

# *Fear Me Out Podcast*

## Episode 1

Hosted by Clinical Psychologist - Dana P. Saperstein PhD.

Fear Trauma & Self Exploration

### SUMMARY KEYWORDS

fear, people, intuition, feeling, god, life, experience, podcast, feel, talk, wrong, bit, understand, love, manage, symptoms, terms, trust, self examination, therapy

### SPEAKERS

Dr. Dana, Kim Fauskee, Fear Me Out

#### **Dr. Dana** 00:11

There are two basic motivating forces fear and love. When we're afraid, we pull back from life. When we're in love, we open up to all that life has to offer with passion, excitement, and acceptance.

#### **Fear Me Out** 00:30

Coming to you from our studio in Santa Barbara, California, this is the fear me out podcast. We're not your typical Self Help Program. Our show takes a deep dive into those psychological issues that affect us on a daily basis. We hope to shift your perspective and have you experiencing emotions differently. Now, here are your hosts, Kim Fauskee. And Dr. Dana Saperstein.

#### **Kim Fauskee** 00:51

So Dana, why did we write a book and start a podcast?

#### **Dr. Dana** 00:54

Well, you know, Kim, that's really the question of the hour here today. The answer really, from our perspective, is that we wanted to offer a unique perspective to those who are not only affected by but share an interest in, you know, the common psychological issues that we all face every day. It's how we react and manage those issues that really determines our ultimate well being.

#### **Kim Fauskee** 01:18

Isn't fear, something that we think about on a daily basis?

#### **Dr. Dana** 01:22

Oh, I absolutely believe that fear happens to be an emotion that is prevalent in our daily activities, and it affects probably 99% of our decision making, whether we're aware of it or not, I think it's really a universal emotion. That's, you know, it's it's kind of basic to our need for survival.

**Kim Fauskee** 01:42

And what types of fear are we going to talk about on the podcast and what we wrote about in the book?

**Dr. Dana** 01:48

Well, just to give you an example, or to give our audience an example, we want to talk about the fear of failure, the fear of success, the fear of intimacy, fear of being alone, fear of being judged, the fear of death, and there are actually many others that you and I have been writing about in the book and plan to discuss in our following podcasts, I

**Kim Fauskee** 02:10

think it's an interesting question is how to most of us actually experience fear in why do we experience fear?

**Dr. Dana** 02:18

Well, you know, I think our it's really our reaction to fear that holds us back not really the fear itself. And really, how we learn to manage the fear is really going to determine whether we're paralyzed by it.

**Kim Fauskee** 02:38

We want to make sure our audience doesn't think it's, it's going to be about you and I going forward into multiple, multiple episodes about this. And, and we're lucky enough to know a lot of gifted and talented and well spoken people that have experienced a lot of the things that we wrote about and that we're going to talk about in the podcast. So in future episodes, you know, we're lucky enough to have entrepreneurs and Olympic athletes, physicians, Grief counselors, and stage performers who all had to face their own fears to actually become successful in life and, and have some interesting stories, not only professionally, but personally that I think will be very relevant to our listening audience. And, and we'll welcome those people in shortly into subsequent episodes. Not only that, the fears that you had discussed earlier, and the fear of failure and success and intimacy, and so on and so forth. But are there other, like tangible fears that we may experience in life that that people commonly know about?

**Dr. Dana** 03:42

Well, I think that there's there's really many forms that fear takes tangible fears, like you described, you know, like fear of snakes or flying. Those fears are very specific, and they can be managed with exposure therapy and other kinds of approaches. But our focus is really on generalized fear, like the fear of failure and the fear of the unknown. And what we believe is that the more those more generalized feelings of fear, a really deeper self examination is required to come to terms with them.

**Kim Fauskee** 04:21

We're going to talk a lot in not only in subsequent episodes, but a little bit in this episode as well about how faith and intuition kind of plays into I shouldn't say kind of plays into but actually plays into actually managing your fear. How does our body react to trying to manage fear?

**Dr. Dana** 04:41

Well, whether it's the the simple fears, like the fears of snakes or flying, or the generalized fears, our bodies experience both a physical reaction and an emotional one. When we are in contact with fear, you know, physically, our heart rate increases as breathing is more rapid I have a dry mouth, we feel the need to either fight or run. And this is what's called a mechanism of our sympathetic nervous system. And that constant state of anxious fight or flight can really lead to some serious chronic or acute medical problems that are related to stress. And along with self examination, we think it's important to understand that there are activities like deep breathing, and relaxation, and meditation and yoga, just to mention a few that are important to address fear. In addition to facing it from an emotional perspective,

**Kim Fauskee 05:38**

we'll talk a lot more about your profession as a as a clinical psychologist, but can you talk a little bit about your clinical work with clients? Well,

**Dr. Dana 05:48**

you know, Kim, that's a really good question in that, um, I found that we all have an innate sense of how to help ourselves if we can just be quiet long enough to hear our own inner voice. And that's something that's really difficult for most people, because we are so overcome by our symptoms, and so focused on what the fear leads us to rather than really understanding that if we can get quiet enough, and really listen, we can get in touch with what you and I describe as our intuition. And I think that's a really important concept. And to me, our intuition is a manifestation of God, you know, speaking through us, people have different ways of labeling this inner knowing some people call it the collective unconscious. Carl Jung wrote a lot about that. He's a famous guy from the from the olden days of psychoanalysis. Some people call it simple intuition. Some people call it God, or the voice of their own spirit, you know, it really doesn't matter what you use to describe it, and doesn't really make any difference, whether your spiritual or religious beliefs, what they are, this inner knowing is this in all of us. And that's something I've observed. Once I can help my clients get to a place where they can start to focus inward, and step a little bit away from their symptoms. My goal in therapy, or at least partially, is to help my clients find this voice and listen to it.

**Kim Fauskee 07:19**

What was interesting, I think, in the in the not only from the research of the book, and my personal experiences in your personal experiences, and then the people we talk to, there's that really fear comes from a place of self criticism, you know, we we commonly talk about or feel, what other people and how they judge us, you know, that we're or how we judge ourselves actually, not being strong enough, good enough, pretty enough, etc, etc. And not approaching how we live our lives from a place of love and seeing ourselves through that lens. And then if we're not allowing other people's opinions to hurt us than we can tolerate, you know, the differences in our lives and the trials and tribulations that we we normally go through, and that we don't feel like we're a threat or a danger to ourselves. So Dana, don't you think, really the important message is that we come from a place of love.

**Dr. Dana 08:18**

Well, just like in the intro, one, we had that quote from John Lennon, about trying to come from a place of love, you know, I think that love helps us really be in touch with our inner wisdom. And we have to

look at our upbringing and our experiences in life, in order to really understand how fear has affected us and, and how hard it is sometimes for us to come from a place of love. But I really believe that inside in our deepest spiritual part of ourselves, there is a place of peace and acceptance that we can come to. And I understand that some people are uncomfortable calling this our intuition, God's voice inside of us. Though, you know, we can equate God with universal love, if we're comfortable with that term, you can use any term to like, you know, so, as we talked about before, it doesn't matter what the term is, it matters really, to learn how to be connected to this source of love and contentment. And as children, we actually do, unless we're prevented from by, we do experience some, you know, sort of joyful existence unless we're prevented by our parents. You know, by being shamed and criticized and sometimes even physically and emotionally punished for our mere existence. Some, as you and I both know that these abuses, become an ongoing dialogue in our heads. And in in contrast to our loving inner wisdom, a voice, you know, comes in us that's filled with fear and anxiety. And then we start to see the world and the people in our lives and even our cells from that, you know, that negative space that makes us feel really bad and actually leads to the development of a lot of the symptoms that we experienced in the course of our life.

**Kim Fauskee 10:13**

So it's really important that we learn from our past experiences and move from a place of fear and anxiety, a place of love and acceptance. And, and this is the journey we hope to take with the podcast. Absolutely, Kim,

**Dr. Dana 10:25**

part of what you and I have researched over time is the concept of fear, and that we have discovered that fear has gotten a very bad name, really bad name. Yes, what most of what we read about fear is that it's our enemy, something we should defeat or somehow fight to overcome. And we have a very different perspective in that, which is that fear is actually a healthy emotion. And that we wouldn't be alive without being able to feel the feeling of fear, the emotion of fear. And what we believe is that it's how you handle fear that either creates a problem or not, not the presence of it itself.

**Kim Fauskee 11:03**

So it's our actual reaction to fear, then, yeah, fear is

**Dr. Dana 11:07**

not negative, it's not a negative thing, because it keeps us alive. I mean, a really simple example of that is when you're driving your car, and you come up to a red light, there's nothing particularly important about red lights, other than the fact that we've been taught to fear them. Because if we don't pay attention, you'll get killed. That's right, you something really terrible could happen to you. That's probably one of the most simple examples of how fear keeps you alive. I think that actually from the moment that you have an awareness that you are alive, that there is a fear of death, that that continues in our life, it's not something we think about consciously, very often. Because if all we did was focus on the fact that we could easily die, we wouldn't be able to actually live. But it is built into most of the choices that we make. And most of the ways that we live in the world, and then the fear of death is actually a very healthy fear.

**Kim Fauskee 11:57**

We don't come out of the womb, fearful.

**Dr. Dana 12:01**

I think that on a biological level, we actually, there is a built in fear in all of us to take care of ourselves right from the beginning, when a baby, an infant cries or expresses their feelings, it's mostly in response to wanting food, needing to be held or are comforted in some way. And that really does from come from a place of fear. If you think about how you feel, as an example, when you get hungry. Right? Initially, you can be hungry and be relatively calm. But the longer that you're hungry, the more agitated that you become. And that's because you start to become frightened about what's going to happen to you, if you don't get food. Now, we're not really conscious of the fact that something bad's going to happen to us if we don't eat. But if it lasts long enough, the agitation just becomes greater and greater. And the desperation becomes greater because there is an inherent fear of, of what will happen to us if we don't have food and water.

**Kim Fauskee 13:00**

Well, how does our How does our fear evolve as we journey through life?

**Dr. Dana 13:05**

Well, I think that, um, as you and I've researched, there's many different types of fear. So it depends on what kind of fear you're talking about. I think that the sad thing from our perspective is that people are conditioned to be ashamed of the fact that they're afraid to look at it as a sign of weakness, and to spend their lives trying to sort of fight fear in order to accomplish whatever goals you might have. And I really, again, think that that's a sad way to be conditioned. Because, you know, the fear is not the problem, as we talked about a moment ago, it's how we react to fear that determines whether we can sort of transcend the fear in order to accomplish what we want to or whether we become frozen in the fear. And it sort of rules our life in that way. But again, it's not something that's necessarily negative and unto itself, it's how you respond to it. If you respond to fear with compassion and curiosity, you're more likely to be able to manage it to in a way that helps you get where you want to go. If you approach fear with anger or frustration, then it's going to get in your way, and it's going to it's not going to go away, that's for sure.

**Kim Fauskee 14:20**

We, in society, we hear the common cliché of reaching our top potential. This fear holds us back from reaching our top potential.

**Dr. Dana 14:32**

Well, I think it can if it gets to a high enough level, and we're not able to figure out a way to, to do what we want to despite the fact that we're feeling frightened. But again, you and I have have embraced the notion that approaching fear with compassion, and focusing on your intuition as a way of helping you understand what the fear is all about why you feel it as strongly as you do, what you can do to sort of help For yourself feel less fearful about the things you want to do, to us is more of a compassionate approach as opposed to approaching with, you know, with shame and, and feelings of being bad.

**Kim Fauskee 15:17**

You had mentioned, when we started talking about this, that fear is looked at as a negative pathology, something dark, something black, right? Why, why is that? Why, why? Why has it been looked at that? Why? Why are all the publications out there, the books that you read about it and doing a lot of research for our own book, it's about overcoming fear. It's about, you know, punching fear in the face, it's about you know, but you can, you can take it out of your body, and it doesn't have to exist there anymore.

**Dr. Dana 15:52**

Well, the sad thing in the way that most of us are raised, especially as men is that if we admit that we're afraid, then it's a sign of weakness. And I think that that's that that feeling of shame that goes along with feeling weak, gets in the way of us being able to manage our fear in a healthy, respectful way. Most of what happens that I see in my clinical practice is people come in what appears to me in a great deal of fear, but they don't necessarily recognize it as such, a lot of people come to see me because they're angry and frustrated, and, and feel a lot of hostility,

**Kim Fauskee 16:31**

that they're actually feeling the symptom, and not the actual cause of what the symptom causing this

**Dr. Dana 16:37**

right there, it's almost like there's a light switch inside of us that turns fear into aggression. And what I mean by aggression is that you can aggress against yourself by being very, very self critical. I teach some of my clients every once awhile by, you know, ask them to think if you talk to other people, the way you talk to yourself, you'd be in jail for assault, because we take such liberties in the way that we speak to ourselves. And a lot of times, that's how we manage our fears by being very, very self critical. That's not going to diminish the fear, that's just going to make us feel bad about ourselves on top of the fear that we're feeling well, we always apologize for the fear. Right, right. The wall. And the other thing is that as men, especially, we're encouraged to be really critical of people around us and to turn our fear into aggression in that way, and the aggression is, you know, self critical or negativity, or are those different ways of managing fear. And again, that's not going to diminish the fear at all, it's actually going to increase it because not only are you acting without conscience of conscience, if you're being aggressive. You're not making the fear go away, because you're not treating with the respect that it deserves.

**Kim Fauskee 17:46**

I think a lot of our listeners probably listen to other podcasts as well and have probably heard this topic. Because it's, it's well discussed, it's well written on. Especially if you look at people that put themselves in harm's way, harm's way, people in the military, how it almost sounds like they can flip some switch in their brain to turn the fear off and be able to perform, right? So how do they how do they do that? Because they're not doing what we've are going to talk about, not only in this podcast, but in the book in terms of trusting intuition, trusting your faith, and so on and so forth. But is that a misconception that you can just turn the fear off and be able to perform at a highest high level,

**Dr. Dana 18:36**

I don't believe that that's possible. I think that in order to be able to turn the fear off, you have to detach from yourself in a very unhealthy way. And I will say that as men were encouraged to do that, because if we admit any sort of weakness or vulnerability, it's a sign that we're not manly, and that we're not up to the task of being a competent person. Now, when you speak about the military, that's a whole nother level of aggression that people are encouraged to exhibit. The problem is that, that post traumatic stress is a huge problem in the military. And mostly, that's because people are encouraged to disconnect from themselves and do things that they would never do, unless they were disconnected for themselves as an example. You know, killing someone, I don't think is a very easy thing for most human beings to do. It's not natural, right? So you're, you're given praise and encouragement to do something that's very contrary to your your humaneness. And then you develop a really powerful anxiety reaction to it. Because there's a part of you that knows that what you're doing is not okay. But the military has no interest in really, they wouldn't work unless you were willing to do what you're supposed to do, which is, you know, to defeat the enemy, right,

**Kim Fauskee** 19:52

right. Do dominion and probably know the answer to this but men and women What's the word I'm looking for do men and women experience for differently?

**Dr. Dana** 20:04

I think we experience it in a very much of a biological phenomenon, like I described initially, that it's a chemical reaction. But because of the way we're raised, women have a tendency to be a bit more self critical than men do. And men have a tendency to be a bit more aggressive toward others than then women, because women are made to feel ashamed of the fact that they are aggressive and men are, are made to feel very much ashamed of being weak. So it's the expression of the fear once again, that's the problem, not the existence of it itself.

**Kim Fauskee** 20:36

So like I was saying, before, there's a there's a lot of literature out there. There's a lot of publications out there on fear. Why write a book on it? Well,

**Dr. Dana** 20:47

I think it's really an important subject. And I've been in clinical practice for a long time. And many, many of my clients for the last number of years have said to me, you know, the way that you approach helping me is really different than anything I've ever experienced before. The questions that you asked me Are questions I've never been asked before, in the therapy that I've done, and that, you know, they're being very complimentary, and in telling me that my approach to helping them recognize how much fear is affecting their lives, and that I'm not making them feel ashamed of being afraid, I'm not agreeing with them, that there's something wrong with them. But trying to help them understand that fear is a natural part of all of our existence. And that if you can tap into your intuition, and really be connected to yourself internally, that that will help you come to terms with just about anything that that you need to face in the course of your life.

**Kim Fauskee** 21:42

It's probably a good point now where we've kind of defined fear and why we're doing this probably to introduce ourselves to the people that don't know us. So Dana, you're, as I introduced you as Dr. Dana Saperstein. I'll let you continue on with, with who you are.

**Dr. Dana** 22:01

Well, I am a what I would consider to be a multi dimensional person I, I am a professional. I have a PhD in Clinical Psychology. And I'm licensed by the state of California as a clinical psychologist and a marriage and family therapist. I've been in private practice since the late 80s. I've worked with many, many people of different ages, and, and you know, sexes and all that different stuff. My main focus is on posttraumatic stress, working with people that have had really terrible things happen to them in the course of growing up, I also do a fair bit of relationship counseling and help people with depression and anxiety. I really enjoy my work, it's been a great deal of fun, extremely satisfying. On a more personal level, I'm 66 years old, I've been

**Kim Fauskee** 22:52

brave of you to admit that, by the way.

**Dr. Dana** 22:55

I've lived in Santa Barbara for a very long time and consider it to be my my home. I have a wife that had been married to the same person for over 40 years, and I have a couple of adult children and a couple grandchildren. And my life is very sweet.

**Kim Fauskee** 23:08

Congratulations on that.

**Dr. Dana** 23:10

Thank you. And, you know, happy about all of those things. And what about you can tell us a bit about you.

**Kim Fauskee** 23:20

Um, let's see, I guess first and foremost, I'm adopted. I'm a, I'm a son. I'm a brother with an older sister. And I'm a father with with three children, two daughters and a son. Professionally, I was an executive in a large national health care company. And then spent a decade there. And after doing that, and having over hundreds of employees, I went into consulting, working with high performing individuals, company executives, entrepreneurs, that had started and successfully launched companies. And then was able to work also with not only Olympic athletes, but professional athletes. Were where the common denominator for everybody, no matter how successful you were, in business or in sport, was fear. It factored into that 99% of everybody's decision making whether they were cognizant of it or not. And so when you approach me with the idea about this book a little over a year ago, it actually made sense to me. It was the first book project that I was presented with that actually I was enthused about doing, and thought I had enough subject matter expertise to actually add something to being a co author with you.

**Dr. Dana** 24:55



Well, thanks for I appreciate that. Kim. Um, you did ask me the question why I decided to read the book. Part of the reason was that it felt like the time in my life to do something a little bit different than I've been doing. I've had a relatively easy professional life, I've lived in my little Mesa bubble for a long time and erase the

**Kim Fauskee 25:13**

bubbles very nice. By the way, yeah, one of these days, when we get some social media going on this podcast will actually shoot a picture of our podcast studio, which by the way, has an 180 degree, unobstructed view of the Pacific Ocean in the Channel Islands,

**Dr. Dana 25:27**

it is actually very sweet. You know, the fear is an important aspect of why you and I are working together. When I decided to write the book, I realized that if I did it by myself, it would never happen. I'm a relatively shy person. And I realized that leaving it up to me, I would just, you know, just sort of fade off into the

**Kim Fauskee 25:50**

shy person that's now doing a podcast, it's gonna go out nationally and internationally. Yes,

**Dr. Dana 25:54**

but But because I decided to do with you, I figured, you know, the best way to handle fear, in my experience is to find somebody that you can be comfortable with and share the risk with, which is, you know, part of why you and I were doing this together, I thought very carefully and sort of felt within me who would be the best person in my life that I could do this with. And your image popped into my mind. And the reason that I chose to do this with you is because I've always considered you to be very compassionate, kind person who is extremely intelligent and well spoken, and way less shy than me. And so you would, if I felt that you could sort of help me overcome a little bit of my, my reticence and, and that, you know, once we started having conversation and started writing the book, it was so much fun. And it's been really a pleasure.

**Kim Fauskee 26:49**

Well, you know, I was reticent as well, in doing it, I've been asked a couple of times to write a book, I never thought I wasn't an expert in really anything, or at least an expert enough to be able to write a book that anybody cared about. So again, I think when you approach me and again, thank you for your kind words on that. It not only did the subject make sense, but I had some expertise in that thing. And through our discussions, it just flowed so well, between you and I, that I thought we actually had an think I know we have something actually to offer.

**Dr. Dana 27:29**

Right. The other thing that that I forgot to mention is that you and I share a background of each being traumatized in our own ways in our childhoods. And I think that that that may be an understatement. Yes, that led us both to doing a lot of personal exploration. And at least for me, when I was in my late teens and early 20s, I started doing a lot of therapy, because I found that I was suffering from depression and just a generalized feeling of unhappiness. And it turned out that I, you know, once I had

the ability to speak with somebody, I didn't really realize the level of trauma that I suffered as a child, in the process of going through all of that I had a mentor who helped me understand the degree of sensitivity that I possess from sort of a biological point of view. And that from his perspective, in order to be a competent therapist, you have to be very connected to yourself. And he taught me how to be connected to my intuition and how to use that as the main sort of source of knowledge and, and information and working with the people that I see in the course of my professional practice. I know

**Kim Fauskee 28:45**

this is a show about fear, but you mentioned mentors, and as soon as you said that word, and I'll talk about my background in a second here, but the whole finding a mentor, and having that appropriate mentorship really was a turning point in my life for me as well. In kind of seeing that there's another world out there that that wasn't obstructed, or, or clear, cloudy, as how I was raised, and somebody actually that believed in me and took my hand and kind of led me in the right direction.

**Dr. Dana 29:23**

So Kim, tell us a little bit about how your intuition developed for you. I know that it started at a very early age in your life.

**Kim Fauskee 29:29**

So absolutely. And I it goes back to what you had said earlier about you and I have been similar backgrounds from from abusive childhoods and I was adopted like I said earlier, I was adopted by an alcoholic father that was both physically in and verbally abusive. And a mother who was codependent even though I don't hold her fully accountable to the to the abuse I suffered. She To stand by and allow it to happen. My two intuition started, like you said, really early in my life, I didn't know what intuition was, couldn't spell intuition, etc. My earliest memory of my childhood probably begins at about six or seven years of age. In through the terror in the chaos in my house, which happened on a daily basis, my father would come home from work 99% of the time intoxicated, somebody was going to get his verbal or physical wrath that night. And so the chaos would start almost immediately. And to separate myself from that chaos, I would go into my bedroom, into my bedroom closet, and shut the door. And that was the area that I found my solace. And to this day, decades, and decades later, I can still see it clearly. I can still smell the smells that were in the closet, I could still see the clothes hanging in the closet. But the one thing that always stood out to me sitting there in the dark in that closet, was that I had this feeling that I wasn't alone. That there was there was somebody else there with me. And that I wasn't going to have to do this alone. And that that gave me some sense of relief, that that whatever that was, and again, being too young to identify that as whether it was God or whether it was intuition, or was somebody speaking through me or whatever. I just had that feeling. I had that feeling that not being alone. And that I was not going to have to do this journey by myself.

**Dr. Dana 31:48**

You know, Kim, you bring up a really good point in that. The definition or at least one definition of intuition is the ability to know something without analytic reasoning. And it's like bridging the gap between your conscious and non conscious parts of your mind. What's my six or seven year old understanding? Yes, I in the way that I just said it was not something a six or seven year old would

understand. But that's exactly what you were describing. As a you had a really deep feeling that you weren't alone. Not that everything in your life was going to be okay, obviously, because it wasn't No, I

**Kim Fauskee 32:20**

wouldn't know that right? At that point. Right. I didn't know that. I mean, I was just trying to avoid getting beaten.

**Dr. Dana 32:26**

Right. So right. Now, I will say that, that, sadly, my experience with God was fairly negative. Mostly because I was forced to participate in a religious context, that didn't make any sense to me. I remember many times going to temple with my dad, and his idea of having a spiritual experience was to fall asleep, and start snoring in the middle of the service. And I would be sitting next to him and everybody's looking at him. And he's fast asleep, snoring at the top of his, you know, top of his nose or whatever. And I'm sitting there looking around and thinking, what am I doing here? This is so stupid. Now, I will say that I remember playing Little League, and feeling like if there was such a thing as God, that God definitely was a baseball player, because of how much i The feeling of being on the field and smelling the grass and, and all of the different sensations of being on a baseball field, at least for me, during that time of my life, was probably the closest thing I ever came to feeling like there was more to life than just what was right in front of me,

**Kim Fauskee 33:27**

Major League Baseball should use that as our marketing. Right? Right.

**Dr. Dana 33:32**

I will say though, that in my early 30s, if you had asked me what my religion was, I would have told you that I was an antagonist, not an atheist, not agnostic, but antagonistic, because part of what I'm taught I was taught in psychology school is that religion is a drug for the masses, and that it's an unhealthy reliance on something that's not real, that just confirmed everything I already felt anyway was that there was no such thing as God and that and that if you had a religious or a spiritual life, that there was something wrong with you. I was really lucky that during that period of time, things changed really radically, radically for me. And I had the experiences that left me very much certain that there was such a thing as God and and that it was to become an extremely important part of my life. An example I can give you is that when I was 45, I was I went to go surfing one day, and when I got to the beach, the waves were perfect. There was nobody around which is extremely unusual. And in Southern California, usually there's you know, all your special friends are there with you whether you like it or not. And so I was really really excited and extremely anxious to get in the water as quickly as I could. I will say that as I was standing there looking at the ocean, I it was as though somebody was yelling at me at the top of the Her lungs, don't go in the water by yourself. And I was having a very intense argument inside my head about the fact that if you're a surfer, you don't wait, especially if you have the opportunity to serve with nobody around and the waves are perfect. And I just get kid getting hammered. If it's like, I'd never heard such a loud voice in my head, say saying, Don't go in the water by yourself. So finally, I gave in and I waited for my friends to arrive, it was about 20 minutes or so. And we all got ready and jumped in the water. And within about 10 minutes, I had a, what would have been a fatal heart attack. The only reason I'm alive today is because I waited for my friends, and they saved my life in that very crucial

moment. So if I didn't listen to my intuition, at that moment, we would not be having this conversation right now.

**Kim Fauskee 35:49**

It's interesting how your intuition speaks to you loud and clear. It seems to me it at least in the last two stories that you've told, does it speak in that loud and clear voice to all of us? You know, it's been a journey for me to trust my intuition. Okay, it said earlier on, I they felt that I wasn't alone, didn't know what it was, and so on and so forth. And, you know, through my adulthood, understanding what my intuition was, and trying to trust that as my best navigator in life, I still fall into my default sometimes of, of my mind, trying to override my intuition. And now my intuition is onto me, finally, and it's, it's acting out loud and clear. And when it knows that I'm trying to trick it, now it's coming out physically, right? In physical symptoms, and so on, so forth. Like, Hey, dummy. Listen to me. Now, I'm gonna knock you between the eyes. If you don't listen to me and go with that direction. Yours seem actually more loud and clear earlier in your life. So I'm just I'm wondering if if we all experienced it a little bit differently, was it just something that you picked up on earlier in your life learned a little bit sooner than the rest of us or?

**Dr. Dana 37:12**

Well, I would say that because I'm as cynical as I am, and as a hard sell, that whatever was necessary in order for me to get the message happened earlier in my life, when I was in my early 30s, I remember going to sleep one night feeling extremely uncertain, in a spiritual way. And not sure whether my recent sort of acknowledgment of God's existence was real. And whether I could trust it, or whether it was, in my mind, I really wasn't sure if I was being fooled into sort of a false belief system. And then I would be betrayed, as I often was in my childhood. And so I went to sleep one night, and I woke up or in the middle of the night, I had this dream, very powerful dream that I was in the house that I lived in when I was in high school, but I was the age that I was, at that time, which is mid 30s, I opened the door, and God was standing there at my door. Now, God explained to me in that moment that God is not a person. But in order for me to have a conversation, there had to be a person, an image of a person standing at the door. And I remember feeling really strongly that this was God coming to answer my question. So, you know, I said to God, well, what are you doing here? And God said, Well, you know, you're going through a very difficult time, and you're not sure what to believe. And so I figured I should come and tell you what my purpose could be in your life if you're willing to accept me. And I just thought, well, that's pretty sweet. So tell me what's, you know, what's the story. And the first thing that God told me was that if I wanted to feel loved, that God would always be there in order for me to feel a sense of well being in love. And that the only time I wouldn't feel it is if I turned away from God that God never turns away from anyone. But when we don't feel God's presence is because we've turned away from God, either because we're afraid or in pain or something terrible happens. And it's hard for us to believe that, you know, such things in our life could happen. And there still be a God. But God really reassured me that again, all I got to do is ask, and the love is there. So I said, Well, God, that sounds pretty cool. Is there anything else? And God said, Yeah, we need to talk about forgiveness. And I thought, okay, and God said, Well, as a human being, it's really hard for us to forgive other people for the things that they've done that have caused us harm. And sometimes it's even harder for us to take responsibility for the things that we have done or not done that have hurt other people. So if you're willing to let me help, I will help you forgive the people in your life that have caused you harm. And for

you to ask for forgiveness for those from those that you have hurt. And that's my commitment to you if you decide that you want to you know Join me in this question. I thought, wow, that is so sweet. And I said, Is there anything else? And God said, yeah, there's one more thing. You've chosen a profession of healing. And I want you to be able to approach your profession without fear. And so if you allow me to accompany you in the journey of helping people, you don't ever have to be afraid, because I will always be there to help you in the healing process with the people that come to see you. And I just thought, wow, that is such a sweet, amazing gift. And, and it was really actually hard for me to believe in the moment. But God said, you know, if you if you're willing to surrender yourself to me in a, in a loving way, we'll work together and help as many people as can find their way to you. And so I said to God, hey, could you just wait one minute, I gotta go get my wife, because I want to introduce you to her. And so I'm running around the house, calling my wife and we come back to the door, and God's not there. And I realized that it's not my role in my wife's life to introduce her to God, that's her separate journey. So I woke up from that dream, feeling incredibly uplifted and really met in a beautiful way. And I'm sitting in my bed, and all of a sudden, they hear this music playing, that I've never heard before or heard sense. And I thought to myself, God, what's that? And then I got the message that that's what the angels sound like when they're singing in heaven. Probably one of the sweetest moments of my entire life. But it was, like you say, not the usual for most people to have a dream that powerful and that intense. But you know, being the hard soul that I am, that's the way it had to come in order for me to take it seriously.

**Kim Fauskee** 41:37

I think I need to find that neighborhood move there.

**Dr. Dana** 41:41

I wish it was the neighborhood because I'd go back. But it's actually

**Kim Fauskee** 41:44

if God's actually knocking on doors. I need to have that conversation. Right. You're right. It's not the normal?

**Dr. Dana** 41:52

No, it's not. And I will say that, you know, most people, you asked the question to most people have an intuition, I believe the answer is yes. But I will say that we're not brought up to embrace our intuition. We're not brought up to look at it as the word of God inside of our body and to treat it as a sacred part of our existence.

**Kim Fauskee** 42:11

But we talked about earlier about, you know, the overcoming of fear versus the managing of fear. It's like, you know, taking the carburetor out of your car, and expecting your card or to continue to run at a high performance, right, and taking the fear out of our body, which is innate with us and expecting us to perform at a high level. Intuition is something that's ingrained in us correct. Intuition is ingrained in us.

**Dr. Dana** 42:42

I believe that everybody has an intuitive part of their existence, or almost everyone, depending on you know, whether you suffer from depending on whether Yeah, yeah, what the nature is of your biological existence. But, you know, again, most people have an intuition, most people are not brought up to respect it. And to look at it as being sacred. They don't. I mean, people often say to me, you know, I'm not a religious person, so God doesn't have any role in my life. And my response is, well, I, you know, religion is only one way to experience God. And that there are plenty of people who have a very strong faith like me, who are not associated with any formal religious doctrine. And that's a novel concept for a lot of people, because a lot of times we're we, you know, we're made to believe that if you're not religious, then there's no God for you. And I don't believe that that's true. I think there's a God for everyone. And that, that God speaks to us through our intuition. And we can either make it super complicated, which most of us do, or we can let it be very, very simple.

**Kim Fauskee** 43:44

I think spirituality is a hot topic these days, in terms of like you were saying, whether your gods associated with organized religion, or your God is somebody else outside of religion, right? Because I think a fair amount of people are brought up thinking that God is related to their religion, right? And if they're thinking outside that religion, well, that can't be their God. Right? Right. And so I was one that was not raised in any type of form of religion. I've not practiced any formal religion or organized religion at all. Again, I've been a very spiritual person. And again, whether that's listening, you know, to my own own intuition, and that whole feeling that I wasn't alone, and not being alone, well, who who is that? Or what is that feeling? Right? It isn't somebody, it was really a feeling within me. Right, but I was feeling so I've, I do have a belief in a higher power. I don't know specifically what that higher power is what that higher power looks like. But I do have that feeling within me. So that feeling that I'm not alone. allows me Long as I trust my intuition allows me to manage my fear on a daily basis, right that way?

**Dr. Dana** 45:06

Well, you know, I see how much we complicate our lives, especially in the name of spirituality. There's a fellow that I know who he goes to India, every couple of years, there's an offer on there that he enjoys. He's willing to go to India, he gets dysentery every time he goes there gets really sick. But in the process of being in his ashram, he gets to experience his version of God. I've asked him many times, how come that version doesn't live in Santa Barbara in his neighborhood? And he said, Well, I can only feel it there. And I feel sad for him in a certain way, because it's the only time he allows himself to feel it. I don't think that he has to go to India to do it. But in his mind, it's absolutely necessary. In my experience, it's there all the time. It's not location specific. So you were joking about I want to move into that, that house where you had that dream,

**Kim Fauskee** 45:58

only because God knocks on doors and your neighbor knocked on my door,

**Dr. Dana** 46:03

I actually think that God knocks on people's doors all the time, but in a very subtle, quiet way. And that most of us don't take it seriously. Because it's, it's very quiet and very subtle. And, you know, because we're blasted by the media to be afraid all the time. And things are always, you know, shoved in our

face in a very vivid way, that when something is really quiet and subtle, it's hard for us to take it as seriously as we could otherwise.

**Kim Fauskee** 46:31

You had mentioned the media, kind of putting it in our faces and misinformation out there, and what to believe or what not to believe anymore, is probably become more problematic today than it ever has been in in human society. Is the media propagating the fear story even more now?

**Dr. Dana** 46:58

Well, I think so. I mean, I don't mean to be cynical, but I really believe that the more that we are fed fear, the more that we buy stuff, as an example that we don't need, we buy stuff to make ourselves feel better. So if we weren't fed a constant diet of fear by the media, we would stop buying things in order to make ourselves feel better, and just buy the things that we need. Well, our economy would collapse if people stopped buying stuff, they don't need Jeff Bezos would not be a rich man. Exactly. Because you know, how many people do you know that, you know, just buy stuff every day, because every time you push the button to buy something, it creates a chemical feeling in your brain of well being. And all of that is set up, you know, that's based in fear, just like most businesses based in fear, as you know, from your own professional life. And, and that, you know, if you scare people into making, you know, into not making mistakes, and, and they live under the threat of being fired all the time. Yeah, they're going to perform probably not at their best, but they're certainly going to be performed better than they would if if, at least we think that if they were constantly being fed a diet of fear all the time,

**Kim Fauskee** 48:03

we're always being tapped on our pain points,

**Dr. Dana** 48:05

right. And it's for a purpose. And that purpose is, you know, to sort of manipulate us and get us to do things that we wouldn't normally do,

**Kim Fauskee** 48:14

not to digress from, from what we're talking about in spirituality, but there may be listeners listening to our podcasts, or somebody that reads our book that that doesn't believe in God. Right, doesn't have a strong sense of spirituality, may or may not have listened to their intuition, at some point in their life, that are scratching their heads right now thinking that we're off our rocker is about what we're talking about. And it's, you know, we're, you know, the spiritual gurus and so on and so forth. But really, that's not the case. So, if you're not a spiritual person, and you haven't really spent much time listening your intuition. But you're a fearful person. And you're thinking that you need to do something to not be as fearful anymore. How do How would somebody like that manage their fear?

**Dr. Dana** 49:11

Well, most of the people that come to see me, come to see me thinking that there's something really wrong with them. Because most of us are taught to believe that the symptoms that we might have, whether it's low self esteem, or anxiety, or depression, or whatever it might be, is a sign that we are deficient or that there's something really wrong with us. It's very unusual for me to meet someone who

doesn't come into my office and say, you know, I'm really messed up. There's something really wrong with me, because they've been made to feel really ashamed of how they feel.

**Kim Fauskee** 49:41

I was told I was different from an early age.

**Dr. Dana** 49:43

Right? Right. And if you're sensitive on top of everything else, you're usually made to feel really ashamed of your sensitivity,

**Kim Fauskee** 49:49

sensitivity and crying as a child. I was not made to feel good about doing that.

**Dr. Dana** 49:57

Right. So I think it's important to point out that there that there are different ways of doing therapy. I know it's not a direct answer to a question, but I promise I'll get there. Most of therapists are taught the medical model to, to look at what's wrong with the person that comes to see you diagnose them as having something wrong with them, and then come up with a treatment plan that is designed to help alleviate the person's symptoms. I don't necessarily agree with that perspective, because it's bad enough that you feel like there's something wrong with you. But then if I, as a professional person agree with you, I was not going to help you other than to feel worse than you already do. So the idea behind pathologizing you is that I can come up with a cookbook recipe, in order to help you alleviate your symptoms, if you don't get better as a result of my recipe. It's not because of my failure, it's because you're not doing the recipe properly. And so it takes the responsibility away from me as a professional, and puts it on you as a person that's, you know, coming to me for my services. And most of the time, what you'll get out of sort of inputs, normal therapy, is the notion that there's something wrong with you. And then you become extremely intellectually educated, about what is wrong with you, and what it means and so on and so forth. But nothing in your life really changes.

**Kim Fauskee** 51:23

We call that in business, the cookie cutter methodology, right? Right.

**Dr. Dana** 51:27

So my way of looking at things is not being a therapist, and psychotherapy is not a science, because there is some science behind it. But mostly, it's an art. And as an art, from my perspective, it involves much more of a connection to the people that I see on a deep emotional level. And sometimes it's it's the first time that a person has ever felt listened to and met on an emotional level. And it's easy to sort of relatively easy to give up the notion, there's something wrong with you, when you come to understand that what's wrong is the way you look at yourself. And the way that you manage the way that you feel, as opposed to there actually being something wrong with you. Now, I do have to say that there are some types of mental illness that are, you know, biologically driven. And what I'm saying right now doesn't necessarily apply to you if you have schizophrenia, or you're bipolar, and definitely have a, you know, a genetic type of mental illness. But generally speaking, most people have the mistaken idea that because they're suffering, and there's something really wrong with them. So part of my idea is to



help you be connected to yourself, on a deep level, I don't encourage people to become self centered, because that's obnoxious. And we don't like self centered people. But I do try to encourage people to become centered within themselves. Because most of us are brought up to be centered outside of ourselves, we're brought up to be really worried about what people think of us, our families, conditioned us to believe that there's something really wrong with us because, you know, maybe because you're a little bit different, you're sensitive, the, you cry easily. So obviously, you're weak, and there's something really wrong with you, instead of really understanding that sensitivity is a gift. And that once you've come to terms with where sensitivity has led you in your life, it can become an enormous acid in terms of creativity and novel solutions to problems and so on and so forth. So you don't have to be a spiritual person to necessarily embrace the idea that you have an intuition. I don't often, you know, I'm not going to insist that anybody look at it from a spiritual perspective, your intuition is your intuition if you don't want to necessarily see Yeah, no, not just listen to. But if you don't want to see it, as a spiritual part of yourself, you can still see it as a, as a part of yourself. And if you learn to trust it, and really be seated in it, regardless of you know, where it comes from, it's going to make your life a lot better.

**Kim Fauskee 53:57**

Faith plays a role. Yes, in in a lot of things. I think when we talk about faith, whether that's getting through an illness, a catastrophic event, a trauma in your life, again, whether that's through organized religion of belief, and God, have faith that everything's gonna be okay. With that. Talk about talked a little bit more from your professional perspective about the whole idea of faith?

**Dr. Dana 54:26**

Well, I think that if you consider the changes that you have made in the course of your life, and that I'm assuming that when you first started therapy, you thought there was something wrong with you. And then you were taught that that you know that you're

**Kim Fauskee 54:41**

not only that, I think I was told there was something right,

**Dr. Dana 54:43**

right. So I'm assuming that over the course of time you began to develop some faith in yourself and learn how to trust yourself. Is that fair to say? Yeah,

**Kim Fauskee 54:51**

I think it goes back to your idea of being a little bit pessimistic about things and not not a fast believer and so Certain things that the jury's still out. And I think that was the course with me as well, especially when I just started therapy was I was a little skeptical about it. And then as I got into it and further understood about myself and having a little bit higher sense of myself at that point, I did start believing at that point in started having faith that, you know, well, maybe there is something wrong with me, but it's actually how I'm reacting to this thing, versus actually having some type of pathology that I need cut out of me, or, or exercise anatomy or something.

**Dr. Dana 55:42**

Right? Well, I think that that, again, knowing you for a long time, I've seen the evolution, and that you've come to a place where you trust yourself, and that you are very much centered within yourself. That's one of the reasons why I wanted to write a book with you is that I felt that you're a man who knows himself well enough to be able to speak eloquently about you know, who you are, what you believe, and that it's not just coming from your head, it comes from your heart.

**Kim Fauskee 56:12**

No, it definitely definitely comes from my my heart. Truly.

**Dr. Dana 56:16**

And that's important in terms of being able to, you know, write a book like this and have a podcast like this, because we're going to be interviewing lots of people who have, I mean, faced many different kinds of fear, we're going to be talking about the fear of death, the fear of success, the fear of failure, the fear of, of self examination, the fear of money, all kinds of different fears. And the people that we're going to invite into our world are people that have been able to manage in a graceful way, those fears, as opposed to feeling that they have to fight a battle all the time and win the battle.

**Kim Fauskee 56:51**

There's a lot of us in the book, in that way, and truly being transparent and a little bit cathartic. On our own personal journeys, my personal journey, through it, and through all of those fears as well. Not only your personal journey, but your professional journey through that as well. Right

**Dr. Dana 57:13**

on that. One of the things that I learned maybe 30 years ago, was the concept of hypnosis. I do a lot of self hypnosis, and I do a lot of hypnosis with the clients I work with who have been traumatized. Because when you experience trauma, you don't really feel the feelings associated with what's happening to you, because you go into survival mode. And then those feelings get kind of stuck inside your body. And then they get triggered by events in life that remind you of the things that happened to you that were that were really traumatic, but it just becomes a vicious cycle because you're in a place of anxiety and desperation. And a lot of times people turn to substances and all kinds of different ways of managing their trauma. I find that when you do hypnosis, you're kind of recreating the the physical sort of electrical state that your body was in when it was being traumatized. And then it gives you the opportunity to for once feel the feelings and release the feelings from your body, which gives you a sense of relief and a sense of peace. You can't make trauma as though had never happened. But you can certainly get to a place where you can neutralize it to the point where it's no longer a reference point in your life and affecting you as much as it does.

**Kim Fauskee 58:32**

I think people may be thinking that managing fear may be a long term exercise in terms of coming to grips or understanding their intuition, coming to grips with their spirituality, their believing in God and potentially a higher Spirit speaking through them. Is that really the case? I mean, is it is it something that if somebody heard this podcast today and thought, well, I've never heard it described this way? That makes sense to me. Okay, could they could they start living their life today, managing their fear

much better? Or is it is it a longer cycle of more understanding and more compassion to yourself? More education?

**Dr. Dana** 59:27

Well, I think I think they use you're actually describing your own process. How long did it take you to get to a place where you felt like you could trust your inner voice and that you felt like you know that you weren't crazy and that there wasn't something wrong with you and that and that actually, you know, you're actually quite gifted and, and have a really strong internal moral compass and all of that stuff. How long did it take?

**Kim Fauskee** 59:50

Well, I realize that there is no quick fix. There is no magic pill. There is no magic fairy dust. Right? Right. It took a while. I had to get out of my own way. Really, I mean, I fully understood through therapy through through my own education on the subject, and so on and so forth. I fully got it, what was what I needed to do. And then it was it took more time for me to just to get out of my way, you know, it's so much easier to just to fall back in the default of what's comfortable that you've been brought up with what you're used to in your life. And, and continue to use that and not be cognizant of the new tools and the new learnings that you've been given to be able to live the way you didn't, didn't want to have to live in the past?

**Dr. Dana** 1:00:41

Well, he also had to learn to face the fears of trusting yourself and getting to a place where you could really, despite the fact that it's sometimes really scary to trust yourself, you may not have any evidence that what you're feeling has any outside has any outside sort of source. And so how do you believe something that you only feel inside, despite how strong you feel as if you've been taught that there's something wrong with you, and that you can't trust yourself. So that takes a long time.

**Kim Fauskee** 1:01:19

That still sits in the back of my head today? Right? I mean, that there's, you know, when you when you're told, especially from an early age, that there's something wrong with you, you're different, you act differently, You're too sensitive, and so on, and so forth. And no matter how much therapy and self examination that you do, and how understanding and compassionate you are to yourself, that little voice still sits in the back of your head all the time. And for me, I just have to be cognizant of that, right in terms of how I react, not only to fear, but how I react to other circumstances in my life. So much easier to fall back into that default, and be comfortable with something that's negative than it is to be able to use the tools that I've been given now, to be able to turn you on and see things in a different way. Well, I

**Dr. Dana** 1:02:13

think that's why faith is in constant exercise in experiencing, that you're not alone. And that you're you're and that you're well met, in terms of whatever it is that you are doing both in a positive way, I think that your intuition can help you become incredibly creative and, and come up with ideas that you might not have come up with, on your own, I think can also help you in your darkest moments when you're feeling super vulnerable. And, and, and, and maybe even hopeless. So you know, again, it's an

experience that takes a lot of time to build that trust, because it's not an intellectual phenomenon. It's very much of a feeling. And you have to have that feeling. You know, as human beings, we need to have that feeling a lot in order to trust that it's real.

**Kim Fauskee** 1:03:02

So we talk about the journey, not the destination. Right? And that. So we're coming up to an hour right now. I think we've shared a lot, right, we've shared a lot about who we are, why we're doing this, the ability to have the podcast. So we can go a little bit deeper into areas that we weren't able to, in the in the book, also bring in some guests that have experienced certain things and have some interesting takes on on their experiences, through fear and different the stages of fear and so on and so forth. What today, maybe what would be your biggest takeaway from that we can give the audience today as, as we in our first hour of the inaugural podcast?

**Dr. Dana** 1:03:50

Well, I would ask people to consider that the idea that there's something really wrong with you because you feel bad about yourself. Or that somehow you don't see yourself as having great value is generally more of something of an attitude that you develop based on the way you were treated and the way that you are not treated. I think that that people suffer as much from emotional neglect as they do from overt abuse. And that it takes a lot of courage to face those aspects of your life. But you know, I'm a very biased person, being a psychologist, but I figured that the more you're willing to work on the psychological, emotional injuries that you suffered, the greater your life will become because you're not just dealing with whatever the symptoms you might have. You're dealing with the underlying reasons for feeling the way that you do.

**Kim Fauskee** 1:04:41

When you and you should have a lot of credibility. You've had 1000s of patients that have have bettered their lives by coming in contact with you. i I'm an example of somebody that's that's done a lot of self examination and done therapy and have kind of, or I should say, kind of I've come out the other end and and feel grateful that I that I did spend the time doing that. So,

**Dr. Dana** 1:05:06

welcome. It's been a pleasure and I look forward to our next meeting. Our next meeting is going to be about the fear of self examination.

**Kim Fauskee** 1:05:14

I can't wait.

**Fear Me Out** 1:05:16

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