SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT

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Clue

HOW DID YOU GET INTO WOMEN'S HEALTH/FEMTECH?

I grew up on two wheels. Since I was an infant, I traveled with my parents and my older brother on motorcycles all around the world. They were adventurers and loved traveling, writing books about it, and giving lectures. So, I was lucky to see a lot of the world as a kid and as a teenager. I grew up seeing women all around the world, taking care of kids while working in the house and often working outside the house as well, seeing fruit in the market or something like that. I understood that being in control of your childbearing is really essential for women's ability to create good lives for themselves and their families.

Then later in my own life, I was struggling to find the right type of family planning method that worked for me. Eventually, when I was in my late 20s, it dawned on me that there had been so little innovation in this field since the pill came out in the late '50s. I was both puzzled and angry. How come that helping women understand which days of their cycle they could get pregnant wasn't a top priority for business and research? We had flown to the moon and invented the Internet since the invention of the Pill, and still, nothing had moved in this field. Nothing was using technology to understand our hormonal fluctuations. I wanted to change that. It was my spark to start Clue.

WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO PRIORITISE WOMEN'S HEALTH?

Women's health sits right at the center of so many important systems in our world. It influences our capacity to participate in the workforce. Our biological system can create babies, and that comes with both magic and a lot of cost for us as individuals: financially, emotionally, physically, but also for society in terms of lost work, lost talent, lost innovation, and lost economic opportunity. There is a yearly $12 trillion investment gap into women. The world is in need of all the innovation that we can muster to find a way out of our various crises.

WHAT ARE THE AREAS FOR OPPORTUNITY?

We are increasingly building technology that can collect data on women's bodies and experiences, but we still are not utilizing these datasets as fully as we could. For most people, their health data is not playing any central role when it comes to healthcare decisions and general well-being. For instance, a hormone test you might do with a private provider will seldom be asked for or taken into account when you go to your gynaecologist. I also think there is a lot of opportunity in fully understanding how having a cycle actually influences our lives in a myriad of ways. There are pockets of people from the alternative world that have explored this for years, and most women have a personal awareness to some degree of how their life is impacted by where they are in the cycle, but very few people feel that they are informed by the cycle. And I think that's a huge opportunity because we know from science and our experiences that our social appetite, sexual drive, energy levels, motivation, concentration, and many more things are indeed not flat lines but curves that wind up and down.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO AT THE SUMMIT?

I'm always very curious about which problems entrepreneurs are tackling. I think it says a lot about what our culture is making space for. Right at the cross of what we can include in culture is where I often find that we build products. I am also really curious to hear what founders are struggling with to see what common agendas are. I see that more of the big players are starting to get involved, whether it's international institutions like the UN or high-profile political initiatives like the White House Female Health Initiative or NHS launching a big female health program. I also see more men getting involved, which I think is crucially important. They just need to remember to build diverse teams. We need the men, but the men also need women to build great products, services, and companies in female health.