



Episode 11: Using Chinese Medicine to Get to the Root Cause of Your Fatigue

Evan Hirsch: Welcome, everybody. Dr. Evan here, with another amazing episode, and another amazing interviewee. So today, I'm speaking with Dr. Shiroko Sokitch, MD, who is a doctor that cares about you. So, she is the owner of Heart to Heart Medical Center in Santa Rosa, California, and since 1993, Dr. Shiroko is an expert at using many modalities to bring your body to balance and wholeness. Her specialty is healing when it seems impossible, perfect for our audience. She brings hope and healing to difficult healing conditions by blending Chinese and Western medicine with a deep spiritual and emotional healing approach. We love that. Trained in General Surgery and working as an Emergency Room Doc for 10 years while attending acupuncture school gave Dr. Shiroko a broad range of medical experience. Her new book, *Healing When It Seems Impossible: 7 Keys to Defy the Odds*, a book about her unique and comprehensive healing approach is available on Amazon, and we have a gift for those of you who stay to the end, we'll give you the link, and you can get that free gift. So, Dr. Shiroko, thanks so much for joining me today.

Shiroko Sokitch: Thank you for having me. It's gonna be so fun.

Evan Hirsch: Yes, it's gonna be awesome.

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: So today, we're going to be talking about using Chinese medicine to get to the root cause of your fatigue. So I always like to ask people about their story first and, and how they got into what they get into. So how did you get into Chinese medicine?

[00:01:29] Shiroko Sokitch: Well, my story about Chinese medicine is really a love story. Many, when I was a surgical resident, I had reached a crisis during my second year of residency, and I had a couple of experiences that just sort of led me to wonder if surgery was the path for me. And one of them was that I went into surgery because I wanted to save lives and of course, in surgery, you often save lives, but I found that once we save lives, there would still be difficult issues that people had to deal with and that

there was more to saving a life than taking someone from the death store. And also, I reached my own personal crisis at a, like about halfway through my second year, where I just started to look at my own health issues and my own emotional challenges and realized that there was so much more to being alive than just being a surgeon.

And at first, that's all I thought was like, "Oh, I can just work forever and work 90 hours a week or however much they had us working, and it would be okay," but it wasn't. I needed space for myself, and so I took a month off. And during that month, I had a dream that if I stayed in surgery, I would die, and it was literally like, "If you stay in surgery, you will die." [laughs] And I was like, "Oh," and I'm I have a habit of listening to my inner voice. And so this seemed like very loud inner voice, and so I was like, "Okay, well, I've got to think of something else to do, but I didn't know what." And somebody gave me a book called *The Web That Has No Weaver* and it was about acupuncture and Chinese medicine. And it was just the title of it was so beautiful. And I started reading about how energy works and how acupuncture works. And it was. Literally, I fell in love.

I just was like, such an amazing concept to me. And so I said, "Okay, I got to figure out how to study this." So at first, I was just like, "Okay, I'm gonna go to Boston and study with the guy who wrote the book, who's Ted Kaptchuk." And I had no idea how to do that. So I just like, "What?", but then, in my residency, there was a guy who was a respiratory therapist who was an acupuncturist. He had just finished acupuncture school. And so I heard about him, and I started talking to him, and he became my mentor. And then he told me there was a school in Seattle that I could go study at. And so it just one thing led to another I decided to leave my residency, and that I was going to go study acupuncture, and I was going to go work in the ER while I studied acupuncture, so like there's all these things that just kind of fell into place in that way.

Evan Hirsch: That's amazing.

Shiroko Sokitch: So, and this is many years later, and I'm still in love with Chinese medicine. It's a beautiful art. So.

Evan Hirsch: It is. Indeed, I don't know if I told you but I, I did the Helms course that UCLA for medical acupuncture and so I had some-

Shiroko Sokitch: Cool.

Evan Hirsch: -familiarity with *The Web That Has No Weaver* and some of those things, but definitely rudimentary, but I have always appreciated-

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: -the five element and all those different components. It's-

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: -interesting. And it's not every day that I get to interview another MD, and so it's really interesting to hear about your transition from conventional medicine, much like mine was.

Shiroko Sokitch: Oh, yes.

Evan Hirsch: So let's talk about fatigue and TCM, Traditional Chinese Medicine. How do you approach it?

[00:04:57] Shiroko Sokitch: Well, how I approach everything with my patients is to look at where is the imbalance and so how the organs work in Chinese medicine is different than how they work in western medicine. And the key really is to recognize that you are made of energy. And the energy travels through your body in certain patterns. And then that when your energy is out of balance, there are problems. So you look for where's the imbalance in the organs. All of the organs have different functions than they do in western medicine. So some of them there's, like, I always think about it as like a little bit of a crossover. So there's some functions like the heart still circulates blood as it does in western medicine, but it has other functions or the kidneys, they still process our water balance in our bodies or electrolyte balance, but they have many additional functions.

So I'll start with the kidneys because they have so much to do with energy level. The kidneys rule your low back, your knees, your bones, your overall sense of having energy, big transitions in life. The emotion of fear, your physical brain, and of course, they filter the water as we know them in the West to do. When you think about overall sense of having energy and big transitions in life, big transitions can be things like puberty and menopause, which is what it was meant to be. But also big transitions, like let's say you move across the country, or you get divorced or any kind of big change in your life, your kidneys regulate that. And if you translate that into western medicine, that would be your adrenal glands. And so for people who are fatigued, adrenals have a lot to do with that for the most part but what's cool is, so you if every organ, so the liver, there's liver, and heart, and spleen which regulates your digestion in the lungs, which is your immune system. Every organ has some connection, one to the kidneys, because everything's connected but to your energy level.

And it's so in my interview of working with a person who's talking about fatigue. I asked a lot of questions to figure out which organ it could be that's out of balance. And then I use that information, and then I examine them, and how I examine people is conventional Western exam, but I also listen to their, feel their pulse, and look at their tongue. And from that, I learned what's going on with them from the perspective of Chinese medicine. And so, for example, there could be a person, and this isn't uncommon, actually, for chronic fatigue, you probably know this. But people who have once upon a time had some kind of infection like a virus is pretty common. And this is where I think Chinese medicine again is like such an amazing science because, in Chinese medicine, we believe that if you don't take care of your immune system, when you first get sick, if you don't do the right things, then that thing will invade your body.

Now, we call it wind or cold or heat or something that comes into your body from outside. But when it comes in and if it's not treated right, then it can keep going deeper into your energy layers and cause illness, more chronic illness. So one common cause of fatigue that we know in the West is chronic viral infection like Epstein-Barr, and in Chinese medicine, so if I, in my history I would learn you know, like what's happened to your body like when this first started, what were you doing what was happening to you? So in that functional medicine way, taking a longer history and seeing where did this originate? Was it something like something attacking your immune system?

And then, in my exam, I feel their pulse, and I learned is their immune system, okay? Or is it their kidneys or you know, like, where did this originate? So, and then I use Western medicine or functional medicine. To do testing to figure out like what's the root cause? So in Chinese medicine, of course, the root cause could be the immune system or the kidneys. And I can tell you how the liver could be involved, like, so there's many different potential causes for what would cause the fatigue and then you and then you can investigate further using functional medicine to see. What's the real medical cause, so?

Evan Hirsch: Nice. So then, in terms of treating, let's say a, so as a kidney deficiency, commonly associated with fatigue?

[00:09:40] Shiroko Sokitch: Yes, yes. So, the three like, well, actually there, there's at least four possible chronic fatigue connections with different organs. So one would be kidney, one would be liver, one would be your immune system, which is the lungs, and the third or the fourth would be the digestion, which can also lead to chronic fatigue, but sort of more indirectly. So with the kidneys, what can happen in Chinese medicine, you're born with a certain amount of energy. A certain amount, what we call your essence, and that is housed in your kidneys. And it's called the Jing, and it has, like, there's so many factors. So, the health of your parents when they made you. The connection that they had when they when you were created, so it goes all the way to when you were created, not just your birth, and your childhood, but all the way back to the essence that you receive from your parents.

So that's how your genetics comes into play. And then, what you do in your life and the Chinese philosophy is you don't overdo anything. So you kind of live your life in moderation. You don't work too hard. You don't have too much sex. You don't eat too much. You like everything is how to stay balanced with your energy and if you abuse your energy, so like overworking, or oversteering, or overdoing too much. And then and you have a certain amount of your essence, then you can become depleted in your kidneys. So you could translate that into Western medicine. So, people who like in the 80s, especially when I was going to medical school in an acupuncture school, it was a, there's this workaholic thing. I think it's still going on, but back then, it was really noticeable like "Work, work, work, work, work, work, work." Like you had to do it to make it, and you do that, you burn out your essence, you burn out your energy, and if you burn out your energy, then you can become fatigued.

So that's one way. You want me to tell you the other ways that you can get fatigued?

Evan Hirsch: Yes, that would be great.

[00:11:51] Shiroko Sokitch: Okay, so the one that I started with, which is the immune system, so let's say you've got some kind of a virus, and it's not just Epstein-Barr virus-like people. Like, in my career, one of the things that I always talk about is flu season, because when flu season comes along, if you get the flu and you don't treat it right, then you could become a person who develops chronic fatigue. So something just as simple as the flu, which is not necessarily simple and now in the time of the global health crisis, we don't even know what it takes to treat that correctly, but if you don't take care of your immune system properly when something comes into your body, then it can begin to damage your organs energetically. So you would do Western medical tests, and you wouldn't see anything which I've seen literally hundreds of people who have chronic fatigue that started with some kind of a viral infection or a cold that they had, and it wasn't treated properly and then they kind of just progressed and then over and maybe they went back to work two days later, and they work too hard. So you blend that immune imbalance with a kidney imbalance and that that builds upon itself.

So, a hidden infection is another possible cause of chronic fatigue, which is also a Western diagnosis and then in Chinese and then the liver. How the liver works is, it rules the smooth flow of energy in your whole body. It deals with the emotion of anger, and it handles stress, but it also regulates the menstrual cycles. And when you think about smooth flow of energy, that means all of the places in your body that could get tension so you could have neck and shoulder tension or you could have migraines or you could have chronic hip pain, or you could have sensitive ligaments and tendons which are all connected to the liver. Even eye problems, the liver opens up in the eyes. So even eye problems are connected to liver imbalance. So let's say you're a person who tends to be really stressed out all the time, and angry all the time and frustrated and on the go and.

Well, that will cause fatigue, especially if you don't let your anger out. Let's say your anger is all hidden underneath and hidden inside your body. And you don't let it out or do anything like don't exercise regularly. So a person who has a whole bunch of fatigue could be a person who has a lot of anger in their body or a lot of stuck liver energy, and then that translates into fatigue, but it isn't really and what's interesting, so like when you feel their pulse, each position of on your wrist so when I feel somebody's pulse, it's three positions on each wrist, when they have fatigue, and it's not because they're the kidneys position is the third position. A person who has liver imbalance isn't going to have a low kidney pulse. They're going to have a strong liver pulse or a weird thready wiry repulse. And so you can tell by feeling their pulse like is because you can feel their immune pulse, you can feel the kidney pulse, you can feel the liver pulse, and you can kind of tell which organs are out of balance. And based on that, you can say, "Okay, this is, this kind of imbalance.", and then you work from that place to help them get balanced.

Evan Hirsch: Excellent. So then my next question is then stepping into that, then how do you get them balanced? So we talked about herbs? Are we talking about acupuncture? I know-

[00:15:31] Shiroko Sokitch: I do everything. Yes.

Evan Hirsch: -your combining all this stuff. Yes.

Shiroko Sokitch: [laughs] Yes. So a person who's very depleted, so a person whose kidney energy is very low. So they're coming from an empty tank. So with them, often I will measure their hormones and look at what's happening to the tank, and when their energy's extremely low like that, it's hard like if you're playing with an empty tank, then it's hard to do anything like acupuncture. Like if you do acupuncture with an empty tank, it's harder too because there's nothing there to play with. So I have to build their energy first. So a person like that I might give them some hormonal support, which could be herbs. And it could be bioidentical hormones. I like using like DHEA or pregnenolone for people to kind of help them sort of build up their energy. And then when I do acupuncture, then there's some energy behind it, that will help it work would help it move. I mean, there are ways to do acupuncture to build energy, but it's harder to build energy than to move energy that already exists.

So I use acupuncture, I use herbs, I use supplements. I use all the functional medicine testing to figure out sort of technical root causes of things. So a person whose immune system is out of balance in their fatigue, I will look for the root cause infection. I will either do a, I'll do a stool test to see if there's any bacteria, or viruses, or parasites in their digestive system. I'll do blood tests to look for viruses. The problem with viruses, of course, is that there's so many viruses and we don't know what all of them are, and we don't know how to test for them. Even the flu virus, like how do you test for residual flu virus in somebody who's been sick for 10 years, you don't, right? And testing and Lyme disease is another potential infection that can cause fatigue, right? And hard to find, hard to diagnose. So that's, all of those things come into play, and they're all kind of tricky, like, where do you go and how do you work with that? And so it's a matter of, I have so many herbal formulas, and I like herbal formulas because they can address if you have a parasite, a virus, or bacteria, or a yeast kind of creature living in you.

Some of those herbs will crossover and do a lot of different things. And they're not as damaging to your immune system. Because they work with your immune system and the Chinese herbal way, much as the Western or much as the Chinese medicine way is all about balance. So you use herbs to bring balance to a system. And you're working within a system which so beautifully ties into Functional medicine, which is why I love doing both Functional medicine and Chinese medicine. Because they dance with each other. So.

Evan Hirsch: That's great. So then Chinese medicine does acknowledge infections, is that true?

[00:18:40] Shiroko Sokitch: Yes, but we call it like if you really go with traditional Chinese medicine, of course now as Modern medicine so we can talk about infections, but they were called wind. So and most so, the outermost layer of your energy so energy is in your body. It travels throughout your body, but there's no inner and outer, and excessive are in deficient all different factors that you take into account with energy. But the entry point for most infections, so the outermost layer is your lungs and your large intestine, and if you think about it, almost any infection that you could think of starts either as a like a something that is in your throat, your lungs, your nose, which is all considered part of your lungs, or it starts as diarrhea. So infections enter your body. There's a place under your ear, which is called the entry point of the wind. It has a fancier name in Chinese, which I can't remember right now. [laughs] But it enters here which is why they say to wear a scarf like if you see a lot of acupuncturists, who are always wearing scarves, especially in San Francisco because it's cold in San Francisco [laughs] in the summer, but you can wear as little clothes as you want, but if you wear a scarf, you're protecting yourself from wind coming in.

Now we know that that's not necessarily true, but that something allows a virus or a creature to enter into your system, and it usually enters either through your respiratory system or through your digestive system. And, in fact, I've tried to think of infections that enter some other way and like maybe like HIV and Hepatitis B enter through your bloodstream, but most other infections kind of enter. Oh, and maybe Lyme disease enter through your bloodstream as well. But most other infections start with your lungs or with your digestive system that I can think of. And so, what was my point there? I can't remember my point. [laughs]

Evan Hirsch: Infections, herbs? Oh, yes. How does Chinese medicine-

Shiroko Sokitch: View infection, right? [laughs]

Evan Hirsch: -view infections? Yes.

[00:20:55] Shiroko Sokitch: So each season has a weather element, and each organ has an element that is connected to the weather. Each season has a time, and each organ has a time of year. So summer, there's heat, and spring is wind, and fall is cold dry air, so dryness. And so, each element can cause a symptom that is like an invasion of your body by that symptom.

And so that's how we diagnose infection really. Is like, is it when did that came in? Is it heat? Is it dampness? Hepatitis is considered to be dampness in your liver? So things like things like that. And each organ is sensitive to those elements of or those weather conditions. It's not really like I explained it to my patients, but really, I explain it more from a Western point of view because it's harder to understand that wind got into your ears and caused [laughs] whatever symptoms.

Evan Hirsch: Yes, and wind invasion ain't no joke.

Shiroko Sokitch: It is not. [laughs]

Evan Hirsch: When I did my acupuncture training, and I don't do acupuncture anymore, but when I did my training, I had a very intense treatment that I received. And I was in Arizona, and then I went over a friend's house, and I'm walking around without a shirt, and the AC is on full blast. And I got very sick I know that they said, cover-up after you get this treatment or whatever, but I was young, and I was like, what's the big deal? I almost got pneumonia. I got so sick.

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: Yes, it can. It can definitely happen. Yes.

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: So let's talk about how Chinese medicine is different from other forms of healing.

[00:22:52] Shiroko Sokitch: Well, many different things for me. I mean, first of all, Chinese medicine has been around 5000 years. And for me, what I think is most remarkable about it is that it's a system of medicine. I mean, there are, when I studied. When I went to acupuncture school, I was just studying acupuncture, not herbal medicine, but now in studying Chinese medicine, most people go to school for four years. So and it's like medical school, you have a whole system of medicine that you have to learn. A whole philosophy of healing that you have to learn. So there are not very many other healing modalities that where you spend so many years in school like doctors, chiropractors, and naturopaths. Those are they spend many years in school, and they learn a whole system of medicine. So it's Chinese medicine is parallel in that way.

And there's lifestyle factors. There's nutritional factors. There's herbs and medicinal factors, and then there's a whole philosophy that goes along with it. For me, when I first started studying it, what I found so interesting was that it was a whole system of how to view energy and there aren't. I mean, there's a lot of people who talk about energy healing, and energy medicine, and things like that, but they don't really, I don't want to say they don't have a system because I don't want to compare and I don't know that much about them. But in Chinese medicine is a whole way a whole philosophy of healing and ancient system that's very scientific, if you go look into it like as you start to explore it. And one of the things I loved about The Web That Has No Weaver is that he used all the science, the Chinese, and when the when they had the Cultural Revolution in the 60s, they actually did research to figure out did they want to use Western medicine? Or did they want to use traditional Chinese medicine as their method for their billions of people? And they did hundreds and hundreds of studies, maybe thousands of studies, but they had an easy audience. And they researched Chinese medicine versus Western medicine for many different conditions before they chose to use traditional Chinese medicine as part of their medical system.

Evan Hirsch: Yes, and I know that even now, I believe in Beijing or a lot of the hospitals are kind of side by side where you can do you can go Western side, or you can go in Eastern side.

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes. Yes. Or sometimes they'll do both, which like, in the West here, there aren't very many physicians who do what I do, which is to really blend both of them fully together. But in China, I think they do that, although I haven't been to China. But I had a friend who went to Taiwan, and he spent three years working in a hospital there, and he did the acupuncture there. And right alongside surgeries and Western medicine as though they were right there blended together.

Evan Hirsch: Right. Yes, I think one of the things that really was remarkable to me is around the 70s when I think it was Nixon, who opened up China, there was a reporter who went over and ended up having appendicitis, and he was having surgery, and the anesthesia was all done with acupuncture. Yes, which is-

Shiroko Sokitch: I have to confess that I'm not sure I would allow myself to be operated on just acupuncture. [laughs] I'm not sure my belief system allows that, and people always talk about, using anesthesia or using acupuncture for anesthesia. But I'm not sure in my own mind. I could do that. So I believe in an acupuncture, and I'm not sure that I could get there. [laughs] So.

Evan Hirsch: I hear you. Yes. It would be [laughs] challenging for me as well. Yes.

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: So let's talk about your book. So Healing When It Seems Impossible: 7 Keys to Defy the Odds, tell us about it.

[00:26:56] Shiroko Sokitch: Sure, I would love to. So again, my path, my journey as a healer has been parallel with my personal journey as a human. And so many big lessons have happened in my life as a human that integrated with my work as a healer. And so my book is kind of a culmination of both my journey as a healer and my practice of medicine. And what I have figured out over the years is that there are certain elements to healing that are vitally important and that healing yourself is possible. So the book comes from the idea that you can sometimes it seems so difficult and especially when you have a difficult health issue, and so many of my patients have difficult health issues. And I've had some difficult health issues, but the thing that really took me down was when I split with my husband 13 years ago, and my heart was broken, and I couldn't function for some length of time. It was like my whole belief system about life. It took me down, and I had to re-initiate my whole existence in order to come to believe in myself as a human and as a healer again.

And so through that, I learned, so I'm going to talk about the first key. The first key that was love, and through that experience, I learned that love is the most vital element to healing. It was the love of my friends, the love of my medical practice, the love of my

patients, the love of the people that came into my life to help me during that time. That's what healed me. That's what made me back to being a functional human being. And so I began to see that is a vital step to healing when you have a difficult health issue as well. A lot of times when we have a difficult health issue, we are struggling because we're angry at our bodies, we feel betrayed. Because there's a life that we were living in suddenly, we can't do those things anymore.-

Evan Hirsch: Right.

Shiroko Sokitch: -And we feel angry at our bodies. We feel angry at life. And so I've made love the first key because the first transition that you could make is to think of your body as your friend. And to think what would love do if like if you loved yourself? What would happen if you found a way to find love in this difficult health situation? What would happen? And oxytocin is a vitally important hormone in our bodies and cortisol and oxytocin. Cortisol is our stress hormone, and oxytocin is what we call the love hormone, but oxytocin, when you have more oxytocin, you're better able to heal. And you're, you have the energy to heal. So if you use love as your starting off point, that is, that's a great place to start. It gives you some sort of hope, when it seems like you might not have any, in these difficult times.

The second key is the physical healing, which is, of course, vitally important as well, when you have a physical issue, you need to physically find balance. And I, over the years of doing both Chinese and Western medicine, I've developed the thing, what I call the Triangle of Wellness. In the 80s, there were a lot of mystery illnesses, and we didn't have all the testing that we do the Functional medicine testing that we have now. We didn't have some of the science that we have now. Back then, we believe that cholesterol was bad for you, and we should eat low-fat diets. And now we've learned that fat is essential to your nervous system. And so there's a lot of science that has evolved over time, but there's still science still doesn't know everything. And so one of the beauties of Chinese medicine is this whole other way of looking at things. And so out of blending those things, I came up with a Triangle of Wellness, and that is your hormones, your nervous system, and your immune system. And when that triangle is functioning, then your body has the substrate that it needs to heal.

And so I often see patients who have mystery illness because I'm their last resort and they find one, somebody who will help them understand what's happening when there's no answers. So, I use this triangle like so, "Okay, if I can't find what is the root cause?" And of course, we have many more tools, like I said, but what if we can't? Then we go into balancing hormones, balancing nervous system, balancing immune system, and then there's the possibility of your body finding its way to getting well. The other element of physical balance, of course, is looking for the root cause, and I do all that kind of testing to find the root cause and digestion being one of the main root causes of things that people get ill with.

The third element of my book is finding your own unique lifestyle. And again, everybody has diets and exercises and millions of ways to do things. But what's right for you? What's the right diet? What's the right way to eat? What's the right attitude because attitude is another lifestyle factor, right? What's going to work for you? And so that

bounces back and forth between the fourth key win, the fourth key is learning to listen to your body. And so you, you listen to your body. You adjust to your lifestyle. You listen to your body. You adjust your lifestyle, and it's that dance that teaches you. And what I love about my chapter about listening to your bodies that the elements of Chinese medicine like I was describing to you like low back pain, knee pain, things like that. They will guide you to the organ system that's out of balance. So by learning, like listening to your symptoms, and then taking Chinese medicine and looking is like, "Okay, these things are all happening to me." "Oh, that fits my liver" or, "Oh, this fits my kidneys."

And then you can kind of you can diagnose yourself to some degree. And by listening to that, then you can do things to help balance those organs. Which is what I've been teaching my patients for 27 years, so and I love the ones that have known me for a long time. They'll come in and say, "Oh, I have dampness today" or, "Oh, my livers out of balance." And because they've been listening to me talk about those things for years and now they know.

Evan Hirsch: Right.

Shiroko Sokitch: So the fifth key is the emotional and again, one of the things about Chinese medicine that I love is that each organ has all these physical functions, but it also has emotional and spiritual functions. You cannot separate your body from your spirit. You cannot. Your body is integrated with your emotions. Your emotions are a part of your system. It's not, there's no such thing as psychosomatic disease, or everything is psychosomatic, right? So when you, everything has an emotional component. I have a favorite story about a firefighter that I used to take care of, and he had a knee problem, and he was young, was in his 30s. And he came in, and he had this knee pain, and he didn't want to have surgery because he didn't want to be out of commission for that long, although he'd had this knee pain for several months. And they started doing acupuncture needing to get better. And I mean, it should have been simple. He was young. It was just a simple knee injury, but then he wasn't getting better.

So I kept asking questions like, "What's stressing you out? What's causing? What's going on in your life?" and he was always, "Oh, life is great. I have a wife. Sometimes we fight a little bit, but everything's really great." Then one day, he came in, and he said to me, "Oh yes, I just hung out with my dad," and I was like, "Oh, how was that?" And he said, "Well, my dad's an alcoholic." [laughs] He grew up with an alcoholic dad, right? So I started talking to him about it, and it opened his eyes. And he left that office, and he went and read a book about being an adult child of an alcoholic, and he realized that there was a whole bunch of emotional stuff that happened because his dad was an alcoholic and that he had never thought of it before. I love those kind of moments where somebody's eyes are opened, that you never saw anything like that before. And so after that, like once he acknowledged that there was an emotional component, he was able to heal his knee without having to have surgery. So, and every organ has emotional and spiritual functions. So like again, like if you start to look if you have a health condition and it's not getting better quickly or not getting better as you might imagine. There's always an emotional component.

And then the sixth key is patience and persistence, so to never give up. Whenever you have a healing journey, so I view our bodies is like we're spirits that live in bodies, and we're always on a spiritual journey, even if we don't know it. And when you have a health challenge, much like when you have a challenge with somebody you love or a family member or a mission on Earth, like whenever. When you have a challenge, it's your opportunity to grow. And the patience and persistence comes from, okay, there must be a reason for this, let's keep looking for answers. Let's not give up. Let's keep looking. Let's keep looking. And to be patient about that. I love the hero's journey. I love hero movies. I love stories of people who overcome against all odds. And when I was writing this book, I was just obsessed with hero movies. Like some of my favorites are like The Matrix and believe it or not, Kung Fu Panda. They're hero's stories, right? They're as somebody who's given a challenge, and they have to get, and this is how your health is. If you have a difficult health issue, it's a heroic journey to get to getting well.

And the seventh key is to trust the process. Because when you again, when you've seen five, six, seven, eight doctors and you've seen all these different healers, and you're looking, and you're looking, and you're looking, and you may feel like, "What's wrong? Why aren't I finding the answers?" Well, that process is a part of the journey of what's going to bring you to be well. And there's something about that journey that maybe seems like it's a waste of your time, but it's not. It's a part of your journey. And I have a lot I'm lucky I have a lot of friends and acquaintances who are people who have been through their own health challenges and so many of them because of the health challenge they had became healers, became people who served others in that journey. Friends who had Irritable bowel syndrome for years, or who had thyroid conditions, and they overcame it.

You probably know Terry Wahls. She's a woman who, she's an MD who had MS, and she healed herself of MS, and now she's healing other people of so many neurological problems because of what she learned about her own journey. And so that's the opportunity when you have a difficult health challenge that it will show you who you were meant to be.

Evan Hirsch: I love it. Is that all? Is that all of them? That seven, right?

Shiroko Sokitch: That's all seven. Yes.

Evan Hirsch: Sounds like an amazing book. Yes, I-

Shiroko Sokitch: Thank you.

Evan Hirsch: -totally resonate with all of those things. Me having fatigue for five years, and I got over it, and now it's my mission to help-

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: -a million people resolve their fatigue. So I totally get that. And I used to think when I came when I was originally trained in Conventional and Functional medicine, I thought it was all about the physical, and then really know much about the emotional, but now we actually have a Nervous System Retraining coach on our team like-

Shiroko Sokitch: Oh cool.

Evan Hirsch: -it's such an important part of the work that we do, and you definitely can't negate it, and you have to look at all of the causes, including that mind-body-spirit connection. So I totally applaud the work that you're doing. The book sounds amazing.

Shiroko Sokitch: Thank you.

Evan Hirsch: So great. So, we're coming up on the end here. And so let's talk about a couple of things. So first thing is, what is one thing you would say to our audience that they can do today to start to feel better?

[00:39:35] Shiroko Sokitch: Practice loving. To find something to love. So many people, when they don't feel well, are sort of in a shell of darkness. And I've certainly been in that kind of a shell of deep darkness. And if you could just find the one little light and the little light would be love. So we often think that somebody should love us. And the cool thing about love is, is that it's this blasting energy, it's large. And so if you give some love, it will come back to you. So even if you feel like there's no love for you that nobody's giving you any love, go out there and love something else. Like if you have a dog or a cat, give that some love. If you have a kid, give your kids some love if you have a partner. Do something loving for your partner, even if you feel really crummy. You could give them a little hug or say thank you and appreciate them. Just a little teeny bit of love will open your eyes. And it's something you could do any minute of any day. And it'll help you feel a little better.

Evan Hirsch: I love that. My wife Stacy, she has a free Saturday morning meditation, and a lot of what she does on there is love and kindness.

Shiroko Sokitch: Oh, cool.

Evan Hirsch: Empty yourself and to others. And, yes, I find that to be very powerful in my own life.

Shiroko Sokitch: Cool.

Evan Hirsch: That's great. So let's talk about how people can find you. So, where can they learn more about you?

[00:41:08] Shiroko Sokitch: Well, I have a website, hearttoheartmedicalcenter.com,

and I named my office specifically because of this Heart to Heart, my heart to your heart. And that's how I practice is like I believe that my love will help you heal, and I believe that if you bring your love to your healing, you will heal better. So my business is easy to find, hearttoheartmedicalcenter.com, and my book, you're going to have a link to my book fair you can have a link to, yes.

Evan Hirsch: We'll have, yes. We'll have a link to the website and the book and then also you're gonna give our community a free workbook, which-

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes.

Evan Hirsch: -is the Healing When It Seems Impossible: 7 Keys to Defy the Odds workbook, and this is not a small workbook. This is, how many pages?

[00:41:56] Shiroko Sokitch: 75 pages. [laughs]

Evan Hirsch: 75 pages.

Shiroko Sokitch: So my book has, so the seven keys and then there are all these elements to each element of the seven keys, and there's exercises for everything so that you can integrate that and to help you. So you can take it as deeply as you want. You could just read it, or you could do the exercises and really just heal yourself. Use it for your own self-healing. And the workbook is, I just took all the exercises out so that you could do them.

Evan Hirsch: Excellent. Well, thank you for that gift for our community. Thank you for sharing your knowledge with us today about fatigue. Hopefully, people have a greater understanding about how Chinese medicine can help their fatigue as it really is. It's a different lens. It's a different way of looking at it, but you're still looking at the areas of imbalance, which is such an important part of all this.

Shiroko Sokitch: Yes, yes, definitely. Thank you for having me. It was really fun talking to you.

Evan Hirsch: Yes. Thanks for being on with me today. Bye, everybody.

Shiroko Sokitch: Bye.