



**Christina D. Bethell: We are the Medicine - Leveraging The Power  
of Relational Neuroscience to Flourish In Challenging Times**



Dr. Bethell is a Professor at Johns Hopkins University at Bloomberg School of Public Health, where she advances a new integrated Science of Thriving. She is also founding director of [Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative \(CAHMI\)](#). Watch this session to learn what the latest science tells us about the role of relational health and embodiment in the general health of individuals and the effects of undischarged traumatic stress.

**TOP EMBODIMENT TIP:** Take more time - Being, Belonging, Becoming.

**What do we mean when we say someone is flourishing?**

- Dr Bethel talks about the concept of flourishing and how it is important we see it as distinct from being “not ill”. She postulates that flourishing is learned and that asking yourself “Are you flourishing at this time?” equates to asking:
  - Do you have a sense of meaning in your life?
  - Do you experience curation of positive emotions?
  - Are you engaging positively in daily life?
  - Do you experience a sense of accomplishment?
  - Do you feel value in your relationships with others?
  - Do you experience a sense of mattering?

**The Effects Of Undischarged Trauma**

- Early childhood stressors can result in a wide range of complex health conditions in adulthood; we are beginning to learn how to support children nearer the time of such experiences and thus reduce the chances of illness years later.
- Microglia, nutrients in the brain malfunction and destroy healthy neurons instead of repairing damaged ones.

**The Three Pillars Of The “We Are The Medicine” Model**

- **Time in:** (Being) – attuning to our inner experience, e.g. meditation, breathing exercises, visualization.
- **Time with:** (Belonging) – gaining fulfilment from participation in activities; establishing bio-synchrony.
- **Time for:** (Becoming) – discerning what arises and taking action.
- This model operates at the levels of **individuals, family, community, clinical** and **policy-making**.

**Coping With Stress**

- Have a broad understanding of the biological, chemical, and physical effects on the body.
- Respond, as opposed to Reacting.
- Reference to Bessel van der Kolk: “*Mindfulness is a necessary state to be in to live your life... Without mindfulness, there is no growth.*”

**Resources**

- ❖ **PowerPoint Presentation:** [miace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/BethellFinalPPT.pdf](https://miace.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/BethellFinalPPT.pdf)
- ❖ **Website:** [jhsp.hopkins.edu/faculty/directory/profile/3038/christina-d-bethell](https://jhsp.hopkins.edu/faculty/directory/profile/3038/christina-d-bethell)



## Dr. Christina D. Bethell





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