
Curated Q&A Call #6 Special Topic: Parenting with Seth

(00:00):

SETH:

Rebecca. Oh, thanks. I was going to do that. I was going to record, so thank you. Sometimes I forget, so I appreciate the extra security there. So yeah, if you have questions and you put 'em in the chat, I may or may not be able to get to them. Rebecca or Ari will do the best they can to answer if they can, and today is a special topic call about the subject of parenting. So we did get a fair few questions, not a ton. So there were a couple other questions that were not about parenting, which I may get to as well at the end, so we will get going. All right, so the first one. "Please, can you talk about how we might support an older teen with complex trauma, including early developmental trauma, lots of toxic shame, who's cycling between fight flight and deep freeze collapse energies?"

(01:01):

"Should we be holding boundaries in the same way? Example, around chores and work, et cetera, or prioritizing safety and connection building to begin with?" Okay, so when we are talking about trauma in our kids and what to do, how to be, a lot of it depends on how old they are. So for an older teen, at that point, I'm going to say you kind of want both. So if you only default to what's easy, safety, connection, making the world as simple and stress free as possible, in my opinion, at that age, you won't be doing them the most service because it is still really important to have responsibilities, structure, some sort of things they have to do around the house, learning time management, follow through. All of these things are really important at that age. So I would say do both, and the way that may be is how you communicate those boundaries, right?

(02:15):

So if your premise is one of safety, attuned connection, yes, that is good, how can you bring that into your communication around, okay, you got to take the trash out or it's time to help with the dishes. How can you have that same level of kindness and care and attunement while also communicating that it's time to get something done. They need to work together. And there may be resistance and pushback, and that's where you can be kind and clear and firm, perhaps, if it's really difficult, it's like, let's do this together. Come on, join with 'em. Let's be,

I'm your ally in this. I know it's tough, but let's work together and we can get this done. That is a way that you can have both of those things at play at the same time. Now the other question is, are they open to understanding about what's happening in their system?

(03:13):

If they are old enough to understand this education and to maybe start to do some of this work, but they have to be open to it. This is really key. When kids get older, autonomy is so important, and of course that's a dance between, you have your responsibilities, you have your autonomy. Both are equally important. So if they show interest, I would just start giving them education like, Hey, I'm learning about this stuff. You may find it interesting. I think it explains a lot about what you're experiencing. Maybe you start them off with some YouTube videos from Irene or maybe you just talk about it. Sometimes it's better not coming from a parent, especially at that age. So maybe you say, pick out a good overview from Irene on a YouTube video and say, Hey, I really, it'd be great if you want to check this out.

(04:07):

It might be helpful if they get interested. They could start doing this work and start getting better, but it has to be their own initiative at that age. I've had clients who, or potential clients, parents who wanted their teenage kids to do this work, and they brought them in, and the kid just didn't want to be there, and there's no point. It's just you're wasting your time. They have to show interest and actually want to do it. So I think that's all I have for that one, and well, this will be a theme throughout all of these answers. Do your own work. Above all, as parents, it's about how we're showing up, and the more regulated and with capacity we can be, and the more steady we can be, particularly in the context of power dynamics, I don't want to do that. The more we can stay regulated and calm and grounded and clear, the better it's going to be for them.

(05:15):

It's like a solid anchor and they get to thrash around in the waves a bit, and you're just there showing up with your regulation, with your capacity, and of course, not all of us are there yet. It's a work in progress, right? That's fine. Just do your best, do your best to keep doing your own work.

Okay. "My brother, as an older father, co-parents his two children, he's had a number of difficult court cases about the arrangements, but it's now sorted. He has early developmental trauma, as do I, but he's moved through it very differently. His parenting amazes me. He's open and honest with them and they talk a lot. The children are genuinely delightful and seemed very balanced, but his 10-year-old daughter has frequent stomach upset with vomiting and headaches. She's seen the doctor who isn't concerned, can I help somatically?"

(06:09):

So I don't know how much in their life you are. Again, yes, if you are a presence in their life, you can help somatically by showing up somatically, by showing up, embodied in your attunement, in your regulation, the best that you have. Broadcasting a sense of, I'm here, I'm listening, just showing up in this way, somatically attuned, attuned to yourself, attuned to the environment. The best you can do is going to go a long way. In terms of the daughter, it's hard to know for sure what's happening, because that possibly could be due to some kind of environmental stimulus. Maybe there's some food or something she's allergic to or something in the environment that's upsetting her. It's hard to know a hundred percent for sure without a full history. But given that there were difficult court cases about custody, it sounds like that would very likely lead to quite a bit of tension in the kids.

(07:16):

So my hunch is what you're seeing is likely a representation of some form of dysregulation, upset in the system. So how to intervene at 10, that's an interesting age, because she may be open or she may be not open to understanding a bit about her system or working with herself. It could be as simple as, like, oh, honey, oh, your tummy's upset. What would it be like just to, let's put our hands there and just really listen. Pretend that our hands are ears and they're really tuning into that belly, and you're really listening, and what do you hear? What's it sound like in there? Maybe you can help encourage some form of expression. Does it sound like ugh, or sound like, ah, maybe there's some way to help her start working with her system creatively in that manner. So it is worth a shot. It sounds like the dad is doing pretty darn good and is pretty solid.

(08:18):

So over time, that will certainly help that stability. There is a natural inherent self-correction within all human beings, and the younger we get some form of stability and regulation in our

life, the quicker we will be to respond. So the fact that the court cases are all settled, it sounds like it's stable now, that will likely impart some self-correcting qualities all on its own over time, that ongoing stability without all the conflict. So just be open to that. Be patient, be present the best you can. And yeah, if there's interest, curiosity, a way to help introduce her to her system and how to listen to it and how to maybe express a little bit what she's feeling. That could be helpful as well. You could always talk about yourself, right? Oh, I sometimes felt that way. I remember when I was a kid, sometimes my stomach would just, oh, I'd feel so nervous or I'd feel upset, and you can sometimes enter into the conversation that way as well, talking about your own experience.

(09:26):

You could also see if the father is interested in learning about this work and what may be going on, it's going to be up to him to see if he is or not.

Okay. "I find it difficult to act in a good way with my child who's preschool age when there's a behavior of aggression or violence, for example, hurting their sibling. I know that there's also healthy aggression, but hurting someone else is a boundary. I've tried different strategies, but so far this has not been satisfying for me. So I'm looking for help on how I can deal better with aggression in my child." Okay, I'm just going to adjust my screen here for a second. I'm doing a little, okay, there we go.

(10:15):

So yes, it's important to have a boundary. Hurting other kids. Hurting themselves isn't the best, so we want to try to steer away from that. Absolutely, and there is this aggression that wants to emerge. So of course the first thing is how comfortable are you with aggression and your own aggression? Is there a way in which you maybe need to work with being more comfortable, allowing it to express, working with it yourself, et cetera? With all of these things, the more bandwidth and capacity we have for a certain experience within ourselves, the more sense of safety a kid's going to feel around us in engaging with that. Within them, we are the template. So if they sense repression in us very often, that can even be a direct expression. The way that what they're doing may sometimes be an expression of what we are repressing.

(11:14):

Important thing to know. They also may have just their own reasons. There may have been traumas, experiences they went through early on that have instilled this aggression, this need to fight. So it could be either or both. But yeah, the more capacity and comfort you have within yourself for that quality of aggression and expressing it, the better it's going to be for them. One of the first things I'll say is how can you engage with them with this energy? And there's many ways to do that. This is a preschool age, so imagination is fully online, play. Creativity is there. So engage in physical games. One of the classic examples I often give is, this is easy. Let's pretend to be some kind of big animal. What kind of dinosaur would you be? What kind of, if you were a big creature out on the African safari, what would you be, an elephant or a giraffe?

(12:14):

How can you encourage them to pretend and you do it with them? Let's be these big creatures together, and then, well, how do we stomp? Boom, boom. I stomp around the house, boom, and I make a sound, and I am very physical and I'm using my body and I'm putting force through the ground. I'm using the energy of aggression in a way that's about play. It's about creativity. It's about pretend. There's not about fight or needing to push or hurt or hit, but you're still using that big forceful energy. Also, sometimes it may be helpful to engage directly with things like pushing. So that's another classic one. If you stand in front of the bed so you have something to fall on and you say, Hey, I bet you can't push mommy over, and she runs and pushes, and you say, oh, you got me, and you fall on the bed, and they're victorious and they've pushed you over.

(13:11):

How wonderful kids love that a lot of the time. So that's another way to help them have an experience of victory using their agency, using their aggression, having a sense of achieving this victory. That can be very powerful. Exercise in general, running around on the soccer field with a ball, playing Frisbee, running through the woods, whatever it may be. Using the body to access these sympathetic energies in ways that are not about fighting necessarily, but that are engaging that sympathetic system in healthy ways. So there's all of that. Then on the flip side, how can you really lean into opportunities for co-regulation? So when there is that quiet time, when the energy has been spent curling up together on the sofa, reading a book, watching some kind of fun kid's show on the tv, whatever it may be, story time cuddling, building something together with Legos or some kind of co-regulating creative, quiet activity that you can really lean into together. That's going to be the other side. That's really important because

when there's aggression, the aggression needs to be expressed, and then often at the other side of that, there'll be a need for connection, safety, quiet, oh, it's okay. Sometimes kids aren't sure that it's okay to express these things, which is why they get bottled up and then they explode. So giving these outlets and then also really leaning into time for quiet for co-regulation, both of those things, if you can start working on that, will probably help quite a bit.

(15:11):

Okay, another one about a very young child, okay.

(15:25):

“How can I support my child through necessary medical procedures, especially if they're pre-verbal, what to do if she actually hates, if she absolutely hates necessary physio exercises to prevent further medical interventions and physically fights back.” Okay, so pre-verbal age, if you're going into medical experiences, it's going to be tough, because there's no ability to explain this is what's happening and this is why it's happening, which is what gives us a greater sense of safety once we can understand those things. So the most you can do is advocate as strongly as possible to be with them for as much of the experience as possible, for all of it if possible. That's often not possible depending on what we're talking about, but to be with them leading up to whatever the procedure is and to be with them as soon as possible when it's over. If this is an experience where someone is going under anesthetic, general anesthetic, and this applies for all ages, you really want to have a safe, attuned person with you as close to the moment of going under as possible, and you want to have that person there, ideally when the person is waking up.

(16:44):

So having that safe connection on either end of the experience is the most important thing.

(16:51):

Make room for what the emotions are to tap into your capacity the best you can, to hold space for the fear or the tears or the anger or whatever it may be. In terms of physio, that's a tough call. It is. I mean, physio, depending on what we are talking about, sometimes that may be totally necessary. Sometimes there's other things that are actually much better. There's some

things that can be done through Feldenkrais method that are far superior to the way that physio approaches things, and so it may be that she's having a natural resistance to something that she does really need to do. It may be that she's having resistance because it's actually not the best for her system. Hard to know for sure. I would encourage you to, if possible, explore if you can find a Feldenkrais practitioner in your area to work with, just to try that out as an option to see what the response is, because it's quite different in the way that they work, and it may be that her system responds better to that.

(18:11):

Again, I don't know all the details, so I don't know for sure if that's an option or even if it would be a good option. I don't know for sure, but it's something to consider exploring if you're still dealing with these responses. Then again, it's about, well, how can you hold space for her to have those feelings as much as possible, really be there? And yet it's like, yep, we're doing this together, honey, I know it sucks. I know it sucks. I'm with you. I'm going to stay with you. I don't like to necessarily get into the have a reward after thing, but I mean, it depends on the age. That might be an okay thing to do. Let's hesitate to use food because that can lead to some problematic associations later on. But maybe experience, if there's an experience she really likes, whatever it may be, let's go ice skating or let's go to the zoo, or I don't know what it would be. Go to the park. We can do something you'd like to do afterwards. Something that's activity based, probably want to steer away from, we can have ice cream after, because yeah, that can lead to some coupling later on where I need to have this sweet or this treat when I experience something stressful. So if you can have some kind of rainbow on the other side of the cloud that is sort of activity based that you do together, that could potentially be helpful as well.

(19:47):

Okay.

(19:48):

“When my daughter was born, I solely discovered developmental trauma involving chronic shock and attachment trauma.” I assume you mean in yourself, the way you write this. “My daughter is now 18 and verbally fighting with me like a tiger. My system collapses and she hates it. I do not have enough capacity to hold space for her, though I try. She sees my collapse first and judges it. Her growing up goes much quicker than the growing of my regulation, how

to reduce the panic inside, the feeling of failing completely at being a good enough mom.” Okay, so, last part. First, I mean, how to reduce the panic inside. It's about working with the panic. It's about working with that activation directly in the various ways that you're learning in this program. Where is it in your body? How might you create a little sense of space around it in order to allow it to be felt?

(20:48):

Is there some emotion? Is there some sound? Is there some way that your body may want to express this energy of panic? Do the legs want to run? Do you want to curl up in the ball and hide? These are all things that you would need to do separately. You don't want to do this with your daughter, but there's going to be a need for a little bit of compartmentalization, consciously, perhaps, where you make space to work with your own system. Self-acceptance is so important. Most of us, me included, we're lacking in some regard as parents because of our own experience. It's just the way it is. We have been handed a long intergenerational chain of unresolved trauma that stretches back generations, most of us. So it is not like it even started with our parents. It started with our parents, parents, parents, parents, parents.

(21:44):

So we are doing the best we can with what we have inherited. The fact that you are doing anything at all is to be celebrated. So try to orient to that and have acceptance for yourself that it's okay that you didn't know everything, and what you can do is do your best to show up. Now for yourself, for your daughter, it sounds like there's a lot of rage coming out and yeah, I hear you. That your system doesn't have the capacity to just stay calm and present for that. Totally get it. She's 18. She's old enough for you to communicate that, to communicate a boundary, to say, Hey, I hear your rage. This is something you would have to communicate when it's not fully volatile, when it's a little bit calmer maybe, and just in these moments when you have all this anger, I totally hear you.

(22:37):

I accept your anger. It's really intense for me right now. I'm sorry. I have difficulty holding space for it. So that's what you're seeing when you see me shut down. I wish it could be different, but I don't have the capacity right now. So is there a way that we can start to find a different way for you to direct that energy that's not at me? We're getting into the territory where there has to be some communication of boundaries essentially at 18. She's a young adult, so yeah, you

need to make room for her experience as a good parent. Obviously it sounds like a lot of what she's experiencing is a result of the family system and the inherited trauma. So yeah, there's a degree of responsibility and there's a degree where she is now responsible. She is now a young adult responsible for her own experience.

(23:35):

She needs to start learning how to find different ways to work with that that isn't about beating up on mom. Okay, so that's tough. That's a tough dynamic, but I would encourage you to try communicating that boundary clearly and say, I don't have the energy for that. I can't hold it. What's something else we can find for you to do? And there may be many things that maybe she could do to start working with that energy in a different way. I don't know her personality or anything, but if there's any way to get her involved in something that's active, martial arts is a great one for a lot of people, some kind of intense sport. Anything that will give her an outlet for that energy. For some people, maybe it's drama. If they're not super physical, maybe it's improv class, maybe it's art, maybe it's music.

(24:28):

I mean, it is hard to know exactly, but some way that you can support her. There's something I would say to all parents as they realize, like, oh geez, I've got some drama, and I pass it on to my kids. Like, okay, well maybe you have a college fund, but maybe more important is a therapy fund and that you are putting aside some money so that then when they do want help, you are there and you can pay for their sessions. You can pay for whatever the activity is that helps 'em move their aggression in a different way. You can offer that financial support and given all that, you have a boundary and you say, look, I can't, and it may be, I don't know if they are living with you or not, but if it keeps up and you clearly and kindly communicate your boundary and it's disrespected and disrespected, it's like, okay, well, I think we need to start exploring a different living situation. 18, they're old enough to live somewhere else. So sometimes a boundary is a way to meet aggression that is not self aggressive, but is clear and it communicates a kind of similar energy in a different way. No, so I hope some of that is helpful. It's a complex and tricky situation, some kind of framework of how can we work with this together? If there's a way to find that, some kind of common ground.

(26:09):

Oh, nice. Just seeing your chat. She's into hockey. Awesome. Yeah, boxing, great. Yeah, any of that stuff, really good. Some other direction for that energy to go. Yeah, that's physical. Okay. I think that element of helping her understand how it affects you. Kids don't want to hurt their parents inherently. It's just when she's lashing out, she's not under control of herself. She's in fight flight response. It takes over. So if on the other end of that she can start to understand how it affects you, then that might be helpful. And if she hears your boundary, right.

So okay. "My five-year-old daughter and I experienced in utero and birth trauma., She was born nine weeks premature, and as a result, she's progressively presented with a dysregulated nervous system. She struggles with safely expressing her physical and verbal aggression towards me. How can I help my daughter move her aggression out safely so it doesn't drive the activation deeper into her system?"

(27:19):

"What are specific labs that may help me better work with my own activation in those moments?" So this is the same answer as my previous question about the preschool age kid who was having trouble with aggression and hurting their siblings. Same exact answer, but you asked specifically about labs and lessons for you. So I'll get into those details. But yeah, just a reminder, healthy aggression, focused play, pretend imagination, physical activity, and really leaning into co-regulation and quiet and connection when it presents itself. So in terms of what labs you can focus on, lab six is a big one it sounds like for you. So of course the healthy aggression lessons, both healthy aggression training calls. We've had one already, I believe, and there's another one in a little bit, the containment lessons from lab six also. So just like I'm talking about, engage with them, with the energy of sympathetic stuff and then quiet, you can do that for yourself, right?

(28:25):

Working with the aggression, working with that healthy sympathetic energy in the ways we talk about. And then containment, how can you bring in this sense of connection? I have this container. I am bringing in this attuned care for myself, this touch, doing that for yourself as well. Also tense and relaxed, finding the painful and the pleasant. Both of those are about noticing something different essentially. So how can you start to train your system when that aggression is coming out? And she's really big in her energy and in her words, and you say verbal aggression, physical aggression. So how can you maintain a focus on, say, your seat or

your feet, or are you breathing? Is there a way that you can stay somatically oriented to something simple? Doing the lessons like tense and relaxed, finding the painful and the pleasant. Those might help train your system in noticing differences, learning to focus on something else.

(29:31):

This is called pendulation, where we are with something, but then we're also noticing something else, and how can you just really, on how you show up with this stuff with our kids when they've been through trauma, and we're wanting to help support them. Again, the biggest thing is how are we showing up? It may take time, right? We are works in progress ourselves, like I've said, right? So we have to have patience for ourselves and we have to make an effort to continually keep on doing the work, to let those balls out of our own swimming pools, to release those old stressors, to deepen our connection to ourself. The more steady we can be, again, the better. And please know that this takes time. Like say we've had five years where there's sort of chaos and trauma and just circling around the family system and no one really understands what's happening.

(30:36):

And now we've got some education, we're starting to learn. We're starting to work with ourselves. We're starting to know a little better about what to do. It's not all going to change overnight. It may take a couple years of something different in order to change the system, but it will change. The more consistent we can be, the more success we'll have with the entire family system and the way that that ripples out. But it does take time. The younger kids are, the quicker they can change also, which is a good thing, which even into the teenage years, I've seen family systems change and respond pretty darn quickly as parents start responding differently, both within themselves and in the relationship. And the final thing was resources. Of course. What are your resources? What are your resources? Go to them.

(31:40):

Okay, so I'm just going to check the chat here for a moment. Okay.

(31:51):

All right. So that's all the parenting questions I got. I'm going to get these two that are not about parenting. If anybody, we still have some time. So if anybody does have a burning question about parenting that they didn't get in, you can put it in the chat since we have a bit of time. Okay. "Hello. Love these Q and As. This is my second SBSM, and I did 21 Days, and I'm wondering what I can work with for neuropathy in the legs and feet. I was born in 1941 during the war, and both my parents had their own traumas. I also, surprise, surprise, had early developmental trauma experiences, but can only remember a tiny beginning bit. I'm guessing my legs are frozen. I wanted to run away from it all. Grateful for any suggestions you have." So with neuropathy, it's not just one thing. This is a syndromal representation of the nervous system being both in fight, flight, and freeze.

(32:51):

Just like Crohn's, IBS, fibromyalgia, all the various different autoimmune things that we see. These are syndromal representations. So that's what happens when fight, flight and freeze are all on. So yeah, it is likely that you wanted to run away, and it is likely that you of course couldn't. So it sounds like there is a big energy of freeze and also the sympathetic underneath it, that fight, that flight. So mobilization, when we have freeze, we want to start to find the energy underneath. We want to find that urge to flee. So if you just sit and feel into your legs and you just start to, maybe you just start to wiggle the toes a little bit, and maybe you just raise the heels a little bit and you let the feet start to kind of play with the ground. And just notice what does that do?

(33:46):

Does something happen in the calves? Does something happen in the thighs? Just listen. Play with your feet. And then see, does a little spark come? Is there a little sympathetic thing that maybe starts to happen? If so, cool, lean into that. Let your legs start to go a little bit. Maybe they start to run, in sitting, just with the heels. That is a really gentle way to explore mobilizing sympathetic energy with the legs, is you're just sitting, and I'm doing it right now. I'm just letting my heels, just gently running. And then stop. Listen, see what the legs feel like. Feel your seat orient to your breath. Orient around, see the outside. Maybe let the legs go a little bit more like that. And then on the other side, self touch, containment, nurturing resources with freeze. You can't force freeze. You can't force it to lift.

(34:49):

It's there for a reason. By God, it's like I'm containing this stuff. I've been doing a good job for 20 years. I'm not just going to let go because you tell me to. It has to be an invite. It has to be an invitation that happens through how we pay attention to ourselves, which is through bringing the kind of attuned connection that basically we were missing in the first place for most of us. So how can we start to nurture that listening quality, that ability to touch, turn our hands into ears. We can do that to what is the body saying? How might we translate what we find? Even if it's very little, sometimes using imagery is helpful. So say I just feel frozen and stuck. Okay, really? Where is that? Oh, I guess it's kind of in the torso. Okay, maybe I'll just feel here.

(35:44):

Oh yeah, my chest feels frozen. Okay, what's the color of that? Oh, it's like this gray sludge. Oh, okay, great. And can you feel that? Okay? Yeah, I can see that. Now. Where's the gray sludge stop? Where's it not like that? Oh, I guess I can feel my sit bones and there's a little motion there that's not quite so sludgy. Building this internal conversation, this dialogue with ourselves about our own experience is often how we start to encourage that freeze to lift. It's like, oh, somebody's paying attention. I was like, I can start to maybe feel a little safer about this whole experience here. So we want to invite it through our curiosity, through how we pay attention. And then when we get little bits, a little sympathetic starting to spike up, go with it, help it mobilize, help it express, and again, that tells our system, I'm listening. I want to work with you here. And our system is inherently self-correcting. It will get the message and the memo as we start to do this more and more.

(36:51):

Okay, question around parenting. "My child sees me have meltdowns regularly. I have chronic fatigue, all the syndrome stuff, lots of guilt around not having the capacity for mom stuff." Got it. "When we have good co-regulation, when reading together, quiet time. Advice on talking to a 9-year-old about what I don't have capacity for." That's a tough one. Yeah. I think that they've already seen you have the meltdowns, so okay, we do want to, as much as possible, minimize that, because what happens is they will start to feel a need to take care of you, and then they become the emotional parent of the parent. So you can always start to change that if you can and try to have those meltdowns away from her. That would be one step that would probably be more viable than talking to her about your capacity, is actually putting up that boundary where it's like you kind of take yourself away in order to have the meltdown, if possible. I

understand it's not always possible. I also don't know the full situation. Is there another parent in the picture? Is there extended family? Are there friends? If there are any other people, then those are resources that you want to use, so it's not all on you, right? How can the uncle or the aunt or the friend or the grandma or whoever may be involved help share this experience and spend some time with her as well?

(38:34):

Okay.

(38:43):

I just realized I assumed that was a girl, but I'm not sure. So yeah, him or her, whichever gender the child is, yes, working with that. Often what we do, she's a girl. Okay? Often what we do is more impactful than what we say, especially at these early ages, because we are modeling for our kids. So if we don't have the capacity to model, Hey, I have all this good regulation and attunement and connection and capacity, we can at least maybe model, I have the energy to at least contain this and have a little boundary around it so it doesn't affect you so much.

(39:28):

Okay. "I need to travel soon and I'm already dreading it. I've avoided longer flights for years. I'm not afraid of flying, but find it really unpleasant to be stuck with strangers who don't make contact, but seem to be observing me in places such as airport halls, while having to appear normal, calm, composed, but actually exploding from anxiety, having digestion issues, et cetera. I'd be grateful for advice on how to prepare, stay calm, busy, and present and present, or what do I do if I get overwhelmed?" Okay, well, if there's a sense that everyone is observing you, there's probably some hypervigilance going on here in the picture because I mean, sure, there's people who will people watch and stuff, but it sounds like there is a lot of sympathetic energy and some hypervigilance, whereas it's almost a paranoia as you're going into these situations. And I mean, I get it.

(40:21):

It's not fun flying, and I just did it a bunch, and I don't like it that much either for different reasons, but traveling is stressful, so we really, really need our resources. That's number one. What can you do? What can be there for you? I don't care if it's a cup of tea or a silly app on

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your phone, whatever it is. For a long time, I had trouble with turbulence because of some experiences I had. There's an article on my website about it called Planes, Babes and Incubators, Exploring Coupling Dynamics, if you want to check that out, and if Rebecca or Ari, if you want to pop that in the chat, one thing that I used as a resource for a time was I would add this silly app on my phone called Doodle Jump, where you're playing this little game and just jumping on these little platforms.

(41:14):

And when we started to get into turbulence, I would use that as a way to channel my anxiety, my worry, my hypervigilance. Like, okay, I'm just going to get really freaking good at this little game. And that was a resource for a little while until I learned my system started to be able to work more directly with the experience. Then later on, it was about more somatic work, like, oh, is my pelvic floor soft? That's one of the biggest things that you may notice. Oh, thanks, Ari and Rebecca. Okay, that's in the chat. Now. That's one of the biggest things when you're experiencing stress, is that we may unconsciously tighten our pelvic floor, and that makes everything feel way, way, way worse. So that's another thing to notice is how are you holding? Is your system clenching? Is the throat tight? Is your jaw tight?

(42:06):

Is the pelvic floor drawn up? Is your abdomen bracing? If you can start to notice those things and allow those structures to soften a little bit, that will go a long way towards your system, not scaring itself. You've got enough to deal with in the environment. You don't need to be scared by your own physiology, which is what happens when we start to brace these things. It reinforces the signal of danger to ourselves. So what are your resources? How can you use them during travel? How can you stay somatically oriented to these elements such that you're not constantly bracing? And then see what it's like for you to orient in these situations to things other than people, can you just go find a window where you're just looking out at the tarmac and the different planes and the sky and just orienting towards something other than all the people around you. That might be another thing to explore.

(43:06):

Okay. All right.

(43:11):

Well, I guess that is about it for today. So a little bit of a shorter call sometimes happens when it's a special topic call. Yeah, good to see you all. I'm really glad to be back here and being able to do these calls. So I'll be on most of the rest of the calls. I think the next one I'll have to miss because I'll be teaching again in a workshop, but then I'll be back. And then also we've added a bonus call, just because I missed doing the calls. So, I'm going to add another one. So, alright, thanks so much. Really good to see y'all, and we will catch you next time. Bye for now.

Note: The following part of this transcript accompanies the supplemental Q&A video on the replay page.

(00:02):

Hey everybody, Seth here again. Sorry. I was alerted by my assistant after the call that there were two questions I had missed. So sorry about that. What happened was I always print out the questions so I have them on paper in front of me with my notes, which I do by hand, and two of those pages of paper just stuck together. So when I turned 'em, I just missed two questions, so I'm making this video to answer those. So the first one. "I have EDT, early developmental trauma, and was bullied as a teenager. My eldest son is now 14 years old. He has friends but is not the most socially adept person and will have periods without so much social contact. He's a normal boy. He just needs a bit of extra support. I get triggered with him being alone or when I hear him being a bit socially awkward."

(00:52):

"These are my reactions, but they get in the way of me being the support that I want to be for him. Do you have any advice on how I can better handle this?" So nothing too fancy here. I'm afraid it really comes down to you doing your own work. Like you say, you acknowledge these are my reactions, which is awesome. It's really good that you notice that. And I guess the question that you want to dive into a bit is what is getting triggered? What happened to you? It sounds like you were aware that you were bullied. When you get this trigger, when you get activated into your own stuff, do you get images? Do you get memories? Do you get specific things that arise in your mind from your own experiences as a kid? And how might you start to work with those things using these somatic approaches?

(01:46):

And remember when you're doing somatic work, that includes, that can include image memory. If something comes to mind, you hear something happening with your son, you hear him being socially awkward and you get a rush of some kind of activation, really see if you can pause and tune in to what is being activated. Are there images that come? Are there memories? It is just a felt sense that's very familiar. And seeing if you can start to connect the dots a bit for yourself. What is unresolved in you that is getting poked at? Because that's the best way that you can support him, is by releasing those old things that are the source of the trigger. That's why you're getting activated is because you have your own stuff there. So just keep doing the work and the best you can. Try to keep that separate from him.

(02:42):

And like I say, with parents, pretty much all the time, unless our kids have reached an adult age or they're independent and self-sufficient, we really don't want to involve them too much in our process. It tends to create a situation where they feel like they have to take care of us or sort of limit what they share with us because they don't want to upset us or stress us, et cetera. It can lead to some problematic dynamics. So keeping your own process separate from him and doing your best to show up with the capacity that you're building to just be there. And one thing that may be useful in the moment when it happens, say you don't have the time or space to process and you want to be there for him, how can you really orient towards some of the simple somatic elements of this work?

(03:34):

Can you feel your feet on the ground? Are you breathing? Is the breath happening or are you holding your breath? Is your throat tightening up? Just see if you can pay attention to some of these basics to see if in the moment at least you can stay a little bit more present with the activation. And then as soon as you can, you sort of go away and you work on your own stuff.

Okay. "Sometimes my younger daughter, seven, gets a rash on her inner elbows. Last summer she got a rash on her whole body. Doctors did not discover the reason, they said it was because of previous inflammation, something like clearing from the body." So that could be, it sounds like what they're saying is there was this little rash on the elbow and then all of a sudden there's this whole body rash. So yes, it's possible that that is an expression of the system clearing something out, that it just got started and showed up on the inside of the elbows.

(04:33):

That's totally possible. "She's generally healthy, not allergic to anything. So we tested her. Any ideas? And my older daughter, 10, grinds her teeth while she sleeps a lot. Any ideas on how I can help or support them?" So with the rash, that's really hard to say because there can be so many factors that can be dietary, it can be environmental exposure, it can be autoimmune, it can be due to dysregulation and trauma, or it can be mostly due to other things that are purely environmental in nature. It's hard to say for sure, but grinding the teeth while sleeping, the other daughter, that is of course a classic sign of unresolved trauma, held sympathetic aggression expressing through the jaws at night. It's literally like, I need to bite, I need to choose something. So that is an expression of survival. Stress for sure, and that it comes out at night is not unusual.

(05:32):

So that tends to make me think that maybe for the 10-year-old as well, or sorry, the 7-year-old, that there may also be some elements of dysregulation in the picture with the rash. But again, as far as what to do at these ages, it's very unlikely that they will be interested in engaging in some kind of somatic trauma therapy. And I don't know if they should, if anything it would just be touch work or play-based. But I think that again, it's a matter of doing your own work. How regulated can you get so that you can be that safe, consistent presence for them. If in fact the survival stress that they're maybe holding in their system is the result of the family system or early events that were highly stressful. I don't know if there were surgeries or big stressful events early on in life that could have been a part of this, then the more you do to improve your own regulation and capacity, the more that will broadcast out to them.

(06:48):

And the good news is, I mean the younger they are, the more naturally their systems can self-correct without doing trauma work necessarily. All that being said, remember the very basic things that are really important with parenting, attunement, listening, holding space, making space for them and their experience, and also involving them in household responsibilities, chores, tasks, giving them some structure, some responsibility around the house, things that they need to do. Physical activity of course as a family if possible. Really important. Getting out in nature for hikes and walks, going and playing on the soccer pitch, throwing a Frisbee, whatever it may be that gets the blood moving. The more you can do that as a family unit, the better as well. And will all again help the system start to naturally self-correct in many cases when the kids are younger. Just getting that fresh air, the connection

to nature, the vigorous activity, connection with the family system, all of that is just really healing.

(07:54):

And of course, this is all dependent on the level of trauma we're talking about, right? If a young person has had severe abuse and neglect, just these things won't be enough on their own. There will need to be some more deliberate therapy. But it's hard to know exactly because, yeah, I don't have a history with this question, but it sounds like the best you can do is this kind of more organic kind of support around activity, connection, attunement, responsibilities, play as a family unit, that kind of thing. And if it turns out at some point that, okay, I think we need to actually do a bit more than the touch work. If you can find them, a practitioner is often the best for kids. They don't have to talk about stuff, and they can just sort of get an experience of being attuned to, in a really supportive way, learning to listen to their body. It can be a good form of work if they're open to it and if it's available. Unfortunately, it's also kind of hard to find.

But okay, I think that's all for those two. And sorry I missed those the first time around. I hope that that was helpful.