

(00:00:02):

Okay, great. So here we go. This is the last Q&A call for SBSM 15.0. So the first question is, "In sensing, my body agency and confusion are very near together. I have an agricultural German background, which is transgenerational. The farm historically is more important than the human, and my own early experience was being locked away in psychiatry for being crazy while expressing what I felt. I love the land, but practically I collapse physically and I'm challenging the Give Yourself Up program, which has been passed down the family system. How do I work with this? I used pendulation and I tried diaphragm work to make space for me. Any more practical advice?" Great. So I love that you mentioned pendulation because one of the first things I thought when reading this question was agency and confusion are very near together. So we want to, of course, support you to move into more agency, and this may also involve spending time with the confusion, but how can you, yes, pendulate between those two things?

(00:01:18):

And I'm not sure if that's what you mean by pendulation. If so, awesome. But I just want to mention it just in case that's not what you mean. That it may be very useful to spend time, "Well, how do I sense that agency? Where is that in my body? What do I feel? What's the energy of that? What's the emotion of that? What's the posture of that? What are all those elements when I come into the more confusion kind of feeling?" It sounds like there's collapse. So that might be something to notice. Okay, how might I feel that, embody that, then move into an embodiment of the agency, back and forth, feel the difference, discover which one feels better. One may feel more familiar, one may feel better, and they may not be the same. In these types of situations, the confusion, the collapse may be more familiar and the agency may be less familiar.

(00:02:11):

Just get to know those states, spend time with both and really start to notice, "Well, which one actually feels more life-giving to me, and how might I start to lean into that more?" Now, a lot of this is, what this question really boils down to at its core is authenticity. Because you were challenged, your authenticity was greatly challenged. And not only that, it sounds like you were literally locked away for a while, in an institute for being authentic. So my hunch is it's likely that under that collapse, there's a great deal of aggression that will be important to support and to understand that that may be part of that emerging agency. Other ways that you might

support agency is like with the potent posture, which might go very well with that sense of, "I can literally stand up for myself." The layers work, so that idea of making contact with ourselves, feeling our different layers.

(00:03:19):

How do I really feel in these very sort of discrete layers of my body? What's the authentic experience there? I mean, all of these exercises and approaches to feeling the body ultimately can support that sense of authenticity because it's about what's really happening for me and how might I allow that, express that, validate that through this work through what wants to emerge. Expression, really. Like this is about ultimately developing the agency to express your authenticity from a place of certainty, personal power, literally standing up for yourself. Boundaries might also be useful in that regard. So that may be practical boundaries. If there's still members of the family system that don't want you to be yourself, that don't want you to have this agency and sense of self and freedom of expression, then maybe you need some practical boundaries with people in your life. Maybe it's simply feeling a sense of energetic boundaries.

(00:04:24):

There's that whole practice of me, you, really settling into that. You can do that with objects. It doesn't have to be people. It might be kind of weird to do that with random people. So how might you find something in your environment that you can identify as another and really feel like, "Okay, me. This is me here, and then that's you over there. That's different." Maybe that point starts to turn into a, "Oh, I can maybe feel a sense of, here I am, maybe that starts here and then it can come here and then it can come here," sensing your personal bubble, how much space can you take up? What's it like to imagine taking up space? This is something that could be interesting to do in a room where it's a relatively, maybe, confined space, relatively small, and you start by just feeling like how comfortable is it to take up space here?

(00:05:26):

Do I feel like I can really meet the edge of my skin? What happens if I think about having energy that sort of goes a little bit further out? How big can my bubble be? What's that feel like? These are all different ways to explore. What this question is really fundamentally about is your authenticity, feeling comfortable with that and embodying that.

(00:05:51):

Okay, question two, "Every time I leave home I faint. This is extremely debilitating to every aspect of my life." I would imagine that would be quite inconvenient. "With growing more capacity, does the body just know it doesn't need to do this anymore? I thought I was understanding the theory of the nervous system, but now I feel like I don't understand anything. I always thought I was hypervigilant and fight and flight, not freeze. Are these states of the nervous system visible to the human eye, how are they measured?" So there's a few different questions in there. One, with growing more capacity, does the body just know it doesn't need to do this anymore?

(00:06:30):

Yeah. And it is not just about the capacity though. Essentially what it sounds like has happened is that you have lived historically in hypervigilance and now your system is being predominated by freeze. And so you've flipped from one expression of the survival response to another. And so the growing capacity is in service of establishing flow so that you're not in either extreme, that there's a more back and forth kind of thing happening where the sympathetic and the parasympathetic are dancing together in the homeostasis. So that is what will ultimately resolve this. And capacity building is yes a big part of that. Now, this other part, "I thought I was understanding the theory of the nervous system, but now I don't feel like I understand anything," so very often we talk about how the sympathetic charge can be wrapped up in freeze, and that is because of the progression of the survival responses.

(00:07:35):

Like we go into fight-flight, that doesn't work. We can't get anywhere, especially if we're a baby or we're young. So the only option is to shut down and then maybe we live in that more shut down state for the rest of our life. Maybe that's functional freeze. So it's a functional form of living with that shut down, but that sympathetic is still underneath. Maybe it's a really collapsed version of living in that freeze where we're more depressed, lethargic, fatigued, and in that case still there is that energy waiting underneath, but it's not always like that. We can also have freeze in us that is protected by a more sympathetic expression. So these things aren't always as black and white as that first example. That is more common, but it's not always the case. So what's important to understand is simply that there's layers and we may flip from one kind of expression to another. It sounds like in this case you probably did live in

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hypervigilance and fight-flight and that was a protection of sorts against this more parasympathetic freezy collapsed state from allowing yourself to go there. And now it sounds like you've actually developed enough capacity through this work to go there. Your system is letting that layer out. Now this touches into a concept called energy wells, which we haven't, I don't think, talked about on this round. So the idea of energy wells is that we are all born with a certain amount of life energy that is sort of the fullness of our expression. This is my energy that is mine. And as we go through chronic stress and trauma, that energy tends to get compacted and compacted. It gets recruited into the survival responses so we don't have access to it for ourselves, for just our life, for our vitality, and our energy kind of becomes smaller and smaller and smaller until we live in this sort of very small window of tolerance.

(00:09:35):

We have this little capacity and maybe we override that and live in functional freeze and we don't understand that we're living in a false window of capacity. Nevertheless, there are these layers in ways in which our energy has been packed up. When we start to do this work, it's like we start getting that compaction movement a little bit. We do these practices, we start to get to know ourselves a bit better. We have weird symptoms, we have weird sounds. We have movements that come through. We have different expressions. The energy starts moving in its well, and eventually what happens is it moves enough that it comes over the edge and into the next bigger well that is underneath. And there can be many of these energy wells where it's like, "Okay, we've been in this state and now, wow, we're in a more expanded state."

(00:10:29):

When that happens though, all the symptoms can change. That's usually when we see something drastically change like this. So it's my hunch that you probably did enough work that you moved into the next energy well, and now you're able to feel this freeze and collapse that's been there the whole time. It's sort of taken over the system. So that's my hunch as to what has happened. Now are these states of the nervous system visual to the human eye and how are they measured? Sometimes, yeah, there are ways in which it's visible. Not always, but yeah. So if someone expresses with a lot of tension and rigidity in their physiology like the guy's just vibrating, he's like a live wire. There could be anger, explosiveness, anxiety, but just this sense of, ooh, something's about to blow. That is clearly someone living in fight-flight, a system dominated by fight-flight, or maybe there's this lethargy, collapse, a lack of tone through the system.

(00:11:40):

Depression. That's a very clear physical representation of being dominated by the collapse stage of the freeze response. Now the tricky part is functional freeze, which is where we've just again learned to sort of just numb ourselves to our experience, the physiology has adapted and we may just appear completely normal. And in fact, that's probably the majority of our western population, is people who just seem fine and they're actually living in some degree of functional freeze and our things are contained and packed away really well. That's not so visible. So it's more subtle and it's something that you can learn to feel. It's something you can see through behavior sometimes. There's people who are just go-getters all the time staying adrenalized, but they seem kind of calm and capable, that this is sort of a classic representation of functional freeze high performing. So those are the ways in which maybe we see these things.

(00:12:44):

Now what I didn't answer yet is, so, what to do, which you didn't ask about, but I think it may be good to go into that a bit. So when this has happened, if this is indeed what has happened, that your system has gone into this next sort of energy well and you're experiencing new things, this freeze response has really come up through the system when that's the case, when that's happened and we're sort of in new territory, that's the time to really come back to basics. You don't want to necessarily focus on lots of tracking sensation and allowing energy to move and doing big healthy aggression work or anything like that. It's more about, "Okay, let's stabilize." We're in this kind of weird new territory. Use your resources, use the basics that help you settle. It sounds like if freeze is really dominant in the system, it may be helpful to just do little bits of mobilizing.

(00:13:41):

So for example, I mean you say, "Every time I leave home I faint," so it sounds like your system is perceiving that leaving home, big danger. So that would be a time to treat the process of leaving home as a neurosensory exploration. So you do it when you don't have to leave home and so maybe you just go to the door and look out and you orient, and maybe you do that with your resources in hand and you have a cozy blanket or you have a cup of tea and you just sit at the threshold and you look and you watch and you see, and then you go back inside. Maybe the next day you take a couple steps out and sit on the stoop if you have a stoop, but you hang

out outside a little bit, outside the door. Again, you use your resources, you stay safe, maybe you just stay seated in case that feeling of faintness comes on like little explorations.

(00:14:36):

How might you start to do that? And in that process as well then start to sort of encourage little bits of the other systems. Maybe you sit and you just make a little sound or look around and I have my tea now and then maybe I'll squeeze my fists a little bit and sort of move my pelvis and then look around a bit and contain. It's like you're introducing yourself to the world from a very different place. And so that may have to be a very titrated kind of process that's well-supported by your resources.

(00:15:18):

Okay. "I'm wondering how to work with the feeling that I want to control my environment. I have early developmental trauma and I survived by trying to control my father's temper and convincing myself that I have more control than I had. This causes me to remain on high alert and blame myself for things that are really not in my control. How can I work with this somatically?" So feeling like you need to control your environment is totally understandable growing up in that way. It was the way that you stayed safe. So it's fundamentally a fear response that this behavior is stemming from.

(00:15:54):

And so I think the lens to look through is exploring how awareness of yourself and cultivating agency within yourself can replace the need to control externally because ultimately that is what needs to happen. The reason we feel like we need to control things around us is because we don't feel secure in ourselves. So we need to have that control over ourself, or put a little bit more accurately, we need to have awareness and agency within ourself. We need to understand what's happening in our body, in our psyche, in our emotions, and we need to work to cultivate our agency, our authenticity, our ability to act proactively for ourselves.

(00:16:50):

So some specific things that may be helpful for understanding yourself better and cultivating your sense of control. The Feldenkrais lessons may be quite useful for this because it's a very refined exploration of our systems, of how we decide to do things. The Feldenkrais work is not

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fundamentally, remember, about the movement itself, it's about the internal awareness of where we make those movements from. What is our driving impulse? What do we want to move first? What would it be like just to imagine that? It's very much about cultivating an awareness and a curiosity and an agency over our own decisions about what we do internally, which is really what I'm thinking will be supportive for sort of coming out of this need for the control to be external. So the Feldenkrais lessons in the later labs could all be interesting to explore with this idea of, "Yeah, I'm zoning into myself to learn what I do and how I do it, and to discover other options internally."

(00:18:02):

And then again, authentic expression. What are you really feeling? How can you honor your internal experience for what it is and allow that to be expressed in some way? Words, painting, drawing, making music, banging on things, movement sounds, who knows? But what is some creative expression of yourself that is under your control? How might you learn to be in command of what you say, what you speak, how you move? And again, this is within the context of your space where you're not having to maybe interact with other people. It's about exploring yourself within a safe environment so you can start to learn that it's about having control and awareness and agency, in here. All right.

(00:19:03):

"In the last training call, Irene talked about the delay between thought and action. How does that fit in with us seeking to be spontaneous and trying to get away from second-guessing ourselves?"

(00:19:11):

So, I want to be clear. When she was talking about the delay between thought and action, that was specifically in reference to the Feldenkrais lessons. So, that doesn't mean that in life you always want to apply that lens of, "Should I go to the grocery store? I don't know. Maybe I'll sit and feel, what would that be like? What would be the first thing I do... When I get up to go to the car, how would..." It's not necessarily something to bring into your day-to-day experience.

(00:19:41):

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So, that being said, it's an interesting question because... So, how does this fit in with being spontaneous, trying to get away from second-guessing ourselves? That's about following impulse. It's kind of a different thing. That being said, you could potentially apply this Feldenkraisian lens of sensing into where the impulses arise from and how you might carry them out. It could be potentially interesting to apply that to your impulses. But again, that's kind of a separate thing. So, I just encourage you to differentiate that that really was instruction for when you're doing the Feldenkrais work specifically.

(00:20:21):

So, yeah, you could check it out. What happens if you spontaneously want to do something and you just pause a moment and feel, "What would that feel like? How would I do that?" I mean, it could be interesting. But yeah, it's not exactly what she meant.

(00:20:34):

"I have a general question about stuckness. This is my third round, and I've had daily repetitive symptoms of shaking that I don't seem to be able to pass through and add meaning, images or memories to. There's just sensation, sound and movement. At the same time, I curiously always get stuck on lab six. Do I need to spend more time with anger before I'm ready to move on? Or is capacity the problem? What ideas do you have generally for people who get stuck?"

(00:21:11):

Okay. So, when we feel stuck with a certain process or experience, it generally tells us that either we don't have the capacity yet to process that, or there's some element of our experience that's missing. So, that's what you're referring to in this first part where you say, "I can't seem to add meaning or images or memories." You're probably referring to the SIBAM model, which I've referred to in the past, which is these different elements of human experience that can be part of processing this kind of stuff. Just for those who may not have heard it before, SIBAM is an acronym developed by Peter Levine. It stands for sensation, image, behavior, affect, meaning. So, the different ways in which we experience ourselves through sensations, through images that arrive, through behavior like movements, through affect, which is the emotion, the expression, and meaning, what's the context, what is this about.

(00:22:16):



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Oftentimes, the meaning, the images, the memories, those aren't something we can just summon up. They often arise organically when they're ready. That being said, if there is an element of SIBAM that's sort of missing, and that's why this is stuck, you could explore... The idea of imagery can be sometimes useful, and where sometimes people get hung up is they think that they have to imagine something real, like they have to see the image of a person, or in a memory, the situation that this is about, and that's actually not the case. Way more often, what's really helpful is to work with an image in an abstract sense.

(00:22:59):

So, if you're feeling some internal experience, you just sort of ask, "What's the image of this? What's the texture? What is the color of this? Oh, it's like a yellow vibrating electricity." It can be very abstract. That is one way that you may sort of add to what's needing to happen, if that's the case.

(00:23:22):

Now, it's important to understand that sometimes another missing piece may not be an element of SIBAM. It may be that you need another person. It may be that you need a person to witness the experience and be part of it, so that it's happening in connection. This is why sometimes it's useful to have private sessions as part of this work, because sometimes, not always, but sometimes there's specific pieces that just won't feel safe enough to move through unless we have some kind of companionship and support that feels safe. So, it's possible that that's why as well.

(00:24:03):

The other thing is that, yes, perhaps, maybe it's a capacity issue. And if that's the case, if your system isn't quite ready to allow this big charge through, then you want to think about how you can start to increase your space inside, essentially.

(00:24:19):

So, the diaphragm's working with healthy aggression, but in different exploratory ways. There's the supplemental voo ahh video in the extra resources for that lab that I made that showed different ways to play with that voo ahh sound and the movements of the jaw that can be supportive in bringing more space into the head structures and the diaphragms, the internal

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structures, and exploring those things proactively when you're not feeling this big charge coming. It's like you want to prime the pipes. You want to work with making space when you're not in the middle of the intensity itself. So, I hope some of those ideas are helpful.

(00:24:59):

Okay. " Regarding toxic shame, I grew up learning that anything to do with sex and the naked body was shameful and disgusting. It all felt very embarrassing and awkward. Later, in my early sexual relationships with men, I did things to please them, which now fill me with a sense of shame and disgust. I'm feeling confused about toxic shame in relation to this. I don't feel anger, more of a feeling of recoiling or curling up. Your thoughts on this would be very welcome. Thank you."

(00:25:36):

So, when it comes to this sense of shame and toxic shame, it's not you. There's nothing in you or what you did that you need to feel ashamed about. That's not where the toxicity is. The toxicity is in the programming you received. So, that is something that's pretty important to understand. You grew up learning that anything to do with sex and the naked body was shameful and disgusting. So, that wasn't you. That was inaccurate information that you got from your environment that went inside, and shame and disgust got coupled with sexuality. So, that is where the toxicity is, is in that faulty programming that you were helpless against. When we're kids, we take in what our environment tells us. That's the way it is. We're a sponge. So, in that process, shame and disgust got coupled with sexuality.

(00:26:38):

So, the idea of toxic shame is that it's about allowing ourselves to feel the body's disgust at what we are holding, at what it's been forced to hold. So, in this case, it's like you were forced to take in this programming that says sexuality is shameful and disgusting. That feels gross to the body. That's not accurate, that's not right. It's an insult to our humanity, essentially. So, that doesn't feel good to the body. That's what the disgust is about. "I don't want to hold that programming. I don't want to hold that faulty information." And so, when you say, "I don't feel anger, more of recoiling, curling up," that sounds like the beginning stage of that disgust wanting to come out.

(00:27:34):

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What do we do before we puke? Oh, we tend to contract around our belly. I would be interested to explore what comes next, after that recoiling and curling up. What wants to emerge from that place of being coiled and curled up. And that may well be a blah kind of thing, and that is what can connect you to your anger. So, the toxic stuff coming out, that expression of disgust, yuck, can very easily bridge into, "Blah. Get away from me. Yuck, yuck. Get away from me with that bullshit." So, that's what my hunch is, what needs to happen there.

(00:28:24):

All right. Let's just take a little pause. 10:30, so take a little orientation break, take a little, get some tea, need to go to the bathroom, get some water, whatever. Just take a little pause.

(00:28:36):

All right. So, before I move on, there was a comment in the chat I wanted to highlight, because it is a good, important point to remember. When I was talking about, I think it was a response to the question where there was no image or anything coming up. There's a comment that, "Yeah, maybe early experience or in utero, because no image." Totally. Yeah, that's a really important point to remember, is that sometimes there are no images because it's such an early experience, and that actually goes along quite well with if it's a capacity issue. Because very often, these early experiences, they do require a lot of capacity to allow through because they're so intense, and they often have no context or image or memory. So, yeah, a very good point.

(00:31:16):

Okay. "I experienced a shock last weekend. My dad fell and hit his face. I was so scared when I saw him because he was black and blue and had a massive swelling above his eye, and I had to drive him to the hospital. I felt faint and disconnected. I'm wondering if my reaction, which felt extreme, is worse because of my limited capacity to process my feelings in the moment, and/or if this could be triggering something from my past because it felt so big. Any thoughts? My dad is okay and fine, but my fear is still lingering."

(00:31:51):

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So, yeah, very often it's both. Both are true. So, when we have a limited capacity because we're working through our stuff and we still have these unresolved survival energies at play in us, then yeah, we have less capacity for big, new stressors, which this was. So, yeah, that alone can overwhelm the system and make it such that we go into more of an extreme response because we don't have the capacity to process it because of our past trauma that we're still living with. And simultaneously, that overwhelm of the new thing can at the same time trigger past experiences of overwhelm. So, yeah, both can happen at once. It's a double whammy, which totally explains why your response is what it was. I wouldn't say it was an extreme response. I'd say it was a normal response for someone who is working through their trauma. So, it sounds like, that you just basically went into a little bit of freeze and shut down, and that's fine. It's an adaptation that is not surprising, and you can certainly work with it.

(00:33:04):

One thing that might be interesting to do is apply this, what we've talked about a bit in the past, called the T-Model work, where it's like T is the time of the overwhelm, the maximum intensity, and then you want to go way out to the other edges and sort of work your way in. So, you want to start by orienting. In this case, it's really good that you had a successful outcome. Your dad is fine. He's okay. Great. Maybe start by orienting to that instead of going straight to the moment you felt the overwhelm, you really think about, "Wow. Yeah, he's okay. Yeah, that was intense, but he's all right. And I can sort of see that he's functional. I can imagine. Yep, yep, he got bruised, but he's all right."

(00:33:51):

And then, maybe you go way before, to what was happening earlier that day. "Before I heard anything had happened with my dad, what was happening? What was the weather like? What was I wearing? Who was I with? What was the day like? Can I remember what that was like? What did it feel like until..." And then, maybe you work forward a little bit. "What happened just before I got that call, what was I doing?" Okay. And then, maybe you go to the other side. "Well, okay. So, yeah, I know my dad's okay. Before that, what happened? Okay, that's right. We were in the hospital and I wasn't sure yet what was going on, but he was getting care, he was getting attention." And then we go back to the other side and then, "Okay, I got that call. What was that like? Okay, that's the moment I started to feel this." And in this way, you sort of work your way towards that moment of real intensity, which is probably when you saw him, when you saw the bruising, that was the T.

(00:34:50):

So, it's a way of working our way into that from a more resource place, when things were okay, essentially. And that's not something that you necessarily do all in one go. That could be something that you work with over multiple days. You spend a time just maybe with the outer edges one day, and then maybe the next day you go a little further in. It could be a titrated process. Also, it could be something that could be well-supported with a practitioner to guide you through that process. That could be potentially useful.

(00:35:24):

All right. "I am a late diagnosed autistic, age 66, and I have learning issues due to brain injury at a young age. I'm experiencing difficulty with website navigation, plus reading and understanding and doing the exercises. Please explain if there are specific exercises that are better for TBI, a traumatic brain injury, and autism, or others that are less favorable. I'm struggling to find someone to work one-on-one to help me with the exercises. And this is my third round. I've been limited to the live sessions due to learning and navigation issues."

(00:35:58):

Okay. So, when we have or had a traumatic brain injury, or if we're in a state of any kind of real overwhelm, if we're having trouble just navigating the basics, what we want to avoid is big, high energy work. We don't really probably want to do any healthy aggression work or big emotional expression, and don't want to spend a lot of time trying to track everything that's happening inside. It's more about building foundations, resources, and capacity.

(00:36:34):

So, what I would refer you to as sort of a baseline guide is that there's an entry in the most frequently asked questions page. I actually saved the link here, just pop it in. And this question has a list of the different lessons that often are most supportive of helping to build foundational okay-ness, safety. These are the practices we would recommend as a baseline for people who are really working through the early stages, early developmental trauma, building foundations, increasing capacity, resourcing, that kind of stuff, learning how to contain, to be connected in little bits.

(00:37:24):

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And so, that being said, of course, please know it's very individual. Not everything on this list may be right for you, but that's where I would start, is with the exercises in that list and just sort of check them out and see how does it feel. And you want to go towards the ones where you notice you start to feel a little settled, you start to feel a little bit more okay or a little bit more connected to your environment or to yourself. And you want to avoid anything that feels like it's stirring stuff up and releasing stuff.

(00:37:55):

Another thing that I'll suggest is to check in with the practitioners on the site. If you've said you've been having trouble finding someone for sessions, there is a list of our team members who are available often for sessions. I would specifically suggest Mara Yale. I think that she could be a really good person for you to work with if she has availability. She knows a lot about working with traumatic brain injury and people on the autistic spectrum, so it could be really helpful to get some guidance from her if she's available. Another idea I have is in terms of the exercises, once you find lessons that do that for you, then I would recommend maybe downloading them or getting someone to help you download them so that you don't have to go to the site. They're just in a folder on your desktop. So you may need to have someone help you do that, and they are within the site, but you're right, you have to sort of navigate to the different labs and lessons and menus, and I can see how that could be challenging. So if you could find someone to help you just download these lessons I'm suggesting onto just a folder on your laptop or your computer that's just there, so it's just in one place, you open the folder, and you click on a lesson, and your computer will play it back. You don't have to go to the website. So, that's another idea.

(00:39:28):

Someone asked, "Can someone say where it is on the site?" I just posted a link in the chat there, so that's the link where we list all the lessons that I'm talking about. So just click that and you'll go there. All right. Okay, "Listening to Q&A number nine, several questions came up. I'm embarrassed to ask them, as I'm a six time alumni and I feel I should know and understand by now, but things land so slowly, and I still get easily overwhelmed with what to do, so I do freeze or distract." So number one, well, before I even get to these, just know that I think it's awesome that you're asking this question, and these questions are actually very relevant to everybody potentially, so I think these are great questions. And yeah, it's fine if it takes a long

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time for stuff to land and integrate, and the fact that you know that about yourself is a sign of wisdom and experience in doing this work. So, bravo for asking this question.

(00:40:37):

So, "Number one, after a stressful day or event, what type of exercise might one do afterwards to help things flow through?" So, the answer is whatever works. This is where I can't necessarily like, "Yeah, do the joints lesson," because that may not be it. What you want to do is essentially think about what wanted to happen that couldn't happen. If you've been through a stressful day or event and you come home and you're feeling just, you can tell that you're activated. Well, what wants to happen then? What wants to be said or what needs to be felt, what wants to move through? So, it's just a basic inquiry like, sit down or lay down, connect with yourself, and just ask your body, "What wants to happen?", and that maybe it starts with a sound or a movement or some words, maybe you see some images. Just start with a basic inquiry, and then it's about knowing the lessons.

(00:41:42):

I'll get more to that in your third point. But essentially, yeah, what might one do to help things flow through? What needs to be expressed that couldn't? What needs to be said that couldn't? What needs to be felt that you didn't have time for? These are the things we want to inquire about. And then there may be specific practices that help that, but that may change from moment to moment. So number two, "What does organic releasing look like?" Often trembling, vibration, muscle twitches. There could be spontaneous movement impulses that come through as part of that, sounds, emotion. It's spontaneous releasing, and it can look different ways. Especially as you do it more, it may be quite quiet, it could be invisible: you could just have this feeling of electricity moving through and vibrating out that's quite subtle. Or it could be laying there and you literally have muscles jumping under your skin, like muscle spasms, and then you just focus on just softening and allowing that to happen.

(00:42:53):

Sometimes, spontaneous releases or very often they get interrupted and stopped because we get scared. So something starts shaking or trembling and we try to clamp down on it and stop it because we get scared and we don't know what's happening. So we want to, when we experience a trembling, shaking vibration, that kind of thing in the context of doing this work, it's like, "Okay, let's just let that happen." We want to try to imagine softening into that, letting

go of the tissues, just let it move through. And then, what might we do to help that happen if it feels like it needs it? And that's where maybe sounds want to come, movements. There may be strange impulses like the shoulder wants to do something, and then maybe that even starts as an involuntary movement, like, "Whoa, there's this. Oh, what was that?", that was a little twitch. If that's the case, sometimes we want to slow it down, "Oh, what was that? What does my arm want to do?", and we may want to explore those movements in a slower way so it can look like lots of different things.

(00:44:05):

Number three, "How might a toolkit look and how to use it? Basically what my day-to-day living of this program looks like?", so that's where it's like, this is about knowing what works for you, and that's about practice and internalizing the lessons. Just like I've made the analogy many times, a musician has to practice their chops such that when it comes time to improvise, they can. So, learn which lessons do what for you, and see if you can really internalize them so you don't have to go to the audio recording. So, maybe eventually you learn that, "Oh, I've now experienced that when I'm feeling constricted inside, if I go to the idea of the shoulder and respiratory diaphragm and I spend some time opening that chamber, that's often really helpful. Okay, I know that. I have that experience within myself," or, "Oh, I've figured out that when I get this certain feeling in my neck, I need to, ah, let a little, ah, expression come through, maybe a little aggression."

(00:45:16):

It's going to be different for everyone, but that's what the toolkit looks like, is every time a carpenter needs a hammer, they don't go to the hardware store to buy a hammer: you just have your hammer. So, you just have your diaphragm lesson in your pocket, and when it'll be useful, you have the healthy aggression in your pocket when it will be useful. That's what the toolkit looks like, and that's what living the program day to day is. Now, for myself day to day, it's also internalized at this point that I just do it instinctively. It's like, "Oh gosh, I just noticed I'm quite tight. I need to, oh, yeah, get a little space in there. Okay, yeah," it just happens eventually spontaneously because your body learns the tools.

(00:46:05):

And the last thing you asked is, "What key points to remember?" If there's any key point to remember that what this work is about is am I connected to my environment? Am I connected



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to myself and am I in the present moment when I thought about that's really what it boils down to: am I connected to myself and the environment in the present moment? And if not, what work do I need to do to support that connection? That's what being in flow and in regulation looks like is that we're connected to ourselves and we're connected to the environment and we're not anticipating the future or reliving the past.

(00:46:56):

Okay, "Hi, Seth. You helped a girl who had brain surgery play out stored trauma on a skeleton." So, this was a story I told you, must have been on the parenting masterclass. This is a client I had who had seizures and had to work with expressing sadistic urges, one of which was to draw red all over this. We have an anatomical skeleton in the office, so I got these washable markers and she wanted a color on the skeleton and she would red, red, red all over it, and then would wipe it off, bandage it up, so she had had early surgical experiences as a baby, brain surgery, so she was renegotiating that invasion, and often that expresses through intense aggression and sadistic urges. One of the big key moments that really changed things for her was when she wanted to light a match and stick it into the skeleton's eye, which I helped her do, and that was tremendously relieving for her. And then, she got to fix the boo-boo, right? So yeah, helping play out these sadistic urges in creative ways.

(00:48:03):

So, "My son has had a birth trauma held down with lots of medical interventions, taking blood, inserting cannulas, sedation for brain scans, general anesthetic stitches in the forehead," so yeah, very similar kind of early surgical experiences, "He's five now and grabs and squeezes people's arms. He finds bits on my skin to pick. He grinds his teeth in his sleep. How can I work with him? I've tried redirecting him to squeeze objects, but he prefers people and he loves cutting up and ripping paper." Okay, so yeah, it sounds like a very similar thing. There is this aggression that wants to come out, this desire to hurt, essentially, which is a sadistic urge, and again, that's really common and normal if a little one has been through intense surgical experiences. So, what's really good is that you're already working with him, and as it's not literally hurting you, to some extent, I would actually allow him to pick at me and pinch me a bit, and I would be like, "Oh, wow. You're strong. Wow, look at that. Wow. Hey, you picked that right off of me, didn't you?", not uncomfortable, but it's like it's something that you as a parent are in a unique position to do if you can be the safe person, because the reason he needs it to be a person is people that did it to him. So, it's good to redirect to an object if you can, and

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there are some ways you can do that, which I'll talk about, but if he feels safe engaging in little aggressions with you and they're not tremendously damaging to you and it's okay in a big picture sense, then it's to some degree you allow that, and be with him in that and highlight his strength, highlight his agency, highlight his ability to act essentially, which can help him decrease the need to do it, right? It's like, "Oh, someone isn't judging me or shutting it down. Someone is meeting me at the level of my aggression and engaging with me."

(00:50:25):

Other ways to do this can be with pushing. So one of the things is get him to push you over, so you stand in front of your bed, a surface that's safe to sort of fall back on and you say, "Hey, I bet you can't push me over. Try," and you really resist, you really resist and make him use his strength, but he's going to win and, "Oh," you fall down on the bed, "Oh, you got me," and he will probably be quite happy about that. Finding ways to help him celebrate his strength and to have victory, to have victory over you essentially in these ways that are around play. It is great that he loves cutting up and ripping paper, so yay, let him do that as much as he wants. It's important though to remember that it's not only about allowing the aggression, the sadism to express. That is an important part of it, but that's only half of it because what I was also doing with that little girl in the office the entire time I was with her, no matter what we were doing, I was also thinking about her kidneys being soft.

(00:51:40):

She never let me touch her, but the whole time I'm thinking about, "Soft kidneys, soft brainstem, space, ease," holding the intention of that down regulation, that safety, those organ systems coming into softness. So that's a really important part of it too, it's the other side of it: it's like, you've got to allow that, argh, that wants to come out and you also have to support what's less known, which is the, "Oh, it's actually okay," right? So, both have to happen.

(00:52:11):

So as he's going to bed, putting your hand on his kidneys, thinking about them being soft, stroking the back, doing maybe he likes the T-touch circles are often very soothing. If you don't know what that is, that's often done along the back where you do a complete circle and then a half circle, and that puts you positioned to do another lower circle and a half circle, lower circle and a half circle all the way down the back: that can be a very soothing thing to do on the back for somebody, yeah, holding the kidney, adrenals, just connection, comfort, safety as you can.

Maybe if you guys are watching shows together or watching a kids' film or something and sitting with him, reading stories to him, engaging in connected co-regulating activities with the intention of supporting that softness, that settling, as you can. That's the other really important part of it.

(00:53:15):

And the final thing I can think of is it can be about repair as well as the destruction. So, building a big castle blocks and then destroying it and then building it up again. Maybe like I said, with the girl, she liked to color red and all over the skeleton, but then she liked to wipe it off. Maybe there's some way, maybe a doll or some other type of an animal, stuffed animal, something like maybe that could be destroyed and then stitched up again, wrapped up with bandages, something like that. So, that process of aggression, repair, that's a big part of it as well.

Okay, "Hi, Seth. I would like to have a life where I study and meet my friends and where I'm creative. To be honest, I'm somehow only able to do one thing. On days when I study, I don't see my friends, I'm not creative and so on. Do you have ideas why that could be, if that's important, and how to titrate my way into being less rigid? Thanks so much." So yeah, this is about capacity. You have the capacity right now for one thing at a time, and that's totally okay. And I think it's important to celebrate that you can do at least one thing at a time. That's awesome.

(00:54:40):

A lot of people can't do anything: to settle down and study is an achievement or to be able to engage socially is an achievement, to be creative is an achievement. So for now, I would encourage you to really celebrate the fact that at least you can do these things in their compartments. That's okay. Have patience. It comes down to developing capacity, which happens by doing this work over time, so it's not like there's one specific neurosensory practice that will suddenly enable you to do all the things. It's about building the capacity over time. That being said, there are ways in which you might be able to explore little bits. This is all the name of the game: titration, so you don't want to try to necessarily study and then go hang out with your friends for five hours, right? Because that sounds like you already know it's going to be past your capacity.

(00:55:34):

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But what if you're on a studying day and you're in study, and then you send a text to a friend, or you have a phone call, a little exchange, you share a meme and whatever, something on social media? You do a little bit of social engagement, or maybe you're on a social day and you're hanging out with friends, but when you go home, you see what it's like to do something creative for five minutes. Maybe that is just bringing creativity into the meal you make for dinner. Something that you would already do anyways, but like, "Oh, what could I do to make this? Maybe I'll learn a recipe or look up something that I wouldn't normally do," finding little ways to bring little bits of the other things into the day. That might be one thing to explore.

(00:56:24):

It reminds me a lot of actually the shift that I had to make in myself around making music because for me, music had to be compartmentalized. I'm a recording artist, I like to record music, and that used to always be everyone leave me the hell alone, "I am now going into music creation mode and I'm isolated, and I'm going to be in this for 14 hours and I'm not going to see anybody or talk to anybody," very much in a silo. That was easy to do when I was living in my own little cabin in the woods. It wasn't really possible to do once I was living with Irene, and I was working and I was working on myself, and doing all these different factors. I had to make food, et cetera. So what I learned to do is I just started making music in little moments. I was like, oh, I've got a half hour. I'm going to go in and see if I can get a couple lines of this vocal part down. So it stopped being about I have to do all this one thing all at once. I can just do bits. I can do a little bit here, a little bit there.

Okay. "My dad was an abusive narcissist and money was the only support I ever got from him. I left home at 24 and I'm 30 and he still pays for all I have. I'm unemployed with chronic fatigue, terrified to be in the world and feel like an imposter, all of which sabotage any attempt to make it on my own. I could never tap into the idea of being self-sufficient. I feel paralyzed and terribly ashamed for relying on him for my daily sustenance. How to break the code dependency dynamic?"

(00:58:06):

In terms of breaking that dynamic entirely, that only can really come from self-sufficiency, ultimately. But there's some things you can do in the meantime as you're working to develop that, which may be supportive. One thing I would try to focus on is a little bit of reframing around what's happening with your dad. So yeah, it sucks. Okay? You didn't have someone

who was available in any way for you. They were totally focused on themselves. I have been there, I get it. That's not a good parental model. It's not supportive. There's all sorts of ways it doesn't meet our needs.

(00:58:52):

The fact that he's paying to support you still at 30, I can understand why you feel this shame around that, but I would encourage you to maybe try reframing that a little bit and that this is the only support he knows how to give and he's doing it. It sounds like it may not be a lot. You're not having to live with him, right? You're living on your own. You left home, right? So there is space there. A lot of people, like a lot of parents like that, will only offer that financial support with major strings attached. You have to stay under my roof and you're under my control. And it comes along with all sorts of demands. Sounds like you have independence to some degree. So that is actually really good. And so how might that just kind of be like, well, that's the least he could do for me, bastard. After all that he put me through, at least he's paying me so I can get better.

(00:59:57):

Have a little bit of a reframe on that. It is the least he could do and it's kind of good that he's doing it, and that may be tough to think about it that way, but it is a little bit more supportive of coming out of that codependency because if you're ashamed for relying on him, that's a hook into that dynamic. And so how might you start to remove that hook by kind of being like, you know what? I don't need to be ashamed. He fucking owes me. Bastard wasn't there. At least now he is supporting me to get a little better.

(01:00:37):

Also, it's okay to accept that financial support and still freaking destroy him in your mind. It sounds like healthy aggression and annihilation is going to be pretty darn important and you probably need to destroy the hell out of him quite a bit and there's no conflict there because that's an internal process. So you can do that work as part of that uncoupling. Self-sufficiency is something that we have to build over time through our felt experience, through our lived experience. If we've never had it, it's something that we're going to have to build for ourselves and that can absolutely be done through this work. By learning that we can be explorers within ourselves, that you can start to process some of these feelings, that you can explore what's

happening in the sensations in your body and how you make movements, all the different ways that we're inviting you to check out your experience through this work.

(01:01:45):

The more you do that, the more you're developing that self-sufficiency. It's an internal self-sufficiency. It's about, I can participate with what's happening in here, and it gets kind of like that way back to that first question. I can learn to have control and agency within myself, and that is a form of self-sufficiency. That is what supports the more external manifestations of self-sufficiency, which I have a job that I want and I make plenty of money and I can support myself, et cetera. That stuff has to be built from the inside out. So that's what I'll encourage you to keep doing, and it's good that you have the financial support to be able to do that, and that's where you may want to try to apply that reframe.

(01:02:46):

All right, a couple more questions. "In the last call, Irene mentioned there's a lot going on in the area around the armpit and thoracic spine. That's where I feel a void as if a part of me was forcefully taken away. When I resource, I always need to curl up in a fetal position and push pillows against my left shoulder diaphragm and place my fist on that area like a baby. If I don't, I feel exposed and my thoracic spine cracks a lot both front and back. What could this mean and how can I best work with that area?" So what it sounds like to me is that's an area of frozen tension, in that area and maybe other areas, but that's where you're feeling it. There is this big charge probably and it's frozen, and that tension is then just sort of locked in place. So that's why when you go to feel it, it feels like a void because the freeze is keeping it all kind of stuck.

(01:03:53):

And that's also why you would have lots of cracks because there's a lack of flow through that area because of the tension that's hanging out there. That's of course just my best guess based on what you say, but it's likely given the description. A couple of things I would encourage you to explore. One, since you've discovered a very resourced position for you, that's fantastic. So I would be curious to start exploring different things from that place. One specific one that comes to mind is the bell hand lesson. That could be really interesting to be in your resourced fetal position and do the bell hand lesson, because the bell hand lesson is all about flow and softness and it works with the hand, which is an extension of the arm, which goes into the area

that you're talking about. So maybe you do it first, actually not with the hand that's connected to that arm where you feel the void in the shoulder.

(01:05:00):

You do it with the other hand that feels better and just explore that, see what happens. An important point about the bell hand lesson, it can take some time to figure out, is that it's about developing softness through this movement and it's about exploring how we can bring these fingers together. And even though Irene talks a lot about that idea of soft CBD movement, flow, how slowly can you do it, et cetera, what very often people still do is that. The fingers just stay straight. So just to be very clear, this is the kind of motion that the bell hand wants us to support, like this sort of sea anemone that's just, ooh, soft. Now, that might be tough to do, right? There's a reason that people tend to do this, right? So I understand it may be hard to do, but that's what you want to go towards. And so that's why it starts with very little movements, just one finger at a time. How can you cultivate that sea weedy soft movement through your exploration?

(01:06:26):

Another thing that could be interesting to do again from that position of resource is start to bring in the diaphragm work. Breathe into that space. Are there words that want to come out? Is there a sound that wants to come out? Work with images. Again, it could be abstract. You said, "I feel a void as if part of me was forcefully taken away." Okay, what is the image of the thing that was taken away? I'd be interested to explore that, and it may not make any sense. It may not be literal, it may be abstract. All fine. What was the image of what was taken away? How might you invite that back into that space? What would that be like to explore from that resource sort of fetal position? And again, yeah, diaphragm work. How can you fill up that area with yourself, with your own breath, with your own intention?

(01:07:26):

All right. "I grew up with gaslighting and bullying and I keep finding myself in situations where people are rude and I don't know how to respond. I come home and ruminate about the event and I still can't find the words that I would say to that person. Or if I do, my sentences are jumbled. I do the healthy aggression work, but in real life, in the moment, my mind goes blank. I can't articulate myself and I feel powerless. It's like I'm choking. I wonder if I'm doing something wrong, why can't I articulate myself in real life?"

(01:07:59):

So yes, this is ultimately about healthy aggression, for sure. To be clear, that's not generally a practice that we want to do in the moment. When someone's being rude to you, you don't want to go... Whatever it is that would really want to come out. Generally, that might get you into more trouble. So that's something to do after the fact, which it sounds like you're aware of. But yeah, in the moment, what to do when you feel like, oh my God, I'm just freezing. I can't do anything. Really in the moment, what to do is really keep it simple. Can I remember to feel my feet on the ground? Can I notice that I can breathe because you are breathing or you would be dead? So can I remember that I'm breathing? Can I feel my feet on the ground? Would it be helpful to orient away from that person for a moment?

(01:08:57):

Would it be helpful to maybe just do a little bit of just feeling my hands, feeling like my own touch or maybe just a gentle squeeze of the fists. Just little things that send little impulses through, of, okay, I'm here. This is where I am, starting very simple like that. The reason you can't articulate yourself in real life is because that imprint is so strong. If you grew up being told, no, you're wrong, you're wrong, you're wrong, even though you were right, which is what gaslighting is essentially, yeah, that's going to really make it hard to allow yourself to vocalize. Being bullied, all of that, of course, that's going to shut you down and make it hard to express. So again, how can you express not in the moment. So it sounds like you're already working with that, but you say, I can't find the words, or if I do, my sentences are jumbled. Fine, let it be jumbled. Babble, speak nonsense. Be silly. Maybe what's the sound of the mumble?

(01:10:07):

Allow yourself to be a little weird because you're just by yourself. You don't have to be presentable or communicate accurately. It's about getting the voice moving. So it doesn't matter if it's jumbled or not complete, just let the sound happen in response to what you didn't get to say and what you wanted to say. Ultimately, this isn't about these rude people that are showing up in your life. They are a reflection of what happened when you were a kid growing up. So those are the people that ultimately you need to work with the healthy aggression, the annihilation practices. It's about allowing what didn't happen with them to happen now. And that I think is ultimately what will free up your ability to start to respond in



real time, is that those big charges may need to be expressed towards the source, right? The gaslighters, the abusers, the bullies from when you were a kid.

(01:11:12):

And again, it's possible that this would be supported well by a practitioner for a while because it sounds like it doesn't feel safe for your system to do that, which is why things get jumbled and it's hard to and you get frozen up, et cetera. So it's possible that having that added support of a practitioner for a little while at least could be supportive in working with this piece.

(01:11:36):

Finally, from an energetic perspective, the throat is shut down. I don't know if you've explored the Healing Music album that I created that's on the site, but there's chakra specific tracks, one of which is the throat. So it could be interesting to give a listen to that and see how you respond. Maybe that can help a little bit, bring some helpful input into that area. Yeah, it's the throat that needs to open up and it needs to be connected to your sense of agency, your sense of will, which is the solar plexus. So that also could be useful if you haven't used that sound healing resource at all, that could be something that's helpful to explore as a resource.

(01:12:26):

All right, there we are. Thanks all. So I can't believe it's our last call for a while. I'll miss you and look forward to seeing you again in the next round. And all the newbies, whoever they are, of course, always cool to see the familiar and the new folks coming in. And a reminder, there is one final call, which is the wrap up call next week. So if you want to make it to that, that's on Tuesday with Irene. And yeah, keep going on. As always, thank you so much for being here and for doing the work and working on yourselves to change the planet because what we're doing, one nervous system at a time, is so awesome. Cheers, all, I appreciate you. We'll see you next. Bye.