

I'm an adolescent doctor. when I began in Adolescent

Medicine the first day someone sat me down and they gave

me some numbers and they gave me some numbers because those

numbers were designed to motivate me to do the right thing.

And what was the right thing I was supposed to do.

What I was supposed to do is I was supposed to listen very

very hard to people why because I learned that 80% of what

goes wrong in adolescence 80% of what kills teenagers is

completely preventable.

It's about car crashes.

It's about suicide.

It's about violence.

It's about Drugs, it was completely preventable.

I learned that half the kids who killed themselves have seen

a doctor in the previous month and a quarter within the previous

week. So what that meant is I was taught how to listen to

kids how to listen to kids really intensely to assess them

for their state of wrongness their state of danger and then

to tell them quickly with a few minutes.

I had why and how they should change do you think that works

right? It's intrinsically shameful people are not broken

and when we begin relationships with human beings from the

vantage point of trying to figure out how they're broken

were missing that potential to heal.

So more than anything.

I want to start out by saying our kids are not broken and

we are the ones who are positioned to move them forward and

how do we move them forward through relationship?

And I'm not just making this up we know this and let me just

pull in a couple models to tell you how we know this, but

first let's think about What our goal is?

Yeah, our goal for every kid in America is for them to become

a healthy 35 year old that's our goal.

Meaning that we can't have our foster parents think that

the goal because the kids have been through it that the goal

was to get them a point of not using drugs to get them to

a point of not having sex in an unhealthy way to get them

to a point of not going to prison.

That's not my goal.

That's not good enough for my kids is not good enough for

any kid the goal.

He said the ingredients within them to become healthy 35

year olds meaning I want them to be compassionate to empathetic

to look at another human being whose downtrodden and rather

than avert their eyes to be the ones who are going to reach

out and say brother.

Here's a hand by the way, is that not who our kids are our

kids are because they've been through it some of the most

compassionate people on Earth.

They come to Earth with a different kind of credential which

can change the world in many ways if we give in the opportunity

to all right, what else do we need for that?

35 year old to be we need them to be creative to be innovative.

We need them to be able to take constructive criticism.

We need them to have a collaborative spirit and we need them to

be resilient to be able to bounce back even when times are

difficult. So resilience is a movement.

That's about 60 years old now kind of shifting models from

thinking about what's wrong with people and what are the deficits in their lives versus what are the protective factors in their lives that are going to make a difference and potentially move them forward.

Heard lots of research on this.

Let me summarize it for you while standing on one foot here

is what it says to you what it says to you is that the kids

who make it are the kids who have had at least one adult

more is better who believe in them without condition and

to hold them to high expectations.

Who's that adult supposed to be supposed to be your parent

and when it is we are additive and when it's not we are critical

because to quote Jennifer parenting is not necessarily linked

by Logically, it is a way of being with a human being is

this human being in storage or are you parenting right?

So what does what does unconditional love mean to hold someone

to love someone unconditionally?

Is that like it's okay to do drugs know what it means is

I'm not going anywhere you can count on me.

And what does it mean to hold kids too high expectations

is it that I expect you to get good grades.

I expect you to get trophies.

I expect you to be able to make me proud by putting a bumper

sticker saying you're an honor student my card.

No.

High expectations is I see you I know who you are.

And I expect you to be that person.

So for those of us who have kids and raise them in a loving

way we knew who they were when they were three or four years

old. And we you know, my own girls who are my girls my girls

are the girls who when one of them they're twins when one

of them saw a chicken hanging out of a pot with the legs

hanging out when she was four years old and she came to me

and she said I'll be I don't understand did you know that

when some people are eating chickens, they're eating real

chickens. Why would they Do that don't they like chickens?

They're the girls who wouldn't let us turn off the lights

in the summertime because the malls were hanging around the

lights and they wanted to make sure that there were the malls

would get lost.

So we had to turn on the outside lights turn off the inside

lights and walk them out with tractor beam flashlights so

they could be with her mouth grandmas.

The most protective force in my children's life is the depth

and power of my love for them.

The fact that I really see them really know who they are

means that even when I have those moments where you want

to bring their neck and you're allowed to have those moments

you're not allowed to do but you're allowed to have those

moments. But even when I have those moments what I remember

is who they really are and they come back to me metaphysically

and spiritually and that's what good parenting is and that's

the essence of resilience.

That's it.

The rest is commentary.

That's 60 years of research.

Question is how do we get to know that I mean, how do we

do it?

Let's bring in another point of research which is trauma-informed

care. Are you guys up on the aces adverse childhood experiences

and what trauma does to people it blows your mind?

It is nothing short of astounding if we get into touch with

the science that's coming out and let me tell you the science

is coming out which I understand pretty well right now is

nothing compared to what there's going to be in five years

and nothing compared to what there's gonna be in 20 years.

But we know like we have never known in the history of humanity

is what is causing so many of the problems.

We have always known that the bodies come floating down the

river. We've never known why we've always known that it is

more likely that the bodies will come from the same family

that same family that's traumatizing and have another child

who was traumatized.

We've always known that we've always known the people who have suffered oppressive and racial Injustice have more problems, but we've never known why and now we do So here's what we know we started knowing this in 1998 when the first big study came out of 18,000 people that study asked a whole bunch of people about their health conditions.

Tell me do you have high blood pressure?

Are you obese?

Do you have have you had cancer have you broken bones?

Have you had osteoporosis have died?

How often do you get a common cold?

You have Lupus all those questions and then one step further.

Tell me about your health condition.

Tell me about your social.

And have you ever tried to commit suicide have you been in
prison? Have you been divorced or abandon a family and have
you used drugs and then went further than any study had ever
done? It's a tell me what happened to you and it asked of
some basic questions tell me we've been abused emotionally
sexually or physically tell me have you felt neglected tell
me did one or both of your parents experience incarceration
tell me did either of them use drugs did either of them have
a mental illness and if you ever witnessed domestic Violence
in your household and then what for each one you said?

Yes to you got a point and then what they looked at is the
difference in people at one point versus two point versus
three points versus 4 and above compared to zero now of the
childhood Aces there's a lot of stuff missing a lot of stuff
that study didn't do like racism like poverty like seeing

your brother get shot didn't test any of those things.

But here's what we learned if you had Was your to these conditions

then you are more likely to be engaged in drugs or go to

prison or abandon your family or can try to commit suicide

that surprise.

You know, that's what we expect.

You were more likely to be obese.

You're more likely to have heart disease to have high blood

pressure to have strokes.

You're more likely to have cancer more likely to have Lupus

more likely are brittle bones.

If you were abused as a child you were more likely are brittle

bones as a 70 year old woman.

This changes everything.

But that's not what humor to tell you.

I'm not here to bring you down.

I'm here to lift you up because here's what we also know.

We also know that those kids who had someone who is protective
in their lives.

Someone who stood by them look very much like everybody else.

So there's this amazing unless and that's why we're in this

room. I believe there's this amazing unless interest in the

science and why this unless happens, so I'm going to say

yes. Thank you.

So we all come from the jungle here.

I am in my jungle chair in the jungle.

The worst thing happened to me as a tiger can come and attack

me. What am I supposed to do is result.

I'm supposed to jump and to run my entire body is transformed

by a hormone called adrenaline that hormone does all sorts

of things to me like it gets the blood to my butt which is

my jumping muscle away from my belly, which is what butterflies

are cool.

Then your heart pumps really fast and then you sweat right

so you can cool off and your pupils get big why so you can

See you in the dark, even if the tiger's chasing and you

can't think clearly when you're being chased.

Why because you're not supposed to you're not supposed to

turn to the tiger and say let's work it out you and me.

All right, so you're supposed to run and when you do run

then what happens is the adrenaline courses through your

body and it looks but sometimes stressors are not tigers

that come into our lives and leave sometimes stressors are

racism homophobia.

Our child abuse starvation and when you're stressor is like

that and you are in your jungle chair.

You can't just jump and run.

You have to be ready to jump in any direction at any moment

and you have to remain hyper-vigilant at any moment because

you never know where the Tigers going to come from.

So you need a different set of hormones because if I'm ready

to jump at any moment, what do you think?

My blood pressure needs to be high or low?

Hi, anyone know what the hormone is that keeps your blood

pressure high?

The hormone of chronic stress it's cortisol.

Okay, it's cortisol.

We have a right answer in the corner and she's proud.

Okay, so it's cortisol.

And what cortisol does is it changes your endocrine system

it changes your meaning your glands so that the hormones

that you need that regulate what you eat what you drink how

much salt changes for a lifetime?

Okay, because you have needed in early childhood to be able

to jump at any moment.

It changes your brain structures.

So that that part of your brain that keeps you hyper-vigilant

and always in fear, which is called your amygdala has been

changed for your life, which is why people been traumatized

are always a little bit more reactive or might be a little

bit more reactive.

They needed to be to stay alive.

It changes the part of your thinking the part of your brain

that helps you think the part of your brain that helps you

integrate information.

It changes everything.

It's a very very big deal.

But oh and and why do you get so you know when you're going

to eat more you're going to get diabetes that's going to

lead to high blood pressure Strokes.

It all makes sense.

But when you what have if you go to have a rash and you go

to the pharmacy and you ask for something, what do they give

you? Hydrocortisone because it's an immune suppressant.

It's an immune suppressant.

And as a result when you are bathed in an immune suppressant

during your whole childhood, then what happens is your immune

system is going to be tamped down which is going to cause

autoimmune diseases like lupus or cancers later because it's

cancers are controlled by your immune system.

Okay, or when cancer is get away.

All right.

Let me tell you something else scientifically that is amazing

and frightening.

If we're really going to change a child's life, we have to

start about a hundred years before they're born.

So let's start that so the changes that we do make in people's

lives are really changing Generations why this makes no sense

and I'll tell you why it does.

Genetics are very simple.

You receive a set of genes from your parents each of your

parents and what I color you have depends on what I colors

they have but now there's a new field called epigenetics.

Have you heard of this epigenetics is where the science is

now. So yes, you receive jeans, but you have so many genes

inside you that they can have you handle all sorts of different

circumstances and what gets turned on or what gets expressed

is depending on what circumstance you need in order to survive.

That's Gets expressed now, which means that if you needed

to be hyper-vigilant, if you need it to be able to run if

you could never feel safe you need to have the genes expressed

in your lifetime that kept your cortisol.

Hi what we now know that we've never known is that the genes

that get expressed in your life for more likely to be passed

along to your children.

So this is epigenetics.

So when we protect a child, we are protecting the Next Generation

and the Next Generation.

What about that grandmother?

Who is that?

Mother or foster parent or Aunt or Uncle who is doing the

real parenting?

So what's happening?

Is that as I'm getting ready to jump as I'm getting ready

to jump if my grandmother says hey Ken, don't worry about

it. I got you covered here.

I'm watching out for you.

You're safe.

If I'm worried about your dad.

You're going to know it then what that means is I'm borrowing

her cortisol.

I'm borrowing her cortisol.

Literally her hyper-vigilance her attention.

Her love protects me from needing to disrupt my brain regulation

my brain formation and my endocrine system.

And that is the Power of Love That is the power of love and

the question now becomes unless until when I what point is

a no longer protective to your brain and genetics and nobody

knows. I don't know nobody knows.

But I swear before God that I am sure you can heal a teenager.

I don't know that I can change their genetics, but I know

I can change their behavior.

And I know I can change how they raise their child.

What is love love to me.

He's seeing someone as they deserve to be seen.

As they really are not based on the behaviors that they're displaying. That's what love is the most protective thing in a human beings life has to be seen to be known to be valued not to be judged by your behaviors.

Right, but to really be understood and that is a gift beyond measure. So, how are we going to judge our success?

This is hard stuff to measure hard stuff to know but I really think that what we're trying to do if we're going to change the world for these kids and their children and their grandchildren to come then we have to understand what we're really doing when we are parenting again parenting not being biological meaning that level of protection for human beings.

What we're really doing more than anything else.

He's making a human being understand that they're worthy

of being loved.

And the other thing that I think we're doing beyond anything

else is helping that same human being understand that even

if in their life, they learned that adults were not worthy

of being trusted there actually are adults that are worthy

of being trusted and that enables them to feel again and

to connect again and because connection is the most powerful

protection a human being will ever have it is a gift beyond

measure. Thank you guys, and thank you for the work you do.