

MERYL: Hey, everyone. Welcome back to the Rebel Nutritionist podcast. I have Amanda. So I don't know if you guys have seen Amanda . This is Amanda. And we decided to do a little bit of the video for the podcast.

So if you guys are watching us on YouTube, Woohoo. And if you're listening to us great, you'll still get the same great information. But people have been giving us feedback that they wanna see our faces. They wanna see the facial expression and the back and forth. And we do that so well, cuz we're both so passionate about what we do.

So today we are going to talk a little bit more about what is functional medicine, what is functional, ATT nutrition, more importantly, what do we do here? Why is it so unique? Why. You should come see us and, and how it can support and benefit you. And so we've had many discussions about that in the office.

Amanda's had some great input as have every everyone here, really all of our coaches, all of our staff is like, this is why you need to come see us. We need to tell people about it. And so so we're going to do that today. And Amanda, I mean, I guess really we should start. The big question of what is functional medicine.

Yeah. Right. So I'm gonna throw it back at you for a second. Okay. Right. Because we talked a little bit about this because I've been in this work for over 20 years and I sleep, eat, drink, breathe it. So sometimes it's hard for me to like kind of simplify it and say, well, this is what functional medicine is.

Right. I get deep into the biochemistry and the medical part of this. And but I think Amanda really kind of said it really succinctly when we were talking. How do I best explain this? Well, how are you feeling and how did you, how were you feeling when you needed to find functional? How did you find it?

Because you said, oh, I think I thought my path was so different, but I really think people need to hear that. Yeah. Cause I don't know that it was so different.

AMANDA: Yeah. I guess. Yeah, I think that the journey to finding functional medicine is not always an easy journey to get here. For me, it's just my own experience. If you listen to the previous podcast we did, it took me. So many doctors, so many years, several plus years to, to find a physician, to find a program, to find a support system like functional medicine offers and, and the tools and **all the things that you get by working with a functional practitioner. You don't find in the conventional healthcare system.** And, and that was, it took a long time to, to figure that out. Mm-hmm and most people who are inquiring about our services have already gone through that experience. Right. They've gone from doctor to doctor. They've gotten the prescription after prescription, they've been told there's nothing they can do to help themselves to feel better.

And so ultimately they end up here and they're like, how can you guys help us? What do you offer? That's different than every doctor I've seen prior to seeing you.

MERYL: Right. Right. So I'm gonna take it back just a step. Yeah. And say, really? So how is functional? What is even functional? Where did this come from?

Right. And, and what does that mean in the context of comparing it to let's say what we know is modern, typical medicine and, and, and just to clarify, give people a jumping off point, right? So **functional medicine is really about root cause medicine**. If you go back and look at historically. The days of old, let's call it your family doctor.

When you know, let's say my mom was young and my grandparents were young. It was, you had a family doctor almost from the day you were born. They probably delivered you. Right. Mm-hmm until the day you almost died give or take, and **they knew your history. They knew your story. They knew about you.**

So they could. They could really speak to whatever was going on. They knew your history and could help you with it right now it's become so diluted. We're a number and, and we'll talk about what that, what the whole system is, but, and oftentimes before the advent of real antibiotics, The doctors were going into the garden.

Right. It was like that homemade witches brew of, of what is medicinal in terms of the plants that you had. Right. So I almost feel like functional is going back to what does nature, what is the root cause of where your illness comes from and oftentimes, and the other. Beautiful part about a doctor knowing you is if you got sick often, what was the reason that you were getting sick? Often? Not just bandaid with medication, but wait, it, I know you, you're not really a sickly person. Why are you getting sick so often? So **a lot of the symptoms were nipped in the bud. So to speak when you have someone who knew your story**, who knew you so fast forward to where we are now, and that certainly doesn't happen.

But really what we look at is we are one system. I always say, this body, **your body is one system**. So what goes on in your brain? The thoughts, the feelings, the emotion has to be manifested here and vice versa. Right? We now know **the gut microbiome is intricately connected to our brain**, right? We always talk, we talk about our gut being our second brain. So there's a. Connection. And there's a connection to everything else. We, I think part of what we've lost in, in modern medicine is **we have specialists for everything yet. Nobody is talking to integrate how these systems function together**, right? So in functional medicine, we take the whole system and figure out if you are having a symptom and whatever, right? What, whatever was going on with you. For example, the fatigue, the unexplained exhaust. How do we go back and say, well, what is causing that? **And it's never just about one thing**. We have to look. And this is where it's so integrated, right? You look at sleep, you look at gut health, you look at the whole system, you look at the nutrition, you look at the exercise, you look at the thoughts and the behaviors, and you look at environment

And if we don't start understanding that we have to pay attention to all of that before we really become a whole well balanced body, then we're missing such a huge component of our health and wellness, right. Would you agree? A hundred percent? So that really in essence, functional

medicine is listening to those symptoms that start to come about and say, oh, let me address that symptom.

What is, why is that symptom happening? I always say **our body whispers until it screams. Right. and we don't want the scream because we know we can prevent the scream. If we really just pay attention**

but we have become, we are not, **we are a very reactive society. We don't practice prevention, which is everything that functional medicine is.**

Right. **We react once we have an illness and. And we don't embrace prevention.** I always say people say to me, well, I don't wanna pay attention to what I eat and I don't wanna pay attention to what I sleep. Like one day I'll do that, but not now. And I always say, this is the gas tank. We all start with a full gas tank and it, and it starts to go down and it starts to go down. If we're not replenishing it. With the foods and the sleep and all of the things I just mentioned. So this gas tank goes down, goes down and we don't feel it necessarily. I mean, there's definitely whispers of things that go on. Right. but it goes down. And what happens when you get to bottom? You're like, wait, how did I get there? well, if you're not replenishing your body with good things, healthy things, supportive things, then. How, how, how are you surprised? So does that, do you think that that answers some of the que so, so you know, so that addresses functional medicine looks at that route, right. What did I miss there that I didn't Address?

AMANDA: Well, I guess my question for you. So like, I'm just thinking if I was, somebody was never seen a functional medicine practitioner and I was interested in you. Coming to you and, and seeking your advice and your counsel what was, **what could be something that I would expect to get out of working with you?**

Great question. What would, what's an example of **the first step would be that 90 minute deep dive discovery session.** Like what can you paint a picture of what that looks like

MERYL: Absolutely. And, and I'm gonna take a step back cause we talk. **We, we do have to set expectations for our clients because this is going to be very, very different than anything they've experienced, especially from, from the type of medicine they've come from.**

Right? Yeah. And like you said, well, the doctors are very dismissive. Of of the symptoms. They're just like, well, it's in your head or right. Or we can't, if we can't diagnose you with a disease, you must be fine. right, exactly. It didn't show up on the diagnostics.

So you're okay. Exactly. Right. Your labs are normal.

So you are okay. How many times have you guys heard that you have normal labs? Like the functional ranges are so crazy and those again, I mean, we can have spinoffs of podcasts on all of the things that we're talking about. Yeah. If you're told your labs are normal. If you told, if you're being told that you are fine and there's nothing wrong with you yet, inherently and intuitively right.

Listen to your intuition. If intuitively you feel anything, but that listen to that, that's part of the whisper. That is a real part of your body saying. Yeah, I don't think so. **And I think part of what we've lost in modern medicine is our ability to advocate for ourselves.**

AMANDA: Totally. Yeah. I remember. And I think we're getting a little better, but I, I think our previous generations my grandparents' generation, even my parents we, we were told, listen to the doctor or the doctor knows best and I don't think that that's the case.

MERYL: And I always say the caveat to that, and I wanna be very careful. Look, I. Love. I love doctors in terms of, I, I commend them for why they originally go into medicine, right? Yeah. It's the same reason we are in this industry. We want to help people. **We wanna genuinely help people. And I feel that if you go into medicine, that is your intention.** Your intention is, is true to the fact that you wanna help people. The, the hard part is that. And the frustrating part and the disheartening part is. You get, **they've gotten lost in the system. The system has failed. We, we really don't have a healthcare system. We have a disease management system.** Mm-hmm right.

So I think we have to be very careful about putting so much faith in these doctors that **really may or may not know what's best for you because they have no context of what your life has been like.** So. You know what to expect when you come here is that firstly, there's a reason our sessions are an hour and a half because we need to take the deep dive.

We need to listen to your history and I'm not talking about just what, what your symptoms are right now. Right? It's what, what environment did you grow up in? What was that mental, emotional environment? And I think this is so important because people come in here and I ask them and I. Well, **where did you grow up and what was your family dynamic like?**

And for a lot of people. There was a lot of different kinds of trauma and trauma doesn't have to be abuse or physical abuse or mental, emotional abuse, even though that's part of it. And there's a huge amount of that. I always say **trauma, that that is felt here is felt everywhere.** Right? Mm-hmm and we see that.

But, but other kinds of experiences, **the story that you were told,** right? We see people all day long. I will tell you, especially when it comes to weight loss, right. **People think they fail at weight loss because they're not on the right kind of diet.** It is not that you're not on the right. Kind of have you been chasing the diets your whole life and what message were you told when you were young?

You know, we had a, a really good example and I'm diverging a little, but there's a point to this and we'll come back to that at a client yesterday who came. 45 year old woman, right. Is, is, is pretty overweight, wants to lose weight, but understand she's got, she's got some metabolic dysfunction. She's got some high blood pressure issues, right?

She's now got medical issues that are tied to that. And I said to her, **First of all, she can't remember a time when she wasn't on a diet.** And I said, what was the first memory that you have of being on a diet? And she's like third grade and I'm like third grade, like what? And and I said, what was the message?

She goes, well, **my mother was always on a diet. And so that was just what we did in our house.** And I just have always been on a diet. I said, so, first of all, **you've never been given a really good food foundation.** Like, you don't even know what to eat. Right. You're 48 years old or 45, whatever it was, let's say 45 years old and you don't even know what to eat.

She's like, no. And I said, and do you even then it's the mental, emotional stuff, right. Then the tears start. That's how important that is bringing back to why do we have an hour and a half session? Mm-hmm **it is so important for us to get the nuances of the, and the context of what goes on in your life.**

Right? I mean, think back to when you were. When they were looking for a diagnosis for you, people weren't asking what your history was. where was the stress coming from? Mm-hmm mm-hmm no, yeah.

AMANDA: What my childhood was like, what foods I grew up eating, what emotional and mental stressors I had in my life.

Right. None of that

MERYL: and that all impacted you as you went into college and started with 100%, right? Yeah. So, so the first thing that **we start out with is this deep dive, because we need to understand not just what the symptoms are. but how did you get here?** Right. Right. And so I think part of setting the expectation for people is knowing we are gonna do a deep dive in what is the reason for it.

And are you ready for that? I think the other piece of that, so I wanna take a step back, not even a step back. I wanna take a moment of pause and. **who is this a good fit for? Are you ready for this kind of work?** Because people come in thinking, oh, I'm gonna go to a nutritionist for weight loss. or I'm going to go to a nutritionist for a meal plan. and yes, you'll get both of those here. but I always say we gotta go in the back door to come out the front door, meaning. It's not, **you're not just walking out with a one size fits all meal plan.** You are not just doing lab work, right. There is a whole process to how we work because let's face it.

It didn't take you three months, six months, or even a year to get to where you are. If you have pain, if you have discomfort, if you are struggling mental emotion. Like, if you don't feel well, you are imbalanced in some way, shape or form, whether it's it's GI issues, right? Anything gut related bloating it's not normal to have bloating, right?

If you're reflux, if you have hormonal imbalances, if you can't lose weight, right. That's part of a symptom not being able to lose weight, even though you think you're doing everything right. Is part of a symptom. If you're having sleep issues, if you know, skin issues, all of these things. Are related to some disconnect in the body.

however, this is a partnership mm-hmm right? Yes. We're gonna do our deep dive. We're gonna sit and talk. We're gonna do some testing, which we're gonna talk about in a second but if we don't really turn the mirror around and say, okay, well, what is your participation in this?

Right? It's not poor, poor me, poor me.

I can't follow a diet or, or I never listen to the, everybody has excuses. I don't have time. I don't have this. I don't have the money. I'm lazy. I'm I don't like to cook. I right. We could sit here for

45 minutes and come up with lists of excuses that we get from our clients. Here's the bottom line.

Anything you want bad enough, you make time for you make energy for, it's an investment and you only got one body. Yep. Right. You only have one body. At what point are you gonna decide that you need to take care of this body now? Cause you don't get a do over. And **it is so much harder to treat a disease, an actual disease or condition once it's actually presented itself, then it is to prevent** right.

And I always say, listen, I had cancer. I don't want anybody. I get the chills. When I talk about this, I don't want anybody I know or love or work with to ever have to hear those words. Right. And this is the work that we do. It's prevention. But if you are feeling sick and you don't feel well, that's your body's little whisper saying help.

And if you're not getting the answers from your traditional healthcare practitioner, find someone who knows the answers. It, I don't just settle for. You're fine. Your labs are normal, right? I mean, what was your feeling like you got that? Yeah,

AMANDA: intuitively I knew that that was wrong. Intuitively I just, and I, I couldn't accept that. That was okay because I, I would go home. And even though **the lab results all told me that I was in the normal range and all of the testing came back normal. I didn't feel normal.** I felt like I was trapped in this body that I wanted to heal, but I didn't have the tools to do it. So, yeah, I know the frustration.

MERYL: Yeah. And this is, yeah. And this is why we're doing this because we, **we want people to have the tools. Exactly. We want people to know that there are tools out there.** Yeah. And, and look, it doesn't mean a hundred percent of the time that you're we can't, let's put it this way. We can't guarantee this specific success.

Right. Sure. But I will tell you if you put in the work. And you're willing to do the work and you make the effort to do the work. And I'm not saying hard work notice. I didn't say hard work. Yeah. It's consistent work. Yeah. And, and then it starts to change that light bulb goes off in your head.

Would you agree with that?

AMANDA: Totally. Yeah. Yeah. And I think like, **what would you say the ideal client Working with us has to be like in order to yield the results that you can get that are possible.**

MERYL: Right. Great, great question. So I think the thing is, is a, they have to, as how he says all the time, right?

Your window has to be open. **Are you open to a new way of thinking, right? Are you open to really looking at your health in a little bit of a different light** in terms of. Taking a deep dive from a biochemistry, like **doing the testing to see where those missteps are.** And I think you have to be willing to put in the effort that this take, like I said, it's a partnership, it takes effort.

It doesn't have to take, it's not hard work, but here's the thing. Anything that's different from your typical routine is going to seem hard. Right. So how do we make it? So it's not so hard. It's all

about **cultivating good habits**. Right. And **we change habits one at a time**. So that's what I would, that's part of it is **being willing to understand that this is a process**.

I think if there's one thing that I'm going to say is that this is a process and **it is a minimum of. Three to four month process**. Mm-hmm, a minimum of a six to nine to a year long process.

And then some mm-hmm look, I've been working on myself for 25 years. Right. Right. I mean, and, and you too, I still work in progress.

Well, we still are work in progress. There's no question. Right. But I'm saying, right. So it's been a work in progress because every little bit that we get more information is more information for how do we help support our health. Right. And so. You have to be willing. You have to be open. You have to understand that this is an investment.

I mean, I think what I want people to understand. They come in, they go, oh, it's so much money. And I'm like, okay, well, **think about how much money if you've done the diet thing, how much money have you spent on diet pills, potions programs that have actually led you right back to where you are**. Right? Right.

And not even the money, how much time and effort and emotional energy have you spent, wouldn't it be nice to do something and be like, wow, I don't have to obsess about what I'm eating all the time. So. When I say effort that's, that's what I mean. And that's what I mean with the mindset and the work and all of that kind of thing.

I think the other thing is, and the money, right? Again, it's an investment. It is not. So you think about what you've spent on medications, what you've spent on doctors visits. I can tell you for some people it's hundreds of thousands of dollars. Mm-hmm right. So I think

AMANDA: and that's just the financial spending. What about the emotional spending effort? That, and I don't think people think about that. Right.

Right. How can you put a value, a dollar

amount on that? No, of course not. Right. Because like, **think about the people that wake up every day in pain, right? Like every day is a struggle**, right? Like, Ooh, who wants to live like that?

You know? And so yeah you don't, you don't wanna have to have to deal with that. So I think you need to be willing to say, all right. Yeah. I, I am a willing participant in this. **I am ready to do this at a pace that's comfortable for you**. I, and the other part of this is understand that whatever we do has to be realistic and sustainable for you.

It's your journey. Mm-hmm, , it's not our journey. Yeah. And also

AMANDA: I think the, the, **the client needs to believe that they're worth the investment**.

Oh, great point. Talk about that. I mean,

because we can make so many excuses. I mean, I'm a mom like I'm a wife, there's so many things that sometimes come before my needs, but like pushing all of that aside for whatever other people's issues might be, that those obstacles in their way, it, you, **at some point you have to put yourself first**. Yes. And you have to tell yourself, like, I am worth this. I am worth the investment financially. All of the things that come along with that investment. Yes.

MERYL: And, and that is a great point. So again, I had another woman in here. And I've had men too. So I don't want you to think it's just the women, but women are a little more forthcoming on the first or second visit than, than the men sometimes are.

But we've had plenty of people, both men and women come in and I say to them, what do you do for self care? Right. **Self-care is really important. They look at me like, well, what's self-care** and I'm like selfie going to the beauty salon, right? I mean, and some of that is, but self care is what re what makes your soul.

I'm gonna say that again. **What makes your soul sing?** I love that. And not enough people. Do things to make their own soul sing. They're busy taking care of everybody else. Mm-hmm like you said, right? That especially the women, cuz we are more of the nurturers and the caregivers mm-hmm and they've taken care of everybody else. The kids, the parents, the husbands, the friends, the da, da mm-hmm . And yet **they have not put their own health first**. And these are the people that struggle the most with with, with giving that to themselves. So I think that's a great point. **Are you ready to finally take care of you?** because here's the thing.

If you are not healthy, how are you going to manage and take care of everybody else? Right. At some point your body breaks down. Definitely. You know, and you you're like, oh my God, I'm gonna, I'm on the verge of a nervous breakdown, you know? And I said this the other day, I did a little video clip. Like I'm dealing I'm now in that sandwich generation, I'm dealing with, with an aging parent who needs help and we have to figure out some things.

And I have been really stressed and I've been trying to do my walks and I've noticed even my breath, like I have had to be really diligent to pay attention to myself. because if I am stressed and I am not feeling well, I cannot. Take care of, of anybody else so I think that's so, so important is, is what does self care look like?

And, and what is your why? And your why is not weight loss, right? You're not wait, your why is not, I, I wanna get in, maybe it is to get in the jeans that you didn't wear before, but I want you to think about the why, if especially if you're having a hard time losing weight, cuz so many of our clients come in thinking if I just lose weight, if I just lose weight, that's the answer to my question.

That's my problem. Right? And that's not the answer. Weight loss is a part of it. but again, what do you need? What are the tools and the habits that you need to put in place to do that? So all of those things setting that expectation for someone like this is what we're gonna talk about.

This is the deep dive that we're gonna talk about, you know? And **are you willing to make some compromises with what your own your own daily activities look like?** and. And again, we're not gonna ask you anything that we don't practice ourselves and **we are going to ask you to commit to yourself.**

I think that is the biggest that's really when we, when we, when we get people who are like, well, I, I, I'm not ready for this. **You know, we ask them, why are you not ready? And they just haven't been able to wrap their head around the fact that they deserve to be well they deserve to love themselves.**

I think that is such a pervasive me message. Agree.