



## Medicine Stories Podcast

### Episode 103 with Dr. Suuzi Hazen

Midlife Burnout for Women & Why Healing Work Can Make Us Worse

April 7, 2023

[Intro]

Excerpt from today's show by Suuzi Hazen:

*There's just so many warning signs that were showing up earlier in my life that I just ignored and kind of powered through them because I had no idea what to do about it. I started having low energy around age nine. And so I just basically spent my whole life kind of powering through for, like, literally everything I did.*

*(Intro music, "Wild Eyes" by Mariee Sioux)*

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[0:00:24]

**Amber:** Hey, friends, welcome to Medicine Stories, where we are remembering what it is to be human upon the earth in relationship to the elements that birthed the cosmos.

You're gonna hear a lot more from me on this topic, as I recover my energy, because I've been really deeply interested in it for so long: this elemental intervene between us, the earth, ancestors, and the cosmos, exploding stars that, throughout the elements, traveled throughout space and time and now make up my very body and your very body, and what happens when those minerals become dysregulated, how this is the foundation of our energy, wellness, psychological well-being, emotional reality, and physical health.

This is my interview with one of my closest friends in the world, Suuzi Hasan. We have been friends for 15 years and, in recent years, have just been going through the same thing with adrenal fatigue, complete burnout, energy absolutely tanking. And for me, it's gotten really bad in the last couple of months, and I'm really pulling back from work and a lot of things. So, as I'm always saying, I will do this podcast forever, I hope, but I am going to probably be slowing down big time right now as I heal.

So this is me and Suuzi's conversation, just a really real look at where we're at, what got us here, and how, ironically, so much of what has depleted and dysregulated our minerals has been doing things that we truly thought were making us healthy. And this is, you know, the deepest paradox for everyone really interested in health and wellness and well-being is that in an age of information overwhelm, we can hook into ideas that make sense to us, but we don't have the full picture. And in the long run, or even in the short term, they actually end up making us much worse.

We also talk about our paths forward: what we've learned, what we've come to understand, and what we are putting our efforts towards, as far as healing and recovering our energy levels and coming out of this state. Suuzi will be joining me on my Forest Bathing Costa Rica Retreat in late September — and I hope you can, too. We talk about it at the end here, and there's a link in the show notes to learn the details, if you are interested in coming.

I also want to let you know that all of our herbal body oils are half off right now. We do this big spring clean every year. So St. John's wort, the St. John's wort and Mugwort Cosmic Convergence Oil, our Queen of Heaven and Earth Breast Oils, Violet Castor Oil, and the Ancestral Communion Mugwort and Redwood, as well as As the Witches Teach Mugwort and Yarrow Herbal Body Oil is organic and or wild-crafted. Half-off, dude, that's a lot (*Amber laughs*).

And there is one Patreon bonus for this episode. It is Niecia Nelson, who was my guest on Episode 100, which was much beloved by me, and many of you, as well, interpreting my recent hair tissue mineral analysis, HTMA, results. Whoa, it is very personal. Looking at these results, especially with someone with a mind like Niecea, is not just a look at, well, these minerals are low, and these are high. It's a full — you can see your current state of health history, psychology, emotions. I mean, it's truly almost like divination, except it's not. But you do have to have like a trained and intuitive mind to put it all together in the way that she does while just looking at mineral levels. It's fascinating. So it's a video of she and I with, you know, the background is my results, and it's there.

And thank you so much for listening and continuing to be here. That's at [patreon.com/medicinestories](https://patreon.com/medicinestories). As always, all the relevant links and further resources for learning more about this is in the show notes, which you can find by scrolling down, wherever you push play, on this episode.

Alright friends, let's dive into my really sweet, personal, comfortable, flowing conversation with one of my besties, Suuzi Hasan.

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## [Interview Begins]

**[0:05:38]**

**Amber:** Hi Suuz!

**Suuzi:** Hi Amber. How's it going?

**Amber:** It's good. I love doing recording a podcast interview that is so low-stress for me. It's just talking to someone I've talked to for, Lord knows how many hours, over the last 15 years.

**Suuzi:** I wonder if we've hit the 10,000 hour mark? *(Suuzi laughs)*

**Amber:** Mm, we're experts at talking with each other.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, man, you know, relationships like this are such pure gold. And I feel so grateful to have this with you. And, you know, both of us are, I'd say both of us are, extremely blessed with the relationships that we have in our lives with our spouses and our female friends. And I know that not every woman has that. But I hope that our example shows that it is possible to have really good female friendships that are just very lacking and jealousy or negativity. Like we just, I don't know, we just don't have that.

**Amber:** Yeah, I know. I do see a lot of women online talk about how hard female friendships are for them, or just sometimes when I see the way people treat each other online, and like I'll often, like on Instagram Stories, express, like, "This is crazy what I'm seeing!" or sort of lack of logical thinking, or any sort of accountability. And people will be like, "Are you really surprised by this?" And I'm like, "Yes, because the people in my life don't behave that way."

**Suuzi:** Yeah.

**Amber:** And then I'm like, oh, but I guess for a lot of people, people in their lives do behave that way.

**Suuzi:** I know. I always come back to the example of low-rise jeans *(both laugh)*.

So this — okay, I don't think it's totally come full circle yet, but we're old enough to remember the early 2000s, the trend was low-rise jeans that were so low your belly button was exposed, your hip bones were exposed, even the top of the ass crack would be exposed. And women would even ride like a G string on top of that, which was just...

**Amber:** That's right.

**Suuzi:** Oh God, it was actually traumatizing. And the thing is, obviously, none of me or my friends did that. And I'm not necessarily throwing shade at the women that did, because I understand they're just trying to meet what they thought was a societal expectation or have a little fun or whatever.

**Amber:** Or look hot, trying to look hot.

**Suuzi:** I guess so. I mean, some of us thought we looked hot.

**Amber:** Thong song was all over the radio.

**Suuzi:** Eww. It's just some people, I just think some people they just do stuff that there's just kind of like a lack of judgement, or like individual, critical thinking. And we just haven't surrounded ourselves with that kind of people.

So, it's great. I mean, maybe just be weird, and pick weird friends, and you're gonna wind up with people that actually treat you well and respect you as a human, and understand that you make mistakes and forgive you, and are willing to talk about it when you have friction rather than just like, "Oh, next."

**Amber:** Yeah, I don't know. That's so funny that you bring that up. I remember that. And I mean, we were young, right? We were like 20, early 20s, and I thought it was such an absurd thing to do.

**Suuzi:** It was traumatizing on a low level, just like seeing women like that, especially because at the time I was living in Vancouver, which is so cold and rainy like nine months out of the year, and women were just, like, walking down the street with their whole kidney area exposed, and then often they were also wearing flip flops.

**Amber:** Oh gosh, yeah.

**Suuzi:** In the winter! Like, slipping over ice to like get on a bus. It was just like it was a mild form of self-harm, in my opinion.

[0:09:33]

**Amber:** Yeah. So this kind of, I mean, the reason we were just immediately attracted to one another's friendship is this focus on health, and this interest we both have in paying attention to our our bodies as ancient, homosapien bodies, and our relationship to the Earth and the Sun and prioritizing that over sick, societal standards that are making so many people ill like that. That is the the tie that binds us together.

**Suuzi:** It is. Yeah, I remember one of our first bonding experiences was childhood, like I was helping you with your child. And then — which is like such a feminine, human thing to do, you know, like, group child rearing, which we all fantasize about, right? And then...

**Amber:** And also at a party

**Suuzi:** Oh god, yeah, we were like leaving a party early. Like, come on, how is that? *(Amber laughs)* And then also the gathering of St. John's Wort on Summer Solstice. Like, I think we did that together very shortly after, or, you know, at some point. That was like one of our, I don't know, that was just a very special memory. I'll never forget it. I've done it every summer ever since then. And I don't plan on skipping a summer until the day I die. I'll be out there in my wheelchair, scrambling after herbs, being like "Hey, Sonny! Get over to that one! That one is looking lively!" *(Amber laughs)*

**Amber:** So, we tell the whole story of how we met in the interview we did, gosh, I don't know, four or five years ago now. I think it's episode 18. And I loved having you on, and thank you so much for showing me that kindness that day. But also, before we even met in person, your now husband, then fiance, Spencer, was telling me about you, like, "You're gonna love her!" And he was right.. But now it's

**Suuzi:** Wow, that's so cool that you knew him kind of. Maybe you even met him maybe before I met him?

**Amber:** I don't think so. No, because the kind of first time I met him, I was making a tincture in a friend's kitchen. I mean, he was like, "Oh, you would love my fiancée. She's moving down here soon."

**Suuzi:** Wow. That's so cute. I mean, those — I will let you actually like start talking— but like, don't you remember those times in our early 20s when everyone was just kind of like finding out who they were, and like learning new skills, and like moving across the country to be with someone? Like, it just was really crazy and stressful and hard, but it was also so magical and free and exciting. Like, it's a crazy time, man.

**Amber:** Yes. I'm gonna tell another quick story about Spencer, especially since you mentioned just like being your weird self and finding your people. At one of your, it was kind of a small birthday celebration for you a few years ago, I was standing in your kitchen with Spencer and another friend. And the other friend was like, "Spencer, how did you and Suuzi meet?" And I had heard this story from you, but I was like, oh, I want to hear it from Spencer. And, you know, he talked about how he was a musician, you were a music journalist, and you interviewed him. And he's like, "And I met her, and she was just so weird." (*Amber laughs*) And he loved that, right? He just, I laughed so hard. And I still think about that all the time. But he was like, "Wow, this woman is so weird. I can't wait to be with her."

**Suuzi:** You know, that's actually, I think, really powerful. Because if I had even been capable of kind of dimming my light and trying to act normal, he wouldn't have been interested in me, and then I would have missed out on this, you know, amazing relationship that I've had that like grounded me and allowed me to actually grow up over the past 20 years. And I just, if I could send that message to our listeners today, it's like: just please stop being normal. And I mean, probably for the women our age, they've given up already. But for the younger ladies here, it's like, okay, you don't have to aggressively like be a freak.

**Amber:** If you're not naturally. Just be your natural, weird self.

**Suuzi:** Just, yeah, so like, your natural interests, your natural ways you choose to adorn yourself. But you also do want to be really mindful of just don't get caught up in the hype and trends. Just be you and go deep with that. And you will attract the right people into your life, and you wouldn't attract them if you're being fake. Just, yeah.

[0:14:04]

**Amber:** So, despite this shared interest in natural health, you and I, now at 42 and 43, find ourselves tanking. And I want to talk about that with you because I just know so many women, probably especially over 35, but I'm sure some younger, too, who can relate. And so this is related for listeners of this podcast to what I talked about with Hamid and Niecia, specifically, with minerals, and our deep, mineral health.

**Suuzi:** Somebody just passed me a cup of coffee.

**Amber:** I love that somebody

**Suuzi:** I know. I know.

**Amber:** I love your kids so much.

**Suuzi:** Thank you, I feel the same way about yours.

Yeah, you know, it's kind of funny to me, and I've had people be like, whoa, like you're like this sort of, you know, you're a doctor of Chinese medicine. You are kind of like a, like literally, my whole life is devoted to health. It's like at the foremost on my mind at all times. But then, so how could this happen to you? But then I also think, how does orthorexia play a part in this? And for both of us, how does our extended time period as vegan and vegetarian play a part in this? I wonder about that.

Then I also think, okay, here we are 42 and 43, that six times seven, and women's lifecycles go in a seven-year round, men's go in an eight-year round. This is Chinese medicine wisdom, and it's very apropos. But so here we are, hitting six rounds. So I actually think it's fairly normal to experience a health transition at age 42-ish. If you're well, you should be able to weather that transition. If you're demineralized, stressed, exhausted, whatever, you know, you won't feel good.

**Amber:** Like I said, over 35, so many people start to notice things that 35, and that's also —

**Suuzi:** 35 is five times seven. And that there, I mean, one thought I would have is like, you know, during those years that we spent as vegan and vegetarian, honestly, I think if we had just been eating a fairly typical standard American diet, eating factory-farmed meat, going to McDonald's and getting a burger, I think that would have been more health-promoting for us than basically almost living on, like, kind of a starvation diet of like mung beans and rice and processed food, whatever. Yeah, I mean, corn, whatever, you know, just the so-called "healthy" but actually very unnourishing foods we're eating. I think we would have done better on maybe a standard American diet but minus the soda.

**Amber:** So you and I both have at this point labs that show us that we are in what I'm calling "late-stage adrenal fatigue." HTMA is hair tissue mineral analysis, and I have thyroid bloodwork, you're going to do that soon, as well.

So yeah, what I want to talk about is how, even when you are trying so hard to live healthy, I mean, I just I see this from people all the time online who are like "I'm doing everything! What isn't working?", is them coming to a place of understanding. And it's really cool because I've actually been like obsessed with how we are stardust for decades, elemental. Like I titled my podcast interview with Kimber Maulden, Elemental Intervene. We are literally made of elements. Minerals are elements. When our minerals are dysregulated, our cells can't hold whatever healing we are trying to do.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, exactly.

**Amber:** And you and I now have a clearer picture of what got us here and our path, so I want to talk about that.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, and also, don't forget to talk about our Costa Rica trip.

**Amber:** Oh, we will talk about our Costa Rica trip (*Suuzi laughs*), we are inviting you, listener, to join us on. And so I'm just gonna say here that this Costa Rica retreat —

**Suuzi:** I can't fucking wait.

**Amber:** We are, I am holding this, and you, along with me, from a place of total burnout and healing and relaxing. So this is not a like, "Go, go, go!" retreat, where we're up at 6am to do breathwork and yoga. This is like we're chillin' in the rain forest and connecting with plants and forest bathing and eating chocolate and sharing our hearts and getting to know each other. And so we'll talk details at the end.

**Suuzi:** I can't wait. How about like sipping like coffee grown on the island? I mean, fuck yes to that. Yeah.

[0:18:58]

**Amber:** Okay, so I'm just obsessed. I'm obsessed with minerals, and I'm seriously considering doing a practitioner training, not because I want to be a practitioner and someone who reads other people's HTMA's, but because the more I read about it, the more I'm like so fascinated, deeply fascinated, and I'm like, everyone I know needs this knowledge. Like, my six-year-old is going to benefit from me understanding this better. I told you we did an HTMA on her. We should get the results in a few days, but I cannot wait because I know she's minerally dysregulated. Any sort of energy issues, attention issues, I'm just seeing everything through the lens now of cellular wellness and energy.

Oh, and I'm gonna say, too: so I found Kimber Malden through you, we did an episode on prometabolic.

**Suuzi:** Oh, I love Kimber! She's so special.

**Amber:** She is wonderful. Even though, like, a general prometabolic lens is still how I'm eating and going to be eating, I did the same thing with that as I did with vegetarianism, veganism, keto, low carb, fasting, which was I just dove right into it, started applying everything that everyone recommends, without knowing where my body was at from a mineral perspective, without tuning in to my own self as I did it.

**Suuzi:** Yeah.

**Amber:** And I gained a ton of weight which also, I don't think I told you this, is reflected in my HTMA. There's a ratio between two of the minerals that's like "you can't metabolize carbs." So it's just been so fascinating. And then my thyroid labs are showing high reverse T3. So my thyroid is actually like producing T3, but then my body is stopping the T3 from getting into the cells, which is also contributing to the weight gain. And I think maybe you feel like this?

This how I've been feeling for the last, I mean, I could go anywhere from like six months to seven years, because it's just accelerated and gotten a lot worse in the last few months. I feel like my body and my health, my weight has been like a runaway train that I'm like, I don't know how to reel this in.

It seems like a domino effect going in every direction, and I don't know how to stop it, and I don't know what to do. But now I'm working with Niecia one-on-one, understanding mineral regulation better, and I'm really grateful to be on this exact same journey with you. So like, tell me a little bit about what you've been experiencing.

[0:21:36]

**Suuzi:** Okay, sure. There's just so many warning signs that were showing up earlier in my life that I just ignored and kind of powered through them because I had no idea what to do about it. I started having low energy around age nine, and so I just basically spent my whole life kind of powering through for, like, literally everything I did. Whether that was getting up with an alarm clock in the morning, going to school, which I hated, going to my various jobs, doing my schoolwork in university and Chinese medicine school, and just showing up for anything has always required a lot of, like, push-through for me.

So, I know that during all those years, I was really depleting my adrenal gland function. And I think what happens is that after so many years of that, then your thyroid starts to take, because your thyroid is kind of outputting other stuff to compensate for the gradual weakening of your adrenals. And then it's, I mean, it's just like you're running a car on fumes sort of deal. I mean, I hate all the car analogies with humans, but they are kind of helpful.

And so, during the COVID madness, I decided that I was like I was so grossed out by everyone being like, "Oh my goodness, I'm just staying home watching Tiger King and eating chips. And I've gained like 30 pounds, haha!" I mean, I just hated that whole dialogue so much because, you know, personally, I did not stay home. I kept doing everything that I normally do, because I had to, and I wanted to. And I was like, okay, well I'm just gonna run the opposite direction of that. I'm going to actually use this opportunity to lose these 10 pounds, because, at that time, I was about 10 pounds overweight. I never really fully lost all the weight after I had my son, Guy, who was eight, and it was pissing me off, and I basically hated myself. Which now, looking back, I'm like, oh my god, like 10 pounds overweight? Like, who cares?

Anyways, I started. So this would be like summer of 2020 and, at that time, my energy was maybe like it was still relatively normal. I could do things. I could power through things. I could spend an entire day doing an aggressive deep cleaning on my house. I could work in my garden for a couple hours under the hot sun. I could still do that kind of stuff. Now, I can't. I can't do anything like that, which is really sad. But I started fasting, and I started exercising a lot more. And I believe that was kind of like the final straw that broke the camel's back. And it was super weird. And like, it just goes counter to everything you read on the internet, you know, about weight loss, but it was like the harder I tried to lose weight, the more my body just started retaining water, basically.

And so, at this point now, 2023, I'm about, unfortunately, I really think I'm 40 pounds overweight, Amber. 40 pounds. I'm de-energized to the point where I might have about 20 minutes of energy at any given time. So I can, you know, I can get up and make dinner, then I'm going to need to rest. Then I can clean up for the most part, but then I'm going to need to rest. I can vacuum my floor, but then maybe mop it the next day, you know, just that kind of thing. And it's really insane because it causes this whole kind of stress cycle on my head where you're trying to, like, parcel out your energy

throughout the day. And I'm really trying to not stress out about it anymore. I'm just like, you know what? Here I am. Everything's fine, whatever. But yeah, I mean, I guess that's all I could say for now.

[0:25:31]

**Amber:** Yeah, years ago, like you were posting, you've posted over the years about stress and what stress is doing to you, like when you had the hives or like that breakout?

**Suuzi:** Oh, yes, like, that was another. Yes, that was another watershed moment for me.

So, I think my younger son was about three, and I was going through a super hard time in my life. I mean, anyone that's been on Instagram with me, like, I have not held back from sharing a lot of my hardships on there, which I think has been quite humanizing for a lot of my Insta friends. But I was going through like, literally, hell in my marriage. We were just constantly fighting, the intimacy was not flowing, and oh, my goodness, it was so bad.

And I had this one night where I was literally laying in bed, and my brain was just going crazy, stressing out about money, the relationship, how am I going to do everything I need to do tomorrow, just like going insane. And then I woke up in the morning, and my face was totally swelled up. It looked like a bee sting or a rash or a burn. I actually shared a photo of it on Instagram, which you can find if you scroll down my account to a picture of, like, my bed, and then the photo is like next after that. So just look for the bed picture.

But yeah, it was it was an adrenal response, where my body sent out so much adrenaline it caused facial swelling. And that's a known thing in Chinese medicine, like, we know about that. And interestingly, I've seen a handful of other women go through that, too. My liver pills employee at the time was struggling with it. She was struggling with it, like, on kind of an every two weeks cycle with her hormones, I mean. So I think at that point, my adrenals kind of just broke a little bit more.

**Amber:** So, at the time when you were posting that I was like, that's not... how can stress do that to you?

**Suuzi:** Like, how could you think that?

**Amber:** I didn't believe it!

**Suuzi:** I love that, Amber, I love that.

**Amber:** Because, you know, confession time: this is how much I was overriding my own exhaustion and my own stress levels. And I, you know, I think it's a way of talking myself out of I'm kind of feeling like that could happen to me, and it's from the same cause.

Like something Niecia said to me when we were, when she was interpreting my HTMA results the other day was that I've been out of touch with my true level of exhaustion. She calls it the pusher pattern. I have just been pushing through, completely ignoring my body's signals, in a state of constant cortisol flooding through my body for years and years. And but I think, too, that a lot of people think what I thought: when everyone has stress, it's super normal. Or even, like adrenal

fatigue, I've sort of like, eh is that just some thing someone says when they are just tired? But now you know, it's when your potassium and sodium levels are like...

**Suuzi:** Downregulated.

**Amber:** Yeah.

[0:28:41]

**Suuzi:** I mean, there's actually a whole school of thought, even in functional medicine, that adrenal fatigue isn't real. And even some of my, like, favorite, like paleo influencers, one of them, she's just, like, obsessed with posting about how adrenal fatigue isn't real. And I'm just like, you know, I don't know. I mean, that's fine, because that's her opinion, but like, just whatever.

**Amber:** Yeah, well, yeah, too, for me, one of my huge, really smart, herbalists with one of those crazy minds, an elder herbalist talks about it a lot, too, that adrenal fatigue isn't real. So I have believed that.

**Suuzi:** I mean, the thing is, are they saying that adrenal fatigue doesn't exist? Or are they saying that adrenal fatigue is a misnomer for what should be properly named as a different syndrome?

**Amber:** Yeah, I think what he was saying, if I remember correctly, is that like, people just put too much into that basket. When really, we don't know. It's been a long time since I read his essay on it. Now I understand that like what people see is that when these minerals are depleted, your adrenal glands aren't functioning: that's adrenal fatigue.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, I think so. I mean, I don't... For me, I'm not really ever going to go on the internet and say that someone else's experience isn't real and that they're wrong. Like, I'm just I'm not going to do that, but, you know, like, it's okay for people to have strong opinions that I may or may not agree with. So I don't really care about that. I just hope that, that's why I'm just a big fan of people sharing their stories online. You know what I mean? Because whether we...

**Amber:** The bigger picture: you're exhausted, our energy stores are just at the... and we know what it feels like to have good energy because we have in the past.

**Suuzi:** We have, yeah.

**Amber:** And our hair tissue mineral analysis for me and my thyroid labs, and I'm thinking yours, too, prove what we're feeling. And I'm really noticing how it took me having proof and having another human being sitting in front of me saying, "I can tell your feeling like this by looking at these labs," for me to be like, "Yeah, like, I am feeling like that!" I mean I have cried so many times in the last month working with Niecia and getting these results back, because I'm like, yes, this is how I've been feeling for so long, and I've just been fucking powering through.

**Suuzi:** I know. I mean, honestly, I have been, as your friend, like, observing you for years as you've built Mythic Medicinals and your podcast, bought a home, and dealt with everything you've dealt with, with caring for your elder family members, and bringing a new child into the world and

nurturing a marriage and a teenage child. And I've been, like, watching you, you know, as your friend just being like, "Oh, my goodness, like, this is a lot." And you've been very graceful, and you haven't expressed that you were very stressed at all until almost maybe like a year ago, you started opening up about it.

**Amber:** I admitted it to my own self. And part of so much of it, as I've shared with you is this is the sibling dynamic that was laid down between my sister and I from birth, where I'm the caretaker, I'm competent, I'm fine, I'm calm. And that has just spilled over into the rest of my life. And so, even my own mind, I'm like, no, it's fine. Like, I got it.

**Suuzi:** It's like, I'm the strong one, you know?

**Amber:** And I'm the competent, efficient, stable one.

**Suuzi:** Yeah. Yeah, well, fuck that. *(both laugh)*

[0:32:28]

**Amber:** I'm gonna read something else that Niecia said to me:

*The pusher pattern: trying to utilize the sympathetic branch of the nervous system to overcome a low metabolic rate, or inability to meet the energetic demands of one's life.*

So it's literally your, my, our bodies are not making the energy that we need. So we pump up the cortisol, get the sympathetic nervous system online, to give us the energy we need to do the tasks we need to complete.

**Suuzi:** Yes, yes, I am. You know, that brings to mind an example of that. Something that we probably both know, for anyone that's into circadian biology, is that you get almost like a rush of adrenal energy in the evening, maybe around 10. So, if you don't go to bed before that, you'll get this rush of energy, and it's going to be hard to go to bed until, like, 11 or something.

But something that I would do a lot — and I'm not doing this anymore. I haven't even been doing this probably for maybe two years — but I would go through the whole dinner drama. And this is something that I do by myself a lot because my husband is really busy. And he also, he's just not necessarily around for dinner time. And I'm not saying this in a blaming way, but this is something I do a lot. So do the dinner time, bedtime. And yes, my kids are eight and 10, but it still requires quite a lot of wrastling on my part. And then after that, finish that, and then almost just, like, collapse on the couch and be like, "Okay, I have another hour of emails and one hour of cleaning up the kitchen." And then it's like, almost just lay there numb until like 10, and then suddenly get up with energy and do a whole bunch of stuff. And then collapse in bed at like 11:30.

And that, to me, is such a typical pattern that I know a lot of busy exhausted moms have. It's so unhealthy, and I am not doing this anymore. I am just going to bed early and just like fuck-all-that-shit kind of vibe. And for any moms who are like, "Oh my God, that's me!" like, if you can, just stop that right now because this will not, it is so unsustainable.

**Amber:** Yeah, I'm going to read a couple paragraphs from from this website, mineralbalancing.org. This is part of me understanding what's going on with minerals and what people are talking about when they interpret HTMA results:

*To correctly interpret a hair tissue mineral analysis, HTMA, in his search to learn more about minerals, Dr. Paul Eck uncovered the work of soil researcher, Dr. William Albrecht. Dr. Albrecht had written about mineral balancing with soil and had developed the mineral wheel, which identified how minerals interacted with one another through their synergistic or antagonistic attributes.*

And I'll link to this in the show notes so people can see this wheel.

*Dr. Eck discovered that an HTMA provided much more information than simply the ability to identify toxic metal levels. He found that the levels did have some value, but what was most important was the balance of minerals and their ratios with each other. Dr. Eck realized that the HTMA was actually measuring the body's response to stress, and that rather than looking at the separate mineral levels on a hair test, all the mineral levels had to be interpreted as a whole. He began looking at a hair tissue mineral analysis as every single one of the minerals interacted with one another.*

Because they do.

*Dr. Eck found that when a mineral appears low on an HTMA, it may really be low. However, at times it may be adapting or compensating for another mineral imbalance. Therefore, to balance one's biochemistry, these adaptations and compensations would need to be taken into account. He found that by providing certain nutrients he could raise or lower other nutrients.*

So this is, like, super complicated. It's life, right? It's biology, it's chemistry. It's the interaction of different elements with one another. And I just found it so fascinating that Dr. Paul Eck was able to read the soil researchers' research and say, "Oh, I wonder if this applies to the human body, as well." And then, of course, it does.

[0:36:51]

**Suuzi:** You know, it really brings to mind what I do with goat farming and with goats. It's like all about their minerals, and any farmer knows that. Like, there's these very noticeable, visual signs of copper deficiency that we're constantly looking for. We are constantly supplementing selenium, we're always giving salts. Most goat farmers do free-choice kelp. And there's like, it's actually a pretty well-established science for goats. So I would assume we could do the same for humans.

**Amber:** Yeah, that's so interesting.

**Suuzi:** I know.

**Amber:** When Hamid was on the podcast, we talked about copper. And that when sheep herders notice that their sheeps fur — is it called fur? I forget.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, the fur would start to get kind of like curly or coarse or something?

**Amber:** I think it was a discoloration.

**Suuzi:** Yeah. Coppery, like a red discoloration almost?

**Amber:** That the mineral copper would have been depleted in the area they were grazing, and it was time to move on.

And I went to do this, speaking of copper, so I did an HTMA last year with Hamid. I was planning on doing one with him again this year, because I put that video of his interpretation on Patreon. And so I was going to do a follow-up this year. But since I'm working with Niecia, now in a one-on-one mentorship, she did the HTMA results interpretation for me. But it's really cool because I have a year later results. And what we can see is that my copper has gone way up in the last year like too high, way too high.

**Suuzi:** I will say for humans, our hair, just the visual look of our hair tells a lot about our copper storage. Like Hamid had mentioned to me, "Oh, okay, your hair is nice and curly. So if you have curly hair, and it's holding its curl, that's a sign that your copper levels are good. If you had curly hair and it started to straighten out that would mean your copper is depleting." And have we not all heard that story of people going on chemo and their curly hair goes straight?

I don't think it, you know, that would be relevant for people with straight hair, but also the color of your hair. Like if your hair starts to go gray that's your copper levels decreasing. I will say your hair is really holding its color really well, and that's a really good sign.

**Amber:** It does look like it on Zoom calls I've noticed (*Amber laughs*).

**Suuzi:** And in real life. I see it in real life! Just a little salt and pepper, but I like I'm like hyper-observant of my friends' physical appearances just because I think you're all so pretty. Just, I don't know I just think my female friends are just so beautiful, and I don't know. When we're hanging out, I'm always just like looking at you and enjoying how pretty you are in just the same way I look at like a flower or whatever. And so my observation is that your hair has not, like it's just holding whatever. There's a little salt and pepper, but it's not increasing.

**Amber:** Yeah, it is actually holding. Like I thought it might be rapidly graying, based on how it was going for a while there, but it does seem to sort of be in that pattern.

[0:40:03]

**Amber:** Um, well, you also, aside from women being beautiful, from your TCM training, you really use people's physical appearance to assess their health in a way that I think a lot of people would be offended by or just be like, "You can't really tell from that." But like, every time you've pointed something out to me, I'm like, you're absolutely right. And I see it now, too. And I think anyone really who's studied, especially Weston A Price's work on the palate and dental health, like, you really can get a very good assessment on people.

**Suuzi:** You know, I think people get really offended by it because they bring it back to phrenology, which was that kind of science of studying the human skull for certain patterns. And they put like, certain races in a much lower position to other races — and obviously, that's total bullshit. I mean, every race is different, has different and has different standards that you would want to look at.

But some of the, I mean, the number one thing that you look at to see if someone's healthy is actually the quality of energy coming out of their eyes. So it's not even, it's definitely not about their body weight. It's definitely not about how pretty they are, at all. It's about like, if you look in someone's eyes, and there's kind of like this soothing glow of someone who has what we call it in Chinese medicine, we call it spirit, if they're spirited, and it's not a crazy, look, it's like a soothing, like, “wow, this feels good,” that is literally the number one thing we look for is the quality of light shining out of someone's eyes.

So I think that's something that I do with my kids a lot is I'll say, “Hey, let me look at you,” and I'll sort of, like, cup my children's faces and just look into their eyes and really get a little read on it. And then I'll be like, “Okay, you know, I think you're hungry right now. I think you're thirsty. Let's make you some tea,” or, “Hey, you're doing really great right now.” Like, that's just — anyone can do this. You don't need any special training. Just looking deeply into your loved one's eyes, it is like soul medicine, and it will really allow you to just be a really wonderful support person, and them for you, as well.

**Amber:** That's so beautiful. So you're not looking for anything specific? Or are you? Are you just like however, your intuition is?

**Suuzi:** It's like, you know, the saying: the eyes are the window of the soul. And it's 100% accurate. I mean, there's so many sayings that we have in our culture that people think oh, they're kind of just poetic or whatever, but they're actually not poetic. They're actually based on ancient, indigenous — I don't even want to use the word “science” — but an ancient, indigenous understanding of the way our bodies work.

And that quality shining out from other people's eyes it's, in Chinese medicine, we do consider it the liver spirit, which is the seat of your corporeal soul, your earth-based soul. So it's like your earth energy shining out through your eyes. It's your earth energy. I mean, God, don't we all know that feeling of like, just looking at someone and having like, this super creepy, evil vibe. Like, go with it, you know, never override that. Or, you know, just that soothing feeling when you look up and your friend or your child or your spouse is looking at you, and you just, you know, take a couple of breaths, and it's like, okay, everything's gonna be okay. I mean, it's a really big deal. So, yeah.

[0:43:40]

**Amber:** I'm gonna read a poem that Niecia had posted on her Instagram last year around the time I first found her. This is by Alison Luterman. I thought of you, Suze. I thought of you when I first saw this:

*I stalked her  
in the grocery store: her crown  
of snowy braids held in place by a great silver clip,  
her erect bearing, radiating tenderness,*

*the way she placed yogurt and avocados in her basket,  
beaming peace like the North Star.  
I wanted to ask, "What aisle did you find  
your serenity in, do you know how  
to be married for 50 years, or how to live alone,  
excuse me for interrupting, but you seem to possess  
some knowledge that makes the earth burn and turn on its axis."  
But we don't request these things from strangers  
nowadays. So I said "I love your hair."*

**Suuzi:** Wow.

**Amber:** What is being described there, to my mind, is a woman in robust, metabolic health, well-mineralized, grounded in her body on the earth, not afraid to be weird.

**Suuzi:** Definitely making good choices. I mean, hello, yogurt and avocados, like, that's good choices no matter where you're at. Can't go wrong.

Yeah, her long, snowy hair, but she's, you know, it's not just hanging down there in a scramble; she's taking the time to do a nice up do with it

**Amber:** And you know that feeling when you're just attracted to someone you're like, "Oh, I see something in you, that I want that frequency around me. I want to join you there. What do you know that I don't know?"

**Suuzi:** You know, and we need to we need to move towards that in other people. And it's so different from like, I don't know. I mean, it sometimes it can be hard to parse that apart from jealousy. Do you know what I mean?

**Amber:** Well, sometimes jealousy is part of it. And like, yeah, that's fine. If it's not unchecked, unconscious, or you're like trying to hurt someone that you're jealous of.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, definitely. I mean, there's been times when I felt jealous of other women, and I was able to step back and just recognize they have something that I want, or that, yeah, and can I be curious about that, you know? I'm actually pretty good about that. And then there's been other times where I felt jealous of a woman, and then I've stepped back and been like, wait a minute, like, you know, really, all she actually has is like, maybe the body shape that I would like, but that's kind of all she has. She also, the other picture of her life maybe isn't what I need. So I'm just gonna celebrate that she has that and just kind of just kind of step back and just not even go into overjudging her or trying to figure out what's going on. Just kind of step back, admire what's cool about her, and just kind of move about my day?

**Amber:** Yeah, envy reveals what we want to us. And like, sometimes it's something we cannot have. But when it is, it's like, thank you. Thank you for showing me what I want. Now that I'm more aware of that, I can take small steps to move in that direction.

**Suuzi:** I love that. It feels so good. Rather than just being like, “Oh, you know, like, everything must be so easy for her,” I mean, I think now at our age, we just know that that is a fallacy. I mean, it's not easy for anyone. Yeah, just life isn't. Like, there's easeful moments and peaceful times, but in between, it's like it's just rugged. Life is rugged. So, yeah, there's no quick fix.

[0:47:49]

**Amber:** I want to talk a bit about how what I'm seeing now through my work with Niecia, of how my minerals became so dysregulated. And in the Patreon bonus, which is a video of her interpreting my HTMA for me and comparing it to where I was a year ago — and it's worse now, it's a lot worse.

That's why I remember what she says, not in this video, but what she had said in a previous call was like, going back to the car analogy, “Last year, you were running on fumes, but you had those fumes. Now the fumes are gone.” Like, I'm on the verge of collapse, and I can feel it. I can feel it. And I feel like literally I am seconds away from plunging over a cliff. But dude, going with my intuition to work with her when I did is pulling me back from that cliff. So the video is on Patreon.

**Suuzi:** And it is so good. It is so good.

**Amber:** You watched it?

**Suuzi:** Yes, of course, I watched it! Are you kidding me? (*Amber laughs*) It's good. I mean, Niecia is amazing. And just anyone can learn so much from watching that conversation, and it's, yeah, very much worth taking the time to watch.

**Amber:** Okay, so this came up before in the podcast with my interview with Dr. Elizabeth Wade on like birth control and cycle tracking. But I am now, like, everything goes back. The first turning point for me was when I got one depo provera shot at age 17. It did so much damage to my body. Very soon after that, and related to that, I went into hypothyroidism.

Very soon after that, I was also remembering I did MDMA three weekends within, like, a five-week period my senior year of high school, like ecstasy with my friends. And it fucked me up, and I knew it, but I just pushed through.

I didn't know what to do. Like, I didn't tell anyone because we didn't talk about depression and anxiety back then the way we do now. I was, like, deeply, I thought I was gonna die every second. I was terrified every time I was in a car. Every time the phone rang, I thought someone was gonna die. I was really, really unwell.

And around that same time is when I started having the body pain that I have had consistently for 25 years, which I now know is like calcium, I mean, can be many things, but definitely a calcium deficiency. So, and then I'm vegetarian through all this time period. And then around the same time, like 18, I became vegan, plus full suite of vaccines as a kid, eating processed, toxic food, tons of antibiotics. So like, here's this is how, there's many ways, but these are some of the ways that your minerals become depleted and dysregulated.

**Suuzi:** All those things, like when you take MDMA, you know that wonderful, like ethereal, I-love-everyone feeling? Literally, that's the feeling of minerals being metabolized out of your bones through your liver and kidneys. That's literally why all drugs feel good because they're just... that's how it works.

**Amber:** Say it, wait, explain that to me more.

**Suuzi:** Yes. Okay, so all of what I call that white powder drugs — and also also cannabis and mushrooms, too, and Bufo and whatever, all drugs — if you get an ecstatic, ethereal, psychedelic feeling from them, which they all do, that's the feeling of minerals being processed through your liver and kidneys and out into your bloodstream.

**Amber:** So is it like a mineral high?

**Suuzi:** Okay, I guess.

**Amber:** But then they're exiting the body in that moment, as well.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, they're metabolizing. And they're now going to be excreted through your breath and urine. So that's why they feel good, and that's why, you know, for anyone that's done, MDMA, Molly, ecstasy, whatever you want to call it, the hangover the next day is like so extreme. I think I did it a couple times after college, and I was like, never again. I can't do that. So when I think of you in high school doing it for three weekends in a row, like, that's really intense. But also, you know, sounds like a lot of fun.

**Amber:** I know. Well, it was least less fun each time.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, I believe that. And was there a feeling like the second time or third time, when someone passed you the pill, almost this feeling of like, "Oh, God, no!" but then taking it, and it's like jumping off a cliff kind of?

**Amber:** No, not really. I don't remember. I was... well, yeah, actually, the third time it was because the third time was at an actual party. The previous two times were like intimate gatherings with really close friends. And that was just like, awful. Wow thank you for that insight. And yeah, this is why like Hamid, Niecia, and other mineral people that I follow, talk about this a lot, how psychedelics are actually super depleting.

[0:52:48]

**Amber:** And I want to read this post, now that the conversation has gone there from Sena Maria on Instagram. Of course, I'll link to her, and everyone else. She actually lives here. Do you know her?

**Suuzi:** Oh, is her name Sena Maria?

**Amber:** Yep, I don't know her personally, but we've connected online but she has a great post called "Why your healing work isn't moving the needle."

*So the cell is the building block of all living things: they provide a structure for the body, take in nutrients from food, convert those nutrients into energy, and carry out specialized functions. Cells also contain the body's hereditary material and can make copies of themselves.*

Then she writes about “the current approach to physical spiritual and emotional catharsis”, so this is like the healing work that so many of us have been involved in, recently:

*Transformational festivals, high intensity interval training, plant medicine journeys, microdosing, cold plunges, sweat lodge, fasting, psychedelic-assisted therapy, cathartic breathwork, overemphasis on cleansing, peak experiences in somatics, Tantra, Kundalini, et cetera, keto and low carb diets, resulting in nervous system dysregulation.*

And so, compare that to a cellular, physiologic approach:

*Animal-based diet. eating every three to four hours, blood sugar regulation, remineralizing, sleep and circadian rhythm, minimize EMFs and blue light, appropriate body movement, lymphatic movement, home-cooked quality foods, rhythm and routine strength training, saturated fats over PUFAs (or poly unsaturated fatty acids), toxin-free skincare and household, resulting in nervous system regulation.*

*So our depleted cells, which is like most of us, are not capable of holding nor integrating.*

*So the healing doesn't stick, and the depletion continues.*

**Suuzi:** That really hits home.

**Amber:** I know.

*We need nourished cells to hold our spirit work.*

Like yep, yep.

*When cells can properly produce and clear energy, we have psychosomatic healing, happy hormones, motivation to exercise, we can gain muscle, a buoyant mood, detoxing is easier, spiritual insight, ability to focus, clarity, regulated nervous system, sense of purpose, strong libido and creativity.*

**Suuzi:** Wow.

**Amber:** I know. It's like, it adds like unpeeling layers, right? Unpeeling, unpeeling, unpeeling, unpeeling, unpeeling layers. And I'm like, I don't know if it's gonna get any more core or foundational than minerals.

**Suuzi:** Okay, I agree. And the one thing that still concerns me a little bit, or challenges me with the minerals, is that we have to take them in and digest them through our stomach.

**Amber:** But that's part — so this is like what I'm saying where it's like, the dominoes, and it's so confusing. And where do we start, and what effects what, is yeah, dysregulated minerals; messes up your digestion. So yeah, I mean, this is definitely a place where I'm stuck. But like, I know, Niecia is working with me on this.

[0:56:12]

**Suuzi:** I think also, it's like, you know, we can take, we just, we do not want to go into that paradigm of just popping a bunch of mineral supplements and thinking that that's going to Band Aid over the situation, you know. I've done that before, and it just does not work.

I want to really think about things like, you know, if there's any level of sleep deprivation, that's not okay. I'm not okay with that for myself or my friends anymore. Because when you sleep, your body actually gets a chance to like regulate the minerals that you do have. So I think that's huge.

And, yeah, that, and like being outdoors and just taking in natural light through your eyes. I'm just whenever I see people, I mean, just minimize your sunglasses-wearing, please, ladies.

**Amber:** Yeah, I only wear them if there's an insane glare while I'm driving.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, I think that's wise. I mean, I'm definitely a big fan of — because we have such extreme sun in the summer here — and I'm a really big fan of wearing like a wide brimmed hat, that sort of shading my face in my eyes, but I'm not going to shove sunglasses on under that. So yeah, taking in the natural sunlight, which gives your hypothalamus the signals that it needs to regulate the minerals and hormones that you do have. So, I think is just absolutely huge, and that's free.

**Amber:** Yeah, I'm so glad you and I are exploring that together, too. And I want to say, also, everyone that I know who is working as a mineral practitioner is bringing all of this in.

**Suuzi:** They are, yeah, they are. Yeah, I know Hamid and Niecia are really big on circadian biology, and that neither of them, or any of the mineral people, are like supplement pushers. They're not like that at all. I think it's that, for those of us raised in a medical paradigm, even though we kind of know that that's not the way for me, there's always still this little poll of like, okay, is there just some sort of little pill I can shove in my mouth and make everything better? Like my heart knows that that's not it, but my head still goes there. And I will say I think Niecia and Hamid are really amazing about being very mindful about what they suggest you put in your mouth.

**Amber:** Absolutely. And then sometimes they are necessary. I'm taking a few very key supplements. I could have never gotten my retinol levels back up by food alone with them being as low as they were. Yeah.

So yeah, thank you for introducing me to Sarah Kleiner and her work on circadian health. I bought her webinar, Harnessing the Power of the Sun, and it just like immediately answered all my questions about sunrise and sunset viewing, and just so many other things. And oh my gosh, did you see it's going to finally be in the high 60s by the end of next week? I'm like, I cannot wait to feel warm and comfortable barefoot outside, watching the sunrise at 6:30am.

**Suuzi:** I started doing Sarah Kleiner's, and if you can, I would definitely link her podcast or YouTube channel or something here because just everyone needs to know about her. She's an absolutely amazing women's health coach. She I think is one of the best women's health resources that I've seen, and I've been, as you know, like, we both been digging into this for years. She's absolutely incredible. So I did her leptin reset program. And I started Sunrise, sunset, outdoor, naked eye, solar noon, frequent light breaks throughout the day, blue light blockers after sunset.

And, I mean, it has been has helped me so much. And I'm excited. And during that time, we went through Snowmageddon up here. So it was like I was outside, sitting on my deck, shivering, looking at the white sky, which was allegedly sunrise, but like it was a blizzard. So I'm really excited to enjoy all this wonderful healing with the sun, when there's actual sun.

[1:00:28]

**Amber:** Also, learning in the webinar that I got from her, Harnessing the Power of the Sun, about how to really be synthesizing vitamin D. Because people can be getting all the sunlight, but if they're not doing key things, or are doing other things, that vitamin D doesn't get in there. And I am committed this summer to storing up enough vitamin D to get me through next winter.

**Suuzi:** So how exactly are you going to do that?

**Amber:** Well, I'm still learning from her, but like, I didn't realize that you need you need the light exposure in your eye in the morning to properly synthesize vitamin D from sun exposure on your skin later in the afternoon.

**Suuzi:** Yes. Wow. That is, I mean, it's just insane how much we are relearning right now that our ancestors just that was part of their life. Wow, she is so cool. I mean, Sarah Kleiner she also has a vaccine-injured 19 year old child. So, hands off to all the moms of vaccine-injured kids out there. I mean, it's so sad, but some of these women have become the biggest, like, warriors for healing us and themselves and their families. And I just take my hat's off to them.

**Amber:** Yeah, I mean, we could talk about this forever, it's kind of being on, we're lucky that we're both working with practitioners so we have guidance and a path forward. I'm about to take a big step away from everything that I've been doing for so long, and I'm feeling inspired by you, because I've seen you slow down.

**Suuzi:** Thank you! Thank you, Amber. I'm really realigning my life to a slower pace that I can handle, I would love to be high energy again and just kind of go, go, go, and creative all day, and whatever. But I'm not there right now, and I am not beating myself up about it. I am in a healing phase right now, and we'll see what happens on the other end of it. Hopefully, I'm gonna get better, but I just have to go day by day right now and get other people to just get help from other people. And, you know, there's a lot to be said for that. It's, you know, once you kind of turn around, and you switch from you're always the person helping other people, and you say, "Okay, well, maybe other people are helping me," and kind of relax into that, it's really nice.

**Amber:** Yeah, and I want to say to that, even with these practitioners and these approaches, it's lifestyle change, as well. It's not just get outside and take these supplements and eat liver. It's like

you've got to think about the structure of your life and what can shift to really hold you, and I can't, once I just started admitting to myself how tired I am, I am like feeling that tiredness so strongly. And some days, it's more than others. But some days, I'm like, I have to be in bed. I lied in bed for four hours in the afternoon today. What is that? (*Amber laughs*) It's that I have to be in it, I have to be in it.

[1:03:38]

**Amber:** Another interesting thing I'll say here too, is that so I got some desiccated, bovine thyroid supplement pills to help with my thyroid issues. But Niecia told me like this might actually your body might not have the mineral stores it needs to create the energy that this is going to push into your body from the outside. So you need to pay attention to how that's feeling.

And then specifically, once we got my HTMA results, it was like, yeah, it doesn't really look like you have the sodium and potassium to create the energy this will try to push into your body. And so I tried it for a while and I felt so much worse taking it. I felt so much more tired taking it.

**Suuzi:** Wow.

**Amber:** And it's like that's so fascinating because it's just like it's making the wheels turn, but there's no gas in the tank.

**Suuzi:** Wow. No wonder women in a similar health condition to us, like, just go from doctor to doctor and like get no answers, and wind up having to, like, figure this out for themselves in the alternative health space because I mean, I'm not sure if either of us are gonna wind up going on thyroid medication. I mean, I've had to open my eyes. I have opened my mind to that, and it's not something I'm going to reject, if it seems like the right answer, but I'm going to be extremely mindful of doing that.

Because, you know, Sarah Kleiner, herself, had low thyroid function, and she went on thyroid medication. And all that happened was her heart was racing, and she couldn't sleep. She didn't wake, she did not get more energy. She just got those side effects, which is 100% what you're talking about. It just started like revving the engine, but there was no gas in the tank. And so then she went off the thyroid meds and started doing this circadian reset, and was able to, using the light therapy and so on, actually get herself well again. I'm not against, necessarily, taking thyroid meds if they are the right choice for me, but I'm going to be very mindful of that.

**Amber:** Well, a very good friend of ours who we had sushi with recently texted me like a few days later that she had gotten together with a friend who was on thyroid medicine, like pharmaceutical thyroid medication, probably Synthroid. And she was saying, like, it wasn't helping. It was making things worse. So yeah, it's really something to consider.

And we are elemental means, right? That totally makes sense that when we remineralize and are living in harmony with the sun, as you were saying, it's just ancient: this is the basis of our ancestors' days, of their health, of their spirituality, that we can fall into alignment with our biological blueprint of health.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, that's so interesting, because I know that that same friend has actually been really hassling me to consider taking medication. And I've heard to death — and if you're listening right now, we love you, but I'm not against it. But it's like, okay, then we're also... I mean, you know, it's just it's got to be really thoughtfully curated, if that makes sense. And you know, this friend, like, she loves us so much. She just wants to see us get better, and she wants to see us get better fast. Yeah, I love that about her, and I want the same thing for us, too.

[1:07:17]

**Amber:** Okay, let's talk about Costa Rica! So you're going to — the backstory behind this. I guess I've said it before in the podcast. This company, Trovatrip, reached out to me, asked if I was interested in trying to lead retreats, see if we could get enough signups, and we ran a poll and this was the place that was the intersection of interest and affordability.

So it's one of the most affordable trips that they offer, and we're calling it the Forest Bathing Retreat in Costa Rica in Sarapiquí. This is from September 23 to September 28, 2023. And there are spots open still. It is confirmed we have enough signups now which is eight people, but it's happening for sure. I'm so excited that you're coming!

And so the activities in our days there are pretty amazing: an organic farm tour at Finca Eco Organica, a guided forest therapy session, a chocolate tour, a guided night walk tour, and a trip to Poza Azul waterfall.

**Suuzi:** It just sounds so perfect Amber, and I love how, like, every day there's something cool, but it's just like kind of a, you know, the mornings are — I think the mornings are all slow, right?

**Amber:** Yeah, so you can look at the like full itinerary and what happens each day on the website that will be linked in the show notes. But yeah, it's chill. And, like I said, they were like, "Okay, how many workshops you want to teach, we can book the space," and I was like, I don't want to teach any workshops" (*Amber laughs*). This was before I understood that I'm in, like, complete adrenal fatigue on the verge of collapse, but I just knew I can't have any expectations on me right now. That's how I feel: no obligations, no expectations, people reaching out asking me if I want to collaborate or do this or that or promote them. I'm like, "No, you don't want to rely on me for anything at this moment in my life because you will be disappointed."

And I mean, this trip, you know, at the time of this recording, is almost six months away. I think we will regain much of our health and energy, but also my intention is for it to be relaxing. Not exhausting, basically.

**Suuzi:** Well, and to me when I imagine like, you know, so I'm trying to imagine myself if I was like, a fan girl of yours — which I am, which I obviously am — but like, if I was one of your Insta friends or followers, and I'd been attracted to you for years and curious, I would be so excited just to hang out in the hotel lobby with you, and like, drink coffee and hanging out on the balcony. I would be so much more excited about doing that, rather than sitting down in a conference room and having you stand up in front of me, in front of a whiteboard and like, give a lecture of some sort. (*Amber laughs*)

And to me, I almost feel like this is, like what this trip is, it's almost like a much more new paradigm of learning. So rather than this kind of top-down, like "Amber's gonna give a lecture," no, we're gonna hang out, we're going to socialize. We're going to share stories from our lives in a very authentic, very relaxed, no pressure way. It's not like anyone needs to share a story. But since we're women, we're just going to talk, and it's going to be so sweet and powerful. And, in my mind, such a more healthy way to heal and experience each other, rather than a more forced scheduled, whatever vibe.

**Amber:** Yeah, heart share, story medicine, as it spontaneously arises and flows, with no expectations on anyone.

**Suuzi:** Exactly.

**Amber:** Yeah, I also want to say that, like I see Instagram posts of retreats and gatherings and stuff, and they look exhausting. *(Amber laughs)*

**Suuzi:** Yeah, I know.

**Amber:** I'm like, they all have spent an hour and a half on their hair and makeup, and their outfits are incredible. And they're like, "We went to this place to post for these photos," and like, this is not the vibe I want for this retreat at all.

**Suuzi:** Oh, my goodness. Like all the women are wearing those like wide-brimmed, felt hats *(both laugh)* — I'm sorry, but like, you know what we're talking about here. And it's like, that's totally fine, if that's someone's vibe, but like, this is not going to be our vibe.

**Amber:** Yeah. I mean, if that's your vibe, that's fine, but there's no conformity. No conformity is expected. I don't want anyone to have impostor syndrome.

**Suuzi:** Yeah no "I don't know enough to come," or if we're expecting anyone to be anything other than just, like, authentic. And also, you know, sometimes it's like, oh, you're expecting people to be authentic? So does that mean they have to, like, share everything about their lives, or whatever? It's like, no. There's levels jumping here or like, I don't know. It's just the only expectation is just show up and just see what happens.

**Amber:** Yeah, exactly. I think you and I, both, like, I've always had a wide variety of really diverse friends, like just very different kinds of people. They don't have to look or act or talk like me — or look, or act or talk like, like anyone. So, just wide capacity to hold folks where they're who they are.

**Suuzi:** Yeah, I think — you know, I think for both of us — we've just always been very curious about other humans. And that's something, that's a quality about myself that I really love, and I almost like cherish that more, and cultivate that more. It's just, rather than judging or trying to understand, why not just be curious about other humans and try to learn something from each other, or just enjoy the moment together.

**Amber:** Yeah, enjoy the moment together. Thank you, Suuzi. Safe travels to Canada tomorrow to see your family! Oh, and I love you.

**Suuzi:** Love you, too. See you soon!

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[Closing]

[1:13:40]

Thank you for taking these medicines stories in. I hope they inspire you to keep walking the mythic path of your own unfolding self.

I love sharing information and always put any relevant links in the show notes, which you can find by just scrolling down from wherever you pushed play on this episode. You can find all past episodes and our handmade herbal medicine at [mythicmedicine.com](https://mythicmedicine.com). We've got reishi, lion's mane, elderberry, St. John's wort, mugwort, yarrow, redwood. We've got body oil, sleep medicine, heart medicine, Earth essences, and more.

While you're there, be sure to check out our fun quiz, [Which Healing Herb is your Spirit Medicine?](#) It's light-hearted but the results are really in-depth and designed to bring you into closer alignment with both the medicine that you're in need of and the medicine that you will already carry and can bring to others.

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The music that opens the show is by Mariee Sioux from her beautiful song, "Wild Eyes." Thank you, my beautiful friend, Mariee, and thank you for listening. I look forward to next time.