



Reverse Autoimmune Disease Summit

Dr. Keesha Ewers Interviews Misty Williams

Dr. Keesha: Welcome back to the reverse autoimmune disease summit everybody! I'm Dr. Keesha Ewers and I'm so happy to introduce my friend, Misty Williams, who spent years struggling to reclaim her own health and vitality after surgery to remove an ovarian cyst, some life-threatening complications, and an endometriosis diagnosis that sent her into brain fog and fatigue tailspin. This might sound familiar to many of you who are listening. Her doctor told her that the only remedies for her issues were drugs and surgeries, that her labs were so called normal, and that she could Google to learn more about what's happening to her body. We all love "Dr. Google", but it can take us off into corners where we don't even understand what it has to do with us. So, at 35-years old, Misty embarked on the fight for her quality of life and during many more challenges on her road to healing, including an unexplained forty-five-pound weight gain, debilitating brain fog, fatigue, hypothyroidism, and premature ovarian failure. She founded HealingRosie.com to provide high performing women with the resources and the community to successfully confront the unexpected chronic health issues that women often experience as they age. Welcome to reversing autoimmune disease, Misty.

Misty Williams: Yay! Thanks for having me.

Dr. Keesha: You know, one of the things that I get asked all the time is how long is it going to take me to feel better? Right? So, I really want to dive into that and talk about how people can take charge and be advocates for themselves. A lot of the women that you're working with and I'm working with are busy, over-scheduled people that really need to learn how to advocate for themselves, which means learning how to build into their schedule... Themselves. I think this is part of your journey too, so I would love to have you, what we didn't say in your bio, talk about this journey of yours because I know you are one of those high achieving, high-performance women yourself, as am I. We like hit that brick wall at a certain point and come up railing going, "Are you trying to talk to me?" [Laughs] "Is someone trying to get away attention here." I would love to hear your journey.

Misty Williams: Yeah, well you touched on it a little bit. Everything started for me back in 2011. It's kind of funny when you were saying that you want to talk about how long it takes to get well. It can be humbling, actually, to start doing the math on the

numbers. In some ways, I don't know if we ever really complete that journey because we're constantly evolving, getting older and we're living this life. There definitely have been some needle movers for me and we can talk about those. As you mentioned, everything started with just a routine checkup. I actually wanted to have a baby. I was thirty-five years old and single and was thinking, "Man, I've never had my fertility checked, is this going to be an option for in my life? How does everything look down there?" So, that's what started the journey for me is wanting to make sure that I was in good condition. Of course; they found that ovarian cyst, they did an outpatient surgery to remove it, and found an endometriosis once they were inside. This 20-minute surgery turned into a two-and-a-half-hour surgery and they sent me home with a little checklist that said, "If any of these things happen, then here's your instructions, here's what you do." There was some of them that required me to go to the emergency room, but there were some of them that were a lot more benign.

Misty Williams: I started vomiting and vomiting wasn't on the list. I kept vomiting for six days and I couldn't get ahold of my doctor, kept leaving messages at the office. I finally heard back from a doctor who was on call for the office and he had no idea who I was and he didn't know anything about my procedure. He said, "She has a call with the doctor on Monday. If she gets dehydrated, take her to the emergency room." Now looking back, I'm sure I was totally dehydrated because I wasn't keeping down on food or water for days, but at the time I didn't know like what dehydrated look like or even really how to think about that concept. You only hear about like movie stars getting dehydrated and that's why they miss concert dates. In real life, people don't get dehydrated. So, Monday came and went and my doctor didn't call me because she went home sick that day. I called an hour after our appointment looking for... probably 30 minutes after, and the next day I was freaking out of course. I went to the doctor's office and just parked it, sat on the couch in the waiting room. "I'm here to see the doctor" and they're like, "Oh, she's not going to be here until 12:30," I was like, "Great, I'll wait." About an hour later she called and said, "Misty, I'm really sorry, please go to the emergency room." She had a doctor meet me there and they stitched up part of my small intestine. So, went back in for another surgery and what happened in this whole mess of surgeries and all the trauma, I mean, that's unbelievable trauma: going six days without being able to keep food or water down, I went home and I didn't sleep for 144 hours.

Dr. Keesha: Another trauma.

Misty Williams: Yes, totally another trauma. My body could not... even though I begged God for sleep, begged! I don't know if you've ever had that happened to you.

Dr. Keesha: Oh yeah.

Misty Williams: It's like you think you're losing your mind. You absolutely need the reset of sleep every day.

Dr. Keesha: While holding a newborn in my hand. [Laughs]

- Misty Williams: Right! It's called "Motherhood" for you. I wish I had a more compelling reason than stress.
- Dr. Keesha: [Laughs]. At least you know why.
- Misty Williams: Yeah. Right? So anyhow, all of these things compounded before all this happened, I had no symptoms really except for painful periods, which to me was normal. I had no idea that painful periods weren't supposed to be painful. My girlfriends and I had been talking about painful periods since I started my period. You know? It was kind of like a badge of honor, like "How long is your period and how heavy is it? What is your cramping like? So, it was very, very traumatic. All of this was super traumatic for me and I started experiencing symptoms that I hadn't been experiencing before: crazy brain fog. I remember sitting on the couch, specifically, trying to re-engage with work because I, unexpectedly, was pulled out of work for two weeks. My clients knew I was going in for a procedure, but the whole thing was made to be not that big of a deal. I'm trying to get back to work and I remember looking at my computer and trying so hard to think, to process thoughts, and it was like they were cotton balls all stuffed in my brain and I could feel my thoughts trying to get through, but they just couldn't. I had the crazy fatigue after that of course. I'm like, "Well I didn't sleep for six days. I'm going to be tired for a while," but it was months and I was learning that I needed to go to bed early. I was one of these people that didn't go to bed until 2:00 AM, so I was getting to bed at like 9:30, 10:00 PM and I was waking up at 9:00 AM still feeling utterly exhausted and just so tired getting through the day.
- Misty Williams: All of these symptoms now have been kicked up and I went back to the doctor, as you shared, and wanted answers. I'm like, "What lifestyle changes do I need to make? Do I need to change my diet." That's the first thing I thought, it was like "I must need to change my diet" and I was willing to do it. She couldn't give me anything and it wasn't just her, it was doctor after doctor after doctor. I went back to my primary care doctor, she showed me my labs were normal and that everything was fine. I'm trying to explain to her how my life is absolutely falling apart. I'm an entrepreneur. I had clients and I couldn't work. I'm single. "Who's gonna take care of me? What's going to become of me?" It was super scary and she was so fed up with me pushing, pushing, pushing. Finally, she said, "Misty, even if I did run your labs I wouldn't know what they meant.
- Misty Williams: I kept being horrified over and over and I went to the next doctor, who's an endocrinologist, and she told me the same song and dance. She was trying to be... "I'll run your labs again, but everything's" and then she started feeling around on my neck. She was like, "Does this hurt? Do you feel this? Do you have any trouble swallowing?" and I said, "No, everything's fine." She took me back, did an ultrasound and sure enough I had thyroid nodules. "What causes thyroid nodules?" "We don't know what causes them." I'm just thinking like "where am I?" I'm like through the looking glass, I'm in a parallel universe.
- Dr. Keesha: You're in the matrix, that's what I call it. That's the medical matrix.

Misty Williams: That was really what took a long time for me. I did find the Paleo space, which actually is a fantastic space because of their focus on ancestral health. "How did our ancestors do this and how do they stay healthy and what can we do to modify our lifestyle, so that we're more aligned with nature?" That was great and helpful, but there's so much I've learned since then. There's some deeper things that we can do. I started hearing about bioidentical hormone replacement therapy and it took me years to find someone that would even prescribe it. I actually had a head fillings, mercury fillings improperly removed from my mouth, which I didn't know was improper because we don't know these things as patients. That kicked off a forty-five pound weight gain in three months and I'm 5'2, by the way. So, forty-five pounds on a 5'2 frame is like, "What is going on? What is happening to my body?" By this time, I'm like "Fully Paleo, there's no Wifi in my house, I've replaced all of my rugs with natural fibers, I've cleaned out my cabinets, the cleaning products had been swapped out, my shampoos and everything. Everything. Now, I'm getting forty five pounds and I didn't connect the dots on that until about a year and a half ago, actually. It had been a mystery for me. If I hadn't had these medical procedures, I probably wouldn't have experienced any of this stuff. It took a while...

Dr. Keesha: I want everybody to hear that because this is really important. People get so angry and so upset and so fed up, but the reality is, is that there's a children's book that's called "That's good. No, that's bad," there's also a Chinese proverb, a parable about that. It's human life on planet earth of whatever it is that's our challenge. It always, if we're willing leads us to grow. What you've learned as a result of that is priceless.

Misty Williams: Yeah. Well, it totally changed my life ultimately. I mean, I'm on a completely different path that I've ever been before. There was a couple of things that I had to start really tuning into for myself. First of all, I started having to listen to my own intuition because all of these doctors, they were telling me things were fine. I knew things weren't fine. I see, even in the Healing Rosie community, women coming in almost flooring like, "Well, the doctor said everything was fine." Even though, they're experiencing...We are taught to give our power away from such a young age. I mean, I have a girlfriend here in Austin who I think is like mom of the year. I'm watching her parent, a five-year old and a seven-year old and I've been watching her for several years. I met her about four years ago, so she had itty bitties back then. She has one little girl who has so many emotions and they're bigger than her little body and it's big love emotions. When she sees me, she will come tearing across the room and she will throw herself at me and if I don't see her coming, it will topple me backwards, you know? Then, whenever she's feeling frustrated or overwhelmed, she just lets it rip. I mean, just these big, big emotions. What my mom would do or my dad would do when I was young and I had really big emotions was reprimanded for them. It was "Sit down, shut up, dry it up, you're going to get a spanking." It was whatever you're feeling and experiencing is not okay and it doesn't matter how you feel on the inside, "Little girl it's not okay and you need to get ahold of yourself."

Misty Williams: So, we're taught from like bitty babies that our emotions, our feelings, and our own intuition is not okay. Also, what we're feeling is not okay and in order for us to get love and connection in our life, we have to become whoever the power broker is, wants us to become. That gets so ingrained in us that when we become adults we're working with doctors and they tell us that things are a certain way, we believe them. We are completely checked out from our own intuition. That was a really scary thing for me to start grappling with. There was actually never, it's just my personality, a moment that I was going to believe them and not myself but I did have this horrified, "Oh my God, I have to go against the machine."

Dr. Keesha: Right.

Misty Williams: It felt like this daunting heavy, "How on earth am I going to..."

Dr. Keesha: With no energy, that's the thing.

Misty Williams: Yeah. That's right. It took probably four years for me to finally get on bioidentical hormone replacement therapy. My labs finally showed something, they showed premature ovarian failure because by this time I'd been four years with one ovary and all these other things that were going on, all the internal stressors that hadn't been dealt with. The bioidentical hormone replacement therapy was really a lifesaver. To this day, like when women come in and they're like, I want to feel better fast, get your hormones checked. BHRT can absolutely dam the waters for you, so that it can give you resources to go after all the deeper stuff, you know? I was so grateful for that to happen, but it wasn't until I moved to Austin five years ago that I started finding the right kind of doctors and practitioners to really help me make substantial progress on my journey. I mean, I feel so great compared to how I used to feel, but I know my journey's not over. I still am dealing with weight issues. I'm like up and down at the same 10 pounds and it drives me up a wall. I'm like, "What do I've got to say?" I'm working on some gut stuff right now and I'm also doing real deep detox with Dr. Papa's True Cellular Detox Program, which has actually been really phenomenal. Anytime I've done detoxing, by the way, I've worked with good people and I've experienced really great results, but am I going to be just done after this round? I don't know.

Dr. Keesha: Here's the thing that, this is such an important discussion and you and I were starting to have it off air. I said, "Oh, no, no, no. We need to have this talk on air for everybody to be able to hear it." It is the number one thing that I get asked is how long is it gonna take me to feel better? And, the way that I want to think about this as in tribal days, we had rights of passage, where we are going through whatever shift into our next stage of development. Whether it was age related, going from childhood to puberty or puberty into marriage and childbirth and menopause, etc. It could be developmental with your own psychology as you're up leveling your state of consciousness. There was always some sort of ritual and a group of elders that were standing there waiting to welcome you through and show you the way. We are really devoid of that in our

culture and the language that they use in anthropology to describe this is just like, "Oh yes, this is where my patients wind up and they don't know what to do." At first there's an ending, right? There's an ending of whatever way you were, so if you're going from childhood into puberty, you know there's an ending of childhood as you get your hormones right? Then, there's this liminal state, it's called, and then you move into your new beginning. The liminal state is the one that we feel lost in. We don't have answers. It feels like we've just received the challenge that we have no skills for. We don't know where to go find mentors.

Dr. Keesha: We don't realize that once we get the new skills, we actually have to practice them a lot in order to master them. That is not just a one off and that space is one that as Americans we feel very uncomfortable in it. When we think about it as an ending and then we have to cross a really busy street and we want to get across that as quickly as we can to the new beginning. If we've ended a relationship like we want to hurry up and figure this out and then move on. Right? Actually, it's that liminal space. I call it dancing in the liminal space, being able to navigate that space and being able to let go and know you don't know and not think about wellness and getting over my illness as a light switch. It's either I'm sick or I'm good and more of like here's the space that we're in, the body, we're learning about it. We're learning how to actually make friends with it. We're learning that it's actually our friend, not something that's just betrayed us. Right? That space can last a long time and then you can learn your new skills and then guess what? You have the same thing happen over and over again. It's a cycle. Mother Nature shows us this. We go from spring to summer to fall to winter. That's actually how human life cycles go too, but we don't recognize that we're so disconnected. That space is one that is illness. You're in the center, you don't know what you're doing, you want to get across from curb to curb as quickly as you can and actually it is impossible.

Dr. Keesha: However long it takes is interesting because I view illness as an opportunity now to be a catalyst for change. So, you'll learn all this, you'll transform, you'll get these new skills mastered, and then for a while it will go along really well. Have you ever remodeled a house where or even just painted a room. You paint a room, then you start noticing the baseboards are yucky. The windows are gross and "Oh, I need some double [inaudible] now. Then, you see that the closet's outdated and then you go, "Oh, I want to do something about that and that is actually how it is with our health and our vitality. You get one level done and then we're just like, "Oh, and then there's this," where before when we were way back there, we didn't even know all of those distinctions. Right? We just felt like shit. [Laughs] I was like, "Sorry. Sorry."

Misty Williams: Yeah, I think there is an awareness that happens when you... I know for me, when I embarked on this journey, I started really tuning into not only, did I have these frustrating symptoms that I wanted to go away, but I also began to value health in a way that I hadn't before. I need this good health if I'm going to function in the world, if I'm going to give my best gifts to the world, if I'm going to show up for my family, if... Everything about my life started depending on my

health in a way that I wasn't tuned into and it definitely raised my standards. It really made me think about like across the board, "What do I want for myself?" It wasn't enough. At the time that all this happened, I was running half marathons and doing things that I thought were good for me. Afterwards, I learned that probably the half-marathons actually weren't so hot for me.

Dr. Keesha: I know you thought you could run marathons and I thought I was a health fooder. [Laughs].

Misty Williams: I know, you live and learn man, you live and learn. There's so many things that I want for myself now that I'm tuned into, so I actually see that I have further to go. At thirty-five, if I hadn't been on this particular journey, I would look at the Misty now and I'd be like, "She's great..."

Dr. Keesha: Yeah.

Misty Williams: "No, she's fine." I know so much more and have a lot higher standards.

Dr. Keesha: Yeah, in Functional medicine when I'm teaching, I speak for the Institute for Functional Medicine a lot and we teach doctors how to do this. Who are in the matrix, they've come outside the matrix and now there's like, "I don't know." It's like trying to read Braille, so what we do is we say what you need to do is to give your patients a multiple system questionnaire. They call it an MSQ and the reason for that is people, when they're really sick, I called this your misery to motivation ratio and when their misery is high they're very motivated, right? Then, they start to feel a little better or a lot better, and then they'll say, the next level of healing, "I don't notice any change, like nothing's different." The MSQ is like this scale, a likert scale of zero to 10. If you can start to quantify this on a scale of zero to 10, instead an off or on switch, which is not realistic, then you start to see like, "Oh, I'm making this progress in this gradual way, which is actually the way it should be." You don't want these very weight losses and very dramatic shifts because the body will release a bunch of toxins out of its tissues when you have dramatic weight loss. Now, you have mercury exposure to your central nervous system and it's not good. People lose sight of where they're at, so the MSQ is really helpful. I always have my patients instead of doing that, I say, "I want you to kind of keep track in your own health journal about where you feel each day in terms of your energy, your motivation, your libido level, and your weight and the things that you're monitoring on a scale of zero to 10." 10, you feel fabulous and zero, you feel like zero. [Laughs] and see how you're doing and you'll start to notice a trend. It's harder to tell trends, I think, and you know as an entrepreneur, you're like brilliant at trending numbers and figuring that out. You have to do the same thing with your help.

Misty Williams: Yeah, totally. A couple of things, I kind of have in my head this, "How long does it take to get well?" There are some things that really help, especially for women, that I would just invite everyone to look at. To see if this might be useful for you. If you do these things you're gonna get better a lot faster.

Number one, you've really got to dial in your sleep. I was a chronic, like I never, from 18 to 35 I did not go to bed before 2:00 AM probably ever.

Dr. Keesha: All high achievers that come to see me have this exact same.

Misty Williams: I would get a second wind at about 9:00 PM and I rode that wave. I just felt like I was so productive during that time, I was a night owl and I wore that label proudly.

Dr. Keesha: So, in Ayurvedic medicine the Pitta time, that's the time that your brain is like super intelligent and on it, sharp digestion, that is happening between 10 and 2:00 AM and PM. Pitta people, which you are, and so am I, we'll get a second win. Anytime you guys are listening, you see like "I get a second win," you need to get yourself in bed before the second one hits.

Misty Williams: That's right. That's right. It took me a while. What really helped me dial my sleep in more than anything else, was cold baths. I would take them in the evening. I don't know if it matters when you do them, 60 degree water and it took about 10 days of doing that every night. I woke up refreshed for the first time in my entire life that I can remember. I didn't even know people woke up refreshed. I thought everyone woke up feeling like they'd been hit by a Mack truck because they'd been sleeping and so, you're waking up from being sleepy and tired. I had no idea that waking up refreshed was a thing.

Dr. Keesha: That's the first thing.

Misty Williams: That's a biggie. That's a biggie. If you want to like spam..

Dr. Keesha: We have a whole talk on sleep.

Misty Williams: It's huge.

Dr. Keesha: And I know you have a sleep summit coming up.

Misty Williams: I do, I just feel like this topic is so utterly important and you can work on every other thing under the sun and if you don't fix the sleep thing, then your solutions and even if things are helping will only be temporary. It's just a matter of time, you know?

Dr. Keesha: Yup.

Misty Williams: So, sleep. The other thing that was really helpful to me is getting support for my thyroid and hormones. Some people think that you just do the thyroid hormone support and you're done and you're actually not. I've actually experienced diminishing returns on my hormones because I hadn't identified the underlying things. It's like I've been looking for them. Sometimes it's... I can say as a patient, like someone obviously in Dr. Keesha's position who knows all this stuff,

knows you're going to go and do thyroid and hormones and then we're actually going to go do a gut test, we're gonna look at your toxicity, and we're going to tackle that next. You had sequenced all these things, but for someone like me, back when I first started hormone therapy, I'd heard about heavy metals. I had no idea how to test or to treat it. I couldn't find any doctors that you would even talk to me about it. Gut health was the same. I'd heard of this thing called leaky gut. All the Paleo books talked about it, so I did some gut healing things like I did the bone broth, eliminating night shades, gluten free, all the stuff like, "This is what's going to help heal your gut." I did those things, but I had no idea how to measure that stuff.

Dr. Keesha: That's the non-personalized track, that's what I start with. I talk about that in my book *Solving Autoimmune In Puzzle* and the quick and easy *Autoimmune Paleo* cookbook is like, "You have to test, don't guess." So, you can start with these basic things, but you have to individualize.

Misty Williams: I look back now and I kind of see where my big wins are. That's kind of my goal for the Healing Rosie community is like, "Hey, you guys compress my big wins and take my 10 year journey and make it a two year journey, but there's so much that you have to get over in your head. You have to get over like, my insurance needs to pay for everything. "What do you mean I got to pay for this out of pocket?" That's probably the biggest one and the other one is "I should be able to figure this out on my own." I'm going to watch all the talks and I'm going to get the supplements. God only knows how much money I've wasted on supplements over the years, that I read were really good that I took and was not even sure what I was going to get from them.

Dr. Keesha: I started eating all the superfoods.

Misty Williams: All the things, all the things.

Dr. Keesha: You have to test not guess. The thing about bioidentical hormones that I haven't said yet that I want to say, so I prescribe these, but one of the things I always want to make sure that people understand and, please hear me, is that people have different genetics. So, you will process bioidentical hormones, through your liver just like you process synthetic ones, except that they're easier on the body and the liver than the synthetic crap. As you do that, you want to make sure you're not leaving behind metabolites that can be carcinogenic. Some people will hear the word bioidentical and they think instantly, that means healthy, like all herbs are healthy, but no herbs can cause anaphylactic shock too. It's a plant material. When we're messing with our hormones, we have to know test, don't guess. Every five months I'm testing to make sure that you're actually not leaving behind excess amounts of those carcinogenic metabolites. When people don't lose the weight they want to, that's where I go. I go to, "Oh, okay, how are you processing this? How efficiently are you programmed genetically and how efficiently are you actually doing it in real time?" because we never treat the gene. So, you have to know that bioidentical does not mean

without risk, but testing and following through and making sure you're not leaving a bunch of trash behind is without risk. Then you're good, right?

Misty Williams: Yeah. I really emphasize with all of the people out there and women, especially, who would really love to be working with someone like you, Dr Keesha. It's really challenging. People in my community, all the time, are talking about frustrating experiences they have with Functional medicine practitioners, just because it says Functional medicine somewhere in their resume does not mean that they are gonna treat you well. This is where I think it's really important that women get educated on how they can advocate for themselves like what is available to you as a patient. I was talking to a friend of mine. Do you know [inaudible]? He has a book called "Fetal Brain". He had a traumatic brain injury and doctors, he had like a 5% chance of ever waking up from his coma. Then, another 2% chance of recovering like not being a vegetable. So anyway, he defied all the odds and he did it with a lot of the principles that we know about in the ancestral health space. He talks about the code of ethics that you sign as a doctor and part of that code is that a patient has the right to choose their mode of treatment, patient has a right to choose.

Misty Williams: So, there's a lot of pressure on doctors to do the standard of care. I've experienced it myself and I've seen it in our community, when these women come in and doctors are basically trying to shove the standard of care down their throats and that is actually completely contrary to the code of ethics that they all sign.

Dr. Keesha: Well, let's back up a little bit because I always want people to really understand this. The evidence-based, Gold standard of care, which is what the American Medical Association say, that is their very language. That is then what's held up in a court of law. So, that's really important. Instead of thinking of it as shoving down the throat, insurance companies also will not reimburse. It's not under evidence-based Gold standard of care, which means match pill to ill. If you go outside of that, then you're outside of standard of care.

Misty Williams: So, there is a way this can be documented though. This is actually what I was going to get to is that you can actually request that things be documented properly in your chart. Patient was prescribed the standard of care, patient did not want to do standard of care or the patient declined the standard of care. Patient brought, whatever research, there's so much stuff out there that you could bring in once you explore this form of treatment or whatever. This has to get documented in your chart. It is true doctors are really concerned about protecting their ass in the case of, of any kind of claim coming up, but from my perspective as a patient, I get that you need to protect your ass and I'm trying to protect mine.

Dr. Keesha: Of course, of course, but what I want people to understand is then you have to know that what we are talking about is not evidence-based Gold standard of care, according to the American Medical Association and the insurance companies and the pharmaceutical industry, who've both trained doctors. So

what you have to know is that's inside the matrix. That's the government standard and then there's the outside the Matrix, which means then you have to let go, as you said earlier, of an expectation that insurance will pay for it because it is not in that model of care. People get so angry, they want to put this inside this model care (government standard) and they do not go. So, once you find somebody like me and zillions of other people out there who have said, this doesn't work, then I'm over here doing what does work. You have to get it that it's going to be all out of pocket and that hurts and that bites and none of us like it, but it is just the way it is. It's like this radical acceptance of reality gets your hormones to get balanced because you're not always in a state of anger.

Misty Williams: There are ways, I mean in our community we have definitely found ways of getting your insurance to cover certain things. What a great one is, go to a doctor out of network that practices the kind of medicine that is important to you and file an out of network claim for that doctor. Most of the time, you'll get partial reimbursement yet whatever labs that doctor wants to run because it's an MD or whatever credentials your insurance is looking for, your labs will get covered. But you have to be willing to go outside and pay for a doctor that you wouldn't normally pay your \$35 copay for. So, that might mean your out-of-pocket is 100 bucks, 200 bucks, 300 bucks depending on where you live and who you see. You pay a few hundred bucks and then you actually can leverage your insurance company for some of it, you get at least some.

Dr. Keesha: You just have to be willing to do it by hand, submit. I always tell my patients like we give you all the ICD 10 codes, you need, documentation and everything for you to hand submit. I always say kiss the money goodbye so, that you don't have an expectation and then do a little happy dance when it comes back. [Laughs] It's a better than model then being angry all the time. Right?

Misty Williams: Great Advice. Yup. There's navigating all of this is challenging, for all of us, but I will say that learning to advocate for myself has been one of the most powerful things I've done because this hasn't just shown up for me in the medical side of things, with doctors, but it's actually turned the mirror on me and had me look at so many other situations in my life where I'm giving my power away to people.

Dr. Keesha: Good.

Misty Williams: Like, I mean, it is rampant. We don't even realize we're doing it, constantly giving our power away to everyone else. As a result of this journey for me, I've actually learned to create for myself, I really see myself as in creation all the time and I've learned to create for myself a much, better life. It's a hard road to go and it's also like, "Whoa, what a gift. I got to put on the brakes and start creating something different before I was six feet under and it was too late for me."

Dr. Keesha: So Misty, I wanted to bring you back, because you said there are five things and we've hit two.

Misty Williams: Oh, well. Sleep, hormones and thyroid. Both of those are really, really important. You can actually find a doctor for those things to help you with the hormones and thyroid piece, but I really encourage people, whenever you're putting together your doctor team, don't try to find one person that's going to do everything for you. In our space, what I've discovered, I actually have a doctor who is an integrative medicine doctor here in Austin. He will do all of the thyroid, hormone, running labs, all of the stuff that I actually need in order to figure out what's going on in my life and to support me. When it comes to the deeper protocols they're not so good. Right? But man, what I can get from them is awesome and then I work with another practitioner for the root cause stuff, to go after the deeper things, and there's a lot of practitioners in our space who are really excellent with going after the deeper things. So I did the bioidentical hormone replacement and the thyroid stuff, took me five years for that to happen and I wish I would have found someone right away and like got on it. Cleaning up my environment, dialing in my diet and finding a root cause practitioner. Those things right there, I mean it seems like a small little list, but if you're going to keep yourself from getting shiny object syndrome, which is so easy to do in this space,

Dr. Keesha: It is.

Misty Williams: and just focus on, "All right, I'm going to start cleaning up my diet." I think a Paleo template is a great place to start. A lot of us need to go deeper and do autoimmune Paleo. There's a lot to the diet conversation, but get started. If the diet would have never worked for me. I did not go and clean everything out of my house overnight. It was like when the laundry detergent was out, I bought something better. When the glass cleaner was out, I bought something better. Slowly, I just transitioned. When my shampoo ran out, "Okay, I gotta find something that doesn't have all the crap in it." That was probably the hardest part, finding something that I would be comfortable putting on my hair and that would actually look good at the end of the day. So, I did it little by little, I started with the diet. I did all the environment stuff, finally found a doctor to help me with bioidentical hormone replacement therapy and thyroid and I work with a variety of people actually.

Dr. Keesha: Can you actually talk about why women have a hard time getting better or different kinds of women who get sick. I want to hear what your answer is to that.

Misty Williams: Where they're at in their journey?

Dr. Keesha: Yes.

Misty Williams: So, I'll try to, I haven't looked at my notes on this in a minute, but I'll try to go from memory here. There's some women who are super lucky, right? They start feeling crappy and they go out and dial in their diet, maybe get some more movement in their life and they're better. So, we think of them as the phase one woman. There's some people where that's not enough for them, there's still

stuff going on. Those people have to clean out their environment, do a lot of the deeper stuff, get the crap out of their environment and start drinking more water. What else is on my list there Keesha, since you have it all in front of you.

Dr. Keesha: Actually to that question, why is it easier for some women than others to get well and you just wrote four types of women struggling with chronic illness and you didn't actually delineate them.

Misty Williams: Well, basically here's where it ends up because this is what's important. I don't know that every single level is as important as... What ends up happening for a lot of us, and this was me, is that I got to the point in my own journey where my mitochondria was so worn out from everything that was happening that no matter what I put in my body. Supplemental or whatever else, it was like I was in a car with three cylinders. I'm going up a hill and there is just not enough power to get me over the edge, you know? Sometimes doing the basics works for a certain group of people and then you might be one of those women where you do everything right and it's like you still aren't getting better. When you get to that point, you have to look deeper, you have to look at genetics for starters and see what's happening with you genetically and you have to start doing some deeper hacks and work with someone really Jedi to help you figure it out.

Dr. Keesha: This is the four corners of the autoimmune puzzle that I talk about in my book, which is number one: genetics, number two: digestive health, not in this order, number three: exposure to toxins and then your body's ability to get rid of those toxins as well as environment too and then, number four: is trauma and stress. You're gonna find yourself in there in some ratio and they all actually affect each other. I really like people to look at all four of those at the same time because even if, getting rid of gluten and sugar for a few weeks makes you feel fantastic and you lose 15 pounds, there's something else going on in there. You can hop on this in a preventative way. Our culture, we have to feel like anvil is dropped on our head often before we slow down. [Laughs]

Misty Williams: I was actually really hoping you would go this trauma route because first of all, one of the things I love about your work is that you're so holistic and you do so much amazing work around trauma. I can tell you that in my own journey there was a hard, hard, hard lesson that I had to learn and I am not alone. I've been talking about a lot in our community lately because this is something that is so pervasive in our culture, especially for women. I've spent my whole life being a really crappy receiver. I give and I give and I give and I give and I'm a really great giver and I enjoy giving and I find a lot of meaning in giving. Growing up, the oldest of four kids and I was mommy's little helper, I was always doing for her and I got so much praise for being a giver. I am completely uncomfortable with the idea of having needs and needing support from people. When I did my second surgery, where they admitted me to the hospital to keep an eye on me this time, I got to the end and I was uncomfortable calling any of my friends to ask for a ride home from the hospital. Any of my friends would've been like, "Oh my God, Misty, of course I'm gonna be right there."

Dr. Keesha: Of course.

Misty Williams: I actually called someone that I barely knew because it felt easier than asking a close friend to come and help me. After that happened, I remember going home going like, "What have I created?" and not too much later I watched the Ted talk by Bernay Brown. You know her talk on vulnerability? I realized that I was really great at making everyone else safe, but I didn't make myself safe in the world. I didn't have a safe place and I don't think I could blame that on anyone. I had created a life for myself where I was both masculine and feminine. I was accountable and responsible and I was the supporter enhancer, nurturer all the time. Everywhere.

Dr. Keesha: Everybody with autoimmune disease, Misty. I call it the three "p's," people-pleasing, perfectionism, and the poison of past hurt.

Misty Williams: Yep.

Dr. Keesha: Those three have to get dealt with, but where you can move forward. When the question is how long will it take me to get better? It's how long can you actually deal with those three "p's"? How long will it take for you to, really, really do that? You have to look at like what's your willingness to do it and then, how fast do you integrate it? That's how long it will take you to get better.

Misty Williams: Yeah. Right. I wish this realization happened for me... I started connecting the dots in 2014, it took me almost three years of going through cycle after cycle of burnout. I started being a lot more in tune to the fact that I was giving so much. Then, something would happen and a relationship or something that I had created would crumble and fall apart for whatever the reasons were. It was like, "Man, I'm expending all this energy but nothing, I'm not sustaining anything." You know? It was just over and over and over again for me. I just was getting burnt out and then I would try to muster it all up and bring it together and I'd burned myself out again and I'd messed her it all up and get my feet back under me and it would happen again. In 2016, I hit a wall and it was bad.

Dr. Keesha: Good. [Laughs]

Misty Williams: I know it ended up being the best thing that ever happened to me. I've been into personal development since like my whole life, but I went to my first Tony Robinson when I was 25 years old. So, you know, in personal development it is radical accountability and responsibility all the time and it's resilience and changing how you look at things and all the tools. I had this amazing toolbox that actually made it harder for me to, if I didn't have all these tools I would've burnt out a lot faster and been better. [Laughs].

Dr. Keesha: Exactly. It helped you limp along.

- Misty Williams: It helped me limp along, a long time, but you know, finally there was no more limping and everything started incinerating, especially, professionally. I had built this amazing, I do marketing as my career, it's my background, I built this amazing team, but I was seeing that nobody on this team wanted to be responsible and accountable for anything. So, I was carrying the energy of accountability and then trying to like, "What else do you need?" and nurse them along. The team gets so big and that's just not sustainable anymore, like there's not enough of me. I'm basically turning into super bitch is what's happening. There is no margin whatsoever in my life and I'm feeling the deadlines and the pressure and all this stuff. It was just like, I mean, people started quitting, which I don't blame them. I had one of my team members poach my largest client and took that client away, so revenue was drying up. I don't have enough work now coming in to sustain this entire team. It was just like this mass gasoline, torch it, it was up and I finally got to the point where it was like, "I don't know how to fix. I can't fix it. I have no more tools."
- Dr. Keesha: That's the ending, that's the liminal space. Right?
- Misty Williams: Just that it was this utter, deep, deep, deep surrender. It was deep. I remember being in the pit and having a conversation with my mom saying, "I feel like I've been abandoned by God."
- Dr. Keesha: Yeah. That's how liminal space fills.
- Misty Williams: Yes. It was so scary. What was so amazing is on the other side of that, and I let go (I truly was like I cannot fix this), I was terrified I was going to get evicted from my apartment. I'm going to lose my car, like I don't what is going to happen for me. It was...
- Dr. Keesha: That's how long it takes you to get better guys, if you're listening to Misty. When you let go and get into that liminal space and let go. Right? Total surrender and radical acceptance.
- Misty Williams: What ended up happening is things started miraculously coming together. I got a call from a friend who had wanted a partner in her company. She had a literary agency and she needed help with the marketing side of things like out of the blue, why would she ever reach out and call me? It's one of those, God works in mysterious ways.
- Dr. Keesha: Because God hadn't abandoned you at all. [Laughs].
- Misty Williams: I had abandoned me and that came together, that lasted for about seven months or so. We'd got to the point where this is just really not fitting and it's really uncomfortable. Then, all these other things started appearing and it has been since 2016, so we're in 2019 right now recording this interview, I had been at three years of this unbelievable unfolding in my life where I truly see that life is happening for me. I'd never made any of this shit happened that I thought I

was making happen. Letting go has introduced this unbelievable flow in my life like, my stress levels are almost nonexistent compared to what they were and.

Dr. Keesha: That's not your stress levels. It's your perception of your stress.

Misty Williams: That's right.

Dr. Keesha: We're actually going to stop because we're out of time. I want to just say thank you so much. Misty is an amazing example of what's possible when you really, really start advocating and thank you so much for sharing your journey and these principles. Now, we also have your links for Healing Rosie, and then you have a free gift for our audience.

Misty Williams: We do. One of the things that I was equipped with early in my journey that actually really made me feel like I was in a driver's seat, I worked with a Functional medicine neurosurgeon who was in Nashville at the time. We put together a list of optimizing labs. "What are the optimizing labs? What was he using to optimize people? What are the functional lab ranges?" because that's what we need since traditional lab results have the, what we call, disease ranges. If you're outside of this and you're like in Hell and ready for drugs. He gave me all the functional ranges and then, what it might mean if you're high or low. I actually partnered with my friends over at Maximized Genetics to give this all a facelift and an update. We have a really awesome list of labs that are phenomenal for running for yourself and seeing where you need the help. The great thing about lab work is you can take lab work into a doctor that doesn't want to run labs, and now he has to start or she has to start acknowledging some things and helping you out. I felt very empowered by that and I'd love for everyone to get a go.

Dr. Keesha: Well, thank you so we'll have that here too. Thank you so much, Misty.

Misty Williams: Awesome. Thank you for having me.

Dr. Keesha: All right, everybody, until next time.