

Dr. Jill

Your Functional Medicine Expert®
Jill Carnahan, MD ABHM, ABOLM, IFMCP

[#12: Dr. Jill interviews Suzy Cohen, RPh Best Selling author of Drug Muggers](#)

Text:

Dr. Jill 0:12

Fantastic. Well, hey everybody. It's so exciting to be here. I've really enjoyed meeting you all through Facebook Live. What's so cool is that I have some of the most wonderful, amazing friends that actually happen to be so well-known in their field. And today is going to be such a treat for all of you listening because we have Suzy Cohen, who not only is one of my dearest and best friends in the world but is also a famous author—a pharmacist. She is an entrepreneur. There are so many things you're going to learn about her today, and I'm excited to introduce her. Before we start, just be sure and share with your friends, especially if they want to know more about vitamins and nutrients and all the kinds of healthy things we can do to support our health and our bodies during this time.

Dr. Jill 0:54

Be sure and ask questions because I'll be out of the corner of my eye watching our feed as well and taking note of your questions. If we can answer any of those [questions] live, we will do that. And you have Suzy Cohen, America's pharmacist, most beloved, and author. So she's here too, and I'm sure if you have questions for her, I will ask those as well. Just an FYI on my side: If you need any information, you can find me at JillCarnahan.com. All right, Suzy, let's jump in. I want to introduce you. You're a licensed pharmacist for 30 years and the author of *Drug Muggers* and so many other books. I'm sure that behind you, you have a slew of all the famous books that you've written. And I'm just excited. People always know I love [to hear one's] story. I would like to go way back to: How did you get into pharmacy school? And how did that all happen in the very beginning?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 1:46

Wow! That is going way back. First, let me just say thank you for having me. It's a real honor to be on your Facebook feed and with your audience. And I hope that today is not only inspirational but entertaining and humorous. There are so many stories I could tell, too. They would just love you even more than they already do. But I didn't really start out wanting to be a pharmacist. I wanted to be a medical researcher and work for a drug company and, basically, find a cure for a disease or cancer [and] help people. So it was always in help mode, but it wasn't always something where I wanted to dispense pills and dispense drug information. That sort of happened on a walk along the campus at the

University of Florida, where I was doing all my undergrad or preliminary courses. And I was with a friend, and he said: "Oh, I'm taking the PCAT in a couple of weeks. Do you want to do that?" I said, "What's the PCAT?" He said, "It's a test to get into pharmacy school." So, "Oh, okay. That sounds like fun!"

Dr. Jill 2:48

I love it. Really fun.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 2:52

I wasn't expecting anything, but I went ahead and took the test, and so did he. We were just study friends. We both got into pharmacy school and four years later we graduated. [I was] like the next best nerd, knowing every medication and being able to pronounce all these multi-syllabic drug names and things like that. And I honestly thought that drugs were the answer to everyone's illness. I really thought with all my heart and soul that I was getting into this profession [and] this industry to help people. [It was] only about five to ten years in that I started to notice the trend in my retail pharmacy. I would dispense medication, and then maybe an hour or two later, a day or two later, [or during] my next shift—there was a time frame, [and] it differed for everyone—they would call and say something bad happened. "Oh, I have a stomachache." "I have a headache." "Is this supposed to knock me out?" "I've been sleeping for 14 hours." Or, the spouse would call.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 3:53

I started to realize: "Wow, the drugs are not the be-all [and] end-all." And it was compounded by another factor that I'll share. A lot of people don't know this about me, but I was married to my second husband at the time; his name is Sam. He had been injured by an antibiotic for having taken it for a long time. It's called "getting floxed," which, if you want to get into that, we can. If not, people can Google it. But the point of the story is that, compounded with my feelings at work, where I was seeing my patients get hurt from my medications, I was also seeing this at home, where medications weren't helping him recover from the antibiotic toxicity that he had experienced. So it was this huge awakening where I thought: "There has to be something better than patented medications out there. There has to be a way to help and heal people without hurting them." [I thought this way] especially [after] watching Sam, who had been hurt by this antibiotic, which is still prescribed today. And then in pharmacy school, where we're taught that anything but patented synthetic medications are the answer, you can't mention something like echinacea; you'd be laughed out the door. So basically all of that inspired me to start writing a newspaper column, and then the rest happened really quickly.

Dr. Jill 5:13

Gosh, Suzy, thanks for sharing because it is such an interesting thing about how our personal experiences and our passions [were so similar]. I'm no different with [my history of] breast cancer, Crohn's [disease], and medical school, and then realizing, "Gosh, there's got to be a different way." When my gastroenterologist told me: "You have Crohn's. You're going to need drugs or surgery for the rest of your life. You're going to need immune-modulating agents. You're probably going to have multiple surgeries. You're probably going to have your colon removed. And this is incurable." And then I hear the nerve. I was just a naive third-year medical student. I didn't know much, and I said, "Well, doctor, does diet have anything to do with this?" And he's like, "No, Jill. Diet has nothing to do with this."

Dr. Jill 5:49

And you and I [both] know there's this intuitive sense of like, "There's more. That's not true." And I didn't know a lot, but I remember thinking similarly to you, "There's got to be more! That can't be true." And I'm stubborn. I've got a German-Swiss background. I was like: "Gosh, darn it! I'm going to prove him wrong." And I fired him. I was like, "I'm going to check this diet stuff out." I came across a specific carbohydrate diet, [and] I implemented it. And, Suzy, I wasn't cured in two weeks. But within two weeks, my fevers, my pain, my diarrhea—all the symptoms were gone, just with the change in diet. So I knew there was something to it. So I love how our stories are different, but they're similar in the sense that we knew there was more, right? There had to be more.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 6:29

It's interesting that you share that story. I remember the specific carbohydrate diet. I even interviewed the lady before her passing. I forgot her name.

Dr. Jill 6:38

Elaine Gottschall.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 6:39

Yes, that's it. And I bought, like, a 20-pound thing of almond flour and started making yogurt. It is a remarkable diet. Kudos to her for having created that and the offspring of all of that. I'm curious, though: Were you able—at that point when you were in the midst and the throes of all of that—to trace it back to your childhood or to the farm or to anything that you grew up with around it? Or at that time, was it just survival mode?

Dr. Jill 7:08

Oh gosh, that's such a great question. It's so insightful. You are like a functional detective at heart, just like me.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 7:17

I'm curious because you're so articulate. You're so aware and intuitive. A lot of people are dealing with something, and I know because I've seen it over the years with Sam or even with my own health issues. I had thyroid disease for a period of probably a year, which I cured myself because, like you, I am stubborn. "I'm going to do this." And I wondered if you were aware of that time, or was it just: Dig your feet into the ground, survive, and then look back?

Dr. Jill 7:50

Yes, I knew. I had already had an introduction to the root causes in functional medicine. Although I wasn't a functional medicine practitioner, I was just in medical school. Before medical school, I knew that I wanted to do holistic healing and help people find wellness, not just with drugs and surgery. But I felt like the best route was the allopathic route because our system, unfortunately, is still driven by reimbursement and all the [other] things that are driven by the conventional system. If you had a heart attack or you had a car accident, the best place you want to be is in a conventional ER to get taken care of. But what they don't deal well with is gut issues, autoimmunity, [and] all the things you and I see.

Dr. Jill 8:26

In my history, there's no doubt that I was definitely exposed to atrazine, organophosphates, and pesticides, probably not only growing up on the farm but even in utero or [during] pre-conception through my mother. I think it was that far back. Then I got breast cancer at [age] 25. I think what happened was that I was undiagnosed [with] celiac [disease]. I didn't know it, but I actually had celiac disease. I was a carbivore, so I was on a high-carb diet full of gluten. I was actually a vegetarian from age 14 to 25 when I got my cancer. And I have no problem if a vegetarian is healthy and knows how to do it right; I didn't. But at the time, I joke, not eating the right foods almost killed me. So that perfect storm of gluten, without my knowing it, was kryptonite to my system.

Dr. Jill 9:09

And then the chemotherapeutic agents that I had—Cytosan, 5-FU, and doxorubicin—are all very toxic to the gut lining. And Cytosan actually has studies in animals that show it creates permeability in the gut. So it was the perfect storm, flooding garbage from inside the lumen of the gut into my immune system and creating an inflammatory response. And then I have this gene called NOD. This NOD gene is related to Crohn's disease risk. What it

means is that genetically, when I see normal bacteria that get into the immune system and the bloodstream, my body reacts extra quickly and extra aggressively towards those bacteria and causes collateral damage. So between the toxic exposure, the chemotherapy, and the gluten that I didn't know was toxic, I think all of those things created a massively permeable gut on top of a genetic predisposition toward Crohn's. And then that's what happened.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 10:01

That is what they call the perfect storm. You have your environmental and genetic [factors]. And so there are a lot of people who could benefit from... I could see your next article—your next blog.

Dr. Jill 10:13

Speaking of blogs and articles, you've been a prolific writer. In that way, you're one of my heroes because you just keep putting stuff out. As some people know, I just got a publishing deal. So next fall will be [when] my first book is coming out. But you and [inaudible] a pro. So I asked you the other day, "How do you get inspired over and over again?" But let's go back to: How did you start? What's the story with your first book?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 10:40

By the way, congratulations on the book deal! I definitely need to hear more. I'm so proud of you [for] everything you've done. To have this as another accolade is going to be amazing. So, how did I start blogging? I got mad.

Dr. Jill 10:57

I love it.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 10:58

I got mad. I got mad. Anger is a motivator, just like love and fear. But I got mad because the medications scared me. They were hurting my patients; they hurt my husband. I got ticked off. So I started immersing myself in natural holistic medicine, and I went to a local newspaper. I was excited. I put on my best dress and heels and a pound of makeup and everything. I brought a sample article, and they said no. So I went to another newspaper because I was like, "Oh, he must have had a bad burrito." Ocala was where I was, by the way. People in Ocala who are listening: I have a strong fan base there because I did wind up in that paper. They might know me by my maiden name, which was Suzy Gurvich. And my parents are the ice cream man and the ice cream lady, and they just retired last year. But anyway, they lived in Ocala for—God—over 40 years.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 12:00

So anyway, the point of this is that I got mad. I went to another local paper. I finally went to the Lake City Reporter after two years of trying and having 30 letters from the Chicago Tribune, the Seattle Times, the Sacramento Bee, the Orlando Sentinel, the Fort Lauderdale Sun Sentinel, and, like, 25 other papers stuck to my wall saying: "No." "No." "No." "No." "We're not interested in this." And the Lake City Reporter, which is about 30 miles north of Ocala, said no. I was in his office, and I think that was pivotal for me. His name was David Brown. I still love this guy. He gave me my break. He just looked at me because he said no, and I just sat there [being] stubborn, right?

Dr. Jill 12:45

I love it.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 12:46

And I just sat there like this. There must have been some type of facial expression, and there was this awkward silence between us and a little bit of a staredown that was pleasant. I just had big eyes because I was confused as to why he was saying no to me. Finally, after about 45 seconds, which is uncomfortable, he goes: "Why do you want this so much? Why do you want to do this?" And I don't remember exactly what I said, but it was pretty empathic: "I just want to help people! What I have to give is a gift to people! What I have to share can change people's lives! You don't understand what I've been through. Everything I've learned can help people, and if you don't put me in your paper, someone else will!" [There was] another awkward silence, and he goes, "You can start Tuesday."

Dr. Jill 13:36

I love it! Oh my gosh. That stubbornness—that did it! Either that or the great shoes—it might have been the shoes, you know. [laughing]

Suzy Cohen, RPh 13:42

It might have been. So this had 10,000 [copies in] circulation. I don't know what portion of those people read in Lake City, but it was a 10,000 circulation. Within a year, I was up to about 2 million in circulation. And within five years, every single newspaper that said no was carrying me. I took it as such an honor that they dubbed me "the Dear Abbey of Health." I was getting more mail—in some markets and in some newspapers—than she was in a couple of markets, like Atlanta. That's how fast it grew. So I became a syndicated columnist. This might be an interesting story. I was syndicated by the Chicago Tribune at one point. I signed a deal so that they could syndicate me. And they got upset with one of

the articles that I wrote. It's been about 15 years. The article that I wrote was warning certain women that a mammogram could be harmful if they did it repeatedly because of the radiation and that, as an adjunctive, [they should] start using this new thing called digital thermography. Well, one of their advertisers pulled out on them. Maybe he didn't pull out, but he called them and ranted, and down came the axe for me. They're like: "Get that columnist out of our paper. She's promoting digital thermography." Tell people: What has come to be?

Dr. Jill 15:16

Yes. Digital thermography is a great screening tool for young women to see changes in the molecular patterns at the cellular level in breast tissue and, actually, your entire body. But you can see changes metabolically in the cells very easily.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 15:31

And you can see them very quickly. I'm not saying that mammograms should go out the door. All I was saying was to look at this as well for adjunctive imagery. And today we know that the radiation that's emitted from those things can be harmful in some cases and can contribute to the formation of breast cancer, depending on the individual. I'm parsing my words because there is a place for everything. I'm not saying no to them. I think I just got upset about the Chicago Tribune cutting me from... I was the biggest, most popular columnist in their Sunday Q section at the time.

Dr. Jill 16:07

Wow, Suzy. But that's part of our journey. Speaking the truth sometimes comes up against adversaries and people who are out for money. [For] you and me, the heart [we have] truly is to help people. That's really why we do what we do. We have both said [this] to each other: We would probably do the same thing if we weren't paid a penny because we're still making a difference. Now, thank goodness that we can pay our bills with what we do too, but it really is a passion for us. I love that you mentioned mammograms too, because here I am, a breast cancer survivor. I had breast cancer at 25 years old. That's incredibly young. I'm [supposed] to get mammograms every year from [age] 25 to 60. That's a heck of a lot of radiation, and that actually increases my risk of cancer.

Dr. Jill 16:45

So even though it's recommended, I have not gotten a yearly mammogram because that's so much radiation over those years. So you really have to think... Again, I'll be very clear: I am not against mammograms. I recommend them. I order them for most, if not all, of my female patients. But what we decide together is: Where is that limit [with regards to the] amount of exposure? When do you start getting them? How frequently do you get them?

And there's no one size that fits all. So this is a discussion between myself and the patient in deciding what risks they're willing to take. All of those factors play into what kind of family history [one has]. And certainly, if you're high risk, it is not a problem to get an annual mammogram. But that would be reserved for the highest risk and the shortest period of time. All of those things are taken into account. It's important because any procedure, any sort of screening, has risks and benefits. And some people don't talk about the risk; they only talk about the benefit.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 17:38

Exactly. What you just said was the meat of what I wrote about in that article. And I'm sure that that was my last article because they didn't want to lose their advertiser. But I'm sure I saved a lot of women some grief and saved their health and their bodies, so it was worth it. No other paper cut me. In fact, I got mad again. I bought back my syndication rights. I thought: "If you won't print the truth and you're going to cut... If this is what it takes..." I paid them off thousands of dollars to buy back my syndication rights, and I've been self-syndicated the whole time. I took it, and it just blew up. At one point, I had 20 million [copies] in circulation. Again, I don't know what number of people read that because some people read the newspaper very little. Some people today don't know what a newspaper is. But back then, it was a thing. People would read the paper, and they would read the columnists and things like that.

Dr. Jill 18:37

Oh, I know my parents are probably like your parents. They're like, "Oh, we love Suzy!" They live in Florida [for] half the year. So they're [like], "We read every week," and they love and adore you. Speaking of [which], your parents are so precious. I know we've talked off and on about them. I didn't know they were the ice cream man and the ice cream lady. I just adore [them]. I haven't ever met them. I've just seen photos, videos, and your stories. What do you think are some of the qualities that your parents gave you as far as your drive? And what do you see as some things that your parents have [done that have] been influential in your life?—because you are so successful and driven, and you've got these delightful, beautiful parents. They're just so sweet.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 19:17

They are cute. I love my mom and dad so much. I'm so blessed to have them at this point. Dad is in his 90s. Mom is in her 80s. They're immigrants. They are both multilingual and can speak various different languages. They immigrated with my two older brothers. So [they have] two children. They came to New York City. They learned the language. They were pregnant with me, so I was born in 1965. At that time, they were still learning to speak English. They speak English fluently now, but they have their own little special dialect.

They immigrated at the time from Israel. So I'm a bit of a mutt because my mom has French and Polish in her and my dad has Russian in him.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 20:09

But anyway, they met in Israel. They fell in love there. They had two boys. They immigrated to New York City and had me. So by the time I was like seven or eight years old, my parents got a phone call. It was the teacher saying, "We think your daughter has a speech impediment. We'd like to enroll her in some speech therapy and some classes, and we'll try to fix this." So try speaking to my mom, who has new English but has a French and Polish background. French is her native tongue. She was born in Paris. Finally, they're like, "Could you put her father on the phone?" So they put my dad on the phone. That was no better. They explained to them my heritage, my ancestry. And it was like: "You know what? We got this. We'll teach her to speak English. There are no problems with your daughter." And here I am today, decades later. I speak English fluently and to live audiences.

Dr. Jill 21:07

I love it. I love it.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 21:09

Because I was a mutt, the words weren't coming out correctly. [It's] because at home they were speaking all these different languages. So I was going to school and speaking all this weird stuff.

Dr. Jill 21:18

A little bit of other words coming in there. Now, are you fluent in other languages? I don't know if I even know that about you, Suzy.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 21:26

I can understand Hebrew pretty well. I used to be able to speak it a little bit. My mom said until I was about seven, I could speak French. [I] maybe [know] three words in Yiddish. But no. I tried to speak Spanish, [and] I took some classes, but I was never very good at it. I wish I was.

Dr. Jill 21:49

Well, you're very fluent in English, [whether it's] written, verbal, or in other ways.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 21:54

I'm fluent in English and fluent in DoorDash.

Dr. Jill 21:58

Yes, I love it. The other language. Oh, my goodness. Well, what about your book? So that was your column, and that set you up. But then what happened with your first book?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 22:07

So my first book was The 24-Hour Pharmacist, which was originally named Sex, Chocolate, and Botox.

Dr. Jill 22:15

[laughing] I love it.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 22:20

[laughing] They changed it to The 24-Hour Pharmacist because I'm a pharmacist.

Dr. Jill 22:21

I prefer the first title. [laughing]

Suzy Cohen, RPh 22:23

[laughing] I know. It probably would have been an NYT bestseller. But be that as it may, they changed the name to The 24-Hour Pharmacist, which they thought: You have this handbook, and it is a guidebook with natural holistic tips and alternatives to drugs. It would be like your 24/7 pharmacist guidebook. After that, [there] was another book that actually went further as the Drug Muggers book, which is now probably in 10 languages. So I'm really proud of that. And that's about drug-nutrient depletion. I had read a handbook at the time right before that by two authors, Ross Pelton and James—I forgot his name. Great guide. [It's] a little handbook. And they had done this work on drug-nutrient depletion. Well, I interpreted that, added more data to it, and created a book for consumers that was palatable to regular people who were taking medications. It was about drug-nutrient depletions.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 23:27

I couldn't think of a good title, so I went over to Sam, who was in the living room one night. I said, "I need to encapsulate how to name this book aptly so that it's consumer-friendly,

and I'm really having a hard time." So he was playing around with different names. He's like, "drug-nutrient depletions... " We couldn't think of anything good. Then, at some point, I gave him a slice of banana chocolate bread. I don't know if it was a moment of idiocy or brilliance. I don't know which, but he just props [himself] up on the couch and he goes, "Drug Muggers!" So I submitted the book with that title, and they didn't want to publish it. So I got another 'no.' So I said: "Why? The 24-Hour Pharmacist has done great. We even put it in hardback." We went from paperback to hardback. They said they didn't want to offend doctors. Wow. So you know what I did? We published it ourselves. I took what little savings I had because times were tough back then. I had little kids, and Sam wasn't feeling well. He was working part-time; I was working part-time. I had other issues—lawsuits from the ex. Issues—I had issues and expenses. So I published this book. I printed 1,000 copies. I sold it from the back of my trunk.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 24:55

Then I got contacted by the producers of Dr. Oz's radio show. They loved the concept, and they wanted me on the program. So I flew up north. I met Dr. Oz, and I did his radio show. It really was one of the first big breaks that I actually had. He took me in like a pet project, if you will, because here's this pharmacist—she's a bit of a rebel. She's a bit of a bad bleep, and she's trying to get the word out there to keep consumers safe. And she's just showing them that medications should be married with a nutrient. I wasn't telling anybody to stop their drug. I was just telling them that if they take a statin cholesterol drug, take CoQ10. If you take birth control, take selenium and B12. This wasn't rocket science to me. My heart was in the right place, and he saw that. After that, I got on his program. Then I get a call from my publishers, and they're like, "Could you send us a copy of that book?" I'm like, "Now you want to see it?" Now they wanted to see it, and they gave me an answer within a week. They said: "We'll publish this now. We get it now."

Dr. Jill 26:08

Wow. It's almost like every step of the way, Suzy, you encountered [resistance], but you did not take 'no' for an answer. I love that.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 26:17

If I hear 'no,' I just need to re-ask the question in a different way or ask somebody else. There is no such thing as 'no.' And I think that's a take-home point for patients. If they think they can heal and they think that they're not doing well with the care that they have, they need to come to you. But the point is, they need to go somewhere else to find out what else can be done.

Dr. Jill 26:41

Yes. I totally agree. Oh my gosh. There are so many questions I want to ask. I want to talk about your last several years and all of your development of vitamins and stuff. But before I do, I know people are like, "Well, how do you guys know each other?" I want to go back. Do you remember when we first met? I think it was almost 10 years ago. We didn't even know it, [but] we lived in the same building a few floors down from each other at one time, right?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 27:09

Yes. It's crazy. You lived one floor down from me, and I was so happy to meet you. I had just moved here with my husband, maybe the year before. It was the weirdest thing. We flew out here so I could give a lecture at a weight loss clinic, and we never took our flight home. We moved into an apartment with our travel suitcase and started buying Tupperware, and I think I stole a lemon from Papa John's or whatever. Forks—I don't know. But we moved here with pretty much nothing. And we made a phone call and told the neighbor to put a "for sale" sign on our house. So we just moved here [at the time]. I was really hungry for a functional medicine expert because I had been studying functional medicine when Jeffrey Bland had seven people in the room. And I saw that you were speaking somewhere, so I went to your venue. I don't know if you remember this, but I went to your venue and was in the audience. Afterward, I went up to you and said: "How great you were! How smart you were!" and "Could we stay in touch?" And I think we exchanged emails or something.

Dr. Jill 28:12

Yes. I remember [thinking], "Who is this?" You know, there are certain people in your life... I remember the moment, and I loved you instantly. I was like: "Who is this woman? She's really cool." I just kind of knew we'd be friends. This is a very special connection. It's so funny because I remember when I first started my practice in one little room that I shared with Dr. Bob Rountree. I had one day a week [with] hardly any patients. I remember doing these free lectures in the community. I think maybe 12 people showed up, maybe 10, maybe less. Nowadays, it's a whole different ballgame. But it's so interesting to go back to our roots and just humbly remember all the things that have happened—the miracles, really—and even meeting you because I count you as one of my dearest friends. It's so rare in this realm to have women who are not only passionate about healing and helping people at the root [but also] not just out for money. Really, our hearts are in the right place. [We are] also trying to find answers, seeking solutions, and [being] a little stubborn. And then we love shoes, so we can have all kinds of discussions about fashionable shoes and Freebird sales. I always get a text from your husband [saying], "Jill, the Freebirds are on sale, please go now." And I'll run to the mall no matter what I'm doing; [I'll] drop everything. Freebirds are 80% off. And Suzy, you can see—you know my collection out there, right? I'm a total boot addict.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 29:38

Yes, and you look good. You can rock those boots, baby. You look so good in them! My fetish was high heels for a long time. You can wear those in Florida at certain venues and when you go out. When we moved here, I was wearing them around the streets of Boulder. I looked like maybe I was working the streets or something at some point, or maybe like Peg Bundy with the thin legs and the high heels. Mine were like three to four inches, and I could walk in them pretty well. I had decades of training in Florida, and at some point, I retired them. They're there in the garage. If anyone writes me, I will send you pictures. You can have them.

Dr. Jill 30:22

I love it. You're right. I was in Chicago for years too. It's like black suits and high heels. And then I get to Boulder, and I'm like: "Oh, my people! I can put on hippie shirts and cutoff jean shorts and my cowboy hat and boots, and I fit right in and feel much more at home.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 30:36

I'm only out of my pajamas because you said I was going to be on Facebook Live. Normally I would be in flannels or something.

Dr. Jill 30:43

I know, I know. Oh, Suzy! It is so fun to talk to you. I know people want to hear about what you've been up to in the last several years. And I'm so proud of you and excited to share with people some of the solutions that you have. You've written; you were syndicated for so many years, [with] millions of people reading your column every week. And then you've gone on to be a famous author. But you didn't stop there because you've developed some products. And I remember in the very beginning sitting in a coffee shop, and you were like: "What do you think about this formula? Would this be good?" And you've been so successful now. So tell everybody a little bit about what you've been doing, some of your formulas, and some of the solutions that you have created. And they're brilliant.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 31:25

Okay. I'll try to nutshell it for you; it's kind of a long story. But basically, I was sending people all over to natural health food stores, which I still do. But there were times when they really couldn't get what they needed. I know you carry specialty formulas. So it was a slow metamorphosis where I realized I was sending people to the health food store, and I knew they weren't able to buy the things that I was telling them. Or, maybe I had told them six or seven things, and it was going to break the bank for them to get everything. But I didn't really want to formulate [anything] because, as a syndicated columnist, newspaper person, and blogger, you don't usually have a thing to sell other than your book. So it was a real shift for me. But I got so many emails and letters. My friends would say: "Please, like,

get over yourself. Make us something!" So when I co-hosted the Thyroid Summit in 2014 with Dr. David Brownstein, that was a real awakening for me because I realized some of the things I had taken to cure myself of hypothyroidism were really useful to other people. And I created Thyroid Script. That was my first supplement. I ordered a thousand. What I didn't expect was to sell them in a week. I thought that would last me two years.

Dr. Jill 32:47

There's like a theme with your books and your products. You're like, 'Ugh!' and then everybody's like: "Please, give us more. We love Suzy!"

Suzy Cohen, RPh 32:54

Yes. And it wasn't even during the Thyroid Summit. It was probably six to eight months after the summit had aired. So it really showed me people do want my products. They are interested in that. And I have a natural skill set because I understand pharmaceuticals and pharmacology, and I understand medical things. I've had a lot of training in six years of school and 30 years of holistic. So when you put that together, you get supplements that are aimed and targeted. Like, I can't name a medication that this could replace, for example. This is on my desk, not to be promotional, because it just got patented today.

Dr. Jill 33:37

I saw that. I actually felt like, "This is so exciting!" So this is actually—I wanted to make sure everybody hears that— four patents that you own Suzy.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 33:44

Four patents. It's so hard to get a dietary supplement patented. But remember, I come from the pharmaceutical world. In my world as a pharmacist, every drug is patented. So to me, that's a thing. But supplements aren't generally patented. They have to be unique enough for you to argue with the examiner, the auditor, [or] whatever they are—the FDA people and the patent people—to get it patented. So these things have to be unique enough, and they are. But that's what happens when you cross a pharmacist with herbs: You get four patents and you get supplements that work without side effects.

Dr. Jill 34:22

Yes, and I'll be sure to share this link to all your products. But if you have them handy, or if you don't, tell us which ones you have out. So you have the Thyroid Script [and] the Memory Script. What else do you have? And then I want to be sure and talk about the Immune Script. What are your products?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 34:39

We can start with Immune Script. This is really interesting. There's not a lot that I can say because the FDA will throw me into a ditch. So I have to hold it up and just say that this works. This can protect you. The ingredients in it include Andrographis, olive leaf extract, and EpiCor for gut health. That's a trademarked, patented, prebiotic type of dried fermentate. And everybody knows what olive leaf extract does. I can't say these things because, again, the FDA keeps a muzzle on supplement sellers. But this is a product that you can feel good about, and when you can't wash your hands fast and furious enough, you can take one Immune Script at night or two, and it'll help you sleep and it'll help you feel like [you have] a little bit of an insurance policy, especially if you're going out and about the town. And then I have the Memory Script, which is great for those bouts of forgetfulness. It'll reduce forgetfulness. Again, I can't name diseases. Joint Script is kind of amazing. People love that. I have HashiScript, which people think that because I'm from Colorado, it has hash in it. [laughing]

Dr. Jill 35:54

Oh, that's funny. [laughing]

Suzy Cohen, RPh 35:57

We get that question.

Dr. Jill 35:58

That is funny. They don't realize: Hashimoto's. Now, probably most of our listeners know what Hashimoto's is, but why don't you just explain in case there's someone who's listening who doesn't know about Hashimoto's?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 36:08

So a disclaimer is coming now. HashiScript does not treat, cure, or prevent Hashimoto's. It is not intended for use with Hashimoto's. HashiScript supports immune health and thyroid structure and function. Now I've got that out of the way. So Hashimoto's is an autoimmune disease for which many people require the use of medications. I know you treat this in your practice all day long. But what you can do is cut down on some of the proteins and antigens that make it through the permeable intestinal barrier. It's the gut permeability that oftentimes will lead to autoimmune illness—not always, but oftentimes. So HashiScript contains a digestive blend that cuts down on casein and gluten. It sort of attacks it and breaks it down so that maybe your body takes less of a hit. When you can cut down on those antigens, as you know, the immune response is lessened. So that's kind of what it

does. It also contains selenium, which supports thyroid hormone function and production. I've got to be careful. [laughing]

Dr. Jill 37:22

I actually love that people are hearing this, Suzy, because they understand. You've dealt with this because you are developing your own scripts. You are abiding by the law, doing the right thing, and creating great, great products for people. Actually, they feel better—that's the bottom line. They feel better when they take your products.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 37:41

Or look better.

Dr. Jill 37:42

Yes. They look better; they feel better.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 37:44

Collagen Beauty Powder is one of our top sellers. Yes.

Dr. Jill 37:49

So let's talk about that real quick, and then I'll come back to my rant on the guidelines. What I was going to say is that you have been in this industry. You know how we can say and promote things that are helpful without stepping on any toes. And for a lot of us in functional medicine more recently, with all that's happening in the pandemic, there are a lot of crackdowns because they do not want the information about alternatives to be out there. The bottom line is that they want medications that are powerful and expensive and options that bring in billions of dollars to be the primary solution, even if there are no solutions. And the truth is, you and I have solutions. We have things that can help people. We have things that can actually support their function and their immune system. But it's getting harder and harder to say that, which is so sad for me. And I know you and I don't take any 'no,' right? More and more, I am convinced that my voice is very important. I'm being cautious and doing the right thing like you are, but I'm not going to back down. People need to hear the important things that we're telling [them] and sharing. So I love how you stated that because people get the idea that this is really important. It's important for our health. And people want answers. They want solutions.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 39:10

Yes. When you hear the FDA has come knocking on your door—you see some doctors doing ozone and other things—to me, that just means you have arrived; you are doing something right because they don't want you to be treating people with things that aren't lucrative for them. But people are smart. It's not like it used to be. We have the internet now with different platforms available and a lot of health bloggers, medical physicians such as yourself, pharmacists, [and] people who are talking and doing their part to get the word out. Consumers aren't dumb. This is very transparent to them. People are looking. What I've taken to doing is pointing people to studies so that I don't have to say it, but you can Google a Bangkok study on Andrographis. Hopefully, people will do that when they hang up or—I don't know, I don't do a lot of social media—when they hang up from Facebook. [laughing]

Dr. Jill 40:05

[laughing] Yes, I understand completely. They got it.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 40:09

You're too young, but I'm 55, I think. We used to have a phone with a little cord, and you would hang up.

Dr. Jill 40:15

Yes. I remember the day. I totally get you.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 40:19

So when people hang up from Facebook, or "book face," like my mother would say, they can Google the study on Andrographis. And then there's another amazing study on the skullcap. A quick Google search will reveal which countries are using it and their case rate as well as their mortality rate. So I find those things interesting. And that's what I've taken to doing rather than me saying something and trying to parse my words and talk through a muzzle, I just point people to a study: "Hey, look at that."

Dr. Jill 40:47

I love it, Suzy. I think I'm going to take some lessons from you because, like I said, I feel more and more like I'm called to this. I want to give people good information, and I know my heart is aligned with integrity. I know that. I'm not afraid that I'm doing anything wrong. But I also know that the powers that be don't want that information out, so I have to be more careful than ever. And you've practiced this for years because you've gotten great information and great products out to the public and yet navigated these crazy waters. Tell us about the collagen [product that you have]. We kind of passed right over

that, but I want people to know about the collagen product that you have too because I love collagen for the skin. One of my best beauty secrets is collagen.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 41:24

Yes. And you're so pretty. You look so great. Your skin looks fabulous, and you're just glowing. So collagen wasn't on my radar until a few years ago. I started researching it because I'm getting older, I'm still in the media, and I'm a little needle shy—I don't know. I've tried Botox before, but I'm a little nervous, and it gets expensive. I don't know—I get a little nervous with anything unnatural. So the idea of putting botulinum into me makes me a little nervous. But that said, there's no judgment. I've done it before, years ago. So I started looking at collagen, and I would buy some, and then they would smell like fish. So I learned that, especially in some of the countries in Asia, marine-derived, fish-scale-derived collagen is a big thing. It's really a big thing. It's in a lot of K-beauty products and a lot of other products that keep women looking gorgeous. Their skin is so gorgeous and porcelain. But I rejected that. So I found collagen. It's a brand name. It's called Verisol. It comes from New Zealand. Grass-fed—all of that.

Dr. Jill 42:26

The best stuff comes from New Zealand.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 42:30

I dream to go. And I imported this and used Verisol collagen, which has clinical studies behind it, along with tart cherry extract, which is well known for supporting joint health, structure, and function, and some vitamin C to push it into the sauce. Anyway, it's a little tiny scoop because it's very concentrated, and you take one scoop a day and you can have gorgeous-looking skin without having to do a lot of stuff. I really like that product. It's one of my best sellers. It's called Collagen Beauty Powder. I can send people a free sample. We can send them to your site, and they can get stick packs or whatever you want to do.

Dr. Jill 43:07

I'll just be sure to put a link here to your site. I love collagen. I think that's literally been one of my best-kept beauty secrets, as I take it every day. I really, really love that. And I love that you mentioned a clean source because sourcing is really important. And I've had those products that taste like fish. Especially [since] sometimes I put in coffee. Fish and coffee just don't go together very well.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 43:27

It doesn't go together. I'm glad you brought that up because you made me think of something. So there are certain collagen brands that have a wide variety of types of collagen, which I think is good if you want a head-to-toe type of collagen. That's not what I'm selling. I'm not dissing it or dismissing it either. But if you're just targeting your hair, your skin, and your nails and you just want a beauty collagen [product] with a little extra oomph for your skin and antioxidant health, the collagen beauty powder is really remarkable because it's a tiny little scoop. It's pink, which women love. It's pink from the natural cherry extract. It's unflavored. You can put it in anything. I think I'm starting to sound like I'm selling it, which I'm not. I just love it. You know, when you formulate something, it's like a baby. These are like my babies, and I have three other babies.

Dr. Jill 44:17

The hours you've spent once in a while with me at coffee shops and with experts checking this ingredient: Where does it come from? You really do your homework. That's what I love that you bring to people, whether it's your books or your column—you do your homework. The other thing I know people love about you is that you're so real. That's part of our friendship—just being real and authentic with one another. But a lot of your experience comes from your life and your experiences with patients and family members. Doesn't a lot of our drive to help just come from those life things? We're like: "Here's a problem. I don't know the answer, but I'm going to find it out. I'll see if I can find a solution."

Suzy Cohen, RPh 44:54

I think that love will drive you to do a lot of things, and I so deeply love my sweet Sam. He's clunky with moths. He is not the moth ninja—that would be me. I can cut them and get them out. So we're having a marital situation with the moths. I think I'm going to write about that next week.

Dr. Jill 45:14

Tell me more. I want to know. [laughing] Is there a moth infestation in your home right now?

Suzy Cohen, RPh 45:19

Okay, we can be tangential. So in eastern Colorado and western Kansas, there's the Miller moth. It's like they swarm over Colorado. There's a migration, and they go westward. And no lie, there are probably 20 [of them] in the house. And I don't want to kill something just because it got lost or it smells my peach crumble or something. I mean, they're moths. They're like less attractive butterflies. These things aren't going to bite you. I mean, if it was a wasp, you know, that would be it. But it's a moth. It's kind of cute. So I'll get a cup

and then a piece of paper under the cup. I don't have one to show you. You can cup them, get them out, and be free.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 46:03

Well, this is too much work for him, so he literally has this long stick that he grabs things with so that he doesn't have to bend down—one of those grabbers. Imagine grabbing lint from behind your washer. It's one of those grabbers. It's on a pole. It's two or three feet long. It has claws. He grabs the moth by the claw. He's like, "I'm going to set it free this way," because he doesn't even want to touch it. It flies away, and he starts screaming like a girl. We have an agreement. Sam and I have an agreement. This is no lie. We got married in July of 1998. We have an agreement. We got married in Florida. He would kill all of the cockroaches and spiders—he's good with a broom—and I would be responsible for mice and snakes. We agreed to this before getting married. This is very serious. There have been some tense stares over the years, but he has accomplished his husbandly duties with an A+. But the moths were never discussed.

Dr. Jill 47:15

Oh, no! Now it's up for grabs.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 47:18

So it's my job now.

Dr. Jill 47:19

Oh, no. That is hysterical. I would like to have a GoPro on your head in your house some time and see the moth saga unfold.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 47:29

Can you text him when you hang up from Facebook and tell him to do his husbandly duties and get the moths properly?

Dr. Jill 47:36

I am on it.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 47:40

He threatened me. He held up a fly swatter. He's like, "I got this." I'm like: "No! You're not the moth slayer."

Dr. Jill 47:47

Oh, gosh. This has been so fun, Suzy Cohen. I knew it would be because we always have fun and people get a little insight into our weird sense of humor and our obsession with Freebirds and all of that stuff. But it is so fun to talk to you.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 48:02

You didn't tell me about your book. I need a minute of your book. Tell me about your book. What's it going to be about?

Dr. Jill 48:08

Yes, well, thank you for asking. It's funny because I'm kind of the mold expert. I thought it would be on environmental toxicity and mold because I've been through a lot and a lot of environmental chemicals—from birth on—have affected my health. But as I sat down to write the proposal this fall—and for me with the first book, I put a lot of work into the proposal—sometimes you just have an outline, but for me, it was four months of a basic mini book. So in this proposal, I started writing. I started writing about environmental toxicity. And I kept waking up, almost from a dead sleep, hearing the word 'memoir' [and things] like 'your story; your story.' And I fought it because I was like, "My story isn't worth telling. Like, who am I to tell my story? I'm not famous. I'm not..." But as I kept waking up, my soul was telling me, "You need to tell your story." So I shifted. Two months into it, I shifted. I really shifted into what they call a prescriptive memoir. So it's going to be about my life's journey and health. And in that will be woven science and faith, and all those pieces like: Why did atrazine affect my breasts? So you'll actually know the chemical pathway a little bit. But the real heart of it is my story.

Dr. Jill 49:16

I'm so excited and so terrified. But I'm also excited because I feel like whenever you go through suffering—we've both been through very difficult situations in our lives—and then somehow you can write and have purpose and meaning and share and inspire with the world, it actually gives meaning to all the stuff you've been through. So in that way, I'm kind of excited as I write about it. It gives more meaning and purpose to the difficult things like cancer and Crohn's and mold and divorce and traumatic relationships that I've been through because what I can do is take that and hopefully inspire and reflect to the reader the situations in their own life where they might be struggling and just encourage them. That's my goal.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 49:58

That's so beautiful, Jill. I know you like no other, and I just want to tell you your path to recovery, your vibrance, and your brilliance—the story does need to be shared. Don't be afraid. If you ever feel a moment of fear or doubt like: "Am I doing the right thing? Am I saying too much? Or am I not saying enough?" The truth is, everybody has hardships in their lives. Behind every home and under every roof, there's someone struggling, and they will benefit from your story and everything you have to say. And you're a beautiful soul, and your story should be shared.

Dr. Jill 50:33

Thank you. Well, now I'm committed to next fall. It's going to be out, so yes. Thank you for saying that. That means a lot coming from you.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 50:42

I'm going to DoorDash you a lot of coffee.

Dr. Jill 50:43

I know, right? I'm going to be like: "How does this work, Suzy? How do you stay up writing with a deadline?"

Suzy Cohen, RPh 50:47

I'm going to put some NoDoz in that little hole where I put a present by your house.

Dr. Jill 50:53

We have a little gift exchange where she drops off little secret packages, and I know where to find them. It's like the best thing.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 50:59

I was going to put a bottle of NoDoz in there. [laughing]

Dr. Jill 51:02

[laughing] I love it. Oh, my friend, I love you. I'm going to say that publicly, yes. I'm so grateful for your time today. It was so much fun. I hope people found it informational. I'll be sure to share links to your products. I know we'll talk again soon. Maybe we will do this again soon.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 51:16

Thank you.

Dr. Jill 51:17

Thank you all for listening and joining in on girlfriends kind of having coffee. Take care. Bye
bye.

Suzy Cohen, RPh 51:23

Bye.