

(00:00:03):

Okay, so this is Q&A call number six for SBSM 15, and I'm assisted today by Carie Biccheri. Thanks so much for being here, Carie. She'll be getting to your stuff in the chat as she can, and we will get going. Good to see you all. I hope spring is blooming if you are in the Northern Hemisphere for you, and if you're in the Southern Hemisphere, that fall is happening nicely. Always love these transitional times of year. Lots of energy gets stirred up. It seems like both fall and spring, at least for me. It's like a time of transition. So today I've got a couple broad themes I want to discuss at the beginning and then some individual questions, of course, so we will get going. So the first one is on authenticity. I got a couple questions that were both about essentially finding authenticity. So one was someone who said that they felt unseen, essentially had a sense of not being there, kind of not being recognized, being seen, and another person who said, "I feel it's dangerous to be me. I feel like when I am me, I cease to exist."

(00:01:25):

So yeah, both of those are cases where a person was not supported in one, cultivating their own authenticity, appreciating it, understanding it, having to be valued, learning how to express it. These are cases where most likely we learn to adapt by packing ourselves up and shaping ourselves to the expectations of our caregivers such that we would be safe. That's the normal response. Remember that authenticity and attachment are two primary biological, developmental needs. There's a great talk about this by Gabor Maté. I don't think it's released yet, but it'll be released pretty soon, but you can go find it anytime on YouTube. It's open source. It's called The Need for Authenticity by Gabor Maté, and Carie, if you can pop that in the chat, people can go ahead and watch it anytime.

One of the things he highlights is that these are two primary needs that we come in with, authenticity and attachment. They're both necessary for our proper development. However, when we get in a situation where there's a conflict between the two, meaning if I myself fully, I perceive that the attachment is threatened, my caregiver goes away, they become cold, they get upset, they get stressed, whatever it may be, the attachment is disrupted in some way, I find myself, in those cases, attachment always will trump authenticity, especially as an infant and a young child. Now, later on, there may be some kids that just have more of a spark in them, and they're the kids that run away. I think those are the ones who, their authenticity is actually trumping the attachment. They're saying, "Screw the attachment. I'm going to be

myself and I'm going to run away." But early on, we don't have that option, and for most of us, we will almost always continue to choose attachment over authenticity when that wiring is in place early on.

(00:03:41):

So we need both, and that puts us in a real pickle, and that's how we learn to start boxing ourselves up and not understanding who we are, how to connect to ourselves, how to be seen as ourselves, how to be present as ourselves. So in terms of addressing this, there's a bunch of things we can do. Following your impulse is one of the most important basic things for building authenticity. That starts with the most basic biological impulses. I drink water when I'm thirsty. If I feel I need to pee, I don't sit there and hold it. I go do it. Whatever that biological function is that needs to happen, we facilitate that without delay. Now, of course, we don't want to put ourselves in situations where we're upsetting people, I mean, passing gas in a crowded elevator may not be the most optimum expression of our authenticity.

(00:04:37):

Maybe we want to hold it a bit until we get out. Just to be clear, I'm not advocating for putting ourselves in embarrassing situations, but that being said, we want to honor our basic biological needs as quickly and effectively as we can. That is one of the ways that we start to build authenticity is by honoring that innate biology, and then of course, it builds from there like, "I have a feeling I don't really want to see this person tonight." Okay, don't. "I have an impulse that wow, for some reason I'm feeling like going down this road, even though I normally go the other way," awesome. What's going to happen if you follow that? There's all sorts of magical and amazing things that occur when we learn to follow our impulses at more and more subtle levels. We may run into a friend that we hadn't seen for 10 years because we decided to just follow this random impulse to go a certain way.

(00:05:31):

We heard stories like that a lot. So impulses start with the most basic, and they can be cultivated to be very refined in terms of what our body is telling us, and we want to learn to listen and follow that. One thing we may want to do as a sort of basic self-care practice is orienting combined with self touch. So we want to... The service is to be ourselves. We want to be ourselves in the moment. We want to claim ownership of ourselves. This is me, this is my

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body. It may be as literal as, like, yeah, naming... okay, I'm sitting here, I'm feeling my hands. This is my arm right here, my arm, my chest, my belly, my heart.

(00:06:24):

Doing that in combination with orienting to our present external environment can be a powerful way of just building that connection to self. Potent posture. That is a building block of potency, authenticity, having our own, "Here I am." That's one thing we can start to tap in the moment as if we start to feel like we're going away or if it's not safe to be seen or be authentic, well, sure, okay, maybe we are not ready to say the words that we feel like we ought to say, but we can pay attention to our posture and that's invisible. So maybe we are quiet, but we just feel our feet and is my spine straight? Am I over my feet? Am I balanced left and right? Checking in with their connection to the ground, that potent posture can eventually facilitate speaking our truth. It's much harder to speak our truth if we're coming from a place of being slumped or collapsed. It is pretty powerful, the connection between our posture and how we express ourselves verbally, what we have access to in terms of our sense of self.

(00:07:48):

Another further thing down the line in the same flavor is of course, the healthy aggression work. Now, that is often at the root of reclaiming our power, reclaiming our potency, our sense of self. It can take a while, as I've talked about on many calls to get there, and healthy aggression work goes hand-in-hand with developing capacity. So that's why we just got there. Lab six, now the healthy aggression lessons are out. There's the training calls on healthy aggression that expand that more, and there's a reason that the same time, the same lab, we release healthy aggression, we also release the containment lesson and the layers lesson, and both, all of them, tense and relax, finding the painful and pleasant, all of these are kind of meant to work together. So tense and relax, finding the painful and the pleasant, these are lessons 1A and 1B from lab six.

(00:08:46):

Those are introducing the concept of pendulation. I can dip into something sympathetic. I can dip into something parasympathetic. I can find something painful. I can find something pleasant or neutral. I can feel tension. I can feel relaxation. Pendulation. So learning to get comfortable with moving between states. Layers and containment. Those are both about connecting to oneself in a very nurturing way, which is about building capacity, and service of

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building capacity may be very useful as we start to dip into aggression as a way to come back again to pendulate with something more parasympathetic. So maybe I start to connect to potent posture, and maybe I start to feel my jaw and I notice that it's tight. There'll be some questions on that later, and then maybe I start to maybe just feel a little, and then, oh, that's a lot. Okay. Oh, here I am. Layers, containment.

(00:09:46):

I can pendulate back to something more pleasant or neutral or parasympathetic. Okay. Now, other things you can do while you're in the process of cultivating your authenticity is consider limiting your interactions with people or situations that are highly stressful. I will say more about this later with another question, but there are times when we do want to make more of a safe bubble for ourselves. It's okay to set boundaries with people that you know want to keep in your life, but you just recognize that whatever reason they're activating right now, and now is a time when actually you're needing to build a bit of internal safety. That's tougher to do if you're getting activated. I mean, there's no way we can avoid stress in life. It's not possible. But we can create a bit of a safer bubble for us by looking at our interactions and the people we're with and are situations, and choosing to limit ones that we know are very stressful.

(00:10:48):

And it can be a really powerful cue to see how these people respond, right? Like say there's someone, "Yeah, I want this person in my life, but just right now, I can't deal." If you express a boundary to that person kindly and just say, "Hey, just wanted you to let you know I'm taking space for myself right now. I'm doing a lot of deep work, so I'm making a bit of a bubble for myself. Nothing to do with you personally." Anyone who really is there for you is going to totally support that. I mean, they'll be like, "Of course." And if someone gets all hurt or upset or angry, I mean a little bit of hurt, maybe, or upset is understandable, and maybe you have a conversation, that's okay. But if someone gets angry or manipulative or tries to keep you tied in, et cetera, starts playing games, then it's like, "Oh, okay. Well, I guess there's a real reason that I'm sensing that this person is maybe not the best for me," and that can lead to more information about that relationship.

(00:11:49):

Finding situations outside of your home where you can be authentic. So once you make your building sort of a safe base, a home base that feels, "Okay, I could be myself here. My home is

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a safe bubble," then you start to expand that bubble. So maybe you don't go to the most stimulating situation in the world, but can I take my authentic self for a walk around the block? Start to notice when do I... What happens? What are the things that I start to shrink a little bit? Is it that noisy car that goes by or someone yelling or is it a kid screaming or is it a dog or whatever it may be. You treat your normal life as you would a neurosensory exercise like, "Oh, I'm noticing I'm starting to collapse a little bit. I'm starting to shrink a little bit." Pause. Notice your posture. Taking your potency, your authenticity into the world in little forays, little adventures. Let's see, anything else?

(00:12:57):

A couple other things. I mean, noticing what happens when you start to lose yourself. So I talked about things you can do. The first thing really is noticing what happens. Am I starting to collapse? Do I brace? Do I puff up? Do I freeze? Do I get numb? Do I go into my head? Do I get floaty? Do I dissociate? Do I get angry? Understanding what you do when you start to lose connection to your authentic self because that's what you need to notice. You need to notice the signals so that you can know that it's time to do some kind of intervention. And finally see what it's like. If you can start to notice what is the felt sense of speaking the truth. Now, this can start just by yourself. You can use the mirror in a really powerful way. What is it that really wants to be said?

(00:13:52):

What do you want to say to that person? Well, say it to yourself in the mirror. Don't call yourself an asshole. You can pretend that you're talking to the person that maybe you want to say some heated words to and witness yourself saying those words as if that person was there. But you're seeing yourself. I'm witnessing myself speaking my truth. Maybe it's just not about anybody. Maybe it's just there's something you need to say for yourself. What is the sense in your body when you start to speak your truth and witness yourself doing that? So these are all different ways that we can work with building our capacity, building our authenticity, building our connection to self.

(00:14:39):

Okay. Number two was freeze. Lots of questions about freeze. So one is someone who said they've been doing the work for a while and they're starting to feel more okay when they're alone, but they're finding increased sensitivity to stimuli of all kinds, being around people,

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hearing certain sounds, that kind of stuff. So this ties right back into what I was just talking about. When freeze starts to lift, this is very normal, this is one of the first things that we may start to notice is like, "Wow, when I'm in my bubble, I'm starting to feel a bit more okay," awesome. And that almost always comes along with this increased sensitivity to stuff that before maybe it was just irritating, mildly activating. Now, "Whoa. Wow, I'm really noticing it. I'm having way more sensitivity." That's just a clear indication that it's good to work with your bubble and understand it's about slowly increasing it, like I just talked about.

(00:15:48):

It's okay to be protective of your space when freeze is lifting especially, it's a vulnerable time. It's like you're coming alive, like you're seeing the world for the first time in some ways. So understand it's not permanent, but it can be a stage in which it seems like things are getting worse. There is always, it seems like, this place where people, like, they do all this work to come out of freeze, and then it starts to happen and it's like, "Oh shit. I want my freeze back because now I'm feeling all of this stuff," and just that's totally normal. I think we all go through that to some degree or another. So just understand that that's fine, and it's okay to protect yourself, protect your space, make a safe bubble, slowly build on that.

Now, how... someone else asked, they had had periods of freeze in the past that were associated with a total collapse, how to work with freeze when you're terrified of it because you've had past periods where you've just been totally taken over and been in collapse. In those cases, it's totally understandable, of course. And I've talked about in the past that with freeze, one of the ways in which it starts to lift is by spending time in that state intentionally. And so there's really no way around that that I know of. We have to be with what's happening eventually, but we can really, really titrate how we do that. So if there's this association with, "Oh my gosh, I don't want to visit freeze because last time I just was in bed for six months," okay, so we know we want tiny, tiny, tiny bits. So this is where knowing what your resources are, it's extremely important. Remembering that you can come out of your internal experience anytime is extremely important. I can go to out here, so it's again, this relates to tense and relax, pendulation. I can dip in and I can come out in the tiniest, tiniest bits.

(00:18:07):

The system needs to learn that it's safe to start to venture into that territory. And the way we do that is by using all of our resources to make that trek in little tiny doses. Remember that the

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principles of stimulating, the ventral vagal and the sympathetic, the contrary systems. Freeze is that big emergency brake of the dorsal vagal system that can't be on fully if the other contrary systems are getting juice. So sympathetic, ventral vagal, that can be little squeezes of the fists, little pressing with the legs, squeezing the arms, making sound, trying to put on some music, orienting to safety, connecting to a resource, all of these things. So it's like, "Okay, I'm gathering my tools together. I know there's this freeze in me. I can kind of sense it. I'm going to just hold the intention of spending a moment connecting to that, and I know that I have all the stuff I need right around me to come out of it." Now, someone asked the same question, "Are freeze and collapse the same thing?" Yes, yes. It's a spectrum.

(00:19:27):

In the initial moment of freeze, if we think about how this stuff occurs, how it's supposed to, in a real survival situation, we go into fight-flight. "Oh my God, I can't fight. I can't get away. I'm getting overwhelmed," the system goes into freeze. At that initial moment of freeze, when fight-flight is still present in the system, there's this moment of frozen with shock is what we call it. The system hasn't collapsed. It's still sort of humming, but we're frozen, and that's the initial stage of freeze. Frozen with fear is a classic expression. Then eventually we can't sustain that. If we don't get support in coming out of that, then we will collapse. That's the second stage of freeze is basically surrendering to death like, "Okay, I can't get away. I'm just..." And then the system just collapses. So it's a spectrum. And then someone else asked, "What's the difference between functional freeze and being dominated by freeze?"

(00:20:31):

So that means CFS, being bed bound, not able to really do anything, that's being dominated by freeze, and functional freeze is very, very, very different, right? Functional freeze means that we're able to do all sorts of things. We're able to perform at a high level a lot of time, at a very high level. So we're numb, right? The functional freeze enables us to be numb to our experience, which allows us to do amazing things. We could do all sorts of high performing things when we're in functional freeze. So totally different from the system being dominated by freeze and it no longer being functional.

(00:21:15):

And they asked, "How do we work with these differently?" So once the system has collapsed, I've talked about this before and it's a lot to do with what I've just been talking about, right?

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It's like, "Okay, now I have to identify my true window of tolerance. What can I actually do? I have to slowly build that," et cetera. If someone knows they are in functional freeze, it could actually be a much easier intervention if the system hasn't collapsed or maybe not easier, but at least not so long because if they know they're in functional freeze, they can start to do a lot to intervene before that crash happens, which is all this work. They're learning to, "Well, I guess it's time to stop just going, going, going, and powering through and being an awesome performer. It's time to start checking in and feeling myself more and using all the tools that we use to do that, right?" So if one is still in functional freeze, it can be a little bit of an easier road than if the system has gone over the edge and to collapse. And then how to navigate coming back to life out of a long dysfunctional freeze. So this is like I was just talking about, they said just specifically, "I'm slowly unfreezing and energy is returning and I'm beginning to feel alive again. I'm revisiting some of the things I used to love, like art and cooking, being organized, looking at old photos of myself. I'm feeling nostalgia and some confusion and some loss and probably some grief." So yes, this is a classic beautiful example of a system that is becoming alive again, waking up out of a long period of being shut down.

(00:22:58):

And so it's just you keep doing what you're doing, you don't push it. One of the best examples, metaphors I can give for what to do in this kind of situation is you put all of your energy into savings. You don't put it into checking, you don't spend it. As the energy returns, you welcome that and you orient to the felt sense of that rather than immediately using it to do things. So what is it like to just orient to that sense of feeling a bit more alive? What's it like to feel and celebrate that you can feel nostalgia, that you can feel grief, really welcoming those feelings as very valid and vibrant experiences of being alive in and of themselves, that that's enough. You don't have to feel like you need to do more and you just gradually build. You build your aliveness through doing this just gradually, gradually.

(00:24:06):

And then as you have the energy to do so, you can start to touch into more things that are unfreezy type of activities. What would it be... Get the blood moving, right? Go for a walk. Maybe start to explore what's the edge of your capacity for physical activity, gentle physical activity. Can you walk an extra minute every day or something? Is there ways just to get your blood moving, get the system moving, moving spontaneous movement, Elia's movement lessons, great. They're very gentle for the most part, but they really get the energy moving



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through the system. That might be something to explore. Again, being mindful of your capacity, not going over the edge.

All right. All right. So going on to individual questions. So this is a really interesting one. I had to think about this for a bit. "How do we bridge the gap between feeling grief or other emotions in the body and then understanding that in our context, we're not animals in the wild who simply forget about their predators, right? We're not just in the moment. We have a higher brain and memory. We are generally intertwined with whomever caused us grief. Often a good part of our identity has formed around the people we've had relationships with. We then have to make decisions about drawing boundaries or deciding to break up with a partner. So we're not, in my opinion, "power of now" animals."

So, very interesting. True, right? We, generally speaking, don't just live in the present moment. I would say that we have the capacity and the ability to be "power of now" beings. That's sort of the point of this work, is learning to be present all the time and not thinking about or feeling or being hijacked in some way by the past or trying to anticipate the future. And that's the focus of pretty much every spiritual teaching, is be here now, right? As Ram Dass said. And it's just that the way to that is more biological, not so much through mantras and such as has often been thought, right? We need to work with the survival energy that is hijacking us from being in the present.

(00:26:36):

So we are in the now in the sense that when we're feeling our emotions in the body in the present moment, that's a present experience. We need to start to identify is this experience because of what's happening now only, or is it because of things that happened then? How am I being acted on by the past? So that's a pretty important moment of differentiation for this kind of inquiry. Is this about just now or is this about then also? Maybe it's both. Maybe something that is a little bit upsetting now feels a lot more upsetting because of something similar that happened way back then, right?

(00:27:21):

So starting to understand where do our reactions and sensations and emotions come from? Is it just about the present stimulus or is it connected in some way to the past? And you're right that we have to then evaluate our context, right? So that's what I was saying at the beginning part, about what are our relationships like? Do we need to be connected to this person who

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caused us all sorts of grief? Maybe we don't need to be for a while. Maybe it's time to put a boundary up and have a bit of space. That's all important stuff to evaluate.

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Something that you said here, "A good part of our identity has often formed around the people we've had relationships with." I would say even more directly what our personality forms around is, our internal survival reactions and response to the relationship, right? It's how we respond inside that forms our personality. Now, the person is not the source, they are the trigger. They are the source of the difficult energy, the abusive behavior, but it's how we respond that determines our personality, right?

(00:28:37):

Someone may respond by freezing and the personality will be influenced that way. Someone may respond by fighting or fleeing. Their personality will be influenced that way. That's why we see people who are both very timid and shy or people who are overly puffed up and armored and defended, right? So it's not so much the people, it's what we do. So that's again, bringing back to the present moment. That's where we intervene. What do we do? How have we learned to survive? How do we respond? That's the present moment intervention. It has nothing really to do with the other person other than we may want to limit that stimulus. It may be time, like, "Okay, yeah, I don't need that in my life right now. Maybe I will want to revisit that later."

(00:29:24):

And we need to learn to set boundaries appropriately. Maybe this is a person I just need to limit my time with and I still want to be in connection with him. Or maybe this is a person that, yeah, you know what? No, right now I'm done. And again, how people respond to the way in which we kindly set boundaries, and underline kindly, right? If we set boundaries with someone very kindly, clearly talking about us, not about them, how they respond is a big source of information.

Okay. "I have generalized high activation, and I work on soothing. Over several weeks, I go from high activation to feeling almost peaceful, but the peaceful regulated feeling only lasts a short time before some stored emotion comes up. I work through it and then I feel activated again. The cycle repeats. I know it's good that I'm letting old stress out, but I'm feeling activated most

of the time. Is there a way for me to spend more time feeling regulated and good in between releases and activation?"

(00:30:40):

So the first thing I want to do is, again, define regulation. Regulation does not mean feeling good. Regulation does not mean feeling peaceful or calm. Regulation means our system responds appropriately to the environment and it does so autonomically. So if there is a tiger that we have to run from, regulation means our system goes into fight-flight and gets us the hell out of there. And then once we escape, it just comes down. We don't have to do a certain breathing or orient deliberately or it's just like, okay, well that's over. And then okay. And now I feel my system coming down. I notice the threat's over, parasympathetic is automatically taking over now that the threat is gone. So regulation is a way of being. It doesn't mean a way of feeling. We still feel all the things. It's that we respond differently and our system... And it happens more and more automatically as we build self-regulation, which is different from autonomic regulation that leads to the other.

(00:31:57):

So self-regulation is learning to do the things. I get activated and then I do the thing that calms me down. That's self-regulation. You're learning to work with your own system. Autonomic regulation, true regulation is when that happens all on its own. You don't have to do anything. So just to be really clear, there can be a lot of confusion about this where people think, oh, once I'm regulated, I'll just be at peace all the time. No, that's not life. Now there is... I will say there's a greater sense of capacity, agency, that does bring an overall kind of general milieu of peace, if you will. One more has the sense like, ah, I can deal with life, right? But it doesn't mean that we feel calm all the time or peaceful all the time or anything all the time. It means we go up and down as appropriate to the situation.

(00:32:47):

So that being said, "I'm feeling activated most of the time. Is there a way for me to spend more time feeling good in between releases and activation?" Well, the body has its own rhythm, and once we start doing this work, it responds. It wants to release this stuff. It has an organic trend towards healing. So in a way, we've just got to understand this is how it is. As the stuff has been packed up for decades a lot of the time, now it's coming out, how can I lean into that? How can I start to just accept that at least the energy is moving? And it sounds like you are. It

sounds like you totally are, but it's like, yeah, I'd like to feel also more periods of just kind of at ease. The best I can say is, that's resources, resources, resources, external, come out of your inner experience.

(00:33:42):

Let yourself check out, do whatever it is, go shopping, watch a show, whatever it is, it's okay to distract yourself. It's okay to numb out. It's okay to dissociate in a way. It's okay to use your resources, do what you need to do to support those feelings of not being so connected to the activation. And again, the pendulation focused lessons, tense and relaxed, finding the painful and pleasant this week are a microcosm of how to do that somatically, which helps build the skill of being able to be with both. So I can say, I feel you and I wish for you also increased moments of goodness. And I think that'll happen. But one of the ways that happens is by just accepting that activation is coming. It's really good that you've learned to soothe. I mean, that's so key. It sounds like maybe you came into this sort of being activated all the time.

(00:34:42):

Now you're learning, oh, I can come down. That's tremendous. So don't take away from that. Even if it's only happening in small moments. It's something that will, over time, build. And generally what happens is just the pendulum swing starts to change and you have more time feeling that sense of just kind of, okay, and then something comes up. But especially during the first, even, year or two of this work, yeah, there's a lot that needs to come out and it's going to do it.

Okay, "I get what's called, or I get what I call adrenaline headaches. When I have a stressful event, I get really bad headaches across my forehead that settle into my temples and take two days to get rid of. These come when externally I'm handling an event fine. But there's an internal piece I feel like I don't know how to suppress because I'm not worked up on the outside. I have tried, but I can't seem to control or know how to calm a response as I'm not always aware it is happening. And these headaches are debilitating."

(00:35:48):

Yeah. So the first thing I would say is go back to the beginning of the call. And again, it's okay to have a safe bubble. It's okay to limit your stressful events as much as possible. That being said, when you do have to be involved in one of these events, how can you start to attend to that

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internal piece? That sounds like one of the most important things to start to do in the moment. So “I have this internal part, I feel like I don't know how to suppress,” and you don't want to suppress it, but it sounds like what's happening is it actually is being suppressed. And then that suppression is leading to tension, and that's what causes the headache, right?

(00:36:30):

A headache is an expression of tension, and tension comes when we are bearing down on something. So it sounds like there's an internal piece that you're not able to attend to. I would probably be suppressed with attend to. There's an internal piece that I'm not able to attend to, because I seem fine on the outside. So you start... Again, how can you start to notice the signals that you're not fine on the inside? What are the ways in which you can start to notice the tension? Maybe there's something that starts to happen across here. Maybe there's something that starts... Maybe it starts in the shoulders. But there is a bearing down that's beginning at some point. And I would say it could be important to really give yourself permission to explore events as an opportunity that you can leave if needed. How can you start to find ways to be in interaction, but know that it's okay to take yourself away for a little bit and just check in with that internal self.

(00:37:36):

What's happening? What's happening with my body? Am I clenching somewhere? Am I starting to bear down? And then another idea is the diaphragm work. So what might it be like to take a few moments away for yourself and just connect with a sense of space in your body? And if you can't find that, maybe you could notice, well, what's blocking that sense of space? Where is the tension? Maybe that's just what you discover through trying to feel what it's like to expand in these various diaphragms. Also, it's important to know that we don't work with them directly in the audio lessons, but we have these diaphragms in our head.

(00:38:19):

So just like there's these three diaphragms, shoulders, respiratory and pelvis, and then the feet. But we have these three in our torso. There's three in our head as well. There's the bottom of the skull, and then there's a structure called the tentorium, which is right here. And it's sort of like a trampoline type structure. It's like a shock absorber for the brain. And then there's the top of the skull. So just as we work with the diaphragms in the torso, you can do the same thing with your head, and you can do that when you're not in stressful situations. That

might even be the best, is to start to explore, how can I work with bringing space and ease into these structures by using the approach of the diaphragm lessons.

(00:39:09):

All right. Let's take a little pause just before I go on, about 40 minutes in. Just if you need to go do anything for yourself, just come away from the screen, get some water, go pee. Honor those biological impulses if they are present. Come back in just a minute or so. Great point here, "Learning brain anatomy has helped me connect to awareness of tension in my head." Yeah. Actually, yeah, learning anatomy of all kinds can be really interesting as part of this work. I had one client who had very, very early sexual assault in infancy, and the internal felt sense was all confused because of those intrusions at such an early, early part of their life. And learning to look at like, oh, the heart is here and the, oh, wow. And then the uterus is way down there, the vagina is way down there, and oh, my stomach's here and my guts are... Just seeing like, whoa, these are where my parts are, was an incredible part of the healing.

(00:41:51):

And there's all sorts but yeah, learning the physiology, learning where stuff is in us can be really interesting. And combining that with felt sense explorations. Like, I see where my liver is. Oh, wow, it's here. Okay, and then now, wow, what happens if I feel that with my hands? And then what happens if I connect to that area from the inside too? And it can just be a really interesting part of this work, learning to really understand what's going on in here. There's no difference between physiological anatomy and biology. That's all the same stuff. I mean, biology can be used to describe processes from the most minute transfer between cell membranes and tiny biological processes. When we talk about anatomy, we're generally talking about the larger structures. So I guess there's a slight difference there. All right.

(00:42:58):

Okay, going on. "Since last January, I've had digestive problems. My midsection swells when I eat or drink, it sometimes gets so swollen, I feel my insides are being stretched. The doctor didn't offer any explanations or solutions other than to avoid certain foods. But when it started, I was eating the same as before. The swelling is worse on days and weeks when I feel more emotionally overwhelmed, it never goes away completely. Is this caused by autonomic dysregulation? Waiting a long time between meals does help, but it means ignoring hunger." Okay, so one, yeah, it's almost certainly influenced by dysregulation. That is a common

experience. We have to remember, when we have fight, flight, and freeze in the system, the digestive system is getting contrary instructions all the time that are based on survival. The sympathetic says, eliminate, eliminate, eliminate. And the freeze says, "Hold on to everything tightly, as much as you can." So you get both of those at the same time, you get all sorts of problematic representations in the gut.

(00:44:15):

And also when that's the case, we don't have access to the good gut stuff, that low tone dorsal vagal state, which is the rest, repair, digest. All the restorative functions happen in that low tone dorsal state. So we don't have access to as nearly as much to that when we've got the high tone dorsal on and the sympathetic on, and they're shouting at the gut saying, "Ah, do this, don't do this." So yeah, dysregulation is probably a big part of that.

(00:44:45):

One thing I would inquire about, just for you to check out, I don't know if this is the case, but is there a way in which you're eating your emotions? So that can be sometimes part of this phenomenon, where I'm feeling something in my stomach, it must mean I'm hungry. But it's actually not hunger at all. It's grief or it's anger, it's fear. So that is one thing just to check in for yourself before you eat. What is my emotional state? Am I eating in order to suppress something in any way? Is there something coming that I'm uncomfortable with, and I know that if I eat, I'll get soothing? Those are important things to look at.

(00:45:26):

The other thing though is that sometimes, again, it's not all about this work. It is possible that maybe there are foods that are aggravating you. One thing that can happen with this work is things that, again, we could tolerate before, now we become more sensitive to, as we unfreeze, as we become more alive, we get more sensitive. The system changes. Maybe something that it was able to tolerate is now aggravating.

(00:45:54):

So it can sometimes be helpful to get different kinds of support. I am someone, now, to be clear, I don't really go to doctors. I have a doctor and I will see them for a check-up, like a physical once a year now. I didn't do that at all for probably 25 years. Now I do. But one thing

I've found in reluctantly exploring the medical system is that MDs very often know very, very little when it comes to these types of internal issues. And naturopathic doctors very often have a much more refined lens.

(00:46:37):

So I turned 50 recently and I decided that, "Well, okay, I'm turning 50. Maybe I'll get some blood work done and do some stuff. Grumble, grumble." And I did a couple things that were really intensive. So I did something that's called the NutriStat Complete, which is a very intensive panel of blood work. This was all through my naturopath, who I found. It was great. And I did something else called Viome, V-I-O-M-E, which was blood, saliva, and stool sample. And that was all self-collection. For the other one, I had to go to a lab and get it and mailed in and stuff. But it was a very, very comprehensive panel that came back. So incredibly detailed, like 1000 times more detailed than what my medical doctor looked at. So my medical doctor, I had my checkup before this and they're like, "Yep, everything's fine. You're great. No Problem." My naturopathic result's like, "Oh, okay." They can really see, yeah, there's no overt issues yet, "But here's all the things that your system is kind of having grumblings and struggles with." And it was extremely helpful. And I changed my diet in certain ways with the Viome thing that I did. And I'm not like an associate or anything, I'm not promoting them. It was just useful for me, that's why I mentioned it. But they have this thing, after they go through all your results, where it's like, "Okay, these are foods you should avoid. These are foods that are okay, but limit. These are foods that are fine, neutral. And these are super foods, like foods that are really, really good for you." And that's just been really handy. And it's not for all time. You then get tested again in six months, you see what's different, et cetera.

(00:48:26):

So all that to say, that's a world I totally avoided entirely for most of my life. And it turns out, well, what do you know? It can be kind of helpful. So yeah, my digestion, my health, my vitality has all improved quite a bit due to those changes. So sometimes we need other supports. And when it comes to the gut and internal stuff, I'm sure there's all sorts of variables, but generally speaking, the naturopathic approach is far more detailed and comprehensive than what you'll get from a doctor. Most of the stuff people with trauma history go to a doctor with, this is what you get. "There's nothing wrong with you," or just, "Yeah, stop eating this." And it's sort of like a big sledgehammer approach that doesn't have nuance when it comes to internal stuff like this, so. All right, so it could be useful potentially to look at, get that kind of panel done.



(00:49:26):

The only other thing I had thought of with this, with gut issues, it made me think of a lovely Qigong practice, which is really great for anybody, which is just working with the belly, saying hello to the belly. So I'll just actually demonstrate, I do this most days. See if I stand up back here. Okay, so you interlace the hands, like such, and just place them on the belly. And then take a moment just to feel your breath. You really feel your hands, you connect in, feel the connection. And then you just start to do these circles in the direction of the digestive pathway. And it's not really intense pressure, but it's not light pressure. It's like I'm palpating a little bit, down, up, around. Maybe I move my legs a little bit. And while you're doing this, the Qigong practice is to smile. You can't see my head right now, but I'm smiling. And as you're smiling, you visualize your belly smiling, like there's a big grin right here. Yeah. And just smiling and moving. Yeah, really simple. It's a really lovely self-care practice that, again, I noticed when I started doing that, my digestion improved. So what do you know? Yeah. Something that could be useful to explore potentially.

(00:51:15):

Okay. "I've realized, this fifth round, that I'm hyper vigilant to people sounding angry. When I perceive an angry voice or sound, I feel strong sympathetic activation, mostly fear. Even when I know the person is not angry, my body responds the same way, to the sound of a perceived anger." So that could be, yeah, someone laughing really loud or something, I guess. "Probably this is from early developmental trauma. How can I best work my way through the fear response?"

(00:51:43):

So, again, good to notice. We're not trying to avoid activation. We're not trying to expose ourselves to it either unnecessarily. But again, when something happens like this, okay, this is a chance to work with this in some way. And how you do that depends on your capacity. If it feels like too much to really work with directly, with that fear, then again, it's about, all right, I'm going to come out. I'm going to orient externally, use the resources, etc. Just do what I can to stay present and find some kind of safety out here. Notice what isn't angry outside.

(00:52:25):

Communication can sometimes be helpful at that very basic level. If you just say, "Hey, are you angry?" And you know that they're not, but maybe you just want that confirmation, like, "No, I'm not angry. I was just excited." Just communicating about that could sometimes be useful.

(00:52:41):

If you can work with the fear, if you feel you have the capacity to do so, well, then there's many things you can do. But really it comes down to just being able to feel those sensations of fear while staying present. Using containment as you need to, or maybe you connect into your layers, just feeling your edges, but can you find some way to stay present and feel those sensations of fear?

(00:53:13):

Now, again, this isn't something we would want to do if there was an actual danger. If we're having a fight-flight response in response to a real thing, we don't want to sit there and observe it. But if there is no actual danger, and this is just something from the past getting stirred up, we want to see if we can just be with it. Can we just be with those sensations? Can you identify, what are the sensations? Very often, we just have a sense, "I'm just afraid." Well, how do you know that? Can you get curious about how? Just that act of investigation, how do I know? I'm afraid, what are the sensations, brings on your higher brain and starts to de-potentiate the limbic brain, which can help bring the response down a little bit. So what are the sensations? Is it something tight? Is my heart beating fast? Am I sweaty? Am I shaky? What's the sensation?

(00:54:10):

And then can I stay present while I feel that and realize that I'm okay? It may be that just observing that is not enough. Maybe there's a mobilization that wants to happen. Maybe I need to express that energy of fear in some way. And who knows what that is? Maybe I need to curl up in a ball and hide, and get real small, and contained, and feel what that's like. Maybe I need to move into more potency, and feel my spine, and feel my feet, and connect to a bit of my aggression. What's that like? Maybe I need to let my legs run. Maybe I need to crawl on the ground. Who knows? What is the impulse? What does the body want to do in response to the fear if just feeling it and staying present is not enough?

(00:54:56):

Okay. So these two questions kind of go together. "What if the felt sense of safety and connection is a trigger itself, almost like it sets off a danger alarm in the system, which sparks a sympathetic response? How can someone move forward from that place?"

(00:55:26):

Well, that's very common. If we never had the ventral vagal wiring in the first place, as we are building it, we may notice that, "Oh my gosh, yeah. When I'm with someone, I don't feel all yummy and connected. I go, 'Ah.' I feel..." Okay, even though there's safety. Very often as the guards start to come down, again, as we unfreeze, as we get more sensitive, as we become less braced, less protected, we may start to notice, "Wow, that actually feels dangerous. Feeling more safe feels scary because I'm not as protected. I'm not as defended. I'm not as ready." So that's not unusual at all. I just want to say that first.

(00:56:14):

And then, "I've tried exercises..." This is a separate question. "I've tried exercises meant to be calming for early developmental trauma, but just feeling in my body or even my feet also feels triggering. I feel like my body is just screaming in pain, and my only resources are numbing myself with a screen or sleep. Also, now, I'm getting triggered by Irene's voice, like rage emerging. No idea why. The only audio I've been able to listen to is watering the brainstem. Could I please request if we have more exercises recorded by you so that it can be an alternative?"

(00:56:50):

All right. So in both of these questions, there's a lot of talking about how, "I'm getting triggered and I don't like it. How can I avoid that?" And I'm sorry to say that that's not the point of this work. Every time we get triggered, that's an opportunity. The point of this work is not to create a safe space such that we never get triggered.

(00:57:17):

Now, for a period of time, as I've said, that may be useful. To have a safer bubble, to do proactive things to create a safer space for yourself. That's okay. And we are not about just avoiding triggers at all costs. It's understanding that, okay, like this second one, you're starting to feel rage at Irene's voice. Great. All right. Irene's not attacking you. So what's that about,

right? Who is it you're actually mad at? It's not probably Irene. That is an opportunity for investigation. Maybe it's a different woman who was in your life at an earlier time who was telling you what to do, right? "Irene guiding me through these fucking practices, feel your feet. Rah." It's like, okay, who pissed you off really? So it's an opportunity to understand yourself more.

(00:58:27):

In terms of feeling... Safety is itself a trigger. Totally understand that. Then what would it be like just to allow yourself to work with what gets triggered, right? It's like, "I'm starting to feel safe. I'm starting to feel connection. Oh, now I'm feeling activation." Okay, time to work with the activation. It's not about just needing to feel calm.

(00:58:54):

And then how can you find ways that are safe, that are about safety, that actually feel safe? Maybe there's some ways that do that don't involve other people. Maybe there's, "I feel safe," like in the second one. "I feel like my only resources are numbing myself with a screen or with sleep." Great. Do that if you need to. No problem. And okay, you've identified a place that is safe enough. Sure, it numbs out a bit. Okay, no problem. How can you engage with that activity of numbing out and start to bring in little bits of noticing yourself? Anything can be an opportunity in which to start to bring in some of these practices.

(00:59:43):

So, "Okay, I've identified that at least I can numb out and watch a show." Awesome, there's a resource that works. Now, while I'm doing that, can I just start to notice, for moments, that there's a chair holding me? And then I come out of that and I'm back to the show. Can you start to build in ways of noticing your internal experience in little dollops, and then come out of it? All right.

(01:00:19):

Also, if you know that just checking out with a show or something works for you, that's a form of external orientation. You're paying attention to something outside of yourself that's engaging you. Cool. Are there other things that do that? Can music do that? Or is it possible

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that nature can do that? Just being around trees and plants. Is it possible to find a bit of a sense of that same kind of safety? So exploring, exploring in those ways.

(01:00:54):

But yeah, really, with both of these questions, at the end of the day, it's like, well, we got to work with what happens, and getting triggered is part of this work. All that means... When I say I get triggered, what does that mean? It means survival from the past has been brought into the present, and it's not about what's here now. That's this work. That's what we're doing, is working with survival energy from the past that arises in the present. It's also not exposure therapy. We don't want to deliberately trigger ourselves. We don't want to deliberately throw ourselves. We don't want to make ourselves go into situations that echo bad stuff that happened to us, as is done in exposure therapy. It's not about that. But it's also not about always avoiding triggers. So I hope that all makes sense. Hopefully I don't sound too mean with that. Okay.

(01:01:57):

"Hi, Seth. I have energy stuck in my reproductive organs. It is light, bright, and a lot." So first, I want to say right there, awesome. That's so cool. You've already connected to a felt sense of this thing and you've interpreted it with your imagination. You notice that it's bright and light. That's great. "I'm scared of it, and I don't know if it's my own. My dad was very boundary crossing all my life. No CSA, but he watched my body change." I am not sure what CSA means, but I think maybe sexual abuse, childhood sexual abuse. "But he watched my body change and was very nosy about my sexuality, and about boys and contraception and stuff. Sometimes I feel like his energy is trying to enter me through my vagina and it's disturbing. Is this over-coupling? What can I do? I just went no contact for two years."

(01:02:54):

Okay, so you've already got lots of good things in place here. Sounds like you have, yep, you've put in a boundary, so you are going to have that container of safety in which to work with this stuff. You're starting to identify what's happening. And you're feeling scared of it. Okay, awesome.

(01:03:11):

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So there's a couple things that you may want to explore. One, yes, it sounds like there's an over-coupling here between your sexuality, your sexual organs, and a sense of being intruded upon, and that's associated with your father who was intrusive with his attention. So yeah, that's a real thing. It sounds like that did get coupled together.

(01:03:33):

There's a couple different ways in which you may want to explore working with this specifically. So one is... And they're kind of contrary. One is something that I saw Peter taught in a masterclass on sexual trauma and sexual assault, and this could be very useful potentially. So you need a big exercise ball to do this, ideally. Like one of those big balls that you could sit on. And you want it to be inflated, not so much that it's super taut and bouncy. So it's got a little give to it, like a little bit more stability than if it was fully inflated. Then all you do is you sit on that ball to start and you just first see what happens with that. Because it's a little different way of sitting, right? You have to stabilize with your legs, and there's a very firm contact with the pelvic floor. So you just start with that. What's it like to sit on this ball?

(01:04:41):

And then as you stay with that, as you work with that, you start to think how can the pelvic floor, and if you're a woman, how can the genitals open to the support? It's sort of a sense of a flower sort of blooming open, and how can it really accept the support from the ball. Like softening, opening into that contact. Notice what happens there. All of this can lead to stuff moving, emotions. Just sitting on the ball and starting to feel that can spark stuff sometimes. So every stage of this is about noticing, expressing, leaving it if you need to. All the basic principles apply, okay?

(01:05:32):

And then if you can do that, you start to move a little bit. What's it like to have this sense of support, feel that firm contact, feel like I'm opening to the support? And just sort of moving, feeling the feet, shifting the weight a little bit, maybe moving the pelvis a little bit. The ball's very responsive. And eventually you want to see if you can notice your spine. How can the spine be a little bit wavy? How can it feel the bolster of that ball underneath, and what's it like to think about opening to that energy that you're talking about? Maybe that's actually your energy and it's just stuck because it got frozen due to this intrusive, unwanted attention. That's one possibility. If that's the case, maybe this energy is actually something that you can reclaim,

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and maybe it can be invited through softening to move up the spine. Maybe the breath can help with that. It sounds like there's a lot of bracing down there, so as this softens, it may be that the energy actually integrates through the system in this way, that's one possibility. The other possibility is to go totally the other direction, and that would be, "Well, how can I push? What would it be like to push that energy out?" So this would be using the vaginal muscles, the muscles of the pelvic floor, as if you were giving birth essentially.

(01:07:12):

Maybe you're connecting that to your jaw. There's a huge correlation between the jaw and the hips. Maybe the hands, everything is expelling the unwanted energy. And it may be that both of these are useful in different ways back and forth, or maybe just one is, but they're both different ways of working with the pelvic floor and the anatomy in that way. There's different ways to interpret this. In my opinion, it's pretty darn rare that we actually have someone else's energy in us. Now, there are shamanic traditions and situations that do address this. It can happen. However, usually, I think almost all the time, what happens is, it's all our energy, but it's become stuck, and it's maybe taken on the persona of somebody else. So this is leading to the Annihilation article that I wrote, and again, that may also be useful in this context.

(01:08:32):

The annihilation work, it's not that someone else's energy is in us, it's that we used our own energy and created this thing that feels like somebody else in us, but it's just us. So when we destroy the avatar we've created, it's freeing up our own energy to come back to us. It's not something we have to get out of us, it's something we need to reclaim within us and bring back into integration, so it's just a slightly different way of looking at it that can be more empowering. It's like, "Oh, this isn't his energy. This is just my energy, and it's scared and stuck, and it's got these imprints of his attention and his personality, but it's my juju."

(01:09:19):

"Why is there sometimes a time lag between a triggering event and the reaction in the nervous system or fascia? In my observation, it seems to be that the bigger the lag, the more intense the reaction. In the most extreme case I had two years ago, the delay for my nervous system to react was 48 hours. Can you explain why this is the case and what are factors that caused the delay, how can it be reduced, and what are the best cues to notice in the moment that something is too much?" Lots there. So yep, totally familiar with this phenomenon where there

can be something activating, you feel fine, and then like a day or two later, the system erupts. I believe that that is freeze, essentially, that's making that happen. A microcosmic example of this is, I'm sure a lot of us have seen this. When a baby gets startled or upset, there can be this moment of calm.

(01:10:25):

There's this calm before the storm, before the eruption comes. We see that a lot, and essentially what that is, I believe, is the system processing the overwhelm. It's a little microcosm of freeze like, "Oh my gosh, that was so much stimulus," and the system is frozen for a bit, and then the sympathetic activation is able to come and it comes through, so this is that, I believe, but just in a much longer way because the freeze is deeply embedded in the system. And so something is really overwhelming, but without really knowing it, we shut down and freeze up, and then a couple of days later, the stress is gone for long enough and here comes the activation that was there, so I'm pretty sure that's why it happens. In terms of what to do, again, it's about taking care of yourself in the moment, and that's directly connected to noticing the fact that you're getting overwhelmed, so it's great that you ask this question. The second part, "What are the best cues to notice in the moment, something is too much?"

(01:11:31):

Now, I can't say for sure what it is for you because those cues are different from person to person, but some very common ones would be bracing or clenching, stuff getting really tight, feeling like you can't focus. Your thoughts are just racing, racing, racing. You're having an internal argument with someone. You feel heat, you feel a fast heart rate, or you feel like maybe you can't breathe. Maybe you're dissociating, starting to feel spacey, you're checking out. Maybe you feel like you're leaving your body. Maybe you feel numb like you're there, but you can't feel anything. Maybe you get angry. Maybe you're starting to just feel irritated, you don't know why. All of these are indications that we're starting to be overwhelmed.

(01:12:12):

So you need to figure out for yourself, what are my indications? Start to notice in the moment, when can I start to notice what are some indications that something is happening that is too much. And there will be something there, it just may take some practice learning to notice, what are my signals, how do I know? And then once you can identify that, then you can start responding in the moment, which just means taking yourself away, doing a little bit of



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orienting, using your resources, going to the bathroom, letting out some sighs, some sounds, checking in with your body, is something clenched? Maybe I need to breathe into the diaphragms a bit and bring in more space, loosen things up. Maybe I bring in the layers work and just make a connection to myself, whatever it is. That's why we have all these tools. The reason we learn these is so we can start to apply them in real time, not just so we can listen to them on the audio lesson.

(01:13:07):

This is like musicians who are learning our skills so that when the time comes, we can improvise. That's what it's all about. And that starts with knowing that we need to, which means we learn to recognize, what are the indications that I'm getting overwhelmed?

"I had a back tooth removed about nine years ago, and I wasn't expecting that to happen. The tooth next to it started to act up. In the end, I had a root canal and it was never right again. Two years ago, I changed to a holistic dentist. We decided to remove the root canal tooth. I still get sensations at both removal sites. The third tooth in that row is now chipped. What's the best way to process all this? I was terrified of dentists as a child, and I remember the dentist pushing my shoulders down and saying, 'Just relax.'"

(01:13:51):

"Just relax," oh my God. So this could have been me that wrote this question. This is insane. I had the same experiences, had a root canal, it had to get removed later on. I was terrified of dentists. I feel you. So this all is about healthy aggression, self-protection, what didn't get to happen? That dentist coming at you, pushing your shoulders down. What would an animal do? That's something we like to ask in these situations. How would a wolf respond to dental work? So it's like this is what needs to come through, and there's likely a lot of holding because of that, so that's why you can still feel stuff in your jaw. And again, I relate to this personally, absolutely. So we are good. At the next lab, we've got the Voo Ahh lesson. Be sure to check that out, and also the supplemental video with all the variations, and it's about moving the jaw but not forcing it. So when we're working with the jaw in general, there can be so much tightness in here, and we want to learn to find the edges of it.

(01:15:11):

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It can be easy to just jump past the tension, in a way. How can we go into the edge of it? So maybe it starts with just little movements, little lateral movements, or maybe it's about feeling it just working with the jaw and understanding that it's probably directly connected to wanting to bite off the dentist's head, and that is essentially what needs to happen.

Two more questions. "Hi, Seth. Before diving deep into this work, I was the adventurous girl who traveled and road tripped solo. Now I'm overwhelmed by visiting the supermarket. I can't articulate or advocate for myself. I have EDT and complex PTSD, and I'm a highly sensitive person, but had to suppress it as a child. Back then everything seemed way too much. I needed tons of support to adapt, but then never got it. My sensitivities were seen as weaknesses that my dad would get angry at me. Now, I doubt I will ever be in the world. Can this resolve?"

(01:16:23):

Yep. And again, totally relate. One thing that I want to highlight, there's all sorts of nuance and variability from person to person, but basically at the end of the day, we're all HSPs, we're all highly sensitive people as babies. And then what's our environment like? That's really what we're talking about. We all come in very sensitive as human beings. And then how do we adapt? Some people adapt by freezing and then they don't notice that they're highly sensitive. Other people adapt by becoming hypervigilant, and that gets coupled with their sensitivity, and that's where you get more like the classic representation of how people call themselves HSP. Well, that just means your survival energy is there and you haven't shut down, so it means you're hypervigilant and that has been coupled with your empathy, with your ability to feel things, so it feels like a problem. It is just different survival adaptations to the fact that we're all very sensitive and almost none of us got what we needed. Almost all of us got overstimulated in some way or another by this world, so it's the way in which we respond and adapt.

(01:17:43):

It sounds like for you, you actually managed to maintain your sense of vulnerability, to maintain your sensitivity even though it was overwhelming, you stayed in that overwhelm. Then it sounds like you learned eventually to go into functional freeze. At some point you made that adaptation because like you say, "I was adventurous, I traveled, I tripped solo, etc." So now what's happened is you've returned, you've come out of that freeze adaptation that at some point, it sounds like, was made, and you're back into this reality of your childhood where everything is overwhelming. I know it sounds crazy, but this is a good thing. This is a good

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thing. It means you're connected to the reality of your internal experience and it isn't frozen. That's where you can build from. We have to get out of freeze before we can build capacity, and we have to know what our true window of tolerance is before we can build capacity.

(01:18:45):

So, okay. It's very little right now, that's okay. You can build it. It just means, like I've said many times, I've got to learn what can I do that is okay? And then how can I slowly, slowly start to increase that? Instead of seeing your sensitivity as a problem, can you honor it? Can it be like, "Okay. Wow, I am back in my childhood state, essentially, of feeling overwhelmed. That's an opportunity because now I can give myself the support that I never got." It sucks you have to give it to yourself, but that's how it is. We have to learn to work with ourselves, bring our adult self to our own child. We can also get support. It doesn't have to be all on your own. That's where a practitioner could be useful. So maybe it would be a good time to have at least a temporary period of seeing someone for private sessions and getting that good attuned support from another person that you didn't get when you were a kid, and you have to give it to yourself as well.

(01:19:58):

But it all comes down to identifying, "What can I handle?" And slowly building from there. Bring your SBSM tools into normal life and use them to start to finely, little bits, increase this capacity, this window of tolerance. So you know you're overwhelmed going to the supermarket. Do you get overwhelmed going out the door? Maybe that part is okay, maybe it's when you get in the car, it's like, "Oh, shit. Now I'm starting." Just find where the edges are and then you use your tools like, "Okay, maybe I'm just going to imagine going to the grocery store." Oh, what happens there? "See, I'm totally here. I'm safe," but maybe I'm thinking about the grocery store. So that's what it's about, and just identify what your real capacity is and then you slowly, slowly build it. It takes time, and it absolutely will happen if you keep up the work.

(01:21:03):

Remember, again, this was me. Highly sensitive, chronic PTSD, early developmental trauma. I had to live in the woods for 13 years essentially. I couldn't deal with the world. I get it, but it all can change. You need to give yourself the support and seek support from others as is needed, as is safe.

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"I previously worked with a somatic practitioner and the sessions opened up a somatic response which keeps repeating itself. It involves my jaw clenching up and my whole head feeling like it's changing shape. I also fold forwards, and the emotion is one of a stubborn defensive blocking like a bull might defend itself before action. I believe it's from the womb, but my question is how do I work with it? I feel that it's a big block that stops the flow of life energy through me."

(01:22:03):

So it sounds very much like you've identified something has been released, which is a moment of self-protection that got frozen in time, essentially. The thing that you really want to look at is, this is the really beautiful sentence here. "It's like a bull that might defend itself before action." Great, start visualizing the bull and what is the action? You don't even have to do it. Maybe you go into, "This thing gets triggered, and okay, that's clenching up and I'm folding forward," and then you imagine that bull. What is that bull wanting to do? And maybe then you see that happening and then maybe you start to find ways to embody that. Essentially it sounds like there is a response that wants to emerge from this place of frozen self-protection, and it's just about discovering what that is.

(01:22:58):

And again, I can't say for sure, but it sounds like the frozen thing is like this in some way, and this is a very potent place from which to expand it in some way. And how that may happen is, I don't know, but understand that it's something that you can discover, absolutely. And working with that image of the bull, getting ready for action and what might that action be is a really powerful visual to tap into.

As always, thank you so much for being here. Really good to see you all, and we will continue on. We'll see you next week. Keep on exploring. Someone said to me the other day, "Oh my God, I can't believe how much is on the site." They hadn't realized the additional resources and all that's in there. And then Elia's lessons, the music that I made, there's so many things that are not just in the labs. And even within the labs, some of the labs have additional resources, so remember to really use the site. There's so much in there. So it's all there to support you. Okay. Bye, everyone. Thank you.