

42. Abundance Mindset with Dr. Michael Hersh



**FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT**

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**Michael:** Well, hey, everyone. Welcome to another episode of Doctors Living Deliberately. And welcome, of course, to my co host, Dr. Arpita Gupta DePalma. How are you?

**Arpita:** I am excellent. Michael Hersh, how are you doing?

**Michael:** Doing great. And of course, want to wish everybody out there a very happy Thanksgiving. And we have a very timely topic for Thanksgiving. And we are going to be talking about abundance and, you know, given that Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful, to be thinking about gratitude, and of course abundance, I think that this is the perfect topic for today. Arpita, what do you think? Yeah?

**Arpita:** I agree. I think for me, the abundance and belief of abundance is there, but I, like, as we'll talk about, I'm a little bit more stressed when I get into that mindset of what if I am not getting enough done? What if I'm not going to be the first one here or doing it, blah, blah, blah, all that, you know, so the other side of it is where I tend to suffer. So I'm going to let you kind of share that wisdom that you have about the abundance mindset and how we can kind of get there. And stay there a little bit more frequently.

**Michael:** Well, for sure. Yeah. And I think before we can talk about abundance, we have to talk about the opposite, which is scarcity. And I think most of us spend a lot of time in scarcity. You and I definitely are not immune to scarcity. And so we should probably start with a definition, which is essentially that scarcity is the notion that there finite resources and unlimited wants and desires in the world. And if somebody else has something, then I can't. And that is the epitome of, of scarcity. And I think that this shows up for physicians in a lot of different ways at work. You know, maybe if they're talking about hiring a new physician in the same specialty, you're wondering, are there enough of our views to go around? Will I be able to maintain my productivity with more doctors there? Or maybe you're doing a little bit of the comparison with your neighbors. I work hard, how come they can afford that home renovation? Or why is there never enough time to do all the things I want to do? So there are lots of different ways that scarcity can, can sneak up for physicians. Essentially, scarcity is the idea that there can only be one winner, right? And, and therein lies the problem with scarcity because the truth is, there's not just one winner, right? You may have more than one neighbor doing a home renovation at the same time. And there is a perfect example of the fact that it's not always just one person that can have the thing. And I think for physicians, the two pieces of scarcity that show up the most frequently is scarcity around money and scarcity around time. And I know I have both of those. What about, what about you? Are there, are those common ones for you, Arpita?

**Arpita:** Totally. Like, I remember when we started our medical practice 10, 11 years ago that, okay, we're doing this. And, oh, what about the competitors, you know? And like, hey, we have to set it up so that we're in a good space and that we don't have people that are doing the same thing close by. And so that's part of it is that the scarcity mindset that we need to be the only ones here doing this because otherwise it's not that people are not going to come right. That's one angle of it. I think and when I think back even to starting this work as a coach, right? I remember when I started, I was like, Oh my gosh, I have to hurry up and get out there. And what if somebody else starts working on anger? Or what if somebody else starts doing this in my area, right? In my neck of the woods. It's like, when we start to recognize the, so what about that, right? How, how infinite the possibilities are. That's when we have a little bit of a shift to kind of get into a place of peace. But I remember thinking, Oh my gosh, there's so many physician coaches. And we do the math. There's a couple of hands full of coaches per state. Right? So it's what our brain does to try to keep us safe with this, hey, we, we have to hurry up and be the only one, right?

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**Michael:** Yes. Yeah, and I think that is something that for those of us that have been through the medical pathways, we are indoctrinated into scarcity from the very beginning, right? There's, you know, I went where I did my undergrad, essentially, everybody was premed. And so there was scarcity around who are going to be the ones that get into medical school and then you get into medical school and who are going to be the ones that get their, you know, their top picks for residency and then for fellowship. And so we are reminded every step of the way that there are limited spots, limited resources, all these people want to do the same thing. And so this idea of scarcity kind of, it gets ingrained in us. And then we have a hard time getting ourselves out of scarcity. So we're out in the world living our lives and everything we look at is scarce. And how can we get the things that we want when other people already have those things?

**Arpita:** Right. Yeah. It's tricky. And it, part of it is just starting to learn to be at peace with the concept of everything is happening exactly how it's supposed to. I think that was a big piece for me because I, I had to really settle into the fact that I can always be in this push, pull kind of tug of war situation where I'm always trying to get that thing right? That there might not be enough of, or there's a limited quantity of, and if I could just kind of settle back and relax into the space of what is, things kind of unfolded exactly the way they were supposed to. And that was a lot easier to live life that way.

**Michael:** Absolutely. And it's interesting how the scarcity kind of drives us in ways that maybe we don't actually want to be living, right? So for me, you know, money scarcity is what amplified my progress in my physician burnout, right? So the scarcity around money was driving all of these things about trying to get to financial independence with the idea of retiring early, that I needed to act now because, you know, reimbursements and medicine were changing and I needed to, you know, really drive myself to earn as much as possible now because who knows what the future has in store. And all it did was perpetuate my burnout cycle so much more quickly and it all started with scarcity around money. But if we're talking about the thing that I have the greatest scarcity around, it's 100 percent time and you and I, we have had this discussion multiple times, right? I, I have this recurring thought of how am I supposed to get all of this stuff done? And so my scarcity around time really has been a big driver for overwhelm, frustration, and really just not always showing up the way that I want to be showing up in life. And you and I were just talking about this a little offline a little bit earlier today.

**Arpita:** Yeah, I think with regards to that specifically, that scarcity around time, for me, it was a big portion of it was, hey, I have so many things I have to get done. And then I created this urgency and I didn't realize I was the one creating the urgency of all the things that had to be done. And quite frankly, they didn't. It was all me. I think another area that I've started to have more awareness around is the scarcity of, you know, my involvement with different activities, right? If I don't show up for this event, or if I don't participate in this way at the school, then I'm not going to be part of the crew. I'm not going to be included. I won't be remembered the next time something happens.

I was talking to you also earlier today. You know that I've been very intentional about pulling back from what I'm doing this year as my son's a senior. Right? And so part of that means I'm not at as many conferences. I'm not with my colleagues and coaching as much. And so feeling the scarcity of maybe I won't be involved and in the know. It shows up in so many different ways for us. And that's part of what we have to recognize here. It's not just time, money, etc. It's scarcity of who we are and what we want to do with relation to everything in our life. And for me, that's where I know I referenced this, I feel like I referenced this in almost every podcast, it's your inner knowing of what you want to do, what you want to be. And it's very, very hard to be true to that sometimes. And because it feels like you're going against the grain, you're going against what's natural and

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should be happening. You're going against what's keeping you safe, right? Or putting you in the best place to build your business or build your career, whatever it is. And sometimes you just have to pull back and be in the discomfort of Hey, I know what I want to do and it's okay. So scarcity can show up in so many different ways. And the trick is being able to pick up on that.

**Michael:** Yes. And you're talking a little bit about mindset. And so, you know, there are mindset shifts that we can make intentionally. And so we've been talking a lot about scarcity. And so I think it's important to talk about abundance now, which is that kind of the opposite of scarcity in that it is the idea that there are plenty of resources out there for everyone. And some people may be a little bit confused by this idea, right? If there is a pie and there are more people taking slices from that pie, how can there be infinite resources for everybody? And the idea with abundance is maybe there are more slices being taken out of the pie. But as the pie grows, the slices that everybody gets are actually larger. So in that example, everybody wins. Because the pie is growing as we all work together for the things that we want, right?

**Arpita:** And maybe that piece of that pie is not pie that you liked, right? So for me, a big piece of it is again, everything that's supposed to happen is happening exactly how it should be. And so maybe this blueberry pie, let's just say over here, got consumed by this group of people and you know what next week here comes cherry pie and that's my favorite. So this is crazy that we're talking like this about pies But it's like a great way analogy of how to make it make it make sense, right?

**Michael:** I mean and like if you don't have pie on your Thanksgiving table tomorrow, right? I think pie is the perfect analogy and for this Thanksgiving episode

**Arpita:** Very much so. But yeah, part of this is just being okay with it happening as it is, right? And that is a little bit of woo, but quite frankly, it's just so much more relaxing to be in that space instead of always rushing and having this urgency to want more or to want that piece. Maybe that piece really isn't meant for you in the first place. And that's been really helpful for me because I would always catch myself in this rat race of I need to hurry up and get this. I need to do this to make sure I'm showing up this way. And when I sat back and just like, why am I doing this? Right? Why can't we just allow ourselves to see what happens? And it's not like we're just sitting back, not doing anything. We are physicians. We work hard. We do a lot of things. Being able to relax into the space that we're creating, where we are putting ourselves, where we want to put ourselves, and things are gonna happen for us the way they're supposed to. Just having the belief in that is, is key.

**Michael:** I wanna give like another real time example of that shift from scarcity to abundance that I, I hope will resonate with a lot of our physician listeners. And so for me, I, you know, I was the second gastroenterologist. in my practice. So when I joined, there was just one other gastroenterologist. And last year we hired our ninth doctor and we are just have an offer out to a 10th doctor now. And I will say that each time we hired a new doctor from two to what is about to be number 10, there's always this inner feeling of what's going to happen to my compensation? What's going to happen to my productivity? As we add somebody else, you know, is this going to have an impact on me, on my family, on our ability to save, all of those things. And all that has happened, each time we add, is that we have grown our practice, we've grown our footprint in our community, and the desire for patients to come and see me, has not dwindled. I am just as busy, if not busier than I've ever been. And it's because we leaned into the discomfort of the scarcity of thinking, like, what's going to happen? Okay, we're going to do this anyway. And then what ends up happening is the whole practice just gets bigger and it really has been incredible to watch and to see and I don't think I had the words for it before coaching of understanding that I was in scarcity, wondering what would happen to my productivity or

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what has actually happened, which is that the pie has grown. The practice is bigger. The footprint is larger. And now we're all benefiting from that. But it's very clear. I mean, this has been a very clear example to me of how you know, scarcity is always going to be there. There's always going to be that discomfort of what if and learning to accept that it's there and lean into it and do it anyway can have such profound impact on kind of what happens next.

And then making sure that you take a moment to receive the abundance to see, like, sometimes I look back at like, wow, I cannot believe what we have built as a group. Over the last 15 years. It really is incredible to step back and look at and again I think this is part of the gratitude, right? Going into Thanksgiving and taking a moment to look back and see what have we done? What have we built? What have we achieved? And you can do this from, you know, a business perspective, a medicine perspective. You can do this from a family perspective. What have we gotten ourselves through? And look how far we've come. It's so important.

**Arpita:** Totally. I'm going to give you a, maybe a real life example for what might happen down the road in the next couple of days as people are traveling as well. I remember I would always have a lot of angst when we were traveling for vacations or trips. And we'd get to the airport and inevitably, based on the frequency with which we traveled, it was pretty common for us to have a setback with regards to the flight being delayed or canceled, et cetera, et cetera. And that urgency that we had that we have to hurry up and get in line and be the first ones to get it changed, or, you know, these are back in the days when they didn't have all these apps. That scarcity mindset, even again, with the apps that we need to hurry up and do this because I need to be there. This is what needs to happen. And having the ability to sit back and just say, okay, you know what, this is happening, my travel plans got a little bit messed up here, the airlines and however it works with the universe, it's going to figure itself out so that I get to where I need to get, or maybe I don't get to go. I get to sit back and reflect on what is the gift with that, right? And a lot of times we're not going to see it right then we might feel a little bit of angst or frustration with it, but ultimately we get to decide if we want to spend the time that way. Right? And so if we can sit back and just say, you know what, this has happened, my travel plans are all screwed up. And now what am I going to do with what is here? What, what is the purpose of me getting to Minneapolis, or wherever the hell I'm going a little bit later, or maybe not even going anywhere. What is the purpose of it? How can this bring joy to myself right now? And what is the gift here? That was a big piece of it, right?

And so traveling has changed a lot for us, for our family, because there was always this angst about needing to get there. We have a set time, I have to hurry up and get back, then I have a patient schedule, blah, blah, blah. What's the worst that's going to happen? If you don't make it back on time, right? They're going to shift the patients. It'll all work itself out. We have to get to a place where we allow ourselves to recognize that because we put so much pressure on ourselves that it has to be just so.

**Michael:** It's amazing that you brought that up as an example, because last year for Thanksgiving we were supposed to travel to New York to visit my family, and the day, the evening before we were supposed to leave, my son had a fever, and we had to cancel all of our Thanksgiving plans, and we had to pivot very quickly on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving to figure out, you know, we're not going to travel anywhere. We're going to stay home. And we don't have any food to eat. And, you know, I mean, don't get me wrong, there was sadness, there were tears, right? I hadn't seen my family and I really wanted to go. And my family was all really looking forward to having us for the holiday. And it just wasn't going to happen. And so, you know, we have talked before about feelings. You can feel sad. You can feel disappointed. You can allow it to be there. And then once you've allowed yourself to feel sad, then you get to pivot and be like, okay, I'm still grateful that I get to spend

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this holiday with my wife and children. And we're going to do the best we can. And my kids don't really like turkey anyway. So

**Arpita:** Exactly. And maybe you guys just needed that time to kind of slow down and be present at home with each other without other responsibilities, right? That is the gift for what happened there. So

**Michael:** The last thought that I, I kind of want to leave everybody with is we've been talking about these two kind of ends of the spectrum. We've been talking about scarcity. We've been talking about abundance. And I, what I want to offer to people is that abundance is not necessarily the antidote to scarcity. Abundance feels great and I really love having an abundant mindset, you know, being able to cultivate that. But the antidote to scarcity is not abundance. It's recognizing when we have enough, right? It is leaning into the fact that I don't need more. I don't need more time. I just need to utilize the time that I have to the best of my ability. I don't need more money. I have enough. And if I need more, I know how to go out and make it, right? And so remembering that abundance mindset is fantastic but you don't necessarily need more if you can recognize that what you have is enough.

**Arpita:** Amazing. Yes. Truly a hundred percent. Why are we in the states of constantly needing more, that competitiveness of getting to be the first in line, the urgency to really be able to do everything that we have on our to do list, all these things, who is creating that emotion behind it? We are the ones creating the emotion behind it. So if we can start to recognize, do we need to do that? Do we need to push ourselves the way we are, or can we shift in a manner where it's a little bit more freeing? It's a little more peaceful for our own sakes. We're ultimately in control of doing that.

Well, thank you. It's been a great, great time chatting with you, Michael Hersh. What do you have planned for Thanksgiving? Anything crazy, anything fun?

**Michael:** We are just going to do some family time and relax and try to enjoy our time together. What about you?

**Arpita:** Same, just not doing too much this year. We're going to just relax and enjoy our families and be thankful, do that gratitude practice. I would highly recommend if we haven't started yet, you guys. In the morning, what I do each morning is I brush my teeth and I say, what am I thankful for? And not only what am I thankful for, but why am I thankful for it? And that helps me really kind of ground myself back to recognizing everything that we have in our lives and everything that we're creating for ourselves and being appreciative of it. So have a wonderful Thanksgiving. I hope you have some special moments and we will see you next time.

**Michael:** Happy Thanksgiving, safe travels, and absolutely see everybody next time on Doctors Living Deliberately. Take care.

**Arpita:** Bye.