

The Triple-Brain Dermatologist

Leading with Intuition, Connection & Creativity for Women in Dermatology

Dr. Shimi Kang

Award-winning Psychiatrist, Neuroscientist & Bestselling Author

Women in Dermatology | 4-Hour Workshop



Learning Objectives

What you will take away from today's workshop.

01

Identify neurological triggers that cause "brain block" in clinical, business, and personal interactions.

02

Apply Neuro-leadership to manage staff, navigate difficult patient encounters, and build genuine professional networks.

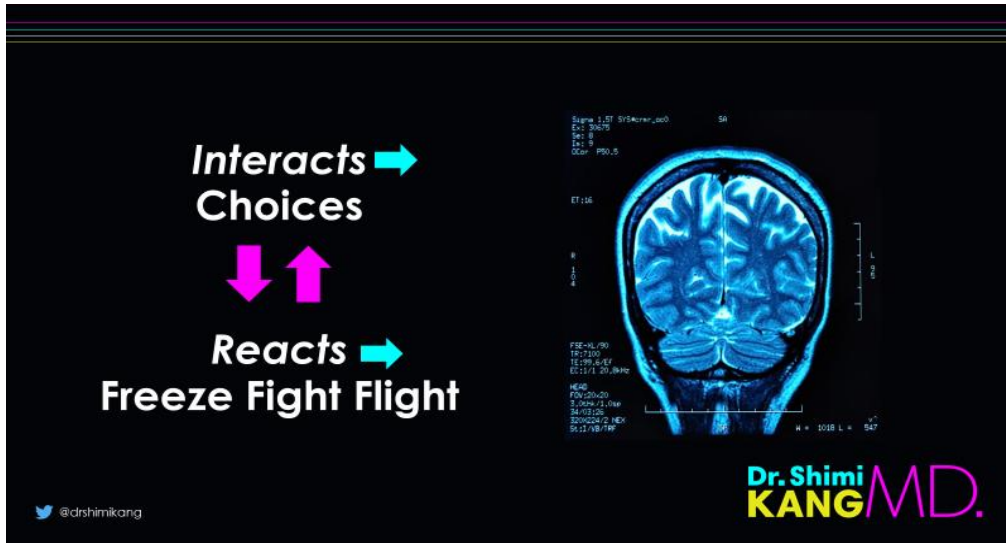
03

Utilize the Thinking Brain to deconstruct dermatology misinformation and execute high-level business decisions.

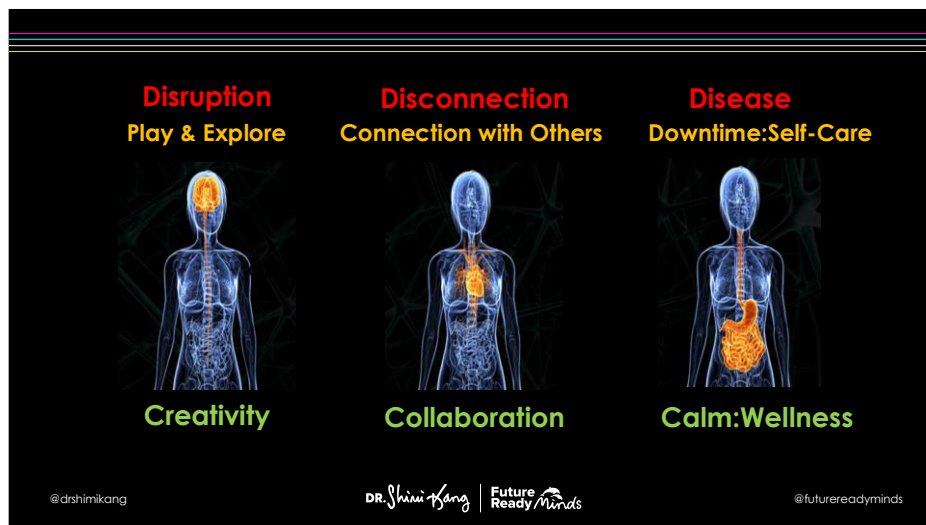
04

Develop a practical Allyship Roadmap to navigate gender bias and support colleagues using social-emotional intelligence.

- a) Stress moves us from interacting with our environment through conscious choices to reacting via freeze (anxiety), fight (irritability), and flight (distraction/avoidance).
- Resource link: [Do you have coping skills?](#)



- b) We can manage the 3 global trends by activating our 3 brains through play, others, and downtime leading to the 3 Future-ready skills of being calm, connected and creative.
- Resource link: [Did you know you have 3 brains?](#)



c) Techniques such as breathing, mindfulness, gratitude (downtime), social connection & a curious play-mindset move us into the powerful growth response and prepares us for learning.

- **Resource link:** [What to do when you are stressed!](#)

The Reactivity Trap

Burnout and outdated leadership habits reduce trust, wellness and performance.

REACTIVE MODE

- Cortisol-driven, threat-focused decisions
- Micromanagement & control behaviour
- Short-horizon, tunnel-vision thinking
- Avoidance of difficult conversations
- Progressive emotional withdrawal
- Rigid, risk-averse culture

RESPONSIVE MODE

- Calm clarity under pressure
- Trust-based delegation
- Adaptive, long-horizon strategy
- Courageous, direct communication
- Emotional regulation & resilience
- Psychologically safe, innovative culture

Imposter Syndrome

How the brain's survival mechanism misinterprets growth as a threat.

THE SCIENCE

- The gut-brain (enteric nervous system) triggers a "threat" response when you enter unfamiliar territory.
- In dermatology, this feels like: "I shouldn't be the one presenting at this conference" or "They'll figure out I don't know enough."
- The brain's survival instinct misreads professional growth as danger — creating the classic "fraud feeling."
- This is NOT a character flaw. It is neurochemistry.

IN DERMATOLOGY

- Being the only woman — or the youngest — in the room during grand rounds or academic presentations.
- Questioning your clinical judgment after a difficult case outcome even when evidence-based decisions were made.
- Feeling pressure to over-explain or over-justify prescribing decisions to patients who come armed with social media "evidence."
- Minimizing your own expertise when challenged by a patient or colleague.

BREAKOUT SESSION 1

The Gut Check

Small groups | 15 minutes



Share Your Imposter Moment

In small groups, share a recent clinical or professional situation where you experienced the "fraud feeling." Be specific about the trigger.



Apply the 5-Second Technique

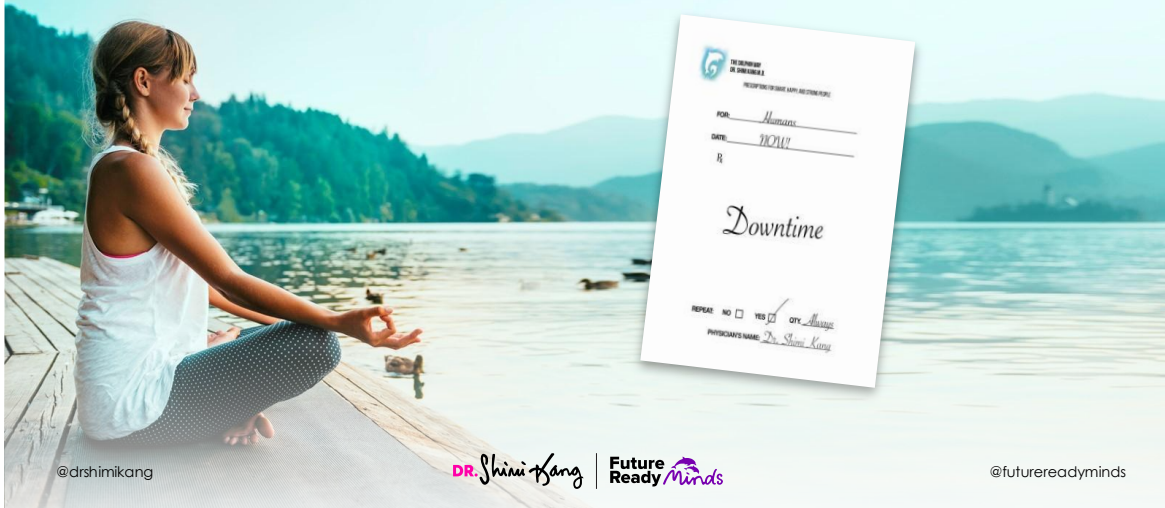
Together, walk through each step as if you were in that situation. Practice naming the gut response out loud.



Reframe the Narrative

Replace "I'm a fraud" with "I'm expanding." Share your reframed statement with your group.

Gut-Brain: Calm Wellness Joy



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The Vagal Reset

From Reactive to Responsive — Gut Brain Practice

The NAVY SEALS DO THIS!

The Science — Vagal Tone & Leadership Resilience

The vagus nerve connects all three brains — gut, heart, and head.

High vagal tone: calm clarity, broad awareness, adaptive response.

Low vagal tone: threat mode, reactive decisions, tunnel vision.

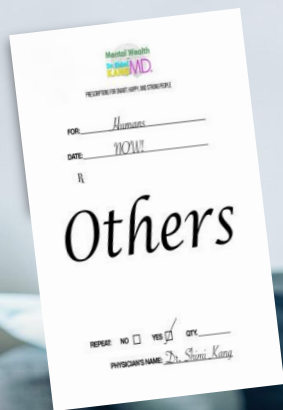
The breakthrough: vagal tone is TRAINABLE.

BOX BREATHING — THE PRACTICE

- 1 **INHALE**
4 counts
- 2 **HOLD**
4 counts
- 3 **EXHALE**
4 counts
- 4 **HOLD**
4 counts

Repeat 3–4 cycles • Takes 90 seconds
Use before any high-stakes moment.

Heart Brain: Connection Empathy



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Authoritarian Shark



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Collaborative Dolphin



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Permissive Jellyfish



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The Neuroscience of Connection

Enhancing Sustainable Motivation

Cortisol-Driven

Short-Term Extraction Mode

- Fear-based motivation
- Reactive decision-making
- Individual competition
- Burns organizational energy
- Depletes human resources



Oxytocin-Driven

Long-Term Sustainability Mode

- Purpose-based motivation
 - Strategic, creative thinking
 - Collective collaboration
 - Conserves organizational energy
 - Regenerates human potential
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Connection Before Content

From Transaction to Trust — Heart Brain Practice

"The 90 seconds you spend connecting before content saves you the 45 minutes of pushback that follows when people don't feel seen."

The Science

The heart brain processes relational safety BEFORE the head brain can engage. Skip connection — get defended nervous systems, not open ones.

The Research

As little as 60–90 seconds of genuine, undivided attention before a meeting measurably increases psychological safety and follow-through.

The Practice

Ask one genuine question before every significant interaction. "How is your day so far?" Device-free. Agenda-free. Listen for the real answer.

KEYS of Motivational Communication

- Kill the Shark and Jellyfish
- Empathy
- Your goal
- Success!



The K.E.Y.S to Motivation

The K.E.Y.S are the essence of motivational communication. They complement but not intrude on the development of self-motivation. It is a four-step process focusing on a balanced state of mind, empathy, autonomy, and optimism.

Kill the shark and jellyfish. Behavior science tells us that pushing and micromanaging (shark) are counterproductive. Also, guiding is better than no direction (jellyfish). Thus, take a few deep breaths, get centered as a calm, present, Dolphin communicator.

Empathy. Empathy is a powerful tool to connect with others as it activates powerful mirror neurons and releases the trust hormone oxytocin. Put yourself in their shoes and make a statement of empathy!

Your Goals. Identify and express an understanding of the other person's goals. We all need a reason to take a step or make a change. Defining personal reasons builds autonomy and sets up the brain to release dopamine.

Support success. Create a positive support system by expressing optimism in success! If you can add a vision of success, you will activate serotonin.

Ex: If you want to help motivate someone to go to the gym.

K – Kill Shark & Jellyfish - be a Dolphin.

E – “Aww, you look a bit tired and sounds like it’s been a long day.” (empathy)

Y – “Remember, you wanted to get in better health.” (autonomy)

S – “Come on, I know once you are there, you always feel great!” (optimism)

Play is a Mindset

THE SOLUTION KEY
DR. SHIMI KANG M.D.
PRESCRIPTIONS FOR SMART, HAPPY, AND STRONG PEOPLE

FOR: All Humans

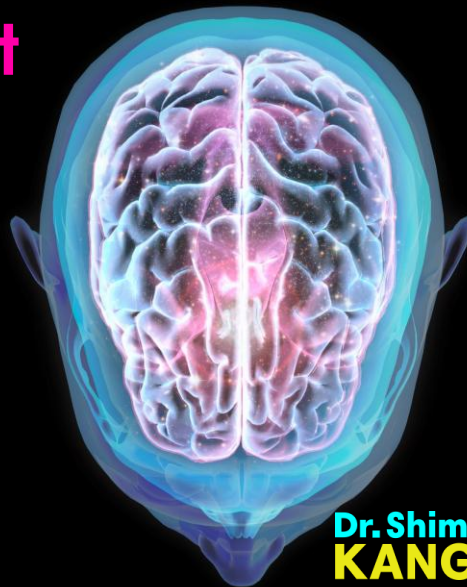
DATE: NOW!

R: Play

Let go of perfectionism ✓ Critical Thinking ✓
Mistakes ✓ Innovate ✓
Trial and Error ✓ CQ ✓

REPEAT: NO YES QTY: _____

PHYSICIAN'S NAME: Dr. Shimi Kang



Dr. Shimi
KANG M.D.

Innovation can be nurtured.

- **Resource links:** [The Power of Play](#), [The Science of Play Types](#)
- [How Visualization Works](#)

Play & experiment is not a luxury — it is a biological necessity.

The neural laboratory where adaptability and performance are born.

<h1>P</h1> <p>PURPOSEFUL NOVELTY</p> <p>Dopamine</p> <p>Seek one new experience, question, or approach each week. Novelty rebuilds the brain's appetite for innovation.</p>	<h1>L</h1> <p>LAUGHTER & LIGHTNESS</p> <p>Endorphins</p> <p>A shared laugh is the fastest nervous system reset available. Breath, pause & endorphins drop cortisol and rebuild all forms of resilience.</p>	<h1>A</h1> <p>ADAPTIVE CURIOSITY</p> <p>Brain Derived Neurotropic Factor</p> <p>Curiosity releases BDNF — “Miracle-Gro for your neurons” — physically growing the neural connections that enable learning and creativity.</p>	<h1>Y</h1> <p>YOUR NEXT BOLD STEP</p> <p>All Three Brains</p> <p>Play isn't reckless — it's the psychological flexibility to try, adjust, and try again. The foundation of the calculated risk conversation.</p>
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Play Types

- Storytelling ←
- Object ←
- Social ←
- Celebratory ←
- Body Movement ←



Dermatology Misinformation

Using the Thinking Brain to filter noise — from skin-fluencer myths to complex patient beliefs.

 MYTH

"Sunscreen is Dangerous & Toxic"

The Evidence:

No peer-reviewed evidence supports the claim that FDA-approved sunscreens cause harm at regular use levels. Chemical filters like oxybenzone are detected in blood, but detection ≠ toxicity. Skin cancer risk from UV exposure far exceeds theoretical sunscreen risk.

Tactic:

Acknowledge the concern, cite source quality (peer-reviewed vs. influencer), redirect to evidence.

 MYTH


"Natural Products Are Always Better"

The Evidence:

"Natural" has no regulatory definition in skincare. Many natural ingredients (essential oils, colloidal silver, tea tree oil) are common sensitizers. Efficacy requires clinical evidence regardless of origin.

Tactic:

Validate the preference for natural; distinguish between evidence-based natural ingredients vs. unproven claims.

 MYTH

"Topical Steroids Worsen Disease"

The Evidence:


Topical corticosteroid phobia (TSP) is well-documented and drives non-compliance. When used correctly, topical steroids are safe, effective, and the cornerstone of eczema management. Risk of harm from untreated inflammation outweighs risk of appropriate steroid use.

Tactic:

Address the fear directly. Explain the potency ladder and safe usage. Show what undertreated disease costs the patient.

The Three-Brain Accomplice Framework


Moving from good intentions to structural change in your workplace.

 GUT BRAIN — Intuitive

Recognize the Discomfort

Your gut signals inequity before your head brain has named it. When you feel that uncomfortable "something's wrong here" in a colleague meeting or after a performance review — trust it. That is your enteric nervous system identifying a threat pattern.


Gut Practice: When discomfort arises, pause. Ask: "Is this my reaction, or is there a systemic pattern here I need to look at more carefully?"

 HEART BRAIN — Social Emotional

Build Empathy Required for Allyship

Social-emotional intelligence is the bridge between recognizing inequity and acting on it. Without genuine empathy for the colleague experiencing bias, allyship becomes performative. The heart brain requires you to truly imagine the experience of another.

Heart Practice: Actively seek out and listen to the experiences of colleagues facing systemic barriers — without minimizing or problem-solving immediately.

 HEAD BRAIN — Thinking




Strategize Structural Change

Allyship without structural action is just comfort. The head brain's job is to move from empathy to strategy. Accompliceship means identifying and changing the systems — hiring practices, patient assignment protocols, feedback standards — not just the individual moments.

Head Practice: Identify ONE structural change you can advocate for in your clinic or institution this quarter.





The 3-Brain Commitment

One commitment from each brain that you will take back to your practice. Each participant shares one specific commitment using this structure:

 Gut Brain	<p>Intuitive Commitment</p> <p>"In the next week, when I feel imposter syndrome triggered in a clinical or professional setting, I will use the 5-Second Grounding Technique and reframe with: _____"</p>
 Heart Brain	<p>Relational Commitment</p> <p>"The next time I face a difficult patient encounter or a challenging colleague interaction, I will lead with KEYS — specifically practising the ___ step, which is hardest for me because: ___"</p>
 Head Brain	<p>Structural Commitment</p> <p>"One piece of dermatology misinformation or systemic gender bias issue I will address in my practice is: ___. My first specific action will be: ___ by [date]: ___"</p>

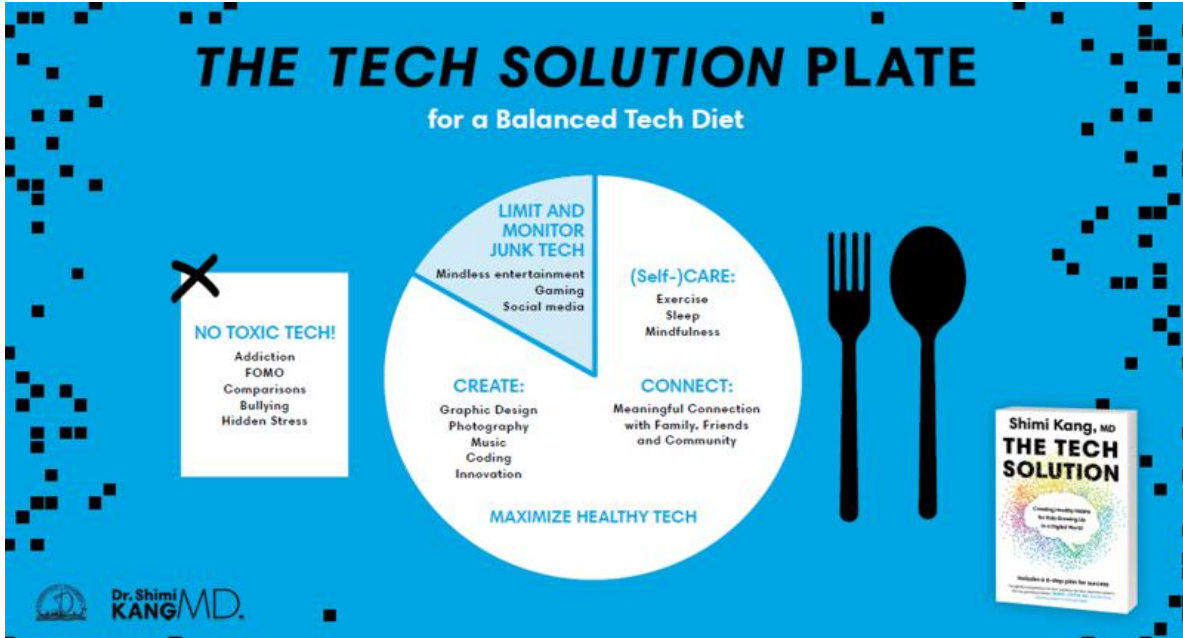
Your Neuroleadership Toolkit

Practical tools to carry from this workshop back to your practice — every day.

Brain Centre	Leadership Application	Daily Tool	Key Question
 Intuitive (Gut)	Overcoming Imposter Syndrome	5-Second Grounding Technique	Am I in stress or growth mode?
 Social Emotional (Heart)	Staff Motivation & Difficult Patients	KEYS Communication Scripts	What does this person actually need?
 Thinking (Head)	Misinformation & Business Decisions	The Logic Filter (3-Step)	What does the evidence actually show?
 All 3 Brains	Allyship & Accompliceship	The Accomplice Action Plan	What structural change can I make?

Final word: Please review your tech diet!

- Resource links: [What is your tech diet](#), [Limit Junk Tech](#), [Consume Healthy Tech Diet](#)



Thank you!
“Know thyself, Love thyself”

The banner features a central image of Dr. Shimi Kang holding a brain, with the text 'Mental Wealth with Dr. Shimi KANG MD.' and a YouTube icon labeled 'DrShimiKang'. To the left is a white card with the text 'A daily dose of P.O.D.' and a signature. To the right are two QR codes, the 'DR. Shimi Kang' logo with '@drshimikang', and the 'Future Ready Minds' logo with '@futurereadyminds'. The background is a colorful, abstract splash of purple, pink, and green.

Event follow-up Discussion Questions:

1. Given Dr. Kang's discussion of lifestyle & unplugging, please review the life diet plate. Reflect & discuss the role of toxic, junk & healthy tech with those you trust - family, friends, peers & colleagues.

2. If there was one thing to do to further develop a Future-ready Mind, what would it be?

**Hint: On a scale of 1-10, rank your gut, heart and head brain intelligence.

3. Creativity has been cited as a key skill for Future-Ready leaders. How can you develop this more?

**Hint: Remember the power of play. "Perfectionism & creativity cannot co-exist."

Further Resources:

Understanding Burn-out & How to Avoid it: blog [HERE](#)

Understand Stress & what to do about it: 6 min video [HERE](#)

The 2 Ingredients for success = adaptability and diversity: 3 min video [HERE](#)

Internal Drive: The Art & Science of Internal Motivation: blog [HERE](#)

How to Achieve Peak Performance & Flow States: Blog [HERE](#)

The science of forming lasting habits for success: 3 min video [HERE](#)

About Dr. Shimi Kang

An award-winning Harvard trained medical doctor, researcher, and expert on the neuroscience of wellness, leadership, and motivation, [Dr. Shimi Kang](#) believes every person has the innate intelligence and ability to live their best life. With over 25 years of clinical experience and extensive research, Dr. Kang provides proven solutions & practical tools for the key 21st century skills. She is the author of the #1 bestseller [The Dolphin Parent](#) & [The Tech Solution](#), a Clinical Associate Professor at UBC, the founder of [Future Ready Minds](#), & host of the YouTube show, [Mental Wealth with Dr. Shimi Kang](#). She is a recipient of the YWCA Woman of Distinction, Governor General of Canada Award & Diamond Jubilee Medal for her many outstanding contributions in science & health

