

Voyage Phoenix Featuring Zhanna Tarjeft, FNP



Today we'd like to introduce you to Zhanna Tarjeft.

So, before we jump into specific questions about the business, why don't you give us some details about you and your story.

My American journey started when I came to the U.S. 13 years ago as an exchange student after getting my Master's Degree in Psychology and English in Dnepr, Ukraine. I am an immigrant from Ukraine. I loved studying and wanted to improve my English here. After a year in the U.S., I started taking Anatomy and Physiology classes, chemistry and biology and fell in love with the biological science classes. Knowing more about our bodies and the ways to heal them led me to apply for a degree in Nursing and to become a Registered Nurse. I graduated from Oakland Community College in Michigan and worked on the Medical-Surgical/Orthopedic floor at Huron-Valley Sinai Hospital in Michigan for a while.

Unfortunately, as a Registered Nurse, I was disappointed

because I could not do much for my patients in terms of disease prevention. Most patients on our floor were chronically ill with heart disease, Type 2 Diabetes, osteoporosis, and gastrointestinal issues. It was discouraging to see that all I could do is to give my patients Doctor prescribed meds, watch for any side effects, and make them comfortable with pain medications when needed. Deep in my heart, I knew there should be another way to provide more comprehensive care. This thinking led me to get my Master's Degree in Nursing from Frontier Nursing University in Kentucky and to graduate to become a Family Nurse Practitioner.

After graduating through my second Master's Degree, I practiced for a while in a conventional medical environment, but as I became ill myself and got diagnosed with the condition of autoimmune thyroiditis (Hashimoto's disease) I realized that the conventional approach left me with little to no treatment options. Simply sitting back to watch and wait as my own body continues to destroy my thyroid gland did not seem too cheerful to me. The risk of developing other more severe autoimmune conditions goes up exponentially as you have one autoimmune condition. I intuitively knew there had to be other options. Which in turn led me to come across the Institute for Functional Medicine and I started learning new methods to identify and treat the root cause and how I happened to develop a thyroid issue in the first place.

Overall, has it been relatively smooth? If not, what were some of the struggles along the way?

Moving to a foreign country to experience the culture is far from an easy thing to do. I am proud of not giving up along the way. I arrived in the U.S. with \$600 in my pocket, but my room and board were provided by an American family first on Long Island, NY, and later in West Bloomfield, Michigan for 1 year. After that, I was on my own. As a foreign student, I also had to pay 3 times the rates per credit hour, books, clinical rotations, and provide for my own living expenses. I

had hardly any help from my parents in Ukraine who were struggling to survive during the post-Soviet era and the mess that ensued. Needless to say, I could not apply for any credit or student loans either I had to do everything with cash I earned. Looking back, I do not know how I managed to somehow pay for all that was needed. I had my share of disappointment in people, but I also met amazing Michiganders who helped me and inspired me to never give up and to follow my dream. Later on, when I became an RN and got a stable job, I met my future husband who encouraged me to study further and, eventually, supported me in opening my dream-practice Sprouts Health focusing on uncovering root causes of disease “dis-ease”.

Sprouts Health – what should we know? What do you guys do best? What sets you apart from the competition?

At Sprouts Health, I use a comprehensive approach to finding and resolving the root cause or causes of health issues, looking at the body as a whole of systems (gastrointestinal, immune, etc.) instead of a simple summation of work of different organs. I hardly ever see patients with a healthy digestive system. “All disease begins in the gut.” – Hippocrates

Conventional medicine approach puts patients on medications: you have allergies – here is an anti-histamine pill, you have depression – here is your anti-depressant, and the list goes on. There is a pill for every ill. The conventional insurance model works great if one has a sore throat or a urinary tract infection. It is not so great when the patient complains of debilitating fatigue, autoimmune conditions, diabetes, and other chronic conditions. The patients are sicker with a giant list of concerns and the insurance allows only 20-30 minutes for the initial appointment and 15 minutes for follow-ups.

I work with complex patients who have seen 2-3 specialists, were put on 5-10 medications, and still have no relief in symptoms and suffer from unpleasant side effects of the prescribed medications. My patients want to make changes in

their lifestyle and diet and are open to the suggestions beyond medication prescription. My patients also begin to question why their body got into self-destruction mode. We are trying to find the answers to these questions together. I focus on the thyroid health, digestion, hormones, but uncover a number of different underlying nutritional imbalances, toxic exposures, viruses, and parasites that add on to the full picture of disease.

I offer online, video conference (internet), phone, and in-office appointments. My patients also know they will see me personally as their clinician, not a different PA, MD, or NP each time they visit the office.

What is “success” or “successful” for you?

When my patients refer their friends and family members, the referrals often tell me how much they praised me. This feels good to have many happy patients who are willing to send me other members of the community to help.

Read the full interview here:
<http://voyagephoenix.com/interview/meet-zhanna-tarjeft-sprouts-health-phoenix/>