



**Transcript: #433 The Anatomy of Anxiety with Dr. Ellen Vora, MD**

**Wendy Myers:**

Hello everyone, I'm Wendy Myers, welcome to the Meyers Detox Podcast. And on today's show, we have a really good guest, her name is Dr. Ellen Vora, and she is a holistic psychiatrist, and she's going to be talking about the anatomy of anxiety and all the different underlying root causes of anxiety. I know so many women suffer from anxiety, millions of women in the United States, tens of millions. And so, this is a really important topic to look at because I don't think people realize that anxiety affects 40 million Americans. And that number continues to climb in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. And while conventional medicine tends to be like, anxiety is like a neck-up problem, the reality is that brain chemistry and emotional trauma, and psychology is at the root cause of anxiety. And so, as a holistic psychiatrist, Dr. Ellen Vora offers nothing less than a paradigm shift in our understanding of anxiety and mental health. And she suggests that anxiety is not simply a brain disorder, but a whole-body condition.

**Wendy Myers:**

And so, in her work, she's found, many times, that the symptoms of anxiety are traced to imbalances in the body. So, the emotional and physical discomfort that we experience from the sleeplessness, the brain fog, the stomach pain, the jitters, is a result of the body's stress response. And some people because of emotional trauma have a really high set stress response that can be triggered very, very easily. And so, it can be triggered by even diet, and drinking alcohol, and nutrient deficiencies, and the use of technology, and a lot of the other factors that we'll explore on the show today.

**Wendy Myers:**

So our guest today, Dr. Ellen Vora has a new book called *The Anatomy of Anxiety*. We're going to talk about it on the show, and like I mentioned, she's a holistic psychiatrist, acupuncturist, yoga teacher, and the author of *The Anatomy of Anxiety*, and she takes a functional medicine approach to mental health considering the whole person and addressing imbalance at the root.

**Wendy Myers:** So, she received her BA from Yale University and her MD from Columbia University. And she's a board-certified psychiatrist and integrative holistic medicine practitioner. And she lives in New York City with her husband and daughter. And you can learn more about Dr. Vora and her work at [ellenvora.com](http://ellenvora.com). Ellen, thank you so much for joining us on the show.

**Ellen Vora:** Oh, Wendy, thank you so much for having me.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. So, you studied at Yale University, and you attended Columbia, and can you share with your listeners about your experience working in the medical field and how it kind of led you to explore a more holistic approach to anxiety and mental health?

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. I probably have a somewhat similar story to so many people who start in conventional worlds and then end up in holistic worlds. It was sort of two parallel processes happening at the same time. While I was in medical school at Columbia, and then doing my psychiatry training, which I actually ended up doing it partly at Columbia, and then I finished at Mount Sinai. Throughout that time, I felt somewhat disenchanted with what I was taught to do, and I didn't really feel like that was sufficiently helping my patients thrive. And in parallel with that, I was really out of balance in my own health. And I was a physician, I thought I knew how to feed myself and how to exercise. I know what to do. And yet the springs of the machine of my body just kept popping out. And so, I really had to come to grips with the fact that what I had learned was not allowing my patients to thrive. It wasn't allowing me to thrive, and I had to go back to the drawing board.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, I went on a somewhat inefficient 10-year journey of figuring out how do I get my own health into balance, and I studied Ayurveda and Chinese medicine and became an acupuncturist, became a yoga teacher, and studied functional medicine. Over time I came to work with psychedelic medicines. I did all of this additional training to try to understand really when I meet a human being and they're out of balance, how do I help them gently get back to a place of balance where they can go on and allow their health to receive into the background and just serve as a foundation so that they can lead a fulfilling life.

**Wendy Myers:** I mean, that learning curve is really inefficient. It's really inconvenient too. But that's why we're here to help you guys, you listeners, cut down that learning curve as much as possible. So, in your book, you have a new book out, which we'll talk about in a second. So, you categorize anxiety into false anxiety and true anxiety. Can you explain that a little bit?

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. So, that's the central thesis of my book, and basically, the way I was trained was to think of anxiety, according to the Bible of mental health, what we call the DSM, and it's classifying anxiety as generalized anxiety disorder or panic disorder with, without agoraphobia, and so on and so forth. And the idea is always to steer management, but it's there to indicate, our medications

indicated it's cognitive behavioral therapy, the tool that's appropriate for this diagnosis, but those were never my first-line tools anyway. So, it wasn't meaningfully steering treatment in my practice, and what I realized was a much more useful way of thinking about anxiety. And so, that I had a kind of, you know, now I know what I'm working with, now what do we do? A more meaningful way of thinking about it was, are we dealing with false anxiety or are we dealing with true anxiety? Where false anxiety is avoidable anxiety, it's anxiety that has a basis in the physical body. It's usually a stress response as a result of some aspect of modern life that's getting our physiology out of balance and tripping us into a stress response that then feels identical to anxiety, and it doesn't need to be happening. It's creating a lot of unnecessary suffering.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, when I know I'm dealing with false anxiety, I become Mr. Fix-it. And it's like, here's what we do. We got to change your sleep schedule, and we got to get off these foods, and heal the gut, and heal the liver, and be less inflamed, and so on and so forth.

**Ellen Vora:** And then true anxiety is entirely different and that's purposeful anxiety. It's really not something to pathologize. It's not something that we could gluten-free, or decaf coffee, or gut heal our way out of. It's our inner compass, and it's there to help guide us and slow down and pay attention to what's truly not right in our personal lives, in our communities, and in the world at large. And it's a call to action. It's saying, take that anxious feeling and transmute it into purposeful action so that we can make our unique contribution, which does not have to be grand. It's just uniquely what we are here to do to help.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. You need to heed that body's call and listen to it before it gets out of control. And so, you have a lot of tips in your book about body-based anxiety. Can you talk a little bit about that and some of the tips that you recommend?

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. So, this is the whole first half of my book, and there's just a lot of actionable strategies. I like to improve people's sleep, that's one of my favorite things to treat, because it eludes so many of us, good sleep, and it's actually very treatable, and it just requires a slightly different strategic understanding of what helps humans sleep. And I use an ancestral lens, basically that we evolved for millions of years under the conditions where it gets cold and dark after sunset, and in modern life, it's really different than that. We're getting exposed to blue spectrum light after sunset, and it's disrupting our circadian rhythm. It's making us feel inappropriately wakeful in the evening. We're not secreting melatonin, which helps us sleep, and also helps our body do repair work, it revs up our immune system. So, we're missing all of these cues.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, I really like to be strategic with patients about light and make sure that they're not bringing their phones into their bedroom at bedtime. That they're wearing blue-light blocking glasses after sunset until bedtime to block blue spectrum light and protect the circadian rhythm. And there's a whole host of other things we do for sleep. And I like to look at the gut and the diet, and some

people like this approach, and some people find it overwhelming. So, it's always, I'll meet people where they're at with it, but when it comes to anxiety, I think one of the most impactful changes we can make is to simply keep our blood sugar stable, which as you well know, is part of an intricate web of how our body is managing stress and our adrenals, and all of this.

**Wendy Myers:** And that's so challenging. It's so challenging to do no matter what, you get so many cravings and so much temptation, and I think people don't realize how much sugar they eat.

**Ellen Vora:** So hard, and our modern world does not make it easy. But I think to sort of motivate people and to recognize how central this is to anxiety. When we eat something sweet, like refined carbohydrates or added sugar, our blood sugar spikes, and then insulin chases that, and then our blood sugar crashes, and the design of the body in this potentially life or death, you know, it sees it as like we're starving, we don't have food, we release adrenaline and cortisol, our stress hormones. And that signals to the liver to break down its storage of glycogen so that we have starch broken down into glucose, putting that in the bloodstream sort of restores normal levels of blood sugar. So, it's good. It saves the day. Our organs don't fail, but it feels like a five-alarm fire in the body and that feels identical to what we call anxiety and panic.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, a lot of suffering, a lot of panic, a lot of anxiety that's happening in modern life is simply due to blood sugar crashes. And so, if you're struggling with panic disorder, if you're feeling anxious every day at three in the afternoon or five in the afternoon, it's worth taking a look at the pattern of your anxiety, how it might relate to blood sugar and just giving it a try. Whether it means overhauling your diet and eating in a more blood sugar-stabilizing way, which I will acknowledge can be so tough. Or some of my patients benefit from just a hack of using something like almond butter and taking a spoonful at a few different intervals throughout the day to give them a safety net of blood sugar to kind of blunt any crash that might be superimposed over it.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. That's a really good tip, that's really a tip. Also, maybe don't drink Monster energy drinks. I know two people that have gone to the hospital with anxiety attacks and heart palpitations because they just don't realize you can't drink a gigantic liter of Monster energy drink or other ones.

**Ellen Vora:** I'll never forget a patient, I had this beloved patient so many years ago, so it was like a former lifetime. And I believe he was Mormon, he might have been Seventh Day Adventist, but basically, through his culture and his religion, he was not consuming coffee or tea or alcohol. He had a really, like really clean living and he was struggling with so much anxiety and insomnia. And I was doing this inventory and I really couldn't find the source of the false anxiety. And one day he came into my office carrying like a jumbo energy drink, and it was Red Bull or Monster, whatever it was, and I was like, well, hold up, you told me you don't

consume caffeine. And he's like right, in my religion, we can't consume caffeine and he's like, this is juice.

**Ellen Vora:** And I was like, oh, good branding, Red Bull and Monster. Well done. No, it's not juice.

**Wendy Myers:** Very loose definition of juice.

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. So he thought he was drinking fruit juice.

**Wendy Myers:** Oh God.

**Ellen Vora:** And I don't fault him, right? Like marketers are so brilliant and effective. But so yeah, there are sometimes, kind of, hidden sources of things that are very destabilizing to our physiology.

**Wendy Myers:** And so, in your book, you also make a really critical connection between sleep and anxiety. Can you talk a little bit about that? I mean, you touched on it, but like maybe go a little bit more in-depth? Because I mean, there are like 14 different things that can go wrong when it comes to sleep. As I know, because I've had to hack my sleep for years and I finally got it right, but it took a really long time. So, can you talk about some sleep hacks?

**Ellen Vora:** I'd love to. Yeah. So, I think one thing to just recognize with the relationship between sleep and anxiety is that we kind of appreciate that anxiety impacts our sleep. We know that if we're having racing thoughts, if we're ruminating when we're trying to fall asleep, it makes it harder to fall asleep. But what we don't all appreciate is that any compromise to our quantity or quality of sleep is directly contributing to our anxiety levels through a number of different pathways. One that I think is interesting and not being talked about enough is the function of our glymphatic system. So, I know you guys know so much about the lymphatic system and so much understanding of how to detoxify, and our brain has its own system for detoxifying. And the design of the body, it just happens to be that happens at night while we sleep. That's basically when the city of our brain goes to sleep and that's when the garbage trucks go around the alleyways of our brain and clear out the trash.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, if we're not sleeping adequately, we don't get that opportunity to clear out the trash bags of the alleyways of our brain. And we know what that feels like the next day. Then we're going through our day kind of foggy, kind of tired, less coordinated, less patient, less creative. Just less clear in general and certainly more prone to emotional lability and anxiety. So, it's just one more way to motivate that sleep is critical, as if people even need more. We want to sleep. Nobody wants to struggle with sleep.

**Ellen Vora:** And as we talked about before, I like being strategic about light. I like a cold bedroom, blackout shade, an eye mask, and a white noise machine. And I always

want people to at least make conscious choices around their relationship with caffeine and alcohol. Both can impact sleep negatively. Caffeine, what many people don't appreciate is that it has a long half-life, let's call it about five or six hours. So, if we're having coffee or tea in the afternoon, it's effectively like we're having half of that coffee at like 9:00 PM. And we wouldn't do that if we know we struggle with sleep, but effectively, that's what we're doing. And so, you want to push caffeine a little earlier in the day, maybe reduce the overall amount, maybe find other strategies for giving yourself that feeling of being revived when you hit a lull during the day. And then of course it becomes a virtuous cycle. When you drink less caffeine and you get better sleep, you don't hit that lull in quite the same way when you're consistently getting good sleep. Alcohol is its own whole conversation, but basically-

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah, that's like the whole podcast.

**Ellen Vora:** It is. It's nobody's favorite conversation. Suffice it to say, it does help us feel sleepy, but it doesn't actually create really good quality sleep, and it rushes our brain with a neurotransmitter called GABA, which is a lovely feeling, it's relaxing. But our brain wants homeostasis. So, it sees all that GABA and converts it to a different neurotransmitter called glutamate, which is an excitatory neurotransmitter. And then that's why we're tossing and turning the second half of the night. And we wake up headachey, and irritable, and agitated, and thinking, I just want to get through the day until I can have a glass of wine. And so, alcohol creates the need for itself, disrupting our sleep. And just in several ways, contributes directly to anxiety levels.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. That's a really good point. That was a really clear illustration of what's happening because I think a lot of people don't understand why they need to drink, or they feel compelled to drink alcohol every night before they go to bed. And why do they wake up feeling like crap afterwards.

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And so let's talk about food for thought. And so, you touch a little bit on blood sugar control, but what is it exactly about food and some tips the listeners can do to help control their anxiety?

**Ellen Vora:** In my several rounds of edits, chopping the food chapter down to like, it's still, I think, the longest chapter and I had to cut so much material. There's a lot to be said about it. But first and foremost, that food is central to managing anxiety. And in all these nuanced and complicated ways, one of the basics is that our brain requires certain raw materials to function, nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. And we get that from food, that's the design of the body. And it's really hard to do that in modern life. We're eating food produced from, kind of, nutritionally bankrupt depleted soil, and not to mention all the ways that our food is inflammatory, and our processed food industry is not only nutritionally bankrupt but also actively inflammatory to our bodies. And so, it's just really

hard to feed ourselves in a way that nourishes us, that doesn't tip our body into a state of further imbalance.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, I have the utmost sympathy for, we all struggle with this, but I want people at the very least to be informed, and the fact that this is critical to how we feel. And if we can air on the side of eating real food and err on the side of avoiding fake food and generally having an eye towards feeding ourselves nutrient-dense foods. We're sort of really trying to think from a place of radical self-love, how do I nourish my body, and take good care of myself? And it usually requires stepping out of the paradigm that we've been handed of what a healthy diet looks like. Whatever your idea of that is, there's been so much marketing and sort of mixed message headlines telling us "Okay, be low fat or be low carb, or don't eat the egg yolk" and it's just all over the place. Clean eating.

**Ellen Vora:** And I think a good compass is just a picture of what your great, great, great grandmother was eating. What's a balanced plate that generally offers some well-sourced protein, some starchy carbohydrates, like a starchy tuber, and vegetables with ample healthy fats throughout. And that's usually a good way to give ourselves the nutrients we need for our brains to function well so that we can feel less anxious. And it's also a way to communicate to our body that we have enough. And I think that is itself calming to our nervous system when our body says I have enough of what I need, and I think that allows us to drop into a state of calm.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. I think people also don't realize that it's just mineral deficiency that can cause, their nervous system is not going to be relaxed because they need minerals for so many different processes in the body. And so, you're not going to sleep, you're not going to feel relaxed, and just the very simple, basic thing can be a huge difference.

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. And that's where, I mean, I love to minimize supplements in my practice, but I think that the modern environment just makes it too difficult to get certain basics, even from a nutrient-dense, diverse, real food diet. So, some mineral supplementation is often really helpful for anxiety. There's one other nuance around food that I want to bring up, which is that it's so hard to eat well in modern life. And for that reason, it can become somewhat anxiety-provoking to try to eat well. And so, then people even dip too far into, kind of, orthorexia where they're obsessively trying to eat in the right way and fixating on it and making a lot of sacrifices in your daily life. Saying no to social plans and things like that. And that's counter therapeutic. That just leaves our lives so oriented around how to feed ourselves that we miss out on what there is to live for, social connection, ease and pleasure.

**Ellen Vora:** And so, we all have to, kind of, strike this balance and it's not easy, but to not fear food, to not feel fragile, to nourish ourselves all while doing it with some looser grip and a feeling of ease about it. And I try to offer strategies to make

that possible. I feel like I've figured out a way to balance that in my own life, but I have a lot of sympathy for the ways that we all struggle with it.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And let's talk all about that about herbs and supplements. Do you have an appendix in the book that talks a little bit about that and supplements and herbs for anxiety? Can you list some of those and when you recommend them?

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. So, I always try to have a light touch when it comes to supplements, for so many reasons. And one is, I don't want to distract from the fact that I think food is the best way to get our nutrients and certainly the best tolerated by the body. And I don't really want to, kind of, play into green medicine. The idea that conventional medicine taught me a pill for an ill and sometimes integrated physicians sort of are like, well, it's still a pill for an ill, but now we're going to use Rhodiola or Ashwagandha instead of Lexapro. And so overall, I'm interested in de-emphasizing it, but there are things that help my patients. And it's very bespoke. It's unique to the end of an individual, but generally, on the margin, I think [magnesium glycinate](#) at bedtime is a really helpful supplement for just about not just people who struggle with anxiety, but for most of us.

**Ellen Vora:** Most of us are deficient in [magnesium](#). It's really because our food is deficient because our soil is deficient. So, it's very hard to be replete with [magnesium](#), and anybody I've ever tested, their red blood cell magnesium levels have been deficient. And so, I like people to take that at bedtime. I personally supplement my [magnesium](#) pill with an [Epsom salt bath](#) about once a week to just absorb it through the skin as well. It has other benefits. And then I found that [turmeric](#) is helpful for people that are inflamed. That is a nice way of interacting with the immune system at a kind of pivot point called NF- $\kappa$ B, which really, I find, helps calm the immune system down and point its target more appropriately. So, when inflammation is playing a role in someone's anxiety, [turmeric or curcumin](#) can be really helpful.

**Ellen Vora:** I certainly have had patients thrive with [CBD](#) compounds and hemp oil. I've had other patients be disappointed by it. So, it's a little bit individual, I think one hot take on that is that it's not like we can all expect it to work right away. So, some of my patients who've really benefited from it, it's because they took it consistently for about a month or two months and then really started to see it shift their baseline of anxiety.

**Ellen Vora:** And there are several others, but that's where it becomes really individual, kind of, what's the right thing to reach for. I think maybe the other one worth adding in a general way is the [B vitamins](#) and in particular, the [methylated B vitamins](#), since there's this disproportionate representation in anybody struggling with mental health issues, people with the MTHFR mutation. And so, basically, I like people to just take an already [methylated B vitamin](#), because if you have the MTHFR mutation, it's like you have a handicap around [methylating your B vitamins](#). So, have your supplement take care of that step for you. And so, if you start to take [methylated folate](#) and a [methylated B12](#), that can really support



neurotransmitter production and detoxification, and you can help with anxiety levels.

**Wendy Myers:** And what about GABA? I've had a number of friends with anxiety, and even myself at one point was taking GABA and was tremendously helped by that. Can you talk about that role, that supplement's role when it comes to anxiety?

**Ellen Vora:** That's a great question. There's a lot of nuance to that. I think overall I am very oriented around GABA in my practice. I think GABA is like this endangered species of modern life.

**Wendy Myers:** There's so many things that stress us out and things we're not aware of. And just use up all the GABA.

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah.

**Wendy Myers:** And we don't have any leftovers when we go to sleep.

**Ellen Vora:** Exactly. Yeah. And some of that's nutritional, some of that's the fact that we have compromised gut flora, so we're missing the Bacteroides species that help us manufacture GABA. And then we burn through it through our days. Alcohol compromises our GABA functioning, and benzodiazepines medications, like Klonopin and Xanax also dramatically compromise our GABA functioning. So, it's really hard to have healthy GABA levels.

**Ellen Vora:** Overall, what I do in my practice is rather than recommend people supplement with it, which I've had patients benefit from, I do think it's a kind of supplement where it's hard to do it well and make it genuinely lipophilic and able to cross the blood-brain barrier. And the ones that really do it well, I have some concerns about, so I've had patients really get like, I'm very interested in how people become physiologically dependent on benzodiazepines. That's a big focus in my practice. And some of the kind of GABA supplements are almost like second cousins of the benzos. So, like with the Phenibut, and I think it's called PharmaGABA, that might not be right. It might be-

**Wendy Myers:** No, it's PharmaGABA.

**Ellen Vora:** Okay. There's one that I think is actually now discontinued, like no longer allowed to be out on the market. And I'm glad about that because I had a lot of patients get hooked on it and it was an over-the-counter supplement. But it was just a little too much like a benzo. And so, I don't generally steer people toward the GABA supplements. What I like to do instead is create a diet and lifestyle strategy for supporting the natural manufacturing of GABA.

**Wendy Myers:** That's great.

**Ellen Vora:** And that comes down to fermented foods, and breathwork, and cold showers, and gargling, and humming, and toning the big old nerve function, getting better sleep, more nutrition. I think there are so many things we can do to support our GABA manufacturing and functioning in our body, and I prefer to take that old-fashioned route.

**Wendy Myers:** That's great, that's great. And so, what role does emotional trauma in parenthood, parent issues, and childhood attachment trauma, play in the genesis of anxiety? And then, does that play a role in how you work with patients?

**Ellen Vora:** Absolutely. It's so essential. And my book, it's sort of separated into these two areas, and in the first half, there's almost no mention of trauma. It's like the first half is, Hi nice to meet you, let's play Mr. Fix-it with all the ways your body's out of balance. Kind of deal with the low-hanging fruit, clear the air, get to a place of relative physical resilience, physical stability. And then it really just creates the stage for us to be able to grapple with the much more fundamental and psychospiritual reasons that we're anxious, and that runs the gamut. Someone can have no trauma if any of us really have no trauma but being that maybe they're not getting their fundamental human needs met in their current life. But a lot of people, the reason that they're stuck, and the reason that all of the different therapies, and treatments, and medications that they've tried are not really getting them all the way there, is because trauma is kind of at the root and still dysregulating their nervous system, keeping their limbic system where it's almost like the foot is stuck on the accelerator pedal. And then you just feel hypervigilant and a state of hyperarousal all the time, and perceived threat inappropriately where it isn't. And that makes it really hard to go through our daily lives.

**Ellen Vora:** And that's where I like work that focuses on regulating the nervous system and somatic-based therapies. Because I find that talk therapy, talkie, talkie. That's not really what access is, where the trauma is stored in our bodies. Thank goodness for Bessel van der Kolk, who opened our eyes to this. It's stored in our tissues. It's stored in our physical bodies and hashing and rehashing, not only doesn't get there, but I find can even be re-traumatizing. So, I like my patients to get into some kind of trauma-focused therapy and there are a lot of good ones, somatic experiencing therapy, EMDR, DNRS, these are a lot of acronyms. The family constellation therapy, there are so many different ways to work through what we're holding on to. And sometimes it's even what our ancestors were holding on to, which on a biological basis, impacts us epigenetically. So, we carry a lot of trauma from our own childhoods, from our lives, and even from our ancestors. And we need to work through that as well to shift the foundation.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. I love that you brought that up. I love, love, love because I talk a lot on this show about physical detoxification, but it's equally important because we know from the ACES study that over 67% of physical health issues are rooted in that childhood attachment trauma. So, it's so important to be looking at your trauma,

if you're looking to have physical relief of your health symptoms or issues. So, I'm glad that you're talking about that and it's part of your book. And so, where do we get your book? So, your book is, *The Anatomy of Anxiety*, where do we find your book and learn more about your work?

**Ellen Vora:** Yeah. So, you can really get my book wherever books are sold. And I love to always encourage people to support local book shops, to support black-owned bookstores. I think that's a wonderful way to just make conscious choices about where we give our money, but you can learn more about my work, I'm pretty active on Instagram. I'm @EllenVoraMD and my website is [ellenvora.com](http://ellenvora.com), and the book is called *The Anatomy of Anxiety*. And I really hope for anybody who resonates with any of these messages, that it can be helpful.

**Wendy Myers:** So, any closing thoughts or anything we didn't cover about anxiety?

**Ellen Vora:** I think what's coming to my mind right now, I really like what you just brought up, and it is interesting with the ACES study, this is in the realm of true anxiety, but sometimes those of us who get really focused on healing the body, fixing the body, it can almost be a diversion or a distraction from a more central problem in our lives that's really hard to look at. And so, if that sounds familiar, it's just worth slowing down. Maybe putting a gentle hand on your heart, on your belly, tuning in, and realizing how strong you are and how capable you are of facing what might be a more inconvenient truth that has to be grappled with.

**Ellen Vora:** And I think if there's one thing to prioritize above everything else when it comes to managing anxiety, it's community. And it's not always easy to do that, modern life does not make it easy to live in a community, but this is at the heart of our anxiety, we're hardwired to feel safe when we're really deeply held in a community and in relationships. And when we feel like we're not held, seen, witnessed, or supported, it can just leave us feeling like we're out alone on that proverbial savanna of evolution. And that's a very uneasy feeling. And so, just make sure that you're seeing it as a priority, any opportunity you have to choose people, to connect with people that you love, who lift you up, that gets prioritized over everything else I'm saying. Meal prep and early bedtime and really everything else is secondary to community.

**Wendy Myers:** Yeah. And I think the overarching theme is that there's a lot of things to address that are very simple, like getting back to basics that will ameliorate so many people's symptoms and get rid of 80%, 70/80% of symptoms people have, just getting back to very, very fundamental basics. So, thank you so much for coming to the show, Dr. Vora. That was a great show, I love your energy. You're just so grounded and the perfect spokesperson for anxiety. You're like the opposite of anxious. So, thanks for coming on. I'm Wendy Myers of [myersdetox.com](http://myersdetox.com), and thank you so much for tuning in every week to all the world experts that I have come on the show with because my goal is to really help you to feel good. You deserve to feel good, and it can be simpler than you think. So, talk to you soon. See you on the next podcast.

