you, that sort of dissipates and disappears pretty quickly, not long after the sessions.

And so the path of that shopping trolley full of what you're carrying for your family slightly changes. And as you empty those things out of it, you get more within your own direction. And it is something to be experienced. And it's why I think I rely a lot on testimonials from people, because it is only one session. I don't require people to come back loads, they can come and see me once.

And the change is usually pretty profound after just one piece of work. You can attend to quite a lot in one session. It's to be experienced, but I don't expect everyone to tell everyone to believe and change their view. But certainly an open mind that this will resolve those issues is all I ask people to come for. But beyond that, it's hard to come up with more, other than people's testimonials and their experience of it.

It's really hard to give any hard scientific evidence at this point and I'm fully aware of that having come from the scientific community myself in the past. So I find myself in this state. It's not ideal, but it's the best I can do.

Jaia Bristow

Well, I appreciate your honesty, first of all. And I know that it's not a money making scheme because, like you say, you see people once as a one off. It's very reasonably priced, especially for the amount of time you put in and I think when it comes to ancestral or intergenerational trauma,

we know we're not born as blank slates, right? We just can't be born as blank slates. It doesn't work.

[00:15:18]

Maybe there's an innocent baby but if we're talking about science, we see how when we're in the womb, we take on a lot of our mother's emotions. We feed everything that she's putting in her body, it's coming straight into our bodies. But there's also we've learnt about trauma from trauma that happens in the womb, trauma at birth, there's all these kinds of things. And then we share not just the energetics, like you say, of our ancestors, but the DNA of our ancestors as well.

And then when we're being raised, especially if we're raised by our biological parents as well, which I know is not the case for everyone, but then we take on, so we share their DNA, we share, as you're talking about, energetics, and they're not clean slates either. So they've had their traumas in their lifetime plus the traumas that they've maybe inherited that they're going to pass on to us unconsciously, inevitably, if they haven't done their own trauma work.

Because trauma, once you get into the world of trauma, it tends to perpetuate itself, it tends to add layers. So it makes sense that we have ancestral intergenerational trauma. Then the way that you work with it is where it starts becoming quite, you know, unusual and maybe weird for people. But there is a logic to it.

There are so many things that we can't always explain in this world, and maybe later down the line, we'll find ways of explaining it. But I think many of us recognize for ourselves the areas where we do have these patterns, like you say, or these moments or these compulsions. When you're talking about your collection of traumas, it really sounded like an irrational compulsion.

And it's like maybe we do find an answer in our lifetime of where that comes from, and maybe we don't. And maybe even when we find an answer in our lifetime, it doesn't quite fit. It feels like even that incident that we're drawing it back to feels like we'd already reacted too strongly to that incident. We already had trauma there.

So, for example, I'm someone who works a lot with rejection and abandonment. Now I have a very loving, connected family. My parents have been together for, are still together, have been together for a very long time. I'm close to them. I have, on paper, no reason to have all these quite bad traumas around relational traumas and other things.

And then I can look back on my life and of course there are moments I can look back to my childhood and my dynamics of playing. I can associate it to being queer and a person of color and therefore being rejected by society at large. I can try and rationalize it and it feels like there's something greater.

And as soon as I look at my family, and I don't want to spend too much time talking about my personal story here, but as soon as I look at my family, I see in my mother, my grandmother, other people, that there is a thread of abandonment and rejection of people being abandoned, being given up for adoption, being left, and suddenly, adding that layer, it's not saying that this is the only way of healing trauma and working with trauma, but including that layer of ancestral trauma feels so important as part of the process in this kind of work.

[00:18:52] Jonathan Meenagh

I think you're right. There's a few layers of things that at least I can see in the system. And I'm very open minded about this in terms of the direction on this. The process seems to work that you get an inheritance from your family of what's taken place, the patterns, behaviors, that kind of thing, and the traumas. But then the world around us, it seems to sit about 60/40 is what I see in an adult system. It's about 60% inherited, and about 40% that is lived experience.

And it can be more or less for some people depending on how difficult their upbringing has been or how hard, perhaps, they've experienced life up to that point. But it sits around 60/40 on average. And so there's a mix of both. You carry both, what your own experience is and the experience of your ancestors. And you're absolutely right. What appears to happen is when you inherit something in, it does re-express itself.

But the re-expression you'll get will have a different context. It will have a different texture and a different form. And if I look back through someone's line, so I'm looking back here through like a father's line, there's usually eight or nine, maybe more, people who will have come down the line and will have experienced pretty much the same thing, almost identical, one to the next to the next, to the next, to the next.

And you don't just inherit one person's version of it. You tend to get all eight in a kind of little unit and then you have it as well...

Jaia Bristow

All eight? What do you mean by all eight?

Jonathan Meenagh

So it's like a combination of the same experience from all eight of the ancestors.

Jaia Bristow

And the ancestors are from one line, or is it bringing together, because we have eight great grandparents usually, for example?

Jonathan Meenagh

That's right. So I usually just see it through the individual's mother or father line. And sometimes it's only from one line, sometimes it's from both lines. Sometimes it's the absolute exact mix of ten and ten. Sometimes it might be predominantly the father's line and maybe a couple from the mother's line. But it tends to be that the system, or the individuals who have experienced these things, all tend to group together.

So if everyone's been involved in a controlling romantic relationship that's been difficult, they'll all kind of group together and create the expression of, their combined expression of, a controlling, romantic, difficult relationship. And that's sort of then what is inherited, usually it's kind of a very predominant pattern within someone. These are the kind of patterns which I think are really irresistible. They're really hard to break, they feel almost second nature and innate, because there's so many ancestors connected and they've got such a weight to them.

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And often the context through which the original ancestors originally experienced it is often quite difficult for us to replicate today because we have much more freedom around who we get with nowadays, whether we're married or not, and the arrangements that we have around relationships. That didn't happen for many of them.

You sort of inherit this thing with a completely different modern day context and you then try and have to look to see if you can resolve it. And often then what you get is the feelings of maybe not feeling uncomfortable unless there's control in the relationship and then maybe the control is too much and it feels overwhelming, whatever it happens to be, there's lots and lots of different versions of it.

But when I work to resolve it in someone, all of those ancestors will come in and I'll see the combination of them. And what I tend to do is bring the energetic in, so I can feel it. I know this sounds slightly out there, Jaia. You've experienced it, so you sort of understand what I'm saying. But it's one of those things that's hard to imagine unless you're doing the work.

But I bring the energetic in and I'm able to describe it in detail, usually quite forensic detail about how it feels and how these ancestors experience that particular experience in that, say, relationship. It's usually very similar for all of them. There's usually a couple of differences here and there and I can usually talk about those if there's a few outliers.

And then I'll give some language then, which will bring these sort of traumas to a conclusion that sort of brings it to a piece or a completion, actually. It's like the traumas almost are looking for a completion and it's usually gained through some kind of understanding where they're seen and they're held with, sort of, I suppose without judgment and with a degree of understanding from everyone.

And once you sort of allow that, you get a movement and it's somewhat you can sort of feel the energetics moving out and it takes a little while to then reform yourself around the fact that that's not there. You say, it could be a few days, could be a couple of weeks, but gradually you change your behavior based on not having that pattern anymore.

Jaia Bristow

That makes sense. Yeah, it makes sense to me at this moment. And I think now that we've established that, I think, all humans have some parts of ancestral trauma. Like I said earlier, we're not born as blank slates, so most of us have some ancestral trauma. We know, as I've talked about in many of my interviews, we know trauma can come as layers. So once you start having trauma, it's easier to have more layers on top.

Which is why, often, groups of people, I talk a lot about racial trauma in some of my interviews and things like that. Because groups of people who are oppressed by the dominant culture and who have a history of oppression in their family, especially with, not going straight into slavery or anything, but with slavery and things like that.

So they'll already have more ancestral trauma, plus their own trauma and all that has added extra layers, and allows for extra layers to be added, if this makes sense. And so I think it's really

important to acknowledge that we're not born as blank slates, especially when our parents aren't born as blank slates and haven't necessarily done a lot of trauma work. So they're adding extra layers to everything.

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And so you've already started talking a bit about it, but now that we've established that we all have trauma, ancestral and in this lifetime, and that the trauma in this lifetime is more likely to happen, the more ancestral trauma we have. Now, tell me a bit about this Inherited Trauma Release Process.

You've talked a bit about the fact that what needs to happen is that trauma needs to be seen and understood without judgment, which is easier said than done at times, but makes a lot of context when we know how trauma is formed by an unsupportive holding environment. So by having a judgment free, safe, supportive holding environment and understanding and light on it, then it makes sense that that helps it find almost some kind of closure. It's like letting the ancestors have closure, it sounds like, is what you're saying.

Jonathan Meenagh

That appears to be what is happening behind the scenes. We can't be certain because we're working in energetics, so I'm going with what, I wouldn't hard and fast put any certainty on any aspects of this because working in this field you could never be 100% certain. But what I can see is that, yes, that understanding and that light shone on something does release the pressure.

It's a little bit like holding a secret. And you often see this as well in families where there's been a trauma of some sort and it's held very much as a secret. And it's like a pressure cooker. Everyone is tense. There's a kind of worry, anxiety about it getting out, but once it's seen and everyone has looked at it, suddenly the pressure just goes and everyone just suddenly feels okay.

No one's place in the family is threatened, no one's life is going to be threatened. Everyone deserves to be where they are in the family, in the family system. We're not going to exclude anyone because of what happened and we're not going to judge anyone because of what happened. And that really just settles everything and everyone across the family.

And so a lot of it is really to do with, a lot of the time, is to do with belonging and people in the family really having in the past being worried about some of the events taking place or the actions taking place, threatening their position in the family or their right to have a place in the family. And when that's threatened, that tends to create a really significant amount of trauma. People who've been black sheep, people who have been pushed out, that kind of thing, that leaves a mark, usually, that repeats itself quite strongly down the line.

Jaia Bristow

We all have a desire to belong, right? I think that's a universal desire. And I've heard about that as well a lot in family constellation work, which I know is one of the foundational modalities to your Inherited Trauma Release Process. And we see that sometimes, or I've heard a lot about when kids don't know where they belong in the sense of if there was a death of a child earlier on, and so the kid thinks they're the second child, but they're actually the third child, for example, because there was a loss in the middle or things like that.

[00:28:14]

And so having that recognition of where they belong in the family system, for example, this is just one example, I know there's lots of different ways to work, can release something, can help make some sense of things that don't always make sense.

Jonathan Meenagh

You're absolutely right. That's great. Belonging is one of the fundamental aspects of what can cause trauma in a family, or the basis of trauma in a family line. But it does go beyond that into, as you say, the kind of environments of political issues that happen over centuries.

And I think the thing that I'm most interested in from the scientific point of view is there's been some useful studies recently in the descendants of people who survived the Holocaust, and that their grandkids are having similar symptoms to having experienced the event themselves, but none of them have actually been there or experienced it.

But it sort of chimes with, at the moment there's very little explanation, of course, you're growing up with families, with everyone. I think there is a degree to which you do pass on the behaviors and the anxieties and things unconsciously when you're sitting around the dinner table. All of that, of course, definitely happens. There's something more, I think, running underneath that though.

I think there's a layer there which is a bit more direct in terms of the experience itself and the energetics of that experience being felt again in the generation, that it's almost like a generation that comes after that generation have gone, it always seems to me that once one generation has passed, it's like the next generation to come into the world are the ones that then pick up quite a lot of that unfinished work of the family.

It sort of seems to jump to the kids, or at least that's kind of what I'm seeing in the work. So it is interesting there's a little bit of work that has spotted it now or at least is looking at it, which sort of chimes with what I'm saying. But it's early days for all this, Jaia, it's a relatively new-ish field that's opening up. But at the moment it's very much all really evidence based results, I think, is the only way to kind of look at it at the moment.

Each session does provide a clear result as opposed to, oh it will maybe help. Because we're used to sort of going into processes, I think, today where we go with the best of intention, but doesn't necessarily always give us what we need, but it's trying to get to a process which actually, and that's been my drive the whole way, is to make sure that when we open up a piece of work for someone that it actually does what it says on the tin.

It delivers what it's supposed to do. And I think with some energetic work, it's quite consistent. And getting consistency is the big challenge, I think, with this kind of area.

Jaia Bristow

Absolutely. Two things come to mind as you talk. One is you say you think it's a relatively new field. I disagree with that. I think we see in many cultures that actually this ancestral work has happened. Maybe it's newer for Western mainstream culture, but I don't think it is actually a new field.

[00:31:49] Jonathan Meenagh

You are 100% right to correct me on that because this is all very ancient practice and we knew how to do this for millennia and we've abandoned it and actually we're really just rediscovering it. I don't think it's true. You're absolutely right. It's really just a reawakening of it.

Jaia Bristow

Thank you. And the second thing that comes to mind as you're talking is you talk about this sort of it's hard to put into scientific terminology and so you're working a lot on evidence based, and testimonials and things. So maybe we can talk a bit about what to expect when we do this kind of work.

I know that when we had our first session together, you told me a little bit about things that might happen and that some of it might be very subtle. And of course, I'm sure it's different for each unique person, but maybe, and we've touched upon it already briefly today, but I'd love to go a bit more in depth into what we can expect or what people can expect from doing this kind of work.

Jonathan Meenagh

So there's a range of things which clients experience after they do a piece of work with me, and it has a bit of a spectrum. Some people will leave and have a very gentle... the main thing everyone reports is that you get, and you can maybe talk about your experience with it Jaia if you're happy to as well, usually after I finish the session is a kind of really intense feeling of calm and clarity, which a lot of people say stays with them as a permanence.

It's like a new state that they remain in for weeks and months afterwards. Certain things, which perhaps were just always there, maybe distractions, being slightly pulled in different directions, or that sort of dynamo, internal dynamo, that is always running, stops. And there's a sort of centering that comes from the work, which, of course, everyone has ups and downs across their life, so it's not going to be completely on the whole time, but there's a kind of permanence to it, which seems to be the main effect that really calms everything down in the system.

The other thing, a couple of things which are, again, they're qualitative. It's really hard to put them into quantities, but there's a sort of... people are less whipped up by events. So, for example, something that would make you feel angry or frustrated, suddenly you find that those things that you've had all your life where, perhaps, your car parking space is being taken by someone, or you have run out of milk, or your partner has used up all the washing up liquid and not replaced the bottle, whatever it happens to be, we all have various things activate us, those activations diminish and vanish, in some cases.

They just don't exist anymore. And events that would have maybe made us feel anxious. We might have maybe not enough work coming in that month, or there's maybe a whole range of things, watching the news, it just diminishes. And we stop getting whipped up into things which have no purpose and which don't actually deliver us what we're here to do.

There's a sort of, almost, I'm keeping a wide berth on this in terms of how I'm seeing it, but people tend to get into their purpose a bit more when they've done the work. So they sort of find their

path. So they're a bit less distracted off into things which will whip them up into anxiety or frustrations or whatever happens to be.

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And you get more in that, okay, well, what do I need to achieve today? And what am I going to do that will make me feel fulfilled? You tend to get into that direction without too much effort. And the things that used to be pushing water uphill, trying to find that right job or trying to get everything to fit in and to feel right about life, suddenly it just all seems to happen without too much effort.

And that's another thing that people have reported. Life just takes on more of a flow with a lot less activation. Everything's much steadier and intrusive thoughts, that kind of thing, vanish. They cease to exist. So, again, it's quite qualitative and everyone you ask will have a different experience to tell you about, which is why it's very personal.

Because what everyone's carrying for their family is so unique that once it's gone, the experience of life afterwards, then changes for that person in a very unique way. So it's very hard to have a sort of singular, this is what to expect, but that's in general what I think most people experience. I don't know whether any of that was sort of aligned with what your experience was?

Jaia Bristow

Well, it's interesting because, as you say, it's unique for each person and trauma can be unique for each person. And then when you bring our families are all unique, so when you combine the two, then of course it's different. I could relate to some of what you said and not others. For me, I'd say there were two categories of things.

So number one was just very subtle shifts that if I hadn't even been paying attention, I might have missed. But because you told me, at the end of our session, you told me a bunch of things that might change for me or that were likely to change and then I immediately forgot them, because there was a lot of information and it was a long session.

But then suddenly I noticed, oh, like you say, this situation where I'm used to feeling a lot of reactivity, I didn't feel reactivity. Interesting. Oh. Suddenly I remembered that's one of the things Jonathan said might happen or specifically around that area, or sometimes it was like, yeah, actually dynamics with my family made me a lot less reactive. Also, other people noticing shifts in me and being like, oh, you just seem a lot calmer recently, things like that.

So there was that layer of things, that level I'd say, of subtle, small shifts, less reactivity, a calmer nervous system, as you say, other people noticing shifts within me and the way I carried myself in the world. I'm someone who's always been told I'm very sensitive, especially to criticism and certain comments and things, and suddenly that felt different.

And then, and this is where it gets interesting, extra interesting for me, is that at the end of the session you gave me a length of time. In my case it was three months and two weeks for this work to work on me and to have completion. Now, we haven't reached the end of that period yet, so I'm going to be careful with how much I share.

But what I have noticed is there's a lot of big things that have come up for me as well. So there's the small shifts which sort of happened on their own, and then there's some big things. And

through the capacities I have developed through other tools and modalities, so I do all kinds of different work and I've interviewed all kinds of different experts.

[00:39:04]

Those tools, those modalities, gave me the tools and capacity to metabolize and digest the big stuff that came up for me. And I think if I'd done this trauma healing, ancestral trauma healing work, this inherited trauma release, 5, 10 years ago, I wouldn't have been ready to be able to metabolize and digest the big things that were coming up as it is.

So, again, this is what I find fascinating about trauma work and why I love these conferences, because there is no one, magic cure. You talked at some point about maybe having 60/40 inherited trauma and lifetime trauma and it's different for people. So, yes, this is a fantastic tool and contributes to creating more spaciousness and ease and balance and harmony within oneself, to healing some of those extra layers of trauma and starting to unpeel the onion, or not starting, maybe continuing to unpeel the onion.

And it's not a standalone thing. It's not like, okay, one session with Jonathan and everything will be magically cured and you will live in peace and harmony and sliding on rainbows forevermore. It's like we still have to do the work. It's amazing, the releases and there are some immediate effects and, like I said, some big stuff has come up for me these few months, and I have had to work with that and be with that and learn to accept it.

And, again, look at it and feel it without judgment, with some understanding on how it connects to my experiences in my life, in the lifetime trauma experiences. And also maybe some of it is ancestral. I've got more in tune and trusting in sort of intuition and these parts that I don't quite understand in that there is a spiritual element, an ancestral element, and that sometimes I can really tune in and feel that and sometimes less so.

I remain a very logical, rational person who likes science. And I think that's why I was drawn to you because you do have that scientific background as well as doing this more esoteric work, as you say, which is based on family constellations and lots of other modalities and where you've trained, it's not totally weird and out there. So those are some of my experiences.

I really encourage people who are listening to this conference to try it for themselves because we've established that we all, maybe different percentages, but we all have some form of ancestral trauma and we see that there are ways of working with it, whether we understand that scientifically or not.

And also what I really love when I work with you is sensing for myself what resonates. Sometimes you'd say things and it just felt true. I could feel it in my body, in my cells, in my DNA, in my experience. And sometimes there were things that I would question that I was like that actually doesn't feel quite right. And it wasn't the way that your work isn't just telling me this is how it is.

It's an ongoing exploration together which, again, for the skeptics out there doesn't mean that you're just making it up based on what I'm saying, because, again, I could sense what resonated and I could really notice the positive impacts after we'd worked together. So if we know that we have ancestral trauma, that there is a way of working with it, and that the results are incredible and sometimes all you need is one session, but be prepared for some stuff to come up and to have the other tools you need to work on it, then I don't see why anyone would not give it a go.

[00:42:49] Jonathan Meenagh

I think that's a really good summary and I think people come to this work whenever it feels right. I always get people at the right point. There's something that kind of draws everyone at the right moment, when it's right for them. And so there is a good shift. I'm constantly questioning all of it and that's what I want to find out. Why? If this is what I'm seeing, why am I seeing it? Why has that just happened? Why am I being shown something that doesn't feel quite right?

Okay, let's work out what is that? The whole point is, for me anyways, I really want to know what's going on under the bonnet. And I've got some theories now as to what I think is going on in terms of the cause and effect and what I can see in terms of the cause and effect. It's helping guide that direction and the development of it. But, for me, it's really just being able to offer people something.

Maybe people have tried other types and I think there's lots of... all the other types really do work. I mean, I have people who've had various different types and you can actually see in the system where it has worked because I can see the conclusions to some of the traumas that were carried further back that have been brought to us through talking therapy, could be like some even more experimental things.

And if you look into the system, I can see the bits where, oh yeah, that's resolved and that's resolved and you've done that piece of work through that talking therapy. The system is very clear, it kind of holds all the information. These very different modalities all do work and you can see them working.

And I think it's all about finding what works best for you, but being able to offer people something which is perhaps a little bit more out there, but in terms of being able to deliver a result or at least get you the movement that's needed, that perhaps if everything else hasn't worked, then it's a really good option.

Jaia Bristow

Yes, absolutely. I'm mindful of time. But before we end, I just was wondering if you could say a little bit more, you reference when I look into the system, I see what's worked and what's healed and what's not and what's open. Can you say a little bit more about what you mean when you look into the system?

Jonathan Meenagh

So it comes through to me and there's lots of people who work in this field, who can perceive things through the system. Just to be clear, I wasn't able to do any of this before I started training in constellations. And as I was doing family constellations, the more of the pieces of trauma that I was picking off one by one, suddenly I could start to perceive things that I wasn't able to perceive before it came in.

It was a bit like Whoopi Goldberg in Ghost. I was literally sitting in the middle of a session one day and my head was being literally, physically, turned around. I was like, what is going on? I thought there was something wrong with my neck. When this stuff sort of kicks in, it's not something you

expect. And so it took quite a while to work out what on earth was going on and I was like, oh, hang on, this is information, there's stuff coming through here.

[00:45:55]

I feel it all very much in my body and my head gets directed to various places. When I say I see things, it's not quite as clear as that. I get the numbers in my head. I can see that five positions back and it's a grandmother and it's this and it's that. And then I'll feel the energetic of it and I'll suddenly just think, oh, this is the relationship. It'll just pop into my head.

And then I'll feel the feeling of what it was like for that person in the relationship. And I'll go, oh wow, you get a really strong sense of control, or whatever it happens to be there, whatever the emotion effectively was that was felt by that person. So all of that all came on. It wasn't instant. It's taken a number of years for it to really dial up.

So when I'm seeing someone and that happens, it's a combination of numbers, very clear numbers actually, and very clear patterns, very mathematical in terms of how the system works. It appears to have a very clear set of rules and inheritance and things like that. And it's almost, when you look at it, it's almost quite a mathematical structure to it. And then you can sort of, head movements and things, I'll sort of get the information I need that way.

But I only really get the information I need to heal the system. I don't get the, you know, where your grandmother lived and you know, what color the front door was and all that kind of stuff doesn't come through. The only thing I get is the important bit of information that is needed for the individual sitting in front of me for them to reach a conclusion or to reach peace or reach healing in that particular piece of trauma.

It is completely functional around the trauma and nothing else. And I'm very careful in all of this not to create any narrative or any past family history and this happened or that happened. We resolve what we can see in front of us and try not to create any kind of, well, there were lots of people back there. Anything that creates any more judgment or any more feeling, I kind of encourage everyone just to do what's required to bring the conclusion to this stuff and then to move on from it and to do so then clearing your own path rather than bringing this with you. It sounds really out there to describe it. I mean, I can't describe it any better than that.

Jaia Bristow

I think you did a great job. I think it's really important to include that, that you're perceiving and sensing things, you're not seeing these spirits as ghosts dancing around and that there's a mathematical element almost, and that it's a system and you receive the information you need to support the trauma healing in that moment.

You're not suddenly having a client in front of you and you know every thought they're having and all their family history and anything like that, and that it's in service of what you're doing. So I think that's fantastic.

Jonathan, for anyone listening who's like I think now is the time or I think the time might soon be to do some of this work, how can people find out about you and get in touch with you?

[00:48:53] Jonathan Meenagh

You can find me at inheritedtraumacenter.com or inheritedtraumacenter.co.uk. And I'm happy to, if anyone would be interested, I'm very happy to take a call with people to describe the process before they book. And, of course, if people just want to go ahead and book with me, I'll talk them through the process and walk it all through as we do the work.

The sessions are usually about 3 hours long. They're quite involved, but they are very detailed. 3 hours doesn't feel like 3 hours when you're in this work, it flashes by very quickly, but I hope to do as much as I can within that 3 hours. And then I usually do a follow up with people just to check in how they are after, you know, a few weeks later or a few months later, whenever it feels appropriate. And that's usually the kind of package for what I offer.

Jaia Bristow

Brilliant. Well, I encourage people to check it out. I think our session lasted about 4 hours the first time and I was quite tired afterwards. So I recommend people setting aside a good half a day for it. And as you say, it didn't feel like we were together for 4 hours during that time. And I love that a free follow up is included as well, and that it's the sort of work that doesn't need, it's not like talk therapy or something where you need 10, 20 sessions. Maybe some people will need multiple sessions, some might not, but it's definitely worth it.

So thank you so much for your time today. I hope people are inspired to check it out and that it supports and nourishes many people in their journeys of trauma healing.

Jonathan Meenagh

Thank you so much, Jaia.