

**The Aware Show KPFK Radio Show
Lisa Garr with Jonathan Tripodi**

Lisa: Welcome to Aware. We are dedicated to communicating information that inspires your positive growth and change. Are you interested in a peaceful planet? Are you interested in optimal health? Are you living with purpose? Are you enjoying your life? We realize each person can make a difference, and our mission is to empower your awareness. The choices that you make in every moment shape your life, and we encourage you to realize that you have your own answers, and to always listen to your own truth. We invite you to stay aware.

Good afternoon. Welcome to The Aware Show. Hi. This Lisa Garr. So we've talked before about the fact that when — when you have stress in your life, and specifically I'm talking about traumatic events that happen in your life, that they don't only register into the mind and to the subconscious, but they also get into the body, in something that my guest today called — calls Body Memory. Jonathan Tripodi is my guest, and he wrote a book called *Freedom from Body Memory*. And he is joining me to explain what the whole concept around body memory is, and how to recall and to live pain free, from — from traumatic events that get stuck into our bodies.

Welcome to the show, Jonathan. Thanks for joining me. Oops. He is — okay. We'll be getting him in just a second. Well, all right. So then I will continue to talk about this, that — that we sometimes store stress, not only in our mind, but in our body, which is what I was talking about. And it might manifest in something like chronic back pain, or uneven hips, or various things that you can go to doctors and try to treat, and you can run down that kind of rabbit hole in trying to treat. But there are certain different types of body work. A Hella work is one of them, and there's all sorts of different body work that when you really get into the — the cellular level of the body, memories are stored in the body, and — and they can get stuck, and enable to body to create, and manifest all sorts of disease around it. And he is actually on the line right now.

Hi, Jonathan. How are ya?

Jonathan: Hi, Lisa.

Lisa: How are you?

Jonathan: I'm well.

Lisa: Good. Well, thanks for joining me.

Jonathan: Thank you.

Lisa: Yes. Thank you for joining me. So we were just talking about the concept of body memory. And you'll probably be a great person to explain it, because you've seen so much of this in your lifetime. What exactly is storing memories in the body?

Jonathan: Yeah. That's a really good question, because body memory is a silent phenomenon as far as you wouldn't necessarily attribute some of the problems that are going on in your body with something that's happened in your past —

Lisa: Right. Like —

Jonathan: — because maybe you stored so much.

Lisa: Like it manifests in things like a sore back, or chronic back pain, or hip pain, or — or things like that. Right?

Jonathan: Yes. All — all types of pain are — especially, musculoskeletal, joint pain, muscle pain, all of that is — is certainly symptomatic of body memory, but also anxiety, and depression, fatigue, and digestive disorders —

Lisa: Wow!

Jonathan: — headaches. The — the way to appreciate how all of these things are really tied to your past is that every — your entire body is in communication with — with your nervous system, and with your environment. So there's — there's information being exchanged all the time at the cellular level. And when you have an experience that overwhelms you, whether it's physical, or emotional, or even psychological, or all of the above, your body has protective mechanisms that take this experience and stores it. And — and it, essentially, or you can — you can use the word, you know, if you're familiar with the word, "suppression."

Lisa: Mmm-hmm.

Jonathan: Or repression, which is more of a psychological term they use in psychology. So all these terms really describe how our body has this ability to take whatever that overwhelming experience is, and — and tuck it away.

Lisa: So it — it could be in our — our — our craniosacral? It could be in their face? It could be in our neck? It could be various areas around the body, and also can manifest in terms of psychological illnesses. Right? But my question is how do you tell the difference? How do you know that if something is — is really lower back pain due to an old injury, or it is a body memory?

Jonathan: Well, you know, sometimes you don't know until you — until you actually explore it. So, for instance, in — in some of the techniques that I've learned that are manual therapy techniques, hands on healing techniques, when you — when you

begin to apply your hands as a practitioner to a person's body, let's say, it's at their lower back, you might become aware that the back is really tight. So — and that — that there's an active tension in the — in the back. So somehow the person's nervous system the communicating to their back to tighten. And this may be happening even when they're lying in bed, and they're comfortable, but it doesn't appear to be any particular reason why it's telling it to do that. So this is like a hallmark that hallmark sign that maybe this is — this tension in the back is a protective tension, and it may be protecting it from something it has experienced. So, for instance, part of the what — there are muscles that connect into the back that relate to emotional stress, in particular, stress that is related to one's security. So let's say you just found out that you've lost your job.

Lisa: Okay.

Jonathan: You got three — you have three kids that, you know, you support a family, and you're the major bread winner, and now you've just been laid off, which is happening in America a lot right now.

Lisa: Mmm-hmm.

Jonathan: You might suddenly — that overwhelming emotion of what that's like could translate to tension in the back muscles. And, suddenly, you know, weeks or months later, that tension translates into a pain that sends you to the doctor, and the doctor says, “Oh, yeah, you've got inflammation of this disk, your vertebra.”

Lisa: Right.

Jonathan: And, okay. But he's not saying that — he may not necessarily say that that inflammation is because of the tension in your back, and the tension is 'cause because of the loss of your job and this overwhelming emotion —

Lisa: Right.

Jonathan: — that you feel around that. So — so sometimes when you place your hands on the body, and you help people come out of these protective responses through really gentle forms of touch, what happens is the reverse. What was suppressed becomes expressed. So the communication is restored to the — to the emotion, or sensation, or event that the — that the memory is — that the tension is connected to.

Lisa: Now does the person's memory come up once you get to that level of breaking through the body's armor, and getting through to the — the memory? Does it come up?

Jonathan: Yeah. It comes up. Sometimes, now, we — we have what — there's kinda two categories of — of — of body memory. There's when you have a release, is

what you're describing. There's the melting pot phenomenon. And that means that we — we've stored stresses, or held stresses in our body from many different experiences. So when you start to release that, you know, sometimes in your body you may — it may be about this, that, or the other thing, but you don't — necessarily aren't aware of it. So you might start — let's say you might start crying, but if you're sad about many, many things, you might not necessarily become aware that you're crying because of one thing or the other.

Lisa: Right. Right.

Jonathan: And — and, in that case, it's just important that you let yourself cry, knowing that you are sad. It's not — there's a reason for it. And — but there's many reasons for it. Where other times — let's say a memory will surface. Let's — we can say, like emotion or sadness, and it relates to something very specific. And the way you know that is that that specific thing comes to the person's consciousness. They know exactly why they're crying.

Lisa: Okay. So that's — so it's, basically, you — you don't have to necessarily have that memory come up, but it does — it releases either way, essentially. Doesn't it? It releases the —

Jonathan: Exactly.

Lisa: Yeah. That's great.

Jonathan: But you — you give yourself permission to have — it releases without knowing why.

Lisa: That's —

Jonathan: Recognizing that there's a melting pot of stress in our body from — from our entire life that we're not always conscious and aware of. And it's just enough to get the release.

Lisa: Now let me ask you about the craniosacral therapy, and the — the myofascial release.

Jonathan: Mmm-hmm.

Lisa: What does all that — what does our face hold onto? What does our head hold onto? I've always been curious about that, because you can — you can see, you know, roadmaps in people's faces of their lives — some — some people. So how do we hold onto things in our face?

Jonathan: Well, you know, one thing that comes to mind immediately is, when you see someone's forehead, and people who have — who are in a state of worry, or

concern, you know, they have that — that frown occurs over their forehead, and — and —

Lisa: Right.

Jonathan: — in between their eyes. So you can always — you can kinda see the body language of — of that — of that — of that emotion, you know, through that — that posturing of the forehead. The jaw in particular, a tension in the jaw tends to relate to anger. So, you know, usually when we're angry, we — we're voicing it, or speaking it, and we're speaking it out loud, and we're speaking it forcefully, and we're angry. Right? Well, imagine how your face would feel, or your jaw would feel, if you took that intensity of feeling and suppressed it. So that — that translates to the muscles in your jaw being very tight, and can relate to problems like TMJ or headaches. Let's see. The other thing you'd be surprised at how many people have had head injuries.

Lisa: Right.

Jonathan: You know, whiplash injuries from car accidents, or maybe they hit their head, or somebody else has hit their head.

[Laughter]

Lisa: Right. And —

Jonathan: A —

Lisa: — that — that type of thing takes a lot to heal. Yes, absolutely. And so that registers. That could register in the neck, back, all over entire body. And you can go to a chiropractor and get that worked out, and physical therapy, and so forth, but the memory still stays in the body. That's basically what — what your book is talking about. Right?

Jonathan: Yes. And it's not just a memory, but it — for the memory to be held in the body, there needs — that means that your body is still protecting yourself from the memory. So it's — it's not just the memory alone, but the protective response to the memory. And the protective response is what's generating the tension in your body. So you're — it sounds strange, but if — if you — once you explore, your body kind of intimately and, you know, and give yourself time to really get in touch with your body, 'cause we lose touch with our body.

Lisa: Yeah. Uh-huh. That interesting.

Jonathan: A lot of times our focus is always out of our body. It's on what's outside of us. But once you start turning inward, you start wondering why are my shoulders — why am I holding my shoulders so high?

Lisa: Right.

Jonathan: Why is my jaw so tense?

Lisa: Why doesn't my right arm move when I walk, or something like that? Yeah. You can definitely tell on —

Jonathan: So underlying these tensions in our body, and even the tensions that pull our body out of alignment. You know, a lot of people go to chiropractors, and — good friends of mine are chiropractors, and it's — and I get chiropractic on a regular basis. And I am also aware that a lot of people go out of alignment in the same way over and over again, and they have to keep going back to get readjusted and readjusted. So the question becomes what keeps pulling you out of alignment? Well, your bones don't move on their own. They — they get moved by the muscles that are attached to them. And what causes muscles to become tense? So you begin to ask those kinda of questions. And one of the sources of muscle tension is the survival response, the protective response to past experience. So we're still guarding in response to these things that have happened in our past that overwhelmed us. And that's keeping chronic tension in our body that constantly misaligns us and, you know, affects the circulation in our body, affects the way we move, certainly affects the way we feel and, you know, can create situations where we exercise. We get chiropractic. We feel like we're doing a lot of good things. But we keep finding ourselves in the same patterns of tension or stress.

Lisa: Do you —

Jonathan: And part of what's missing is that we're not getting access to these protective responses, and really letting go, because when you do let go, it's not that you just relax. So that's a real important thing I want to stress, Lisa, is that there's a difference between relaxing and releasing.

Lisa: Okay.

Jonathan: And relaxing is like phase one of — of really letting go. So you can relax, but just to the point where you encounter that protective response. So, like, let's say your jaw. You can relax your jaw to an extent, but you realize that if I relax my jaw even more, I might then be encountering some of the anger, maybe, that I feel that I've held in. So or if I relax my belly enough, or my low back enough, you know, I might actually encounter some of the emotion or the feeling or the memories of things that I've experienced, injuries —

Lisa: So that's why —

Jonathan: So —

Lisa: — you hold onto the stress. That's why people hold onto that stress, and it eventually becomes chronic. Right?

Jonathan: Exactly. You can go through all of these interventions, but if they're not helping you get in touch with those protective responses, and — and creating an environment where you can actually not only let go of the protection, but release what you're protecting yourself from, then you never get to the other side, which is where your body is at peace.

Lisa: Can you ever — have you ever seen where somebody has had an injury to the body, and the injury healed, but they'll keep injuring that one specific place over and over again, an ankle, or a knee, or whatnot? Is — is that the body memory talking, basically?

Jonathan: Yeah. It is. And it — and that gets — that actually lends itself to a very fascinating aspect of body memory, which has to do with the masculine and feminine parts of our nature. So, for instance, I know for me and my life, I have the part of my body when I look at my history, what's — what's physically happened to me and my body has always happened on the right side.

Lisa: Interesting.

Jonathan: So that became a real — yeah. It becomes a curiosity. How about — I mean, I don't know — how has it been for you? Have you had any —

Lisa: Yeah.

Jonathan: — one-sided experiences?

Lisa: Yeah. It —

Jonathan: Have you had —

Lisa: It's been my right side, as well. It's been my right hip. My right knee. Right toe. Left elbow. But —

Jonathan: Uh-huh.

Lisa: Yeah. That's true. And what is the — is that the masculine or the feminine side of the body?

Jonathan: The right side is considered the masculine.

Lisa: In Chinese medicine, right?

Jonathan: Mmm-hmm. And that's how we have assert— it's the energy of assertion. It's how we take action. Where the left side is the feminine. It's how we receive. So I know, like, for instance, some people who are type A personalities, and they go, go, go, and they never slow down, will tend to have right-sided problems, which is basically a way of slowing — having them slow down.

Lisa: Ahh!

Jonathan: You know, that there's — there's an imbalance in the — in the expression of the masculine and — and their feminine. So they're forced to slow down, and move into a more receptive state, instead of a masculine, you know, being in that full-on masculine for a long time.

Lisa: If you were to look at the opposite — so for someone who's having injuries on their left side primarily would that indicate in some way that they're receiving side is out of balance, and needs to be a little bit less, or a little bit more balanced between receiving, giving, and taking?

Jonathan: Exactly. And, you know, it's all about relationship, Lisa. It's about connection. It's — and we — we lose connection with ourselves, and we lose connection with our bodies. And so some of the injuries that are occurring are not only helping us to get reconnected to our bodies, but reconnecting to the part of us that may be expressed through that part of the body.

Lisa: Can you tell by looking at someone's body — so if maybe their pelvis is inverted, or if it's tilted, what type of body memory it is? Or can you tell if someone's holding on to a body memory by looking at their body? Or do you have to actually physically touch it, and go deeper?

Jonathan: Well, ultimately, the release of body memory discloses what the body — what — what's — what's really going on. So, ultimately, you know, when people will come to see me, “Well, what do you think this is about? Here's my situation. What do you think it's about?” “Well, you know, the best way to approach this is to keep an open mind, and to really enter into the release process, because your body already knows the answer. So rather than guess, let's actually go in, do — do the work, and, you know, help — let me help you to — to access these protective responses that are there. Give yourself the opportunity to release those protective responses, and gain access to the truth.” Right? So the body ultimately —

Lisa: You make it sound so easy.

[Laughter]

Lisa: You do. You make it sound very easy.

Jonathan: Well, there — there is a simplicity to it, Lisa. It really is straightforward. Now the process is scary, and there's anxiety that comes with it. And part of my job is to help create that — that safety, and provide that support, and that nurturing, that allows people to venture into an unknown situation. And — and I like to make it — you know, I like to give people the direct route. It is really kinda simple that way.

Lisa: Now let me ask you about the access. Well, first of all, if this is — if — if — as you're listening to this interview and it sounds like something that might be true for your body, start off with reading the book. And there's a lot of case studies in the book. The book is called *Freedom from Body Memory*. And I like that you stated that in the positive. But the subtitle is *Awaken the Courage and Let Go of the Past*. You can look at The Aware Show website, which is TheAwareShow.com, and we have all of Jonathan Tripodi's information on the — on the home page there. But if you — you know, reading about it, and seeing whether people have gone through, and illuminating more about the history and the science about it is great. And other people's stories is great. But if people want to actually go and experience this, I know that you, Jonathan, you're in Virginia Beach, right? In a Virginia —

Jonathan: Mmm-hmm.

Lisa: — where are there body therapy? It's — it's called be — hello, what's it called? Be — okay, what's —

Jonathan: It's called BMR.

Lisa: BMR.

[Laughter]

Lisa: Thank you.

Jonathan: Yes.

Lisa: BMR treatment. Are there BMR therapists around, Body Memory Recall therapists? Is there a central place for people like this?

Jonathan: I've trained over — a little over a hundred practitioners in the body memory recall approach. And — and some of them have — who are actively providing that service are on my website. So if you go to BodyMemory.com, there — and you go under the treatment link, you'll see that there is a BMR directory, and it lists people who are practitioners, who are in different states.

Lisa: Great.

Jonathan: You'll see their contact information.

Lisa: Now what's the difference between this and Hella work? Are you familiar with Hella work?

Jonathan: Yeah. I am — and Hella work is great work, by the way.

Lisa: Mmm-hmm.

Jonathan: Is that something you've experience?

Lisa: I have. Yes. I've experienced Hella work, and — and so did my husband. But that's — from — it sounds the closest to what you're explaining in the book, but going deep and, then, uncovering the memories, but going — and I was looking at your brochure, because sometimes the Hella worker would go into the intestines, and that's where a lot of memory is also stored, is in the gut.

Jonathan: You know, it's true. And one of the reasons that I don't emphasize one part of the body or the other is because after 18 years of treating body memory and — and also participating in that healing process, myself, it's in — every cell of your body is capable of, and often does, hold tension and memory from — from past experiences. So there are central locations which I call epicenters, where there tend to be focal points for where we — we're holding. These protective responses are really active, and where there's memory. They happen to be aligned with the midline of the body. And if you're familiar with the chakra system, or the subtle energy system, and if you're not, that's okay. But if — for those people listening, is it follows the chakra system. But basically the locations are right around the pubic area, right around the naval area, moving up unto your solar plexus, which is right under your rib cage, central to your body, right over the heart, is the next location, right over throat. The — the next epicenter is right over what's called the third eye area, which is in between the — the two eyes, like up on the forehead. And, then, those — those are the six primary areas where, when a person goes into a protective response to an experience, and — and — and suppresses that experience, those particular areas become tense. So certainly the first three epicenters I mentioned —

Lisa: The base —

Jonathan: — are right there in the abdomen.

Lisa: Right. Okay. So there's a lot —

Jonathan: And they affect — and they affect all of the digestive organs. And that's one reason I mention digestive dysfunctions as being a system of body memory.

Lisa: Those can even start off as little as when you're, you know, after being potty trained, and normally little kids get constipated, because that's where their control center is —

Jonathan: Mmm-hmm.

Lisa: — and that can stay with you for life if you don't release something like that. Very interesting.

Jonathan: Well, body — body memory is all about control. And the healing of body memory is about letting go —

Lisa: Letting —

Jonathan: — of control.

Lisa: Letting go of control.

Jonathan: Yep.

Lisa: And that's — and letting go of the past in — essentially, is what you're saying. What is — what is your story around this? How did you get involved with doing this type of work? You've been doing it, and — and trained so many people. How did you get involved with it?

Jonathan: I went to Physical Therapy school about 22 years ago. And prior to then, I had suffered a blood clotting disorder. Blood clots developed in my right leg, and it was a severe onslaught of blood clots that obstructed the flow of blood. And so much so, that my leg swelled up three to four times bigger than my — my left leg.

Lisa: Wow!

Jonathan: And it was very scary. I went to three — went to three different hospitals including Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. And I went to so many hospitals, because none of them could discover why. They ran all the tests. My blood was fine. I had no history that would, you know, would suggest that — that would cause such a thing. They were stumped. And so after I left Mayo Clinic, they basically, left me with, "We don't know what really happened. We don't know why it happened. You — the best we can do is hope that it doesn't happen again. And the damage done to your leg is severe, and is a degenerative condition at this point, meaning we don't expect it to get better. It's gonna get worse. Potentially, in five to ten years, the circulation will be so bad in your leg that you may have to have some form of amputation." It was really scary. So it was a turning point in my life, and I ended up in a Physical Therapy school. And coming out of Physical Therapy school, I got introduced to myofascial release, which was a form of manual therapy that treats the connective tissue in your

body. And the — the thing that got my attention was that the person who mentioned it to me said that the connective tissue holds memory. And I said, “Oh, that’s interesting.” So I went to a class. And I was specifically seeking this — this memory experience, this release of emotion that they — people had talked about, and memory coming up —

Lisa: Mmm-hmm.

Jonathan: — 'cause it just sounded so unusual and extraordinary. Well, it was the last day of the class, and no one in the class really had had any phenomenal memory come up or emotion. So I was feeling a little disappointed, and the last technique that was done actually triggered this release experience, where my body started to shake, and muscles in my abdomen started to contract, like spasm, if you will. And before I knew it, I was crying, like sobbing, at the top of my lungs. Just —

Lisa: Couldn't breathe.

Jonathan: — tears flushing out of me. Couldn't — yeah. I was just a full-on — you know, I say it because I never — I never remembered ever crying like that before. But that was my first experience of — of — of accessing memory in my body. Now at that time I didn't know what I was crying about. My body seemed to be doing it on its own. But afterwards, Lisa, I felt so calm, and I could breathe so much more. And it — and at the same time, I felt exhilarated, like, you could feel a sensation of energy moving through my body. And so I was intrigued. I was hooked at that point. And I — I followed up and I did all the myofascial release training. And, then, I went on to study craniosacral therapy, which is a way of working with connective tissue and memory, but through different systems of the body, like the central nervous system and the head. I went on to take visceral manipulation, which is similar, but works with organs.

Lisa: And —

Jonathan: And —

Lisa: — so you — and that led you to the whole entire concept of — of what you put together? So you created the body memory system? Recall system?

Jonathan: Yeah. And body memory recall is — it’s really a comprehensive. So when you asked what’s — is it different than Hella work — it's — it's a very integrated approach.

Lisa: Got it.

Jonathan: I don't know of any approach that is as comprehensive. It — it directly treats every part of the body anatomically. Every part is — there are techniques interacting with every part.

Lisa: Well —

Jonathan: It incorporates breath work, and dialogue, and all of that.

Lisa: Wow! It is very — it sounds very, very comprehensive. And I, you know, I love the fact that you pioneered — are pioneering this — this kind of movement in allowing people to be free from this type of stuckness. And I'm sure that you can tell just by looking at somebody where they're holding onto — to memories in the body. But it's definitely worth exploring because, over time, those things manifest into either chronic illness, or long term diseases. So thank you so much. I mean, you're just a — a great — it's just great to listen to somebody who has, of course, come from a story, which sounded like it was — your life was on the line there. Your leg, at least, was on the line. And you created a solution to it, and are helping a lot of other people. So thank you very much for your work in the world. I appreciate it.

Jonathan: Well thank you.

Lisa: Thanks for letting us know about it. And once again, you can look up Jonathan's book, *Freedom from Body Memory*. It's on our home page of TheAwareShow.com website. Thanks very much, Jonathan. Thanks for joining me this afternoon.

Jonathan: Absolutely. Thank you, Lisa.

Lisa: All right. And we will be right back. This is The Aware Show. And we're gonna going to be right back talking about how to control your emotions, so that they don't get stuck in the body in the first place.

We're gonna to be speaking with Ian Brennan about anger antidotes when we come back.

[Momentary pause in interview]