

ADDICTION

SUMMIT



Why We Have an Addiction Crisis!

Guest: Dr. Chris Meletis

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Dr. Paul Thomas: Welcome to another episode of the Addiction Summit. I'm Dr. Paul, your host. And it's my pleasure today to introduce to you a very good friend of mine. Dr. Chris Meletis and I go way back. We've been cruising the Portland's vicinity for a couple of decades or longer. We're not going to give out how old we are. But this is an individual I would absolutely go to if I needed anything. Or if I was in crisis, you would be my guy.

Dr. Meletis is an educator, a physician, an author. He has written 16 books and published over 200 articles. I don't know when you sleep, although I just found out that you don't sleep. We talked a little bit before we got going here.

And his personal mission is "changing the world's health one person at a time." And if you were ever lucky enough to be connected to Dr. Meletis, you'll know what I'm talking about and that that mission is really his life. He is an amazing individual. We are so blessed to have you on this show. Thank you for being with us.

Oh, I forgot to mention you were seven years in charge of the Naturopathic College here in Portland, Oregon. And I just can't even list all the other things you're doing with your life.

Dr. Meletis: Like I told my patients, I was institutionalized for seven years.

Dr. Thomas: Institutionalized.

Dr. Meletis: As a Dean. I have one to qualify that, as the Dean.

Dr. Thomas: Well, then you belong with an addiction summit.

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: I know we're very fortunate to have you on this summit. I was wondering for starters, maybe just to kick this off. You've been in primary care medicine for about 25 years or so. Share with us your thoughts about why we're seeing more addiction in the world than in your practice.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. So over the last 25 years, I've seen young, old, conservative, non-conservative, religious, non-religious. Everybody is suffering from some level of addiction, anxiety, depression. And it's becoming rapid.

A few years ago, during the summer, the news stations were reporting there's more anti-anxiety, anti-depression meds being prescribed in the summer. And during the holiday season, the winter seasons, it's kind of gloomy. We understand that we have to deal with family, some of which we don't want to deal with. But they're still family so we get together with them. But during the summer, this is supposed to be when it's wonderful, summer.

Dr. Thomas: Right. It's warm. You're relaxing. You shouldn't be stressed.

Dr. Meletis: And so I'm seeing a lot of trends. You, of course, have seen the trend towards autism. Autism when my children were born—I'm going to date myself a little bit—were one in 500. Now what is it? It's like rampant.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah. One in 58, the new CDC data. And that was for children born in 2002.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. So, 10 times worse. So we think gut. We think brain, psychoneuroimmunology—fancy word. But the fact is our gut goes with GMOs, processed foods, arsenic in the chicken supply.

We're not fueling ourselves. And I remember—dating myself again—1970s, “You are what you eat from your head to your feet.” And we're eating stuff that wasn't designed for human beings. Our ancestors never ate them. And as a result, we're not functioning very well. We're toxic. Our guts are messed up. Our brains are messed up. We'll talk probably today, hopefully, about gluten.

It's like, wow. And we're stressed out. I often tell my patients—because I have my cell phone and I travel a lot lecturing and I used to be healthier and younger and had hair, and I've seen we're suffering from connectivity.

We have excess connectivity. We don't have enough time enjoying nature, looking at the greenery, connecting with the earth. And even Stephen Sinatra, an MD cardiologist, was discussing in Florida, right before I did a big lecture, a thousand of medical doctors, that we need our earth or ground ourselves. We're wearing rubber shoes. And my boys—20 and 24—have never been stung by a bee. Every summer I would step on the clover, running around my backyard as a kid, there was a bee.

Dr. Thomas: You were stung.

Dr. Meletis: Yes. And I regret stepping on the bees not because I'm hurt. But, I mean, poor bees. But it was like, wow.

Dr. Thomas: We're not barefoot. We're not touching the earth. We're completely connected to cell phones.

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: I was going to tell you just this last week—I'm a pediatrician as well as an addictionologist. And you do family medicine, I think, correct?

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: So, we're seeing kids, adults. Everybody's stressed out. This last week, I had four teenagers so stressed out that they were failing in school, couldn't pay attention, and were actually— they were a mess. They were in trouble. And dig a little deeper, and their actual challenge was too much screen time. They were spending six to eight hours a day on school nights and nonstop on the weekends.

Why do you think that is? What's that doing to them that's sort of destroying their health and wellbeing?

Dr. Meletis: Great question. I also, this week, got notified that person with two initials, minor, was at a crisis center trying to have—just committed a suicide on Xanax, on marijuana cannabis version, and couple other things. And he was dissociating.

But I think that's really—we're connected but disconnected from our fellow human beings. And as a result, we don't know how to communicate. We don't know how to talk. And there's an article that came out about a year ago showing we actually learn still better through books, paper, touching, not the screen.

But when I was lecturing down in Florida, I talked about how likely would you or I be able to train all of humanity to use their non-dominant hand. So if you're a righty, what's the likelihood I could train everybody to use their right hand? If you're a lefty, what's the likelihood I could tell everybody that's left handed, "Use your right hand for 15 minutes a day"?

Compliance is hard. It's hard for us. And staying healthy and doing all these stuff, it's like. I said, we're already doing it. Our kids are being trained with those opposable thumbs to use their non-dominant hand quicker than I can even imagine—because I'm still a plugger on my screen.

And so what happens is if I'm a right-handed person, I'm getting my left finger going. And it's triggering maybe some of my right cortex, which otherwise wouldn't have been stimulated so much. I think there's going to be a lot of things we learn. We know about the EMF fields, electropollution. And I think we're going to learn also that we're retraining our brains to do things that aren't necessarily good for us. And there was a study showing way back when and lots chiropractic neurologists will say, "Did you ever stand in a bouncy chair? Or did you ever use a little walker?" So if you did that before you crawled, you cross-trained your brain the wrong way.

Dr. Thomas: That's what happened to my cameraman, one of my kids. He jumped and jumped forever. I think he crawled first, though. Maybe I'm okay.

So for the viewers, you are listening to something here, and you're going, "What does this have to do with me, maybe?" Hopefully, you're getting something throughout this summit that we're touching on. And that is there's this whole spectrum that occurs. When I have my parents walk in with their kids and they're holding a bag of fishies, they're not real fish.

Dr. Meletis: I know what they are.

Dr. Thomas: They're gluten, right? We're going to get to that. And then I'll have a different parent comes in, and they've got chopped fruits and

vegetables. That's the beginning of an addictive thing that I want you to touch on with food.

And then we give them their smartphones, and they're getting addicted to screens. And all of this is doing something to dopamine and what else in the brain. Maybe speak a little bit about—and so remember, when we talk about food, when we talk about screens, we'll get to the opiates and the alcohol and all of that. But this is the foundation, I think, that's sort of setting up our kids. Speak more about—

Dr. Meletis: Well, it's kind of like Hansel and Gretel. They wander around in the forest, and they get deeper and deeper. But because we're so stuck in technology, we lose our breadcrumbs really quickly. I have little two-year-olds coming in that can actually work their mom's and dad's phones, which their parents are very proud of. Like, "Wow, they figured it out." Not necessarily a good thing.

And I'm not against technology. I'm not a luddite. But, once again, this is not something that humanity's ever had before. So we're training our brain. We're getting constant feed. And to date myself, even though I wasn't around when these shows—but there used to be radio shows. In fact, there's *War of the Worlds*, where Orson Welles talked about how we were being attacked by, my belief, as Martians.

And well, when I was a child, I would listen to a radio program on the radio, and you would actually have to paint your own story. The stories are being pre-painted for us. The videos now that kids are doing, the gaming, all these are desensitizing and blowing brain chemistry.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah. So it's constant stimulation of the brain. And when our brains get stimulated, is it a little burst of dopamine? What do you think is going on there? And are we depleting neurotransmitters?

Dr. Meletis: I'm glad you brought up dopamine. Dopamine is, of course, one of our major addictive faux pas. And if you're a nail-clicker or a skin picker or a hair twirler or we can go to other kinds of addictive, OCD-type behaviors, you're self-stimming.

And so then we go to other things, the different kinds of medications and so forth and opioid receptors, which we'll talk about. And so it's like, okay, you

have these kids. They need all this stim. And then later on, they need more stim and something even more enticing, more awakening, more thrilling. And then we become a junkie to our own adrenaline.

Dr. Thomas: Right. If I'm reading you right, this whole process—people talk about, “Marijuana is a gateway to heavier addictions.” How about that junk food we're eating, those cell phones we're spending too much time on? They're just as much a gateway. Because, like you were mentioning, we're overstimulating the dopamine. And when you deplete it and you stop that stimulation, what do you feel like?

Dr. Meletis: Withdrawals. In fact, I wake up in the morning, I have to fight, don't pick up my smartphone. We're not talking as a doctor like, “Did I miss a call?” I wonder what's happening on social media, I wonder what has happen to the world. Excess connectivity again.

And you mentioned the little Goldfish. Well, these chairs that we're sitting on in my office here, well, they have plenty of Goldfish smeared. And just recently I had a little boy come in experiencing autistic spectrum. And there are Goldfish tricks—this was the first visit. I've not had my visit with them yet. And everything was sticky and everything. I'm going, this child's having problems. So we were having this conversation with the mom about gluten and dairy. I said they cross-react. There's a cross-activity at the receptor level that affects our brain.

And right before we started talking today, we're talking about how there's—if you were to just Google “gluten psychosis,” just literally put in “gluten psychosis,” there are medical journal articles showing that gluten actually can lead—in non-celiac patients, these are just people that are sensitive. They're having neurological problems. They might not have any kind of—gluten doesn't bother me. I can eat gluten. My tummy doesn't hurt. They're having neurological issues. And gluten and dairy—casein particularly, a protein in dairy—cross-reacts.

And now, we're also—you and I are made of trillion of cells. Our audience is made of trillion of cells. Of course, as a pediatrician, you saw little babies, six pounds or less, eight pounds. And now as they grow older, and you saw my children, they get bigger. And they are what they eat. So are we made of little

Goldfish? And I'm not picking on Goldfish. It could be anything. It could be Wheat Thins. It could be McDonald's. It could be Burger King.

Dr. Thomas: Bread, pasta.

Dr. Meletis: It could be anything. And the fact is, if I offered you as a parent of many children, and I say, "I can get you a really good deal on gasoline so you can drive your kids around." And let's pretend you have a minivan, okay? We're giving you \$0.99 gas. And you go, "\$0.99 gas, what are we, in 1970s?"

Dr. Thomas: Take it. Yeah.

Dr. Meletis: Take it. Sold. Or you ponder and tell the wife, "Hey, I got \$0.99 gas." And she's going to probably say, "What's wrong with that gas?" When we're driving along, and we see, "Oh, look it, there's a place where we can stop and get a bargain."

Dr. Thomas: A \$0.99 burger.

Dr. Meletis: And it's not a bargain when we pay for our health. And so, our brain and our gut play a definite role. And because we have chlorinated water, fluorinated water, we have herbicides and pesticides that kill bad things like beetles and other things. And if they can kill things with hard shells, think they can kill the cells in our body? And we won't even go, necessarily today, into the whole genetically modified kind of foods, which are the Frankenfoods, as I call them.

So it's like, wow, we're just no longer in Kansas. We're no longer in *Little House on the Prairie* days.

Dr. Thomas: So you've touched on two big things I want our audience to—you're going to hear this over and over again through this summit. And it's only because it's so important. And that is the cellular thing that's happening with dopamine that we're triggering with gluten, we're triggering with casein. They're actually morphine-like receptors they're activating.

Dr. Meletis: Yes, they are.

Dr. Thomas: So if you're an opioid addict, now, that's full on opiate receptor. But it's just a little boost of it with your gluten or your casein, right? And then

you moved into something that I want to stay a little more on. And that's the gut.

Dr. Meletis: Please. Yes.

Dr. Thomas: So the GMOs where they modify the foods so they can spray the fields with pesticides and herbicides that get in to that food that we eat, which is everything made from corn, soy, wheat, sugar. It has these pesticides and herbicides in them that, like you said, will kill bugs. What are they doing to our intestines and how does that affect our brain?

Dr. Meletis: Interesting. Well, when we alter our microbiome—the fancy word for the community down there—we're wiping out our friendly bacteria. You and I know as providers, we can write a prescription for an antibiotic. And if we write a prescription for an antibiotic, we're actually going to see that it's going to disturb the GI tract. We can cause diarrhea. We can cause yeast infections.

But now, when I eat processed foods, bad foods, you mentioned the beetle. Here's some celery. Here are some veggies. And like my sister, she would actually feed her children whole tomatoes. They'd come to our house and there's a tomato, they will eat that like an apple. Whereas other people like, "Okay, here's a goodie. Here's processed foods."

But now we're feeding our microbiome. So think of it like little Pac-men and women. They are down there like little fledgling birds eating whatever we eat. And there's as many of them—or there should be, about a hundred trillion of them—as there are cells in our body. We know that the gut produces upwards of 70% to 80% whole body serotonin levels, which is happiness, calm, relax, neuro-inhibitory, and just contentment.

And I think of the drugs, the SSRIs, the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors. I won't mention any of them, but we all know what they are. And we actually say, "Well, what's going on there? Are we working on our gut or are we working on our brain?" So taking care of the gut.

And upwards of 60% of the neurotransmitter dopamine is also in our gut. And if any of us have a tummy ache, a flu, and you ask, "How do you do? How are you feeling?" "I'm miserable. I think I'm dying." You're virtually willing to do anything to get out of that pain. And pain and inflammation are terrible.

In fact, neuroinflammation in the European literature, for now over a decade, they talked about inflam-aging that we're prematurely aged. I think we all grew up, all the audience, and said, "Hey, when you get old, you'll know how I feel." Your body is going to start hurting. "Okay, yeah. No, no. We're young. We're going to feel great."

But once again, I have high schoolers from a very high or upper middle class neighborhood here, which actually come in with all these addictions. And it comes down to a term that I think you and I really can appreciate, and I hope the audience does too. It's called epigenetics.

So there's a saying—I forgot the political correctness, "Genetics loads the gun. Diet and lifestyle pull the trigger." So whether that was cell phones or whether there are the EMF fields, whether it is the fact that you have other stressors. And that also includes, what was your mother's stressor?

When I was on board and my mom was adopted from Nazi Germany in 1944, she was in an orphanage with bombs going off.

Dr. Thomas: High stress.

Dr. Meletis: And I was an egg within her, unrealized as she was a little baby. And so, now, the research shows that even that impact impacted. Then the challenge of that on her journey—and it wasn't until she was 50 years old that she went back to Germany, found her biological parents, which answered a lot of the genetic side of things, but the epigenetics of that stress.

So, one of things, if an audience member was born without an emotional silver spoon in their mouth—we hear the term silver spoon. "Okay, I was born into a well-to-do family. I didn't have to want for naught. I got my designer clothes," right? Well, if you are not born with the emotional silver spoon in your mouth, you're fed. But a kid is to be seen and not heard and just go along and come back and get some food if you're lucky. Then for the rest of your life your adrenals, your cortisol levels and your emotional responsiveness and also your ability to nurture your own children is changed at a physiological level, what's called neuroendocrine hormone brain component.

So we got our messed up gut. We got our messed up hormones. And we have all this stress. We're no longer in Kansas. You'll hear me say this again and again. We're no longer in the *Little House on the Prairie* days.

Dr. Thomas: So that's the bad news. We have another whole episode that deals with epigenetics. So stay tuned. Check that out. But surely, you're not saying I'm doomed because I had a lot of stress when I was a kid or I was even abused.

My grandmother, oh my, maybe—I had great grandparents. But people have—I'm just trembling as I hear all these things you're saying. I'm thinking I'm doomed.

Dr. Meletis: No. Life is full of hope. And where you have faith, there is always hope. You got to just believe that you can be the agent of your own change. Never accept whatever the current story is, half- full or half-empty.

And I have patients all the time, they come in with terrible stories of abuse and challenges. You wonder how they even show up to life. But they've taken charge. They feed themselves with positivity. And they also feed their bodies. They get their microbiome balanced. They avoid the gluten and the processed foods.

It was actually EnvironmentalWorkingGroup.org (EWG.org), a not for profit. And they have the Dirty Dozen foods and the 15 Clean. Not everybody can buy fancy, organic foods all the time.

Dr. Thomas: Check that out if you need some help in figuring out which foods are the worst, right, the Dirty Dozen. And which ones are the safest ones that you could actually buy non-organic would be okay.

Dr.Meletis: Yes. So once again, making choices. And so epigenetics, some of that occurred when we were pre-aware. We didn't have a choice. Now, we have a choice.

We can choose today, this very moment, what are we going to eat; what are we going to put in through our mind, is going to be the news and as a song went—I think it was back in the '70s—I have a bad memory when it comes to songs. But there was a song that talked about a reporter. And she could tell you about a plane crash with a gleam in her eye. And this is what we are being fed with. All this negativity on the news, the news channels, social media, people are being mean. And the reality is we focus around surrounding yourself with better people.

It's actually Warren Buffett which challenged people, hang around with people that are what you perceived better than you, and you'll be drawn towards them. And with addiction and a stress that leads one to finally succumb to needing to medicate and self-medicate, it's like, wow. I need to create an environment, an ecology for my body, which is epigenetics.

So you create your future by being around positive, loving, caring people. For all my patients with addictions, they have to say goodbye to the people that are not able or willing to go with them on that journey because you have to break some of those ties. Because otherwise, it's just—life gets a little stressed. It's like driving down the road here in Oregon after the winter, and there's a rut on the road from where the trucks have their chains. It's like you have fall back into it.

So you create your own epigenetics with a healthy diet, the healthy lifestyle, not get into the newsfeeds. And getting rid of or, as they say, unfriending the friends which you thought were your friends, but they're only social media friends and are really kind of downers. That's epigenetics. Taking charge.

Dr. Thomas: That's the piece. Thank you for that clarification. Don't get hung up on epigenetics. You're in charge. It is taking charge of your entire world starting with your food, making sure you're getting your nutrients. And I'm going to ask you—actually let me ask you now, what would be the key nutrients that you think people might be missing?

Dr. Meletis: Wow. Okay. So assuming they don't have a leaky gut and assuming they have healthy microbiome, we see these commercials on television, "Take this and you'll not have constipation." A good probiotic is more than just GI health. It's brain health. Leaky gut, leaky brain, leaky cells; phenomenal books out there. So you have to take care of the gut. So good probiotic foods, if you're not going to take supplement.

Dr. Thomas: What foods are good probiotic foods?

Dr. Meletis: Things like kefir and some yogurt since I'm assuming you're not allergic to dairy. And I think both you and I are very familiar with testing people for overt allergies and sensitivities. So I'm a big proponent that everybody should find out in the buffet of life. And just down the street from us is a very vegetable—how would I put it. There's a restaurant. It's a buffet of vegetables. And I will do it without naming it. And in that buffet, you might be

able to put some hard-boiled egg, some cauliflower, some peas, some carrots. But if you knew that carrots weren't your friend and you should not be eating carrots, then you say, "I'm not going to put carrots on my salad."

So on the buffet of life, you want to know, is this also good for my immune system because inflammation will cause a problem. So, with what a person takes—most people and, as they say, upwards of 90% of the US population is deficient in one or more nutrients.

Dr. Thomas: Yes. Which are the key ones that most people are missing?

Dr. Meletis: I think vitamin D. Vitamin D without question. If you think about going outside, you find a mud puddle you can drink. You might not want to. You go outside you get free air. And it's so important that our body actually creates vitamin D. It's a freebie.

And when you have things naturally made as freebies—think B-vitamins. B-vitamins are known as stress vitamins. I routinely ask my patients, "Are you recalling your dreams at least twice a week?" And often, they are like, "Why would I do that?" When we're kids, we often will remember our dreams, right?

And I'm saying, "Well, that's how you defrag your hard drive. Otherwise, you carry yesterday into today, and today into tomorrow, in terms of all those things we that haven't filed away—the interactions, positive and negative, the worries, we carry it. So dreaming is a way which we process—not to sound too Freudian—our stuff.

Dr. Thomas: Does that have to do with B-vitamins?

Dr. Meletis: Yes, B-vitamins. Invariably, all patients come out, and I'm going say, "I am going to give you the least expensive entrance to movie of your own mind."

Dr. Thomas: Wow. Now, I've shared with the audience, I overdid it with alcohol. I'm an alcoholic. I've got 15 years of no drinking. I've been a member of the 12-step program that helped me in that journey.

If you're getting off of a substance, there are some times of amazing, scary, vivid dreams. But beyond that, I hadn't made that connection with B-vitamins.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. And they'll email me or message me and say, "You were right. They are weird." And a husband and wife, they actually—she never dreamt. She is an executive; very, very busy woman, travelling a lot. And she actually dreamt about being in Mexico, her husband thrown in prison, and being stuck down there with her husband in prison. Strangely enough, that night, her first dream, her husband was also having that same dream. He's never been in prison. But it's like, "Okay, this is really weird."

And then we think about the other micronutrients, things like chromium. And so, generally, a nice multivitamin is great. It's a foundation. And then the question is what quality of multivitamin, because there is a lot of junk out there. And some of the most popular or the most commonly prescribed ones, as the advertisements say like, "Oh my goodness, you get some titanium dioxide. You get some of that aluminum you didn't necessarily want, yellow and blue colors."

Dr. Thomas: Aluminum dyes. So I'm hearing definitely vitamin D, at least a B-complex. Do you think it's important to have methyl folate as opposed to regular folic acid?

Dr. Meletis: That's a good point. Now let's chat with the audience about that. So, we know that when a woman is pregnant, a prenatal will have folic acid in it. I will give you an example, myself. I cannot convert folic acid into the methylenetetrahydrofolate, MTHF, you're just mentioning. In fact, I'm doubly mutated.

Dr. Thomas: You're a mutant?

Dr. Meletis: I'm a mutant.

Dr. Thomas: I am, too. So you are, too, by the way. We're all mutants. When we do an elaborate assessment of your single nucleotide polymorphisms, we all have some. You are just doubly blessed with one of the most problematic ones. So tell us more about why that's so important not just for you but for probably 50% of people walking the earth.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. And so this mutation of not converting folic acid into MTHF makes me more likely have mental health issues, schizophrenia, abnormal pregnancies, if I was a woman. But my children even will get my mutation so hydrocephalus, of course schizophrenia, all because of this mutation.

The thing is you were talking about epigenetics and, Oh my goodness, I don't even want to know my genes.

Dr. Thomas: Doomed. I'm doomed.

Dr. Meletis: I'm doomed. You just merely take methyl folate. And once again epigenetics is solved. Empowered, solved. Here's your problem. Here's your splinter. Remove the splinter. Or in this case, on a regular basis, take your MTHF, methyl folate, and you've addressed that problem.

Dr. Thomas: And avoid regular folate, right?

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: If you get cheap multivitamins that have just says folic acid or folate. It does not say methyl folate.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. And if it doesn't say methyl folate, it's not worth taking, in my opinion, unless you know you have zero mutation. But my mutation actually puts me at a conversion rate of less than 60%.

So I would have to be eating vegetables all day long to even come close. And we know that the average American does not eat their five to seven servings of fruits and veggies, let alone good ones, nutritious ones.

Dr. Thomas: Right. You would need organic, green, leafy veggies to get enough folate from your diet.

Dr. Meletis: Yes. I would have to be—they're at the trough all day munching on and crunching. And you'll probably get some TMJ then. Nothing against vegans and vegetarians. God bless them.

Dr. Thomas: So to wrap up what to eat and then what to take to supplement your nutrients, because these are keys. This is foundation of getting back to health. And if you're struggling with an addiction but you don't fix the foundation, I think you're going to just be anxious. It's going to be hard.

Dr. Meletis: No, it's going to be hard. It's an uphill battle. You level the playing field. Then you can build a beautiful future for yourself and liberate yourself. Because if you're listing like a ship, okay, well, we need to balance things out. And that's nutritional, the B-vitamins, the vitamin D.

We know vitamin D—if you're to go to the Linus Pauling Institute, which is a not-for-profit at a local Oregon state university school, they actually will talk to you about vitamin D. Just go to their website, and you'll see vitamin D for blood sugars, vitamin D for immune system and autoimmunity and depression. And it's like, wow.

Dr. Thomas: We have VDR receptors on our immune cells, on our brain cells, almost everywhere.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. Vitamin D receptors all throughout the body. And so as a result, I think those are the big ones. The other gene I tell to people to really measure, especially if they have an anxious kind of addiction, is Catechol-O-methyltransferase, COMT.

And COMT is one that you're more likely to be brighter than average people you're hanging with. But you're also more likely to hear the voices of, I say the devil-angel conversations, which is a tremendous burden for anybody, let alone if you have a family history or personal history of addiction, the voices are loud

Dr. Thomas: I'm watching this and that's me, what do I do about it?

Dr. Meletis: Well, get tested for—identify your problems. Identify the nature of your splinter.

Dr. Thomas: How do I get tested?

Dr. Meletis: There are lots of gene centers that are available. I don't want to promote any of them. But you just get them online. And you can say that you want to measure for COMT and MTHF gene mutation at the very least because you just nourish yourself.

But you also, if you have COMT gene mutation, there are some arguments that you shouldn't take the natural supplement quercetin, which is good for allergies.

Dr. Thomas: Interesting.

Dr. Meletis: And so I was like, okay. Well, there are certain foods I should or shouldn't eat. And so it's like, "Okay, I want to nourish my body. Plus I need to make sure I am more zen-ed out, more meditative and prayerful." Because

if I have that COMT enzyme, once I get going, I'm going to be gone for three to five times longer than my friend. I'm like, okay, that really bothered me, yeah. And you're still going after because that adrenaline levels are still going. But whenever we have an emotional response; fun, sad, whatever, it's taking brain chemistry. And we're not able to replenish our brain chemistry, or we blow through the COMT enzyme or the MTHF reductase gene enzyme. We're sort of behind the 8-ball.

But once again, is that depressing? No. You find the nutrients. You address the nutrients. And then all of a sudden, your burden for your entire life has been largely addressed.

Dr. Thomas: So I want to help our viewers who don't have the means to go get all these testing done. And if you such—you have such experience with this area of medicine, if you have your relatives and your best friends who couldn't afford to do the testing, but you suspect based on these things we talked about, you and I both have the MTHF and the COMT.

We have those spinning minds and—I've found most of those addicts, if you're addicted to something, you're probably very bright. You may have suppressed that brilliance with all the addictive stuff we get into because it's so distressing to be. But anyway, just some practical tips. I don't have the money to do the testing. You mentioned of maybe avoiding quercetin. What else?

Dr. Meletis: Well, taking the methyl folate. Taking some vitamin D, once you talk to your provider. Any conventional healthcare provider can measure your vitamin D levels. Insist on it. It's your body.

You want to know what those levels are. Their ranges are 30 to 100. I like to see a people right around 55, thereabouts. And remember, it's doing all kinds of other things. But it's going to allow your hormones to work.

And people forget vitamin D is a hormone. It's a vitamin, and it's a hormone. It's made from cholesterol just like your stress hormones. And you mentioned, what else should we do? We need to stop spending so much energy being on all the time.

Dr. Thomas: Perfect. We're eating real food. We're getting our nutrients. And don't forget vitamin D. I've tested thousands of patients on vitamin D, and I

know you have to. And I rarely find anybody over 30. They're usually in the single digits or teens, unless they're supplementing.

So I've used the rule of thumb, if you're an adult, you can probably safely take 5000 international units and not get in trouble. Have you seen anybody get in trouble for taking that much?

Dr. Meletis: I have not. Of course, from that whole 'everybody is different' perspective, I'd say the government—for lack of a better word—their studies say 2000 is the max. I routinely have my patients on 5000. But what's nice is there are laboratories that will measure your vitamin D without even a healthcare provider's order. You can actually become an empowered consumer.

Dr. Thomas: And it's not that expensive. So if you go on a higher dose, 5000 or more—don't go over 10,000—and you should just check.

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: Check your levels. Make sure you're in that 50 to 60 range. It's nice in the middle of an optimal level.

So we've got real food going. We're avoiding the foods that are toxic to us. And we alluded to but didn't quite tell them what to do. How do we figure out what foods we're sensitive to eat?

Dr. Meletis: Well, you can do, for those people who are really on a tight budget, elimination challenge. Go on a really miniscule diet; rice, chicken, fish—organic chicken, of course. And just keep a super—

Dr. Thomas: Just that?

Dr. Meletis: Just that.

Dr. Thomas: Rice, chicken, and fish, folks. How long?

Dr. Meletis: Maybe a week or two.

Dr. Thomas: And then what do we do?

Dr. Meletis: And water, of course, and your vitamins. Don't stop your meds. And then you've cleaned things out. In fact, a lot of my patients, once they hit 50, they get their colonoscopy, and they have to slurp down that stuff and

then purge the system and then lose all their modesty when they go in and get scoped. They say, “I feel so great.” It’s called a cleanse.

And you’re familiar with intermittent fasting. And the whole concept is, if we have less burden to our body and we are reabsorbing muddy water, pun intended, we’re not full of it. I tell everybody, “You need to have two to three bowel movements a day.” And they say, “What?” I had one woman that said, “About every two or three weeks, I have bowel movement.” I’m going, “What? Wait a minute.”

Dr. Thomas: That’s not enough.

Dr. Meletis: Not enough. You are reabsorbing muddy water, your toxins, your pollutants. And your microbiome is not good. So you want to do the simple things like Benjamin Franklin said, “A penny saved is a penny earned.”

Don’t worry about things. Find a mindfulness, a faith, a belief system that works for you. Let it go. And the chatter of “I could’ve, I should, I would’ve,” that’s where, of course, some of these 12 steps you make resolutions. And you put that to bed and then leave it be.

You cannot undo the past. You can’t rewind things. And this very moment, as we’re talking, the next step for each of us is a bold, new step. What we do for the rest of the day is full of opportunity. And we leave the past behind. It’s a 20-20 hindsight. We all have it. We can all beat ourselves up.

Forgive yourself. That’s one of the biggest problems that we have is we’re always trying to make everybody happy. But making ourselves happy while taking care of our responsibilities allows you to recharge your batteries.

So most of us, when we look at our health savings account or credits, we’re given 100 points of credit per day to spend. We are minus by the end of the day. We’re minus 10. And we are working at deficit. So it’s kind of let your adrenals, let your body rest. And like you and I were talking, I’m not sleeping enough. That’s why one finger points to you, four point back to me. And the audience needs—yes, or sometimes—and the thumb. We’ll call it a finger.

But see, we’re having fun. Try to have fun in life. Try to enjoy things. And if you find the sweetness in the littlest things, like when I started walking and getting in shape, [inaudible] more and say, “What in the world happened to you, Dr. Meletis?” to myself, self-chattered.

I actually now take my camera, put it in my back pocket, which is my phone, I will stop and take pictures of things throughout the day.

Dr. Thomas: Smelling the roses.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. By forcing yourself to—I normally would walk through or pass things. And one time, I was walking around in my building, and I saw a bumper sticker on a very old, rusty pick-up. Well-owned pick-up. And it says, “God already made my day because not everybody has another day.”

So as long as you have another day and you have breath in your body, you are the master. And feed yourself. Take care of yourself. Get to sleep. And stop doing all this blue light right before you go to bed. And the television shows that are negative, the news that’s negative. And just become edifying and build yourself because we are mind, body, and spirit.

Dr. Thomas: Nice, nice. We’re going to eat real food, folks. We’re going to get our nutrients, at least vitamin D and B supplement and probably a good multivitamin.

We’re going to try an elimination diet. If you don’t do IgG food sensitivity testing, which you might be able to find a doctor like Dr. Meletis who does that or any integrative physician, you can pinpoint the foods that you need to avoid. But otherwise, you eliminate and one by one add them back.

Dr. Meletis: Yes. Slow but sure. Every two or three days, we add another food. Listen to your body. If it doesn’t like it, that food to is shelved.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah. For how long?

Dr. Meletis: Until you feel better. And then you leave it shelved, and then you try another food. Because once again, why would we consume something that’s not friendly to us?

Dr. Thomas: That’s making us sick. I found it in my practice—I wonder if you found the same thing—gluten, dairy, eggs probably near the top of the list of problems.

Dr. Meletis: Always.

Dr. Thomas: Always. So you want to leave those for a long time. And then one-by-one see what they do to you. And then you’ve just so eloquently talked

about stress. And we talked at the beginning of our talk about cell phones and that constant stress we're getting. The news, alerts on social media, this is all stressful.

You have some expertise in the adrenal gland and adrenal fatigue. Do you think that plays into addiction at all?

Dr. Meletis: There's no question. Whenever we feel poorly—I'm going a very simple example. If I had a poor day and it was stressful, maybe I'm going to want a mocha or I'm going to want a chocolate chip cookie or have a—especially as children, we were also rewarded sometimes with food. Or when life is going good, I had X, Y, Z. And that was a good memory.

And so, we all self-medicate. Within the Christian community, we see church social hours: cookies, punch. Well, you've got your spirit supposedly nurtured, too. Let's just do your body in. Then we have a little disconnect there.

And so what I would say is that we want to look at how do we find that balance point within the body that we make it doable. And at the same time, not get overwhelmed because you can get stressed out by trying to improve yourself.

I have patients like, "Okay, I was doing really good. And I kept on thinking, I can't eat anything. It's hopeless." And then all of a sudden it's like, "No, you're doing your best." And everybody listening just needs to remember, as long as you're doing your best, your legitimate best, on a daily basis, that's all you can do, is your best. After that, that's all you gave today. Tomorrow your best might be better or worse. But it's your best. It's your personal integrity.

Dr. Thomas: Folks, keep making changes that are in the right direction. So my journey on the food side has taken me over a decade. I finally am mostly gluten-free. I was at a big presentation last night, and I wasn't. But for the most part, I've been able to do that. I've been able to get almost off of all processed foods. But that's taken me a decade. But you just keep putting one foot in front of the other making yourself healthier, changing that environment, that epigenetic thing that we're talking about, and that will reduce the stress on the whole system.

Dr. Meletis: It will. And the adrenal glands. So once again, say no—of course, you love your family, your loved ones, your significant others. But you try to

say, “No, I really need to go do this.” And ultimately, when I think I’m rewarding myself with a mocha, which is one of my faux pas, then I’m like I’m actually punishing myself because I know, later on, I’m going to feel poor about it. I’m going to feel guilty about it. And I’m going to feel bloated and distended, and I’m going to feel mentally messed up.

And we have to realize that if we’re trying to nurture ourselves, our body’s telling us something. If you and I worked out and your personal trainer/son, the CrossFit guy is here, go ahead and sweat. You might crave salt. And if you crave salt that means I need something.

But most often, when we’re going after a habit—it could be a gambling habit, it doesn’t even have to be an oral addiction. It could be some other habit or an internet habit. You’re self-medicating. Figure out, “What is wrong with my current circumstance that I need to medicating.” And some of it becomes a habit. So there’s a dopamine issue. And then, “Well, I’m bored, and I’m going to do”—I’m not making light, some addiction a very chemical and very hard and very genetic. And that is not to make light of them. But the fact is, we need to figure out, okay, what were my triggers? What were the variables that made me slighter binge again or do whatever?

And most often it’s stress, self-love, and adrenal glands. Most of us are so overwhelmed. We’re tired. But because we’re tired and we’ve gone so long for so much, just persevere that’s what was expected or we expected of ourselves, our cortisol levels, which is that stress hormones, is also an anti-inflammatory hormone. So the way I became heavy was I worked 80 hours a week as a dean, writing books, lecturing.

Dr. Thomas: Too many books, too many lectures, too much travel.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. And I’m self-convicting. I just gave a lecture on ethics. And I actually reviewed the ethics of my life relative to, did I spend enough time with my family? So I reviewed my life. An unexamined life—it’s okay to do it. Now, if you’re dealing with heavy addiction, don’t get depressed about it because tomorrow’s a new day. You can make things better. But taking care of your adrenals, there are herbs like maca, ashwagandha, rhodiola, vitamin C.

Once again, if we eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, we get lots of vitamin C. So we’re living indoors, under fluorescent lights. We’re not getting our

vitamin D. We're not eating fruits and vegetables. We don't even have a garden. When I grew up in the '70s, I had a garden.

Dr. Thomas: So are you telling me—I'm getting a little a-ha moment here? Are you telling me that if I get more natural fruits and vegetables, extra vitamin C preferably from fruits and vegetables, which would be the citrus and the cantaloupes.

Dr. Meletis: Even broccoli.

Dr. Thomas: Even broccoli. I actually like broccoli. And I take my vitamin D and I try to get outside and I reduce stress in general, that my adrenals are going to heal?

Dr. Meletis: Yes. I make the simple example. You take the stress away. You're in the Bahamas. You're watching the little waves. And there's a calm breeze. And you're getting fresh fruits and vegetables delivered to you as you watch the waves.

Dr. Thomas: I feel better already.

Dr. Meletis: Yes. But, once again, we can paint these thoughts in our minds. You can actually take yourself there with just a little practice. You're hearing the waves. You're seeing the food. And you are taking care your body. Lots of us also somatize things. It gets stuck in your body. Get a massage. And sometimes, especially in the psoas area, where your hips and thighs connect.

Dr. Thomas: That's my problem spot.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. But that's also where we have a lot of psychosocial stuckness. And so lots of times people will go to a massage therapist, and they'll start just weeping for no reason. Big, burly people; really tough women even. And they're like, "What's going on?" It's just because the stuff is stuck. It's no different than, okay, we know it's in our shoulders. We know it's on our lower back. We know it gets stuck. We know it becomes a physical thing. So just feeling good in your body and controlling inflammation.

We are an inflamed nation. In fact, there's a book called [inflammation], which is of course, huge.

Dr. Thomas: Touch briefly for our viewers, what would you say are the key things to control inflammation?

Dr. Meletis: Avoid processed foods. Avoid sugar. In the Nixon administration, we went to a low-fat, high-sugar, high-fructose corn syrup. High-fructose corn syrup, terrible, often from genetically modified corn. On top of that, it increases your gas, increases blood pressure, increases diabetes. Eventually, you'll lose mind to type 3 diabetes, which is Alzheimer's.

If you continue down that path, you get heavier. And the heavier you get, the more cytokines, which can be inflammatory. So pro-inflammatory cytokines, the chemical made by your body, get thrown out of whack. And if they get thrown out of whack, what happens is you're inflamed.

And research shows that if you have inflammation in your body, the amino acid tryptophan—think eggs, think turkey—instead of going down to make 5-HTP, which is a supplement as well, into serotonin, which is your happy, chill hormone, hence—why do we have so many people on medications. Well, if that inflammation is going to make you go up to the opposite pathway, instead of an anabolic building pathway, it goes through the catabolic pathway. And that catabolic pathway actually goes into kynurenate. And kynurenate is pro-inflammatory in your brain. So you're more anxious, more depressed, not friends of any of us, let alone if you're dealing with an addiction.

Dr. Thomas: Stress, sugar, processed foods are taking away our serotonin, which helps us feel calm and in a happy place and driving us into feeling stressed out.

Dr. Meletis: Correct. And last, no ramen noodles. No MSG foods. I know near and dear to both of us. Dr. Russell Blaylock, a medical doctor, talking about the taste that kills. So we have salt, sweet, sour, bitter, and glutamate receptors, which the food industry has taken advantage of.

So you can have a little chip, which is dead—

Dr. Thomas: [Inaudible] hops, glutamate.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah. But also like, wow. And you're kind of like we get another—can I have another bag of those, please? They have no nutritional value but it's giving us a fix. But glutamate also causes you to be anxious and kills your brain cells.

I like to give the example of a light bulb. And when it gets too much electricity or as when the filaments die, [unknown sound] it flashes, and it's dead.

Dr. Thomas: The glutamate is doing that to our cells.

Dr. Meletis: Totally. And the food we eat. So look for the word glutamate, monosodium glutamate. And even yeast.

Dr. Thomas: Natural flavors.

Dr. Meletis: Natural flavors. Once again, food. What did our ancestors eat? Not food stuffs. And we're a society that's overfed, undernourished. And there's a saying, "Dead food for dying people, live food for living people." Live food, the produce, right?

Dr. Thomas: That is so key. Wow. Do realize, folks, when you go out to a fast food restaurant, almost any of them. When you get something in a bag or a box or a can, almost anything, there's glutamate hidden in it. There's a whole movement that allowed the food industry to slip it in as a natural flavor. They don't have to label it as such. That's why—I mean, even ketchup. You make your own tomato paste, it doesn't have that pop that ketchup has. Why? How can that be? They're putting glutamate in there.

Dr. Meletis: And this is true around the world. Sometimes it's called umami, other names. It has all kinds of names. But glutamate has become pervasive. So glutamate will cause your brain to get excited, which is then blowing your other more calm, relaxed, in control epigenetics.

So we're getting played as a human race. And we are human experiment right now. Our ancestors didn't use it. Our great grandparents didn't use it. They actually feel it—well, my grandparents didn't go to the store asking for organic because everything was organic for our great grandparents or they got it out of their garden. It was organic. They might have some stinky fish fertilizer on it, but hey.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah. I grew up in Africa. The food was out in the garden. There was no pesticide, herbicides, nothing. And that probably saved me until I came to United States and went to college. And then I started doing what we are all doing these days. So, this has been wonderful.

I want to sort of wrap up as we think about the environment, and you've touched on it already so nicely. But a big part of our environment is the people we put around us, the stresses that are just in our everyday living, and I don't think we think about it.

Dr. Meletis: We don't.

Dr. Thomas: We don't. What advice would you give to people, just practical advice, things you've learned from taking care of patients for so many years about how they can start to make some progress in that area?

Dr. Meletis: I mentor a lot of our colleagues and try to coach them, even doctors. And I remember mentoring a young colleague of mine, and she was hanging around with a younger crowd, the party crowd. And I said, "Okay, you want to grow yourself into another level." And she was frustrated. Well, she was doing well academically. She's doing well as a doctor. But she just wasn't fulfilled.

And so be selective. And really make a list for yourself. And I have some tools on one of my websites, where people can evaluate their health and wellness across the board—how they're doing with their romance life, how they're doing with their personal life, how they're doing with their health. Because I tell people this, you can go and get a car. You can wreck your car. You can run your car until it is dead. But you can replace car, assuming you have money. But okay, that's a given.

You can't replace the body. A body is for a lifetime. And so when people ask, "What's the most prized possession you have?" There's no question. It's not your car. It's not your house. It is actually your body. Because without your health, all the wealth in the world—

And Dalai Lama actually was quoted this, "What's surprising about humanity? It wasn't mankind because they'll trade their health to gain wealth. Then trade all their wealth to regain their health and really never live their life." I'm not even giving full justice to his quote. And I think I got 19, 000 hits on just that one post, which have been posted so many more times just on my social media. Because no matter what your belief system is, it's like, "Oh my goodness, I'm not taking care of my health."

And when we feel crummy, and for our people who have addictions, you have to go—you need ebb and flow, ebb and flow, ebb and flow. And you talk about nutrients, for example with alcohol. Alcohol causes B1 deficiency, which can lead to beriberi. And so there's that cartoon of a gentleman that has drunk, and they can see a pink elephant. It's called confabulation. You make up a story about what happened as you black out. But eventually, [inaudible] a brain phenomenon happens, and you actually start believing it. Your brain literally changes to an altered state because of B1 deficiency. So it's B1.

But, once again, lots of things that we're doing for ourselves, that high of a stimulant, wow, how much of brain chemistry does it need to go through? So that's why we use phenylalanine, tyrosine, tryptophan. And we're talking about the adrenals, what about the endocannabinoid system?

Dr. Thomas: I did want to go there with you because a lot of our viewers—we're in Oregon. And they've legalized marijuana here as they have in a few other states.

And so I run an addiction clinic where I'm helping younger folks, 30 and under mostly, get off of opiates. And when they come to my clinic, I would say about 90% are also using marijuana. And so, I'd really be interested in your thoughts about THC and also CBD because I know you've worked with CBD a lot more than I have, and you've written about this. You've spoken about this. Help our viewers understand what their difference is. Are they totally different? Safe? Unsafe? Uses? What do you think?

Dr. Meletis: Well, I'm actually creating a presentation for our audience so they can actually learn about the endocannabinoid system. So we talk about adrenals. So let's talk about the endocannabinoid system.

As you and I are sitting here, our bodies are making 2-AG and AEA or called anandamide. Ananda, in the Buddhist term, is bliss. So your body on a daily basis makes these substances. But much like our adrenal glands, because of chronic stress, our natural endocannabinoid system, which we never even knew existed until a couple of decades ago, have been supporting you immune system, addressing inflammation, keeping us calm. And they now even find out that moms, through breast milk—we know how important breastfeeding is when a mom can pull it off and get it done.

And so, well, we say with the immune system, it's hypoallergenic. It's great and full of nutrients. It's designed for a baby human. Well, we now know that anandamide actually crosses through the breast milk to baby and stimulates their little neurological and immunological receptors. We never knew that. When my kids were young, I just knew, okay, food allergens, dairy. I don't have a baby cow. I have a baby human, all these other things. But now like, wow, anandamide even for a baby.

Dr. Thomas: And anandamide is not present. It's different than THC.

Dr. Meletis: Yes. So, anandamide (the 2-AG) is made by your body every day. But most of us are relatively low. And so this is why I think the marijuana and the CBD industry is being so well received because people, just like the person that works out hard doing CrossFit, they're craving salt. Or CBD pathways—let's define CBD. CBD could be found in marijuana and CBD could be found in hemp. Hemp is less than 0.3% THC. So it really has little direct psychoactive effect. Whereas, marijuana has anywhere from 12% to 25+% depending on hybridization and concentration of THC.

And we've now created the marijuana industry so that the THC, which is the "no worries, man" kind of concept. We're actually disturbing nature again, because much like back in the day when they looked at kava kava, which was used for anxiety in the Polynesian cultures. And if we were to have a Polynesian rituals as I understand, never been there, is I'll chew some kava, spit in the bowl, pass it to you. You slurp it up, you chew it, you pass it around. That's about 11% to 15% kavalactone, the active ingredient.

So we've now done—"Better living through chemistry" again, circa the 1950s and have tried to make something even more such. And so too much THC out of balance with the CBD is a big issue. So a lot of my patients will look towards using CBD from hemp. Avoid the THC.

Dr. Thomas: What issues are you seeing in your patients who are using THC when you said, "Too much THC you get issues"? What kind of things are you seeing?

Dr. Meletis: More anxiety and more depression. Because if you go on—with all due respect, a trip, okay? Any kind of trip. Trip to Hawaii or THC a trip and you just kind of zone out. This takes brain chemistry. Now, if you're already malnourished or undernourished—once again, overfed country,

undernourished country—you don't have the amino acids. You don't have the absorption. So ultimately, there's that comeback, that rebound effect is up. I was up...

And so we know with all of us, an addiction might make us feel better in the moment. But there's a price to pay.

Dr. Thomas: That's what I'm seeing in my practice. So many are using THC because they're anxious.

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: But they're anxious that's why they're using it. But then when it wears out their system, they're more anxious.

Dr. Meletis: Correct. And I see this all the time including with family members. And it's finding that balance point of any tool is a great tool until it becomes a weapon against yourself. So a shovel in my garden is great, unless I'm barefoot and I'm going to chop my foot off. Not so good.

And so making sure things are tools and we're using them and they're not using us. I think that really comes across with people that eat, people that smoke, people that gamble, whatever it might be, internet issues. It's like, "Okay, who's in charge of who?" And I think all of us with human freewill want to be the masters of our own destiny.

And sometimes just like in our careers, I think there's a time where we want to help as many people. And life gets going really, really quickly. And then we realize, "Okay, well, I want to be doing this." But all of a sudden you find you're on your little habit trail wheel. And you're like, "Is life living me, or am I living life?"

Dr. Thomas: That's certainly like an addiction, that's workaholism. But those of you who are viewing this and thinking about your own challenges that might be addictive, if it's starting to cause you more harm than good, then it's probably time to take a step back.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah, reevaluate because your addiction is an epigenetic risk factor. And eventually, it's like burning the candle on both ends. Workaholism, I've done that one very well with doing so many things, which I felt motivated, was a fix. "Can't wait until the next big thing to do."

And I chose to do this with you, my friend, because I've seen it in my life. I've seen it in my family's life. We could help liberate people from this catch 22 of the cat that chases the tail. Nothing against cats, very clever. And we want to go ahead and look at the fact that we can control things. And just we need to take a step back and say, "I'm going to feed myself. I'm going to nourish myself." But because like with the marijuana side of things, which is recreational and the CBD, we have it in our body, this pathway. We have brain chemicals in our pathway.

So you can take a drug to help your depression. But we need to figure out how do I also teach a person to fish instead of giving them a fish.

Dr. Thomas: Optimize your natural pathways.

Dr. Meletis: Correct.

Dr. Thomas: So tell me a little bit more, and then we'll wrap up really quick here. On the CBD side of things, how are you using it? Or how are you seeing people have success with the use of CBD?

Dr. Meletis: So using CBD, once again because of legalities and DEA and FDA and so forth, I recommend hemp if a person is going to be going that direction. And the concept is, go low and go slow.

Start with a low dose because we're trying to nudge the chemistry. And we're talking about the things like 10 mg or 15 mg as a single dose, very low doses. A lot of the medical literature including some on the anxiety and so forth, they will do like 600 mg doses of the CBD.

Dr. Thomas: As a single dose?

Dr. Meletis: As a single dose.

Dr. Thomas: That's a huge dose.

Dr. Meletis: It's a massive dose. And that's definitely not a recommended dose. You want to respect the body. So just like is you and I when we're low in testosterone, more is not better. If a woman's menopausal, more estrogen is not better. So be respectful of the body. Nudge the body because that's the whole addiction thing. You can trade one addiction for another habit. And then you just have a new habit.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah. Your body always tries to rebalance itself. If you go too high, it's going to compensate.

Dr. Meletis: So I suggest people get brain chemistry tested if they can, get genetic tested if they can. Definitely, if they can, figure out if they have MTHF or COMT gene mutation. It's about \$99 online to have a test like that.

I have my patients access a lot of testing directly through my website so they can order it if their doctor won't. But get your doctor involved. They are working for you. And often we forget, doctors are knowledgeable and very powerful. But they are human beings, and they're service providers. Yes, we as doctors are saying this. But, hey, we are service providers. And if you don't like our service, fire us and get another doctor.

Dr. Thomas: That's right. divinemedicine.com is your website.

Dr. Meletis: Yes.

Dr. Thomas: And I think people can access information there.

Dr. Meletis: Yeah, free articles, free lectures, everything.

Dr. Thomas: An amazing amount of information. As we wrap up, I know you're a spiritual man as well, and you've touched that a little bit. But when we do all the stuff to work physical selves—we're fixing our diet. We're taking our vitamin D and our other nutrients. And we're reducing stress, keep working on that, folks. Get sleep, get exercise, and fix your environment in terms of the people and the toxic people you're around.

But if you have anything to add, maybe just wrapping it up with the spiritual side, where mind, body, and spirit, what advice would you give to somebody who's struggling with an addiction?

Dr. Meletis: Be kind to yourself. Show yourself grace because if you believe in a more positive, universal divine presence, give yourself the grace. And realize that no matter where you're at, what you've done, you're worthy of that grace. Be kind to yourself. Forgive yourself. And forgive other people in your life that possibly helped you on that trajectory.

And then there are times where you forgive. And you have to let go. And you need to move on at that juncture and create an environment that you can

flourish. I always give the example of a sunflower. If I plant a sunflower in three different kinds of soil, an urban environment, a vacant parking lot, or in the middle of a fertile of a farmer's field. That seed, that genetic potential will be determined by the environment which it's in.

Create the environment where you can flourish. And therefore, the people around you ultimately will flourish more because it's contagious. Happiness and wellness and just that ascending to a higher level is contagious. And I put it very simply, the mind connects the body and the spirit. The body houses the mind and the spirit. And the spirit conditions the mind and the body.

So it's a trifecta. You've got to work them all. And when you're physically hurting, sometimes the spiritual side is the hardest part. But when you start seeing that glimmer of hope and you start to gain more clarity as you fuel your body better and you're starting to break through those habits, spend some time on just doing positive affirmation. It might be just listening on YouTube on Will Smith, for example, or Denzel Washington. Have those positive things, and you can do it. Will Smith's quote is, "No one will outrun me on the treadmill. I will die beforehand." I do not suggest dying, okay?

But the take home from that is, I'm going to overwork somebody. I'm going to work until I am going to be victorious because he's going to manifest. And listen to those kinds of things. I listen to those as a workaholic. And that's my -ism, is workaholism. As a result, I've seen the consequence. So I speak to everybody that's listening. You can do it. I'm in the process of doing it. I force myself to say no. I've changed my paradigm. And now, thanks to you, I can share a message much more efficiently than one-on-one with the patient. I can share with a larger group.

I hope our audience shares this with their friends and family. It's a vulnerable, hot topic. It's a sensitive topic. But I encourage everybody to share the message because they're the agent of change, not only for themselves but the ones they love.

Dr. Thomas: Yeah, thank you so much. That was beautiful. We can make a difference together, folks. And with leaders like Dr. Meletis and everybody we're bringing to this summit, you can tap in and change your life starting today. Thank you for watching.