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### ReachMD

www.reachmd.com  
info@reachmd.com  
(866) 423-7849

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## Strategies for Success: Exercising Our Mental Muscle

### **Dr. McDonough:**

What do you think is the most important part of your body, the part of your body that actually can help you be successful? Think about it for a second. In a moment we're going to be talking about it with your guest, Kisma Orbovich. Kisma Orbovich is someone who actually talks to many people, leaders in the business world, entrepreneurs, about successful approaches to life, and I thought she'd be a good guest to bring on Primary Care Today because, as physicians, we deal with a lot of issues, we deal with patients who have a lot of issues, and it would be just a good idea to try to figure out, perhaps, the things we can do to make a difference in our lives, what they could be and the best way to do it.

So, first of all, Kisma, welcome to the program.

### **Ms. Orbovich:**

Thank you for having me. I'm excited to be here.

### **Dr. McDonough:**

And to explain a little more about Kisma, she is CEO of Illumination Academy, and basically, her suggestion is that people are using the wrong muscle and failing miserably at attempts to make their lives better. Trying to optimize human health there are certain things you can do, and why make it any

more tense? What is the part of the body that we should be working on most to do well?

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Well, what I truly believe and I've seen working with clients for over a dozen years is the most important thing to exercise is actually our mental muscle. The reason being is, once we are in charge of our thoughts, in charge of our choices, we are in charge of our bodies in many ways. I know, too, because I have physicians that are clients, that there is something about when a patient comes in and they actually have a will and a desire to get well and they choose to take care of themselves, they choose to eat right, it's a whole different relationship, so that ability to exercise our brain, our mental muscle, to me is really important.

**Dr. McDonough:**

And do you think we just don't think about it? Do we get into traps? What is it that kind of gets us out of that habit?

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Yeah, that's a great question. In fact, I was thinking about this today. I just arrived in New York City from California, and I was thinking about all the noise that we're exposed to. I mean, the technology changes in the last 5 years, let alone 10 years, has been extreme. It's no more about, "Well, I get the newspaper in the morning and the newspaper in the evening." It's all day long we are being fed noise, and so I feel like there's—I call it like the mental real estate—is too crowded, so people aren't really stopping to think, "Wait a minute. I need to create some space up there, and I need to exercise..." In some of the higher spiritual teachings, they call it the intellect. The intellect isn't intelligence. The intellect is like the driver of your car, the guiding of your emotions. And so, basically, to answer your question, Dr. Brian, I think people just have too much noise coming into their brain, and they're not deciphering what's important.

**Dr. McDonough:**

In reading what you have to say, one of the things it says is, "Big choices are exciting, and they win over your friends and family, but if you don't have daily resiliency, sticking with it, the luster fades." I mean, when we're counseling patients about dieting, for instance, I often say, "It doesn't even matter if you didn't lose a pound. Did you not gain a pound today? That was a win." And people, they want the 30-pound hit. They want to lose. And it seems our society is becoming so much more wanting the quick hit, the big success, the simple solution. Do you think that's changed even in the time that you've been counseling patients—15, 20 years?

**Ms. Orbovich:**

I do. The bigger the better. Hopefully, it's being tempered. Like I'm not sure... Was it 7-Eleven that

used to serve the really gigantic soda pop? I don't think they are doing that anymore. But I think there's this like, "Wow, look at me; I'm going to do this;" and everyone gets on board, and the dilemma with that, where the cycle starts to spin out is it's great for maybe 5 days, or a week, or 2 weeks, or even a month, but at some point, because there hasn't been built a sturdy ladder climbing up to that desire, people stop, and then the stopping becomes a habit, and that stopping... So, if someone is wanting to lose weight and they start to diet and then they stop, where else in their life are they executing that habit of stopping?

And it's really interesting. I had a session with a client who wanted—has been trying to lose weight, and what we came to, the one choice she needed to make was to actually accept her weight, because she was spending so much energy, so much mental and emotional real estate around shame of carrying an extra 80 or 100 pounds that she was exhausted, so she didn't feel like exercising. She'd much rather have pizza than a salad, anything to feel better. Once that one thing was "accept your body, love your body," everything changed for her, so it started with that choice.

**Dr. McDonough:**

Kind of accepting yourself. We did a story a couple weeks ago for radio, and the story on this radio 1-minute report was talking about Instagram, and it was called Instagram Dysmorphia. So, of course, it drew my attention. Instagram, what's it all about? And it was about how teenage girls now—a lot of people are, but teenage girls in particular—are focused on changing images of their faces on Instagram, looking certain ways. And when they looked certain ways and got 300 likes or 400 likes, they are now going to the doctor's office saying, "Can you make me look like this?"

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Ahh, that's a problem.

**Dr. McDonough:**

And you think about where that starts. I mean, maybe you can address something, something like that, and what we're doing here in society.

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Well, again, if we're looking for the external fix, if we're looking for the external applause and support and positive opinion of others, we're negating the most important, which is our internal belief or in what way... You know, one of the things I teach with my clients and students is that power really is within us, and when we're willing to access that with self love, with acceptance—that also includes loving, accepting other people—it won't matter how many likes we have. And for young teenagers to be going through that, to me, it shows that we as adults have to really emulate this ability of taking responsibility, following our path, making choices step-by-step to get to that bigger picture rather than making it all

about the big win.

**Dr. McDonough:**

When you look at people's lives, like we look at our patients, one of the things I find—and you really have to ask that question to your patients: What bothers you the most? And they'll talk maybe about a family issue, or they'll talk maybe about a dietary issue like you're saying we're talking about, or they'll talk about work is stressful, but it seems over and over people are concerned about money, finances, and it is a big worry. And I'm talking about people who make a lot of money and people who make very little money. It just never seems to be enough. And I know you counsel people. How do you educate people about that? Because they have these fears at every stage of their life that they're not going to have enough to the point where retirees are worrying they're not going to have enough.

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Oh, this is true. It's permeating our society. Basically, it's black energy. In the highest teachings... And we could talk for hours on this. I don't want to get too lofty. But basically, I talk a lot about the universal spiritual laws. If we begin to understand that there is an amazing energy, whether we call it God, or spirit, or universe, or Brahman, whatever it is in us and around us and we have access to that energy, we can take a breath and go, "Do you know what? I'm going to be okay." It's when we close out that energy, that way that we can actually bring in prosperity, whether it's wealth, or health, or love, or spiritual connection—when we close the door to that, we're just fighting it through our human, and we're using up a lot of our own energy, and that's why we feel like there's never enough. And it's true. You will see people—they'll want money. And as soon as they get it in, what happens? They have the fear that they're going to lose it. So, money isn't the root of all evil. It's our relationship to it. When we are so attached to it and when we think that we will never have enough, that's when we have what I call wealth congestion. When we understand that there is an unlimited supply—and I know that can sound lofty to some people, but it's supply and demand—it is there and we have access to be able to create it, we have more confidence. We know there's something greater than just us that is helping us to bring in what it is we desire.

**Dr. McDonough:**

So, what do you replace money with? How do you make that change? I mean, obviously, there are realistic things. You want food on the table, that kind of thing, but beyond that, when people are wanting too much or, like you said, they're even afraid of losing it and they are stressed by that.

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Yeah, it's a great question. I think money is a great energy, so I'll never say to someone, "Don't make less money." I work with people that get up into 7 figures and more in their business. Money is a great

energy. It's when we make it wrong, it's when we get stuck on "there's never enough," we're really digging... It's like we're sinking in quicksand. So, one of the first things to do... I mean, really, this is... A hack for everything is gratitude. And people talk about gratitude all the time, but really think about what gratitude is. When we start with being grateful for everything that we've got, there's opulence everywhere. The universe, the planet exposes us to opulence. It's consistent. The sun always rises. It never says, "Oh, you humans, you've not been treating the planet well. I'm not going to rise today." It's always working. So, when we begin to say, "Wait a minute; look at everything I have done; look at what I created;" rather than what I don't have and what hasn't worked. There's a law of the universe called the Law of Increase, meaning what we focus on increases, so when we focus on gratitude for what we have, we get more of it. When we focus on what doesn't work, what we don't have, it's like we're digging a deeper hole. Does that make sense?

**Dr. McDonough:**

It does. It does. So you're kind of... By the way, I want to let people know we're listening to the voice of Kisma Orbovich. Kisma is the CEO of Illumination Academy, and we're just talking about her approach and how she counsels people on basically mindfulness and really exercising the muscle of the brain. And we only have a few minutes left, but I wanted to talk about the role of your approach to illness and optimism versus pessimism and have you talked with that about health and where those things play a role, because we are starting to realize that approach to life really seems to have an impact on our own health.

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Absolutely. I mean, we know that stress causes disease. We know that. I do a lot of certain kinds of energy work for healing, whether it's mental, emotional or physical. The body wants to heal. It wants to heal. It has these properties that want to get well. When the mind is ready to... Well, one of the things that I have found, and there have been some interesting studies too, when people carry guilt, they actually—there have been some studies where their perspiration has more acid in it. So, we know what acid does. So, if someone is living with a lot of guilt, if someone's living with a lot of resentment, it's like they're eating away at their physical body. It gets into the body. So, if we've got something to let go of, we've got to let go. If we're carrying resentment or anger, it's not worth it. Life is already too short. Why make our body ill by holding on to a negative emotion? There is so much that we can focus on through gratitude, for forgiveness. And I'd just like to say staying in the lane, in my lane, on my tracks, like taking care of my life and always investigating, "Why did I create that?" or, "What do I do next to create something even better?" than worrying about what other people think or say.

**Dr. McDonough:**

Any last things you wanted to say? I know we're running out of time, but anything that I didn't ask you

that you think is important you'd like to leave us with?

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Life is amazing. We've been given a gift, and our body is like a vehicle to carry this amazing sense of being, and hold that every single day as being precious, because when we approach our own life as precious, we tend to operate in a much higher way and bring amazing things into our world.

**Dr. McDonough:**

Kisma Orbovich has been our guest. She is the CEO of Illumination Academy, cohost of the Illumination Podcast. And I really want to thank you, not only for your optimism but for a lot of the suggestions that you have that you brought to our physicians on Primary Care Today.

**Ms. Orbovich:**

Oh, you're so welcome. Thank you for having me.

**Dr. McDonough:**

I'm Dr. Brian McDonough. Thanks for listening to Primary Care Today on ReachMD, and remember, you can download the podcast if you haven't heard the entire interview or if you'd like to hear it again. We'll talk to you next time.