

## It's About You! Transcript

- 0:04 Welcome to A Dose of the Healthy Truth podcast with Doctor Cecil Bennett. Learn more about this podcast and other episodes at [cecilbennettmd.com](http://cecilbennettmd.com). Now here's Dr. Bennett.
- 0:17 Hello, and welcome to another episode of A Dose of the Healthy Truth podcast with Dr. Cecil Bennett. I'm really excited to be with you. I've often looked at doing podcasts, but you know, life gets in the way and you get busy. But then I realized this was something I really wanted to do because I really believe I can help you out there with some of your issues when it comes to health care. From a mental standpoint, from a physical standpoint, and also from a spiritual standpoint. I tell my patients all the time that we are individuals, we are not robots we all have good days, we all have bad days, we all have good months and bad months, good years and bad years. Unfortunately, 2020 was a pretty bad year for most people. We lost loved ones, we lost friends, acquaintances, some of us got sick. But we recovered from that. Life and health are a journey down a river with a very strong current. It's going to move on no matter what we do. We're going to get older no matter what we do. There will be obstacles in that river, rocks that hit us out of nowhere, like sudden illness or unemployment, branches that may restrain us that we have to break free of such as bad relationships, habits, or addictions. Some of us refuse, we want to fight and try to swim upstream. Eventually, though, we tire out. We just go right down the current a little bit more battered and bruised. The key to a healthier life is not the fight against the current it is to use the current to our advantage for seeing the rocks and the branches downstream. Now how do we do this? There's a phrase that we're all familiar with it says "knowledge is power". The more you know about your mind and body, the greater the opportunity to be healthier. Doing this, so requires energy, right? You have to invest time, you have to read, you have to study. If you're like me, you're busy, you just don't have the time to invest. So let me help you with that. Listen to my regular podcast. And let me help you build your medical knowledge. My patients often tell me, I listen to them. And this is a new experience for them, which is kind of strange to me, I am their doctor, you would think that their previous doctors would listen to them. But that's really not the case. And I find that to be very sad.

2:49 But why do I listen? You know, I grew up in a very rural background, I can say, very limited background. I decided to become a doctor because of a situation that happened to my father. You know, my father was born back in the 1930s. And he was what I call a basic guy. He left school in the third grade, believe it or not for his first job. And migrated with my mother from Jamaica in the early 1960s. He tried to study to take the plumbers exam, but could never pass it. He had a third-grade education. So even though he knew everything about plumbing, the best he could be is a plumbers assistant. So someone else worked. They got paid. And then he got a portion of the money. That's just the way things were. I mean, he couldn't do any better. But he was the kind of person that went to work every day. I mean, he got up in the morning went to work, and came home. You know, it's interesting, I remember meeting one of his plumber managers, a guy by the name of Joey LaMotta. Now, you might remember that name because years ago, Robert De Niro made a movie called Raging Bull about Jake LaMotta. And Joey was his brother. Joey was a plumber and my father worked for Joey. So that's just an interesting side note that I like to mention. But, you know, as the years went on, in my father was in his early 50s, he got sick. And what he did, he just kept going to work, going to work every day. Until the point that his supervisor said, you know, Benny, you can't keep doing this, we'll have to send you to the hospital. He went to the hospital, he was admitted. And it turned out that he had some plaque buildup on one of the valves of his heart. So our heart has various valves that pump blood, through the body and there was a growth or think of a little plaque on one of the valves. They tried to treat it when he was in the hospital. But the antibiotics were not working. My uncles were with him at the time, this was up in New York and I was living in South Carolina at the time. My uncles were basic people with a basic education, they didn't understand a lot of things. One of the doctors came to them and said, we've got to move Mr. Bennett, to another hospital. Because that plaque is not shrinking, there's a risk, it may break off, leave the mitral valve and embolize to the brain, and he could possibly have a cerebral infarct or something along those lines. Now, my uncles had no idea what this doctor was talking about. I mean, they were, again, as I said before, just basic people. They said, you know something, we want to get him to the best hospital that we can get him to and that was NYU hospital at the time. The doctor said, well no, I think with all this stuff that's going on with his heart. Remember, it may embolize. He could end up

with a stroke or something. My uncle said, you know, okay, well, we'll just wait one day. The one day that they waited to try and get him into NYU, was the day that he did have the stroke. What happened was that plate broke off from his heart valve. It went into his artery, the main artery of his body, which is the aorta, and went up to his brain. He had a massive stroke, a stroke that killed him within two weeks. So why do I tell you this story?

6:45 Well, we have to listen to our patients. And we have to listen to our patient's families. If that doctor had taken the time to fully explain to my uncles, what the true risks were, and that my father had to be transferred immediately, there's a good chance my father would still be with me. I mentioned earlier about listening to our patients and their families. I have found it's not just what patients say, it's what they don't say, I look at their body language and their facial expressions. If I change around their meds, I write it down. I review with them right there in the office. If they don't understand their diagnosis, I write it down, and we discuss it there in the office. And then I tell them to go home and google it further if they still have other questions or to call back the office. If a patient does not understand what is wrong with them, or why they're taking certain medications, then really what is the point? What am I really doing? I really ask patients to take control of their own lives to understand their own conditions and to understand what medicines they're taking. It makes for better patients overall and gives them better control of their life. I've always made it a point that when I see my patients, I listened to them as we talk about the three G's as I call them, guns, government, and God. I find that the more I listened to my patient the better than I'm able to treat my patients. In 2003 I bought a well-established practice in Peachtree City. That was interesting. Peachtree City is a beautiful community. As a matter of fact, it is a well-acclaimed golf course community. If you Google golf course communities United States of America, Peachtree City will show up in a top-three Peachtree City is also very, very, very conservative. I remember one day I was walking through my parking lot. And I saw a bumper sticker that said Obama on it. I was like, wow, I actually have an Obama supporter in my practice. And as I walked up, and I looked at the bumper sticker closer, it said Obama, and it read one big ass mistake for America. Then I was reminded I'm in Peachtree City. About 25% of the patients that were in the original practice left before they even met me. But most of them stayed and got a chance to know me. And it was

also interesting that you know, as I got to know my patients better, you know, we would talk about different things, and then they would whisper to me. "I just want you to know that I'm a Democrat. I don't want to say that out loud though, because we're in Peachtree City." And we would laugh about that. But again, patients saw that I was competent, thorough, and conversational. Our conversations went from superficial talk to talking about each other's family, to talk about God, then talking about guns, and then talking about government. I don't shy away from those topics. That's who we are. I mean, we are in the south after all. There are times to when, you know, it's called for her to actually pray with my patients about certain issues. And at times my patients actually pray for me. I remember two patients, in particular, there was one gentleman, he was a senior, and he did not have a good diagnosis. He had metastatic cancer and multiple organs. But he always had a very, very positive attitude, every time I saw him was absolutely amazing. And one day, he came into the practice and you know, I had a whole lot of things on my mind. And he said, you know, what's going on, Doc? And I kind of told him what was going on? And I said, you know, when you go home, you know, Mr. We just called Mr. Brown, just say a prayer for me. And he said, you know, why? Why do I need to go home to do that? Let's do it right now. And I was just amazed that he was an individual who pretty much did not have much longer to live, he would pass away the next six weeks, but he still took the time to pray for someone else. So we talk about God, in my practice, we will talk about guns, again, we are in the south. And for many people in my practice, a gun is no more than a fishing pole. It's a tool that's used for hunting.

11:14 But I grew up in Brooklyn, and my perspective on weapons is a little bit different. Because in Brooklyn, guns are not used as a tool, such as a fishing pole. They're used for hunting. Correct, but not hunting, let's say four-legged beast more like two-legged beasts, especially in the neighborhood that I grew up in Brooklyn. So I discussed that with my patients as well. And we discussed each other's perspectives. And you know, that's how we learn to respect one another. That's amazing how the reaction when you look at, you know, guns in general, when people see guns, I know when I was up in New York, if I saw a gun, I would run in the other direction because you just didn't see one, I mean, what's considered to be the most dangerous thing to even look at a gun. And you come down south and guns are everywhere. I was hosting a group of educators from the UK once,

and I've got some property here in Georgia. So we went out there and I had a little surprise for them. I had a friend of mine pull up in his pickup truck, and he let down the tailgate. And there was there in the back of his truck were several varieties of weapons, let's just call it that. From handguns to shotguns to everything else in between. and these folks in the UK were absolutely terrorized. They had never seen a gun in their life. These are individuals in their 40s and 50s. They've never seen a real gun and to see so many in one place, they were just overwhelmed with the site. We gave them the opportunity to actually pick it up, pick them up, understand a little bit about gun safety, fire a few rounds downrange, and eventually, they come down. But it was amazing their reaction. And it's just indicative of where we are in this country, depending on where you live and your reaction to firearms. We also talk about government in my practice. And through the years since I've been with my patients, we've gone through Bush, Obama, Trump, and now Biden together, we built a relationship of trust, a relationship of honesty, there's been a lot that has changed over the years in medicine. Now, we're more technological. Now we're using electronic health records. And, you know, it seems at times when I've been looking at our patients anymore, we're just sitting there steadily typing. But I try to still stay close to my patients. And we have regular conversations, and I try and type later if I can help it. The title of this podcast is about you. And just like it's about my patients, I want this my podcast to be about you to talk to you. So every time I do these talks, I'm thinking about you and what I believe you really need to hear. I'm going to strive to build a very solid relationship with you a trusting relationship. With that said, I'm not going to sugarcoat anything though I don't sugarcoat things with my patients, I'm not going to do with you, I'm going to always tell you the truth, not any of the spin. So you know, there may be times that we will be discussing various topics, such as weight management, and I'll say something you like you can actually lose weight and keep it off if you do ABC. But some of the times I'll say things you don't like, for example, and we talked about weight management, and I let you know that your only shot at really keeping the weight off is significant bariatric surgery or weight loss surgery. You probably don't want to hear that, but I'm gonna be honest with you. I don't want you to lie to yourself. You have to be honest, I'll be honest with you, and you have to be honest with yourself. So let's develop some honesty and some confidence together. Let's start by figuring out who you are. I'm going to ask you a series of

questions to identify your persona and personality. Two things you need to know. There is your perception of who you are. And everyone else's perception of who you are. Your perception is your reality. And their perception of who you are is their reality. Whether you need to change your own perception or change how others view you, that will be up to you to decide over time, I can make the argument both ways. I can say be you. If others don't like that, well forget about them just be you. I can also say, well, maybe you need to change some things about yourself, because some characteristics of your persona may be destructive. For example, we live in a world of not just perception, but position, right? If you are a sarcastic jerk with an explosive anger management problem, but you're worth a billion dollars,

16:05 suddenly that's okay with the world. You're just eccentric. On the other hand, if you're a sarcastic jerk with issues of anger, and you're the receptionists, for a customer service firm, that may be a problem. So it's not just about your persona, in life, but unfortunately about your position as well. That's just the society that we live in, unfortunately, let's do two exercises to discover who you really are. First, I'm going to ask you a series of questions. The first thought will be who you really are, you're gonna have the first thought, and then you're gonna start reasoning to yourself, but that's too late. Your first thought really identifies who you really are. Okay, ready? Are you strong or weak? Are you a leader? Or a follower? Are you passive or aggressive? Are you a taker, or a giver? Do you perceive yourself as being superior or inferior? Good, you should have a good idea now of your perspective of you. There's no right or wrong answer. And the first thing that popped into your head is more likely who you really are. And again, there's no right or wrong answer. Now, does your perception match how others perceive you? Again, there's no right or wrong answer. Based on your position in this world, your social-facing persona may not match your true persona. But that's okay. We will be talking about your true persona in these podcasts. We are all important and have value. Society tends to elevate one group and ignore the other, unfortunately, until the other group is needed. For example, you know, I recently read in the paper where a baseball player signed a contract for a quarter billion dollars \$250 million. Compare that to the salary of a plumber or like my father, who was a plumbers assistant in the 1970s and 80s. He was making \$100 a day. I did the math, and my father was making \$100 a day

and this baseball player signed a contract that made him \$100 every 30 seconds. Think about that. Again, different perceptions and different positions in society are based on hitting a baseball, versus handling a plunger. But what happens if that baseball player who has a \$10 million mansion that has a fantastic game room,

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all of a sudden experiences a major water heater malfunction? where water is now filling up his basement? How important is hitting the baseball in that situation? And how is how important would a plumber be at that time? Again, position at the time of need. What about how we elevate actors or actresses or singers? compare them to teachers. You know teachers will spend an average of 10,000 hours with our kids through high school 10,000 hours with our children. How important is that to us? yet they're overworked, underpaid, and given limited resources for success. But I know how to solve that problem. I know what we need to do to get all teachers in this country fully paid And get resources in every school system in this country. It's very, very easy. Are you ready what the solution is? allow children when they graduate from kindergarten to vote. That is my solution. I mean, when I graduated from kindergarten, I knew my numbers. I knew my colors, I can color between the lines, I knew my alphabet. So why should I not be able to vote? I mean, after all, half of the elected officials in Washington DC act like six-year-olds anyway. Now which half that is, that all depends on perspective, right and position. If six-year-olds are able to vote, I guarantee you, our school system will be much different than it is today. But I digress. The bottom line is that we need to appreciate each other's profession, from bus drivers to social workers or maintenance workers. Because as we can see, in this pandemic, we don't need them until we need them. So that was the first exercise identifying who you are. Now, exercise number two, this may sound a little kooky, but go along with me. What affects or determines your glow? Like what glow? What do you my glow? You know, the Chinese use the term chi to describe the energy that runs through your bodies providing us with circulation, nutrients, and minerals that we need to be whole. But I'm not a fan of that term chi because you can't really measure what she really is right? When you wake up. What's your chi when you go to bed? What's your chi How do you measure that?

21:45 I prefer to use the term glow. And why do I use the term glow? Let me explain. I think each of us has a light inside of us that glows on a daily basis, some days are brighter than others. The form of that light is different for each person. For some, it may be a lamp with three different levels of illumination. For others, it's warm sunlight that may be very bright one day and very warm, or cloud-covered another day. For others, it may just be a plain light ball. You know for old-timers, it may be an old-fashioned lamp with a little wick that can be turned up and down. For me, this is going to be funny, but it's a Bunsen burner. Every day, I see a little Bunsen burner burning in my head with a nice blue flame that kind of tells me how my day or at least gives me a perception of how I'm feeling at that time. So you pretty much get the idea. So as you're listening to this, most of you should have something popping into your head now some type of light that reflects who you are and what your glow is. Now, why do I use the term glow? And why do I want to go down that road or not go down a number road of, you know, how do you feel today from one through 10? I mean, what does that really mean is there's no way to objectively measure that during the day, realistically. And again, we talked about chi, but light. Light is something that affects us every day. Light reflects the mood. And if we see our personality as this glow that's inside us, then we can better understand what affects that glow. And what will make us feel better and what makes us feel worse. Once you know what your daily glow is an upcoming podcast we're going to explore what are the things that affect your glow

23:44 positively and negatively. Things like relationships at home or at school or at work. Things like employment, your employment environment, your co-workers, friends, your health, stress points. Once again, I'm going to push you to be honest with yourself. Are you ready? Now that's a dose of the healthy truth. Join us next time.

24:17 Thanks for joining us for A Dose of the Healthy Truth Podcast with Doctor Cecil Bennett. Learn more about this podcast and other episodes at [Cecilbennettmd.com](http://Cecilbennettmd.com). The views expressed on this podcast are opinion only and are not meant to be taken as medical advice.