

Hear Me: Stories to Challenge OUD Stigma - Series Summary:

In this series, we amplify the voices of individuals who have navigated the healthcare system while facing stigma related to opioid use, race, identity, pregnancy, and trauma. Through raw, personal narratives like Joey's and Kshe's (KAY-she), you are invited to listen deeply — not only to the stories, but also to the systemic challenges and human truths they reveal. These short, powerful episodes are a call to action: to reflect, to empathize, and to change. Because compassionate care begins when we choose to hear.

Listen online at www.familydocs.org/podcast.

Bonus #1: Rhythms and Respect: Meeting Patients Where They Are

Introduction:

In this bonus episode, you'll hear a real and thoughtful conversation between Kshe and Valery—two individuals with deep experience working in communities impacted by opioid use disorder.

They discuss an often-overlooked but powerful concept in patient-centered care: understanding people's daily rhythms and drug use patterns. From timing appointments to building trust through curious, stigma-free dialogue, this episode highlights how flexible, compassionate care models can truly improve outcomes.

As you listen, we invite you to reflect on this question: How might understanding a patient's lived experience—and asking the right questions—change how and when you deliver care?

Conclusion:

Thank you for listening to this conversation with Kshe and Valery. Their insights remind us that effective care isn't just about what we offer—it's about how, when, and why we offer it.

What small change can you make in your practice to meet people where they are? Can you adjust your schedule, language, or expectations to help someone show up and engage more fully?

This bonus podcast was developed by Interstate Postgraduate Medical Association, the California Academy of Family Physicians, and Perfectly Flawed Foundation, with support from an independent educational grant provided by the Opioid Analgesics REMS Program Companies. For more information, please visit core-rems.org.

Bonus #2: Just Ask: Rethinking Blood Draws with Compassion

Introduction:

In this bonus episode, you'll hear Joey, Kshe, and Valery reflect on an experience that may seem routine to some—but can be deeply challenging for people who use drugs: the blood draw.

Rather than assuming control of the procedure, they encourage healthcare clinicians to take a simple but powerful step—ask the patient where they usually have success. This

one question can turn a stressful, painful moment into an act of dignity, trust, and partnership.

As you listen, consider this:

How might shifting your approach from “doing to” a patient to “doing with” a patient changes the experience for both of you?

Conclusion:

Thank you for joining this candid discussion with Joey, Kshe, and Valery. Their message is clear: small moments of respect matter.

Next time you prepare for a blood draw, consider starting with a question instead of a needle. Invite your patient into the process. Recognize their expertise with their own body.

In clinical care, compassion doesn’t always require more time—just a different mindset. What’s one small shift you can make today to reduce stigma and increase trust?

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Bonus #3: Withdrawal: Understanding the Fear and the Feeling

Introduction:

In this bonus episode, Joey, Kshe, and Valery speak openly about a topic that is often misunderstood—opioid withdrawal.

They describe not just the physical pain, but the emotional toll, anxiety, and overwhelming fear that withdrawal brings. For many patients, it’s not the drug they are chasing—it’s the desperate need to avoid the crushing symptoms of withdrawal.

As you listen, consider this:

How might understanding the fear of withdrawal help you build more compassionate, trauma-informed care plans for patients with opioid use disorder?

Conclusion:

Thank you for listening to Joey, Kshe, and Valery share their experiences so honestly. Their stories remind us that withdrawal is more than a clinical term—it’s a lived, often terrifying experience.

As a healthcare clinician, acknowledging the fear of withdrawal and validating the patient’s experience can be the first step in building trust.

The next time you meet a patient who has a substance use disorder, ask yourself: How can I better support them through this fear, rather than judge them for it?

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