

Fear Me Out Podcast

Episode 67

Hosted by Clinical Psychologist - Dana P. Saperstein PhD.

Guest Speaker

Anthony Kar -Practicing Oriental Medicine with Heart & Soul

Dr. Dana 00:00

Today on the Fear Me Out podcast, I'd like to introduce a dear friend and trusted colleague, Anthony Kar. Anthony is a licensed acupuncturist, here in California and a doctor of oriental medicine. He and I have been friends and colleagues for probably close to 30 years, we refer lots of people back and forth because Anthony is an incredibly sophisticated psychological practitioner, and helped me many times with people that are having emotional blocks and other issues that he's been an expert at helping resolve so that the person can benefit by deeper types of psychotherapy. Known Anthony for a long time, he's a very, very dear friend and an extremely bright, really capable, very humble person. Hope you enjoy this interview with Anthony Kar

Fear Me Out 00:58

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. 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 Dr. Dana Saperstein.

Dr. Dana 01:36

Well, I want to welcome Anthony Kar into my office. And onto the Fear Me Out podcast. Anthony. Again, as I stated in the intro is one of my favorite people in Santa Barbara, he and I have known each other forever. And he loves loves talking about themselves. So I'm going to start off by asking, sorry, I'm laughing because Anthony just told me that his his worst thing to do is to talk about himself. And I'm going to ask him to talk about himself. So who is Anthony car? And what's your life about here in Santa Barbara? Now he's being really quiet just to punish me.

Anthony Kar 02:11

So I've had stage fright, like maybe three times in my life?

Dr. Dana 02:16

This is one of those?

Anthony Kar 02:17

Yes, it is. It's really hard for me to talk about myself. Well,

Dr. Dana 02:21

yeah. I mean, I think it's really important for people to understand who you are, what you do, what your background is what matters to you. Again, in the intro, I talked about the idea that you and I have been referring people back and forth for what 30 years? Undoubtedly, yeah, yeah, we're very dear friends and trusted colleagues. And we love working with people together, because it seems to enhance both physical and emotional healing. So I know that, um, you've dedicated your life to that process, both inside yourself and with the people that you work with. I know you're super popular,

Anthony Kar 02:57

go ahead and started out with knowing you through being your client. That was a long time ago. And that was a long time ago. And there was definitely something special about you that I appreciate it. So

Dr. Dana 03:06

you're very kind. But again, Anthony, we're not here to necessarily to talk. You know, I've known Nancy for a really long time, we've actually been to Mexico surfing together and all kinds of stuff. I've never seen him quiet before.

Anthony Kar 03:22

Yeah, the hardest thing to do is talk to myself.

Dr. Dana 03:25

Why is it hard? Maybe we should talk about that, why it's hard for you?

Anthony Kar 03:28

That's a good question. I've always been shy as a child. And I never liked attention being brought upon myself. So

Dr. Dana 03:35

I think that that's part of what makes you really good at what you do is that your ego is not usually involved in the, in the process. I would agree with that, actually. So can you talk a bit about what you do, and you're sort of psychological orientation partly in what you do.

Anthony Kar 03:53

So what I do for a living or what I do in my life,

Dr. Dana 03:57

well, both let's start with what do you do in your life and where you come from and where you're born, all that sort of stuff.

Anthony Kar 04:03

Okay. I was born in New York City. And my mother who came out as gay in New York City, basically took us three kids and moved out from the East Coast to the Left Coast, because I think she could be who she is out here.

Dr. Dana 04:20

And how old you are when you when you left New

Anthony Kar 04:22

York. I was 13 When I left New York City,

Dr. Dana 04:26

and what was your life like there before?

Anthony Kar 04:29

I've had a lot of holes in my childhood memory. So I can't really remember a lot of my childhood, but what I do remember is a lot of violence and disruption,

Dr. Dana 04:41

and who was responsible for the violence.

Anthony Kar 04:44

Unfortunately, my mother, and this is going to come as a surprise to people who know Lani Woo, in this town. My mom had a very difficult childhood. And I think she needed to get out of that environment to actually start growing her Self personally,

Dr. Dana 05:01

was she married? To your father? Yes. For how long?

Anthony Kar 05:05

1012 years, okay. And my dad was kind of the typical father who wasn't involved with the kids like off to work, come home for dinner, and then maybe see him on the weekends. But there's a lot of there was a lot of strife within the relationship, and it really spilled over to the three kids. So it's you and my two sisters that I'm on. I'm in the middle.

Dr. Dana 05:31

And so all three of you guys came out, or all four of you. Your father stayed in New York. He stayed.

Anthony Kar 05:36

Yeah, unfortunately. My my, my wife, they divorced. He divorced everybody. So from age 13, I never saw him again.

Dr. Dana 05:45

Wow. And you've not seen him? Since 13. Right. No contact at all.

Anthony Kar 05:51

And we had contacted him when I was 19 and was in the hospital. But that was it. And he recently passed this February. Wow, I heard

Dr. Dana 06:01

a no contact with your sisters either. No. So he really just bailed altogether.

Anthony Kar 06:07

He did. And I can imagine the pain he must have had. And interestingly, he died of esophageal and throat cancer. Okay. I mean, if you believe in that sort of thing, where diseases end up where you most need attention. I don't think he communicate properly. And his wife who I had some text messaging with, or email with, said that is stubbornness caused them a lot of pain, about not having contact with his kids.

Dr. Dana 06:41

Did he have other children? Yes, he did. Yeah. So he started a new family after you guys left a

Anthony Kar 06:48

totally new life. Yeah. Wow.

Dr. Dana 06:51

And are both of your parents of Chinese origin?

Anthony Kar 06:55

Yes. He was born in Hong Kong. My mom was born in Chinatown in New York City.

Dr. Dana 07:00

Okay. So coming to California must have been quite a culture shock at us as a 13 year old coming from New York City.

Anthony Kar 07:08

It was and what really impacted me the most was the space that I felt around me. Instead of concrete and intensity, there was openness. There was in Kalita. Right. So okay, Galena, back then still had orchards and stuff like that in many roads. I felt a little, I felt fear, I guess, moving out here with new environments and a new life. My mom with came out with her girlfriend, so that was a new life. Oh, okay. So here I am. I'm living with two women, where it was a mom and a dad.

Dr. Dana 07:45

And was your mom continuing to be violent even through your teenage years, or mostly when you were younger?

Anthony Kar 07:51

So when I was 12 years old, I had to look at my, my mom said, like, you want to hit me, don't you? After she she beat me? And I said, Yeah, I want to, I want to defend myself. And that's when she stopped.

So she never hit, you're gonna know. And also, like I said, she moved out here to change to change her whole. I think she wanted to change herself and remake herself. And so then the violence ended.

Dr. Dana 08:22

And she was an acupuncturist, at that time, or that happened after she got here. It happened

Anthony Kar 08:27

at Yeah, she was a nurse, she was a nurse, okay. There was a lot of strife with her and my older sister. And that was, I think, the biggest impact in my life, watching that violence and disruption with her.

Dr. Dana 08:43

So it wasn't just you that your mom took her rage out on. So how do you think she finally got a handle on it?

Anthony Kar 08:50

So she started, I think she started practicing Buddhism. She found Buddhism, she found Chinese medicine and in Chinese medicine, it makes you want to restore harmony in a situation that's, that's not harmonic not in harmony with yourself. And so I think, combination of those two things, her being herself enabled to be out in California, and also, you know, she's in the healing profession. She's a nurse. So I think that made her reflect to I think there was drugs and alcohol involved too. Obviously, right. Right. Her dad was a major alcoholic, and he died of alcoholism. Okay, that was your grandpa. Yeah, that was my grandfather.

Dr. Dana 09:38

Do you feel like I know that your mom has died? Do you feel like you guys came to terms before her death?

Anthony Kar 09:45

Yeah. So at 30 some major changes happen within my psyche that I wanted to change. And that was my relationship with women. And my mom had a big part of that. So I stopped talking to For a year, for a year, yeah. And I told her that I said I needed to go do my work. And, you know, I wasn't really happy with myself and who I was growing up to be at 30.

Dr. Dana 10:11

I'm just curious how you guys came to terms before she died.

Anthony Kar 10:14

So that was a big turning point in her life with me to like, having her son were in high profile professions. Her son not talking to her and her friends, like, Hey, what's going on with Anthony? Like, it was really painful for her. Yeah. So I think that really prompted her into like, finding out what the fuck was going on. Right? Because, you know, she's a woman of the community. She's well respected. But then she has this thing in complete disharmony in her life. Yeah. So after a year, I, I invite her to my house with my sisters for Christmas. And she goes, one, why am I here? I said, Are you kidding? You mean, you haven't done the work? Like I told you why. I was not talking to you. And so essentially, we

had another talk, and she apologized. And from there on out, I still had my boundaries around her. Right. But I was still open to being with her. She's my only mom. Right. And my sisters have a relationship with her that, you know, I wanted to also, like be a part of Yeah. So I think from there on out, she she started growing, I guess I started realizing things.

Dr. Dana 11:35

And were we already practicing as a doctor of oriental medicine at that time?

Anthony Kar 11:40

Yeah, I got my license when I was 2220. Wow, you were quite young. Yeah. Wow. So I went from high school, essentially, into acupuncture college.

Dr. Dana 11:51

And what made you decide to, to follow your, your heart in that direction?

Anthony Kar 11:58

As we, as I told you on that one, on our walk this morning, I hadn't thought my mom just asked me what I wanted to be one day or do in my life. And I mentioned a few things. And one of them was Chinese medicine. And she said, Oh, really? You have to register for school tomorrow, if you're really serious about it tomorrow. Yeah. And I said, Okay. And that was it. And you did it. Yeah, I think she really knew like, obviously moms know best. Right? So even in our disharmony, she knew who I was as a person. And she know, my struggles with learning and I had a hard time with book learning. And Chinese medicine is really, memorization and hands on. So right, then I can I can deal with that. So you're well suited to that profession. Thanks. Yeah,

Dr. Dana 12:48

for sure. You're both professionals. In the same field, were you connected with each other professionally? At first or not so much?

Anthony Kar 12:58

Yes. So my, after college, I worked for a year to save money, and I wanted to travel. And when I got back, actually, traveling was my biggest teacher in life to like, traveling, I went to India for four months. And I got everything stolen. While your lungs India. Yeah. And so India really changed my life in that it, it humbled me and, and made me live with less. And it made me grateful for where I live and what I have in my life. To this day, like I'm always reflecting with my Indian eyes, so to speak.

Dr. Dana 13:42

And you are quite young when when that happened.

Anthony Kar 13:44

24 That's pretty young. So I came back in a complete culture shock. Like I was literally crying almost every day for I don't know what reason. And I had the good fortune of having a bonus mom, and my girlfriend, her daughter at the time, they kind of took me in and gave me a safe place to land. And then my mom after I don't know, four or five months, she goes, okay. You're coming to work. So had her off

at her clinic? Yeah. Oh, well, thank you, you're coming to work. So I appreciate her for that. And I appreciate her for her. Knowing that I think she had in knowing that I'd be successful in what I do. Right? And got me there.

Dr. Dana 14:32

Can you talk a bit about your philosophy, and how you sort of developed it over the course of your professional life? Because your your approach to oriental medicine and to acupuncture is really different. As far as I'm concerned. I've known you professionally and personally for a long time. And I've seen other professionals that do what you do. And in my experience, you're far more skilled and knowledgeable than, than anybody I've had called interact with I know you're shy. But I am asking you to brag a little bit and talk a little bit about your and how you how you do your thing.

Anthony Kar 15:08

I think Chinese medicine for me is, well, it does it takes direct Chinese medicine is nature. So the planet is one breathing living thing and so as your body, okay, and so in Chinese medicine, we're looking for flow in harmony and interconnectedness. There's, there's also in our medicine, there's philosophy. So there's like Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, which is all intermingled and tied in with medicine. What developed for me was the sense of one, Buddhism for me, which means being kind to all living things. And then Taoism, which essentially is going with the flow, don't fight the river. It's brought me where, to where I am today, and how I approached cases and people and situations and, and even in my personal life to

Dr. Dana 16:04

do you have this professional specialization that you kind of certain types of Phoebe like to work with.

Anthony Kar 16:12

So I used to, it used to be more like sports medicine, because I'm definitely interested in anatomy and physiology. And, and then beginning acupuncture was mostly used for pain. People used to come to me for pain, but it's kind of morphed into, I don't want to treat those cases anymore as much. They're not as interesting to me. But when I do, both, when someone does come in to me for like, say, the back pain, I don't treat the back anymore. I treat the person. And in this day and age, mostly I'm treating people's nervous systems, okay, because it's this day and age is fraught with hyper kinetic energy. Everyone's on the go, go, go. Everyone's having instant gratification. Everyone's on their devices. Everyone's plagued with, like, EMFs are everywhere. Yeah, that's for sure. So how can that not disrupt someone's nervous system?

Dr. Dana 17:11

You and I have a similar philosophy in that when someone comes to see me, I do appreciate their symptoms, and that their symptoms are important. But what I'm looking for is what might be driving the symptoms on a deeper level as a percent, is that a fair thing to say? 100%? Yeah, and I think that that's what makes you unusual. I know, you may take that for granted, because it seems like common sense to you. But I don't really believe it's as common sensical as you might imagine, because I'm assuming you see people that have seen other practitioners that do what you do. Do they not ask you the same question they asked me is how come nobody's ever asked me these questions before?

Anthony Kar 17:46

100%? They always say always leave going. Wow. I've never been asked that question before. And or you ask the most interesting question,

Dr. Dana 17:54

right? And I'm sure you scratch your head and think, Well, wait a minute, this is not that.

Anthony Kar 17:58

I don't scratch my head. And so much as I feel sad for my profession, on that level, like practitioners of my, in Chinese medicine should be, I don't want to say caring more, but maybe getting out of their own way. Yeah, you know, and really dig into the person in front of them.

Dr. Dana 18:18

So again, as a mental health professional, myself, and my obvious bias is helping people, you know, from a psychological perspective, and one of the things that you and I do with each other is refer people back and forth. And there have been many times when I've sent someone to you with the idea that I know that what Anthony is going to do is going to be able to help this person open up on a deeper level emotionally. So can you describe what that looks like from your perspective? Question makes sense?

Anthony Kar 18:47

It does. Having a hard time putting into words, because

Dr. Dana 18:51

you're very emotionally sophisticated in my experience. And that has to lend itself to seeing people differently than than the average person. Well, I'm curious about like, when I send someone to you that has like a maybe an emotional block of some kind. Somehow, whatever, how you do what you do you help that person get to a place where they can get past that block, and go to a deeper level of healing on an emotional level.

Anthony Kar 19:18

I'm pretty sure that as you do, I'm not gonna say hypnotize, but I cue them. Like the questions I ask, cues them into maybe opening different doors that they don't that they have shut, sometimes in relationship to their health, sometimes in relation to their interpersonal relationships at home, or their relationship with substance, food, etc. or habits. And I tried to as you reflect on that, how much is

Dr. Dana 19:52

your intuition play a role in all of this, or do you see it from that perspective?

Anthony Kar 19:57

Yeah, I don't know if it's intuition, just the is for me, like as you? I don't know, it's a word. It's just a word. Right? So okay. So yes, I would say yes. Like, I can already tell how I need to approach a person, and what kind of questions I need to ask so that they can follow their own healing path.

Dr. Dana 20:19

Do you see that as a spiritual along with scientific sort of perspective?

Anthony Kar 20:23

Scientific? Definitely not spiritual? Probably. Okay. Yeah.

Dr. Dana 20:28

So what that the feeling that you get with the person guide you toward the treatment that feels right to you?

Anthony Kar 20:35

Yeah, like, you're always feeling them out, right? You're always feeling okay, how? How close? Can I get to their boundary? Can I get them to open their door? The new door or door that's been shut for a long time. And you

Dr. Dana 20:47

can feel inside? Inside of yourself? What is blocked inside the person? Is that a fair way to put it? I don't want to put words

Anthony Kar 20:56

in Yes. Not a feeling. It's just a knowing. So it's just a it's just a knowing that you have Yeah, and and I'm not 100% with my knowing at all time, and I tell them that to like, um, a lot of times I in my work, you know, it's it's a lot of talking, it's a lot of connecting. And, and I say upfront, I'm not a therapist, like, I'm just talking to you about your process and how you can better your life and health with maybe going down the physical avenue of a diet and exercise and meditation along with the internal work.

Dr. Dana 21:31

Right. I guess it sounds like you always have in the back of your mind that there are there are emotional issues that are part of everybody's struggle. Whether the symptoms they present to you are psychological or physical, there's probably a component of of emotionality in there somewhere.

Anthony Kar 21:51

I would agree with that. Yes. Like recently had a client come in. He's been constipated for three and a half years out of the blue. Three and a half years is his bow stopped. Oh, done, everything started to like, and I'm thinking like, okay, like what's so your gut is your second brain, right? Okay. If it shuts down, something, shut it down. Whether it was disease, whether it was like an event? And I say like, I'm not looking for you to make anything up. But I want you to look at what happened around that timeframe. So he came in this week and said, You know, I stopped meditating three years ago.

Dr. Dana 22:29

And that's the main thing that changed his life. Yep. He was a two

Anthony Kar 22:33

day meditator. Why, and he stopped. And this guy has, he said, history of drug abuse, probably some, like, some physical trauma in his life. And he just came in and said, You know what, this is what happened to me. I'm like, this is probably a key, not the key, but a key into why you're feeling what you're feeling or dealing with what you're dealing with.

Dr. Dana 22:57

And, um, have you seen him since you guys came to that realization? Yeah, I

Anthony Kar 23:01

just saw him this week. He actually said it to me this week. Oh, okay. Yeah.

Dr. Dana 23:05

And it hasn't changed his relationship to his balance at all to admit that he stopped paying attention to himself

Anthony Kar 23:12

too soon. The interesting thing about his case is that when I first saw him three weeks ago, to a month ago, he had like, the best week of his life, he was passing every day, you know, everything was going great. And then it stopped. So, my thinking and philosophy of that is, like the old patterns start rearing up again, right? Whatever he dealt with in his life was kind of seeping back in because the body wants to go to a, a healed state or natural state. It doesn't want to go in disharmony. Okay, so I think his programming started activating again in him. Whether it was like God, I can't believe this is happening or it's working. You know, this, like, like, Fox, like, really, it's working. So the self doubt starts coming in and like all that stuff, so so he got scared. He might I got scared. Yeah. And he's, he might Yeah,

Dr. Dana 24:13

and or how do you think people's relationship to fear influences themselves in your practice?

Anthony Kar 24:19

When I first met you and you said the 2 million fact man and motivating factors in in people's worlds are love and fear? I totally agree with you from the first day I met you and like my fear of not wanting to come in here. Yes. Right. Always creates blockages, always creates maybe situations that always puts blocks on the road. So overcoming fear is the key.

Dr. Dana 24:45

And is there a specific method that you use or is it different with everybody when it comes to helping them deal with their fears?

Anthony Kar 24:55

So I look at people as colors and everyone's a different color. So everyone has to have a different approach. And again, like, I am not a therapist, and I like my point is not to do this with every patient. Right, right. And I take the temperature of the person and see if I can go in that direction or not. Some people don't want to deal with it. Some people speak my language. And that's fine, just as long as I can

help them. So not everyone I'm dealing with has this relationship with Me that we've been talking about?

Dr. Dana 25:29

Well, most of the people I know, at least the ones you refer to me, and the ones I've referred to feel like they have a very deep connection with you. Not just as a practitioner, but as a person, they feel very well met. And they feel seen, which is so unusual in most people's lives.

Anthony Kar 25:47

I would agree. I think my if there's any secret to my success as a practitioner of Chinese medicine is my connection and my relationships with patients. Period. Yep. You know, you have to, as a practitioner, you have to instill confidence in their process and their healing. And you also have to kind of walk your talk, like, you have to show health, maybe in a physical way, you have to also show health in the community, you know, like, you're not going to see me hanging out in a bar, you know, or whatever.

Dr. Dana 26:23

So that wasn't your car saw driving by McDonald's the other day.

Anthony Kar 26:26

If it was 12am. Yes. After the poker game. Yeah. Yes. Are you there? Did you see me? No. So yeah, I've

Dr. Dana 26:36

been smarter last year. Here's

Anthony Kar 26:38

the thing about like, people also think like, oh, Anthony year, you're like, you must meditate every day. You must eat really? Well. Uh huh. And I say, you know, I'm Chinese. Okay, Chinese eat everything that moves. We gamble. Right? We're not we're we're known to be drinkers. Don't drink. But yeah, I mean, like, I'm in the moderation. I'm into like, like people say, you ride motorcycle. Or your extreme snowboarder or you like to play poker? Like, what? Really? Yeah, you don't live in a cave meditating? 24? No, I don't. But I do live in a cave. I definitely believe in like, nurturing your soul in different ways. And that's definitely what I like, preached to my patients to like, try to fill your soul this demon young, the principle of Chinese medicine is yin and yang, right? Wide Up, Down hot, cold, excess deficient. Right. We all we all have our like, our ego side and our shadow side. Right, right. So I'm into really promoting pupils. Search for? How can I feed my soul in a different way?

Dr. Dana 27:48

Well, I noticed that you'd like to go fast, because I've been on surf trips with you, and you ride waves quickly. And I know you do your motorcycle thing. And I've, I've heard rumors of how you've lived on the slopes going a million miles an hour on your snowboard. I'm assuming that's just part of the way that your nervous system is wired. Yes. To pay attention to people's sort of wiring in this way when you're treating them or is that not a concept? That's part of?

Anthony Kar 28:14

No, it's definitely a concept I look for me personally. It's I don't seek out the thrill. Okay, you know, like in Taoism, it is it just is like I am, who I am. And I and I go to things, because I like them. Not because I need them.

Dr. Dana 28:33

So you don't feel the need for snowboarding as an example, or a motorcycle riding or gambling or whatever.

Anthony Kar 28:39

I don't have a need. No, I'm attracted to it. So as I'm getting older, I've had to really curtail some things as you know, in your life you've had to as well Yeah, because of my physical limitations. Right. And so this is where the Taoism philosophy really works for me is that I'm not fighting that river. I'm not going to you know, beat my head on that boulder. I'm just gonna go around and find something that I can do. Fortunate enough to still hike, right ride my motorcycle, surf, but I can't ride my bike anymore because my knees I can't do stadiums anymore because of my knees. I can't play volleyball or play softball anymore because of my shoulders. Like I'm still finding things that fill my soul right and not feel like shit. Like why is my body doing this to me? A victim of it. Yeah. And finding peace within within the struggle I guess if you want to call it struggle going with the flow.

Dr. Dana 29:37

I would certainly say it's a struggle because being brought up Jewish there's no grace in accepting limitation. So that's for sure.

Anthony Kar 29:45

Yeah, and you know, it's easy for me to say say but hard for people to get out of their own way.

Dr. Dana 29:52

I don't think I'll ever get over not being able to surf I it still breaks my heart and it's been six or seven years since I've been out on a server poured. So I would love to learn that flow if it's possible for you to teach me how

Anthony Kar 30:04

you can do it, Dana. Yeah. I think I think you are going with your flow because like, also, when I first started talking about this about, you know, not surfing, you said, I'm so lucky to have my grandkid. Right? And then now, this is filling your soul your podcasts. That's true and, and interacting with people in a different way now. Yep. So that that is kind of like going with the flow.

Dr. Dana 30:31

You're right, I'm being more of a smartass, as I'm really good at. At least that's what everybody tells me. So what else can you tell me about your life as a professional person that I think would be useful for people to know who are not familiar with what you do? Because again, in Santa Barbara is a very liberal community. A lot of people are very open minded, and are willing to try all kinds of different paths

toward healing. But I don't know that the rest of the country and the other parts of the world where people listen to this podcast or is knowledgeable about what, what you do.

Anthony Kar 31:10

Personally, I don't think I'm a good acupuncturist, or herbalist. Okay, or Chinese medicine practitioner. I feel like I have nothing to say, or teach in this arena, honestly,

Dr. Dana 31:23

which is so stunning to me, because I know how I know so many people that see you and know you and adore you and feel so helped by you. That it's just so incongruent to me that, that you don't that you don't see what other people see and feel in relationship to you, including my wife.

Anthony Kar 31:42

I think I, you know, and thinking about coming on the podcast, I was thinking about, Okay, what am I going to say? Like, I got nothing to say. I think what I do want to say is that, if there is a secret to my, my practice is that connecting with people, and letting people heal themselves, instilling confidence that they can do it, too.

Dr. Dana 32:10

So that's all we're different, obviously, than what we would get from a Western medical provider who we go to and ask them to heal us.

Anthony Kar 32:18

Right, or even even another acupuncturist. Right, I can know, I know, some acupuncturist to who, who don't know their limitations. Like, I know my limitations, I have no trouble saying I can't help you. I have no trouble referring out. And I think that's the key. I've, I've had a lot of reports back saying in the community, like hey, you know, Anthony, we really respect the fact that you told me to go see my doctor, instead of saying, Yeah, I can treat that. Really knowing your limitations, I think is the key and also connecting with clients.

Dr. Dana 32:55

How does one come to know their limitations? From your perspective, because I think that it's a rare thing. For people to recognize that they're limited. Some people would feel very shamed even say that out loud.

Anthony Kar 33:08

The bottom line, Dana is getting out of your getting out of the way of your ego. And also, getting out of your own way. I've said that a couple of times in this interview or podcast that you have to know your limitations and get out of your own way. How do

Dr. Dana 33:24

you help people understand that when you're working with them,

Anthony Kar 33:27

like you, it's just putting shining a light on it? You know,

Dr. Dana 33:31

do you have any examples that occurred to you that might be useful?

Anthony Kar 33:35

I don't have any examples. It's just mostly identifying and eliminating, and not being scared to admit that.

Dr. Dana 33:46

So trying to keep your ego in check, obviously

Anthony Kar 33:49

100% You know, I'm accused all the time like I told you before at home like you think you're a god. You tell people what to do. And you expect them to do it. Evelyn's my partner, and she's like, basically, she's saying, that doesn't fly with me here at home. Right. And it's really true, like after really temper because one of my Bibles is the Tao of Pooh. Okay, and it's Winnie the Pooh. And he's the ultimate Dallas. You know, Winnie the Pooh is like, Okay, we took the wrong turn. We'll just go circle back and find the money. Right. And all his friends are the human archetypes. Right he your Tigger owl. So I'm self admittedly, a recovering owl. Okay, trying to be poo. And owl is the know it all he has a lot of wisdom, a lot of knowledge, but he doesn't know shit at the same time. Right. So I am the owl trying to emulate poo. Okay, so that's that's one of the there's a secret to getting out of your own way is to understand who you Are and decide on whether you want to continue that line of thought or thinking or not? And does that really work for you and your life?

Dr. Dana 35:08

You know, I have a big smile on my face when you say that because my imagining that most people attribute to you a knowledge base and an understanding that's sometimes grandiose and that they want you to be their Savior in some ways and to heal them. What do you do under those circumstances?

Anthony Kar 35:30

So like you, because I've had experience with you is that you're self deprecating, and you humiliate yourself in front of people. Right? And that disarms them. Okay? And it's, and it's like, oh, shit, well, you're not a god. You like, Okay, I'll take you down from your pedestal, like you're just human like me.

Dr. Dana 35:51

So joking with, with your, at your own expense, I guess for lack of a better word.

Anthony Kar 35:55

Yeah, we're just saying that, you know, we don't know it. All. Right. We're all just trying anyway. Yes. You know, so I think, yeah.

Dr. Dana 36:05

Well, I know that my son has a really lovely relationship with you. You're one of his favorite people to tease.

Anthony Kar 36:11

Yes,

Dr. Dana 36:12

he loves to tease you.

Anthony Kar 36:13

I don't do that in clinic. Okay. In my personal lives, for sure, but not in clinic, sometimes in clinic, if anything, I tease myself in front of them, right, to show my humility, and that I am just a human being hard for

Dr. Dana 36:30

people to accept that sometimes because of desperation, and have tons of fear. I mean, hard to imagine anybody would come to see you without a healthy amount of fear, feeling out of control about whatever the symptoms are that they bring into your world. Yeah. So how do you meet them in that place of fear? Maybe you've never thought

Anthony Kar 36:50

about it before? And never thought about before? How do I meet them in fear? Yeah,

Dr. Dana 36:54

because it's second nature, I think for you,

Anthony Kar 36:57

I think that you have to be a very, very grounding presence at that time for them. So if you're reacting to their energy and spinning as they're spinning, if you meet their spinning velocity, it's not going to be it's, it's not going to help them. I think, my calmness, like looking them in the eye, maybe even touching them, right, like putting the hand on the shoulder or hand on their, on their knee, disarming them and creating a safe place, say, to use that cliché, but it's really true. Having a safe place for them to just be able to feel experienced with their feeling. And to help them move through that.

Dr. Dana 37:39

Which is so unlike most medical situations.

Anthony Kar 37:45

So this is bringing up a story. So I had a man come in and he was going through a breakup and he was sobbing. And I don't know his dynamic at home. But he asked me, Hey, Anthony, can you just hold me? Right? I told that story to a couple of people because I thought it was really I felt super honored by that. And they're like, Are you fucking kidding me? They're no exception to that. Your friends. Were like, I can't believe you did that. Did you really hug him? Oh, my God. Well, well, let me just really clarify. I

didn't just hug him. I spooned him on the table. That was essentially he was lying, fetal. Wow. Like, can you hold me?

Dr. Dana 38:26

I love this story. I do so.

Anthony Kar 38:30

So, you know, I was told I have Scorpio rising if you believe in astrology Scorpios. Can they work with the hardest of the populations? Right? Oh, I have no problem with holding people touching people engaging with people who would maybe like be abhorred by the rest of the population

Dr. Dana 38:51

that have seen it. Now again, you're given. You're giving me all kinds of insight that I sort of knew but didn't really know formally about you. And I again, one of the reasons why I respect you so much is because I feel the love that you bring into the world. I think it's very obvious, and I think other people do too. And it's such a rare commodity. I had an experience recently I've gone to a urologist who I really liked. He's really nice, man, super friendly and engaging. And after the visit, I we were sitting there I looked at him and I said, I really appreciate you. And he looked at me stunned. And this guy's my age in his late 60s. I don't think anybody has ever said that. They appreciated him as a person. They appreciate what he does. And I said to him, you know, I really appreciate what you're doing for me. But I also made sure that he understood that I appreciated him as a person because I the only people that I'm willing to see by enlarge are people that I feel a connection to. And I have a lot of medical people in my life sadly, but he was he didn't know what to do. with what I said to him, because I don't know that anybody ever acknowledges him as a person, they acknowledged him as a really good practitioner, but not as a, as a lovely, engaging person who seems to care about the people that he's working with. It's such a rare thing to experience especially, you know, again, I'm in a situation where I feel scared about whatever's happening in my body. And I need to feel not just that I'm a slab of meat on the table, but that the person that is trying to help me actually sees me as a person, and is willing to connect with me. And he actually said to me, I was joking with him while we were getting ready to do a rather humiliating procedure, which is common in the urology world. And I said to him, Look, I confessed already. We don't need to go through this. And he looked at me like what I said, I'm joking with you. I said, you know, most people don't joke when I'm going to do this.

Anthony Kar 40:53

I think as a practitioner, that, that reassures us that we're doing the right thing, right. And when you say things like that to practitioners, or people say that to me, like we're doing the right thing. I think that's really important. I think that's, that's one thing that really feeds my soul is not to be complimented, but to not be acknowledged. That Thank you, Anthony. You know, you heard me or you saw me or right, yeah. And you didn't try to change me or fix me or put you in whatever box Do you think I should be in? You? Let me be me.

41:27

Are there any people that do you get to a place with sometimes where you feel like I'm doing everything I can, and I can see that I haven't helped you as much as I would have hoped. Do you encounter situations like that?

Anthony Kar 41:38

Yeah. I mean, as you know, with you and me, I fired myself from you a few times. Yes. And so that's just knowing that you can't help people is goes a long way.

Dr. Dana 41:52

Yeah. It wasn't humiliating to be fired by you. Because I've come to the table recognizing that I'm a really difficult person to treat.

Anthony Kar 42:00

No, I didn't fire you. I fired myself.

Dr. Dana 42:02

Wow. Yeah, that's a nice way of saying to me, You know what, I really can't help you.

Anthony Kar 42:09

So effed up, I can't help you. Exactly. I'm turn it on myself. I'm gonna fire myself.

Dr. Dana 42:14

Luckily, we're friends. And so you can finish as much as you want. I don't take a personal that's pretty funny. So what else do you think is useful information? We still have a few minutes left about, again, that notion that somebody who's never seen doctor of oriental medicine or acupuncturist, or do you consider those to be one in the same?

Anthony Kar 42:37

It's just a abbreviations. Dr. Brody medicine just means you have a little bit more school knowledge or testing or paper writing. Okay, I am a licensed acupuncturist in state of California, right? My biggest teacher has been my practice. Okay. You know, like, in the beginning, as I am now, today, sometimes I think about writing every one letter that I saw in the beginning and apologizing,

Dr. Dana 43:04

because of how much more you know now, yes,

Anthony Kar 43:07

and how much how I know how I want to approach cases where people is completely different than I was then.

43:16

So if somebody wanted to know from you, how do I find somebody who's good at what you do? How does a person do that? I mean, I just did a podcast on what makes a good therapist and how to find a good therapist. But I don't know what the questions would be to ask somebody in your field. Same as

Anthony Kar 43:33

yours. I heard that podcast with you and Susan, okay. And it's word of mouth. Okay. Yeah. Because usually those people will spread the word of this is how Anthony practices and this is what I experienced with him. So that's the most effective way word of mouth. Yeah.

Dr. Dana 43:51

But what about if somebody doesn't know if they live in a community where they don't know anybody that has seen someone like yourself?

Anthony Kar 43:59

I usually recommend them calling them on the phone and doing a little mini interview on the phone. What kind of questions? So I have this problem? Have you ever treated it before? Do you have experience treating it? Or how long have you been in practice? Maybe maybe even like, where did you go to school? There's California some really, really good colleges here. A phone call and a mini consult? You know, I don't charge for that, you know, I just, I want to know what the person is coming in for before I actually see them. Okay. Because there's some things I will not treat

Dr. Dana 44:35

any red flags that might come up that a person would should notice. Stay away from that practitioner?

Anthony Kar 44:43

That's a good question.

Dr. Dana 44:44

I asked that question. Because again, in the name of couples counseling as an example, it's so rare for people ask me if I'm in a relationship, and how many times I've been married and how long and all of that, and I always think to myself, you're gonna put your relationship tripping my hands and you have no idea whether I'm even remotely capable of, of having my own in the first place,

Anthony Kar 45:07

right? No, it's super important, um, red flags. You look on the California Acupuncture Board website. Oh, okay. And there are judgments and like actions taken against her an acupuncturist. And so it's all listed there.

Dr. Dana 45:25

So that's the first. Like, that would be the major kind of first step, I guess, in a way is to make sure nobody has any strikes against them legal in a legal way.

Anthony Kar 45:36

Fortunately, where I am today, in my practice, most people come to me being referred by a handful of people already to me, right, like all through their, like their world, their diaspora, like, Yeah, three people told me that I should have, right. That's good advertising right there.

Dr. Dana 45:53

do recommend that people ever become a part of your profession to ever inspires people to become an acupuncturist as an example,

Anthony Kar 46:05

not not outwardly. But two people that I think of now, like my ex girlfriend, she's an acupuncturist in New York. Oh,

Dr. Dana 46:13

and this is someone that that I learned all about, or probably by through a relationship with you

Anthony Kar 46:18

in my relationship. Yeah. And also, this happens in your profession to patients. Yeah. patients benefit from it. And they go, I want to do this in the world, right? Yeah.

Dr. Dana 46:31

Is there a process where you can help people become licensed? Or is that more something that happens in a school environment?

Anthony Kar 46:38

So you go school environment, but you also do our internships, which is basically come to the clinic and do your intern hours there

Dr. Dana 46:47

to do that sort of thing in your office or not so much.

Anthony Kar 46:49

I've done observation, intern hours, but I don't, I don't have the bandwidth to actually take someone under my way. Right now.

Dr. Dana 46:59

I know you're super busy. I can't even imagine where you'd find time to do that.

Anthony Kar 47:02

I need to recharge

Dr. Dana 47:03

for sure. Yeah. What else is important about Anthony Clark?

Anthony Kar 47:08

I was thinking about this question, too. In that I am not perfect. I just want to say that right now I am. I don't want to pretend that I'm like, living on this super purist, self evolved platform. Right. I'm, I'm continuing to work every day. Not constantly. But you know, I put it out there that I want to better myself as a person. And how can I do that? For sure. But I have no illusions that I'm humble person, they have

Dr. Dana 47:36

a heart for you to consider yourself to be as important as I consider you to be.

Anthony Kar 47:40

Yeah, it's really hard to swallow. Like, I'm almost in tears right now. Thank you. Well, that's a good sign, actually. So yeah,

Dr. Dana 47:50

at least in my opinion, because it means you've retained your humility, despite being extremely successful. Have you won a few awards in our community? Yeah, I have. And you don't care about stuff like no,

Anthony Kar 48:01

like, even when I won Best acupuncturists, my patient who is a writer for the independent, I said, can I give it to the second can I give it to them? I don't want you know, I think why I'm really emotional right now too, is like I've I have experienced in this room and feeling stuff coming up from I'm sorry, being therapist by

Dr. Dana 48:27

you. So there are there are ghosts in this room. leftover from it's been many years. It has

Anthony Kar 48:32

probably been 1013 years since I've been in here, but yeah, yeah.

Dr. Dana 48:39

That's alright. Some people start crying just walking up the stairs. They don't even have to come in, in the room. And started

Anthony Kar 48:45

Dana, it started when I walked up the stairs. Yeah, no, seriously,

Dr. Dana 48:48

I saw that. I'm sorry. I usually joke with people that I wear onion cologne, and you know, it's just the way I smell. But when I go to Costco, the register the lady says me Oh, you're the Kleenex. Man. I know you. Because I think I buy more Kleenex than anybody and all Santa Barbara. Thanks, man. It's my it's my main, my main purchase.

Anthony Kar 49:17

I also have struggled with even saying that I'm humble saying that you're humble. Sometimes people say well, you're not humble. If you're saying that you're humble.

Dr. Dana 49:26

Well, I set it for you. Yeah, thank you. Because I see it.

Anthony Kar 49:32

And that's my struggle too. Right? Like I'm, I'm not that evolved where, you know, I feel like I'm doing everything right when I'm not so are you

Dr. Dana 49:41

able to let the love that your patients have for you? Can you let it in?

Anthony Kar 49:49

Actually do let that in. You know that that feeds me and and just reasserts that I'm doing the right thing for the community. Right? Yeah.

Dr. Dana 49:59

Because I Again, the people that you and I work with in common often tell me how much they love you and how much you've helped them and how much they appreciate it and so on and so forth. Because, you know, despite your quietness and your and your humility, people really feel seen and heard and connected, which I think is a miracle, and missing in so many people's lives, period.

Anthony Kar 50:24

I'm really honored by that.

Dr. Dana 50:26

Well, Anthony, it's really been a pleasure. Thank you so much for your willingness, despite the fact that I wish this was on video. So you could see the pain look on your face.

Anthony Kar 50:36

Like, using my knuckles.

Dr. Dana 50:40

This is like interview number of 65 or so. And I just feel so sad that I don't want you to feel miserable.

Anthony Kar 50:49

And my armpits are dripping sweat, right. Talk about fear. Yes. You got us in fear. Yeah, this is.

Dr. Dana 50:56

Well, thank you so much. Again, I really appreciate it. And I hope that the listening audience gets something out of this interview. And if anybody has any questions, I will in the show notes. Give the information that you need to get a hold of Anthony if, if that's okay with you.

Anthony Kar 51:13

Yeah, that's okay with me. Very good. Okay. Thanks, Anthony. Thanks, Tina.

Fear Me Out 51:19

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