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## Curated Q&A Call #5 with Rebecca

Rebecca (00:04):

Welcome everybody to the live Q&A for SBSM 19.0. This is call number five, with me, Rebecca, and I've got Jen moderating the chat, and Susan here as well. So you guys know the housekeeping stuff, and let's just dive in. I didn't really theme these. I'm just going to go through them, and I think I'll be able to get to all of them. So just remember to feel yourself, feel your surroundings, pause if you need to, turn your camera off if you need to. We'll take a little pause at some point. Can you guys hear me okay? Volume's good? Okay.

(01:02)

And hopefully my lighting is good. Okay. So I'm going to start with this first question. "Hi, I'm an alum. I'm seeing significant improvements in my health and quality of life, but sometimes this happens. I feel fear... I feel a wave of fear, aggression, activation coming on slowly at first, then overwhelmingly. It lasts from a few days to weeks, and nothing works. Resources, internal or external. Exercises, nothing seems to work. I lose connection with myself and with the environment. I go into survival mode and I can only wait for it to pass. Suggestions." So first, I want to acknowledge that the fact that you're seeing improvements and health and the quality of life shows that you're doing the work, that's great to hear, and that you've built capacity. And when we build more capacity, then there's more of a possibility to experience more what you might be ready to work with, which is what you're describing here as that fear activation that's coming up.

(02:32)

Yeah. So it's an indication that there is some activation, fight, flee that needs to move. And so a way of approaching that could be to work with it during a time, maybe during the day, when you're feeling more regulated or more neutral. So not necessarily when it's happening. And just maybe you could use a practice, one of the neurosensory practices, or just connect with yourself and your surroundings, and maybe even imagine if you can track - when does this

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happen? When does that typically happen that this wave comes on? And work with it when it's not happening, but by imagining that scenario, maybe there's a scenario or something that kind of triggers that, and work with what's happening in your system just a little bit, and then coming back to a resource and the environment, using those tools and titration.

(03:37)

Something else to consider is being aware of what you're exposing yourself to, like managing your space, your environment. So I know that can be easier said than done, but if you're noticing if there's a way to reduce or bring a little bit of a boundary around situations that seem to trigger this as you build more regulation. So there's less triggers, so to say, to support your system in moving through these deeper layers, because this work is like layers. And you mentioned the idea of it not working, right? It's like orienting, resourcing, it's not working. And I get that. And so if there could be maybe a shift around your frame around something not working, and instead just tuning into what's here, it's understandable how some of these interventions, techniques, practices can seem like there's these things we do, and then it's going to eradicate activation, or eradicate our stress, or eradicate our symptoms.

(05:09)

And that definitely can happen over time as you build more regulation and capacity, but it's not like it's not necessarily working or you're doing it wrong if it doesn't seem like that just goes away instantly. So to reframe around that you're attuning to what you're experiencing, and that the orienting to the here and now, and connecting with the resource, and connecting with your impulses is the foundation to be able to be with what's here. And that might be to be able to be with fear, activation, sensations that we're not comfortable with.

(05:59)

Because when we are kind of that idea of I have to do this and I have to make this work, can actually put more pressure on the nervous system and just exaggerate that sympathetic arousal and that hypervigilance. So rather than using the technique to get it to stop, can I use my tools to help me be present with what I'm experiencing? And then lastly, you mentioned

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waiting for it to pass, and that's okay to let it pass. And I would just suggest that as you're letting it pass, how connected you can stay with the environment and yourself.

(06:45)

And this can really help to alleviate perhaps how long that lasts. Oh, and you might find just titrating a little bit more with the work itself. So if you're doing a practice, some element of it, just a little bit, and then pause, feeling maybe a little bit of excitement coming up in the system, and then slow down. And it's like, again, it's like nurturing and creating more of that flexibility in those physiological states. Can I feel a little bit of that, that rise in the system, maybe some excitement, some perkiness, and then can I settle in my system again?

(07:33)

So that you're not just automatically shifting into that sympathetic state. And then even if you are, it's like, "Oh, I can settle a little bit." And that's the thing. I mean, it's not like we're always only in one state. It's kind of a mix, and there's layers to it. And that's, again, my point with that - it doesn't necessarily mean it's not working if you're not instantly, if you were in sympathetic arousal going into this beautiful ventral vagal, maybe with some low tone, parasympathetic. It might be like, "Oh, I am, but I can be with it and I could settle a little bit." And that again is what that ventral vagal physiology is doing. It's like a brake. It's like letting that brake off, putting that brake on.

(08:25)

Okay. Next question. "Hello. I'm on my second round, and when I do advanced joints, often my legs start randomly shaking vigorously. I just let it happen naturally until it stops on its own. Does this mean anything, and why does it happen?" So what you're describing is the stored survival energy releasing, and that definitely can happen from doing a practice like the joint practices, and allowing it is perfect, but really maintaining your awareness and your connection to your surroundings and yourself is going to be really important, and helping this move through, and allowing the process to complete naturally so you can explore a little bit with maybe playing with if you could slow it down, if you can almost interrupt it a little bit, because

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there could be this letting go that you might do, and then you just let go, and then there's the shaking, but then to also see what it's like to do the opposite, and almost like making a fist, like contract it a little bit or interrupt it just a little bit, and then let go, which can help to inspire more of moving that sympathetic energy.

(10:00)

And then you might notice that it shifts. Does the quality of it shift? Does the pace, does it move into a different part of the body?

(10:15)

If that shaking then maybe would become maybe more of a specific movement pattern, an example could be kicking your leg, turning your leg, bending. So there could be some movement pattern that needs to be completed, some procedural memory that needs to be completed. So in a way, it's just this deepening of the listening and what else might be there, almost like underneath the shaking. Because again, this is all layers, and it can take time. So it's not uncommon that that might be a repeated experience for there to be the shaking. But what's, again, most important is staying connected to yourself. And if it starts to feel like too much, come out of that a little bit. Come to your resources, come to your environment.

(11:21)

And the resources and the environment are always there. It's just we might shift our attention more from that pendulation from one to the other, but it isn't that it's like you completely leave that, right? It's there to support. That's why you hear us in Q&As and in general questions, we're coming back to the basics a lot. It's a big foundational answer to many, many of the questions. Okay? I'm just reviewing that note a little bit. Okay. So I'm going to move to the next question. "Hello. I've been doing this work for about five years. A lot of changes, but one major problem I'm still experiencing is a lack of energy. No medical reason. Is there anything I can do?"

(12:27)

So I'm glad to hear there's lots of changes from doing the work. First and foremost, keep going, building capacity as this, again, this work is in layers, and the way the system expresses and releases is in layers. As you do the practices, can you tune in if you start to feel any kind of spaciness, disoriented or tired, because that could be an indication that you are starting to move into the freezy physiology, which is that fatigue. And so if you start to notice that, okay, here we go, reconnect, resources, environment, and see if you can notice a shift in your system. Am I a little bit more here, a little bit more present in that, more of that ventral vagal physiology, not so much freeze?

(13:41)

As well as then the other part of this is what that underneath, the freeze, of mobilizing the sympathetic energy. And even that, what that could be like is just to be able to first be with the sympathetic end. It's not that all sympathetic is stress, right? Just the sympathetic energy to go for a walk, to do things around the house. And can you start to notice the activeness of yourself and be present to it? And does that start to then become fatigue? Because sometimes the system just gets used to, okay, the sympathetic means survival energy, and that's when you go up too high, you start to create more of the stress chemistry, and then, into freeze, which can be that fatigue that seems like it's not changing.

(14:45)

In that yummy sympathetic, which we always want, there's some ventral vagal. So again, the orienting and connecting it to show the system that it's safe, right? It's safe to be in some sympathetic. It doesn't have to be a stress thing, and then going into more of that protection and freeze. And you may find that specific practices immune to orient towards specific practices that really help support the ventral vagal physiology, that help to support even the low tone, parasympathetic, really settling, but specifically the kidney adrenal practices because of how they're working with the energy. I mean, all the practices will help, but you might find the kidney adrenal practices to be specifically helpful.

(15:48)

And finally, not that you can't do this on your own, but you might find getting some support with a practitioner and having that co-regulation part there to be really helpful in moving the stored survival energy that's underneath there, that's part of the fatigue. So again, it's like this ... I guess in some ways I could say for all these questions the theme of this is in layers. And Irene has talked about this, and we've all mentioned this, but even though this is this three-month program, this is an ongoing thing, and it's in layers, as you realize, because you said you've been doing it about five years.

(16:38)

So keep going, but be gentle with yourself and just tune in when you start to feel that fatigue and play a little bit with what it's like to be active in here, and then to settle again. Okay. The next question. "Last year, SBSM helped me grow in capacity, safety, and ability to stay with the difficult states, but after some very intense episodes this year, I feel much more distrustful again of my body and even of the framework that once helped me. I can still see more awareness and capacity than before, yet I feel more fused with fear and less access to acceptance, presence, and compassion. How can I navigate this phase without further re-traumatization?"

(17:44)

So I want to just acknowledge, to know how difficult it can be to go through bigger stuff, how life can be. And when we start to actually feel more capacity and more safety in the system, that's when things can actually start to show up more, as I've been mentioning in other questions to a degree, because it's in layers. So it's a common part of the healing and renegotiating trauma that it almost can seem like you're going backwards a little bit sometimes, especially when things are happening in life that can be provoking and triggering and hard, as these layers are coming to the surface. So here we are again going back to basics, doing less, going back to the basics of orienting, resourcing, really connecting to yourself and your environment, the practices that really support the safety and the regulation in your system that you orient to, and when doing them, to titrate more.

(19:09)

So working with just a little bit in the lesson, and then tuning into the sensation that whatever's going on in the lesson for you in that moment, like for example, if it was to notice your breath, to notice your inhale, and just to see what it's like to notice the beginning of the inhale, and let that move through the system, and focus on what's happening in the body, and then come out and bring your attention into the external, and working with some of the external resources.

(19:53)

The distrust and the can't seeming to rely on acceptance and the presence of compassion for yourself is understandable. And I wonder what that might be like to explore with it, to see if you can be with it as some information, listen and work with it, in a sense of what does it need, and how can you listen to that happening for you, rather than trying to make it be different, or going into some kind of judgment or shame about it. Let it be informative, and this can help so that this isn't necessarily re-traumatizing, and that compassion, because whatever you've experienced this past year, and whatever you're experiencing is new, and it's like, can you meet yourself where you're at rather than this expectation that you should be a certain way about how you're meeting what's happening in your life? And in other words, not forcing your system to feel safe.

(21:04)

It's like, yeah, it's hard. I don't feel - feeling like I can't trust myself.

(21:15)

And I know for me in working with people, this idea of what trust is, how trust can also seem like expectation, but even if there is that sense of not trust, it's like, well, what can I trust? And here's where we come to that basic again. It's like, well, around me, I can trust that that's a window, right? I'm seeing a window right now, that there's rain outside, the lamp. What can you trust, and what does that feel like in your system? Because again, that's the foundation, to be able to trust in ways of trusting your decisions, trusting your interpretations, trusting other

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human beings, and especially with human beings with trust. It's like, yeah, do we trust? But that might change and that might be expectations. And this is all really formed a lot, early, this, can I trust my caretakers? So can I trust that my needs will be met?

(22:34)

And that's why in this work we work somatically with how do I support, what do I feel and what do I need? Just like when I was little, and I was a baby, and I needed things, and maybe I didn't get that. So we're rebuilding that.

(22:55)

So that's why those types of practices or anything that you might do that help support that could be really useful right now. Okay, I'm scrolling and here we are. Okay. Oh, and the last thing about that, and again, maybe working with a practitioner could be helpful too. All right. Next question. "I have a question about 'in the flow'. Chat GP definition says, 'Deep concentration, losing track of time, effortless productivity, enjoyment in the activity itself.' Wayne Dyer was talking about his experience of being in the flow on YouTube. He described that he was writing for hours without sleeping and eating. He even forgot to go to the bathroom. I can relate to that. When I was doing something that I really enjoy, I often lose track of time and my body's basic needs. Is this really being in the flow?"

(24:12)

Well, I mean, a little bit of this comes down to semantics, or how you want to look at flow. I mean, what you're describing and what Wayne Dyer was describing can seem like a flow for sure. This sort of reminds me of toddlers sometimes when they're playing and maybe they're in that stage of figuring out and learning how to use the potty instead of a diaper, but then they don't want to stop playing. They don't like to be interrupted to go deal with the basic needs. But here's the thing, from what you're describing, it's not actually a healthy flow straight from a nervous system perspective.

(24:58)

In gaining regulation, the idea is can we be aware of ourselves and aware of our environment, whether we're being still and quiet or whether we're doing something, and to be present and connected to our bodies and our body's needs, and our thoughts, and our sensations, and emotion, as well as as needed, and that might shift and change what's happening in the external. When we're not doing that, then our system, that's just part of what the autonomic nervous system does, is - it's just going to go on autopilot. So it's not like habits are bad, right? It's like we wake up in the morning, and we don't relearn how to walk, or whatever, but there was a time we were learning how to, but can we be present with it? Because when we're not, we're just going to rely on, there's sort of like a hierarchy to it and the brain of what is the pattern.

(26:09)

If, for instance, if there was a situation, and you just immediately had to get up, maybe there was a fire or something, and you immediately, you're going to move in the way that is most habitual for that situation. So with the nervous system work, we're looking to refine and open up and develop more capacity to flow within the sense of ourselves and within the environment, and at times with what is happening, what activity that we're doing, because you could tend to go into just a freeze physiology. And that's what that sounds like more to me with not being aware that one needed to use the restroom. Sometimes practices in deep meditative states can just elicit more of a freeze response.

(27:05)

So that's how I would see this. And I think you can definitely flow and be creative and be in enjoyment and be connected to yourself. And sometimes you're not always going to be able to tend to what's there, right? It's like maybe you feel like the impulse, you're on an airplane and you just want to get off the airplane. Well, you're not going to jump off the airplane, but you could feel that, and then maybe there's something else you do to tend to yourself. Be very dedicated. Maybe you're being creative. Maybe you're working on a project and you can be

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there, but also be connected. And actually, I think there'll be a lot ... Something better will come out of it than just kind of going into autopilot, which is how I see that description of flow.

(28:03)

Okay. Just checking my notes. Okay. All right. So the next question. "I've struggled in my relationship with my body for 20 plus years, including eating disorders and doing this work, I'm noticing more connection with my body. Instead of obsessing over its looks, but it's very hard to be present for the deep fears, I couple thinness with more safety. So if I'm feeling fat, I feel the pull to control and restrict. How do you stay present during these activations? How do you stay true to healing when the collective obsession with thinness is in the water, so to speak?"

(29:04)

Understandable. So to control and restrict, and then what might show up as an eating disorder, and I get the languaging, but I just want to name, again. It's a label. I think it's a bit of an aggressive label. It's like, well, is it a disorder or ... It's a coping, right? It's a strategy. It's a way of gaining control over your experience and over your body, and often there is a lack of clear interoception of what you really need as far as intake of food, and then that gets coupled and connected with, like you're mentioning, the culture, and impressions, and perceptions.

(30:17)

When there's trauma in the system, when there's unresolved stress physiology, there can be a need to control. So with the eating, it's just a behavior to try to control, to cope with that activation, to cope with that stress physiology. So if you can focus on, again, resourcing and building capacity, and I'm sure you already are, but to continue to do that before working directly with the intense sympathetic energy, and with directly trying to change the behavior. So resourcing practices, the containment practice in lab six, layers, lessons, self-touch, those, to kidney adrenals, because underneath that behavior itself, again, it's that activation. And then it's like, if I control it and I restrict and don't eat this, then I feel okay and I can feel safe, as you said, being thin is safe. So to be able to work with that sympathetic energy, and mobilize it and

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get the system back to a real sense of safety that isn't dependent on perceptions and ideas around being safe, but being thin, where is the sensation of that in your body?

(31:56)

What is the quality of it?

(32:02)

And work with the emotions directly, emotions that might come up. So if you notice there's an emotion there when you feel like you want to restrict or control, if there's a sense of anxiousness, because again, that behavior of restriction might be suppressing those feelings, and then following your impulse and tuning into the real felt sense of like, when do I feel hunger? When do I feel full? What do I really want to be eating? Then there might be something underneath there, like grief or anger, and to honor those biological impulses as you notice them arising, like really feeling that, but then I'm wanting to either restrict what I'm eating, or go to eating, instead of actually feeling what's there.

(33:11)

One more thing. So also about agency, where can you get back to the choice? That's also part of, with trauma physiology, it's like there's been a lack of choice, a lack of agency, and to start to notice where you have choice about how you see yourself, what you eat, what you don't eat, what you tend to bring your attention to, and that maybe what you bring your attention to, or something else you do helps to promote a sense of safety, rather than it being primarily about a sense of thinness. And this can overflow into not needing the culture to affirm or to declare how you should look or how you should be in order to feel safe, in order to feel validated or worthy, or whatever might arise in that.

(34:34)

Because again, those sensations, that underlying stored physiology is running the behavior to want to control and want to be thin and want to be in this way. So overall, the more regulation you build, the less tendency there will be to need to control and to control in the specific way

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that you're describing. Okay. So we're going to take ... Let's just take a little pause for maybe two minutes. It's about 40 minutes after the hour. We're getting through these pretty good. We'll just take a little pause and we'll be back in two minutes. If you guys want to have something to drink, or use the restroom, or do what you need to do, I'll be right back.

(37:47)

Okay. All right, guys. I'm going to keep moving along here. So the next question here. "I've suffered a lifetime of emotional abuse, of control, and neglect, and as I heal through SBSM, I'm feeling a huge sense - of a sense of having a consciousness, and realizing all of the bad and thoughtless things I did while in survival mode. Is this normal? I'm struggling with the guilt, and I'm confused at things I've done." So yes, what you're describing is normal. I know it's hard, and it's a real healthy part of the healing process to recognize, to feel that kind of guilt, even hopefully empathy for what has happened, whether it's happened from other people, and then yourself.

(39:26)

But as you said, it's an old pattern because you're operating from that survival mode, and that's where those behaviors came from. And now you're recognizing that and changing that, but there can often be feelings of guilt. And so I just invite you to see if you can, with this awareness, is to find some compassion for that self and maybe you even reflect on a specific incidence, a specific time, and how can you attune to that part of yourself and understand that that's where you're operating from, and what you understand now, that it wasn't like you were doing that on purpose. And again, it can be a difficult part of the process, because you're touching into shame.

(40:25)

And so you can also then work with shame directly, feeling it in your body. If you were, for example, to reflect on something that happened, a behavior, something you did, something you said, and that feeling of shame, it's like, where is that in the body? What is the posture of shame? Oftentimes, not always, but a posture of shame is just sort of more kind of collapsed,

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withdrawn, head down. I mean, that also can be a form of reverence. That's why oftentimes we see that in maybe a meditative state, maybe prayer, certain ritual, certain religious, and I'm not trying to get into religion, but especially because oftentimes within religion, there's a repentance, there's this acknowledgement of a tendency for the human capacity to behave in ways that we don't want to.

(41:40)

And again, the foundation of this is that survival physiology. So can you go into that posture? Can you be in that and be within that sense? And then, as I'm kind of round, I'm sort of imitating it, right? And then slowly come out of it and track what you feel in the system as you come out of it a little bit, as you come into what might feel more neutral or potent. And so the potent posture lesson could be useful here. And as a reminder, the potent posture lesson can be done standing, sitting. Really, you could apply it to any position and see what comes up as you tap in to the shame, if there's some activation that needs to mobilize there that's maybe just kind of stuck.

(42:44)

To be gentle with yourself, to remind yourself, and what that really feels like in that reminder that you did the best with what you knew to do at the time. The self-touch, the containment practices could be really supportive here. As you're connecting with that part of you with compassion and with somatic awareness, to integrate that part back in. And it can take some time. It doesn't take forever, but it's something that might need to be repeated. But oftentimes, as we feel that coming up, we might go into the head and kind of ruminate over those situations, and ruminate into more of that guilt. And so again, this invitation to come back to your body and recognize too, how you're behaving, and how you're operating now, to acknowledge that it's like that importance of there's this new pattern, there's this new way of being, there's this different physiology that I can operate from rather than just that.

(44:15)

It's really important we notice that. And again, this is part of what the foundations provide is

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that, oh, it's like that's a different focus. That's a different way of being. That's something different happening in my whole system than what's happening in the system when I'm operating in survival physiology.

(44:47)

Okay. All right. Next question. "Alumni here, with the history of early developmental trauma and shock. I woke up with acute neck pain strain on both sides after Feldenkrais practices, like gentle head rolling. I've had tension headaches for 20 years, but never this kind of acute neck stiffness for this long. Why is the body saying don't move, when moving the head feels like good protection and safety?" So seeing as you have experienced the headaches for that many years, or just experiencing them at all, that's an indication that there could be some stored trauma within the musculature of around the skull and the neck, brainstem. So when we do these types of lessons, especially the Feldenkrais work, it's very deep somatic work, and it can bring that stored survival energy to the surface. That's why, as far as in this program, the Feldenkrais work is later on, because we want to build foundation.

(46:16)

We want to build capacity to be able to be with what might arise as we, in a way, kind of provoke the system, even though Feldenkrais is subtle, what that might bring up. So also, this area, your neck, your head, your face is highly sensitive, because it is about our eyes and our neck and our head being able to turn. It's a big part of how we are in the world, as well as just primarily, am I safe? Where am I? How am I interacting? What do I hear? What do I see? How do I communicate? The carriage of the heads really, there's a lot going on there.

(47:10)

The bracing pattern can come on as a response to it not being safe to move. And so sometimes as we might do a movement practice, even if it's subtle at Feldenkrais, it just might be too much. And the system's like, no, and we brace because you could almost think of or consider not moving, being really still. That's a protection. I don't want to be seen. I shouldn't be seen. I can't move. It reminds me of when I'm playing hide and seek, that's a playful way, but as a kid,

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and you almost are like breathing shallower and making sure you don't move in order to stay safe.

(48:02)

So I would suggest to maybe not do so much of the Feldenkrais right now, and do the other practices, and then follow your impulse as you feel to come back to some Feldenkrais work, to just titrate it more. Just do less, smaller, slower, pause more, feel what's coming up when you do it. Really small amounts, really slowing down the pace. Because again, that stiffness that's lasting could just be an indication that you did too much, and it's easy to do even in Feldenkrais. And even though Feldenkrais isn't asking you to move in a certain way, we're not asking you to, say, now move to the right, and put your arm up like this. We're giving a general invitation. There's a theme, and there's an intention in the lessons, but it's an inquiry. But many of us, just culturally, just being on the planet, it's kind of ingrained in us to move like, oh, I have to move this way, and I should be able to move a lot, versus being much more inquisitive about what we notice.

(49:28)

I mean, that literally is a whole new learning aspect of this work of Feldenkrais, is learning how to learn, learning how to sense, especially when it comes to movement, because we've been programmed to move like this. I mean, we don't do that with children, right? It's where this all starts. You go to school, you go into sports, you move a certain way. There's really not much of an inquiry. Most of your inquiry about that is the first developmental years, and even that can be disrupted as we ... The different elements of why we might confine some of that development. And I won't go on a tangent about that, I promise, even though I kind of want to, but ... Okay. So then lastly, I'd say really simple orienting with the head and eyes, and maybe not even moving the head. And you did say you were alumni, so working with the watering the brainstem lesson and the extra resources could be really helpful, the one that Seth does.

(50:45)

And lastly, maybe working with a practitioner of some sort, a good somatic practitioner,

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osteopath, a Feldenkrais practitioner that gets doing less, maybe even gets this work to a degree, a good cranial sacral therapist. So those could just be some additional things to consider that could be helpful to you. And yes, it would be amazing to do that with someone in person, but it can, not the cranial sacral work, but the other ones I mentioned could be done online if needed to and be effective. But if you could do it in person, that would be the best. Okay.

(51:40)

All right. So next question here. "My question is about trembling and releasing stuck survival energy. My whole body trembles if I let go, but it's hard to let go. I mainly try to let go of my eyes, torso, stomach, shoulders. I can sit and let the eyes tremble for an hour without getting much progress. It seems like it's stuck in a loop. How do I work with this to actually release the energy? So much talk about releasing survival energy, but I find very little concrete info about it." So yeah, if you're in a loop, which it sounds like a loop, to a degree, based on what you're describing, and one of the ways to discern that is that if you feel like nothing's changing, like there isn't enough change where there might be a settling, or it gets stronger, or it gets less.

(52:49)

So what you could do with that, in working with it, is looking to feel what's happening underneath the trembling. And I referred to this earlier in a question with the trembling legs, to a degree. What kind of movement might there be that's happening in the trembling? And you might even dance with it, stimulate that a little bit more by, like you were talking about, let go even though it's hard to let go. Yeah, let go, but then also activate, tense, tense and release. The tense and relax practice in lab six could be really helpful here.

(53:38)

And in exploring, with what that action might be in that trembling, for example, maybe it would be a type of pushing, running, something with getting away, some kind of movement that doesn't even make sense. And to explore with that slowly to see if there is some kind of action that needs to be completed, rather than just the constant random trembling. And as I

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mentioned, as we do something like tensing and releasing, that can help to incite that in the system a little bit versus the trembling just taking over. If it's really going on for a while, then again, that might be just to kind of come out of it a little bit, come to a resource, do some containment work, some self-touch, and just again, coming back to those basics and building that containment, and that landing of like, okay, I can soothe and I can settle.

(54:51)

I can come out of this a little bit into something else.

(55:00)

Another possibility here, as there's trembling, it's like, well, as I talked about, there being, maybe a movement, a specific expression, sometimes there's images that arise. That's part of the mobilization, a meaning, an emotion, and sound, right? It could be words. There don't have to be words though. It could be sound. Sometimes sound really can help. It's like, what would ... I often ask myself this question and when I work with people, if that sensation were to make a sound, what kind of sound would that be? And there might be a response to that and there might not, but you can bring the sound into it. And here's where we get into the grunting or vibration, voo, ahh.

(56:08)

I believe it's in extra resources, lab five. Seth has some videos about different sounds, and see if that can also be a way of moving that, moving it around, in a way. And if there's some completion from doing that and bringing the face into it, bringing those sensory organs into it. And here you might be tapping into some healthy aggression, depending. And there is, on Irene's YouTube, there's a few different videos, and I put a link that Susan can put there, of just a few different videos specifically regarding releasing storage trauma physiology, and shaking, and whatnot. That might be helpful for you to check those out.

(57:16)

Okay. All right. Next question. "I experience consistent dissociation in my mind. I get into

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intense defensive arguments in my head. I try to justify my actions to a critical onlooker and have fantasies of acceptance. Even while doing the neurosensory exercises, there will be a feeling that I need to explain my actions to someone, often apparent. It feels like I'm constantly needing to fight for legitimacy of my inner world and my personal process. These mental loops affect my relationships in big ways. How can I reduce the intensity?" So these mental loops that you're describing, again, are coming from the underlying dysregulation and activation, the physiology.

(58:30)

So it's like a byproduct of that, kind of like a behavior might be. So generally, as you develop more regulation and capacity over time, that pattern happening in the mind can dissipate and start to just lessen, and in fact diminish entirely, but it is a pattern. So a way of working that could be when you notice it to really identify it. You could say it out loud or say it internally like, "I'm having this thought. I'm having this thought, this dialogue with a parent that I need to verify or convince," and kind of name it, and know that it's a thought, and then go into the body. When you have that thought, what do you notice in your body? There's probably some activation there. And so then can you work with it somatically? What does it need to do? Here we go, with, does it need to move?

(59:40)

Is it make a sound? Is it that thing I wanted to say? And maybe that is telling off your parent, or whatever, but really feeling how that's presented in the body versus just the mental formation. And of course, in doing that, staying present, staying connected as best you can to yourself and your surroundings.

(01:00:17)

Resourcing, orienting, dipping into it, coming out of it. It might be really helpful at times to just come out of that. It's like, I'm going to come out of that, and I'm going to notice my surroundings, and I'm going to think about that wall. It's okay to just interrupt it with anything, even if you're not interrupting it with a thought that's the antidote to that thought, but it's just

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a thought about something else, but that's real, that's there, that's going to be less provocative, even. Something like, okay, there's the blanket, there's the chair, there's the rain. And think about that kind of interrupting that thought loop pattern.

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So that's kind of why there can be that natural way that we might just distract ourselves. So in this way, with what I've described, it's more of like a conscious distraction. It's a shift, but it's understandable that you might just do things that distract yourself. And just to be with that, you don't have to scrutinize yourself over it. It's like, okay, yeah, now I'm just distracting myself from that, and I want to go there. It's a pattern, and I'm shifting the pattern. It's a pattern. I'm shifting the pattern and showing the system it's safe to shift the pattern. Again, that's why the basics are so important, because we need to show the system it's safe. You don't have to keep doing that hypervigilant thing to keep control and to stay safe by having to justify and explain and whatever to whoever.

(01:02:15)

And it's understandable that it affects your relationships. So there might be that tendency then to protect by withdrawing or being more defensive. And so to see if you can just notice that, be kind with yourself about it. And when you are around people, with people, where can you start to notice if that happens, that mental loop happens, and how you then interrupt it, when you're with people? And oftentimes when with people, there's something that happens. There's some sort of interaction, right? There's a conversation, there's a vibe, there's something that's going on. And if you go into that pattern with what happened, it could just be so quick that your system just goes into that. But then also, what did you make it mean? If they said something, did you make it mean that you were bad or wrong? And therefore that tendency to go into justifying and convincing and defending, and just like, is that true?

(01:03:28)

Or this is just what happened. They said this, or this is what happened. So we're just getting more real and more comfortable with what's really going on rather than that interpretation of,

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this means I'm not safe, because this means I'm bad, because of whatever happened. And then there can be much more of an authentic way of connecting with others, and a way of connecting with others even if they don't understand what's going on, and for you and your inner world, or don't agree with you, or whatever. I mean, it's awesome when folks do, but what if they didn't?

(01:04:11)

You can still connect and you can still be okay. And lastly, how it is to be with others and feel some okayness. What does that feel like? Even if you just imagined before you were actually doing it, what would that be like to just feel some okayness? And not because you've healed everything from the past or the loops are totally gone, but just even a little bit of just, I'm okay, and I'm okay even if those loops start, because you recognize it's just a loop in your mind, and there you go. Oh, that's a thought, and I can come back to my body. And so how we can be, how you can be in your body and be in your environment, even when you're around other people.

(01:05:17)

And that's that relationship piece. That's that co-regulation piece, because oftentimes other people are going to stimulate us and bring stuff up. So if that seems like too much, working with it by just imagining being around them, and working with your system in that way, and then starting to expose yourself more to people. And how do I want to engage in these relationships in a different way? This doesn't always have to happen, but I think sometimes it can be helpful, especially with people that you're close with, if this was coming up, as you name it, you share it with them. This is what I'm experiencing, and I'm making it mean this, and I'm having this thought and this feeling, and this sense like I want to defend myself, or I want to withdraw. And not from a place of needing them to say something specific, but it's sort of like letting go of that defensiveness, the defendant self, and just stepping into, here I am, and here's what I'm working on, and I'm in relationship with you.

(01:06:39)

So I want you to understand that. Even if it's somebody, that doesn't mean they have to be doing this work necessarily.

(01:06:50)

It's more for you than it is for them, but it can be really profound, what that can allow in the relationship container, and for that other person. So something to consider. Okay. Next question. "After a burnout over 10 years ago, I've gained deep knowledge of early trauma and the nervous system as a psychologist. Body awareness and neurosensory exercises come easily to me, and I can effortlessly remain in the ventral vagal state, yet I still experience chronic fatigue and pain, suggesting dysregulation. I want to understand why I seem regulated, but I still have these symptoms." So understandable, normal, and it's unique to each of us, and only we will really know. Nobody can fully verify for us. You're regulated.

(01:08:03)

I mean, of course we can get a sense. We can feel other people and get a sense about what we notice about how they might be behaving and whatnot. But that's part of this whole figuring out, like, what does that mean to be regulated? And I say all that because when growing up, we experience different shades, versions of early trauma, our sense of self develops in that. And our whole entire personality gets formed around that and can get formed around the dysregulation, which isn't really the authentic self and quite different from who we think we are. And then we can go into the world as we grow and actually be really productive, do a lot of great things, learn a lot of great things, maybe even help other people, as you're saying, as a therapist.

(01:09:04)

And I'm not suggesting that you're not regulated. It's just, again, this is in layers. What can happen is that we get used to it, but really what's underneath there is freeze and sympathetic energy that needs to move. And it's like we could seem regulated or have this capacity, but it's more of like a functional freeze going on. And you said you've come out of burnout. That's

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great to hear, but even just being in that burnout is an indication that was freeze. And now you have built more capacity, and so there's just this other layer that needs to move, and then the system's just kind of going into fatigue and pain.

(01:10:02)

So to be working with this deeper layer of the sympathetic and the freeze would be the next thing, but to keep building capacity to be able to do that. So when you mention feeling tension in the body, if you can be present to where that tension is, what maybe it wants to do, what's the quality of it? How does it want to express versus just tensing? Same thing with the freeze. And it's like that's why those can go hand in hand, the freeze, the fatigue. And to titrate with this, to just do a little bit, and then come back out, especially when working with fatigue.

(01:10:52)

We just want to get a little bit, can we feel a little bit of that action, and I'm doing something, and I'm here. And as you talked about, being in your ventral vagal, and then can I rest and slow down again, and really get into some good parasympathetic low tone? That flexibility in those states, that mobility in those states is what we're looking at here. And it's possible that you, maybe, never experienced what a true baseline is for real rest. So working with creating more opportunities to get into that low tone parasympathetic state. So whatever lessons that you're drawn to that seem to help provide that for you, could be kidney adrenal lessons, that's not always the case. And I also want to name that, as we do any of these lessons, even though it's the same practice, there could be a different experience each time.

(01:12:09)

Like you could feel like, "Ooh yeah, I'm really, really resting, this yummy low tone." And then there also could be activation that happens. I just want to name that. That's totally okay. That's totally normal. But there might be generally the practices that you're aware of that help to provide that for you, to just, how can I really get into that settling, and notice if that settling starts to become freezy? And then that what might be when you start to inspire more of that ventral vagal connection, some stimulation, some sympathetic, and just moving in those states.

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And we can do that in our lives as we do things. Like maybe you're going to do some chores around the house. It's like, okay, so I'm going to do some chores, but really feel how I move my body to do them. Feel that sense of energy. Feel if you start to get tired, because often, and this is also what I meant when I was talking earlier with the Feldenkrais question in the neck, and that we can go into autopilot, and we might, especially when just doing life, go into autopilot and override, and then we go into that freeze physiology.

(01:13:28)

I mean, sometimes we need to override. It's not the end of the world, it's life, but just to be aware of it is the idea. And then what you might do to support yourself, to come back to more regulation, to come back to some settling, to repair if you did override. Because in a sense, it's like going into that fatigue, it's like, okay, the system just needs ... It's like I'm in protection, and I just kind of need to not do anything. It's too much.

(01:14:03)

So titration, building capacity is key. And remember, it's layers. So again, it's not that you haven't built more regulation, and have come a long way in the work. There's just a deeper layer to work with. Okay. Next question. "I've noticed that sometimes when I'm triggered, I tend to stay with an awful feeling for the rest of the day. I've tried connecting to the environment, feeling my feet on the floor, but nothing can help shed the unpleasant feelings. Even when I needed to cry, the only thing that's a bit helpful is trying to distract my mind. Is this some kind of dissociation?"

(01:14:58)

So this can be a type of dissociation, which is just an aspect of the freeze response. And perhaps the feelings that you're feeling, as you mentioned, an awful ... When you get triggered and then there's this awful feeling, it's just too much and too overwhelming. So your system's trying to cope with it, right? Dissociating, going into freeze, distracted, and then it can kind of stick. So a way to work with this, titrate more. See if when that comes up, and it could come up for real, you can imagine it coming up. Can you feel into that emotion? Can you feel into that

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sensation in the body, of what this trigger triggered, even just a little bit, and then come to a resource.

(01:16:08)

I think sometimes resources can be overlooked. And again, they're not replacements. They're not fixits, but it's really about what does that create inside as I connect with the resource? And it can be really subtle, but it's really profound. And that pendulation, that actual sense of choice and agency, if I can focus, I can be with this uncomfortable feeling, and then I can shift maybe more outside myself to a resource. And it's just in itself, that's some mobility and movement, versus being stuck in that pattern, in that physiology, in that awful feeling, as you mentioned. And can you notice the difference in your system, again, with the resource, when you connect, and the difference between disassociating and being here with what is, even if with what is, isn't like the best. It's like, oh, I can be with it a little bit, and I can actually feel that emotional...

(01:17:40)

Oh, that trigger, I felt sad, or I felt angry, or I felt this knot in my belly, and can I be with it?

(01:17:51)

And even just for a little bit, like I mentioned, this is all about capacity building and informing the system in that interoceptive way that we're okay, that we're okay, that we're safe, so to speak, even if I don't totally feel safe with the feeling, because feeling things and having responses to life is being human and is healthy, but it doesn't always have to be okay, it's bringing on a trauma response. It would make sense to feel sad, right? Let's say something happened, there was a loss to feel sad, but to feel sad and to be in fear and to be suffering in that, and for there to be all this stress chemistry is something different. And so it's almost like there's this distinction that needs to happen between these sensations, what we make them mean, what they ignite in us, and same with emotions, which emotions are just usually a collection of sensations, which you described as just this awful feeling.

(01:19:21)

And so I wonder about, with this awful feeling, as well, if you go into rumination and then that's why there's dissociation. So again, coming back to the body.

(01:19:35)

Another thing to consider is connecting with the person in these times, and even when it's not coming up, that you can have some co-regulation with. It can be another human being. It could be a pet. I mean, it can be nature. Maybe it's a friend, maybe it's a therapist, maybe it's a family member, maybe it's a partner of some kind, and just to be with them and feel that sense of co-regulation and support, and if that felt appropriate even sharing while you're in your body with what was uncomfortable for you. That doesn't have to happen, but it could be helpful.

(01:20:23)

All right. So we're at our last question. All right. "I'm noticing unsafety, tensing every time I see or walk across men while I walk to work. I've had some bad experiences - groping when young, narcissistic ex, brother-in-law pushing sex, didn't let him do anything, but haven't told family either. And general unsafety as a woman in this culture, society, Epstein files, et cetera. Yet a part of me has internalized misogyny and wants outside validation, even from women, but especially from men. Suggestions on working with constant stress on safety from just being around men." So yeah, it's really understandable. It's common that your system will go into this protection with how things have been historically and culturally regarding women, and this way that your system is going to this hypervigilant state, especially specifically around men. So overall, I want to suggest once again, the building of your capacity and inner safety in general is going to support this specific pattern of feeling that way around men specifically, but then a way to work with it is when men are not around, right?

(01:22:18)

So when you're in a situation then that's more neutral from that, how do you sense what

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feeling okay, some sense of safety is? So again, back to our basics, and that's where some elements of those practices of the basics will be supported in that.

(01:22:44)

What does it feel like to be okay in your body, and that that's not reliant on someone else. And that's the thing, that's the touchy thing about being human and being a mammal, because we're designed for connection. We're tribal. We are. There's this validation, and if I'm ostracized that I could die, right? So it's like this, can I connect, but that I don't expect or rely on you to make me feel okay or not? Initially though, growing up, especially when we're really, really little, we're very dependent on people. We need them, but as we mature, it's to need them in the same way.

(01:23:38)

So building that inner sense of safety is going to be really the foundation for what I just mentioned. So to keep working with that, working with the work, working with the basics. And then when men are not around, imagining, imagining if they were, imagining if there's a man that was around, what do you notice come up? How can you work with it somatically? Use your tools, track what's happening in the body, track the sensation. The next piece could be a picture, or some sort of media, of a man. And maybe that originally is like a man that you generally feel okay with. Maybe there's an icon, or something like that, that you generally would. And then in actually the image of them, as you see them on some sort of image, working with what's coming up in your system, how that feels, and the idea of being around them, like you're building up exposures.

(01:24:48)

We're not doing intense exposure kind of therapy, but just building it up. And then the reality is, right, you said you walk to work. I mean, you're going to be around men. So it's like, well, how can I be aware of that? How can I be aware of what's happening in my system? Even if you have some boundaries around that, even if it's that you walk farther away from them or whatever, and that's okay. But how can you then start to work with it in actual life, and inform

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your system that you're okay, and that capacity to discern. We're always, whether it's about specific people or not, we're always discerning whether we're conscious of it or not, are we safe? Even when we walk through a doorway, we're walking through the doorway in a way that we don't hit our body against the side. We step off a step.

(01:25:48)

We're always assessing, are we safe? It's just in this sense, in your particular scenario, when regards to a man, it's different. It's more severe in a certain way, but it's like, how do you discern that?

(01:26:06)

How do you sense that it's okay, and that you're okay even around that, even around the man? Because there could just be something unresolved. And so that might be something to consider with anything that has happened in the past that you referred to a little bit in the question, you could work with that specifically. However, you remember and can tune in to what happened, and see what maybe needs to be completed. And that could even be something you do with a practitioner as well. What didn't get to be said? What movement? What stress response didn't get to be completed?

(01:26:57)

And lastly, perhaps checking in with, in some way, understanding masculinity, like traits of that. I mean, even within yourself, this could be assertiveness, this could be healthy aggression, this could be action, very action oriented, solution, ways of understanding men better to help you understand how you interact with them, which is also part of this piece that you mentioned of wanting validation from men and women, right? Again, because we're mammals, we want to connect, but in understanding how they operate can ... And I'm speaking generally, and I'm speaking biologically, and archetype, and that can be helpful because sometimes that can get misinterpreted. So that could be something to consider, that we're just different in how our brains work and how we interact.

(01:28:31)

And then the last, I think that was the last thing. Yeah. I mean, right off the bat, you said, "I'm noticing unsafety, tensing every time I walk across men," being with that tensing, but then where can you feel less of that in your body, especially in getting through the reality that you're going to be by men sometimes, and how can you just work with what's happening in your system, even if you do have some boundary around it, like how close you go to them, and that validation piece, can you validate yourself? As you create more regulation and presence in yourself, there may be less need to have validation from other people, from men or women, and instead, connection.

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And then will you then be able to discern and understand when you're actually receiving that? Because when we're in a hypervigilant state of any kind, we can misinterpret what's going on in our world, and that could be how a human looks at us, their tone of voice, what they said. We can misinterpret that sometimes as a threat, even when it's not, or the other way, not get a sense that there was a threat, even when there is.

All right. Okay, folks, I got through all of them, and it's 2:32 Eastern time, so that's it. Thank you for being here. I hope it was helpful, and it's great that you guys are doing this work. Keep going, and I'll see you next time. Have a good rest of your day.