



EPISODE 106

Finding Your Purpose in Adversity thru Health Health Policy with Okey L. Enyia, MPH

See notes at: www.drberriepierre.com/LLP106

Introduction

Dr. Berry

And welcome to another episode of the Lunch and Learn with Dr. Berry. I'm your host, Dr. Berry Pierre, your favorite Board Certified Internist. Founder of Dr. Berry.com as well as PR medical consulting. Helping you empower yourself with better health with the number one podcast, for patient advocacy helping you empower yourself with better health. And so fitting that today we are gonna be talking about health advocacy. I have a special guest for you guys today, Okey Enyia, who is the founder and CEO of Enyia Strategies, a health policy consulting firm that provides advising research, support policy analysis, project management and legislative strategy for individuals and entities seeking measurable ways to influence policy on issues related to health equity, health disparities, social determinants of health and health in all policies.

He also helps entry-level and makes career professionals find ways to maximize their career advancement aspiration by reviewing resumes, cover letters, facilitating interview preparation, and providing a roadmap for a successful transition from higher education into the workforce and entrepreneurship. Okey was a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Health Policy fellow from 2014 and 2016. He worked three years with members of Congress on a wide range of issues areas in the context of health education, foreign policy, civil rights, voting rights, and advocacy. He was a master's degree in public health from Chicago State University and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Biology and Biochemistry from Lewis University, Romeoville in Illinois.

He resides in Maryland. Enjoys cooking, reading and traveling and really the most important thing you guys, I've harped on it before that, yes we can talk about being healthy and understanding taking medications and taking right medications. Being healthy is the way to go. But we have to understand that there are a lot of forces at hand that plays a role in people being healthy and I know especially as I find a lot in physicians right, where they don't like to talk about politics and the effects of politics on the way we practice medicine. But it is extremely true.

So I wanted to bring someone who's really on the ground floor who's actually working with people who are making these laws that are sometimes good and a lot of times is not very good in your everyday order of health, right? So let's get ready for another amazing episode. If you had not had a chance, go ahead subscribe to our podcast. Leave me a five-star review and let Okey knows he was such an amazing guest on a podcast today. You guys have a great and bless day.



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Episode

Dr. Berry:

And again, thank you. Lunch and Learn community, heard an amazing introduction on today's guest who I'm excited for, to kind of, you know, bring a little light on health policy, which is a taboo topic. You know, a lot of people don't like. It's not sexy. I know a lot of people don't like to talk about, but again, when you got people who are kind of, in their field doing it and I wanted to kind of, make sure I bring that expert here. So, okay, first of all, thank you for coming to the episode of Lunch and Learn community.

Okey Enyia:

Thank you so much for having me.

Dr. Berry:

So I want to, and I said your bio was absolutely fantastic, right? But I always like to kind of, you know, start from the beginning, right? Like tell, tell us Lunch and Learn community, a little bit about yourselves in your own words. And then I want to, I want to rev up and I want to kind of talk about, you know, what were some of your goals and aspirations as you were going through your journey?

Okey Enyia:

Sure. So my background is in medicine, public health, policy research, and teaching. I'm a former House and Senate staffer on Capitol Hill and now I work at the Department of Health Human Services where I report to the Assistant Secretary for preparedness and response. And so I have a social justice background as a grassroots activists. I consider myself a scholar-activist and I bring is the nuance, you know, on the ground perspective to the policy space, particularly as it relates to African Americans and African American men in particular. So enjoy talking about my experience, my journey, how I got to this point. I'm the oldest of six children. I have two brothers and three sisters. My parents are from Nigeria.

I grew up on the south side of Chicago and I moved to Maryland in 2014 to work as a staffer on Capitol Hill. And so I'm also getting a doctorate in public health with a focus in health policy at the George Washington University Institute School of Public Health where I plan on further exploring the intersections of race, gender equity, health and policy, as well as the life experiences of African American men and boys over the life course.

So that is some of my backgrounds. I'm also an author, entrepreneur. I've just released my first self-published book dated 2018 that also clinical. My life experience from Childhood High School, College, Grad School, Med school, Capitol Hill, and into author entrepreneurship. So I'm excited to share some more details about my experiences and hopefully, it serves as an inspiration and as a way to help people kind of try it out their path, define their purpose, overcome adversity and to pursue destiny.

Dr. Berry:

I love it. So six siblings, part of six siblings. Are you the oldest? Are you the youngest? Where do you fall?

Okey Enyia:

Yeah. So I'm the oldest of six children. I have two brothers and three sisters.

Dr. Berry:

And that's tough because you kind of, have to, you're the lead.

Okey Enyia:

Right. Yes. I have the, you know, it's a blessing and a challenge to be the pioneer, to be the first, you know. To kind of make the effort to lead by example. The firstborn usually has a little bit more pressure put on them, you know, from a pen. Well, you know, so yeah.

Dr. Berry:

Now when we look at, we're okay. Is that today when you were growing up, you know, the oldest kind of, leading the charge, is this kind of where you envision yourself?

Okey Enyia:

Not necessarily. I actually was in the Nigerian culture. You know, there's this tendency to, you know, we are known to be high achievers, right? We value higher education. We are very driven and very ambitious. And so my personal goal growing up was to become a medical doctor. And so, which is not entirely unusual, particularly within the context of the Nigerian culture where it's, you know, how the doctor, lawyer, engineer, professor, something like that.

Dr. Berry:

High level. This is what we expected. (Right, exactly). The oldest. I'm pretty sure that carry an additional set of burden, on top of the burden it carries just wanting to obtain those professions.



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Okey Enyia:

Absolutely. So, you know, we have been kind of to carry on a mantle, you know, of sorts. It definitely made the journey much smaller, interesting and enriching. Maybe about five years ago, five or six years ago, I didn't envision what I'm doing right now on Capitol Hill. Because again, I kind of grew up thinking that I'll be serving as a position in terms of direct patient care. But what ended up happening was that it went from direct patient care to public health, to now health policy on a much broader scale. And so that's kind of a hard.

Dr. Berry:

Full disclosure, Lunch and Learn community. I have a public health degree as well. I've talked about in prior episodes that I am 100% sure I'm a different physician because of the public reach. Because it definitely, you know, add to it. Like I felt that as a general physician, yeah, it was great with the one on one, but I always found myself asking, well if this person in front of me is dealing with this blood person, is diabetes, his cholesterol, what is that community dealing with? What are the community-related problems that kind of put this person whom I just happen to be taking care of in front of me?

Okey Enyia:

Right. And so what you're getting at is what framed as the social determinants of health, where you know, one's health outcomes can be determined by where you are born, live, work, play, worship. And so, you know, all of those factors, know it's beyond just patient-physician relationship. What are the social contexts, you know? What type of environment, you know, place matters. And so what type of environment, you know, and what type of influences our emotions to inform or to impact the extent to which you're able to really live the best quality of life possible.

Dr. Berry:

And I definitely, so first Lunch and Learn community I want to kind of what we're going to give the World Health Organization definition of health policy, but I want to ask, "okay, what does he feel health policy is to him", right? 'cause I think it's depending on who you talk to, you get a different kind of interpretation. So the World Health Organization says health policy refers to decisions, plans and actions that are undertaken to achieve specific health care goals within a society and explicit health policy can achieve several things at the defines visions for the future, which in turn helps establish targets and points of reference for the short and medium term. It outlines priorities and the expected roles at different groups and then builds consensus and informs people. So that's the textbook definition of health policy, right? When you, when you talk about health policy and your extra tease, like what does that mean to you?

Okey Enyia:

Yeah, so to me personally, there's an interplay of several factors and I used the social justice framework as the backdrop or as a foundation that informs my work. So for me, it's an interplay between power, politics, economics, and influence. And so it's, it's a matter of the extent to which one is able to get to the decision-making table with data research and compelling story to make a case to help change minds or to better inform. Whether it's in the course of a conversation or in times of college proposals for legislation at the local state and federal levels. And so, you know, all of those factors play into what, you know, I believe the policy is and does. And so for me in terms of health policy, so what I bring to bear is the health space and all of those nuances, particularly as it relates to people of color and how I can better drive the conversation around. How to better influence and impact policies on behalf of people of color.

Dr. Berry:

Is that something that always kind of attracted you to it? And I want to talk, cause I know, I know you kind of mentioned you were on a path to be a physician and we talked about when did that divert, but then just the race and ethnicity, like behind health policy. Was that something that was always kind of drew you to it or you just, while you're going through that package, just realize you were kind of magnetizing that area?

Okey Enyia:

Yeah, so I grew up into it. I come from, from a lineage and a legacy of Dalit activists, of entrepreneurs, ministers, educators, teachers, and so, you know, so it's in my blood to be an advocate, to be someone that has a passion for speaking truth to power, to serving as a scholar, and so as I lived...

Dr. Berry:

I hope you heard that truth, to power and that's powerful. I love it.

Okey Enyia:

Yeah. And so, and so as I've lived and I have experiences, whether it's in College or Grad School or Med School or wherever. My passion for really putting voice and language to the issues and challenges that people of the colored face had, has evolved and has strengthened. And as I have educated myself as I have lived as a conscious black male in this society, I've been better able to inform, to influence, to impact, to raise awareness around issues of race. And ethnicity and cultural competency and all of those things that really inform policy in some way, shape or form.



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And so I think the pivot point for me, I think came in med school because while I was seeing patients, but at the same time, I just felt this burning desire to affect much broader change. And, you know, having seen patients of color treated differently, talked to differently, you know, all of that just fueled my passion to say, "okay, beyond the patient-physician encounter what can be done in terms of public health or in a policy space that can it help to address these issues that I'm seeing payout, you know, on the ground."

Dr. Berry:

Now, if you ask like cause I take care of patients in a hospital, I take care of patients in outpatient clinic and I think a lot of times, the general person doesn't realize the impact these policies that are around them, that are making decisions for them actually have on how, how I take care of them in the hospital or how I take care of them. And the outpatient, you know, space is, do you find that conversation difficult to translate? Like to really explain to a person like no, no, no. Like what I'm doing here in DC, like affect somebody in like California and Arkansas and Florida and New York even though you can't necessarily see it personally.

Okey Enyia:

Yeah. So that's something that I've come to better appreciate about the policy-making process because you know, for example, I served on the Senate side, I worked on the Senate Health Education Labor and Pensions Committee where I got a chance to really understand the various policy levers that can be pulled to effect some type of change, at least at the federal government level. And so what that entailed was as a staffer doing research to draft a memo or to help to draft a bill that includes the language to main, to people of color or to black women, to black men or to Hispanics. And so ensuring that you're able to include language in bills or in proposals or include language in a clause-statement that the number of Congress would read on the House or Senate floor. That's also an example of influencing policy.

Dr. Berry:

Can you ever find yourself? I'm sorry to interrupt you. Can you ever find yourself if you were not in that room, maybe left out? Like if you're not in there saying, hey, we need it. Like, talk about the black man. If he, if do you think if you weren't there, like that wouldn't even come into fruition?

Okey Enyia:

Correct. And I live that every day because I can tell you now in the meetings that I attend, in these hearings and briefings on the Hill, literally if I wasn't in the room, at the table, the conversation would be different. Right? And so, I find myself, you know, I live to give, I'm on about serving leadership and lifting as I climb. And so for me, it's not just about me getting into the table, but how can I create a pipeline to ensure that other people of color who have the education, the passion to help to inform your colleagues who don't look like you or don't share your background?

How can we create kind of a ground well and you know, really kind of build out a staffing infrastructure that will bring in people of color or bring in more nuance diversity and inclusion and equity conversations to help to draft those policy that affects the general public? Right? So yes, there are times when literally. If I wasn't there in the room, literally, some things wouldn't have happened if I wasn't there in a room. Some decisions might have been made differently. So while on one hand your presence matters, but to take it further, you, you being able to articulate in a compelling way which was supported by data and stories, your cases then it becomes much more challenging for very nuanced policy to be drafted into get across the finish line. So yeah.

Dr. Berry:

You mentioned cultural competency and I can tell you when I was a student Med student and we had to take that, I think it was like a three-week course, it wasn't, it wasn't long. And I remember sitting there being like, uh, "Duh, like of course, he should do that". And I remember some of my classmates were like, really enamor, like, this was really like the first time, someone was saying, "Oh, you know, it's actually not a good idea to talk this way." And I think that's what sometimes gets lost on, especially when you're in this space when you're in the know like yourself. You know, we should be there.

But it's, it's almost surprising that like if you don't actually speak up, people are going to be like, people aren't going to like pick up like, oh actually I actually should include minorities and like I actually should actually look out for them. So thank you for, you know, carrying that light, cause it's gotta be hard. Right. Cause I would assume that it's not a lot of black males are doing what you're doing. Like, I would love to see what that room looks like when you go to a meeting and everybody else is there just to kind of be able to do that, you know, the quote-unquote headcount.

Okey Enyia:

Yup. Absolutely. You know, and you know, so let's say in a room full of about a hundred staffers on the, on the House or Senate staff for example, as far as black males. So there'd be maybe triple, two or three, five max and then, there's usually the higher percentage of black women than black men.

Dr. Berry:

I was going to ask that because I wonder, I see it, I see in the school, but I was wondering, even in that space, the women much more represented, not as, not as much as it should, but more than us.



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Okey Enyia:
Right.

Dr. Berry:

Let's talk a little bit about just some of the adversity that you had to face to even get to where you're at today. And obviously still up and growing. Let's talk about, you know, because we talked about we were in the medical school, and medical school, right? What were the thoughts there? What was happening? What were some things that you wish could have been different?

Okey Enyia:

Yeah. So over the course of a decade, I had studied and taken the medical college admissions test four times. And then I applied to med school three times before finally getting into med school. And the last one that I took, the MCAB was actually in a post back program called Medpre which is southern Illinois University in Carbondale. And so I was able to get in and in my cohort, I think the class size was 72. And out of that 72, I think, four black males and I think maybe two or three black females. And so going to a predominantly white institute.

Dr. Berry:

And Lunch and Learn community, I just want to let you know I went to Nova, it was about two half, and we have three. So, this ratio is not surprising, unfortunately.

Okey Enyia:

Right. And so you know, just kind of having to work and study and out rhyming, right? So you're studying and you are dealing with, with hostile classmates who are sharing information and you're dealing with passive aggressiveness. You're dealing within the context of an environment is that while I think the school did make efforts to create a safe environment and as a welcoming environment as possible, it's still, you know, the new ones just kind of daily interactions, made it much more of a challenge for me as the kind of right now and to do well in the coursework and also to maintain fantasies for that matter.

And so having to work in infants, again, I give the programs or the school credit for making an effort, but at the same time, if you go to any predominantly white institution, usually, one of the largest challenges is how do you best create the most welcoming, safe environment for anyone to attend that school. And then we have a number of those, you know, kind of factor into it, it makes it that much more difficult for you to really be able to focus and to perform well on the exams and pass the course shift and pass the board exams and whatnot. So this is that. There is, but fortunately for me, I guess even getting into Middle School, I knew that my vision was going to be a lot bigger than just seeing patients as a physician.

And so it went from the right patient care, but then the pivot into public health and then going from there. So it was a lot of, the support was there, but it wasn't enough for me to perform at my peak. So I actually ended up leaving med school, and I moved back home to recalibrate. It took about a year or so for me just to kind of be calibrate from the experience of constantly being questioned, my competence questioned, you know, just trying to get my identity back whole and just the self-care, the mental health, and emotional health. So, so just getting all of back together...

Dr. Berry:

And Lunch and Learn community, I just want to tell you that this story, like is, not an anomaly. This story is one that many of us who are in a space, that to say minority is probably more of an exaggeration. Like it's, like almost like a spec sometimes where we don't even feel like we kinda belong because we're like, yeah, again, I was in the class of 200 plus and it was three of us and I would look around. I'm like, "wow, this, that this story."

When he tells the story, like I just, I picture myself back at Nova, I pictured myself having to take tests and having to answer questions knowing that I was, unfortunately, the representative of the whole black male community when I answered a question right. If I got it wrong, like I let the whole community down, right? Like that was, that's a burden that you have to face on top of what medical school is. So I appreciate it because you tell a story that is not only enlightening and true but resonates to a lot of people like you. And I'm pretty sure you've probably talked to others who felt right in this ill like, like, yeah, Lunch and Learn community. You could see me. I just, the whole time he's talking, like, "uh hmm..."

Okey Enyia:

Exactly. And so part of it too is to work though constant syndrome. As you mentioned, gonna questioning or doubting whether you belong and just gonna work through that. I mean, so you know, after I had moved back home to recalibrate, the question became, "okay, well what's next?" And in my case, I was already considering giving, getting a master's in public health. And so I applied to a few programs in Chicago and I got into Chicago State University, which is a minority-serving institution, which was a phenomenal experience for me. And it helped me to heal and to become whole and to get my confidence back because I was surrounded by people that looked like me and faculty that look like me. And that affirmed me.



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And American aside, a quick shout out to HBC News, you know, definitely have low for them, you know. So my dad actually taught at Coppin State University in Maryland very early on in his career. And so back, I remember, I think maybe I was in first, second grade I was, he brought me to the campus and, and just to kind of, and also expose me to the campus.

And I always remembered that that's how that I was walking on that campus. And that left an indelible impression on me that just as set as day. And so once I kind of with the graduate program, I mean because of my previous training, I just go through the program, probably love them public health.

I found my stride in terms of health policy and social justice and that nexus. And that further informs my eventual work and the intersections of social justice, you know, health, black men and boys and policy. And so after I graduated from Chicago State University, I was thinking, I'm like, okay, well what's next? So is it at that for our program? Is that a fellowship? You know, what's next? And so I have to go through a little process and trying to figure out, you know, get some clarity around my next move. And fortunately, I had some good mentors and advisors who are helpful and in providing some clarity and some encouragement to me to continue to move forward.

And so I applied, I have taken the JRB once and I've got into Chicago state with that score. But then prior to that program piece. I actually took the GRE I think two or three more times before finally getting entry to the program that I'm at now at GW and also applied to the doctoral programs, I think it was three times between I think 2013 and 2017 now just prior to that, I had gotten into my fellowship, which is named the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation health policy fellowship, which was where I was able to work a year on the house side in Congress and a year on the Senate side as a health staffer policy staffer. And so I went from my graduate degree in public health at Chicago State University to my two-year fellowship in Congress, which wrapped up in 2016. And then I made the pivot into that a parchment of health and services in 2016, which is where I'm at currently. And I just started my, my 12-program last fall. So this is the second semester of my doctoral program. And so this is where we are.

Dr. Berry:

What's a normal day for you right now? I'm naive, right? I'm in south Florida, I don't know what goes on there. I just assume everyone's like around the White House. I don't know.

Okey Enyia:

Yeah. So you know, for me, obviously it's different for each person, but for me, my day usually is made up of meetings with colleagues and writing policies or helping to write policies, attending hearings and briefings either in the house or the Senate. Help for policy decisions that might be coming down the road as it relates to some issue area, let's say, the ACA for example, or if it's the primary industry, there's a whole host of interests and you know, kind of issue areas that we can tap into. And so for me right now, my current space is in the preparedness space. And so anything that pertains to natural disasters, hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, Ebola, Zika, emerging threats.

So anything that needs to, those types of challenges, that is the current space that I work in. And so again, part of what I bring to the table where the conversation is the social justice bent in terms of health equity and health disparities. And so how do we lift up the communities of color, how to do we lift up the most vulnerable populations to ensure that they get the support, the resources that they need to recover when things happen, you know, whether it's a hurricane or some of the threat, how do we ensure that people of color or communities of color are not left out of the conversation?

Dr. Berry:

And we appreciate you for sitting at that table. Definitely. If you had to and of like if someone said, well, "okay, what's like the most pressing issue right now from a health policy standpoint that I, in South Florida you should be worried about?" I will would you say? (Yeah. I think. Thinking national) Right. So, you know, I hear a lot about the affordable care act. I hear a lot about they may cancel this and they asked, they may cancel that. Like, like what is, what are your thoughts?

Okey Enyia:

Yes. So I haven't studied the demographics in Florida in terms of whether you are a Medicaid expansion state. But you know, certainly part of the strategy as a physician would be to make every effort to get involved at the local state or federal levels as it relates to out of the ACA or Medicare, Medicaid. As those issues are very important and salient. And especially now as we are approaching the 2020 presidential elections with Medicare for all being high on the list of priorities as it relates to those who lean left that is definitely have priority. And then kind of tacked on to that.

Dr. Berry:

Physicians, health care workers. If you're in this field like a, like you said, you, you should know. And uh, for those who are Lunch and Learn community in Florida and we are not Medicaid state because our governor is whatever.

Okey Enyia:

I'm in DC, but you know, I do have a good sense of nationwide kind of what states are Medicare/Medicaid friendly. And I know that you know, what politics I had. So I was following the races with answers...and you're right.



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And so certainly he has his hand on the call of national health politics and, and so I would definitely encourage, especially again in the run-up to 2020 to really get up to speed on the nuances of the Medicare for all states because even now in fact this morning I saw several articles speaking to the fact that I think it was and Louisiana, a federal judge denied or is making a case or dismantling the ACA.

And so there are stakes level efforts being made to dismantle the ACA. This has been going on since March 23rd of 2010 when the bill was signed into law by President Obama. And so we know the dozens of efforts that the ride has made to this mass. And so again, if you'd being left, if you are a progressive, then part of your responsibility is to ensure that you are up to speed on what's happening and that you are able to work closely and collaboratively with people that share your views and your values in ways that would be able to move the needle to ensure that self-care is protected. And that is a human right.

Dr. Berry:

I love it. So people ask me all the time. Dr. Berry, you podcast, you blog, do videos and you're a physician. Like how do you have the time? So I got to ask with all of the amounts of work you do, how we got to, okay, the author like to tell us about that. I want to talk about this book. I want to talk about why. I want to talk about what was your influence, who at float. Let's get to that. Like how did becoming, was that something you always wanted to do? Like did you always have a book in you?

Okey Enyia:

No. I don't think. I think and this part of the part about it write about in the book is that maybe over the past maybe seven to 10 years I would get just in passing and just not, you know, candid conversation as I live life as I navigate it from one space to the next, I would kind of get some type of signal or some type of, you know, something someone would share some things just kind of, with to say well you know, you should write a book, you know, you use your experiences would help a lot of people. And even when that was shared, you know, I didn't really pay any mind because I was focused on actually trying to get through med school and get through Grad school and you know, find a job and you know, so I wasn't in the headspace to really kind of say, okay, yeah this might be good to start to put pen to paper, no, it just kind of evolved.

And so I think it had to have, maybe, 2016-ish, around that time. While I was in the Senate, I was like, okay, you know, my experiences like my trials, my fails, my challenges getting into med school tries to get into that 12 programs, you know, that it's so important to document. And so I began to journal actually I think maybe it was 2011 or so. And so my journal was helpful in terms of and having just kind of like a frame rail, but like an outline that I was able to, to build out. And so by the time talking about 2010, 2011 till now, in fact, I was able to leverage a lot of the content that I journal daily into a format that helped me to really frame my experience in a way that was helpful. And so part of my interest and passion was to leave a legacy for generations to come and also to become an entrepreneur. How do you turn your pain into purpose? And ultimately into profit, right?

Dr. Berry:

Lunch and Learn community, I hope you heard those things, turning your pain into purpose. And then most importantly, into profit.

Okey Enyia:

Absolutely. Because you know, I believe you know that nothing happens by accident. And you know, frankly, as a man of faith, as a Christian, you know, I'm like, okay, you know, how can I be the best impact possible? How can I make this world better than how I found it in some way, shape or form? And so that, those are things that really drove me and motivated me to be, to sit down to write the book. And so practically speaking, it took about 40 actual writing hours over the course of 90 days to write the book just to, just to do like a big brain dump, just get everything out, get to journal together and just get everything together in one document. And then I hired a writing coach,

I hired a business coach to also help me to kind of ensure that I was one about this whole writing, publishing process the right way. So I'm a self-published author. I started writing it in December of 2017 and I finished the first draft in March and think it was February of 2018 and then I took about four months to edit, to get a proofread and then I was launched it on my birthday last year, which is November 22nd and then it became the question of okay, taking that content now. Right, and how do I best leverage and maximize the content in this book? And so multiple revenue streams.

And so that's where I'm at right now is really kind of exploring the various ways in which I could take the content, how to get a job on Capitol Hill, how to get a job in the workforce, how to find your passions, your purpose, you know, just framing the content in a way that will be helpful and can be plugged into different areas and networks.

Dr. Berry:

Oh, I love it. Was your influence, cause obviously the trials that you went through playing a huge role in being able to put that pen to paper? Did you, did you delve in with a lot of experience even when you were on the hill even when you were like in the thick of things within the government that also make the book as well?



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Okey Enyia:

Yes. It is a very transparent, you know, I include all of my experiences how I got into med school, how I got into my doctoral program is on Capitol Hill, as a black author, author entrepreneurship and it's a very transparent, we meet with lays out the framework that I'm helping to drive conversations and that covers a wide range of issue areas as it relates to mental health and well-being, self-care epidemic, the stem fields, the school to prison pipeline, health disparities, health equity, health, and all policies. My time on Capitol Hill, like it's all in there.

Dr. Berry:

Love it. That's absolutely amazing. And putting on my, you know, we're, we're both in that field from neuro standpoint cause I definitely can see where you know, you have courses whether you have, whether you're speaking right? You know, cause I think you have a story I think people should hear right? And whether we're talking about high school students, college students, like me, I mean honestly even professional who really need to hear like, "hey, I'm here, I'm doing the work and this is how you can do to work with me."

Okey Enyia:

Absolutely. And you know, I'll also plug the fact that it also talked about my experience in Nigeria, which also my sense of identity and culture, you know, which are, which helped me to get to this point as well. So I definitely have to give a shout out to my culture and my people kind of draw a parallel between Nigeria and Black Panther as well in terms of, you know, living in a country that is ruled and ran by people of color and how empowering that is. And so I definitely want to kind of plug that as well.

Dr. Berry:

I love it. How can someone who is interested in working with you, interested in learning from you obviously interested in getting this book right? Like let's get this promo going, right? Like how can I get in touch with you? Let them know. Wherever you're at, you have social media outlets, web, give them the details.

Okey Enyia:

Absolutely. So my website, I'm also a consultant which is part of my business model, my website is Enyia Strategies which is spelled E, N as in Nancy, Y, I, A Strategies dot com, that's my website. Where you can find my book. If you want person signed copy you can go to my website and I will ship you out a person signed copy. You can also find my book on Amazon and kindle. I'm going on book, since I launched it almost every weekend I'm doing a book signing somewhere. As far as social media, my Instagram is Enyia Strategies, my Twitter also is Enyia Strategies. I'm on LinkedIn as my name O K E Y, last name is Enyia - E N Y I A. On Facebook account.

You can also find me on YouTube as my name Okey Enyia - O K E Y E N Y I A. Also Periscope as Enyia strategies and what else? I think that covers a social media, so IG, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Periscope, YouTube, Website. My email list. If you go to my website or my email list enyiastrategies.com. I'm in the process of actually creating an online course that is focused on creating a career roadmap for individuals who are, who are challenge. We're trying to pivot from the state college to grasp at a workforce, and so I help people to successfully transition from one point to the next by creating a roadmap for them to, to navigate throughout the workforce in that fashion.

So I'd have to talk about how to network, how to find mentors, how to negotiate salary, soft skills, email etiquette, phone etiquette, how to search for jobs in government or elsewhere, how to find purpose and destiny and passions and get clarity around your purpose. You know, that's, that's where the big for me, so that's the online course that I'm creating. I'm hoping to launch it very soon and I'm excited about what's ahead.

Dr. Berry:

I love it. Lunch and Learn community, if you're driving, listening at work, all of those links will be in the show notes, so we'll make sure you get a chance. I'm also going to be giving away a Kindle version of his book as well too because I definitely think this says a person that you meet because again, I've been, I've been following him for about, I think almost like a year or so on LinkedIn. And when I first started I was like, oh, okay, this is the person that I might,

I'm going to have to keep kind of close because when you see people working and doing work, they don't even have to say it. You just, they're, they're so busy working, you could just notice like, oh, this person's actually been, some move him. And so he was definitely someone who I was ecstatic about getting on the show to kind of talk to you guys, because I know, again, I know health policy, I know politics isn't sexy, but it is extremely important. I promise you that medication that you're picking up at your local pharmacy, there's some policy that's made it to a price that it is that, that point, right? So don't think that you are immune and in this bubble that some type of policy does not affect what you're doing here in your little community.

Okey Enyia:

Absolutely. Absolutely. It's so important to be able to frame issues and challenges and policies. What kind of context the person that lives, you know, day to day. So how do you best? And I think in terms of how to find relevancy with what's going on at the federal level with what's going on at the state level and then what's happening locally.



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You know, all politics is local, you know, power, influence, economics, education, like all of those nuances. And so part of it for me is helping to drive the conversation and create a narrative that makes the, what is oftentimes, the aim office, products and making process relevance and the main, and makes sense and connected. Right.

Dr. Berry:

I love it. And before I let you go, I was last, I always ask this question, how can even though, how can what you do empower others to take better control of their health?

Okey Enyia:

Yeah. So, you know, I always say that change starts with you and I think being, being willing to change, which is very difficult at times, you know, that's being human and just, you know, living, having a heart to serve and being willing to seek out support and help. For example, for me, especially now it's a question of strategy of normalizing self-care. So I go see a black nurse psychologist biweekly. I'm going to gym weekly.

As I mentioned earlier, I'm a Christian, so I go to church weekly. I eat well and I try to. And so because I've been exposed to this lifestyle, to these values, I'm better able to, and I'm blessed to be able to share my experiences in a transparent way that hopefully will encourage you to make some positive changes. And so that is also a part of what drove me to about the book to say I'd have to go through personally and then for the thing that I did or that have helped me to get to where I am today, where I am hopefully inspiring people and I'm helping to change people's lives. How based upon you know, my story. That is what drives me and, and my hope is that the opportunity that should made available to me on your podcast and said other radio interviews and TV interviews and speaking engagements that this is one way in which I am hopefully leaving a legacy and making a strong impact. So.

Dr. Berry:

I love it. I love it. Again, Lunch and Learn, amazing guest. Thank you for tuning in and we'll see you guys next week.



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