

Christopher Wark (00:00.182)

There weren't any other therapies. It was literally lifestyle. The nutrition, which is 50% of it, definitely. And the other 50%, I think, is what you think. The mental, your internal language is so, so important. For me, it was life-changing in this situation.

Christopher Wark (00:26.722)

Hey gang, it's Chris. Today I'm interviewing Johann Ilgenfritz. He has a master in photography and worked as a fashion photographer for almost 20 years in Hamburg and London, but his life changed in 2011 when he had a heart attack and six months later was diagnosed with cancer. After unsuccessful radiation therapy, he was left to pursue other options and he started on a quest to restore his health.

And also in that process of life change, he launched UK health radio while he was still trying to heal cancer. And he has successfully healed. He's alive and well. UK health radio is a huge platform now sharing health and wellness information. And so it's great to connect with you, Johann. I'm excited to hear your story. Lovely to be here with you. Thank you very much for inviting me. So why don't we start with your cancer diagnosis? How did all that come about?

That was back in 2011. I had a heart attack in February of that year. And about four or five months later, myself and all the doctors were wondering why I wasn't feeling better because it wasn't that critical. It wasn't like a huge heart attack or anything. And everybody was wondering why I wasn't feeling better.

the first diagnosis, the first cancer diagnosis happened actually by accident, if I could put it that way. That was the start of it. 46 years old, two children, one almost three, one almost 12. And I have to admit it and I do admit it. The first diagnosis really caught me off guard.

Christopher Wark (02:24.726)

put me into a total frenzy actually, to be very honest with you. I was useless. I didn't know how to react. I didn't know what to do. At that stage of my life, I was conventional medicine-orientated only. I'd never really been ill. It never interested me actually, like many people on the planet at the moment.

So it was, I was told to do radiotherapy, which I did, ended up doing two sets of radiotherapy. It did work, the cancer did go away. But the whole time during this process, it was very strange. I just had this feeling of, and I call it helplessness for lack of a better word actually, it was more.

I think that's the best way to describe it. Nobody told me what to do. My only duty was to be there at the designated times for the therapy. Nobody said to me, do exercise or don't. Nobody said to me, carry on playing tennis or go on a diet or don't or anything like that.

Christopher Wark (03:46.846)

of not being part of the process stuck with me. It really did. It stayed with me even after the first

cancer-free news that I got. You know what it's like when things happen and then they rectify themselves, life goes on as usual. And in my case, it did again. But that feeling, that feeling of...

not being part of the process stayed with me, I have to admit. Most cancer patients, when they get a diagnosis, they're not told to do anything. And sometimes they're told to keep doing the things that contributed to their unhealthy situation. They're told to keep eating your favorite junk foods and fast food, processed food, meat and dairy. They're told it doesn't matter what you eat, doesn't matter what you do. And essentially, you're just a helpless victim. And your only hope is, you know,

the treatments that were gonna sell you. So what type of cancer were you diagnosed with? I had, it started to skin cancer. I had both melanomas, the dark and the light ones that weren't detected, that spread. I even had a melanoma in my left eye. In the end, all in all seven. And yeah, that's what forgot me in the end.

As I say. After treatment, did you have a recurrence? Yes. My first, after post-cancer screenings, my oncologist said to me, listen, I'm sorry, we don't know what happened. I call it my second diagnosis because I see them as two different worlds apart, not only from what I did, but also from my reaction to the diagnosis.

as I mentioned before, that feeling of not being part of the process stayed by me. And when I got the second diagnosis during my first post-cancer screenings, my reaction was totally different. I remember sitting in my oncologist's office and she telling me the news that it spread everywhere that they literally don't know what to do and they can't do anything for me anymore.

Christopher Wark (06:12.946)

hearing the voice screaming in the back of my head, you're not going to die. You know, you will do this, you will get through this. If this first option didn't work, then go and find another option. That was literally the attitude that I had with the second diagnosis. That's why I like splitting them up because the first one and the second one were so different, if that makes any sense.

Christopher Wark (06:43.73)

And yeah, with that in mind, with that mindset, I left the office, I went home. I didn't make a huge mistake here. I didn't tell my wife about the terminal diagnosis because they did give me between six and 12 months to live. I told her that I had cancer again, but I didn't tell her about the six to 12 months, which was a mistake in...

in retrospect, looking back at it, of course it was a mistake, but it was my way of dealing with it, it was my way of handling with it. It was my way of taking my health back into my hands, into my control, you know? And I don't tell people to do that. I don't say to people, you know,

Christopher Wark (07:36.138)

take your health into your own hands. I never say that either, but you've got to be part of that

process. You've got to be there. You've got to think. You've got to question. You've got to act. Action is genius. You've got to act. You've got to do something yourself. Otherwise, and the other thing is I said to myself as well, who's going to fight for my life the way I am? And there is only one question, only yourself. Only you will fight for your life.

in a certain manner, in a certain way. And that was my mindset going into the second thing. That's really good. I often say no one will take better care of you than you if you choose to do it. Yeah. If you choose to. And that is a big part of the puzzle, right? Is that a lot of patients don't realize they have power to change their life and that their decisions will affect their life and their health. And so you took action, what did you do?

Literally the same day I went home and I started looking there where everybody tells you not to look, the internet. I just started researching anything and anything I could lay my hands on.

Christopher Wark (08:51.79)

At that stage, there was no UK health radio. It's really a pity I didn't know about you, otherwise it would have been much easier. But at that stage, as I said, I started researching in the internet and seven months into my allotted 12, at that stage I was really ill. Just to give you an idea, it took me 20 minutes to walk up three flights of stairs at that stage. So really...

not well anymore. Two o'clock in the morning, one morning, I read a very short sentence that said, cancer cannot survive in an oxygenated alkaline cellular environment. And by Dr. Warburg, the German biochemist, as I'm sure you know, who won a Nobel Prize for that in

Christopher Wark (09:53.095)

very science-based, orientated. I still am actually, to be very honest with you, but for me that made sense. That Nobel Prize, I explained it in this way. I always say I felt it was standing in an empty football field and somebody switched on the lights. That's how I felt when I read that sentence. I actually worked my wife and I said to Raffaella,

I found a way not to die. Because at this stage, she knew something, you know, she knew by now already because she could see the decay that had happened over the last seven months. So, and yeah, both of us, we started researching this in an area which I'd actually never heard of was lifestyle, nutrition. That was my first point of call was nutrition.

Of course, it hasn't stayed there. It's gone on to many other things. But nutrition was the first thing. And I literally, as we, literally, as we, as we learned, as we researched and learned, we implemented. And some worked and some didn't work. But overall, I became a, a vegetarian literally overnight. Followed, became a vegan. And I have.

Now I have been an alkaline vegan for, well, it must be at least eight, eight or nine years already. When you say alkaline vegan, do you mean you focus on primarily raw food? Not necessarily raw, but alkaline. Even after it's been cooked, it's still got to be, on the alkaline chart,

still got to be either neutral or alkaline. So it's not necessarily raw. I'm not one of those people, I need warm food. Especially in winter.

I live in London, it gets cold here as well. And I just need warm stuff. In summer, it's easier. But for me in winter, it's not that easy. And yeah, as I said, alkaline vegan are for seven or eight or nine years almost, I think. It just all made sense to me. I know you can't control the pH value of your blood. I know that you're

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your body regulates that, but on the cellular level, it's all possible. So depending on nutrition, what you know, well, not only nutrition, I know that now, a lot of other lifestyle factors that influence that as well. But in the beginning, that was for me, if you if you have to tell it to have to mention it in this way. For me, it was

If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. So I went from believing that cancer was the cause of my illness to realizing it was merely a symptom of a sick body, of an already sick body. And that meant cause and effect. That meant for me, that was, okay, now I get that cause and effect. You change a cause, you change, you have to change the effect. That's a natural law, you know? And that's what...

That's what really, really got me going, really inspired me to do it. And then, of course, about three months after we started this, I felt something. I felt a surge of energy that I hadn't felt in a very long time. This is not a quick fix. Well, it wasn't in my case. It took me two and a half years to get rid of everything.

But that after two or three months, I had a surge of energy. I always joke, actually. I say for a normal person, it was probably nothing but a little two or three foot wave. But for me, it was like I was standing on this anomaly. It was unbelievable. I couldn't believe it. And that just supported me. It just helped me in the belief that what I was doing was correct.

I had no idea whether it was going to work or not, or work in time, if I could put it that way. And that belief was, I think, as

Christopher Wark (14:22.386)

as good as what we were doing physically with the food and the stuff already as well. Something I say a lot, which I think is one of the most important things and you just kind of touched on it, is you have to believe that healing is possible. Right? That's the number one thing. You have to believe that healing is possible. And if you believe it's possible, then naturally your response will be to take steps to help yourself.

heal, right? To start to read and research to make changes in your life. Obviously you did. Tell me what you ate. What specifically did your daily diet look like? Well, mainly, and still does actually, mainly green. Green greens, everything green from, you know, it's like everything high

alkaline that's in the pH tens, that even if they are cooked, they come down to the eights or the sevens.

but or even in the nines. So literally, spinach, broccoli, everything green. I do eat potatoes every now and again. And I know that's starchy. So in other words, sugar and all that. But it's just something that I need to do. It's just, I don't call it a cheat. A lot of people say, yes, I'm going to do this. I'm going to do it. It's a cheat. It's not that. It's

giving my body what it needs at that stage. So, cauliflower. So, what's breakfast? I don't eat breakfast. I do intermittent fasting now. I do intermittent fasting. So, I only eat at one o'clock in the afternoon for the first time. And then that is our main meal as well. So, that would consist of...

Buddha bowl, if I could, I don't know if people know Buddha bowls, that kind of stuff. So that's basically what I, that's the kind of nutrition, I'm not a nutritionist. So that's the kind of food we eat, you know, so really wholesome avocados, that kind of stuff. I don't eat too much fruit either because of the sugar. To be honest, I hardly eat any fruits.

Christopher Wark (16:47.106)

but the avocados and bananas and that's also sugar and stuff. But that's what I do have occasionally. Avocados quite often, not bananas really. And what we also do is, especially for snacks and stuff, we have a dehydrator and we dehydrate beetroot and stuff like that, which is delicious. It's just like eating a normal crisp.

So we literally, I always say, people always say, oh, but you had to give up so much. It's got nothing to do with giving up. When you give up something, you make room for something new. That's how you've got to see it. Not as I've got to give up this and I've got to give up that. So it's actually an exciting journey because you're learning to eat new things, new tastes, new smells, new everything for that.

and any fresh juices? I don't. As I said, once again, for the especially not fruit juice, I mainly drink water and herbal tea. That's literally what I drink. Every now and again, I'll have a little bit of apple juice diluted with a lot of water. It's just a nice taste. But it's usually lime and ginger tea, that kind of stuff or normal water. And speaking of water,

I only drink distilled water. I do look at the mineral side of that because distilled water is slightly, has slightly less minerals in that you should have. So we do double check that and, but very important, as I said, I only drink distilled water. I have been now for a very long time.

Christopher Wark (18:44.882)

all the other impurities that are in water, whether it's plastic, whether it's whatever, there's always something in it. Are there any other therapies that you incorporated that you'd like to talk about that you think are worth talking about? I looked at a few therapies, but I know the oxygen

therapy, the oxygen tanks, I looked at as well. I was just...

For some reason, it didn't happen at that stage. It was also a financial thing. It was very expensive at that point. I couldn't work as a photographer anymore, so money did play a role as well. But what I did do is I looked further into the lifestyle side of things. Meditation now plays a massive role in my life where previously I sneaked at it.

As I mentioned before, fasting plays a very big role in my life. Sport plays a very big role, always has, but now it's even more. I run half marathons. I'm almost 60 years old. I'm 60 in November. I ran three half marathons last year. I ran two this year already.

Christopher Wark (20:11.694)

I'm a very big supporter of stress management. Stress management, as a photographer, as a fashion photographer, I personally think it's one of the reasons I got ill was you're always under the gun. You're always under time pressure. And for me personally, I know it's not like that for everybody, but for me personally, time pressure is my kryptonite. It really is. Even now, when I feel

that certain stress coming, it's usually from time pressure. So I looked at it and I probably have more stress, I hate the word stress as well, but I probably have more stress now than ever before. But I looked at my day and I changed my whole day. I now get up really early in the mornings, I give myself enough time.

I don't work too late either. I work from four in the mornings until five, six in the evenings, but at a normal rate and that kind of stuff. So I didn't, you can't get away from stress anymore. If you're a working person and you have family and stuff, that's it, you've got it. But you can change your lifestyle so that it doesn't affect you anymore. And I'm a very big supporter of that and promoter on that.

there weren't any other therapies. It was literally lifestyle, the nutrition, which is 50% of it, definitely. And the other 50%, I think, is what you think. The mental, your internal language is so, so important in that for me, it was, it was life changing in this situation. Yeah, I couldn't agree more. The diet is huge.

but also what's going on between your ears. Yeah. Right? You have to get a hold of your thoughts. And when you do that, then it's easier to make changes to your life. You know, it's easier to change your diet when you take a step back and realize, okay, the way I'm eating might be actually harmful. And the way I'm thinking might be harmful. And my daily routine, my habits might be harmful. What can I change? And you realize there's a lot. You can change a lot. You can change almost everything.

Christopher Wark (22:37.034)

in your life and you can't change it all at once, but you can change it systematically in a pretty

short amount of time. You can make big changes and diet is a big change. Exercise, that's going from not exercising to exercising. That's a big change. Big changes happen in your body when you start exercising and putting the right food in and then changing the way you think and getting a hold of stress. Like you said, rearranging your schedule.

reordering your day and your routine and your responsibilities in a way that is less stressful is so important. And that's one of the missing pieces. Stress is this insidious cause of disease. And so many people tend to shrug it off and think, well, it's not stress. I'm just going to do these treatments and they're going to cure me. And I don't need to change my stressful, chaotic life.

And the truth is you do. And you shouldn't overlook it. So I love your story. I love the simplicity of it. That you focused on nutrition, eating a plant-based diet, tons of vegetables, teas, water, exercise, stress reduction. I mean, these are the foundational principles of health and healing we see over and over and over again in our community. People who've healed cancer, all types and stages of cancer.

against the odds. I mean, we all did basically the same things. I mean, I drank a ton of carrot juice. I ate fruit and fruit smoothies. You didn't, you know, but the point is like we both decided to flood our body with nutritious food from the earth. And so there's more than one way to restore your health, but those foundational principles of nutrition are universal. So I think that's fantastic. And I want to be respectful of your time.

Last question. If someone comes to you with cancer, and they say, I've got cancer, I know you went through it and you healed and you know, what do I need to know? What would you say to that person? I've actually done this quite often. I've been through UK health, I've been approached quite often with exactly that question. I don't, I never tell people what to do. I'm not a health professional. I have no desire to be one either.

Christopher Wark (24:58.198)

But I have, I walked my talk, I have beaten cancer. So I do tell them, I tell them my story. And I do tell them that they have, the first thing I say is if you are willing to become part of the process, you and I can speak. And if you're willing to open new ideas to try, not, you know, understanding something intellectually and actually doing it is two different things.

I've had so many people over the years that understand what I'm saying, but when I hear I can't, I get goosebumps. I live like it's a physical reaction. It causes a physical reaction with me already. Sometimes people can't even in the face of death, they can't change and that's just unbelievable.

That's the first thing I do is I find out whether they are willing to do what is necessary, is needed to do. And then I help them every step of the way. I have a food chart that I sent them that I've created for myself that's quite comprehensive. I send to them and I'm on their case as well. If they say, yes, I want to work with you, I want you to help me.

I'm on their case, I ask them how it's going on a weekly basis. So I actually, I'm quite strict as well. I even have one or had, they've moved away so it's not actual anymore. A person that started running with me as well. So that's how we do. And of course, I start with nutrition the way I say. I'm a very firm believer of doing them one step at a time as well.

trying to do everything all at the same time. I was lucky, I didn't know about the other stuff. They came one after the other and I could deal with them. For example, I tried yoga, I tried doing yoga and it just didn't work, it doesn't work for me. It still doesn't, I've tried it a few times. So I was lucky in that point. So I do pace the people as well, but nutrition is always my starting point. Stress reduction is always almost the second one. And then we move on to

Christopher Wark (27:19.758)

to fasting and that kind of stuff. I read the other day that only 5 to 10% of all cancer-related illnesses on the planet today is genetically inherited. That means between 90 and 95% was contributed to our lifestyles. I didn't realize it was that big, but that's just how it is, you know? That's just, and...

I have a mantra and my mantra is good health is a choice. And I know it's, I know there are certain circumstances where it's not. I get that. But in 99% of the time, it is a choice, good health. And that's good news because people, you know, for people that don't realize that they can actually make choices that will improve their health, right? Like we talked about earlier, that you're not a victim of disease.

that cancer is most likely not genetic. It was not your fate. And that your diet, lifestyle, and environment played a role in your current situation. And knowing that empowers you, right? And inspires this belief that you can get well and empowers you to change your life. Hopefully, and as you said, some people will learn, they're open to learning, but they're not open to doing. They don't wanna change.

That's human nature. And it is hard. I've certainly seen that with people that I care about and people I've interacted with is that they just, they don't believe they can change. And because they don't believe they can change, they don't change. And usually don't get well. So thank you so much. Thank you for your time. This was, this was great. A really, really wonderful, inspiring story. And I just love the simplicity of what you did. You know, you didn't get well overnight.

It took, like you said, three, three and a half months to really, before you really felt a noticeable improvement, you know, but you stayed the course and two and a half years later you were cancer free. And you know, I think there's a big message there too, is like healing takes time. You don't get cancer overnight. You don't heal it overnight. This isn't about a miracle cure or a magic bullet or a quick fix. This is about consistency, right? Being diligent and determined and consistent.

Christopher Wark (29:46.078)

in taking care of yourself in a way that you never have before and trusting that your body can and will heal if you supply it with the proper nutrients and care. Absolutely. I couldn't have put it any better. And thank you for everything you do to help people out there. I know you have a huge following and correctly. So what you've done is amazing. Thank you very much.

I appreciate that. You know, I, um, I'm just as surprised as anybody that, you know, that people are listening and paying attention to me, you know, I just, I'm passionate about health and healing and sharing my story and sharing incredible stories, healing stories like yours. And, you know, in doing that, yeah, people obviously have found me and, uh, and found a lot of value in what I do. And I'm just blessed to be alive and to be able to do it. And, and I know you feel the same way. And so, um,

We'll just go ahead and give a plug too for you founded UK Health Radio in the middle of your cancer healing journey because I guess you saw a void, you know, you saw a void of, you know, a lack of information on natural health and healing, holistic healing. And so you created this platform with how many DJs or how many radio shows and DJs are on this platform? We have at the moment, we have 41 different.

shows that cover different health aspects or different aspects of health. All in all, we have 49 presenters because there are a few shows that have two presenters. So yeah, we are 24-7 as well and 1.3 million listeners at the moment. We did launch all our shows on podcasts on 15 podcast platforms just beginning of December last year.

So yeah, it's been, as you mentioned, I started UK Health really because of, I'm sure it would have, it would have made my life, my journey much quicker in the beginning, I wouldn't have gotten to the, to the ill health stage I was in. If they were, if I, if there was a UK Health, if I'd known about you, I wouldn't have either for that, for that matter. But

Christopher Wark (32:11.69)

That's the reason why I started it was to, and it's, I just wanted to mention this as just if I may quickly, UK Health Radio, it's not a lot of people when they hear my story, they think it's only natural health. It's not. It's mainstream health, it's natural health. And very importantly, it's integrative health. I think integrative health in modern day society really has its place.

because a lot of the people that we've just spoke about, a lot of people that, if I could call it mentor, that I help are very mainstream health orientated. And you have to get them across it somehow. You have to, for them to get that confidence to try something. I was saying earlier, it's like,

When you open your closet, do you only have one make of suits in it? And they go, no, of course not. I go, so why do you do that with your health? Why don't you use what is best for you? What works for you? Nothing works the same for everybody, in any case, not in

mainstream health or natural health, for that matter. So use whatever works best for you. And if in the end you find out, like myself, that natural health

can do it all wonderful. And if not, then carry on the way you are. I appreciate that. We certainly have a lot of people in our audience that are working with doctors, that are, you know, they're doing conventional treatments, they're taking pharmaceuticals. And my message is like yours, is you don't have to reject those things. But the bigger message is, there's so much more that you can do to help yourself, in addition to what doctors are trained, you know.

uh, trained to give you or to do for you. So like, and you may find that that's the missing link, right? That's the missing piece of the puzzle and restoring your health is the part that you have to play. So I think it's terrific. I'm just so, I'm so glad to connect with you. It's awesome that you've created this platform. You're, I know you're, you're reaching so many millions of people. It's just absolutely phenomenal and spreading this wonderful message that the body can heal.

Christopher Wark (34:35.358)

right, that you're not a powerless victim of disease. And, and just bringing that, you know, that audience and that platform and people with really powerful voices, giving them this opportunity to reach more people and share their, you know, inspiring messages too. So it's just a really good thing you got going over there. And I love doing it. That's a nice, that's even, that's even the cherry on the cake. It's just, I've met, for example, like yourself, I've met so

Christopher Wark (35:05.858)

Compared with the fashion world, wow. The fashion world can be- Two very different worlds, right? Yeah, it's been just, it's been such a pleasure and an honor actually to work in this area. It is interesting that the sort of juxtaposition of the fashion world, which is obsessed with what's on the outside, right? And the health world, which is obsessed with what's on the inside. They couldn't be more far apart, I promise you.

Well, Johan Ilgenfrits, thank you so much again. I appreciate you and what you're doing. How can people connect with you? On the website is UKHealthRadio.com. Our social media is everything at UK Health Radio. When you're on the website, you can, we have a magazine, you can subscribe to the magazine as well. It's called Health Triangle magazine. Any podcast platform that your listeners

frequent, if they put in UK Health Radio, they'll find all 41 of our shows, their weekly shows. So a lot of new content coming all the time. Yeah, that's, you can listen to us, of course, on Alexa and etc. as well. All you have to do is ask for them to play UK Health Radio and it will work. Terrific. Okay, well, thanks, everybody. Thank you for watching. Thanks for listening.

You know how to connect with Johan Jelgenfrits and check out UK Health Radio, a lot of fantastic shows on there. I've been interviewed by a few of the hosts on UK Health Radio and that's how I first found out about it. And yeah, please share this interview with people you care

about. Again, cancer can be healed, people are doing it, they have done it, and the more of these stories we can share, the more we spread this wonderful, hopeful message of healing. And we just want the world to know that

cancer does not have to be a death sentence and that healing is possible. So thanks for watching and listening. Have a great one. See you on the next video.