Welcome to CUTV News Radio, where our hosts, Doug Llewellyn and Jim Masters, talk to today's top thinkers from around the world. They bring you information, inspiration, and thought-provoking ideas that you can use in your personal or professional life.

Right now, covering a broad range of topics, we dig deep to discover what makes today's top thinkers tick. CUTV News Radio—it's the show where ideas matter. And now, here's today's host, Doug Llewellyn.

DOUG: Well, hello again, everybody. We welcome you back to CUTV News Radio. Nice to have you here indeed. We're going to be talking about a subject that is very serious but something we really should be talking about. And I'm talking about dementia, specifically Alzheimer’s disease. It is a very, very serious issue, affecting more and more people every day. I’m sure you hear about it, you're aware of it. You may not have thought much about it, but it is something well worth thinking about and discussing.

We’re going to be talking about this with someone who is an expert of sorts. She’s not a doctor, but she helps people who have dementia or are approaching the onset of Alzheimer’s. Let me point out something: the sixth leading cause of death is Alzheimer’s disease. One out of every five people over the age of 65 is now being diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. It is a terrible condition that affects not only the person but also the family and the caregivers as well.

Our guest is Leah Marie. She is a mind health coach specializing in holistic stress management for families who have been affected by the challenges of dementia. For over twelve years now, Leah has worked with families struggling with dementia and Alzheimer’s to employ strategies to assist them in gaining a sense of peace. Communicating with loved ones who suffer from dementia can be extraordinarily stressful and isolating. In fact, studies show that one in five caregivers will pass before their loved ones with Alzheimer’s because of the stress that the disease puts them through.

Leah points out it’s all about accepting where they are and appreciating what they have left. She was inspired to get on this path following a near-death experience herself, and we’ll get her to explain that. She had to look for some other means to recover from her experience, and that’s when she started meditating and learned emotional freedom techniques. She discovered that essential oils are helpful, yoga is amazing, and the self-care that happens with Ayurveda is very powerful. She became very knowledgeable in all these various subjects and now calls herself the Mind Health Coach. Helping others in any way she can is really important to her. So, she is stepping into the role of really helping people before they come down with Alzheimer’s and dementia.

She believes it's a matter of lowering stress, looking at diet, and being proactive about overall physical and brain health. These are all very valid and interesting subjects to talk about, and I’m really thrilled to have her as a guest today. We don’t talk about this subject very often, so let’s welcome our guest, Leah Marie. She’s based in Westport, Massachusetts, and her practice is called the Mind Health Coach. She has a great website, and I’ll give you that website in a little bit so you can learn more about her and, if you’re interested, get in touch with her. Anyway, Leah Marie, welcome. Nice to have you with us. How are you today?

LEAH: Thank you so much. I’m doing well, Doug. Nice to be here.

DOUG: Hey, it’s nice to have you with us. As I say, it’s something that we should be talking about. You have a pretty interesting story. So, let me ask you a couple of things. Number one, I know you have a practice called the Mind Health Coach. Define for us right here at the outset, what is that? What do you do as the Mind Health Coach?

LEAH: Absolutely, I love sharing what I do. I conduct wellness workshops online and in person. I also do group coaching and have been asked to be a keynote speaker many times. I have done speaking events for the Alzheimer’s Association and educational events for them as well. I also dabble in corporate wellness programs because I think all of us are affected by Alzheimer’s being the sixth leading cause of death. All of us need to look at our brain health and how to prevent that.

I have a podcast called the Mind Health Coach Program, which you can listen to on Fridays at 10:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. My programs address holistic approaches to life, how to attain more vitality and wellness, and how to effectively manage stress and overcome challenging times. It's really geared towards anyone with any challenging situations. But I do have a certification as a dementia practitioner from the National Council on Dementia. So, I have been involved in direct care and helping families overcome those challenges for many years.

My passion is to motivate and help people be proactive about their wellness and brain fitness through balancing the mind, body, and spirit. I have a bunch of certifications. I’m a certified holistic life coach, certified in stress management coaching, and have studied under Deepak Chopra and five other physicians in the past two years who are doctors of Ayurveda. I was certified as a Chopra Center instructor specializing in Ayurveda. I was really excited to get that certification because I think it really rounded out what my offering is as the Mind Health Coach.

DOUG: I would agree with you. You’re very lucky to have studied with such renowned experts. Let me ask you a quick question before we go further. You’re a little off-mic. Are you on a headset or not?

LEAH: Yes, I am on a headset.

DOUG: Do me a favor. Why don’t you take it off and just talk into the mic there? I think it might be a little clearer because I want everybody to hear you loud and clear. You were about to say something. What else did you want to say, or if you forgot, I have a question for you.

LEAH: Sure, I can hear you now.

DOUG: The question was, and you sound better, by the way. The question was, I said in the opening that you were inspired to get on this path because of a near-death experience that you had. And I wanted to ask you if you could talk to me a little bit about that. Explain what you mean. What happened? Can you tell?

LEAH: This is a pretty incredible story that took me a long time to share, but I had a horse that I was training. Back in the day, I was able to do that kind of thing. It was an ex-racetrack horse that I had adopted and helped her heal from an injury. I was training her out on my parents’ farm. It was the first time I had her out in an open field after working with her for about two months in a ring. She immediately started acting up. I made a rider’s error when she reared up, and I pulled on the reins. We both went over backwards, and she landed on top of me. That was approximately 1,000 to 1,200 pounds landing directly on my pelvis and my chest area, which sustained some of the impact as well.

This resulted in my heart stopping. My dad was there. He had taken a CPR course about 30 years before and somehow recalled how to do CPR. He actually resuscitated me. When I started coming to, he was very distraught. He was a man’s man, rarely showing emotion, and he was crying, thinking I was gone. He was stating, “She’s gone, she’s gone.” I was laying there thinking, “Who’s gone?” I didn’t know who he was talking about. Then I realized and grabbed his arm and said, “I’m right here.” He was shocked but happy. It was an experience. I always say my dad brought me life twice.

From that experience, I had a trip to the other side that was difficult for me to talk about, but I did experience something. I talk about it frequently when I teach, and I have a new book coming out where I explain it in detail. It really got me on the journey of discovering my purpose in life and how I can impact society, the planet, humanity, and all living things overall.

DOUG: How seriously were you injured?

LEAH: I had a concussion and two areas that were badly injured in my spine—a disc that was blown out in my neck and one in my lower spine. I had internal bleeding and couldn’t walk for about a week and a half. Then I started walking with a walker slowly. I had two little ones at the time, about a year old and 21 months old. Recovery was difficult with two babies in the house, but I had good support from my family. It took about three to four months to physically recover and six months to move normally again. The lasting impact of the trauma was still there, with ongoing stress and nightmares. I had to seek other ways to overcome that fear, and that’s when I started exploring meditation, emotional freedom techniques, and Ayurveda.

DOUG: That’s really very interesting. You mentioned that you help people with Alzheimer’s and dementia and their caregivers. Was it because of your grandfather that you started to focus on helping people with dementia?

LEAH: Absolutely. I was about eight years old when my grandfather passed, and it was a difficult journey for my entire family. I always felt inspired by that experience. An opportunity arose for me to work in assisted living, where I was the chief operating officer for a large company. I left that position in October to pursue the Mind Health Coach program fully. I’ve worked in healthcare for over a decade, focusing on Alzheimer’s and dementia care. I’ve taught CEU programs addressing holistic approaches to stress management for nurses and social workers and have

 spoken at various events. My work is driven by a passion to support families and individuals affected by dementia and to promote proactive brain health.

DOUG: Well, Leah, I’ve got to tell you, it’s an amazing story. And you know what, you’re really making an impact on people’s lives with the work you’re doing. Let me give out your website for people who might want to get more information about you and possibly get in touch with you. The website is www.mindhealthcoach.com. Is that right?

LEAH: Yes, that’s correct.

DOUG: Fantastic. Listen, I want to thank you very much for sharing your story and your expertise with us today. It’s been really enlightening, and I’m sure our listeners have benefited from it. Thank you so much, Leah.

LEAH: Thank you so much for having me, Doug. It’s been a pleasure.

DOUG: Well, folks, there you have it. Leah Marie, the Mind Health Coach, with some profound insights and practical advice on managing stress and promoting brain health. Be sure to check out her website and take proactive steps to support your well-being and that of your loved ones. Thanks for listening, and we’ll see you next time on CUTV News Radio.