

Anxiety and the Importance of Community

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Trudy Scott: Welcome to Season Four of *The Anxiety Summit*. I am your host, Trudy Scott, food mood expert, certified nutritionist, and author of *The Antianxiety Food Solution*. And today's topic is "Anxiety and The Importance of Community." We're going to be talking about community in general. We're going to also talk about how community specifically helps with stress, anxiety and depression. And then our guest expert will be sharing information about an amazing community of integrative practitioners that he is building and his vision for integrative health in the USA and hopefully the world. James, are you there?

James Maskell: I am here Trudy. Great to be here with you.

Trudy Scott: Great. So your vision is for the world as well as the USA?

James Maskell: Absolutely. I'm a citizen of the world. I was born in America. I grew up mainly in England. My parents are South African. And so we actually have a lot in common Trudy because my dad lives in Cape

Town and I grew up a lot in South Africa. And my mother-in-law, my wife's family all live in Sacramento. So I've got all your bases covered.

Trudy Scott: Isn't that so amazing. It's just such a small world isn't it.

James Maskell: It's a small world.

Trudy Scott: Okay.

James Maskell: I grew up in England and I kept the English accent because people seem to like it.

Trudy Scott: It's good. I do like it. And I actually spent some time in the UK too. I don't know if you knew that but I spent two years in the UK. I lived in Scotland and I lived in the Lake district. So we've got that base covered as well.

James Maskell: Awesome.

Trudy Scott: Great. Well let me give your little bio here and then we'll go right into it. James Maskell is the creator of *Functional Forum*, the world's largest integrated medicine conference. He lectures internationally and has been featured on TEDMED, Huffpost Live, TEDx and more. He is a contributor to Huffington Post, KevinMD, The Doctor Blog and mindbodygreen. He serves on the faculty of George Washington University's Metabolic Medicine Institute. So you gave us a little bit about your story. Tell us a little bit more of how you got to where you are. I know you were an investment banker. You talked about the UK and you did this in London. And how you're the host of the Functional Forum and the CEO of the Evolution of Medicine. How did you get from there to where you are now and doing this amazing work that you're doing?

James Maskell: Well Trudy it was a very interesting story I guess in retrospect. I was actually born into the world in the holistic medicine world. So the person who delivered me as a baby was this doctor called Dr. Larry Krantz who was a founding member of the American Holistic Medical Association which was basically the first MD's to be doing any sort of holistic medicine. And my parents are really into it. They were at a conference here in America. They were living in South Africa right then. And I was born so I was sort of like in my – not my genes but I guess early epigenetics was holistic medicine. And I grew up like that. I had a homeopath and a chiropractor and I didn't really realize that was weird until I went to school.

In 1985 when I was five years old my parents left South Africa and we moved pretty much full time to England. I came back to South Africa once a year and a lot of my best friends are there. And then I had a rebellious phase where I thought I needed to be an investment banker. I thought all of this was rubbish and I decided that I needed to be an investment banker. I got a degree in economics. I did focus on health economics and that was definitely interesting to me. I just felt that was interesting.

I got a job as an investment banker. And then after about six months I just realized I was playing for the wrong team. And there was a lot of problems that were facing humanity and the solutions to those problems were certainly not going to be found on the trading floor. You have to really get into it. So I left. I took 100 percent pay cut. I quit my job and I moved to America and I started working in holistic medicine. I worked in a clinic for a year and a half in Georgia. I then worked for a supplement company that was selling to doctors and practitioners doing integrative functional medicine. And I learned so much from that. I mean you think about Malcolm Gladwell talks about 10,000 hours that you have to get to get expertise. That was my 10,000 hours. Like I was really in my car meeting practitioners from specialist MD's in hospitals who were sort of like interested a little bit for themselves maybe in their own health all the way through to reiki practitioners in the basement of their own house doing things. Just two different worlds and everything in between. The whole range.

And I did that for a number of years and I saw look, wow, there are some amazing – from working in the clinic and working with these practitioners I saw some amazing things happen. I saw the doctor that I worked for was reversing autoimmune disease and type 2 diabetes. The first two clients that I ever met for the supplement company that I worked for had recovered their kids from the autism spectrum and they were just normal kids. And I'd seen that transition and it was really impactful on me. So I thought I'm sort of privy to some information that the rest of the world doesn't know. A lot of these chronic diseases are reversible and preventable through integrated medicine.

And then I started to find out about functional medicine. I started going to these conferences and I started hearing people like Jeff Bland speak and I thought look, here's a group of people that can communicate to mainstream doctors. And what I saw is those chiropractors and acupuncturists and nutritionists and it's great. They really led the way. But if we really want to change medicine we have to change the minds of doctors and I thought functional medicine was the paradigm for that.

So at the same time I started a couple of my own businesses. I was helping doctors with sort of a nonclinical aspects of running a business. I had a coaching company that I started with another doctor. I started a web design company with my wife where we'd make websites for doctors and we sort of learned a lot about that. And both of those were good but didn't really scale. And then in 2013 we sort of reached a crossroads where I realized that what we were doing thus far wasn't really scaling but we had learned a lot and we came up with this idea for the functional forum which was how could we actually get the attention and trust of the doctor community about functional medicine and reduce the barriers to entry to doctors to find out about functional medicine. Because the truth is it was hard to find out about it. You had to go to a conference. The conference is in – I know you go to a lot of conferences Trudy but it's expensive to go. You have to fly there. You have to stay in the hotel. And there's only a certain limit of the number of seats that are available.

And so I thought look, most doctors are not finding out about functional medicine just because the barriers to them to find out about it is so high. So we sought to deal with that. So we started a meetup for functional doctors in New York. We called it the Functional Forum and we tried to create a structure where we could make this available for free. So the first time we had 60 doctors in the first event that we ever had. We had some great speakers including Dr. Kelly Brogan who I know has been a feature on your Summits a few times and I know you're a big fan.

And it just really took off. By the fourth episode we were streaming it live. We had Mark Hyman and we had 3,000 doctors watching it. That already made it three times bigger than any other conference. And fast forward a couple of years, a couple of Summits and now we have 200 meetup groups around the world of practitioners and doctors getting together to watch the show. We have a couple of meetups in South Africa, Dubai, Philippines, Havana, Cuba. And then like over 100 in America. And now some of them are as big as 150 people. So that's 150 doctors getting into a room to watch the stream of our show, the live stream of the show and then build that community.

And so we're really excited about it and it's completely scalable. Anyone can start a meetup. We've had health coaches start a meetup. We've had doctors start a meetup. We've had supplement reps start meetups. Every type of practitioner started a meetup. Really for people who want to build a community in their local area, to get doctors together, to make a safe place for new doctors who have never heard of anything to do with holistic medicine to come into that space and learn in a sort of safe environment. For the information that's being

presented on the show to be backed up by the people who are there locally. And really just to create a structure whereby mainstream doctors could be introduced to some of these concepts in a predictable way.

Trudy Scott: Wonderful. Incredible growth that you've seen firstly and I've seen firsthand how successful it can be. I've been tuning in to the remote events and I actually recently attended a fantastic live one in San Francisco. And you're talking about a platform to share this message with the mainstream medical practitioner but it's more than that because for people who are really immersed in the functional world be it functional medicine doctors or be it nutritionists like myself or be it other practitioners - they have this opportunity to learn from cutting edge presenters. And also to connect in this community and network and support each other which I think is just so beautiful.

James Maskell: Yes that's the real value of it Trudy. We wanted to put everyone together into a room. I'm a fan of the word collisions. The word that we like to use is collisions. Like how do we create collisions between people. Now the kind of the coolest collisions we've seen and some of the collisions we've seen and what we try to think was how can we get like-minded people to collide in an area and come up with innovation that then is more than the sum of the parts. So we've had plenty of nutritionists do a meetup, meet a bunch of doctors and now they have tons of jobs available because all these doctors want to be able to do what they're speaking about on the screen but they have no idea or they have no education how to do it but the nutritionists can do it. So that's a great type of collision.

But we've also seen great collisions where it's been hey, let's get digital technologists and doctors into a room together and get them to collaborate on projects. And now we've seen in the New York meetup one of the technologies that we sell now and we can talk more about how that works. There's been a collision between doctors and technologists at the Functional Forum. And so that was really exciting and really exciting to do in San Francisco because all we tried to do was to create a community to get people in a room together to use online tools to create offline connections. And then to be able to see what happens from there. And it's been very, very exciting and rewarding to hear about things that have happened as a result of us putting people in a room together that we didn't have to sort of either think would happen or that just happened as a result of getting the community together.

Trudy Scott: Excellent. I love it. And the other aspect that I don't think is part of the mission but I think it's certainly happening is that consumers who

are interested in this approach are getting exposed to some of this information because I'm going to share some links to some of the prior Functional Forums. So anyone who's listening in to this whether they're a practitioner or not can listen to some of those. And I think hearing that there's this community of functional medicine physicians and practitioners all working towards this common goal - I think it's very inspiring for the consumer out there who is concerned about the fact that they may not be getting the help that they need. Because there's a lot of people looking for help certainly in my community. There's areas where there's not functional medicine doctors. So I think from that point of view it's very inspiring and creating hope for the average person out there who is looking for help.

James Maskell: Well the truth is Trudy there's no shortage of demand for integrative and functional medicine, right. That demand has been driven by people like yourself doing these summits, reaching a lot of people. The real problem obviously is the supply. How can we increase the supply of functional doctors so that there's more support for more people. Because the real exciting news and I think what's really helped this community to grow and expand is the sort of energy that we like to bring. And it's actually the first thing that I said on the very first Functional Forum is that we need to start acting like we're winning as a community and not like we're losing.

There's been this inferiority complex in integrated medicine that we're not as good as their regular doctors and we're just sort of doing this thing on the side. But the truth is Trudy that Western medicine is ideally suited for acute disease. In fact when it was created that's why it was created. If you have an infection, if you have trauma you need that. Whereas if you have more of a chronic issue you need a functional or integrative approach. And that it saves more money and has been proven right now. The whole medical system in America is reorganizing itself around value based care. And that's going to put functional integrated medicine into exactly the best place because their value proposition is much higher for chronic disease because you're getting the patient to participate in the process.

And so what I'm excited about is proving things out in America, proving that it costs less, proving that working with a nutritionist team, practitioner team that includes nutritionists, exercise people, doctors, nurses. All teams working together – health coaches to prove that that's a better, cheaper outcome for chronic disease. And then once we prove that to be able to solve the world's problem. Because the truth is Trudy is that every country in the world from the major industrialized nations like China where they have a quarter of the world is diabetic. They have hundreds of millions of people who are type 2 diabetic. You

go to Haiti or you go to South Africa and you expect that in these nations, you know, typhoid is going to be the biggest killer but it's not, or TB. It's type 2 diabetes. It's chronic diseases. It's noncommunicable diseases.

And there's no solution that's working. There's no drugs that are working. There's no solutions that are working. Everyone's in a flummox about how to deal with chronic disease. And the truth is the solution to chronic disease is integrative or functional medicine because it's preventive, it's proactive, it's participatory on behalf of the patient. And so our goal and our vision is big Trudy. The first thing has been to increase the supply of these functional medicine doctors because you need them and they can't be replaced by technology. The human element is a really big part. But the first step is to get enough of those doctors and then the next step is to galvanize those practitioners into a really efficient system that takes the best use of technology. It takes the best use of human interaction and uses practitioners in the most efficient way to be able to keep and get people well as effectively as possible.

So we've got a big vision. We're going for the big prize and I'm excited to be sharing that with your audience so that they can find out about it, they can support it. And look, it's going to take all of us to be able to do this. My favorite Buckminster Fuller quote is that you don't create change by fighting the existing reality. And we see a lot of fighting the existing reality in all forms in medicine. What we need to do is to build a system that makes the old system obsolete. And that's what I think there is the potential to do and that's the mission.

Trudy Scott: I love that. The quote is you never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete. Correct?

James Maskell: Absolutely, yes.

Trudy Scott: Beautiful.

James Maskell: Buckminster Fuller.

Trudy Scott: Excellent. That's perfect. So a few things I just wanted to go back to here for folks who may be new to the term functional integrative medicine. Can you just give us a definition of that?

James Maskell: Yes. So integrated medicine to me is sort of like the catchall term that refers to integrating things in regular medicine with things that aren't in regular medicine. So integrative for me refers to the modalities. So

acupuncture, chiropractic, nutrition. These are modalities that are being used. Functional medicine is a very specific way of delivering integrative medicine which has a sort of a proprietary middle part of it which is the functional medicine matrix. Which is essentially a structured way to be able to determine what things to do at what time, to determine in each patient what are the causative factors that led to them having this disease. To pick apart the causative factors and the things that may have led to the person getting that disease. And to come up with a structure on how to use integrative modalities in a structured way. So functional medicine is all about root cause resolution. It's all about systems biology. It's all about understanding the body in a more complex way. Understanding the way that systems interact with each other and it's a way to sort of pick apart that web to really understand the root cause.

And the reason why we called our thing the Functional Forum and not the Integrative Forum is we just really feel that if you suddenly had to train 100,000 doctors in integrated medicine and had them to get reproducible results quickly, functional medicine has to be the structure to do it because it does have a reproducible structure that anyone can learn and use. And it allows doctors that are trained in integrated modalities like Chinese medicine and nutrition to have a – it's a sort of a bridge language for everyone to get involved with. And also functional medicine has a lot of momentum. It's in the Cleveland Clinic. The Cleveland Clinic is betting on it for the future of chronic disease management. If you're listening to this the next Functional Forum – we're doing the Functional Forum on the twelfth of September 2016 at the Cleveland Clinic. So we're going to be doing it live from there. And my hope is that event the Cleveland Clinic is going to really reveal that yes, we are betting on functional medicine for the future of chronic disease management because it's more efficient, it costs less and it's better value. And that's the goal. But hopefully that's a good wrap up for you guys there.

Trudy Scott: That's perfect. Now tell us for those who may not know what the Cleveland Clinic is and why we care about that.

James Maskell: Well it's just one of the most prestigious and innovative health organizations in the world. They have an academic arm as well so they have real prestige and credibility. It's in Cleveland. They've been very well known for doing heart transplants and heart stents better than anyone else in the world. Very, very prestigious and I think the current CEO is a visionary, Delos Cosgrove, and he just saw that it's all very well to be the best at doing heart stents but how do we prevent doing heart stents in the first place. And how do we actually create structure that allows people to stay well and avoid the need for a heart stent.

And that was essentially what's happening now. So they're a year into, a year and a half into this journey.

In fact in May 2014 Mark Hyman came onto the Functional Forum to announce that they were going to do this thing at the Cleveland Clinic which was awesome. And at that point then they started building it in September 2014 and they opened up then. And then they did it for a year. The results were spectacular and now they just announced they're going to open into a bigger space. And it's not just like an integrated medicine center down the road that they might refer to when they remember. This is right in the center of the clinic. And so that's the most exciting thing. It's happening right in the middle geographically as well. And if you're watch in September we're going to get our cameras and go and check it out.

Trudy Scott: Fantastic. And I'll make sure to share some links in the speaker blog that goes with this interview so folks can sign up and tune in if they are remote or if they're locally to show up. I'm guessing it's open to people to show up like the other Functional Forums. Is that correct?

James Maskell: Correct.

Trudy Scott: Okay, great. So I wanted to just give an example of a prior Functional Forum and tie it back to this topic of anxiety and mental health. And I really enjoyed the one that you did in January 2016, Functional Neuropsychiatry. You had Dr. Hyla Cass present. You had Dr. Pedram Shojai present. I've interviewed him and shared his great book *The Urban Monk* with my community. And of course Dr. Kharrazian is always an expert in this area. And I just wanted to share how valuable this is. You talked about bringing practitioners together. The one practitioner that didn't get mentioned but is definitely part of my realm are psychologists and who are very open to integrating functional medicine within their practices and working with nutritionists as well. And I just wanted to share some of Dr. Hyla Cass's interview because she's talking specifically how to safely get off SSRIs and anti-anxiety medication. And then how to maintain good health once you're off them. Dr. Cass is actually addressing physicians but it's equally interesting to someone who might be in the space of needing to get off medication and equally valuable to psychologists and social workers and people in the mental health world. So it's really valuable information and whether you're there in person or whether you're listening on the recording it's just fantastic.

So I just wanted to commend you on the way that these panels are set up, the interviews that you have and the presentations are just fantastic.

So we'll go ahead and share that information so folks can go and watch one of those.

James Maskell: That's great Trudy. Yes I mean that's particularly interesting to your community. I hope it is and it's just been great for me. Over the last ten years I've had an opportunity to see all these people speak at conferences and see who's good, see who's engaging, see who really has information that is valuable – we tended to mainly put MDs on stage just because I found the MDs respond well to MDs. Actually everyone responds well to MDs but that's just sort of like one of the things that we tried to get rid of in our community. The sort of the culture of these events is that there's this culture of like well, a naturopath is better than a nutritionist. And a doctor is better than a naturopath and whatever. And even inside the doctors a neurologist is better than a family care doctor or whatever. This is totally arbitrary and totally old world thinking.

What we need is people to work together. We need collaboration, not competition. We need people to really see the gifts of everyone. And really we need it to be a meritocracy [definition: a social system in which people's success in life depends primarily on their talents, abilities, and effort]. The doctor that I worked for was a naturopath in the first office that I worked for and this guy was reversing chronic diseases left, right and center. And I'm sure there were other naturopaths that would have looked down on him. And I'm sure there were a lot of doctors that would have looked down on him too. But 11 years later he's like working with the doctors at the local hospital and he's got his radio show and like everyone respects him. And it's just because it was a meritocracy in a certain way where over time he just proved that he was the man and he could do all this stuff.

And so I feel like the future of medicine is a meritocracy. Look at structures like – Uber's kind of a bad example but if you get enough bad reviews on Uber you're kicked out as a driver or the driver's won't pick you up because they know that you're always being sick in the back of the car or whatever. And so there's this structure by whereby you can give feedback and one of the things that we want to see is real meritocracy. We want to introduce patients to practitioners and if they have a great experience then to introduce more patients to those practitioners. If they have a bad experience provide an opportunity for that doctor to really hone their skills so they can do great medicine.

Trudy Scott: Excellent. So going back to Hyla's presentation and Hyla Cass, integrative psychiatrist, has been on the Summit a few times and is well known in my community. I'm just going to touch on a few things that were covered in her presentation because I want folks here to see how

valuable it is. She talked about how these antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs are toxic. And then she talked about a very interesting thing which you don't often hear our practitioners talk about. About how the detoxification process to get rid of these medications from your system actually requires us to use up nutrients. We use up some of our B vitamins for example. We use up magnesium. So that is going to make us depleted in these nutrients. And she talks about how reuptake inhibitors actually accelerate the depletion of neurotransmitters, these same brain chemicals that we are trying to raise with these medications. And how the medications change the structure of the brain and they cause a down regulation of neurotransmitter receptors. So really valuable information and I'll make sure that we share a link to that so folks can tune in and listen.

And then I pulled another one that I will share a link to and this is you talking to Dr. Kelly Brogan, integrative psychiatrist, and also past speaker on *The Anxiety Summit*. And author of the brilliant new book *A Mind of Your Own*. Isn't it absolutely fabulous.

James Maskell: Yes, so good.

Trudy Scott: Really good. And the fact that she took off and has done so well just because of the grass roots campaign to share this message about medication and despite the fact that there was no mention in media. She had this media blackout. It's just absolutely wonderful. She's a hero of mine. But going back to what you said in this little interview, you said to her "what role can community play in mental health?" And she said she likes to partner with health coaches and nutritionists which is exactly what you've been talking about. We want this collaboration and this partnership. And she talked about group work, group supports because you've got this accountability. You've got the sense of community and patients can model from each other and they are motivated and inspired by each other. So I thought that was really a great way to talk about community. And I'd love you to just give us some other examples of community. When we talk about community what do we actually mean other than some of these things I've just talked about? Can you give us some examples of what we are talking about when we're talking about community?

James Maskell: This really highlights it for me when I read the book *Blue Zones* by Dan Buettner. So Dan Buettner if you haven't checked him out he's awesome. But he went around working for National Geographic and he went around the world looking for places where people live to 100 consistently without the levels of chronic disease that we have. And there are these places around. There's one in Loma Linda, California. There's one in Costa Rica. There's one in Italy. There's one in Greece.

There's one in Japan. And what he found was in all of these places people had exercise although they didn't go to gyms. It was sort of like exercise built into their lifestyle. They had typically healthy food and that was sort of part of their lifestyle too. But the biggest factor they had in all of them was a really strong sense of community.

And there's countless examples where health outcomes have been delivered by good community and not by more health care. And I think you can see that is that in Costa Rica there's not a massive hospital down the road getting better outcomes. It's all about the community coming together. So that was my first tip.

And then last year I don't know if you heard this lecture too Trudy because I know you were at the IFM conference because I saw you there and we interviewed there for the Functional Forum. But last year Dr. George Slavich did a talk on human social genomics. And he essentially showed how through that work that the social isolation and a lack of good relationships was a primary driver of disease. And actually a bigger driver of disease than nutrition or exercise or smoking. Three of the things that we think are probably like the biggest drivers of disease.

So social isolation was a huge thing. So let me give you an example. If you work at a business and you're on part of a team and there's ten of you and you all get fired on the same day, you have a two time risk of depression. Whereas if you're one person and you get fired from that same job and it's just you that gets fired, not the whole team, you have a 20 times risk of depression. And it's because you're basically an intention to break a social bond. If you have a breakup of a marriage or divorce, something like that. That's an intentional breaking of a social bond and that is a bigger driver of depression, 20 time driver of depression. So you can see and the only reason they know this now Trudy and they didn't know this before was because the cost of sequencing genes has come down so much now that they can tell essentially exactly what's happening. And they control for all the variables and they can see that this is a huge issue.

So on one hand you have the very specific science where it's deep and broad action on the epigenome and then you have through socialization, through relationships. And then on the other hand you see okay, where do people live to 100 without the incidence of chronic disease that we have in the Western world? And you can put two and two together for both ends and say the community is a really powerful force. So obviously we've accessed that powerful community for us through the Functional Forum in getting these practitioners together. And so you're improving your health if you go to these meetups anyway. But more

than that, you know, that we've encouraged practitioners to build communities around their practices to really help for these functional integrated practices to be new centers of health creation.

And the difference between health creation and getting rid of disease is obviously these are two different things too. And so I'm very up on the power of community. I think as more and more science starts to come out and as it becomes easier and easier for more organizations to do this research into human social genomics what you'll see is that social isolation is unhealthy. It really brings back the great work that you've been doing for a number of years Trudy because I know that all of your work is about socialization, social anxiety and those kind of areas. And so what we've looked at is initially the science of it but now really coming up with some interesting solutions.

Trudy Scott: Wonderful. And I'm so glad you mentioned Dan Buettner's work the *Blue Zones*. I spent three months backpacking in Europe in my 20s and I was absolutely blown away by the Greek islands and the lifestyle and the people and the food and the community. And I know he shares a story of a Ikaria which is one of the Greek islands there and how the community is so important and their lack of stress and just living a long and healthy life. So it is really, really beautiful and the stats that you share about being fired and the risk of depression are really, really interesting. So we do have research supporting this.

I've got a few studies that I just wanted to bring up that tie specifically to anxiety and stress and community. But just going back to my comment about examples of communities to tie it back to what people who are listening to this might relate to. I talk a lot about the dangers of using benzodiazepines and how when you are tapering off benzodiazepines you need to be working with a practitioner. But there's this wonderful support group called Benzo Buddies. BenzoBuddies.org. And it's a support group. It's a community while you're tapering off the benzodiazepine. So think of that as a community support.

You listening in to the *Anxiety Summit* today. You are part of a community. You are learning and listening, you're part of this community where you're learning, you're inspiring, you're sharing with other people, you're getting inspired, you're getting hope. So all of this is a community that is supporting you whether it's a practitioner joining a community like the Functional Forum that James is talking about or whether you're forming your own little community in your own area where you live. All of this is just very valuable.

And one of the studies that I wanted to share because you talked about seeing kids recover from autism. It was a new study that just came out looking at parents of autistic children and they found that the more social support that they had the better health that they had. Because obviously if you are a caregiver of kids with autism that's a very stressful situation. And having that social support and that community really, really helps them.

James Maskell: Absolutely Trudy, yes. That's so key. And so we have to find ways to develop community. And if we look at a bigger trend Trudy and I love those resources that you gave. If I had to put a bigger trend of like what's really successful in community think about it like this. One, how can you use online resources to create offline connection, right. You know that Benzo Buddies. Before the internet you had no idea who else in the world was tapering off benzodiazepines at the same time, right. But now the internet comes along and you can find these people and you can connect with them. And even locally. How do you find people in your local community to meet up with in person. You had no idea of people who were interested in help or otherwise. Maybe you could go to the farmer's market or you could go to the healthy restaurant and meet there but it wasn't as easy. Now everyone has online what they like and you can use things like meetup or whatever.

But the real results that we see that are most powerful Trudy is where people have been able to pair getting together into a community with other healthy behaviors. So getting a group of people together to go on a run or to go on a walk together. You get the power of the community plus you get the power of everyone getting the exercise together. Or one of our doctors did this the other day where their patients were having a problem saying that they didn't have time to cook healthy food. So he rents a commercial kitchen. He gets 20 people together and they cook their food for the whole week all together. So they pick 20 meals that they're going to make for the whole week. They eat one meal all together. They make this whole food and in 90 minutes they've made their healthy food for the whole week. And they get together once a week, they make their whole food for the week and then they put it in the fridge or the freezer. And they have healthy organic food and it's only taken them 90 minutes for 20 meals because they're all working together. This is the kind of innovation that we want to see. This is why we think that these doctors are going to be the center of these communities and have the opportunity to do it because they're innovating and they're creating the right structure for practitioners for people to have successful healthy communities.

So even as simple as like a group of people getting together to do their CSA box, the community supported agriculture. How do you get a

farmer to know that they can sell directly to consumers. If you're the person in the middle of that you can help to be the person that helps connect healthy food to your community and you're doing a great community service, you get to meet other interesting people that are interested in health. Look at Gunnar from Thrive Market. I'm sure your community knows about Thrive Market. But like that's basically how he started this billion dollar company now by just saying, oh if I order all my healthy foods wholesale I get 50 percent off and then if I deliver it to a few of my friends that's easy. I wonder how that could scale up. And it all came from looking to provide some service for the community to tie together healthy behaviors into a community way. So look, these are the kind of things that we're seeing where there's innovation happening. It's all around community and I'm really excited to see it.

So I would encourage anyone who's listening to think about what are some healthy behaviors that you know that you should be doing already. Where if you got a group of people together there would be the accountability of the group, right. So you have all of these groups these people keeping themselves accountable. You have sort of a vulnerability of the group. You're like oh I just don't think I can get off benzodiazepines. Oh but look, here I am and I can help you. It's like that vulnerability that leads to trust.

And the truth is Trudy is that there is not ever going to be enough functional medicine doctor hours for everyone to get all of the value they need from the functional medicine community because it's a slow process. So what we really need to harness is this peer to peer community support and that's why we started to try mobile app for other people but also to share the best practices. If we see people doing stuff that's cool let's tell everyone else about it so that it can spread and accelerate. So I really appreciate all the work that you do for your community and I think that it's a good example of modeling what's possible.

Trudy Scott: Excellent. And I love all of this. I think it's fantastic. Just going back to your idea of supporting each other, doing something together with a common goal. Going back to the Benzo Buddies story. Imagine if that group had local groups getting together. So they've got this online forum supporting each other but if they got together and cooked a meal together and also meditated together and then supported each other getting off the benzodiazepine. So that would be what you're talking about the getting together and also supporting each other online.

James Maskell: Absolutely. That's exactly the model.

Trudy Scott: Good. Well I think maybe we need to make sure we get this message out to folks and I know there's folks from Benzo Buddies listening in to this. So if this sounds good let's get it going. I think it's just going to take the support from Benzo Buddies to the next level. And I just mentioned Benzo Buddies. I know there are other groups that do this kind of work and any group that's doing this think about this as taking the support that you offer to the next level. I think it's beautiful.

And James you talked about getting together with a group and doing something that's say exercise. And I've belonged to hiking clubs and rock climbing clubs and wind surfing clubs for years. And that in itself is beautiful because you've got the community support and you've got the encouragement and the motivation and then you're getting that exercise as well. So all of these are just wonderful ways to become more healthy and get the benefits of community. I love it. I think it's such an underrated topic - the benefits of community.

And I talked about this autism study and it's not just people saying that they feel better. There's actual clinical evidence showing that they are doing better. In this particular study the one that I mentioned about parents of kids with autism they checked blood samples to measure inflammation. They looked at CRP, C-reactive protein, which is a marker of inflammation. And we know how inflammation is very closely tied to many chronic disease conditions including anxiety and depression. And they found that when they had the social support the inflammation markers went down. So we are actually seeing this reflected in blood work which I think is very exciting.

James Maskell: Yes, super excited. Genetic, blood work, all the ways of showing it. It takes high tech science to show something that was very low tech and very tribal and a big part of our evolution, right.

Trudy Scott: Absolutely. And then another paper that I'd wanted to mention was a Canadian paper published in 2013. And as I always do on these summits I'll share links to these studies so you can go and read them. But this is looking at 82 pregnant women and they found that when they had social support and community support during pregnancy and they were stressed about something that was going on in their pregnancy they had lower cortisol levels. So cortisol is a measure of adrenal output and if your cortisol levels are high you may be more anxious and feel more stressed. But they found that when these pregnant women had this adequate social support the cortisol levels didn't go as high as those that didn't have it. So again we've got this marker to actually show how beneficial community is. And I think that's just so exciting because a lot of people might hear this and say

okay, it sounds good. But the fact that we've got evidence supporting it I think is really, really exciting.

James Maskell: Yes, absolutely Trudy. Well that's exactly what we're talking about.

Trudy Scott: So you did a TEDx talk called *Building Healthcare from Scratch*. Tell us a little bit about that and I'll make sure to share links so folks can watch it as well.

James Maskell: We were talking about building healthcare from scratch but the message of my talk was actually the community and not medicine creates health. And so we looked at it through the lens in three ways. We looked at the blue zones. We looked at the microbiome. You talked a lot about that I'm sure on this series. But the microbiome is a perfect example. You need a community of these microbes to keep you well and if the community goes down, your health goes down. If the community goes up, your health goes up. And so it's a perfect analogy again for understanding the power of community and the microbes you've got. You've got the blue zones. You've got the microbes and then the third as I talked about like real communities in functional medicine.

So look at Mark Hyman with the Daniel Plan where they had this church, the Saddleback Church where they had 15,000 people and they realized that this was actually 3,000 five person groups because they had bible study on Wednesday night. So they introduced healthy habits into those bible study groups and everyone lost a ton of weight. I think 250,000 pounds was lost between all the participants. And that's the power of using again healthy behaviors inside an existing community structure. And then on the other end you've got things like group visits where doctors are seeing patients together in a group and harnessing the power of community that way. So that was what the TEDx talk was about. So drawing parallels between all the places where you see that communities is a powerful force to health creation. And I'm really excited to continue to do more. Guernsey where I did the talk is actually a very interesting place. It's a little island between England and France that's not part of the EU or part of the UK. So they've got some real benefit and potential there to bring functional medicine in, prove that it works for particularly these high cost patients who had autoimmune disease or type 2 diabetes. And to be able to show significant cost savings with that population and thereby really accelerating the progress of functional medicine worldwide. So we're going to be doing some really cool stuff in Guernsey later this year. So if you want to get in touch with us check out FunctionalForum.com, sign up for our newsletter and we'll be in touch as to all the cool things that we're doing later this year.

Trudy Scott: Fantastic. And you're pretty international. I know by the time this airs you'll have just done a Functional Forum in the UK - tell us a little about that one. And then I know you've got one coming up in Germany. Is that correct?

James Maskell: Yes. So in the UK we're doing the Functional Forum there and it's going to be awesome. It's at the Royal Society of Medicine which is the most prestigious, the oldest medical society in the world. So that's super exciting. And one of the speakers that we have is Dr. Rangan Chatterjee who if you have people listening from the UK he is Dr. in the House. Last November he was sort of Dr. Oz meets Super Nanny. He was on his TV show and he would go to live with people for 30 days and he reversed type 2 diabetes twice. He reversed eczema, opioid addiction just by doing functional medicine and having a really sort of intense interaction with the patient over 30 days. So it's amazing. Four million people saw it happen and he's got a second series that's going to come out later this year. We're going to have him as well as other speakers. We've got Mike Ash.

And then the week after that we're going to go to Germany and we're going to cover this conference in Stuttgart which is the first collaboration between the Academy of Integrative and Holistic Medicine and then also the IFM, the Institute for Functional Medicine. So in the same way as functional medicine looks to reduce the silos between medicine like an endocrinologist and a gastroenterologist probably have a lot more in common than they have differently except they don't really understand each other's specialties. So in the same way like functional integrated medicine what we're trying to do Trudy is help people to realize that. People have way more in common than there are differences and that probably goes across all spectrums – political, whatever. So we want to just be a bridge for bringing people together and we're very excited to cover that conference as a part of that bridge.

Trudy Scott: Fantastic. And I do have a lot of international listeners so if you're in either of those areas and interested in attending I'll make sure to share those links. And then of course there will be more coming up in the future so stay tuned. James is on a mission to take this everywhere and it's very exciting to see it happening.

James Maskell: Thanks Trudy.

Trudy Scott: I wanted to just touch on one thing before we close and you mentioned it earlier about the social anxiety. So if you are someone who is wanting to attend an event like this or wanting to be part of a

community but you have social anxiety, there's this condition called pyroluria which is a genetic condition where you have more social anxiety and there's actually a nutritional component to it. And it's a topic that we've covered on prior summits and it's going to be covered in this summit as well. Just be aware that you don't have to go and force yourself to feel socially accepted. You don't have to force yourself to go to these events and sort of put on a brave face. If you have this condition called pyroluria there is a nutritional approach. It's vitamin B6, zinc and evening primrose oil and a few other nutrients. But look into this because 50 percent of the population consider themselves introverts. And if you are one of those introverts and you go to an event and you're feeling uncomfortable but you're forcing yourself to be there and you're feeling anxious about it consider that pyroluria may be a factor and addressing this from a nutritional point of view will make it a lot easier to go and be part of a community. Because as you've heard from James today and as you've heard from some of the research, being part of a community is just so valuable. And if you are avoiding being part of a community because you have a social anxiety then consider that maybe pyroluria is a factor. It would be just wonderful to help more people with this condition so they can be part of communities.

James Maskell: Awesome. Yes look, we try to create a very safe space for people to come into these events. We just really try to create a place where people can come and connect. And so I think what we've found and what we've heard from around there is the people enjoy getting these groups together. It's hopefully very low stress situation. And for those people I'm glad that they have you as a resource to be able to get themselves in a good spot.

Trudy Scott: And I know it's very safe space and it's a great event. I was just in the one in San Francisco. So I'd love to just close with something that you talk about- this is this term called holism. And we talked about our overlaps with coming from South Africa and this term comes from Jan Smuts who is a past prime minister of South Africa. And I think ending on this is going to be perfect for this interview.

James Maskell: Absolutely. One of my favorite quotes from Jan Smuts and holism is a concept that I think runs all the way through this conversation. He said that holism is the tendency in nature to form wholes bigger than the sum of the parts through creative evolution. And I love that concept creative evolution because you can see that in the microbiome. You can see that in the social structures that develop between humans. You can see that at every level. And I think that what we really need is an injection of holism. And one of the things that word holistic has got a lot of bad connotations. Not bad connotations but connotations that

don't lead to doctors to think that it's a credible idea or concept. But one of the things that we're starting to see is that one of the reasons why we're excited about functional medicine is that all the way through functional medicine you see concepts of holism but delivered in a way that's palatable to doctors. And so that's one of the reasons we're in there but I think it's a great quote. I'm not sure if Jan Smuts was the most holistic man in the world but he was certainly a great thinker and I'm glad for him to share that great definition.

Trudy Scott: I know. And I'm wondering what the context was that he used that term. Do you know?

James Maskell: I don't know. I know it was in a book that he wrote in 1935 I think and it was on holism. But look it's very interesting who was coming up with those kinds of terms in South Africa in 1935. It was probably not a very holistic place to be, especially if you weren't white and British. So it's interesting that it came from that source but the tendency in nature to form wholes bigger than the sum of the parts through creative evolution. We have this amazing opportunity now that his grand convergence I talked about Trudy where you have these nutritional approaches being validated by science. You have these community approaches being validated by science. You have this technological revolution arriving right on time to be able to create this creative evolution. And I'm very excited by this grand convergence because I feel like it's going to have a big impact on medicine. But I'm more excited about the impact that it's going to have on mankind in general because I feel like if people can understand holism through the context of their own physical bodies, through the way they work together it'll help to maybe solve some of this societal and other ecological issues that we have on the planet that are extremely pressing.

Trudy Scott: Wonderful. I love your mission and I love everything that we've talked about today. And I just want to thank you for sharing today and ask you if you've got any final words of wisdom.

James Maskell: You know I'll just say the last thing that I would say Trudy and I say this to people at the end is look, what it's really going to take for this to change is the hardest thing and I can't give this to you. You can only take it as initiative. Introverts, extroverts, whoever you are you can still take initiative in those ways. And what we need is for people to take initiative. The meetup thing happens because people take initiative to do it. And as I said it can't be given. It can only be taken. I would just encourage whether if you want to set up some sort of local community meetup group to help your community. And if it goes really well tell Trudy, tell me and we'll tell more people about it. If you want to take the initiative to start a meetup group. Whatever you want to do just

start doing something new and exciting or something that fills your heart up. The biggest difference that happened in my life Trudy is when I went from being a banker to doing something that I cared about. And I went from having like what people think like is a really prestigious job even though I was at the very bottom of the ladder to basically being a commissioned sales rep for a homeopathy company. You can't get more different than that and my parents at the time probably thought I was insane. But my life has been completely different since I aligned my job with my passion. And I would just encourage people who are listening to this who are passionate about this field we're going to be creating opportunities for people to be able to align their passion with their work. But what we're going to require for people is taking initiative. And the cool thing about initiative is that once you start taking it you see that it works you're willing to take initiative in bigger and bigger things. And if we build the biggest integrated medicine community in the world, the next thing that we're going to do is take on the whole of medicine. And I'd never have the confidence or the structure or anything to do that if we hadn't of been successful here. So I would just say to everyone in your community start small, take initiative in the small different areas and then what you'll see over time is that you have the confidence to then start to take on bigger and bigger plans. And we need like literally millions of people acting like that if we're going to solve the problem quickly and effectively with the internet. With technology we have the opportunity to share that in an effective way. So I would just say initiative is my big thing that I'd like to leave everyone.

Trudy Scott: Beautiful. What a perfect ending to a great interview. Thanks very much James. This has been fabulous.

James Maskell: Thanks Trudy.

Trudy Scott: Thanks everyone for joining us for another great interview on the *Anxiety Summit Season Four*. This is Trudy Scott signing off.

Speaker Blog: <http://www.everywomanover29.com/blog/anxiety-community>

James Maskell, creator of Functional Forum



James Maskell is the creator of Functional Forum, the world's largest integrative medicine conference. He lectures internationally, and has been featured on TEDMED, Huffpost Live, TEDx and more, and is a contributor to Huffington Post, KevinMD, thedoctorblog and MindBodyGreen. He serves on the faculty of George Washington University's Metabolic Medicine Institute.

Trudy Scott, CN, host of The Anxiety Summit, Food Mood expert and author of *The Antianxiety Food Solution*



Food Mood Expert Trudy Scott is a certified nutritionist on a mission to educate and empower anxious individuals worldwide about natural solutions for anxiety, stress and emotional eating. Trudy serves as a catalyst in bringing about life enhancing transformations that start with the healing powers of eating real whole food, using individually targeted supplementation and making simple lifestyle changes. She works primarily with women but the information she offers works equally well for men and children.

Trudy also presents nationally to nutrition and mental health professionals on food and mood, sharing all the recent research and how-to steps so they too can educate and empower their clients and patients.

Trudy is past president of the National Association of Nutrition Professionals. She was recipient of the 2012 Impact Award and currently serves as a Special Advisor to the Board of Directors. Trudy is a member of Alliance for Addiction Solutions and Anxiety and Depression Association of America. She was a nominee for the 2015 Scattergood Innovation Award and is a faculty advisor at Hawthorn University.

Trudy is the author of *The Antianxiety Food Solution: How the Foods You Eat Can Help You Calm Your Anxious Mind, Improve Your Mood and End Cravings* (New Harbinger 2011). She is also the host of the wildly popular *Anxiety Summit*, a virtual event where she interviews experts on nutritional solutions for anxiety.

Trudy is passionate about sharing the powerful food mood connection because she experienced the results first-hand, finding complete resolution of her anxiety and panic attacks.

The information provided in The Anxiety Summit via the interviews, the blog posts, the website, the audio files and transcripts, the comments and all other means is for informational and educational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for advice from your physician or other health care professional. You should consult with a healthcare professional before starting any diet, exercise, or supplementation program, before taking or stopping any medication, or if you have or suspect you may have a health problem.