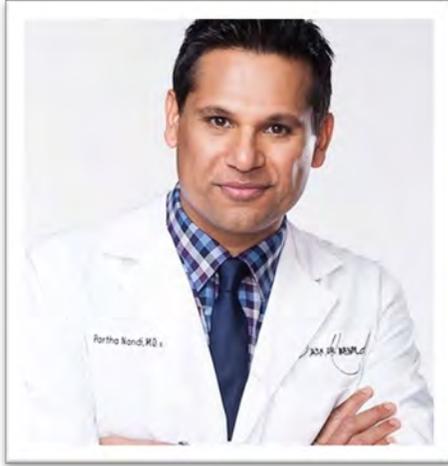




MEN'S WELLNESS SUMMIT



How to Be Your Own Health Hero

Guest: Dr. Partha Nandi

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Dr. Matthew Cavaiola: Hello, everybody. My name is Dr. Matthew Cavaiola. Today, I have the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Partha Nandi. Dr. Nandi is the creator and host of the internationally syndicated medical lifestyle television show *Ask Dr. Nandi*, seen in over 85 million homes daily across the U.S. and over 90 countries.

Dr. Nandi is the Chief Health Editor at ABC Detroit, a practicing physician, and a renowned international speaker. After immigrating to the United States at the age of 9, Dr. Nandi and his family moved to Columbus, Ohio where he pursued his dream of becoming a “Health Hero.” Graduating at the top of his class with a medical degree from Wayne State University, Dr. Nandi has been in practice as a gastroenterologist for more than 20 years, currently practicing full time in Detroit, Michigan.

He is the author of several publications in peer-reviewed journals. And Dr. Nandi has partnered with the Ministries of Health Jamaica and India and collaborated with the World Health Organization, meeting with Global Health Leaders and speaking at international conferences and symposia on his quest to improve healthcare quality, access, and advocacy to empower the world in his mission to “be your own health hero.”

In September 2017, Dr. Nandi released his first book with Simon and Schuster, *Ask Dr. Nandi: Five Steps to Becoming Your Own Health Hero for Longevity, Wellbeing, and a Joyful Life*.

Welcome, Dr. Nandi. And thank you for taking the time to meet with us today and give our viewers some great insight and simple ways to change their health and become their own health heroes.

Dr. Partha Nandi: Thank you, Dr. Matthew. Thank you for what you're doing. A lot of people talk about health. But people don't concentrate on the other part of the population, which is men. It seems like as a physician I see a lot of men that come in only because their wives or girlfriends drag them there.

Dr. Cavaiola: Exactly.

Dr. Nandi: I appreciate all the work you're doing. You're tireless in your efforts. So I appreciate the invitation.

Dr. Cavaiola: Thank you. Thank you so much. Before we get started, Dr. Nandi, tell us a little bit about yourself. Tell us about your journey and how you got into integrative medicine.

Dr. Nandi: Yeah, it's interesting. I was born in India, as you may know. And I came here when I was 9 years old. So my journey actually began at age 6. And the thing I tell people is that I am the professional bowler who comes to your company bowling tournament. I'm the guy who's the baseball player who used to play professional baseball, and I come to your softball tournament for your team.

What I mean by that is, I was born in a country where all the stuff that's alternative medicine (which is spirituality) is really practiced every day. So it's an everyday occurrence. It's part of mainstream life. And so that was a really big, big part of what I believe in and how I was shaped as a child.

So we prayed every day. People practicing yoga, mindfulness was all a part of the culture. So it wasn't something you had to go to a yoga studio and turn up the temperature to 110 or whatever it is to feel. It was just life. You just experienced it. So I grew up in that environment.

I was like every other kid. And at age 6, my world changed. I was a troublesome kid, giving my parents fits.

Dr. Cavaiola: You? You, really?

Dr. Nandi: [Inaudible] We all were like, as 6-year-old kids, you've got energy that's coming out of your ears. So I was driving them nuts until one day I stopped doing that. And that was kind of fun for them for a few days. But then it lasted for weeks. I started having this bit of joint pain in my ankles. And I was fatigued. And I didn't really want to do anything. I didn't want to eat, didn't want to do anything. And the only thing I wanted to do was—there's a sport in India called cricket. I just wanted to be involved in that and listen to cricket games.

And so my parents, as any parent would be, started becoming concerned. And they took me to regular MDs who didn't give them a good idea what's going on. Then I even went to alternative doctors. Dr. Matthew, I was covered in garlic for an entire day.

Dr. Cavaiola: Oh my god! Nobody wanted to be around you. That's for sure.

Dr. Nandi: [Inaudible] for an entire day. All in the hopes of trying to get rid of this. And I wasn't getting better. Finally, my mom and my dad said, "We have to take him to somebody, a specialist." And so we went to the specialist.

I remember this pretty clearly. Really tall man, very kind. But I didn't have any high expectations. I thought, "Well, he's going to give me something. It's not going to work. And that'll be the end of it." But this time, the doctor told me that you have to be admitted. Told my dad that, "He has to be admitted today." And it was Christmas Eve.

And I was shocked. I said, "Why? What happened?" And we went to the hospital. And for the next couple of weeks, I was poked and prodded. To me, I was terrorized. I was held down, screaming, all the stuff and given I.V. medications.

Well, it turned out I had rheumatic fever. And rheumatic fever that affected my heart. Probably if I had continued on, I would have lost my life. And I really owe my life to my parents who really advocated for me and this doctor, Dr. Chandrasekhar. I still remember his name. And without them, I really wouldn't have made it.

And I knew then I wanted to do something that resembled what Dr. Chandrasekhar and my parents did. And that was my first experience with advocacy and being a health hero.

So I pursued my dream. I became a physician and practiced in the suburbs of Detroit. And I thought I was a pretty good doc. I thought I was empathetic. I thought patients benefited from me. And I thought I knew what I was doing.

And so about nine years ago, the second event that really shaped my life was my dad, who was my strength, the same dad who spent every night with me in the hospital when I was 6, actually he had a devastating stroke. Dr. Matthew, this guy was a super strong, never been in the hospital, never really been ill. And now, he had a devastating stroke that really took him and made him bedridden.

And we went to the doctor in the beginning when we were in the hospital. The doctors told him that he would probably not make it more than a few months. And we wouldn't give up. Our family, including myself, my parents, became his advocate, became his hero. And he not only survived a few months; he survived nine years. I lost him just recently to the illness.

Dr. Cavaiola: Sorry.

Dr. Nandi: Yeah, thank you. But the reason I mention this is because when he had the stroke, I realized that we have to do something, not only just in advocacy. But putting your health first, putting your health in the driver's seat and your wellbeing to make that your priority. Be your health hero. Be a health advocate.

And that began my journey to really empowering patients. Listen, I still practice medicine. I still love to prescribe the medications they need and give them procedures. But I'd like them to be able to prevent that. I'd like them to be able to make their health so that at a much earlier stage when they come to see me, they've been able to prevent that.

That's the beginning and my journey that led me up to this. We started a television show based on some of the principles that we talked about. I [inaudible] one station in Detroit. And as you said, now we're in almost 300 million households around the world.

Dr. Cavaiola: Awesome!

Dr. Nandi: Thank you. It's only because the fact is we want to be able to spread this message.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah, and I think you brought up a great point in terms of advocacy. Not only do we have to be our own health advocates nowadays. But I think it's also really, really important for us to advocate for others as well. And I think that's part of our mission with the Men's Wellness Summit is to be able to advocate and get people to start advocating for themselves with their own health. I think it's great. And empowerment. So thanks for sharing your story with us.

Dr. Nandi: Of course. Absolutely.

Dr. Cavaiola: I really, really appreciate that. So you've been in practice for over 20 years. So what patterns would you say today are the most prevalent in terms of illness and disease that you're seeing?

Dr. Nandi: What I'm seeing is that people are having more and more chronic disease. So what that means is our healthcare system is becoming a disease case system. So instead of preventing things, we actually just seem to be patching them and then getting them on their way. So three things that I am observing.

Number one: People are really not doing the right things to be able to empower themselves. What I mean is what they put in their mouths and what they are ingesting. People think they can put crap in and get great stuff out. It just doesn't happen.

If you put crappy food and crappy things that are shown to you in beautiful forms, it just doesn't work. You have a nice fast food sandwich or whatever it is that's shown. And it's presented in such a way that it's amazing. But you put it in there. Your body can't handle it.

The diseases that we're seeing now are chronic but also appearing at earlier ages. We're seeing cancers at earlier ages. We're seeing diseases that really should be kept under control just flourishing.

So I think number one, we're not able to control what we eat. If you just drive and just stop at a stoplight, you'll see on your right and your left people everywhere just putting crap in their mouths all day long. And it's just an epidemic.

So number one, again, what you put in your mouth. And it's one of the pillars that we talk about in the book, which is trying to have the correct plan, not a

diet because I think a diet is a synonym for failure. But rather a nutrition plan that you can use every single day.

So we talk about it in the book and all of our material, how you're able to really eat foods that anybody can eat and tolerate, not going on the paleo diet or going on some kind of restrictive diet where people say, "Well, look at me. I am great. And so you will be, too." None of those diets have shown long term to really give you the benefit of really having a sound nutrition plan that we'll talk about. So that's the first thing I'm seeing with disease.

The second one I'm seeing is that in the Western world we are very, very close to our couch. We have a very intimate relationship with our couch. And what I mean is that we have taken movement right out of our lives. The reason the human body survived through thousands of years, we moved. We're engineered to move. And when you don't move, what happens is that this is going to come back and bite you. So I don't want people to think you have to run an ultra marathon or lift some 500 pound weight in the gym. But rather, just move. Move appropriately throughout your day. Make life your exercise.

The favorite stories I always tell of my patients and even people in my talks—one of my favorite hobbies is vulture watching. And people say, "Wait a minute. You're in Michigan. How do you see vultures?" I'm in a medical office building next to this giant gym with thousands of people working out there. But there is the very interesting phenomenon of these cars that are circling the parking lot, not once, not twice, but several minutes. Often, even more than five or ten minutes.

Why? Because they want to find the parking place that's closest to the entrance to the gym. They're these vultures searching for the least amount of movement to get in the gym. And that's what movement and exercise has come down to in the Western world. How do you short cut even getting in the gym? If someone could pick these people up, in their car, take them directly to their treadmill, they'd be happy.

And so that is what movement is. They go in the gym. And they pick up their big weight. And then they drop it. And they look around to see if people heard the big noise.

But the key is that—and you and I know this. That's not what really results in changes in your long term health. And so I'm interested in preventing the chronic disease that I'm seeing day in and day out, preventing immune

problems, preventing the malignancy. So the second thing that I see is that I see people lacking their movement.

The third is so important. It's another pillar for us. People are really having toxic environments. So not only are they putting toxic stuff inside their bodies; they're surrounding themselves with toxicity. What I mean by that is toxic relationships, toxic work environments, places where people are just getting so much stimuli that's negative you're body is responding to that negative stimuli.

So one of the keys is, how do you stop the noise? So many of my patients say, "Doc, can you give me a prescription for Xanax? Or a prescription for Ativan takes that noise away." And so what we tell them is, "Why don't you do something that your body already knows how to do, which is just breathing, relaxing, mindfulness, even prayer?" That's one of the big pillars in our book which is cultivating your mind.

And what that does, Dr. Matthew, as you know, is when your mind is in sync with your body, when you have mindfulness or whatever technique you want to use to calm the noise, you can really achieve better health. "What does that have to do with my diabetes or high blood pressure?" Here's how it makes sense, the fight-or-flight phenomenon.

As human beings, our bodies are very primitive. I believe, we're meant to just survive. So when we get a threat—when your wife yells at you or your girlfriend says something or your husband says something or your boss says something—your body doesn't know about all that. All your body knows is the impending threat. Something that is causing you harm.

So it immediately goes into the fight-or-flight mechanism. So that means that you are either running, you're attacking, or you're freezing. Not to the degree where there's a saber tooth tiger chasing you, but to a small degree. And that's the same reflex that increases your cortisol, increases your ACTH, all the hormones that worsen disease are increased. So when you have techniques that really calm your mind, decreases all the noise, that will help you to be able to achieve the kind of health that you want.

One startling statistic—and you know about this—is that every three weeks in the United States the same number of people that died from 9/11 die from opioid abuse. Every three weeks. And now we know that just with beginning level meditation, you can decrease the opiate dose by half. And at expert level meditation, you can even go down by 80%.

So again, it just gives you a glimpse that if you can master that noise, master that continued thought process, you can then result in decreasing the diseases that we're talking about that are ravaging our society.

If you look at hospitals, what are they building? They're building cancer wings. Why is that? Because we're continuing to increase the levels of malignancies, increase the autoimmune disease. And what I'm seeing is those three factors can really make a difference.

And I think that the other concept I'll give you is that when we start in our journey, when we're talking about fighting these diseases whether you're a man or a woman, you have to have some level of purpose. The biggest pillar to me, the beginning of all this, is to be able to say, "Why am I doing this? What is my goal? Is it to be a better parent, to be successful at something, or just to be around for my kids for graduation?" Whatever it is, that purpose is going to lead you to have all the techniques. It's going to motivate you. That's number one.

And the last thing I'll say is with these three problems that I talked about, which I think are the main problems that are causing people to have these types of diseases, is having a community or a tribe, which what you're creating with this summit, with people coming together. You're creating a tribe of people that are stronger together.

Dr. Cavaiola: Exactly.

Dr. Nandi: What we've forgotten is that when we have a tribe, we're stronger. Human beings have survived amazing calamities. Why? Because they have worked in tribes together. In Western society now, independence is just worshipped. And what happens as a consequence is that we've forgotten to work together. And so when you work together, everything that you do is better.

One of my favorite teams—and I don't know how many people in the country love this team. But the Ohio State Buckeyes. I went to Ohio State for undergraduate.

Dr. Cavaiola: The! THE Ohio State Buckeyes.

Dr. Nandi: The Ohio State Buckeyes [inaudibles]. In 2014 something amazing happened. They lost their starting quarterback, I think before the first game. And that's when their second string quarterback J.T. Barrett stepped in. But

before the Big 10 championship, which is the league that they're in, the second string quarterback, I think broke his ankle.

So they had the third string quarterback who has never been tested. Cardale Jones came in. And the world said, "Well, they're never going to be a powerhouse like Alabama." No, Wisconsin who was going to play the Big 10 championship, Alabama, and then I think finally it was Oregon.

So people had no hope. But guess what? Big 10 championship came. Ohio State won. Alabama came. Ohio State won. And then they won the national championship that year.

And here is what we found out. When you talk to these 19 and 20 year olds, they said something very amazing. They said, "It didn't really matter who was quarterback. Our tribe was strong."

And the idea is that whether it's health, whether it's your profession, whatever you do, when you're working together in a cohesive team, you are a force of nature. Every one of these pillars I talk about is important by itself. But when you put them together, you become a superhero.

And to me, my favorite superhero, Dr. Matthew, is Batman because I don't think Batman has any superpowers whatsoever. He trained himself really well, has a bunch of really awesome tricks. He's got a great car that's always banged up because he's using it. But when he's got all of his tricks going, he is basically unbeatable to beat his villains.

To me in health, the villains of health can be beaten with the tools that you have. It doesn't mean that you have to be a super person. You don't have to have any innate abilities that can just blow out these diseases. You just have to have the knowledge and all of the tools that you need to be able to fight them. And that's the key to really reverse the trends that we're talking about in current society.

We beat the big infectious diseases that used to kill us and not even let us get past age 40, even less than a century ago. But now, we have to go to the next step. How are we going to go to the next level and increase longevity? I think those are the keys.

Dr. Cavaiola: So, so, so, so much good information there. So to summarize, I want to talk about those three patterns that you mentioned. Number one was diet. Again the food that we're sticking into our mouths is not good for us. And

it's always surprising to me how we go through our lives blindly shoving food into our faces without thinking about the repercussions downstream, future minded about those choices that we're making.

Not only that, but how little we pay attention to how we feel from the food that we eat. It's one thing I always tell my patients. Pay attention to how you feel. Not that you have to be neurotic about it, but just pay attention.

Dr. Nandi: Absolutely.

Dr. Cavaiola: Number two was not moving your body. And I completely agree with you about the vultures. I see it all the time. I don't mind parking a mile away from the gym just to get in there so I can get in extra exercise and extra movement. I think that's great.

And again, number three that you mentioned was about mindfulness. And we'll talk more about the five pillars of health that you mention in your book. And I want to delve into those a little bit more. You've already touched on some of them. But I think there are some other things that we'd really, really like to ask in terms of specifics.

So you just have a new book out called, again, *The Five Steps to Becoming Your Own Health Hero*. So what makes your book stand apart from other diet and movement books out there?

Dr. Nandi: And that's a good question. I think everything that we talk about is knowledge that's available. The problem is that nobody really puts it together in a way that understandable or sustaining. So most books that are diet books almost invariably have you buy something after that. So you get the book, but you've got to buy my DVD or my program or some such thing.

We want this book to be a blueprint to give you an introduction to how you can really do things without having to have a formula. There's no real formula. There's no gimmick. It takes work.

When I talk about getting purpose, it's not like, "Oh, you go in there. And you go to a purpose machine. And oop! You have purpose!" It takes time—several weeks, maybe even months. But that training in your mind really pays off.

When we talk about these topics, I don't want people to get really bogged down in doctor speak. So the other thing is that it's easy to understand. And thirdly, anybody can do it. So if you're in China or you're in Peru or you're in

California, you really can accomplish this. The principles of what you need to eat, the principle of movement, the principles of cultivating your mind, achieving purpose, and having a tribe can be done anywhere.

Often what happens is some of these books are very restrictive. And there's always something that's going to stop you from doing something. And it's always supposedly difficult, that if it's not hard, it can't be good for you. I'm not saying this is a piece of cake that just happens overnight. What I'm saying is we give you ways in which we can really make this happen in a way that's sustainable and anyone who is watching and listening can do successfully.

We give you specifics in the book of what types of movement. We give recipes in the book that we've all created to make sure that works for you. So I think that's the principle difference.

And I'm also a practicing physician. Many of these books are written by people who are really not practicing anything at all. They're book writers. And they're great speakers. But I'm in the trenches.

Today, I saw patients who have asked me the questions that you're asking me. Patients are asking me every day. That's why I wrote the book. That's why I'm doing this. It comes from a need, seeing what patients are talking about.

It's great to be able to give them medicines. It's great to be able to do procedures. But what can we do to do more? Clearly, we're spending more money than any country in the world and not always successfully. So what is it that we can do to be able to get to the next level? And that's what I'm talking about in the book in a way that's sustainable and easy to understand. And without any diet or prescriptions in the sense that make it that you have to have some other plan or some other program to be able to be successful.

Dr. Cavaiola: That's great. That's great. So simplicity, I think, is always great. There's not tons and tons and tons of stuff in there. But like you said, it's a blueprint for people to start on their health journey to becoming their own health hero. And I think that's terrifically said.

So let's dive in a little bit. You talked about nutrition a little bit. So what are a few of the nutrition tips that you'd recommend to people out there to improve their health and longevity.

Dr. Nandi: The first thing I tell people, Dr. Matthew, with the nutritional plan is there is nothing you can't eat. They look at me like I'm crazy. They go, "What do you mean?"

I say, "You can really eat anything you want to." What you have to do is something you said that very important. Be mindful of what you eat. Understand how it makes you feel. What is good for my body may not always be good for your body.

And so listen to the signs. What I mean is if you eat something and it makes you bloated, don't keep eating it, saying, "I like the way it tastes." Understand your body is giving you signs. So you can, number one, eat anything you want to.

But the key is that you don't have to go to the buffet every single time. What I mean by that is when you go to a buffet, most people feel like their \$9.99 or whatever it is that you're spending that they are going to win. They are going to make sure that they get more than their money's worth. But what happens is that in the Western society we gorge ourselves every single time. We feel like the more, the better.

That whole mentality of supersizing everything is not shared by every society. If you look at South Korean women, now their average life expectancy to is to 90. We barely broke 80. What's going on? Well, if you look at something very simple in the nutritional plan, they have something called portion control. The Okinawans say that if you can fit what you're eating in your fist, ballgame. That's all you need to eat.

That's a completely different mindset than if you go to a steak house. Just the appetizer will be enough to do that. Half the appetizer will be enough. We just have a whole, whole, completely different mindset on portion control and portion sizes.

So the thing is it's not what you eat. It's how much you eat of it. Can you eat a piece of pie? Absolutely. But you can't eat the entire pie. And you can't eat the pie every day. Can you a hamburger? I would recommend not to. But if you want to eat it, don't eat the entire thing. Don't make it a half pound burger and go insane. Can you eat a piece of steak? But don't eat the big 32-ounce whatever crazy thing is they give you at the steak house that they'll give you a prize for finishing.

So again, you get a theme here. So you want to fit things in a way that your body can understand. And then that requires some training because your stomach has been used to having a certain amount of food. So you have to have a few days, perhaps even a couple weeks of pain, meaning that you're going to feel a little hungry. But once you train your stomach and your body to do that, understanding again, going backwards. What's your purpose? Why are you doing it? If you've got no purpose and if you don't have a why, you can't stick to any kind of a plan. And so I think it's really important to make sure you've got your purpose and why you're doing what you're doing.

To me, it's clear. I want to see my kids graduate from high school. I want to see them make important decisions with their kids and play with my grandkids. If I do not do what I'm talking about, I won't be around for that. It's just statistically going to be impossible. So I've got to do things to make sure that happens.

So the portion control, I call it, "Eat until you're two-thirds full." So what that means is that you don't wait until you're completely full to finish. Your brain lags behind the stomach. By the time your brain catches up to finding out that that's satiety, meaning when you're full, it's a little too late. So wait. Finish, not when you're completely full but when you're almost there. And again, remember that fist. If you can fit in what you're eating in your fist, that's about the size of your stomach. Remember that. So that's the second rule.

The third rule is, I think it's called the 80-20 rule. People get really bogged down with always being on a prescriptive diet plan. "I go somewhere. Can I have that little, tiny piece of choc? I'm going to explode or something bad is going to happen or I'm going to not fit in my whatever clothes you're in."

The key is that when you do that and you increase stress, then guess what happens? You release cortisol. What does cortisol do? Exactly what you don't want to do and exactly why you're not eating that piece of choc, which is to increase your ability to gain and keep weight on.

So the 80-20 rule: 80% of the time, do exactly what you're supposed to. But 20% of the time—your kid's party, your work party, you go somewhere where you can't control it, it's okay. Just do your best in controlling your portions. But even if it's weekdays or the weekends, as long as you don't go completely hog wild, you're able to try to live a life because what happens is that so many of us are one extreme or the other. There are people who don't care about anything they eat and the others who are always just so hyper about this that

they're losing the battle because up here they're so stressed. So I think those are a couple of tools.

Dr. Cavaiola: Great.

Dr. Nandi: And then in the book, I describe really about carbohydrates, what complex carbohydrates are, what simple carbohydrates are, the ratios of food that are needed. Listen, you need fat to survive. You can't say everything is no fat, and that's the key. So we talk about simple ways to do it. But there are a couple tips that I talk about that really work. If you can do some of the things I talk about in the book, any weight loss program can be achieved, as long as you don't have an underlying thyroid condition or something medical or metabolic that's happening that's stopping you.

Dr. Cavaiola: That's great. That's great. So nutrition obviously is really, really important. Portion control is really important. Not to stress yourself out is also really important. And again the 80-20. Don't stress yourself out about the food choices that you're making as well.

How about movement? How much movement do you think we should be getting daily? Or per week?

Dr. Nandi: What I tell my patients—a lot of times patients come to me. And one of the biggest impediments that people have, Dr. Matthew, is that they feel like there's a mountain in front of them.

Dr. Cavaiola: Exactly.

Dr. Nandi: So by the time they come and see me, they're not just 5 pounds overweight. They're often 150 pounds overweight. And they don't know what to do. They're like, "I've tried every diet plan. It has never worked. What can I do?" And what I tell them is that, "Just give me 5 minutes. I just want you to give me five minutes to start off with." And I tell them to give me 5 minutes of all the pillars, all five. And that'll be less than 30 minutes. But we're talking about movement. Just give me 5 minutes, even that 5 minutes that you can give me where you're moving with any purpose.

So what I mean is walk your dog. Go gardening. Go up and down the stairs. Whatever you're going to do. It doesn't have to be in the gym. If it's in a gym, that's great. But what you want to do is give me 5 minutes. If you can give me 5 minutes then instead of looking at the phone, that will make a significant difference.

And then I then tell them, “Next week, can you please give me 10 minutes?” And so on and so forth. Once you begin—to me the first step is always, always the hardest. And I think you don’t have to have any specific plan of movement that you have to do certain things—you don’t have to go on this type of horrendous activity that nobody can really do. You don’t have to go to a gym or buy these tapes. It’s that you have to make life your workout. So when you have a door that has a little push button that opens it, don’t use it. Pull that bad boy. And use that muscles. Use the stairs. Walk up and down and the stairs. If you have a desk job, stand up several times an hour. Those small things add up to a big difference, even more than your 20 minutes three times a week that you’ll do in the gym and do nothing else in your life.

This is the fallacy. People think, “If I go to the gym for 20 minutes, I have to do nothing more, and then everything is good.” The key is that if you actually don’t go to the gym at all—if you want to, you can—and you actually make life your movement, that has been shown to really maintain weight loss and, better than that, maintain longevity, maintain actual health and decrease your disease. That’s the point. There are no specific—you don’t have to go to a CrossFit gym. You don’t have to go to this specific yoga class. Whatever movement you want to do, you make sure you incorporate it in your life.

If you can do 30 minutes every day, you’re doing more than 95% of this country. But at least start off with 5. I don’t want people to think, “Oh, I have to do 30 every day.” It’s not that. Start off with 5. Gradually increase until you get to 30. And if you can, I think you’ll do really well.

Purposeful movement, though. Movement without purpose doesn't always help. What we have seen now is that when you do things that are actually yielding a purpose, meaning that you’re doing an activity that then leads to a goal or helps in some way, it’s always better than just mindlessly doing something because you’ve seen it on TV or somebody has told you how to do it.

In the book we talk about specific types of activities you can do if you need some help—and talking about what you can do with yoga, what you can do with aerobic exercise, the type of exercise that you can look at and break down what resistance training is. And all the types of information you need for movement is there.

But I’ll tell you. The overall goal is to be able to have you just incorporate movement into your life in a way that’s, again, not restrictive and that you can incorporate into your daily life every day. That’s what is successful. When you

can't do that, that's when it's short term. You'll do it for a month, maybe three months. Then you'll stop.

Dr. Cavaiola: And yeah, you see that oftentimes with people who start on these grandiose exercise plans, especially around the New Year. And a lot of them are just not sustainable because people say, "Oh my god! I've got to go to the gym for an hour and a half every single day with this trainer." And the majority of them fizzle out by March. And then of course all the vultures are gone. But I love the idea of the fact that you're incorporating movement into your daily life however you can, however it best fits into your plan.

If you're in Michigan during the wintertime, it's a lot harder to move. So how are you going to be able to move your body when it's 20 degrees out and it's snowing? So being able to be mindful about that as well I think is really, really important. That's great. That's great.

You talked a bit about tribe. I don't want to belabor that too much. But I think it's really important to have amazing, great relationships in our lives. Describe to us about how important interconnectedness is. You talked about independence. But talk to us about interconnectedness and why that's really, really important in today's society.

Dr. Nandi: Well, I think that social isolation, Dr. Matthew, is an epidemic for us. So what happens is that people just don't have any support they can turn to. They seem to be lost. So many of my patients, when I ask them, "Who can help you with what you're doing?" they don't have an answer for me. Many don't even have their nuclear family—their mother, father, sister, brother—that can help them.

The thing you have to understand is we're engineered to be this way. It's not like we have to rediscover it. It's what your body is expecting. It's what you've built up over thousands and thousands of years. So that interconnectedness is needed for your support.

So an example I give is, again, the Okinawans. They have a group of people that they consider their support—not their entourage, not a bunch of people that say, "Yeah! Everything you're doing is great. I love that idea no matter what the heck it is." So just your yes people.

Anybody who's old enough knows that MC Hammer had an entourage. He did not have a tribe. They took all his money. So he didn't have anything left. But if you have a true tribe, they'll give you the support. And that's this example

from Okinawa. They support you through your trials and tribulations. Again, we talked about the fight-or-flight response. When you have support around you, you know that people care about you and that your ideas are supported, there's accountability.

Dr. Cavaiola: Big time.

Dr. Nandi: There are people who can give you and resolve your problems. If something happens to your marriage, you're not alone. If something happens to your job, you're not alone. So that all physiologically brings down the noise. By the noise, I mean the cortisol level, the ACTH, the same story. Having that drive is incredible.

There was an amazing study done with Italian immigrants who moved to, I believe it was Pennsylvania, United States in the 1950s. And what happened was, folks were looking at heart disease rates. And they looked at this group. And they couldn't understand what happened.

Well, this is a group of immigrants who basically were the same as everybody else in the U.S. except for one thing. They were interconnected. They would cook together. They would walk home and talk to their neighbors. They would actually have big celebrations where they all came together.

It was a startling revelation that their disease rates that killed everybody else were a fraction of the entire nation. Hardly anybody was dying at a young age. If somebody did die, it was a complete shock. Whereas, the rest of the country, you had an epidemic of heart disease, epidemic of strokes. And the only—the only—factor that was different was a sense of community and the sense of interconnectedness.

And we now know that when you have that, your capacity to fight everything, including disease and your capacity to achieve—and that means not just wellbeing and achieve health but achieve all your goals—are increased significantly. It's what we have and what we lack now.

With social isolation, I strongly feel that this epidemic of suicide that we have is a huge part of social isolation and the lack of interconnectedness. If we had interconnectedness and this community, I think the problem with suicides would be addressed significantly. And it's just as we do this summit and you and are talking, at least 30 people have successfully committed suicide. That's how critical this problem is. And so that's why we have to think about how you come together as a community.

And what happens now is that you may be in a town where you can't really find anybody. You may be in a town as big as New York City. But you're as alone as being on Mars because there's really no connection. You're in a sea of people. But nobody is really looking at you.

And I think in that case, social and digital media can be a huge resource. There are a lot of problems with it. But you can actually get communities that are likeminded. One—I write about it in the book—is called the Royals. I think it's BeRoyal.com. But what they do, Dr. Matthew, is that they're in different parts of the country. But they support each other, all of their issues and celebrate their successes. And often, their relationships that they have in this BeRoyal.com are stronger than the relationships they have physically.

So there are ways to be able to get that community even if you're not physically there. And your community, interconnectedness, may be different at work than at home. It can be a different one for your team. So really a critical factor in everything you do, including achieving wellbeing and wellness.

Dr. Cavaiola: That is awesome. And I think you so beautifully said—we do need to rely upon each for support, for that interconnectedness piece for our mental and emotional and physical wellbeing. So beautifully said.

And it so often is the case where we live in these communities, these cookie cutter communities across the country. And most of us don't even know our next door neighbor. And I think the study that you mentioned with the heart disease thing just blows my mind. The people that have community, people that have a support system have less disease, period.

Dr. Nandi: Absolutely.

Dr. Cavaiola: Independent of anything else which I think is wonderful.

Dr. Nandi: Absolutely.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah, it's great. So we've heard a lot nowadays about mindfulness in today's world. As somebody who has lived this and walks the talk, what does exactly does it mean to be mindful?

Dr. Nandi: It's one of the most different things I've ever done. And so I'll give you an example. If you go to a party and you're talking to someone—and everybody's gone through this. You're talking to that person. And that person

is looking at you. And then all of a sudden, they look beyond you. And they look behind you. Why? Because there's somebody with a better plan or someone who can benefit them more than you that's standing in front of them. That is the epitome of not being mindful.

So being mindful is being in the situation. We're conducting this interview. And no matter what you do, people really, really have to fight thinking, "Okay, what's going to happen next? What's the rest of my day going to be like? What's this? What's that? And also, what's the consequence of my current action?" So if I do something, what will I gain from it. So there's this whole idea behind making every action count.

Mindfulness takes that back a little bit, saying, "Listen, you know what? Be present in the moment. Do everything you can to be there. If I'm talking to you, that's all I'm doing. I don't want to worry about the kids. I don't worry about anything else. I'm talking to you."

And guess what? I am not concerned about how that is going to affect my life. So very key is that everybody thinks, "If I do this, something will happen." There's always the domino effect, very sophisticated minds.

But mindfulness takes it back down. You will not worry about what is the consequence. There's a baseball player, Dave Miguel Cabrera. He plays out of Detroit. And so I always give the example to Detroit audiences. I said, "Listen, it's Miguel Cabrera. It's the American League Championship Series. It's the ninth inning, two strikes, three balls. And it's a contract year. If Miguel starts thinking about, 'Okay, if I swing this ball and hit a home run, we win. We go to the World Series. And boom! My contract is going to be whatever it is.' What are the chances that Miguel is going to hit that homerun? Not very high. What if he starts thinking about whatever the consequences..."

The key is that people who do well stay in the moment, understand the issue, understand the process, and just get it done. That's why almost every professional sports team now has a mindfulness expert. So it's staying within that system.

And again, it goes back to that same reflex I keep talking about, when you don't have your instincts taking over all the time. Instincts are great. I'm not saying to ignore them, but when they don't control the situation. And you are in control. And you can change that. You can change how you react to it. That is the consequence of being mindful.

Everybody has heard about Michael Jordan as a basketball player, arguably the best basketball player in the world. And so I like to use sports analogies because it's so illustrative of what we do in society.

Michael was a prolific scorer, scoring 40 points a game. He said, "I am Michael Jordan. I'm great. Give me more people around me to succeed." And they did. Did Michael win the championship? No, he didn't. He kept scoring. People around him kept doing things. And it wouldn't work.

Then he had a coach named Phil Jackson. And Phil Jackson said, "Michael, here is a book about meditation. We want you to be mindful."

Michael says, "I'm a basketball player. I score 40 points a game. Get away from these books. I don't need that." Then, doesn't win the championship. He says, "Okay, maybe I'll take a look."

And when he embraced meditation, mindfulness, cultivating the mind, guess what happened? Michael didn't win one championship. He won two. He won three. He won four, five, and six. Simple example. And you'll see it all over the place.

When you cultivate your mind, whether it be with mindfulness, whether it be with yoga, whether it be with prayer, whether it be just gardening every day—doing something to decrease that noise so then you can really use your capacity—that not only helps you achieve winning basketball championships; it goes back to stop your disease capacity of your body. The ravaging of the disease can be decreased, again, from the same system of decreasing the cortisol, the ACTH, all of the mechanisms. Inflammation at a microscopic level begins when you have this low level of this fight-or-flight phenomenon with cortisol. And then if you stop it dead in its tracks, one of the biggest causes of all disease, infection, starts to go down and dissipate. That's where you really get your endgame.

When people ask me, "Why should I do meditation instead of the Xanax?" that's why. Because you can use your own body's system with no side effects. Imagine that. Covered by every insurance plan. Doing meditation and mindfulness for yourself really could work. And that's how I tell people.

And again, I use the same, "Give me 5 minutes" because I always at least do 5 minutes even if I'm traveling, even if I'm dead tired. Just give me 5 minutes. It calms the thoughts. If I can do 30, 45, absolutely. Great. And that's my goal.

But at least 5 minutes. If you do that, I think it'll make a huge difference in your life.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yes, you mentioned a few simple, really great daily practices that you could incorporate—prayer, meditation, breathing, yoga. All those things are amazing. And I think people have this construct that meditation has to be this really, really challenging, different, complicated thing. But like you said, sometimes just 5 minutes a day can help to bring you back to that space that you ultimately need to be to be mindful. And I think that's so beautifully said.

Do you have any good techniques or places where you send people to help them meditate if they've never done it before?

Dr. Nandi: A lot of my patients are patients that don't have a lot of resources. So I just tell them any quiet place that they can find in their house would be great because some people are single moms with two children, whatever the case. I say, "Go to some place where you find your place." All of us know somewhere in your house where you are the most comfortable. If you can be the most comfortable in that place and if it's your prayer room and pray, do that. You don't have to be in an uncomfortable, pretzel position on top of a mountain, going "Ohm." That's not it because you will be anything but relaxed there.

Dr. Cavaiola: Exactly.

Dr. Nandi: People do all these crazy things because they've heard somebody do it. Find the comfort within yourself. Find the place where you know you're comfortable, wherever that is. Spend a few minutes there where you just talk about yourself and do one simple exercise which is just breathe.

And I tell people, "Just follow the breath from your nostrils all the way into your lungs."

And they go, "Well, does that help you get more air?"

I said, "No, it's not about getting more air. It's about thinking about something else except your problems and all the crap that's going on." When you concentrate on your breath, you have less time to concentrate on all the craziness that's around you, whether it's what you watched on the news or what happened at school.

I think that's the key. Again, it's all about simplicity. It's all about making it achievable. There are people all over the world who are doing this. And they're not in any fancy studio. They're not looking at any tapes, doing any online courses. They're doing it all within their own parameters, within their own environment. And they're successful. And they're happy. And their longevity is increasing.

Women in South Korea, imagine living to age 90. Whereas people in Santa Barbara are not even making it to 70. Come on! It's not the beautiful stuff that's around you. It's what's inside and what you make it. That's the key.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah. Yeah, maybe they need to be on the beach meditating. That would be a better idea. Or just walking by the beach.

Dr. Nandi: Not worrying about the stuff that's around them.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah, exactly.

Dr. Nandi: And really going inward and saying, "What is it?" All of us know what makes us happy. It's just are you going to be courageous enough to admit that to yourself? And that's a whole different—we can talk about that for a long time. But the courage to take the risk, to say, "I know this is what I want. Am I going to go for it?" Within reason. If you have kids to feed and responsibilities, I get it.

But within that frame, understand what it is your purpose is, what it is that makes you happy, what it is that makes you tick. When you have that figured out, ballgame! You know what to do. And you go do it.

I don't have to tell my daughter ever to charge her phone. Ever! That is second nature to her. Why? Because she's got purpose. If I don't have my phone charged, I can't do anything with that phone the next day. Imagine the phone is your body. If you don't do something to that body, you have to understand. You'll not be able to use it. It's got to become second nature. And you have to understand the why. Once you do that, I think the rest will follow.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah. Let's dive in now. We've mentioned the phrase "health hero." This is you *crème de la crème*. What does it mean to be a health hero?

Dr. Nandi: That's a great question. To me, a health hero is somebody who really incorporates and makes health and wellbeing their number one priority. When I talk to kids, and I do talks, I ask them, "So who is your hero? Who do

you want to be?” And I hear, “I want to be an actor.” “I want to be Taylor Swift.” “I want to be Justin Bieber.”

Dr. Cavaiola: I want to be Dr. Nandi!

Dr. Nandi: [Inaudible] LeBron James, a sports hero. But I say, “Take a step back. How about making yourself the hero of your life? And then one step further, how about making your health and wellbeing the number one priority?”

And I take a step back. And I say, “Really, when you do that, then you can incorporate your goals and make that your number one priority.” So I tell people, “When you don’t have your health, you have nothing.” When I was 6 years old, I didn’t have my health. I didn’t want to do anything. All the things that mattered, stopped mattering. So the number one thing of being a health hero is to be your own health advocate, understanding what it takes to make those dreams of yours from now until whenever you feel like you want to leave this planet. All of us have ideas.

It’s difficult when you pin people down and say, “Hey, how long do you want to be here?” Most of us want to be here a long time. But during that time, whoever wants to say, “I want to be disabled or have chronic illness.” Well, if that’s the case, you have to take matters in your hands.

One of the things we talk about in the book is that we believe now that you are not your genes. What a concept! That you are not destined for failure just because your mom, your dad, your cousin, whoever had a problem whether it’s cancer, diabetes. You don’t have to succumb to that. A health hero understands that you can make simple changes to really incorporate the best that you can. And one simple movement we talked about can do that—the movement from the plate to your mouth, such a huge, huge tool. That fork is the biggest tool.

Dr. Mark Hyman is a very successful doctor. And he talks about that. The most important tool you have to fight against disease is really not genetic testing, but it’s the fork.

So to me, a health hero incorporates all these techniques. And I talk about five pillars. And these pillars can really help that health hero to take their goals—once you have incorporated the why, then you can talk about movement, talk about getting the right nutritional plans, then going and trying to use your mind, cultivating your mind and taking it to the next level and using your

community to really become, as you say, interconnected and make that successful.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah, that's great. That's great. Tell us a little bit about inflammation. You mentioned inflammation a little while ago with respect to cortisol. So what do you tell people? Where do you start with these people in your practice when they come in with longstanding, severe, chronic disease?

Dr. Nandi: So some of my patients have inflammatory bowel disease. Some people have chronic pain. Some people have fibromyalgia. Some people have autoimmune disease. And some people even have heart disease. Now, we know that all these diseases have something very much in common. It's inflammation.

So what that means in English is that your body has all these cells within it that are supposed to be helping you do what? To fight infection. When those cells are actually attacking you and irritating your tissues, something amazing happens, something that makes it incredibly difficult for you to have health. So that's inflammation within your body.

Whether your body is causing itself that inflammation which is autoimmune disease or inflammation because of what you're putting in your body, the factors you're giving it, either psychological stress, giving yourself a toxic environment, the key is that you have to be able to decrease that. And of course, you can take a lot of medications if it's severe. But how do we then prevent it?

And what I tell them is that if we can follow these pillars, your body can actually prevent this inflammation to begin with. And I think that the endgame of all this is trying to prevent that whole cascade of cortisol and ACTH. I'm not saying that's the only thing. And when you look at the factors, when you go down to it, if you can decrease that, you can decrease/prevent so many diseases.

And so what I tell them is that if you can start off by just doing the right thing with your food, doing the right thing with your movement, having spirituality, and having a community, and having a purposeful life, that will take so many steps in getting to the end goal of having a disease-free life.

And then if you're talking about longevity, I think the sky is the limit. The way our technology is now, we've been able to fight off the diseases that used to kill us. Why not have people live to their hundreds? But not to 100 in the nursing

home with feeding tubes and not knowing anything of what's going on. You want to be able to live in a way that you're incorporating your life with your family, where you're playing with your kids, giving the wisdom. And that is possible with using these pillars, using the right nutritional tools. There are no gimmicks or hacks. It's about just doing the right thing on a consistent basis like everything else. And you can really achieve your goals.

Dr. Cavaiola: That's great. So your practice has focused on gastroenterology for the last 20+ years. Tell our viewers about the field of gastroenterology. Why is having a healthy digestive system important? Why is this something that you went into?

Dr. Nandi: So I practice internal medicine and gastroenterology. And I like internal medicine because you really can incorporate your entire body and figure out, how are you going to be able to make your body the best it can be?

I like gastroenterology because in gastroenterology you have procedures that you can really fix acute problems. If you have a bleeding ulcer, nothing is more dramatic than seeing spurting blood which is the same as your heart rate in the stomach.

Dr. Cavaiola: I think some people just passed out by watching this.

Dr. Nandi: So you do that. You stop that, and you really have been able to save people's lives. Before we had the advent of these techniques, people would die from these ulcers. They were just spurt out blood. And over a matter of sometimes minutes to hours, they would lose their life.

So I like the fact that there are procedures you can do to prevent problems from happening. There are things called polyps. You can take those out and prevent the second leading cause of cancer death, which is colon cancer. There are stones within the bile duct which are stones that can lead to your pancreas, your gallbladder being inflamed. You can take those out without having to cut the human body. Amazing stuff!

So I really was attracted to that to be able not only to prevent disease, but if there is disease, actually have a final result where you can actually make a definitive change that can change your life. So that really attracted me.

And again, as you mentioned, a lot has changed in the last 20 years in the sense I think we are just deteriorating in how we eat, how we take care of ourselves, and the kind of environment we keep. And I think that that is key.

If we can reverse some of that, a lot of the diseases will be decreased. And I will have a lot fewer people to have spurting blood coming out of the stomach or giving them medicines to really put a band-aid on something that has been causing problems because of what they've been doing for the last maybe several decades of their lives.

Dr. Cavaiola: Yeah, so one area of my practice that I think is so, so important is that the GI tract is an internal tube that is so, so invaluable to our overall health. It's the foundation of where we start as naturopathic doctors and integrative doctors before we do anything else. What are a couple of good tips that you can recommend to improve the health of your GI tract?

Dr. Nandi: Yeah, one thing, Dr. Matthew, that we didn't talk about is that the gut is the second brain of the body. So it actually has more neurons than the brain has, more nerve cells. And it can actually create some of the substances that can affect your behavior. So a lot of people actually feel now that your gut and what kind of bacteria and organisms it has can really change the entire paradigm of disease.

So what do I mean by that? We now know that depression can be related to your gut. We know that heart disease, dementia—there are so many things that can be related to what's in your gut. So the first thing I tell them is that I'd like people to be able to get the right amount of good bacteria in your intestine. That doesn't mean that you go get a probiotic. You can, which is outside. But incorporate foods like yogurt, like kefir, like sauerkraut, like kimchi, those kinds of foods and also prebiotics like maybe onion and garlic so that the bacteria can thrive and actually not just survive in the system.

When you do that, that could help so many diseases including autoimmune diseases like inflammatory bowel disease, like Crohn's disease. You can help diseases that have nothing to do with the intestinal tract such as neurological diseases, such as autoimmune disease. So there's really so much you can do. I think that one of the biggest things is having, of course, fruits and vegetables, whole foods and not processed foods, and then finally to be able to incorporate good bacteria and good organisms into your gut because when you do that, it really changes the paradigm.

Dr. Cavaiola: That's terrific. That's terrific. Alright. So we've got a couple minutes left. Where can people go to find you?

Dr. Nandi: Well, that's great. Thank you for that. You can go to AskDrNandi.com. And all the information that we're talking about—we have

blogs. We have articles and everything else. On Facebook, we're Dr. Partha Nandi and same thing on Instagram and Twitter.

Also, if you are in the U.S. or outside, you can see our television show. It's called *Ask Dr. Nandi*, same title as the book. *Ask Dr. Nandi* is a television show as well as a book. And the television show is seen in Dish, Direct, AT&T, Comcast, Time Warner Cable. Just check your local listings. Every city in the country, you can see our show daily.

And then finally, I think what's really important is being able to reach out to people when you have social media with some of these questions that you have. If you have questions after listening to what we talked about, please reach out to us. And I love the fact that we can directly connect with a lot of our community which is really a terrific privilege.

Dr. Cavaiola: And I'm sure people are very, very happy to be connected to as well, as I am. Alright, so Dr. Nandi, before we conclude, we have one more question for you. It's a real doozie. Do the last question is, what makes you smile?

Dr. Nandi: My family. For example, we just had swimming with the kids and just watching the kids. My son, I think, has just learned the backstroke. And it's just such a miracle to watch your family. And to me, charity and everything you do starts with the family. And nothing that I say to my community I don't ask for my family to do. So they always make me smile. They're the reason why I keep going.

Dr. Cavaiola: That's great.

Dr. Nandi: And amazing privilege to be part of that family.

Dr. Cavaiola: Talk about support. Talk about your tribe. You live it. That's great. All right. So again, thank you so much, Dr. Nandi, for taking the time to do an interview with us today.

Dr. Nandi: Thank you.

Dr. Cavaiola: And the people can definitely, absolutely benefit from all the information you gave. We really, really appreciate your time today.

Dr. Nandi: Thanks for doing what you're doing every day, Dr. Matthew. We appreciate it.