



Reverse Autoimmune Disease Summit

Dr. Keesha Ewers Interviews Ajayan Borys

Dr. Keesha: Welcome back to the reverse autoimmune disease summit. I'm Dr. Keesha Ewers. This is my dog, Sam, and we're having a little family interview this time for you. I'm going to introduce you to my husband whose name is Ajayan Borys. He's an internationally renowned meditation instructor and founder of Effortless Mind(R) meditation. He's an author, a Reiki master, a hypnotherapist, and a certified Enneagram teacher. He applies all these approaches in concert to heal old wounds, expand self-awareness, and unfold the full potential of his students and clients. He leads meditation retreats on San Juan Island in Washington state and in the Himalayas. He's also the author of a few books, including Whispers of the Himalaya, Effortless Mind: Meditate with Ease, and several others. So I'm going to introduce you now to Ajayan Borys.

Dr. Keesha: Hi Ajayan. So the reason that I'm introducing you to Ajayan is because we're talking about reversing autoimmune disease. And when we talk about reversing autoimmune disease, that means that, as you know, we're working on four different corner pieces of your puzzle, right? We're working on digestive health, we're working on toxic exposure and your body's ability to get rid of those toxins. We're working on genetics, and we're working on past trauma and how you manage your daily stress. So of course, one of the things that I want to present to you in the summit as ideas and tools that you can use for making sure your genetics express themselves in ways that are health promoting rather than health destructive. I want to give you ways to heal your leaky gut. You know, making sure that you're not releasing cortisol from that fight-or-flight mechanism.

Dr. Keesha: And so we're talking about a tool for that today. I want to make sure that the toxins that we're talking about, the bacterial, viral, and chemical ones, are not the only ones you think about. We're also going to be thinking about our mental, emotional, and spiritual toxins. So this is what we're going to talk about today with Ajayan, a tool for alleviating and detoxing those. And then, finally, the trauma and stress corner of the puzzle. Again, meditation becomes a great tool for calming the hypervigilance of your autonomic nervous system, the fight-or-flight or freeze response. So when you have a hypervigilant mind, you have a hypervigilant immune system. This becomes one of the really important pieces. A lot of times people chase diets and pills spend thousands of dollars on those. And they would rather do that--and I understand this completely--than spend the time to actually learn how to meditate. And so we have Ajayan here to talk about effortless ways of meditating, right? So that it doesn't become such a burden when you think about the word meditation. So welcome to Ajayan, and I'm going to have you start with just saying what meditation is because oftentimes people think about it as, I have to shut my mind off and hold still and not have any thoughts. And of course that's not accurate. Is it?

Ajayan: Nope, not at all. Okay. So there are a lot of ideas that people have about meditation that don't really apply so much. And in fact, these ideas can be obstacles to being able to meditate. And that's where good instruction comes in and something I've been passionate about for almost 50 years, believe it or not. So anyway, yes. What is meditation? To put it simply, it's going from that active, conscious, level of the mind where we're dwelling right now and where we're thinking and talking to quieter levels of awareness, deeper levels of the mind you could say. Quieter and quieter and quieter. And at some point in your meditation, even that faintest level of thought may just drop off. You don't fall asleep. You're still aware. You're in a state of restful awareness where awareness isn't actively engaged with anything. It's just pure awareness, left by itself. And so that's taking meditation to the deepest level of mind--from the surface to the foundation of all experience, simply awareness. You have to be aware to think, to feel, to perceive, to act. All experience rests on the bed of awareness. So when you meditate, you can actually go to that state where you're isolating that foundation of all experience, which is simply awareness itself.

Dr. Keesha: I've read statistics that say that 94% of our thoughts are recycled every day. That we have the same thoughts every single day, day in and day out.

Ajayan: (Laughing) That's discouraging to think about, isn't it? This is one thing, I love meditation for this too because as you mentioned in introducing me, I've written a few books and that's one avenue of creative self-expression, and I find that when I meditate, I get great ideas for books. That's when many ideas come, and of course the more you meditate over the years, you start to find that creative level of the mind, which is really just a silent, deeper level of the mind--it's sort of juicier, there's a lot more creative energy at those deeper levels--that starts to come into your daily life as well, even with eyes open, all day, whatever you're doing. So a more creative quality of thinking develops; at first you can access that very easily in meditation. Then over time more often, even all the time.

Dr. Keesha: So there are a bunch of apps out there right now. In fact, they're super helpful, you know, to have people be able to access the guided meditations, different kinds of meditation. What do you think about those apps?

Ajayan: I think anything that helps people relax and manage stress in their life is a good thing. I also think that if you want to experience and get the most out of the time that you spend in meditation, good instruction is really important. You know, if you're listening to a guided meditation--and in fact a free gift that I'm going to offer to your viewers on this summit is to get a free guided meditation that I provide--it serves a purpose. A guided meditation will give you a taste, but to get the most out of that time that you're investing meditating, it's good to know what you're doing. Not just to be guided by somebody else.

Ajayan: And once you really understand meditation, understand the mechanics of it, you're really familiar and trusting in your own experience of it, you will go deeper in your own personal meditation because you're not having to listen to something. You're not relying on somebody outside yourself. And that allows your awareness to drop into a deeper

state where you can really dwell in that pure awareness itself, which you can't really do if you're listening to a guided meditation. I mean, you may have moments of that, so again, it's not a bad thing. It's a good thing. But if you want the very best experience consistently, I think it's good to know what you're doing.

Dr. Keesha: Well, the thing that I think when I think about those is that the triggers that you have that create an inflammatory response: so an inflammatory belief system that gets generated, whatever it is, when you get angry, when you get sad, anxious, depressed, meditation is not a cure all for those unless you're willing to look at what comes up, and then start integrating. And those apps don't help you with that process. And so that's the thing that I think about when I think about them is they're great for getting you to calm down in the moment, but then when you get up from your cushion or your chair or your bed or wherever you're meditating, it's really important that you start putting to work whatever it is. Meditation by itself actually doesn't do much except calm you down the time that you're in it. And unless you actually start using it as a self exploration or self discovery, self inquiry time, you know, creating that space to really self confront: Why is it that I'm angry about this? What's happening? There's a pattern here, you know, and, and being able to do that work to move into your next developmental level. So meditation I think is under utilized by a lot of people that practice it in terms of what I believe it's actually meant for, right, which is expansion of consciousness and development, you know not just as a feel good. Drop your blood pressure, drop your heart rate. Right, which is what it does. What are the physical effects of meditation?

Ajayan: Yeah. Well, you're raising a good point. So first just to respond to that. You know, it's true: True personal growth, spiritual growth, is multifaceted and no one technique is the cure all. It's really good to understand that so you don't have wild expectations. On the other hand, like when you ask what the physiological effects of meditation are, they can be quite profound. Meditation can lower your blood pressure. Why take blood pressure medicine when you can simply do it, you know, in 20 minutes on your own? It feels good and it's easy to do and hopefully we'll get to that, too, because lots of people put that boundary in their mind that it's somehow hard to do and it's not.

Dr. Keesha: Remember that meditation for this guy is like ice cream; you'd rather do it than anything else. So when you hear him understand that.

Ajayan: Yes, that is true. And a lot of, you know, instruction. But I mean I've taught so many people now, literally thousands of people, and even...

Dr. Keesha: It changed their lives.

Ajayan: Yeah. Even in the first sitting they have a deep experience and they say, wow, this is a lot easier than I thought. You know? And so a good understanding will clear the path and make it easy for you. So blood pressure drops, of course there are brainwave changes. They've found that lactic acid goes down, which is related to anxiety. And inflammation too. And of course, galvanic skin resistance goes up, which shows that you're more relaxed. A lie detector test is based on that principle. So essentially you're achieving a really deep state of rest and relaxation and that can not only have effects in

the moment or the time that you're meditating in terms of lowering blood pressure and oxygen consumption.

Ajayan: But because our nervous systems, these bodies, are constructed in such a way that when we get deep rest, the body uses that, that rest to restore itself and to heal itself. Doctors say when you're sick, get rest. Drink fluids and get rest. The reason is that your body can use that rest to heal itself. I mean, think what happens during a night's sleep. You're tired, you're exhausted. You may be frazzled, you go to sleep. If you happen to be lucky enough to get a good night's sleep, you'll wake up fresh and ready for the day again. So in that rest, a miracle happened. Some incredible restoration. You know, you got rid of that fatigue, that stress, you woke up feeling a whole different state of experience. In meditation, you're getting even deeper rest than during sleep, and you'll come out feeling even better.

Ajayan: I mean, when I say deeper, studies have found that meditation provides a deeper state of rest than even the deepest rest of sleep. So you come out feeling that much better. So there's a lot of feel good to meditation, right? Yeah, no doubt. But then to integrate that, as you've pointed out if you're meditating regularly, you can be integrating the physical, the purely physical benefits, but to integrate the psychological benefits it takes more work and you have to develop self awareness. There are a million different tools. You use some of these and hopefully you've introduced some of them on the summit.

Dr. Keesha: The Enneagram is one. So on this summit during Michelle Chalfant's interview how do you know if you're in a toxic relationship? I talked about you going to jail and domestic violence in our relationship. So what, what role did meditation play after that, you know, and actually while you were in jail, what role did meditation play for you?

Ajayan: Well, I was in for three days. I did do a lot of meditating in there, and of course it helped reduce the trauma of the experience for me. And reestablish some calm...

Dr. Keesha: Well, I'm sorry. One of the things that you told me is that you did a year-long domestic violence program and that a lot of the guys in your group always maintained that they shouldn't have gone to jail. Right? And the thing that you told me when I picked you up, I had read of course John Gottman's book and I asked you, so do you believe you belonged in jail? You know, and you said for the first 24 hours I didn't, I was angry, but then I realized it was right where I belonged. And my understanding is that came during meditation, that you actually allowed yourself to hold still long enough and self confront. Right?

Ajayan: Yeah. That is a really good point. In order to grow, you have to be willing to be uncomfortable. You have to be willing to self confront. You have to be willing to face what's wrong, what the problem is. If you can't do that, you won't grow. You'll just defend. And so in that sense, I think meditation helped me that way. It helped me see also that I really had to shift my focus from just serving myself, a selfish way of living, to being much more concerned and focused on you and feeling compassion for you and whatever you're going through, instead of hearing what you're going through as blaming me, which becomes kind of a reflex after a while. If you've been blamed some of the

time, then pretty soon, every time your spouse is upset, you may take it personally. Like she's not happy with me or he's not happy with me, and then you tense up and you may get defensive and it wasn't even about you in the first place. So it's really important in this, we talk about the psychological integration. Clearly after so many, even decades of regular meditation, dedication to meditation, I had not really integrated psychologically the way I would want to. And this whole episode of going to jail, it really caused me to face that fact. And as a result, start a whole new avenue of growth, really looking at the quality of our relationship, the quality of my attention, like going to my own sort of bliss instead of seeing, you know, feeling compassion for you and what you're going through.

Dr. Keesha: And your own self, right? Yeah. Compassion for what, what your inner dialogue is. So you know, one of the things that I have noticed since that time, which was, you know, like your answer is just remarkable, is that now when you go to meditation, if there's conflict in our relationship, you come back out and you have like a different idea about what just does happened. So you've used meditation more as an integration tool. So that's what I want to encourage people, that there are so many different layers to meditation and utilities for it, usefulness, and that at its highest level, you know, really with that healing old wounds, you came from, your father was an alcoholic and any kind of anger and conflict was dangerous to you. And you would go straight into shock and start coming out fighting instead of listening. And so your ability, like you were separating your meditation time from your daily lifetime and now you're learning how to integrate it. And if you didn't already know how to meditate, then when the rubber meets the road, you wouldn't have that tool. So like learning to meditate, having it so that you have this ability to move from one part of your nervous system to the other actually serves you when the big challenges come along. Right. Yeah.

Ajayan: Well, you know, this is really a fascinating point, and something I'm still discovering. And that is, I think how you use meditation and what you get from it in large part depends on your intention when you go into it. Like why are you meditating? Is it just to feel good? And you can use meditation just to feel good. I did that for many years. And it works. I felt good and it did give me a lot of physiological benefits. I mean, that I ended up in jail for domestic violence was not a negation of the value of meditation, even at that level, you know, I mean, hey, it really will do so much for people.

Dr. Keesha: Well, you're 67 and you take no medication, and statistically by the time someone's 67, they're on at least five, usually 12. So, you're a medical anomaly and that is very much because of all your years of meditation.

Ajayan: Right. But so if all you want out of it is to feel good, that's what you'll get. But if you really want to grow through meditation, and especially if you want to enjoy a relationship much more and grow through your relationship, then you need a slightly different intention than just feeling good. That's not going to cut it. So now when I meditate, like you said, I come out much more reflective and seeing your perspective and feeling compassion and love for you. And that's because I went into the meditation with a different intention than just me feeling good or just soothing myself, you know?

Dr. Keesha: So as you listened to the Enneagram talk that I'm doing for the summit, you'll understand that Ajayan is a five, that's the person that actually loves to be by themselves. And then I'm a two, which is the one that likes to connect. And so we are considered in the Enneagram paradigm, the Holy relationship, because I'm all about serving others and he's all about serving himself and actually his path, like part of expansion of consciousness is what we call doing the hard thing, which means he has to learn how to become empathetic and aware of others. And I have to learn how to be more self-aware and be able to self soothe from the inside, not require connection. And so it was like this great. So when I meditate, that's what I'm up to is learning how to self-soothe be reflective of my feelings that need to be soothed.

Dr. Keesha: The door shifted or self-confronted without the requirement of somebody else to do it for me. So it's really amazing; so meditation provides the space to be able to go do that self inquiry, you know, like who am I really? What's, what's really happening here? Not what the messaging from my childhood strategy is--the only way we can develop. So one of the things about sending you to jail for domestic violence was I didn't want you to die with the karma of having that on your record, right? Your karmic record; not necessarily an earthly record. And so when viewers--a lot of women with autoimmune disease are actually in that caregiver mode, right? And they do get with people that have a little more narcissistic bent and they don't like to meditate because they're too busy taking care of everyone else.

Dr. Keesha: Right? And so the encouragement here and why this talk is even in here with Michelle Chalfant and the Enneagram and this is to start to understand your motivations. Start to understand, not necessarily--of course, supplements and diet and all of the healing leaky gut and all the things that we've been talking about in this entire summit are so important--but at the end of the day, it's actually your motivation or why you reach for a food or who you get into relationship with or whatever activity that you're doing that maybe you're not putting yourself at your top of your to do list. That's what we want to help you understand. And meditation becomes the space that you're creating to dive deeply into that self inquiry so that you can shift that into a perspective or dynamic with the world and with yourself. That's not based on an upset childhood belief system. Right?

Ajayan: You mentioned the Enneagram. As the Enneagram reveals--and it's kind of unfortunate, but it is human nature--our motivation is ultimately kind of a strategy, right? It's not entirely who we are as whole human beings. It's a strategy that at essence cuts us off from ourselves. And so the five is a strategy. The two is a strategy and because it's a strategy, it's one sided and it has an upside to it and it has a downside to it, and it's not going to be successful. Ultimately until we start to really integrate. And that's where the knowledge of the Enneagram is very helpful for integration.

Ajayan: And of course, like you said, meditation helps expand the container of knowledge: consciousness, awareness. Like I said, that's the foundation of all knowing. So if that expands then you're more open. But you still need the intention to discover, to be self aware, to start to see what is my motivation, like you say, and why is it one-sided and how can I, you know, where can I get underneath this? So meditation helps with that.

Again, it's not a cure-all. And I think that's where I had a problem, was for many years I thought it was a cure-all. And so if there are people out there, you know, who have spiritual practices, and if you think that spiritual practice, whatever it is, is a cure-all it's good to take another look at that because likely it's not. We're just too complex for that.

Dr. Keesha: Yeah. It can be used for "spiritual bypass" is what it's called. Right? Where instead of diving underneath and getting to the root cause of the motivation and why it's there, we'd like to gloss over the top of it and get straight into the spiritual feel good part of it. And then the trigger stays in place, just stays there.

Ajayan: The spiritual feel good part of it. That's a really good expression because that's a...

Dr. Keesha: It's what I call spiritual masturbation.

Ajayan: Oh, you are so blunt!

Dr. Keesha: So blunt. (laughing) He's appalled right now. So let's talk about then meditation that's not being used that way. Right? And how does, how does somebody that's listening develop a practice? Because one of the things that, like your book Effortless Mind Meditation, the goal of that, I remember sitting down with you as you are naming it. And it was like, well, the need is to be effortless. Like people think it's complicated. And you know, the mystique around meditation is that I have to wear certain clothes and I have to sit in a certain position. I have to be there a certain length of time. Everything has to be quiet. Right? And actually that can be true and it doesn't need to be true. Right?

Ajayan: No, you can actually meditate anywhere and under almost any circumstance. I wouldn't want to try it while I'm skydiving necessarily, but you know, I've meditated in noisy places. In all kinds of different circumstances. And the reason I named--actually I think you helped with the name Effortless Mind is because effortlessness is one of the huge keys to success in meditation. If you think about it, what are we doing when we meditate? We're going from that conscious thinking level, which is requiring some focus. It takes a slight bit of effort, you could say, to be thinking at that conscious thinking level, but it seems pretty easy, right, to think at that level? Then you close your eyes and you start to meditate and you're actually going to a quieter level of thought. So it becomes even easier, right? Because even less energy is getting put out. It's quieter.

Ajayan: It's like going from running to walking. Now you go to a quieter level and it's going from walking to just walking very slowly. It takes less energy and then the quietest level, you go from that to simply standing still. And so it's really a process of doing less and less and less until you're simply being. And so that is by definition a process of increasing ease. So if you are making an effort in meditation, you're going in the opposite direction. It's like trying to fall asleep. Falling asleep needs to be effortless--going to any other state of consciousness other than just the waking state requires effortlessness--otherwise effort sustains the waking state. You'll be tossing and turning instead of falling asleep, you'll be frustrated instead of meditating. And so effortlessness is the key to successful meditation.

- Ajayan: And of course there are some other keys that I talk about and we can get into those if you want. But that's a big one. Well, okay. Another one I think you mentioned earlier was the idea that we shouldn't think when we're meditating, we shouldn't have thought. And this is almost funny how consistent this is, because in my classes, I ask, "What brought you here? What do you hope to get?" And I would say at least 80%, like eight out of 10 people will say, "I've tried to meditate, but I just can't do it. My mind is too busy. You know, I have too many thoughts. I just am a lousy meditator. I can't do it..." As if it takes a special skill, as if some people walking the earth don't have busy minds. You know, I'm like, who are these people that don't have thoughts?
- Ajayan: You know I bow down to them. I don't know where they came from, another planet maybe. Because if you have a mind, you have thoughts. A mind is awareness fluctuating in thought waves. Once awareness starts to become active, it's thinking, and that means it's a mind. If the mind, if the awareness settles completely and it's no longer active at all, they call that the state of "no mind." So by definition, mind is active awareness. Inactive awareness is no mind. And when you meditate, it's not like your mind is going to disappear like that. We're going to have a mind for awhile, you know, hopefully. And so most of every meditation takes place in a mind, which means there's activity, there's thinking. And so it's not a matter of eliminating thoughts in meditation. It's a matter of changing our relationship to the thoughts.
- Ajayan: Here's what I mean by this: In normal daily activity, we pay attention to our thoughts. We engage with them, they guide us. They're actually a good thing, good for us. You know, they tell us what to do, what not to do. They give us ideas. They allow us to work, to play, to be with family. So much we do is based on thinking. So we focus on thoughts. We engage with them. We give them credence. Now in meditation, it's different. We want to drop into the awareness function of the mind, not the thinking function. And so what we do is we allow the thoughts to be there. It's fine that they're there, but we're not concerned with them. We just let them float by. And just that disengaging from the thinking process, even though the thinking process still goes on, we are able to start to slip beneath the surface of the mind.
- Ajayan: So we're not going from thought wave to thought wave, engaging in it. We're starting to say, Oh, I don't care about these thoughts. It's fine they are here. I'm not going to fight them, because if you fight them, you're engaging with them. But instead, you just can start to Be, and you let the thoughts flow by and you slip into deeper and deeper levels of silence, until you can actually Be in just that pure awareness function of the mind and not the thinking function. So that's the thing. We change our relationship to thoughts during meditation, and that's what allows us to be successful, but not requiring the mind to cease thinking, because that's just an impossibility.
- Dr. Keesha: That's what I say about trauma too. Yeah, we're not removing the experience that you had when you had trauma or stress; rather you're changing the relationship you have with it. Right? You're never getting rid of stress, you're just changing the way you're in relationship with it. So it's not too overwhelming, it's not too much. Because you're never getting rid of your past experiences, but you can change the way that you're in relationship with them. So that's actually really beautiful way of describing that.

Ajayan: Yeah, that's perfect. Yeah. So the point is, if you don't understand this, then you'll start to fight thoughts and in that fighting you'll be feeling frustrated, and meditation won't be effortless, and therefore it won't be successful. You won't go to these deeper levels of the mind. So it won't be successful. You won't have the experience, and you'll feel like, Oh, I can't meditate; it must take a special skill that I don't have. So that's where good instruction comes in, because it starts to clear away some of these misconceptions that result in self-imposed roadblocks. And we can throw up a lot of self-imposed roadblocks. Like, "I shouldn't be thinking, I need quiet to meditate," you know, just so many different things.

Dr. Keesha: Someone else's seeing visions and pictures and colors, and I'm not, and yeah, I must be doing something wrong.

Ajayan: Right, You know, there's actually a deeper level of the role of thoughts in meditation. And since you've got a very, I know, a very educated and highly intelligent audience here, so let me just go into that for a moment, because that is actually even more significant. Okay, so I have my two hands here. Yeah, they're, they look very big because of the screen. But let's say, all right, so this one's my mind. Meditation is a mental process. I'm just doing something on the level of the mind, right? And so the mental activity goes to these subtler states. Now, because the mind and body are so closely interrelated, when the mind goes to these subtler states, the body's functioning changes as well, and it goes into a state of deep rest and relaxation, right?

Ajayan: So we've talked about that. And it happens simply because of a mental process, which is interesting. Now the body is so made that when it gets deep rest, it starts to restore itself. It starts to, I call it purification. And that means there's actual activity that's taking place in the body, like subtle chemical activity, whatever it is. Like they study sleep trying to determine what sleep does for the body. Like how, what are the changes in the body during sleep that restore the body for another day? And they're still studying that. I don't know what those changes are, but something's happening. So there are actual changes in the body, and that change is an activity in the body, a subtle activity, and that causes corresponding activity in the mind--because the mind and body are so closely related. Now you don't just have activity in the mind, you have thoughts.

Ajayan: So the thoughts in meditation are in large part the mental byproduct of the physical purification that gives you the benefits of meditation.

Dr. Keesha: And then what you eat is going to impact your meditation.

Ajayan: True. What you eat is going to impact your meditation. What you digest in every respect, all your experiences, yes they are going inside of you. And when you meditate, it's going to basically purge some of that so you have a clear unconditioned experience of life. You know, ultimately that's the idea. So this is very much like the cycles that happen during sleep. We go into deep dreamless sleep, and then we get the deep rest in the body, and that allows for purification. That's an activity in the body. And that causes mental activity, which are the dreams. And then we'll go through another cycle, you know, deep dreamless sleep, dreams, deep dreamless sleep, dreams.

Ajayan: And that's the way sleep restores us, right? That's how we get the value of sleep. Likewise with meditation: those cycles of deep stillness, and then thoughts, which are the mental byproduct of that purification. That's the package of meditation. That's the package deal that delivers the benefits. So, and you may even fall asleep in meditation. That's fine. And so to grumble or complain about thoughts in meditation is like complaining about dreams in sleep. It's like saying, "I don't want dreams." Well, we know if we don't dream, you'll have psychosis. So you need that dreaming state. If you don't have thoughts in meditation, you won't be getting the benefits of purification. So the thoughts are actually not a bad thing at all. They're necessary. Part of the meditation. This is something that is so rarely understood but really is key to coming into a healthy relationship with the process of meditation so that you won't be fighting it and you'll be flowing with nature.

Ajayan: Like in a way, it's the natural tendency of the mind to go into those deep states because the mind enjoys that wonderful feeling of silence and stillness. It brings a lot of peace and happiness. There's bliss in it. That's what they call it, Ananda, to throw out a Sanskrit word, right? So the mind goes towards that happiness naturally. And the body, when it gets rest naturally throws off stress. So both are natural and we just want to let the body and the mind, you know, do what they do and not fight with almighty nature.

Dr. Keesha: So that's what you've described very beautifully, is something that we've been talking about on the summit, which is also in solving the autoimmune puzzle and that's the pancha koshas, right? So we have our physical structure, we have our energy body, the pranamaya kosha. We have our emotional, mental, we have our wisdom, and then we have the anandamaya kosha or bliss sheath. So meditation is a way for us to actually create a roadway through all five of those bodies to connect them, assess them, and figure out where the imbalances are. It gives us the space to be quiet to do that. And then when everything's aligned vertically and horizontally, through our chakra system and then all around, then we can get into that anandamaya kosha, the bliss sheath. That's the place where we can go to get downloads of information to have epiphanies and solve problems that maybe we've been chewing on for a really long time. That's where we go to get that stuff. That's Carl Jung's collective unconscious. So meditation becomes the vehicle that you can use to explore, all of those layers of yourself. Yeah.

Ajayan: Yeah. And just to throw another angle at this and why those deeper levels of experience in meditation can bring such insight, is because at the surface of the mind, the thoughts are as gross or black and white as they can get. It's a more bounded and rigid level of thought. And as we go to the subtler levels of experience in meditation, it's like those boundaries of thought soften and the awareness spreads out. It becomes more abstract and fainter. And so there's almost like you could say, a spreading out, or another term, expansion of awareness, right? And so that expanded awareness can take in more, and you can get to a very subtle state where you're just on the verge of unbounded awareness and yet there's some value of thought still lively. So it's the thought of the whole, so you can comprehend the whole situation, many different sides to a situation, many different factors coming together. And also in that silence, there's a lot more creative energy. It's much more comprehensive, and it's a lot more creative and fluid type of awareness. And so that's why you often will have great insight in meditation,

and why, as you meditate over the years of practice, your whole creativestyle of functioning starts to get integrated. That's the idea.

Dr. Keesha: Thank you very much. It's been a delightful conversation. Do you have anything that you want to end with?

Ajayan: Well, as I say, we talked about the guided meditation, so if you want to see... I'll say there's another aspect of meditation that I have discovered and teach along with the basics that we've been talking about. And that is Keesha mentioned the pancha koshas. And so one of the layers of your being is the pranamaya kosha, the energetic body. And I like to integrate into what I teach in meditation some work at the pranamaya kosha, this energetic body to activate the subtle energies and get them starting to flow through the nadis. Those are the subtle channels for the flow of energy...

Dr. Keesha: Which connects you to your genetics. By the way, this work he's talking about actually influences how you express your genetics.

Ajayan: Okay. And it starts to clear the chakras and it really opens the experience of effortless meditation tremendously, and it accelerates your progress in meditation. I wish I had known about these practices earlier on in my meditation career, but for the first 25, 30 years, I didn't even know about them. Then I started to discover them and explore them and learn more about them from yogis in the Himalayas and all that. And so I integrated those into what I teach. And so even in the simple guided meditation that you can have for free, if you go to ajayan.com, that's my website, I teach one of those. I teach one of those techniques, the sort of most fundamental, basic one, and integrate it with the meditation. And if you like that experience, and you're interested, on the site I have a membership site with basically all the course material I've taught over the last 50 years. They're available, and I teach a lot of these practices that integrate this pranamaya kosha as part of the meditation, which I'm very excited about. It really brings more dimension to meditation and vastly accelerates the benefits.

Dr. Keesha: Yeah. The most seasoned of meditation practitioners come here to retreats at this house and, and learn from Ajayan and just walk away going, "Wow, I never knew that." So he's definitely, as a five on the Enneagram, his specialty that he's taken a deep, deep, deep dive into is this, so he's a good resource to learn from.

Ajayan: Thank you.

Dr. Keesha: Yeah. Thank you honey. All right, everyone, until next time...