Training Call #3: The Importance of Regulation & Restoring Somatic Safety. Healing Shock Trauma & Early Trauma

Okay, everyone. We are on training call number three today. The title is The Importance of Regulation and Restoring Somatic Safety: Healing Shock Trauma and Early Trauma. Now, before we dive into this, I asked everybody here who is here live, and thank you to all listening to the recording, "What are you learning this week?" Meaning what are you learning in SBSM. And some of the things have popped up, so I'm just going to read some of them. Someone said, "Adrenals." Yes. "Learning to breathe." Yes. Ooh, the C word, "Commitment." Commitment, I'm assuming to self, yeah? To yourself, to staying focused on you.

I said this, I think last week somewhere, somewhere, "Remember, you're the one thing you can control." Right? You're the one thing. You own you. Your body is the one thing you have full control over. You might not think that when you've got nervous system activation, and dreams that are all weird and wacky, but we know through this work that by growing more capacity, more regulation, you become the driver of your car, your body, and you have control over all the controls. You even learn how to read the map better. That is a big analogy, right? It really is the one thing that we have that we can work on, and we can get really distracted.

So that's maybe an intention I'm going to send to all of you. Notice when you might get distracted, and you get pulled away from your personal being, and your self-care, and your immediate, say family if you have a family, or your partner, or your work. There's so much that distracts us, and often, it's not necessary to know if these distractions are out in the world, so keep pulling yourself back to yourself. I'm not saying be ignorant to what's going on out there, but it's really important to remember that your system is yours, and there's so much that you work with when you really tune into that, and can work with.

"Interoception," someone said, again, what we're learning, what they're learning. One person said, "A lot." Yep, there's a lot to learn. "I'm learning that dipping my toe in is too much." Mm-hmm, so great sentence there for titration, right? Little bits. So if dipping your toe in is too much, then you're just going to kind of check out, I'm assuming the analogy is the water, right? So maybe it's too much to dip the toe in. What's it like to just stand at the shore and look? Right? That's an orienting concept. What's it like to orient towards that water that you might soon dip your toe into, to see what that looks like? "Following my impulse." "Following my impulse." Yeah, someone said, "I'm going to lie down while listening to this call." Great.

Another person said, "Adrenals." Another person said, "I can feel into organs and joints," yay, "and I feel them for the first time." Cool, right?

These are the things that we wanted to have early on. Many of us didn't get them, but what's really great is that we can learn this at any age. We just have to have that willingness to actively engage and work on it. Someone else said, "Managing pain better," which is wonderful. "Sensing my stress," yes. "Going slow," so that's titration. "Listening to and respecting the adrenal ache. I've tended to push through before. I let myself stay a couple hours, just resting and feeling the sensation," this person's saying, the pain.

Yeah, when we start to get into the kidney adrenal work this week, some of you will find, and this is already answered, I know, in the commonly asked questions, or frequently asked questions. Sometimes, if you've never considered your adrenal glands, and where they are, and what they do, and you're listening to the teaching, and you're learning the theory, there can be a feeling of a sharp pain or a dull ache. Everyone's different. It really depends. I have never felt that when I got into this work, but I had many clients who did. It's like if you think about if you've ever fallen asleep on your arm, or obviously if you're sleeping, you're asleep, and your arm is under you, and the blood, right? It loses circulation. What happens when that comes back? It hurts. It burns. Same if you've been out in the cold a lot, and you come in and you warm up. Your hands burn. It's the push of circulation. So pain isn't always necessarily a bad thing. It's an alivening of tissue that's not had a lot of flow, right?

Someone said, "I'm surprised by the images that pop in mind as I'm orienting, which help me understand what I'm feeling." That's a really great observation. As humans, we have memories, and we have visuals, and we make meaning with things, and often, that isn't in our awareness, because we're so focused on survival stress or rumination, but images are a big part of this somatic healing work, and they can actually be a doorway to enter into growing capacity. That's where resources come in. If I tie that back, yeah? To the first lesson, Researching Your Resources, then maybe even before we dive in... And thank you for all your prompts and comments here. We'll dive into the call next.

How can... If you even think in your mind's eye right now, of one of your resources, yeah? One of your resources that helps, that soothes, that nourishes, that is just something that's like an old friend, you can visualize it. You can see it. Whether it's the ocean, a favorite type of food, a person, whatever it might be, you can see that, and see it, and then visualize it, and then listen to how that impacts your somatic system. This is the one thing that we have, as far as I know,

on top of general mammals in the world who aren't humans. They don't have that capacity. We have that capacity, and that's why we can heal from significant trauma.

It's very hard to heal an animal that has been deeply abused. You can try, but you know what often happens if they keep being vicious and angry, right? There's not a lot that can sometimes change an animal, a mammal. But humans have this capacity to pause, and wait, and see, and shift, and attend to these things, and understand consequence. We have free will, right? So this is a really important... this is a bit more macro, a bit more philosophical, but this is really why this work is so important, is, we're working on all these elements.

Someone said, "Is a nap a resource?" It sure can be, if you're tired. You know, we could just say that's a necessity, yeah? It's a biological necessity to rest. Sometimes, if resting is a system that's going into freeze, then that's a little different, right? But we will not dive into that right now, so thank you for all your comments in the chat. Let's get into this. And again, remembering to connect to the system, your system, as we work through everything, and we'll start with a reminder of the seven steps.

For some of you that have been around with me for a long time, you might have known an ebook I wrote a long time ago called Seven Steps to Destress, or How to Destress in Seven Steps. It's on the SmartBody SmartMind site under the resources. It's a real basic, just, we could say, cheat sheet, and we'll read it right now. I'll read it. First thing is pause, and I just mentioned this, right? This ability to pause. And I'm going to pause and have a little water, and just to pause and feel that pause. Can you feel... You know, and this references, say, there's a stressor occurring. Can you make note of, "Oh, I'm in a stress response"?

This is the other thing. Bears that are getting attacked by something, or animals, they are not thinking. They're not thinking, "Oh, I'm being attacked by this whatever, the thing that's bigger than me, that's a predator to me." They just react. So we have that, because you want to react if there's a ball coming towards your head, right? Real threat and real stress situations, yes, we want to react. However, all 267 people here, I can't make a complete assumption, but my hope is that you are sitting somewhere fairly safe, you know? I hope. Hopefully there's no weather patterns coming down on your head right now. I know it sounds funny, but someone might be outside walking. You know, let's hope that there's somewhat safe individuals around you.

You know, cognitively, that there's no bigger predator coming to get you, but there might be this underlying physiology that says, "Nah, nah. I'm actually really unsafe, and I'm not safe. But yeah, she's saying that, and I understand that cognitively," but this is where we can kind of reason with ourselves, you know? Do mediation with ourselves, if you know what a mediator does, right? They're very neutral. How can you add a mediator into your system and be like, "I'm just going to pause and see my environment. I'm going to notice," if we go to number three, "notice the sensations in the body. What are the sensations telling me? Maybe they are telling me, 'Danger, danger,'" but then you can have that thought process, "This is old danger. Yes, I'm feeling danger, but is it danger now? No, it's old danger. It's old fear. It's old fight. It's old flight. It's old freeze."

It's hard to convey how complex we are, right? But we are. This ability to hold onto all these things for a lifetime, and then start to unpack them and see these old things that have maybe been with us since before we were born start to funnel out. That shows how exquisite the human system really is, to survive. Hope that's like a mic drop, right? So it's important to really notice these things, and that we have this ability to shift and pause, be self-aware. The next one, notice your breath. What is your breath doing right now? Not what was it doing 10 years ago or what was it doing yesterday? What is it doing right now? Pause again. Engage. Engage might be to engage with the world, engage with what you're doing. You know, this concept of a little stressor comes in. We have to probably keep going in our day, right? But how can we keep going with a little more awareness of what's happening, of what's going on? Okay.

Even with just this little tiny bit of pausing and going through some of these steps, notice how your system is now, 20 or so minutes into our call, 17 minutes. Has there been a shift? Is there a frustration? Is there a tiredness? Is there an activation that you're feeling, that you weren't aware of yet? It could be anything, right? I'm not expecting you to all of a sudden feel calm and regulated. Just, what is it that you notice after this little tiny bit of information, and how can you take that in, and then follow your impulse? "What is it that I need to do right now? Do I need to shift my position?" I might even suggest if you've been staring at the computer for 20 minutes straight, let your eyes move. I always sit in front of a nice big window. It'd be really hard if I had a wall in front of me, right? I need to be able to look away, rest my eyes, come back. So the system can reset, in a sense.

So let's get into this handout. First line there, "Chicken or the egg." I hope most of us know that saying. These are just these understood things in human language, or at least the English language. So what do we do first, shock trauma or early developmental trauma? What do we work with first? Think there's an answer to that question? No. We don't know. So I'm going to start by actually just telling you a bit about me, and I'll get more into my story later on, and some of you know this, but I thought about 10 years ago that most of my traumas were shock in nature, right? Accidents, accidents, accidents, whiplash, concussion, surgeries, broken bones, that kind of stuff. And it wasn't until really around the time I met Seth, but really only the last four to three years, that I was like, "Oh yeah. I got some early stuff too." It just didn't hit me as hard, because I actually had really good, securely attached parents.

Someone might say, "Well, how is that possible?" It's like, well, there was some birth stuff, there was some in utero stuff, and there was some trans-generational stuff. My mom lost her mom when she was five years old, right? Because martial law wouldn't allow penicillin into her country, so her mom died when she was five, and I get a little teary thinking about that, because that's super sad, and that shouldn't have happened, right? So there was that layer that my mom hadn't healed, that was somehow imprinted on me. But, even that allowed me to move forward and do things, but a lot of the stuff came after where I was put to work really young. I was working really young as a kid, as a teenager, and I was frozen, because I just had to do this, right? I had to show up. I couldn't sleep in on a weekend. I had to be at the veterinary clinic helping my parents, often hungover in my teenage years, right? You know, all these things. I still showed up, and I never complained. I never got angry. I never lashed out. I was the good kid, right?

And so all that stuff was just weighted on me, and also, because of that, when I had these accidents, I didn't feel anything. I mean, when I broke my bones, I felt that, right? But I didn't express the pain. I didn't cry and feel sad. I didn't ask for help. I did it all on my own. I remember doing laundry in my house as a teenager, with crutches, with a backpack, because I wouldn't ask my mom for help. I would put my laundry in my backpack, I'd go down the stairs, right? This kind of, we can say stoicism, is because I was so frozen, and I didn't know how to connect and ask for help. So slowly over time, I started to feel anxiety.

What's anxiety, everybody? Fight-flight, survival stress. And I was like, "Where is this coming from?" I had a great... I didn't have early trauma, but it was the compound nature of hiding everything because of the stoicism. So it's not always just a very cut-and-dry case of I was a preemie, or there was abuse, or there was toxic shame, and this is where I think a lot of people

get confused, because they will look back and they will say, "I wasn't beaten. Yes, I had good parents. I had all the things, but then there's these other little things that pop in," right? And so I just say that to say sometimes, we don't know until further down, that we did have early trauma. And that's okay, right?

And this is the other thing. I don't want you all to try hunting down, "What kind of trauma do I have? What kind of trauma do I have?" Right? Don't do that. It's pretty much, we could say, given that those living in the Western world had some form of early trauma, because I can guarantee you, I'm pretty sure most of our parents weren't sitting on Zoom learning about their nervous systems in the '50s, in the '40s, in the '60s, right? And that's just time. That's just history and progress.

So coming back, that's a long way of introducing what do we work with first, shock trauma or early developmental trauma? Let's just dive into this. It's like we're doing a bit of a thought experiment here, right? There's no right or wrong. So the first line here, sometimes. Now you'll get your pens on paper. Sometimes, if there is old, that's the first word, old, old charge in the system from shock trauma, we need to release/deactivate, deactivate that trauma first. Deactivate is just a fancy word for release. Peter Levine kind of coined that one. De-get rid of activation, right? Getting rid of the fight-flight that's stored, the freeze that's stored.

Sometimes, we need to do that first, before we can go on to forming new nervous system pathways that are regulated. Now, a classic example might be, okay, yeah, you know that you had early trauma, developmental trauma. Okay, but you also had a car accident yesterday, or two years ago, or 10 years ago, and you're still terrified to drive on a highway, let's just say, right? You can drive, but there's this little edge when you get on a highway, because that's where the accident happened. It might be that it is important to work with that event as its own shock trauma, because it's just like this weight on the system, and it needs that energy, the shame, maybe the guilt, the fear, the pain that's still stored in the hips, from trying to brake, I don't know, from trying to swerve, like all the things that could be stored in the system from not being able to avoid and be defensive while driving. That might need to get dealt with first, right? So that's an instance where that might need to happen. But sometimes, next line down, but sometimes we need to work at just getting oriented, that's the word there, oriented, to the body and environment first and being embodied. So this comes back to our swimming pools from week one or training call one. We need to increase that capacity first. Sometimes we need to grow this capacity so that we even have the capacity to be with the

intensity of that car accident or of that early trauma. So this is where these things kind of go interchangeable.

And this is where if you were to just, if you're sitting in this conundrum right now and you're wondering this question, maybe just tune in for a second and literally ask yourself, "What's more important right now for me?" Make it really simple. Don't second guess it. Growing capacity or working on a specific shock trauma, and listen to what your body says. If it goes instantly to one or the other, chances are you're right. This is how you start to use your intuition and you don't second guess it. If it's coming from your body, it might say, "Oh, we need to deal with that accident because that is still harming me in my day-to-day. I can't drive my kids to school, I can't visit my friend across town. Got to work on that." But if your system is like, "Yeah, we need more capacity, there's not enough. I couldn't even imagine navigating a car on the M5 or whatever. It's like I need to work on capacity first so I can even get in and be with the sensations that might pop up."

Next line down. "Sometimes we need to work at the stress organ." There's three words here, "stress organ and somatic levels." I lied. There's four words. Stress organs and somatic levels. I'll explain what this means in a second. "Sometimes we need to work at the stress organs and somatic levels, and work towards establishing connection to self." Lots of blanks there. "Connection to self and/or a sense of a safe haven." I'll repeat this again a few times. "Safe haven, also known as a secure base. As a secure base. This can be done internally or externally." So I'll read it one more time. "Sometimes we need to work at the stress organ and somatic levels, and work towards establishing connection to self and/or a sense of a safe haven, also known as a secure base. This can be done internally or externally."

So what this fancy long sentence means is sometimes we need to work right at the visceral level because the trauma was so early and we were terrified when we were little, and the organs still think that we are that little baby that has been left alone in their crib crying and crying, and nobody is home. Nobody is there. Someone's probably home, but they're not paying attention to me. This could be the baby in the incubator who was born premature. Back in the day, there were no volunteers there going in and doing the touch thing with babies. Usually parents weren't even allowed to come see their kiddo, and often the touch was not done with skin. It was done through gloves and all those sorts of things.

So we work with the kidney adrenals. It's starting this week. We work with the brainstem. We'll get into that later. We work with the gut. We'll get into that later. We're going to work with the layers of the body. We'll get into this later. We already work with the joints. That was an entry point into the body. We'll get into breath soon, which helps to bring your awareness to your lungs, your diaphragm.

So all these pieces in the body that we're working with is to really do a gentle knock on the door of the system to say, "Hey, hey, what might it be like to be just a little less freaked out? What might it be like to be a little less on guard?" Yeah, you wear on guard for a reason, we know that, but there's no more threat, and your system is hurting itself by constantly being in this survival loop. And it's those organs that are literally wired to stay on guard because that's where a lot of the chemicals, this is the adrenals, why they're so important. They have gotten so used to pumping out adrenaline and cortisol, and all the other stress chemicals, to keep you ready to run, to fight from that tiger, to run from that tiger, I should say, or whatever it is that is in your environment.

So I say this because, let's just say some of you decide to work with a practitioner, which I know many of our membership do, to do some extra work, you might find if you work with someone who is trained at the level, I am, and Jen, and many of our moderators, that you ain't going to talk about any stories and any traumas. You're not even going to go into the story. You're just going to be there with them. And if it's in person, they might do touch work, just being with your kidneys, being with your gut, having hands on the shoulders, having hands on the brain stem. It's not about manipulating the tissue, it's just about being a presence of safety. This is what securing the strong secure base is, the safe haven.

Now, this naturally happens in the wild. This is what safety is when mama bear has baby cubs. She keeps them safe. This is what licking is. When you look at mammals, they lick, they keep safe. This develops that self-regulation in our mammal friends. Humans have this too. This is what secure attachment is. This is what attunement is. This is what… baby is crying for food, give baby food. Baby is whatever, give baby what baby needs. That creates that self-regulation. We'll get more into this as we move through.

This is why we work at these levels. This is why it isn't enough to just feel the feelings and be with them. Sometimes we have to be with specific parts of the body to reprogram and reteach that they are okay. That's what we wanted to have when we were little, that hug from mom, or what does a mother do or a human do when a little one is not well? They rub their back, right?

It's just a natural response. That's rubbing down the back of all those organs. You squeeze someone's shoulder. You rarely come up to someone if someone's stressed and you squeeze their ear, right? You know what I'm saying? You come up, you tap someone on the shoulder, it's okay. There's these natural things that we do that show that we actually go to these diaphragm levels, to these organ levels, just intuitively.

If your pet's not feeling well, you're not going to necessarily rub their toenails. You're going to rub their back, you're going to rub their belly. Ears are a bit different with dogs, so we won't go down that route, but that's what I wanted to really convey. Why we go in at different levels depending on the person, depending on the system.

Next line down. "Sometimes we might need to disconnect from it all and take a break." So this is a bit of an attempt for me to be funny because sometimes we just need to stop trying to figure out and we just need to have a little moment to just chill out and be human, and enjoy the pleasures of comedy and food, and friends, and just playing hooky, and not think about, "What trauma do I need to work on today?" Because that can be very exhausting. So sometimes we just need to let the reins go and just live a little bit. Don't worry about what and when.

And then the final line there. "Sometimes we need to blend," blend, "bits and pieces together." And I would say if you were to highlight anything on this page, that would be the thing to highlight because we're not uniform robots that get one trauma and then you work on that trauma, and then this thing and then you work on that thing. We're so complex and we need to have an idea of all of these pieces because they will shift and change. It'll shift and change because we are always shifting and changing.

Page two has one more point from this first page. So go to page two. "So following the lead of the nervous system physiology, following the lead of the nervous system physiology, being smart with our body and our mind, being smart with our body and mind, using our resources, and so on, all leads to greater," that's the second word there, "regulation within the autonomic nervous system." Hence, why we call this Smart Body, Smart Mind. We're having to be smart with our system so that we can create more of that capacity, more of that swimming pool.

Speaking of which, back to the swimming pools and beach balls, it's the next line down. "So sometimes," I've got lots of sometimes in here, it's probably a record "sometimes," in the training calls, "sometimes we need to let out some of the balls to make space so a person can

feel sense and be able to orient to their body and their environment. This is often what's happening when processing and working with shock trauma." I've already mentioned this. This is my example of, let's say you had a car accident. That's a big ball for some of us. I'm not saying a car accident has to be a big ball. I'm saying for some of us that might be a big ball. So sometimes we need to take that sucker out to make up space so that we can actually feel our feet on the ground, that kind of thing.

And that's true. There are instances where people have fallen, a lot of people fall. That's one way we get hurt. We fall off of things, we slip on things. That is literally a situation where your feet lose ground, and if we are trapped in a cycle of survival stress, feeling those feet lift off the ground, it might be important to work with that specific event where maybe you fell down a trail or you fell on ice, or something like that, because you don't realize that your feet are back on the ground. So this is a literal and a metaphorical situation.

So I would say that it's amazing, when I think back to private practice, I'd be working with someone for like a year and then one day, out of the blue, we're working on the gut or the kidney adrenals, or some kind of movement, and all of a sudden they look and they go, "Oh my God, I forgot I almost drowned when I was seven." And it's not because they weren't trying to keep that information from me. They just didn't, A, it didn't even occur to them that that was a big deal because they probably had to go into freeze, because our systems aren't just set up to help a kid that survives a drowning. If anything, parents are just glad they're okay, which is true, but there's no aftercare work to deal with the stress of all the things. And maybe the shame around these events that often comes quite heavy, especially with kids. They feel terrible because they see that they scared their parents, and they maybe shouldn't have been out there and they didn't put the life jacket on, and all these things.

So I'm saying that because sometimes, again, we're not going to remember these things until there's more capacity. See, this goes back to the swimming pools. Sometimes these things just don't come out, whether it's conscious or unconscious, because we kind of know we're not going to be able to handle or process the intensity of that near-death experience, because that is a near-death experience. Those are the ones that I tend to get. Yeah, it's the near death ones. Because what happens when you go into a near-death experience, you almost die, so the system goes into shutdown and it wipes out that memory, for good reason. I think it's fascinating. That goes back to how clever we are at holding these things in until we can handle them.

Next line down. "Sometimes we need to make the swimming pool bigger." I've already said this. "This is improving coherence, also known as flow and enhancing our capacity." So again, the bigger the pool, the more space for those balls to come out. Pool that's got packed balls because the pool is so small, it's hard to get them out. It's hard to get them out.

Remember that drawing that I had you all do that brought back all your art history trauma, or art trauma with the circles, and then you drew the things together on training call number one, the little figure eights, that's flow. That's that coherence. If you imagine even that simple picture, you had a nice system, if you then plunked that into a cramped pool, those balls wouldn't be able to flow. So it's like this double metaphor, like more metaphors, but slow coherence is better when there's more capacity and we don't have as many balls in the pool.

Next line down. "Sometimes we need to just replace the pool and fill it up with new water." And for many of us, that's what we're in the process of doing. "This is building," that's the next word. "This is building up the foundations of the nervous system, getting regulation back into the picture."

And this happens. We know that it takes about seven years for the entire human system to be a new system. Because our cells break down, our hair grows, our organs, our bones. This is true. The system breaks down and it rebuilds. I read a little while ago that that's the whole body, but the organs, I think they regenerate in a much shorter time. I can't remember the exact time, but it was way less than seven years. I think it was like one to two years. Don't quote me on that. But that shows you, if you are really diligent with this, this goes back to what I said at the beginning, don't get distracted, stay focused, because you can rebuild these things quite quickly when you stay on track. So the wires, the health of the tissue, the health of the bone, which is going to allow you to move more, the health of the tissues, all these things, it will regenerate. But we have to always be on the side of healing versus the side of degeneration. I'm not saying you have to be a saint and be perfect, but always moving that needle forward towards more regulation and more capacity building.

I'm thinking about a picture that Seth has somewhere on one of his blog articles. It's shocking if you see what he looked like in his twenties. I'll see if we can find that. I don't know if, Bonnie, you can find that. But he was emaciated and he talks about this, and his spine was the spine of a 75-year-old man. He had no strength, cavities, just terrible, terrible gut problems that he's talked about. You can change your system quite quickly when you really are diligent with these

things. It's not just the nervous system, it's the tissue, it's the posture, it's your movement, how you think, all these things.

So that would be an example of, we are literally replacing and remodeling the pool and creating a new pool, so that that pool is just that much better at efficiently cycling in and out those balls, those traumas. Again, this isn't about not having trauma in our life. This isn't about having no stress in our life. Those things are just there, but it's how resilient we are to deal with those things that come in. So, it is very important to know that we can shift these things quite quickly.

In the grand scheme of things, seven years is not that long. I know for some of us, some of us are a little older, I get that. But we know, and this is a true biological fact, animals are supposed to live 10 times that of when they start reproduction. 10 times. So what that means is the human lifespan should really be about 130 to 140 years. Isn't that wild? And there are people that live long, but it's this stress, it's this lack of connection to self, to the earth, the distractions, all these sorts of things. So very, very interesting when we look at how we've been hindered because of our lifestyle, our cultures, all that kind of stuff. But we can change it. I really do think we can change it.

So final bullet point there, under back to the swimming pools and beach balls, "There is no strict method to this work, but there are fundamental principles on how to approach the system. There is no strict method to this work, but there are fundamental principles on how to approach the system."

What else do I want to say about that? This is why it is hard for me, and I never do say, if you're feeling this emotion, do this movement. Or if there's a pain in this part of your body, that must mean it's this held emotion. That is way too simplistic for the human system. So be very careful about getting trapped into those, we could say, scripts that say, "Oh, well if the lungs hurt, it must mean grief." Or, "If there's pain in the groin, it must mean something, something." Only you know. Yeah? I'm really going to pause on that. You know. You might not know now because you're relearning the language of your body system. But as you learn more, you will know what a certain feeling... You'll know instantly when a sensation comes in. Not because you've had before, but because you just tune in and you're like, oh, that's this. Or, oh, this body part needs to do this now or today I need to be a little less active, or today I need to be more active, or whatever it might be. So again, be very careful of those places that say, this is what's happening to you when you have this thing. Now the exception is, oh yeah, you have a broken

bone. Yeah, that's a broken bone. There's no interpretation there. Okay? There's some instances where that's not true. But when it comes to this somatic system and these sorts of things, there's so much room for just being more connected to self and going back to your fundamental principles. Am I connected to my body? What am I sensing? What movement do I need to do? What impulse do I need to follow? Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Okay, next line down in pink there. Small or bold. So moving towards more regulation, because again, we're talking about regulation here, nervous system regulation, and therefore greater safety is the goal. That's the goal. But sometimes we need to work on a specific procedural memory that is hindering our capacity to feel safe. So this really gets into theory when we talk about stored procedural memories in biology of stress video number five. So for some of you may, you may not have seen this yet. That's okay. Again, it's simple. The specific procedural memory, that would be my classic example. Ball is coming in, it's about to hit your head and you don't have time to protect. Yeah. So the ball's coming like, oh, I didn't get my arms fast enough up there. What that means is the body had a procedure written at the sensory motor level, get arms up to protect brain, eyes, the senses, it's all always about protecting our senses.

But if that didn't happen, there will be a muscle tension in those shoulders that is wanting to move out. It's just like we can't run from the dangerous thing. We're not able to run. So the body has energy, wants to run. If I pull another example, why a lot of us, when we go to sleep at night, our legs are buzzing. That restless leg thing, and that is often a very clear sign over the period of a day, how many times did you not follow your impulse to... It's not always about running. It could be about, ugh, I had an impulse to go for a walk and I just was so busy. So I just ignored that impulse and I stayed inside. It doesn't always have to be because someone was chasing you. It could be you didn't take care of yourself enough that day and move, and so then you're trying to sleep and you haven't exhausted enough energy.

It could also be that. So moving towards more regulation and greater safety is the goal, but sometimes we need to work on a specific procedural memory that is hindering our capacity to feel safe. So I'm saying the same thing over again. That's again, that car accident example. You didn't get a chance to swerve. You hit the tree. There's a procedural memory in your body wanting to do that with your vehicle that's stuck. So next line, we need to listen. We need to listen to what our system needs and follow the impulse. Back to our old friends, listening to what the system needs and following our impulse.

This is why, as remedial as it might seem, listening to hunger cues, needing to go to the toilet cues, passing gas cues, needing to yawn, drink liquid, food, not eat food, rest, temperature regulation. All those things are being kind of told to us via our autonomic nervous system.

So the better we can work with those and get into a healthier rhythm with them, it then allows these deeper impulses, these deeper procedures to show up better. We can't tell when we're hungry or when we're full. It's very hard to go to that next level. It's like a video game, which I don't play, but I remember, I think it was Pac-Man, the first level is kind of slow, or Mario Brothers. It's slow. It's slow. Then you get to the next level. It's faster, it's faster. And if you're not really good at those core movements, you're going to get eaten by something quite quickly. So again, these following your impulse things are so important because it reteaches you, I'm pulling back, it reteaches you maybe what you didn't get when you were a baby. What does baby need? Hunger, going to the bathroom, changing diapers, safety, temperature regulation. This is exactly what following your impulse teaches you, reteaches you. So adapt as necessary, is the next line down, adapt as necessary.

So as some of you know, bottom line as we come to this bottom of page two, a lot of us are constantly living in a state of, we can say, overwhelm, survival stress. And that's okay. You know that's my wiring because of my history. And so when this is occurring, we need to just keep layering on more of these regulation pieces, more of the growing capacity. So we need to bring as much regulation and safety back to the nervous system and not overload the system while doing this. I'm going to read this again. We need to bring as much regulation and safety back to the nervous system and not overload the system while doing this.

So this ability, again, to just keep growing the capacity, taking out the balls or maybe just not allowing more balls to come in. This is where good self-care, resources, it disallows more stress from sticking. And with that, that does bring more safety, more regulation. The more you start to have positive control over your system, the more you start to reteach your system. Oh, I can do this. It gives you agency.

There's a triumphant quality that I just took care of myself really well today. Wow, that felt really good. Tomorrow's another day. Let's see what happens. Maybe the next day after taking care of yourself really well, you feel that there's a bit of a crash, but maybe that crash isn't a crash. Maybe there's just more capacity to now feel the intensity that you couldn't feel last week. And so I've said this before, but some of my highest levels of survival stress just came out in the last three years of my life. Wasn't expecting that, but it came. My heart was fine. So I

was like, okay, this is clearly a big ball that I had no clue was lurking in my swimming pool. It was like in the swamp layer, in the deep freeze layer where literally it was in the deep freeze of my system. So that's again where regulation, regulation, regulations. So page three, you'll see those words written in bold regulation, regulation, regulation. So these are magical words from two of my main teachers, Kathy Kane and Steven Terrell. I'm going to read this paragraph.

And just a reminder to reorient, maybe let's just do that for a sec. Get your eyes refocused somewhere far away from the computer if that feels okay. Are you starting to see how a lot of this stuff is just the same thing said different ways? It's capacity and those balls, and what do we have to do to engage in growing that capacity and disallowing new stressors from sticking? It's not about not having stressors, it's knowing how to work with them in the moment so that more doesn't stick. And if that's the only thing you do for one year, for example, imagine how different your system will be in a year. It will mean that there will be much more capacity, and the other things that you maybe thought were going to be this huge slog to work with just start to come through in a much simpler way. And this is why a lot of people struggle when they try to do quick therapy.

They kind of try to do that weekend workshop that promises everything in three days, but there's been zero, usually, foundation set to know that a person can even handle the intensity that's going to come through. This is one of the reasons why I'm not quick to have big workshops, right? Because we need to make sure that you all have more of this ability to stay connected, stay present. Because when you're in a room of 60 people, you can't check in with every single person. You have to know that they can hold their own through a five hour workshop. And you have to feel and know that they are confident and able to pause when they need to without me constantly saying, okay, take a break.

So that's where these dynamics in group workshops can get a bit tricky because if you don't have that training already instilled in people, you just have chaos building up, chaos and shut down. And by the end, often everybody's just a little more dissociated and a little more angry, but they don't know it. So this is where I've been to enough workshops to know these signs and symptoms.

I think it's possible to do it, but we just need a lot more education and we could say foundation. So back to page three. So this is from Stephen and Kathy's book, Nurturing Resilience. This is not a book that is a how-to book. It's a book for professionals. Of course anybody can buy it, but it is theory essentially. So regulation is the term used to describe our

ability to manage our emotional state, to calm ourselves during times of heightened emotion when we become fearful, deeply sad, angry, or frustrated. Regulation is a learned process. Let's say that again. Regulation is a learned process when we integrate into our own lives by observing others, and importantly through the attachment phases with our early caregivers. So what's really important about this is, regulation is a learned process. And you know that, this is why I always go back to the baby example.

Baby will not get regulated if it doesn't have connection. It will even get some regulation if that connection is terrible, but it needs some kind of connection. For those of you that were brought up in horrific home lives, you're still here. You can read, you can listen, you can show up, you can buy your groceries, you can feed yourself. Heck, you might be an expert at many, many things, but you didn't get that good self-regulation. But if you think about that, that again goes back to how we are different from other mammals. Because if the mammal doesn't have good regulation, it is not going to survive very long in the wild.

This is a good thing for us that we can learn this. And what they also write there, right? This ability to calm ourselves during times of heightened emotion, fear, sad, angry, frustrated, all those things are a normal part of human existence. It's just what happens when we go into them. Can we stay tethered to the here and now? Can we stay connected? We stay noticing our breath. Can we shift our physiology in it in the way that it needs to shift to move out of that big tsunami wave of emotion as opposed to just getting really calm to the point of bypassing that emotion? This is what I think happens in a lot of meditation retreats and meditation practices where there hasn't been enough foundation. A person will feel an intense something like fear or sadness or anger, frustration. But in those moments, you're said to stay still.

And that's a problem with a mammal that needs to express their frustration or needs to cry and sob when everybody around them is looking super peaceful. So it's like you're adding insults upon injury. You're just making it worse. Now, it doesn't mean that you cannot, as you become more skilled and you've gotten some of these layers out, be in say a sitting practice and actually contain in a positive way, a deep emotion and have it moved through energetically, but that's more advanced. That can happen. You can work with these deep, deep emotions in a contained way when you have regulation on board. That's why the kid who has been taught good secure attachment, when they get a little grumpy, they don't have a tantrum. I guess I'll clean my room. Whereas at the beginning it's like a bit of a tug of war.

But then they learn, okay, yeah, I'm a bit pissed. But they contain it. They know that they have to and they process it. So this is part of human growth, at the beginning we're a little clunky and a little unrefined. And then as we get older, we learn how to not suppress, but contain in a positive way and process that, let's say, emotion. Now this is different than if you have a broken bone and you need to cry and wail, but something like, I just don't like doing this. It's something I have to do every day. It's like, okay, well, it doesn't make sense to have a tantrum every time you need to do the dishes, to swing that. It's like that's a little overcompensation. But yeah, there's that little bit of, oh, I don't like this, but oh, I don't like this. Okay, I'll feel it, but I'll keep going and I'm not going to shut down and I'll feel that energy and I'll move it out. So this again shows how complex we are.

All right, next line. So this is going to be review. So I'm going to move through this fairly quickly, but still well paced. So we want to establish regulation for many reasons. We want to establish nervous system regulation for many reasons. Gives us more capacity, gives us more capacity to be in and stay in the body when stressful and even joyful events occur. For those of you that didn't get the memo, joy and excitement can be perceived in the system as stress and fear because it comes with a sympathetic charge. It's hard to be excited and be really calm.

I'm so excited. It doesn't work. Excitement is like this. It's blood, it's heart rate. We're going to dance, we're going to celebrate. But if you haven't been able to differentiate a high heart rate means lots of things, it could mean you're exercising. It could mean a fear or it could mean I'm happy and surprised and this is fun. So this is another part of regulation and growing capacity is being able to differentiate when something is activating but not fearful. And this is why a lot of folks who have deep, deep, deep dysregulation will avoid anything that raises their heart rate. And then you get into trouble because you need your heart to pump. You need a good heart rate. We would call it variability so that we can climb stairs and put away dishes and take care of ourselves and exert effort.

Next line. So again, this is all in service of why we want to establish better regulation, greater opportunity to feel and be with our internal self. That concept of interception, that again is the baby. When we're with the baby, the human, and we're connecting with them and their tummy is gurgling because they're hungry and then we give them food, they feel that soothing in their stomach. That self regulates them, right? Those sorts of things. The more we allow the body to have what it needs, we start to hear its signals much better and it tunes to us in a way that is just more pleasant. But if we've been denied, say that co-regulation, we're going to shut down our interoception, right? If you go to a house, you knock on the door and you're trying to

talk to someone, no one's there, you go the next day, no one's there. Eventually you just stop knocking on the door. You don't even go anymore, right?

So this is the importance of building that interoception, that internal sense of self. As someone said earlier on the chat, they're actually able to feel their organs and be with that. That's very important. That's where our sixth sense is. That's where our intuition is in our gut. It's not in our brain, it's in our gut. It's in our cells, in our body.

Next line, if old, again, this is in service of why we're establishing regulation. If old procedural, these are called implicit and declarative explicit memories. So if old procedure, so it's that word procedure, and declarative. Basically. That's a fancy way where declare is like a declaration, that's explicit. So just to review procedural memory would be that quick activation to protect your head. And declarative would be, oh yeah, when that ball hit my head, it was a sunny day on the soccer field in June. I'm declaring what I remember. So it's the things that we remember that were happening on the outside that is a declarative memory. So if old procedural and declarative memories surface, then we can handle them a bit more. Meaning we can be with them, we can sense them without having more of a stress response. There might be a stress response that comes through because it's attached to that old memory, but we're not adding another stress response because we're freaking out because of the stress response we're feeling that's old. That was a bit long-winded, right? But it's said another way, we don't want to fear the old fears that are coming through. This is what people would call a flashback, or a nightmare, or a memory where it comes up. It's so intense, but we don't know how to be with it because our capacity is so small. So we get retraumatized by the memory.

This is where we say that therapy session retraumatized me. There was no, like it just came out of the blue. There was no ability to be with that intense either memory, or quality, or procedural memory. So when we have more regulation on board, when we have bigger capacity, we can be with these things. If anything, and some of you who are new here might think I'm crazy, but some of the alumni can vouch for this. You'll get excited in a good way when you have a memory come up that has been buried, you'll get excited when you hear and feel a fizz, or an energy, or you sense a sensation, or you have a bit of a shake come through. Because what does that mean? You have more regulation on board. You're growing your capacity, you're getting healthier in your nervous system. But most humans don't know this.

And so what happens when they have these scary situations, these scary sensations, they find a way to make it stop. I've woken enough after surgeries to know what they do when you are

shaking, they try to warm you up. You're not cold. You're letting go of the stress of the operation. And so those movements need to come out. So luckily that didn't happen the last time they came out, and I think it's because I was more regulated. But that's another story. So these are the things that we start to get more attuned to, and it just becomes part of life. It just becomes part of healing in a body that has had all these stressors and traumas, it just becomes kind of interesting. Next line, regulation means that the autonomic nervous system is functioning smoothly. Smoothly is the word there. Smoothly. Meaning the nervous system is not staying stuck in survival stress for too long.

So again, this comes back to it's not about not ever having a stress. It's not about never having an accident. It's about what do you do when it happens. My example last week where I slammed my hand in the door, that sucked, but my hand was fine, but I also took care of it. The process of healing occurred super fast, super fast because of that tending to what the body needed in the moment as opposed to ignoring it and just forgetting about it. Final bullet point there. With early trauma, we could say developmental trauma, it's quite possible that regulation did not happen. And you all know this. We've been talking about this, right? Regulation didn't happen, but it happened enough because if it didn't happen enough, you wouldn't be here. So this is the other thing, is, we're all doing pretty good, generally speaking.

The human system can still work for a long time with dysregulation. But of course, as we know and many of you are working with, say chronic illness, those sorts of things, that is the sign of the system not being able to work so well anymore. The systems can't keep going with that level of dysregulation. That's typically when we pay attention. Because, oh, something's not right. I can't digest my food, I have no energy. I've got this thyroid problem, whatever it might be, all the things. That's what alerts us to something being wrong. And then we work with growing regulation and lots of people will find that a lot of these things start to shift. Okay, we have one more page, a bit more reading, a bit more reading. So take a second to reorient. And a reminder for everybody here live, next week is a pause week. So this week is lab four, lab five will not come into your awareness until, if I get my dates, I think it's April 2nd.

So next week is an off week, week five, no new lab, time to chill, time to maybe catch up on some things, maybe review old lessons or as I said a few pages ago, to just don't do anything. To see how your system is without actively engaging in the learning. And then we will have the next training call the following week, I think that would be April 4th. We'll get into the first part of working with anger and healthy aggression, which is always a fun one. So page four here, I often teach this analogy. Most of you have probably heard it, the car accident scenario. You are

familiar with that one with me, person A, person B. So this is just a way to teach again what we've already talked about, but just in a slightly different way. So this car accident scenario is, this is an example of one person, I call the person, person A, and they have solid regulation. I'm reading this from the paper here.

They have solid co-regulation on board from the start. So they had a good upbringing, good things happen, secure attachment, that's a safe haven. When that occurs, as you all are learning, it builds resilience, not just in the nervous system, but how that nervous system connects to all the organs. Digestion, immune system, heart function, brain, engaging in the world, that kind of thing. Compared to person B. So person B in my analogy is someone who did not have that solid co-regulation from the start. And again, in the case of humans, it was still enough, but it wasn't as good as it could have been. And again, many of us here, that was our situation as we did not have that solid co-regulation. And we know that's why we are working on healing the things we are working on healing.

So person A in this scenario is more able to withstand the stress of a shock trauma and bounce back fairly quickly. Whereas person B's capacity to contain and process a shock trauma is limited as a result of their dysregulation. So the example I often give is you have a very, very simple car accident, simple, like a fender bender we would call it here, where there's just a little bump. Something happened, you missed, you looked away, and then the person in front of you braked and you hit. But no one is hurt in a sense physically. There's no scratches to the car, nothing that requires anything excessive. In a situation like that. Person A walks away and they're really fine. It's literally, it just falls off of them. They even forget it happened. And they go on with life. No trouble driving, no, no nothing. Whereas person B, that really, really disturbs their system. They walk away, they're shaking, they feel shame, that night they can't sleep. Maybe they're not hungry. Maybe they wake up the next day and they're afraid of actually getting into their car because it's looping. This survival stress is looping.

Now what's occurring typically is one would say, well, that was not a big deal. There was no accident. There's really no accident. But here's where their system, going back to our swimming pools, their swimming pool was packed with balls that they didn't know about. And I know many of you might have a story like this, where it was this one thing, that it was that thing that tipped your system over. And I had worked with many people where it was a struggle because they were trying to get compensation through say the insurance companies. And they just look at the accident and they look at the medical results and they're like, "You have no broken bones. There's no brain trauma. Your blood work is fine. This is all in your head." It's a

common thing we hear. But what's happening is their nervous system, basically it's like the pool just broke open and all the balls went flooding out and their system is being overloaded with all of these old things.

And so I say here, while this is an oversimplification, it's a general example that can be extrapolated to many different scenarios as well as many different types of early and developmental trauma. Thinking about one individual in particular. I actually don't know what happened to her in the end because she just stopped coming. But she was that person that had this chronic pain that was out of this world, hypersensitized, so much pain. And then her gut started going off and she was young. She was in her late twenties, young mom. And as I started to hear her story, she was the good kid by age 10. She was paying all of the bills, she was cleaning the house, she was cooking the food because her parents, they weren't abusive and they weren't alcoholics, they were just scattered, in a mess. They just couldn't keep things together. And so she took care of her younger siblings and she went into go mode. She went into survival mode.

And then it was this accident that literally broke the camel's back, and she couldn't understand why, because she had been healthy and well up until then, but she was just living in survival. So this brings me to this next thing that some of us will see in literature and such, and this concept that is from psychology called the window of tolerance. Has anybody heard of this, the window of tolerance? And there's what we will call a real and a faux. Faux is French for false, like faux fur, faux leather. So window of tolerance is a theory about a person's capacity, which is based on nervous system development that is safe, secure, and filled with good co-regulation. So again, the window of tolerance in its true sense is the understanding that this person had good regulation, good co-regulation. It was Dan Siegel who originally coined this term. But this is not the case for many people.

This client or client of mine would be a perfect example of someone who was not living in a real window of tolerance. They were living in a faux or a false window of tolerance. So they were active in working, and having kids, and a relationship, and she was bright. She was there, and engaged, and kind, and empathetic. So there was this appearance of true regulation, but it was how she was able to maneuver herself through the world because she had to show up. She had to learn how to be that person for her parents and her siblings. So the false window of tolerance or the faux window of tolerance is a term coined by Kathy Kain and Stephen Terrell, our mentors to describe something different.

A window of tolerance that is not regulated is false. So that's the first word. The only word on this page, not, a window of tolerance that is not regulated. So it's false. So it's like there is regulation but the system is running a lot, or it's like things are flying at half mast, it's going, but there's, like, you even think of an anchor. Why is it taking so much fuel to move this ship port? It's like, the anchor's kind of dragging on the bottom of the sea. It can move. But then if something bad happens, it's like, oh, well it's not going to move through if the wind's going the other direction. For example, I don't sail, but I'm assuming it works kind of like that. You need to have the wind in your favor if you have an anchor dragging you. But as soon as that wind hits you, everything stops. So meaning, next line down, one is able to be in the world, function, often high functioning for many.

This was me. I had a false window of tolerance. I was very sneaky, I looked very put together. But there was a little bit of a survival stress that was under wraps, under a very intelligent functional freeze. So we think one is able to be in the world, and we create, we think, we work, we have families, but it is being done with nervous system dysregulation underneath. And so the system eventually crashes. Sometimes it doesn't. I was lucky I didn't crash because I had so many other health practices that kept my pool big enough and I was taking out the balls. So it doesn't always mean that we crash. Sometimes we do, sometimes we don't. So for some this faux, false way of living, it's just not functional, but is determined by low energy, chronic illness, mental strife, and other attributes that come with trapped survival stress, and general nervous system dysregulation. So it appears to be functional. That's that functional freeze. But this stuff that catches up with us, eventually, it catches up with us.

So this was a very big call. There's a lot of information we went through. And I wanted to bring this window of tolerance just to name it because it might be something that you hear about, and it's important for me at least to know, for you to know the difference. If we go back to that regulation, I'm drawing with my hands now, that regulation graph right up and down, up and down, that is what we would say is a real window of tolerance. But then do you remember the other graph where it's going up, spiking up, dropping? That would be where that's false. But the person in that spike and the drop, they actually don't know that that's happening. It's because it's normal. So another thing, a little warning, positive warning, and some students will say this. When they get more regulation on board, they feel a little bored. They're not feeling the stress chemistry in the same way.

And then there's this kind of confusion of, am I doing something wrong? Because I'm not feeling that hit of adrenaline in the same way, or I'm not feeling that euphoric kind of

functional freeze in the same way. Some people will say, "I don't feel like myself." As regulation comes on board. And then I say, "Well of course, because you're feeling something very different than what you've been used to for your entire life." And maybe what you witnessed in your family and seen in your parents your entire life. So be very gentle with yourself and very compassionate with the changes, because there might be moments where you feel like an alien on another planet. This does not feel like me. And you're right, it isn't. It's a different you, it's a you that is in less survival stress. So just be aware of that. Be aware of the changes as you start to get into these kidney adrenal exercises this week and as you've grown more capacity from the earlier lessons, that it is quite normal to kind of have a little bit of an existential, who am I moment.

And that's part of rewiring. It's not just working with the symptoms and working with the stress. It's working with your entire being in relationship to you, your people, and obviously the planet. So capacity, just go back to building your swimming pools as much as you can and much falls into place. So thank you everyone for hanging out, for training call number three. Like I said, next week, no training call, no Q&A call. We're taking a pause, we're letting things settle. And then we'll resume the week of April 2nd with lab five, another training call, and another Q&A call. Seth is doing his Q&A on Thursday this week. Thanks, Jen, for being in the chat, and Bonnie, for being here too. And we will see you all in a couple weeks. Keep learning. Bye.