



**Transcript: #389 The ABCs of Progressing from Chronic Pain to Peak Performance with Dr. Ryan Wohlfert**

**Wendy Myers:** Hello, everyone. I'm Wendy Myers of [myersdetox.com](http://myersdetox.com). Welcome to the *Myers Detox Podcast*. Today, we have my very good friend, Dr. Ryan Wohlfert on the show. He is going to be talking about the ABCs of progressing from chronic pain to peak performance. So many of us today have dealt with pain, acute pain and chronic pain. It is life-altering. It sends one scrambling to address their health issues. That's what we're talking about today. We're talking about the quick ways that you can get out of pain fast. We're going to talk about what is the underlying root cause of pain.

**Wendy Myers:** We talk about the emotional aspects of pain, how emotional trauma and mindset can be big contributing factors to pain. We talk about the connection between spinal health, the brain, the nerves and how that relates to pain. We'll also be talking about conditioning, how you have to keep your body in fairly good condition to combat pain. We talk about a lot of the different issues surrounding taking pain medication, prescriptions, over-the-counter pain medications and the negative health issues they can cause. I definitely took prescription pain medications when I had lower back pain. I had a bulging disc and I pulled the piriformis muscle. I couldn't walk.

**Wendy Myers:** I would rely on those and they destroy your liver. They're habit forming. They cause a lot of other issues. I couldn't feel my pain and I wasn't favoring my back, so I kept injuring it over and over and over. It was just this never ending cycle. We'll talk about the problems with NSAIDs as well. What those do to your body and your gut. There are just a lot of really good tips on the show. If you're experiencing chronic pain or looking for the underlying root causes, we talk about the causes and address those causes. It's an overall body experience. It's addressing your overall health. It's not taking a pill.

**Wendy Myers:** I know you guys listening to the show are concerned about your heavy metal toxicity load. I created a quiz that you can take at [heavymetalsquiz.com](http://heavymetalsquiz.com). After you take that quiz, you'll get your body burden level of toxins, based on your quiz results. Then you'll get a free video series that talks about all your frequently asked questions regarding toxins. How long does it take to detox? What kind of testing do I need? Where do I start? Where do I get started detoxing? I answer all those questions and more, and it's a totally free video series. Go check it out at [heavymetalsquiz.com](http://heavymetalsquiz.com).

**Wendy Myers:** Our guest today, Dr. Ryan Wohlfert, has helped thousands of people upgrade their health, energy and performance in his multiple wellness, chiropractic and nutrition clinics and also online. He has created the Superhuman Brain Masterclass and the Leaky Brain Summit, reaching over 100,000 people worldwide. In these virtual events, Dr. Ryan brought together the world's top neuroscientists, brain researchers and doctors to share solutions for brain health, performance and longevity. I talked on that summit as well, about how heavy metals affect your brain.

**Wendy Myers:** He's an EYL certified mindset specialist, a certified chiropractic sports physician with specialized training as a strength and conditioning specialist, and a certified CBP doctor standing for Chiropractic Biophysicist Protocol using spinal rehab and postural correction, to address chronic pain, disease and organ dysfunction. With 20 plus years of education and clinical experience, Dr. Ryan created the Pain to Performance System, a proven and field-tested program that incorporates healthy lifestyle principles like exercise, nutrition, sleep, spinal health and mindset training to break free from dependence on a very broken pain care medical system.

**Wendy Myers:** You can learn more about Dr. Wohlfert and his work at [totalhealthspine.com](http://totalhealthspine.com). Ryan, thank you so much for coming on the show.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Well, thanks for having me, Wendy. I appreciate you having me here.

**Wendy Myers:** You are a chiropractor and you deal with tons of people that experience chronic pain, and are looking for relief. I've certainly dealt with that. I had back pain for a couple of years, and desperately tried everything, physical therapy, decompression, Pilates and all kinds of stuff like massage. Let's talk a little bit about chronic pain and what your thoughts are on that.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** A lot of people have been dealing with chronic pain or just pain in general. 70 million people in America are in pain every day. Right here where I am, I guess not where you are anymore, down in Mexico, but 30% of our entire population is in pain. The most common treatment that they seek is medical care, especially prescription medication. I've been in this pain field, I guess you could say, for 20 plus years in the clinic setting. I've been seeing tons and tons of that over my career. I've given hundreds of thousands of treatments.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's why I wanted to come on here today and express how big of a problem it is with the solutions that are currently being offered or that people might not know about off the top of their head. They just reach for over-the-counter medications, and think it's no big deal to take ibuprofen, Tylenol, Advil, Motrin or all these that lead to a decrease in the actual healing. You're not even getting to the main issue, the main cause or solutions to the problem. It also can create dependence and addiction where your body definitely needs to detox from that.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Like you, I've dealt with pain too. Being a chiropractor, most people think of back pain, right? That is a huge issue, sciatica nerve pain. What I started with when I was actually 13 years old, in eighth grade, was migraine headaches. That qualifies as a part of chronic pain. For the most part, in simple terms, chronic pain is recurrent or chronic lasting pain that affects your life. It affects your lifestyle, affects what you do and your well being for more than three to six months, if we're putting a timeframe on. It might get better, but it comes back.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** A lot of times, there's no known reason for it. That's why people just take medications. They mask it because, "Well, I don't know what's causing it," or maybe they do, and that's still the preferred treatment by the general population and the general medical profession. When I got my first migraine, I was sitting in class trying to read, and all of a sudden I couldn't see the words. I got numbness and tingling in my hand. It almost felt like I was having a stroke. Looking back, I was 13 years old in eighth grade, so it's not like I knew what the heck was going on.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I just went home and slept. I'm assuming but I can't remember, that I took some Tylenol or ibuprofen or something that my mom and dad had in the house that they gave to me. Well, okay, I did that. The migraine went away. Slowly, after a day or two, it decreased in pain but then it happened again, a week later. I knew what was going to happen. I knew I was going to get this headache just because of the initial symptoms that were coming on, like the numbness, tingling and the spots in this aura, that's what it's called.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I was in school, and I went to my school office, where the secretary was and I said, "I'm going to get a headache. I know it's going to be bad. Can you give me some ibuprofen?" What she did and what she said actually changed my life. I don't use the word lucky very often. When I look back, I was lucky that this happened or somebody knew what I was going to be doing in life and just understood that. "Okay, we're going to point him in a different direction here," because what the school secretary told me is, "I can't give you that," which is great. I don't know if they still do that in schools or not. Then what she said was, "It sounds like you have a pinched nerve. You should go see my chiropractor." I was like, "Whatever." I mean it was not like I was driving myself there. I was 13 years old. A lot of times, people would stop there. She didn't. She called my mom to come pick me up. She told my mom about that. My mom took me there, because she didn't know what to do. She wasn't a doctor. She's a homemaker. My dad's a builder and a carpenter.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** It's not like what they grew up with. They were always relatively healthy, and we ate home cooked meals. What if, one, the school secretary didn't tell me that? Two, she didn't continue to tell my mom that, and my mom said, "You don't know what you're talking about?" That's why I'm glad that you're allowing me on here so I can continue telling the story. That's why I'm on other podcasts and summits, because I love telling that story. It could have gone either way. I could have headed down the other path of sickness, disease and medications, all without taking care and finding out what the actual cause was.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's how I got started with the health aspect of what I do. It's not like right there, I decided to become a doctor of chiropractic. No, it was obviously a journey, a progression over time with that. That's been my experience with chronic pain and migraines. Since then, I've been able to go through a series of treatments, chiropractic stretches, therapy and just in general eating healthier foods. Even then, it wasn't like boom, "I'm changing my life right there."

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** This was back in the mid '90s. It was just the first start of the process that I remember, that kicked in for me. I knew that I wanted to do something with health, to help people. I didn't know what, but this is where it's led me.

**Wendy Myers:** I know. I've been going to a chiropractor since I was a teenager. Luckily, my dad was really interested in different kinds of health modalities. Lifelong, I've been going to a chiropractor. I attribute a lot of my health to that. I've had a baby and then I had gotten terribly out of shape, because every time I worked out, I got really nauseated, so I was just doing some mild walking. I've never been out of shape in my whole life. I started working out again after the baby. Boom, instantly I pulled my piriformis muscle, and then literally had two years of rehabilitation.

**Wendy Myers:** I couldn't walk for more than a few minutes. Then I started working out again, and then I had a slipped disc from that. That's when I started taking Vicodin. I started taking pain medication because I was in such agony that I couldn't function. I was shaking and I couldn't deal with it. I really feel like I developed a habit of every time I was in pain, to take Vicodin because I have some trauma there, where I don't have a high tolerance for pain at all.

**Wendy Myers:** There's a lot of people like that that will begin to have some pain. They'll be prescribed a prescription pain medication like hydrocodone or other types of medications. It's habit forming or they like the other effects of it. They like how it makes them feel. They can develop an addiction to it. This is a very slippery slope that people have to be aware of. They might like it a little bit too much and start using it even when they're not in pain. Can you talk a little bit about that and some of the problems with using Vicodin, for chronic pain?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Well, look, we've already hit on it. It's not addressing the causes. I say causes because I don't think it's just one cause. That's where medication comes in. If there's one cause, then this technically or principally will take care of it.

Theoretically it would take care of it but because our bodies are multifactorial, because we can move, because we are exposed to different toxins in our lifestyles, because of the places that we live and the stresses that we're under, I take more of a multicausal approach or multisolution approach to chronic pain.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Being a chiropractor, I have a lot of people come in. They might see me and say, "All right, fix me. Lay your hands on me, and fix me." That is so outside of my philosophy. I run this Facebook group called [Be Your Own Guarantee](#). Basically, my tagline is that you have to be your own guarantee. Don't walk in. Don't listen to this or even think we are going to save you by giving you that magic bullet, that magic pill. It doesn't exist because of the other factors in our lives. I break it down into a few things in our thinking.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Our breathing, I know you know about that too, is a huge part of healing from chronic pain. Then conditioning our body as well through exercise, through nutrition and sleep. Here's the danger that I hear from a lot of people, when we start talking about lifestyle, we start talking about nutrition. We start talking about exercise. A very common response is like, "I know that. I know that." That's dangerous to keep saying you know it, but yet here you are in the position that you are, no matter where that is. That's part of the thinking aspect of it too is we have to adapt and upgrade our mindset to these other possibilities.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** When I say... I want the listener to really take this to heart when you start saying I know to your doctor or to a lifestyle performance specialist, whoever you're talking to, to a detox specialist. "I know I should do that. I know, but no, no, there's gotta be something else." Here's what it is. It's not flashy. It's not sexy, but it works every time. You gotta be simple with your actions. You gotta be consistent with them over time. It's not just time. It's the action, and the effort that we put into it. It doesn't have to be hard.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's another thing people think is, "Oh, this has gotta be hard, either one," because they've been told, or they've learned that health is hard or being healthy is hard. Eating healthy is hard. Exercise is hard to do is to be consistent with it, but no, that's the, I guess, hardness or difficulty that they see is being consistent with it, because for anything to work, you have to be consistent with these efforts. We don't force it, but we have to have a good work ethic, and we have to provide effort, not just sit there over time and not do anything.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** With Vicodin, with hydrocodone, man, you mentioned those, and it starts... It screws up the physiology, where you've mentioned it, the addiction and also the dependence that we have on it. It becomes a habit, because that habit is easy to do, right? Just the actual physical act of putting a pill into your body, it's pretty easy.

**Wendy Myers:** Super easy.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** We've been trained for lack of a better word, but we have. That's what you have to do. We all have to do a better job as health practitioners, physicians, doctors and everybody in the health field, of not encouraging, and this one of my least favorite terms, a "quick fix". We all know that it doesn't exist and everything that you do leading up to that quick fix has an effect. Just like with me, with my migraines and patients that I've treated over the years. Everything they've done since they've come to see me, or everything I've done since seeing the chiropractor for the first time, will determine what type of results that I get.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I know we're being a little bit vague here, but we'll get into the nuts and bolts of what that is.

**Wendy Myers:** With the whole Vicodin thing and taking pain medications, you take that and you can't feel your pain, so you're not careful. I felt I was reinjuring my back over and over and over again, because I couldn't feel it. It made my problem worse. I think people also take NSAIDs or Advil, Aleve and these over-the-counter medications. They don't realize that it destroys their gut. It's like a grenade in your gut and that's the last thing you want to do. That leads to so many other health issues. What is your take on some better choices for addressing chronic back pain and other types of pain?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Well, we've talked about getting to the causes and solutions. Where we want to look is at the basic lifestyle healthy principles. Like I said, it's not sexy, but we need to keep hearing it over and over again. I'll break it down into three that I've mentioned already. The first is thinking or our mindset, because it's the foundation and what we need to address first because we have these subconscious thoughts and we don't even know they are going on. We have to bring that into awareness because whatever we think, we will do, sustainably.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** All right, we might have a one-off action like, "Okay, I'm going to go exercise. I'm going to eat this salad," but unless our mindset matches with who we are and we identify ourselves as a healthy person, somebody who never misses a workout or somebody who will always have good posture with whatever that is, we'll always fall back to the level of our standards and our mindset. For example, what are some thinking type things? When I say thinking, I mean how do we change our thinking? What we can do is start to be aware, what I call "identify".

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Identify our self-limiting thoughts, especially as it relates to pain and especially as it relates to health. Let's say you have chronic pain. If you're listening to this, you probably do. You start asking yourself questions or telling yourself statements like, "This is just the way it is. I just gotta live with it. There's nothing else that I can do. I'm always going to have something."

**Wendy Myers:** I think that can be ingrained in someone's head when they hear that from a physician, because the physician has a limited toolkit and they're not addressing underlying root causes. I think that can be implanted in someone's mind. There's

always something that can be done. I think people ought to be very aware of that.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's exactly right. It's implanted there. It's the experiences and the influences from people that they trust like doctors, teachers and parents. Especially as they're aging or they are kids, like we were, when we first experienced issues that we had. What if, again, the school secretary would have told me, "Well, this is just the way it is. You're just getting old?" I'm like, "Well, I'm 13 years old," but we're all getting older no matter how long we live. It doesn't mean we have to get old and frail. Anyway, that's something that I hear over and over again from patients, "I'm just getting old."

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I'm like, "Oh, boy," and then I throw that out. I say, "So when I'm..." However old they are, "When I'm your age, that's how I'm going to feel. Well, no." It's like, "It's not age. It's the..." That's where it stems from, that thought that's like a weed that just keeps growing and growing, and crowds out all the other good stuff." It sounds woo-woo like, "Oh, we gotta have happy thoughts." It's not just about that, there's toxicities, physical toxicities and sometimes no matter how many great nutrients you take, those toxicities are still there in your brain, the heavy metals, the environmental toxins and the glyphosate.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** It doesn't matter how many happy thoughts or positive thoughts that you put in, if you have something that's interfering with those positive thoughts. Taking root and actually leading to the actions that will create a healthy body and a healthy mind, then it's just not going to work. That's one of the first things to do. It's called learning your language. It's part of the four pillars that I teach, of mindset training. It's learning your language, and we don't want to dwell on that because that can lead to the negative Nancy and the negative mindset, if you allow yourself to do it.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** What we want to do is just observe the thoughts that we have without judgment, without, "I just either maybe said it out loud or in your head." I'm a big fan of journaling, actually writing it down. But with that one, you have to be careful that you're not going to go into the weeds and experience what that is, and thinking that, "You know what, there is nothing I can do about it. This is the way it's always been." Just like detoxification of the brain and the body, it's not going to be a one time thing. It takes simple and consistent practice to get better at it. It's a skill.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Meditation is another part of that. I used to get intimidated by that word, meditation, because you're like, "I don't know how to meditate." Do you know how to breathe? Then that's basically the part of meditation that I like to teach us, is the different ways that you can breathe. With chronic pain, that is another issue that people have is, when you're in pain that affects your breathing, the appropriate breathing sequence and pattern. Then when that happens, that leads to that cycle of more pain, other dysfunction and other issues, so breathing is another thing I love teaching clients how to do.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Like I said, I'm not a flashy guy. I like to keep things very simple, for me and clients. When patients and clients are in pain, you don't want to make it complicated. I've treated and had clients with brain fog, brain issues, anxiety and depression. When they can't concentrate, you can't give them a whole lot to do but you have to do enough to where it keeps them challenged or else it's going to fall off. That's where the progression comes in with that too. Just simple breathing. I have to remind myself of that. I have to take time. If you're experiencing any type of chronic pain, back pain, sciatica or nerve pain, that dysfunction is more than likely there with your breathing.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** If you can't get enough air in the lungs and throughout the body, well, it does a couple things. Let me go back to even the scientific part of that. One, it starts to work the muscles. It starts to get blood flow into the muscles, into the joints, into the disc and into the spine, the spine is the core of our body. If you think about an apple, guess what, that's what the core of the spine is. When people think about core, they think about abs. "All right, I'm going to do some core training." It's not just that. It's the trunk. It's the spine that gives that stability.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Then the second part of it is it activates the nervous system, namely the parasympathetic nervous system, for you to relax. Those go together actually, the breathing and also the thinking. They go very well together, because now you can calm your brain down. These thoughts can come out to where we can identify what your limiting statements are. The limiting questions too, because questions, you gotta watch out for that because our brain thinks in questions like, "Why does this always happen to me?" We would like to change the tone of that and say, "Why does this always happen to me?"

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** You're thinking of, which is the second part, the four pillars of mindset training that I incorporate into the ABCs is counting your wins, and that gets to the fun part. Counting your wins is not thinking positive. It's not, "I'm sorry to say..." Part of it is because sometimes thinking positive is stuff that hasn't happened before, and you're trying to convince yourself that it is going to happen, when in fact, you might not believe it, because you have this self-limiting belief from an experience or influence from somebody in the past that's led to your perceptions and belief systems, and then that leads to the expectations you have for the world.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Counting your wins is by going throughout your day picking up every single win, it doesn't matter how minute, but every win that you experienced. Let's say that normally, on a scale of zero to 10, you have a migraine or your back pain is normal like a nine out of 10, almost debilitating. Today, it was seven out of 10. That's a win. I know it's still above that threshold where it's affecting your life, but when we retrain the brain that way, the new neural pathways get laid down. Now, we start to inhibit the old brain because we're bringing conscious awareness into it. We get rid of that amygdala hijack and the limbic escape, which, in case the listeners don't know, is the back part of your brain.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's where all these primitive emotions, the old part of your brain where the emotions live. That's where a lot of these painful experiences live. I know you mentioned that in the past, the trauma you had in the past, not just physically but how that led to the habit of just taking the pill as well. Those are a couple things.

**Wendy Myers:** I think emotional trauma has a huge role in the physical experience of pain. I think people don't think about that. They are not aware of that stuff that happened in the past. Even their children's separation trauma from parents and other kinds of things can lead to pain syndromes and severe pain. You can't just "positive" your way out of that. You have gratitude, of course, but there are so many things you can do to very simply transmute these negative emotions to help with physical pain. People just don't connect the two.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I love how you said that because it reminded me of one of my favorite analogies of how to describe how perceived threats can cause pain, anxiety or inflammation. A negative mindset in how your body can feel pain, when it's not necessarily damaged in a tissue, damaged to a muscle or a ligament.

**Wendy Myers:** You think it's a physical problem because you're feeling physical pain. It's confusing.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** You've probably heard this, the threat bucket analogy or the stress bucket analogy, where you want to think of your brain and your nervous system as the bucket. What happens throughout our day? Our brain and nervous system is constantly just evaluating what is happening in our world, both externally and then internally. We get, I think, 400 billion pieces of information. Every second your brain and nervous system has to decide, "Is this safe, or is it unsafe?" If it's unsafe or it perceives it could be a real threat or a stress, or a perceived threat or a stress, it could be some sort of emotion.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** It could be something physical. It could be an accident. It could be bending down or whatever is a repetitive type thing. Every time that it is perceived as a threat or a stress, a drop goes in the bucket. Now, this is the amazing part of the brain. You know about this because you were on my Super Human Brain Masterclass and Leaky Brain Summit. I've not even touched the surface on how amazing the brain is, but I like to simplify it because I don't want to overwhelm myself or anybody else. When those drops go in the bucket, the bucket starts filling up. If that water or if those stresses get to that top rim and especially overflows, your brain thinks it's going to die.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** If the brain dies, it means you die because it dies. It doesn't want that, so it does anything it can to mitigate that threat. Here's the cool part. It's like the perfect design or a cruel joke, however you want to think about it. I think it's a perfect design, so think about that bucket now. About halfway to two thirds of the way up, there's an overflow valve, there's a spigot or a spout coming out of that bucket. If that water level, that threat level gets right up there, it disperses that

and not the threat. It gets rid of that threat, but it turns it into a fact like it's a red flag or it's a white flag actually saying, "Hey, I need help."

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That could be the pain that you feel, because your brain is trying to get you to do something about that threat that's building up inside your body, inside your bucket. That's why these emotional traumas and emotional threats are perceived the same way by the brain. It fills up the bucket and it's letting it out. It might let it out as pain, as inflammation, as an infection, as difficulty losing weight, as migraine or as low energy. Every symptom that you feel is your brain's way of saying, "Okay, there's something happening here." It might not be a physical thing wrong with that part of your body.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** For example, with a slipped disc or sciatica, sometimes I smile when I'm assessing somebody. I'm even working up here in this part, and they're having low back pain like, "No, no, it's down here." That goes into the whole other issue of, "Well, if we keep addressing where the pain is," again, your brain's like, "Oh, I'm getting attention for this. It's like these unconscious things that we do, I'm getting attention for this. I'm going to keep this pain." If we find out where that cause is, whether it's a physical, chemical, mental, emotional or whatever it is.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I mean, if we look at the full body. We don't just look at where the pain is or the symptom is, because we know it doesn't necessarily mean there's damaged tissue right there. We look up here. We look everywhere down at the feet, because that's how they walk. We take x-rays of the spine standing, because guess what, that's how your body works. Those are some of the things that we do. I got off topic there a little bit. Sorry about that. But with the threat bucket analogy, that's why we can feel pain in other areas of the body from where there are symptoms, and we can feel pain from emotional trauma.

**Wendy Myers:** It's amazing all the different underlying root causes of pain that people can have. I mean, it's just so varied and multifactorial. How can people with chronic back pain get back to peak performance? Is there anything else that we haven't talked about or anything that you do, how you work with people to help them get back to normal functioning?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** One of the things that we haven't really mentioned is the CEO of my ABCs, conditioning the body, conditioning the brain, especially the body through movement and then also through posture and spinal health. We've touched on it a little bit. I will say this, not all chiropractors are created the same. I guess that's a good word for it, or developed, because we learn different things just like there's a lot of different specialties within medicine and there's detox specialists. There's nutrition, intermittent fasting and all different types of dietary eating lifestyles.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** When we treat the spine, and when we look at the body and the spine, we want to make sure we're addressing the posture and movement. I use a technique called CBP. It's called chiropractic biophysics or clinical biomechanics and

posture. It's actually the most researched scientific-based protocol program out there. We actually use three main things, exercises and corrective postural exercises. Most people are not symmetrical, not because that's the way they were born, but because of different stresses that they've placed on their body over time, they might be shifted one way or this slumped posture. Most people are pretty familiar with this.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** People who are watching, they can see me do these different motions, because I have a nice long neck so I can get in these different positions. With chronic pain or with pain, what happens is you might get an injury and take a posture to take stress off the structures that were injured. Let's say I shift over this way. Then as the pain goes away, your body doesn't automatically just shift back to that neutral position. It will stay there because your brain has retrained it to be in that position. That's part of what we do, is address not just the posture through adjustments that's part of it, but we do E-A-T, we eat.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Exercises, we do corrective adjustments, and then there's a traction component. The traction is actually very unique to this, because by analyzing their posture through x-ray we can identify what their spine looks like, what it should look like. In general, there's average normals, but based on the shape of their pelvis, let's say, or the shape of their thoracic spine and rib cage, now we can identify what the curves should be in the spine. You should have three equal curves, 40-degrees, one in the neck like a banana shape, think about that. Banana, there, banana in the mid back, and a banana in the low back. They balance each other out.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Your body is an amazing balance machine. With stresses, either chemically, neurologically or physically, your spine gets out of alignment. If we're able to identify what your normal is, if it is that average ideal normal or based on the shape of your pelvis and ribcage, is it something different? Now, through different forces that we place on the spine through traction, that we identified through the x-rays, we're able to retrain and remold the ligaments and muscles in the right position. Exercises are great, but if the ligaments are fibrotic, if the ligaments are worn down more on one side or the other, we have to stretch and mold those in the right position.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** The analogy I use every day is, I'd say pretty close to every day, with patients and clients and whoever that's asking about it is teeth, crooked teeth. We can't just push on our teeth to get them straight, if they've gotten into a position where you don't want them. We have to put braces on them. Orthodontists put braces on them to straighten them out and put them in the position that they're supposed to be, or that you want them. Traction on the spine is very similar. It's different in the fact that you don't wear a traction device 24 hours, seven days a week.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** In most cases, in severe forms of scoliosis, sometimes you do. Overall, I find that doesn't work as well as focusing on areas of using a specialized brace for that,

but this is outside of the scope of what we're talking about here is using specialized different blocks or machines in our office. But if you're not local, then we can do that. I can consult with people remotely or virtually. That's what we do with exercises, adjustments and traction to remold the spine in the right position. Then into the healthy position taking stress off of the nerves, off of the spinal cord, so now we can express that full expression coming from the brain down to the spinal cord to every cell tissue and organ in the body.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's how we do that in our office, and combine nutrition and other lifestyle measures that we've talked about as well.

**Wendy Myers:** Where are you located?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I'm in Lansing, Michigan.

**Wendy Myers:** Fantastic. Is there a way for people to work with you remotely, if they can't go to Michigan?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** I would say go to our website, [totalhealthspine.com](http://totalhealthspine.com), but then I highly encourage you to join my free Facebook group, [Be Your Own Guarantee](#). I'm sure in the show notes that you'll put that there, Wendy, a link to that, but then you can just go on Facebook and search for it. That's where I'm hosting right now to deliver a lot of my daily content and my daily advice on incorporating these healthy lifestyle strategies into your life.

**Wendy Myers:** Fantastic. Can you talk about the role that weight has on chronic pain? A lot of people are very overweight and maybe don't connect that to why they're in pain or have knee pain that takes their back out of whack. Can you talk about that?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Well, of course. Weight is another one of those issues, we talked about that threat bucket or stress bucket analogy. When you have that threat, if that's an issue that you're having, that is how your body exhibits, "Okay, there's some sort of threat here. I'm going to hold onto this weight. It's going to be harder for it to come off." You know as well as I do the toxicities get stored in the fat cells. The toxicities get stored in the joints as well. When we talk about it, it's not always a physical issue. Growing up, I always thought, "Okay, my knee hurts. That's gotta be a physical issue."

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** With knee pain, back pain and chronic pain, when it's a weight issue, yes, it can be a mechanical issue. It's also a chemical issue with the toxicities that are built up in the body. By decreasing your weight by maybe 10%, you decrease the amount of stress on the knee by five times, just by that little bit. By decreasing the weight or losing 20 pounds, it decreases the amount of pressure on the discs of your back by, geez, I think it's like 50%.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** If it's a pound with the low back or with the spine, or losing 20 pounds, it doesn't matter if you're 100 pounds overweight or 50 pounds overweight, it decreases the pressure and the stress on the discs and on the spine by 50%.

**Wendy Myers:** I can't really stress enough how staying in shape and strengthening my core, my stomach muscles and lower back also prevents reinjury. Once you have a slipped disc or a bulging disc, it's always a weak point. At least for me, it feels like that, and if I have periods where I have not exercised as much as I could have, I definitely reinjured my back. Now that I'm working out almost every single day, I feel so strong. I don't feel anywhere close to having a weakness there, watching when I bend over.

**Wendy Myers:** I don't have to favor it, and I've noticed that, by staying strong and in shape. As you know, strong muscles are good to go, but the minute I start getting weak, I feel it teetering on the brink of disaster, again.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** No, you're exactly right, because I think movement or exercise in general has taken a backseat over the last five or 10 years, to nutrition. Yes, we want to eat a healthy diet, but we also have to make sure our body is moving. Our body is made to move and also stresses itself to get stronger. I'm trying to get out of my head the whole aging thing. "Oh, you're getting old." My friends give me a hard time about it, because every birthday they tell me I'm getting old. They know like, "Nope, I'm not getting old. I'm getting older. That doesn't mean I'm getting old."

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's the whole mindset shift and mindset reframe. As we age, yes, we tend to get a little bit stiffer, because the stresses have added up on our body. Mobility is a big issue, and it depends on the area of your body, but the low back and the core area of the stomach. We have 75% of our muscles in the core. Our mid sections are diagonally oriented, so we can't just do a bunch of crunches, which I'm sure you're not doing. You're doing planks. You're doing side planks. You're doing diagonal rotation, movement type activities, different wood chops is what I call them, wood chopping activities.

**Wendy Myers:** I don't do wood chopping. I do Pilates.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Oh, okay, but that's conditioning all the different areas, right?

**Wendy Myers:** I think that wood chopping is a guy thing.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Well, I actually do want to start wood chopping. I'm actually doing it. I'm talking with a medicine ball or something like that.

**Wendy Myers:** I know. I'm joking. I'm joking.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** No, I'm glad that you touched on that because when we get hunched over, our posture and spine gets so out of whack. Not only is that going to cause pain, but

now we're not going to be able to move as well. I love the different quotes that I've heard, and different findings from the *American Journal of Pain Medicine*. It said... Man, I'm getting so excited to share this because not many people ask about it. Quite honestly, because it's not a magic pill, but it's a huge thing for our health. Pain, mood, blood pressure and lung capacity are all influenced by our posture.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** There's nothing more influenced by our posture than our healthy functions of our body, and that was way back in '94. They found that from *The American Journal of Pain Medicine*. Every physiologic function is influenced by our posture. They've done studies showing how in *Spine Journal*, which again, it's not a chiropractic journal. That's a mainstream medical journal in the early 2000s, showing that this posture, that kyphotic posture can take up to 15 years off of people's lives. Extrapolating from that, because it's affecting how your heart beats, how your lungs expand, how your insides are and how your gut digests food.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** That's why going back full circle to the beginning of this, we talked about a multifactorial, multicausal, multisystems approach to health. Not just one thing, but unleashing and unlocking the power of your body to do those things through eating, nutrition, detoxing, breathing techniques, posture and spine, movement, exercise, mindset and sleep. We didn't even talk about sleep, but that's another thing where your body actually heals too.

**Wendy Myers:** Can we talk about some quick tips to get out of pain quickly? One thing that worked for me, I had a girlfriend who actually had a severe pain syndrome. She would have to get spinal blocks on a regular basis because she had what's called RSD. I forget the exact acronym, but it's RSD. It just says pain randomly throughout the body. It's just completely debilitating and has a high suicide rate because it's so painful. She said the fastest thing for her was fasting. That would get her out of pain and reduce the inflammation the fastest.

**Wendy Myers:** For me, what was indispensable was gel ice packs. Doing that for 10 minutes a day, but no more. Too much can cause more inflammation, but doing a gel pack for 10 minutes a day before I went to sleep was amazing. The days that I did it, I didn't have as much pain the next day. The days I didn't do it, I had the same amount of pain. Any other tips like that?

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Yes, I'm glad that you mentioned that about the ice and only 10 minutes, because I was a big ice fan. I love ice, but just how you said it can blunt the actual good inflammatory response. Now, I've gone to more of a contrast, five minutes ice, five minutes heat, five minutes ice, five minutes heat. The ice is definitely nice for pain control, but we don't want to blunt the response. Infrared, I know you're a big fan of infrared. We have what's called a K-Laser and also an ultimate light. It's a red light therapy room in our physical brick and mortar office, but those are good tips to get out of pain fast.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** You know me, I said I don't like quick fixes, but yes, in those times, we're like, "Oh my god, I gotta do something." Those are my go tos and also supplements like taking vitamin C, magnesium, essential oils and even enzymes to help to increase the healing of the tissues. Many times, when people are injured, drugs are their go to, we already talked about over-the-counter ones, ibuprofen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatories. They actually decrease your body's ability to heal.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** It might feel better at the time, but a month later, you are predisposing yourself to hurting yourself even more. That's probably why you felt the way you did with your spine, because by taking those, now the ligaments are getting weaker. The muscles are getting weaker. The bones are getting weaker. Of course, if that's happening, it's not going to be able to get rid of the pain, fully, and sustain that. You're going to set yourself up and predispose yourself to further pain, and that leads to that chronic pain cycle.

**Wendy Myers:** I can't even tell you how much infrared helped me with my pain as well. I would do an infrared session. I had a specific red light. There's tons of them on the market. Now, there wasn't at that time I had back issues, but that was 10 years ago, but my PT had one. It was \$1,500. It was crazy expensive at that time, and then I put that on my back. Man, it was amazing. This is a very, very focused red light therapy. It was very, very concentrated and that was amazing. It would get me out of pain so quickly. It reduced that inflammation super fast.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Yeah, because it helps with the inflammation, but doesn't get rid of the circulation. We want the circulation. We want the good stuff coming in, and that's how I describe it to my clients and patients with red light therapy or K-Laser. It's like a magnet. It brings in the good nutrients, oxygen and blood flow and gets rid of the waste. It just helps circulate it. Now, if you did something like that, or at least this was what we recommend for our patients, don't ice it immediately after 24 to 48 hours.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Don't put ice on it, because we want that response to come on. For example, the basketball season is winding up here for our high school and I got a call from a parent yesterday saying, "Oh, my son just sprained his ankle. Can I bring him in for K-Laser?" She brought him in, and it was just swollen. We've seen this. It's swollen, and we did the laser on it. Sometimes we measure it before and after, and the swelling goes down by an inch, depending on where it is that we do the K-Laser. It helps the healing but it doesn't blunt the healing.

**Wendy Myers:** Fantastic. There are so many cool therapies out there. There are so many things you can do for pain that your doctor has no clue about at all, doesn't have time to do, isn't interested or can't explain it to you. Most likely they don't know about it, so you have to be the only person who can be your best health advocate. I love that you have this Facebook group, [Be Your Own Guarantee](#).

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** *Be Your Own Guarantee.*

**Wendy Myers:** There's no one that's going to do this work for you. You have to find influencers you trust, health advocates that you trust, and learn as much as you can. Do what works for you, what resonates with you, because no one has that time to invest in you like you. No one's going to care as much as you do. Tell us where we can join this Facebook group.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Go to [Be Your Own Guarantee](#), or just put that in the Facebook group search. It's BYOG. That's my battle cry in the office and also online now, in this group. We've got to learn how to be our own guarantee, and you learn how to be your own guarantee, so you can break free from chronic pain, but also break free from any dependence that you have on a very broken pain-care medical system.

**Wendy Myers:** Fantastic. Well, Ryan, thanks so much for coming on the show. You're such a wealth of information. I love speaking on your summits. You provide such important information and content for people, so thank you for doing what you do.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** Thank you, Wendy.

**Wendy Myers:** Tell us what your website is again.

**Dr. Ryan Wohlfert:** It's [totalhealthspine.com](#). Guess what, if you can't find the *Be Your Own Guarantee* group, just email me. My email's on the website, and I'll get it to you.

**Wendy Myers:** Fantastic. Well, Ryan, thanks for coming on the show. Everyone, my name is Wendy Myers of [myersdetox.com](#). Thanks so much for tuning in every week, because I am so passionate about providing you with information on how to address the underlying root causes of your health issues and your symptoms, so that you can eradicate them forever from your life. I'm on this health journey with you guys. I love educating you guys, so thanks so much for tuning in every week. I will talk to you guys very soon.