

Speaker 1: [00:04](#) Okay,

Trina Felber: [00:06](#) alright everybody, Trina here and I am super excited to welcome to the healthy me and today I have a really cool guests Dr Chris and she is going to talk to us today about how to be comfortable in your own skin. It's something that we struggle with or I've struggled with. Um, and it's a daily struggle sometimes and sometimes it's just something that you're not sure how you're feeling and your reflection is something that you can look at every single day and you got to be comfortable with who you are. So we're going to be talking about that. So let me tell you a little bit about Dr Christina beyond. All right, did I say right beyond all? She's an MD, completed her doctorate in naturopathic medicine from the Canadian College of naturopathic medicine. She is considered an authority and the treatment of mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorders, and eating disorders, having overcome many mental health challenges.

Trina Felber: [01:01](#) Dr Chris is a gifted speaker and writer and has shared her personal story and philosophy unwellness with audiences across North America. Dr Chris has helped many patients achieve physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. She has completed three books on mental health as well as a 10 week course in person retreat on mental health. Her books are beyond the label. 10 steps to improve your mental health with naturopathic medicine, the essential diet, eating for mental health and moving beyond a journal into self discovery. And then also your course as well on mental health. Welcome Dr Chris. Thanks for having me. It's great to be here. Oh, thank you. Thanks for taking time out of your beautiful day. I can see the sun coming through the window, um, to spend time with us. So tell me, um, what is your skin story?

Dr. Bjorndal: [01:49](#) So my skin story was I had horrific acne in my teenage years and for that I was treated with antibiotics for about a year and that then I learned subsequently many years later that there's a relationship between the gut and the brain. So certainly after my, um, experience with taking the antibiotics, I then developed many mental health challenges and these mental health challenges were anxiety, depression. I got put on medication with that medication I ended up spiraling out of control into a manic episode. Was then diagnosed with bipolar disorder type one. I've had suicide attempts and actually this month is suicide awareness month, so it's fitting to be here. Talking about this. The other thing that I've had with my skin on, you know, just just on that level, it was actually a a diagnosis of skin cancer,

malignant melanoma and the interesting thing about was I don't talk about my.

Dr. Bjorndal: [03:02](#)

That experience that I went through and part of it, it was almost because I felt like my cancer diagnosis wasn't good enough, which actually speaks to this core belief that I have of not feeling like I am good enough and which is why I think ultimately when we're talking about the outside reflection and our skin it. It really comes down to how do you feel about yourself and are you comfortable in your own skin and how can you get comfortable? So it's really been through my whole journey of dealing with, first of all what was appeared on a superficial level, which was this acne piece, which that morphed into this mental health. I'm real, real, real huge struggles in that area that have now led me to the other side of, of being comfortable with not only myself but my skin and, and my mental health. Yeah. And I know myself as well. I suffered

Trina Felber: [03:59](#)

from acne as do a lot of people into their adulthood as well because I suffered with it until I was almost 40. And I always like to say, you know that your skin is, it's your first impression really when you walk up to someone. So it has a lot to do with who you are and how you feel about yourself and if your skin doesn't look the way you feel like it should look, it can really affect you. So tell me what happened after you took antibiotics to treat your acne?

Dr. Bjorndal: [04:29](#)

Well, I had a whole host of health concerns. After that I had, I was riddled with yeast infections. I would get urinary tract infections and then of course this mental health, what will actually, what happened was right after the year after, so this was, I was 13 with the antibiotics and then when I was 14 I developed an eating disorder and that eating disorder. So bulimia was that. I started that. Um, and again, not realizing there's a connection, nobody was talking about the gut biome misses in the eighties. So there was no, no discussion about that. And, and I chalked it up to actually, it was a way that I managed stress, um, I had developed a way of being in the world which was overachieving. And so I was overcompensating for this lack of self worth by overachieving. And we see that quite often. Um, so that, that's really what happened. And then as I moved on a few years down the road and the anxiety and the depression that, that came, which now again in hindsight I think was really what we refer to in naturopathic medicine. And in the more alternative worlds that, that was what was referred to as an adrenal crisis. Because I had been pushing, pushing, pushing myself, burning the candle at both ends. So I crashed and burned big time. Yeah. And um, you're right, I

- Trina Felber: [05:55](#) like that. It just me stop and think we weren't talking about the gut back then like it was, what are you eating? Are you eating too much chocolate? That's as closest to the gut we got and now we know so much more about acne and about mental health and about the connections and it's not just one faceted. It's multifaceted. So it's really cool that you brought that connection out and the thought that I know a lot of my listeners are, you know, twenties, thirties, forties, but can remember back when they had acne, you know, 20 years ago that we weren't, we weren't talking about the gut and mental health and, and things like that. What are the four aspects to address with mental health? So the four aspects are the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual
- Dr. Bjorndal: [06:46](#) specs. I mean, all of us have these four aspects within us, but our healthcare system is focused just on the physical level and when we talk about, you know, mental health or even if we're talking about skin, whether it's acne or Rosacea, whatever it might be, we always focus on that physical level so you know, and its achievements often, you know, what, what can we put honest, not really understanding that skin is a reflection of the inside. So, so that's, those are the four aspects I think are really important and I think if we're just going to stop at the physical level and, and don't get me wrong, I mean you can do a lot on the fiscal level, but I think when it comes to some of these deep, deeper conditions, we have to look at the mental, the emotional and the spiritual sides as well.
- Trina Felber: [07:28](#) Yeah, you definitely do. And I liked what you say because I always, when I talk about skin, because that's my big thing too. Um, I would say it's the largest organ. It's the only, it's the organ that you can see and it's very reflective of every other organ. So when your skin has a condition, it's usually trying to communicate to you that there's an issue in. A lot of times it's a gut, like it's either a food is in irritation, you know, your microbiome is not right. So it's the same type of thing. Yeah. Your, your skin is your largest organ and it's a reflection of all your other organs. So if you're not happy with what your skin looks like, take a deeper look because your other organs might be screaming out and you just can't see them.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [08:05](#) Yeah, exactly. So what we say is, um, the, you know, the organs of detoxification, so your liver, kidneys, colon, lungs, skin and lymphatic system. When things are showing up in a skin level. So exactly what you just said. When things are showing up on a level, it's because the liver, kidneys, colon, and lungs, they can't force. Yeah.

- Trina Felber: [08:25](#) You've already tried to out. Yeah, they're maxed out and it's a signal to. Because you can see it. Finally we got your attention. You're seeing the acne or you're seeing whatever the, the, the skin condition is now you're going to do something about it. No, no, not the topicals. Let's look inside. You know, it's Kinda like that. Now we've got our attention. Don't throw that on me. So yeah. Oh my gosh. What, what are the three macro systems that need support in skin and mental health?
- Dr. Bjorndal: [08:53](#) Yeah. So that's. So that's. So the first one is those organs of detoxification and the next area is the hormones. And then the third area is art, neurotransmitters. So those are the macrosystem. So all three of those imbalances in them can result in skin symptoms such as acne and they can result in mental health symptoms, anxiety, depression, lack of sleep, irritability, et cetera. And again, the Western system is on those, you know, it gets, it's still talking on the physical level. They're focused on with mental health. They're focused on neurotransmitters, but which you want to understand is it's imbalances in perhaps in all three areas. This is really highlighted to me when I did start regaining my mental health. I started, um, with the Diet and nutrition and supplementation and instead of being depressed the entire month and anxious, I was only half the month, which then pointed out to me, okay, well, I mean, I didn't have this light bulb moment at that time, but subsequent after going to medical school I look back and I'm like, oh, my hormones and my organs of detoxification were terrible.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [10:01](#) Absolutely terrible. So yeah, it's, it's funny. Like I, it's funny, I did an Ironman and uh, prior to the race, my skin actually was in a good place and um, and I was still taking some psychotropic meds at that time, which affects those organs of detoxification. But anyways, after the race I, like I just wrote, I was like, I just exploded in acne and I'm like, what's, you know, what's. And I said to my friend and she's just, I mean, you know, in a nice, as nice way as you can. She said, well, your toxic. Well that's true. She was like, but that was all inside of me, you know, at that point in time, it wasn't coming out. But it sure came out when I, you know, was out there sweating race for 14 hours. Oh my God. Will you talk about the 10 key areas?
- Dr. Bjorndal: [10:55](#) What are the 10 key areas? Yeah. So the 10 key areas to address those macro systems and, and the, and the four levels I was talking about are the foundation, I think his diet, sleep, exercise, managing stress, those are the sort of foundational for areas that I think people need to take a look at with respect to their health. And like I said, you can do a lot with diet. I mean diet got

me so far. Got, you know, it took me a long ways, but eventually I then had to look at other aspects of my health which are then, you know, looking at your thoughts and your emotions, how you behave and react in the world, the environment from three perspectives. So the quality of the air, food and Water Watch, like we were talking about, these effect the organs of detoxification. So you know, if you're not eating organic, mean somebody's burning a plastic bag and tim buck two effects the air quality that we're all sharing the air at build up a wall and protect yourself.

- Dr. Bjorndal: [11:50](#) We're all built sharing the same air. So the quality of the air, food and water from is the first aspect with respect to the environment. Second is the idea of Epi genetics versus genetics. Genes, genes load the gun. Lifestyle pulls the trigger. Yeah. The third concept is neuroplasticity, which means you know you are not fixed in any way, shape or form. So with respect to your skin, with respect to your brain, health, respect to your hormones, it can all change. So even though you are where you are perhaps today, that does not have to be the reality tomorrow. I, I love that
- Trina Felber: [12:21](#) you're not stuck. That that's so important for people to hear. You are not stuck. There are options, there are things you can do
- Dr. Bjorndal: [12:28](#) and you get told with many things that you are. Oh yeah, right. Because they say it's genetic and there's nothing you can do. And I think that makes you. I know for me that left me feeling like I was a victim who is hopefully there's a whole, there's nothing I can do. You mean nothing matters like this is it?
- Trina Felber: [12:46](#) Yes. Can you talk about epigenetics and basically what that means? I know what it means, but I want. I want everyone out there to understand what it means. It's a huge. It's really important because it gives you hope.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [12:59](#) That's right. So what it means is so, and it's interesting. I'm adopted so I cannot look to my left or right to verify the truth of this so called genetic disease that I have. I don't necessarily think I have it anymore, but the experiences I went through which were diagnosed as this bipolar disorder type one, which when I asked, well how, how or why me? They would say, well, it's genetic. So Janet, the genes, you know, the genes are not your destiny necessarily. And so the epigenetic piece is what turns that gene on or off. And if you look at research on adopted twins at birth, so identical twins, you would think they have the exact same genome. They get separated at birth and

they do not have the same health outcomes and it's because of the environmental influence, Mrs. What the epigenetic pieces is, what turns it on or off. So whatever lights a gene up is based on the environmental trigger. That's, that's epigenetics.

- Trina Felber: [14:00](#) And that's really important. And Diet plays a huge role in that diet plays supplementation or you know, your health, um, environment like you talked about. So, and I have identical twin, so that's kind of cool. Identical twin. What's that? You are an identity. No, I have identical twin boys that are able to have identical twin boys. Yeah. So it's Kinda fun to see how identical they really are. But I do know like epigenetics to me is just crazy because I know people like it's almost a cop out, like it's genetic. There's nothing I can do stop using it as a copout because it's just because you, like you said, just because you have the gene or it's in you, doesn't mean it has to be turned on. And if it's turned on you can turn it off there. You know, there are ways to manipulate your yourself or your body or your life or however you want to look at it to turn off because um, it's so important to not feel stuck because when you're stuck you don't look for options.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [14:58](#) Yeah. And I think, you know, the way for people to understand it is perhaps, you know, genes may predispose you perhaps, but they don't predetermine yes, it's true that that determination piece is actually determined by the environment.
- Trina Felber: [15:09](#) Let's talk a lot about that with my dental health as well. I'm, I'm big into dental health. I have a whole dental health line, but the same thing when people talk about all my mom's had cavities, my dad has cavities, we have bad dental issues, but the epigenetics plays a huge role in that as well because you don't have to, like, you might have the gene but you don't have to experience it.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [15:29](#) That's right. Yeah. And it's interesting like my. Yeah, there, you know, it's my family. The reason I was adopted is because my father's father died of Huntington's Korea, which is considered a genetic disease, which is like three is a neurological disease, which is like three mental health conditions in one like Alzheimer's, schizophrenia, dementia. So, you know, it's, but I still don't fully buy into that. It is genetic. I think the environment plays a role with that. So anyway, I'm sure geneticists would come out and maybe we'd have a great debate, but that would be heated up. But the last area I forgot to mention, so in the 10 areas is the last area is after the environment to me is basically love spirituality and basically wrapping everything up in love and compassion spirituality. I

think that is again, this big piece that's missing in health in and it's this connection to a higher power that, um, I think is really important and understanding that, you know, if we are going to shift the health of not only ourselves but the health of the planet, that we have to take a view bigger than ourselves.

Trina Felber: [16:37](#)

It has to be. It has to be bigger than ourselves. Yeah. Yeah. Of the 10 areas, what helped you the most feel comfortable in your own skin?

Dr. Bjorndal: [16:45](#)

So I think for me it really was looking at my thoughts. So these last areas that I just mentioned. So the thoughts, the emotions, um, and the spirituality piece as well as obviously the environment. Those are the areas. It's hard to say just one, but those sort of in combination, when I learned to shift the conversation from that inner critic to this inner compassionate side. So I was again, a very driven person but driven by negativity. Driven by you're not good enough, try harder, be better, do more. You're not enough, you know, study harder, run fast, you know, all of that. And that again, that can serve, serve people very well. But if it's pushing you all the way to the place where you want to take your own life, which is what it did for me many times, then we have to come back to something different if we're going to make change. And so for myself, it was really learning to a look at what these thoughts, look at my thoughts and be willing to

Trina Felber: [17:50](#)

look at them and then learn to shift that conversation inside. And I interviewed Gary Bishop, I believe is his name, the author of on f yourself. I don't know if you've read that one. It's really good. But yeah, it was a really good book and it opened my eyes to the conversation that you have. You're the only one effing yourself really? Cause the way you talk to yourself, if you. Once you realize that you are in a conversation with yourself almost from the minute you get up until the minute you go to bed and you stopped to realize what every thought is until you can. I don't want to say master your thoughts, but get some control over it. Almost all of them are negative, like cutting you down. You're like, no, why? You can't do that with you. That looks horrible. You look fat in that.

Trina Felber: [18:34](#)

You look back to the wrong color for you. Oh my gosh, your hair looks awful today. They'll look at that big say like everything that you say to yourself is so bad that no wonder why we're in this era, that depression and anxiety were so anxious because we're creating our anxiety and the way we talk to ourselves. Once you remove yourself from that and understand that you are talking to yourself and in conversation with yourself all day,

you have the power to change that which then changes your environment and your focus and your ability to do better and do better in the world and look to a higher power. So very true. I think mental focus for me was eye opening when I knew that I was the only one talking to myself. Not the only one. You know, obviously the one you're not the only one.

Trina Felber: [19:19](#)

You're the only one in your head. The only one in my head. As I, as I make up, I'm the master of making up the people that I want in my life, in my head. Like if I want to be that girl, then I make her become, become that girl. And so I believe in multiple personalities in myself and creating the ones that I want to succeed and replacing the good ones with the ones I just want to kick to the curb. So I, I love, I loved the mental health aspect of creating yourself, creating the best person that you can be because left to our own devices, you're right. Will we just want to be depressed about it. What people don't understand here is that as well, that's really important is that your thoughts affect the neuropathy, that your thoughts create neuro peptides and those neuropeptides effect of hormones and what gets produced.

Trina Felber: [20:04](#)

And so if you want to change how you look and feel, you have to pay attention to what you're thinking because that's your thoughts that can be contributing to the acne, to the depression, to the health concerns that are happening. I know and I, I truly believe too, when you talk about epigenetics, I think your thoughts have a role in that just because of like the neurotransmitters and all the different gateways that get opened and closed. I, I really believe that you epigenetically can control it, not controlled by that way, but, but I can affect it, um, just by your own thoughts. And if they're constantly negative, negative, negative, that's just creating stress and anxiety and inflammation, which is only going to lead down that some bad lane that you don't want to go down. So tell us like, your skin looks much like it looks beautiful today. You look great, you look gorgeous. You look beautiful. And uh, so tell us how did you get your skin better? What was that journey like?

Dr. Bjorndal: [20:59](#)

Yeah. So, you know, that's funny. When you said you had acne up until your forties, I remember saying to my mom went away and so it's going to get better. And she's like, oh, in your twenties. And then in my twenties, not better. My wife was going to be better. Oh, in your thirties, not better. Thirties, forties. I'm 51, so you know, I still. Anyway, what I did is, you know, one of the biggest things I did was a year long detoxification process, which included Saunas, regular frequent going three times a week for the sweating it out, right? So this,

because again, we store these toxins in our fat cells, so we need to release the accumulation and the reality is the planet is not a healthy planet to be on and when I switched to all organic, so all organic food, all organic. I'm not a vegetarian anymore, I was, but I don't eat a ton of me, but I still incorporate because of the mental health, uh, certain amino acids are essential and some of them you need to make your neurotransmitters and so if you're not eating them, you another reason why your mental health could be suffering.

- Dr. Bjorndal: [21:57](#) But anyway, that was a little aside. So cleaning up the organics from that perspective, not only just from a, the food, what I'm putting in, but also I don't put anything on my face. I don't wear makeup, I don't. Um, I don't use foundation, I don't even use sunscreen even though I've had skin cancer. So [inaudible] again, whatever you put on your skin, you're going in, it's like
- Trina Felber: [22:22](#) it's like a stomach in a sense. It is, it is. It's your exterior digestive system really. That's right. So you. So that when I cleaned all that up, I moved to. My husband makes essential oils and so in the essential oil process he is called, it's called. Do you know what a hydrosol. So we use
- Dr. Bjorndal: [22:43](#) from euro, so yarrow has antiinflammatory, antiseptic property. So we, I use the Euro I just saw as a toner and that's all I use and I don't. I stopped actually washing my face. I don't even wash my face at night time because the water isn't clear.
- Trina Felber: [22:57](#) I know I talk about water and in what you're doing in protecting, you're actually protecting yourself because you're not stripping away your natural biome. So that natural biome, when you strip that away, you're leaving yourself open to bacteria. That causes more issues internally and externally. Externally it can be acne, rosacea, things like that. But when you leave it intact, the problem with most skincare products, skin washes and and products is that they do strip away that natural oil, which then destroys your biome. So in what you're doing, you're basically protecting yourself less is more. And in an industry that wants us to believe more as beautiful, less is actually so much more and more beautiful when you go. And with my line, that's what I did. I stripped it all down to basic oils and, and that's what keeps your natural biome intact. It's what can hydrate and get through the skin.
- Trina Felber: [23:49](#) So yeah, actually I just used your uh, I got a sample from you and I just use the skin cleanser and I love it. Yeah. And it does, it does. It's made with oils and it doesn't strip away your natural oils so it allows your natural biome to stay in place. And now

we're all talking about the biome on the skin, just like the gut. It's so, so, so important. And I talk about the biome in the mouth. He like we, we are just a petri dish. And what we've tried to do her, we've, we've tried to sterilize ourselves like, that's right. I know, it's terrible, isn't it terrible.

- Dr. Bjorndal: [24:22](#) I, I heard someone say, I can't remember who it was, but he said, you know, we, we all think we're here to do all these great things and win Nobel prizes and what have you. But really we're just vectors for care and these bugs are out and they're not here. They were here before us and they'll be a long after us. So really we have more bacteria in and on you. Then you have cells in your body
- Trina Felber: [24:40](#) and it's survival of the fittest. The longer you live, the more bugs you're carrying. Right? So don't try and sterilize your mouth, your skin, your gut, nothing. Because it's only going to serve you. It's not going to serve you. Yeah. I was just going to say the last thing,
- Dr. Bjorndal: [24:55](#) see that was really important. That I think really turned around my skin health was also adjusting my hormones but also start to stop touching like stock picking. I was a picker and when you pick you spread. And so that was 30. So I, maybe it's not a best visual for people, but anyway, that's.
- Trina Felber: [25:13](#) No, I think everybody visualizes things because we all did it. Like we're all there. I'm guilty. Like I said, I was a picker to like I had acne scars like crazy from picking and yeah, I mean it's, it's what we do. You do what you're not supposed to, right? Don't do it. So you do it right. So where do you suggest people start? Where do they start with, um, all of this?
- Dr. Bjorndal: [25:35](#) Yeah. I think really if you're not working with a holistic practitioner or a natural pathic doctor, a functional medicine practitioner, a health coach, somebody, I think that's the first step is, you know, I didn't get here doing it all by myself. I had people that were guiding me and helping me along the way. So I think one of the first places to start is to start to take a look and make that phone call and set up an appointment. And if you don't know where to start, then I'm happy to direct you if you want. Or you can ask somebody, ask a friend, as somebody who who glows around you, Hey, what do you work with? Somebody, they'll probably be happy to sell you because most people are getting some sort of help, but if you want just simple things, I mean people. I would start with looking at the organic piece in your life and start with the dirty dozen, just google environmental working group, you know, the dirty dozen and if

you're, if you're eating those foods everyday, nonorganic switch, half of them make some sort of change because here's the thing, if you want to show up differently tomorrow, again, do the same thing you did today.

- Dr. Bjorndal: [26:41](#) I have to do one thing differently. So if you want to, that's one thing that I would encourage them. And of course water and sleep, diet, exercise, all those things I mentioned are extremely important. So
- Trina Felber: [26:52](#) just pay attention to how you talk to yourself. I think that from the minute you get up to the minute you go to bed, that could be life changing, especially for getting yourself out of a Rut.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [27:02](#) Yeah. Yeah. And I was going to say, when you mentioned that, when you said, you know, it really what I say to people is listening right now, you're at the mercy of your mind, but you can learn to manage this, right? And that's what I teach people is so, so exactly, just like you said, you know, next time you get in the shower, see what's going on in your head and if you're not just present with the water and the, so whatever. Hopefully you're using such a product of Trina's, you know, if you're, if you're already at work, then you're not in the present moment, right? Or if you're thinking negatively about your body, then that's not okay.
- Trina Felber: [27:39](#) They take it to a breath to experience the breath. I love Yoga for that because you have to be in the moment and it really does bring you in, channel your energy back into your brain and your body. Because we get, we just get out of our body and entire life and then we lose all everything. So you have, um, what do you have for everyone to go to, to sign up? They can get more information from you.
- Dr. Bjorndal: [28:03](#) Yes. Yeah. So there's a forgiveness meditation. That's what it was asked. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, I also have created a course if people are interested in taking another look at this or wanting to move down how to manage those 10 steps I was talking about, but I think and the forgiveness meditation for me was a really important piece of my healing journey. Not only forgiving, um, you know, I, I know especially with people who have struggled with their mental health, oftentimes there's relationships that become torn and tattered and you have resentment that builds and these things are toxic for you to be carrying onto and holding onto. So this forgiveness meditation is a, something for me that I learned from a Christiane Northrup and Stephen Levine's work. This is where I've sourced it from, but it's something for people to access and I really encourage

people to, to do this and use it as a, as a healing tool in your own home. You don't have to go anywhere and it's, it's beautiful. And I, and I practiced this once a week. It's something that I still do. So

Trina Felber:

[29:08](#)

[inaudible], I, I know we asked for forgiveness for a lot of things, but we rarely ask ourselves for forgiveness. So it's really important. Well, Dr Chris, thank you so much. You've got so much information and thank you for sharing your stories because I know it's not easy to get up and tell people you know, your struggles that you've gone through, although, you know as well as I know, um, when you're doing it, it's therapy for you, um, because you know, you're building up and helping other people. So that's why we do it because it's not easy to get up here and tell everybody you had acne and you, you know, I've suffered with depression and anxiety and things like that. Um, so I, I, I always honor you for doing that. So thank you so much. And we will have the links in the copy. So if you're interested in checking out Dr Chris's work and her forgiveness meditation, which I do encourage you to do, check it out, click on the link below. We might even be able to put it here in the video as well, so. All right. Dr Chris. Thank you so much. Where, what's your website? Where can they go to find you? Just real quick Dr Christina, C H R I s t I n a n and my last name Bjorn doll. So beingj o r n d a l.com. Awesome. Awesome. Nice and easy one right here. Thank you so much. Alright, thank you.

Trina Felber:

[30:32](#)

Thanks for watching. Make sure you subscribe to keep learning how to create your healthy self. See you next time.