

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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This is *Feminist Wellness*, and I'm your host, Nurse Practitioner, Functional Medicine expert, and life coach, Victoria Albina. I'll show you how to get unstuck, drop the anxiety, perfectionism, and codependency so you can live from your beautiful heart. Welcome, my love, let's get started.

Hello, hello, my love. I hope this finds you doing so well. I am loving that it's getting colder out. Ooh, I love waking up and seeing the beautiful leaves changing color out my window, taking Ziggy Star-Dog, our terribly behaved little Chi-Hua-Hua who I love so much, out for a nice walk in the crisp air.

It's been a really beautiful thing we've been doing for quite a while now, to take these morning walks. It's just such a lovely time for Billey and I to connect, to just be together, and just enjoy moving our bodies and getting some sunlight on our faces.

It's really important for your sleep, for your circadian rhythm, to get sunlight on your beautiful face first thing in the morning, preferably within a half hour of waking up when that's possible. And so, that's been really helpful for both of us.

I, personally, have a PhD in sleeping from the Snorebonne. Okay, that's a joke. I made up when I was like 13 or 14, and I think it's just about as funny now as it was then, like fully grown worthy. But I still like to repeat it, because studies show that I'm really cheesy. I'm really cheesy. I love a terrible joke.

One of the things we do, and we haven't done it in a minute, we should do it again, is we used to have these terrible joke parties in Anchored. We originally called them "Dad jokes," because that's a genre, but terrible jokes aren't just for dads. I'm going to put it out there. You know what I mean?

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

What do you call a cow with no legs? That's right, ground beef. I love terrible jokes. I'm so cheesy. Anyway, yeah, I have a PhD in sleeping. And getting that morning sunlight helps me sleep even better, much more better. So, you can't knock it. No screens in nature. Walking time is just really beautiful.

Yeah, I'm just really rolling around in so much gratitude. The world is a flaming dumpster fire in so many ways. And I'm just doing what I can here in my little corner, making my phone calls, donating, talking to people, having conversations, coaching, supporting people in being embodied, and living the best lives they can in this moment. It's what I can do. Right?

So, functional freeze. Last week, we talked all about this mixed nervous system state, and we're going to talk about it again. It is an experience that is super-duper common for those of us living in the experience of emotional outsourcing. Which is the umbrella term we use here at *Feminist Wellness* for codependent, perfectionist and people-pleasing thought habits.

This experience of functional freeze definitely overlaps with the experience of folks with a trauma history. Growing up in households with codependency, perfectionism, people pleasing, with those thought habits, those survival skills, can be traumatic.

No matter how loving or caring your grownups were. Even if they did their absolute best, you can still have learned that functional freeze was the best choice for your survival in your family system, in your society, in your culture.

So, today, in part two, we're going to talk about how it got this way. If you haven't listened to part one, I highly recommend it. And if you're brand, brand-new to all this polyvagal and nervous system talk, then I also recommend you check out Episode 244 "Polyvagal Theory: The Secret to

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

Understanding Yourself” to get the skinny on all the polyvagal words; we use a lot of the words.

And I can imagine, if you're like, “Wait, I'm totally new to this,” it would be pretty confusing. To be like, “Wait, what's a dorsal? Do I has one? What is it? Do I want one? Is it on sale? Where do I get it?” So, learn the words, or at least get sort of a little notion of them, it'll help.

Today, we are actually going to be doing less of the sciency, science, science, like we did last week. We're going to be talking more about the lived experience of functional freeze. As a quick recap, last week we talked about what functional freeze is, we defined it, and we talked about what it looks like.

I defined it as a state of chronic dysregulation or imbalance between the sympathetic, so here are the words-words, right? The sympathetic, which is fight or flight, and parasympathetic, rest and digest. They're branches within the autonomic nervous system, the ANS, which is responsible for regulating bodily functions not under conscious control.

So, all the stuff that happens without you're thinking about it: Heart rate, digestion, stress response, thyroid, adrenals, pineal gland. I mean, like, on and on and on. It also has a huge impact on our mood, our emotions, our sensations, our feelings.

Functional freeze is a mixed nervous system state that is part sympathetic while also being part dorsal. Which is paradoxical, right? Like, you shouldn't be all revved up but all shut down, but you are. It's when your foot is on the proverbial nervous system gas; all revved up in sympathetic fight or flight about the world, all its people, and things.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

You're hyper vigilant, you're hyper aware of others, hyper focused on how you're being perceived and experienced, and how others think and feel about you. You're anxious, worked up, nervous, buzzing inside.

But you may not even feel it. You might not tell the story, "I'm anxious, I'm buzzing," because you're so used to this high level of stress hormones. Meanwhile, if we did some fancy-pants lab work, your cortisol, your stress hormone, would probably be through the roof, or at least wicked imbalanced, because you're in the sympathetic state. You might just be so used to it, you don't even register it.

Meanwhile, at the same time, your same nervous system that's so revved up, also has a foot firmly on the brakes, in the nervous system state known as "dorsal." Dorsal vagus, dorsal shutdown, aka freeze. And so, you're frozen about your inner life, your emotions, your true desires, your inner voice, on and on.

So, you're hyper focused outside of you, and shut down, checked out, not present to you. When you're in functional freeze, you're a ghost of yourself. Walking around functional in the world, doing and achieving and succeeding, and wow, look at you, while being frozen inside yourself to you and your experience of the world.

It's like your feelings are none of your own business, and you don't remember a time you really felt your feels in your body. And you're not exactly even sure how to feel your feels because it's so... I mean, it's just not what you do.

This can look like having delayed emotional responses, or delayed access to your feelings. Like, feeling numb in the moment, and then having a flood of emotions or understanding in hours or days or even years after an experience.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

That's often a sign that you're walking around, in some degree... Remember, all this nervous system stuff, it's all a spectrum, it's all a matter of degrees, right? You're not all one thing or all another, it's degrees, right? So, that can be a sign that you're in some degree of functional freeze, which can most definitely be a response to stress, distress, and trauma in childhood or at any point in life.

I would imagine that this sounds very familiar to you, if you came back for part two, right? And I'll share, again, that this is how I lived most of my life, in functional freeze. Which I also call "somatic self-disconnection."

I'm talking about it in so much detail, and I'm taking so much time to be with this, to explain this, to make sure you get this, because my life is approximately 473 majillion percent better now, on the other side of this super painful way of experiencing life.

My passion is to coach folks, especially humans socialized as women, to recognize, honor, and shift this functional freeze way of living. To move from somatic self-disconnection back into connection with self. So, I'm excited to keep talking about it, and I hope you're enjoying listening to it.

If you are, let me know. Drop me a little line: podcast@victoriaalbina.com. On The Gram, you can find me, I give really good Gram [@VictoriaAlbinaWellness](https://www.instagram.com/VictoriaAlbinaWellness). Drop me a little DM, I want to hear about it.

Okay, so I think we're pretty clear here in part two, on this pattern not being a super great way to live. Which, for me, then always begets the question, how did I get this way? So, as children, one of the most important tasks for our nervous system, is to understand where safety comes from, what safety means for us, how to get it, how to keep it, and whether it'll stick around or not.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

When our little kiddo cells aren't attuned to the way we need, it makes sense that our tiny nervous system, so new and unsure of ourselves and our people and where safety may come from, it makes sense that our nervous systems might get derailed in a way.

Instead of believing that it's safe for us to live in ventral vagal, the safe and social part of the nervous system, that we can trust that we will be rescued and protected and made safe, if that doesn't feel true than our smarty-pants nervous systems might realize "I need to move into a more vigilant state in order to get through."

While also, sadly, often coming to the realization or the belief that it's not okay to be ourselves. That our feelings are too much, or a burden or a problem, or just in general are not okay to have. So, being smart as we are, we shut our feelings down. We go into freeze within ourselves. Functional on the outside, frozen on the inside.

So, if we grow up thinking that love is conditional... If we grow up with stress, distress, or trauma early in life... If we grow up, and as adults find ourselves in chronic stress, high stress environments due to personal life circumstances, external factors like work related stress, social inequality, poverty, racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia... If we grow up believing, and come into adulthood knowing, that the love we have received is conditional on how we show up, and it's not based on the inherent perfection of who we are, hypervigilance makes sense.

We grow to believe we need to constantly be looking outward so that we will catch the slightest hint that love will be taken away. Because what does that lead to? Abandonment. And what does that lead to? Well, dying cold and alone on a mountain top. Right?

And so, cognitive survival skills, like perfectionism, fear of failure, persistent negative thinking, these can all continue to contribute to our functional

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

freeze, by stoking the flames of our chronic stress and heightened vigilance. So, my loves, we know this sucks. There's no two ways about it.

What I want to do is look at some examples, because I think it can be really easy to beat ourselves up for living this way once we realize, “Oh snap, I've been in a functional freeze for quite a while. God what is wrong with me?” And what I want to do, is to support you in dropping ‘the what is wrong with me’ bit.

Because, A-#1 nothing. B-#2 not a darn thing. C-#3, nada, ya te lo dije, nada. Translation: Nothing, I already told you, nothing. Nada, nada, nada, mal con vos. You are perfect. You were born that way. And functional freeze is a brilliant survival skill.

So, let's look at functional freeze through the lens of human experience. What you'll see in these examples is that functional freeze isn't something that happens with a boom and a bang. It's generally not an acute trauma that tends to lead to a human adopting this nervous system state functional freeze as their steady state.

But rather, it's generally a slow burn of being misattuned to, ignored, thought less of, not given true loving care, or being smothered by overreacting parents. Even good and loving parents can unwittingly create an environment where their kids don't feel seen or heard, without even knowing it. There's also the complexity here of living in marginalized bodies, in systems that don't actually want you to survive.

So, let's start with Naomi. She grew up in a family of academics. Both her parents were university professors, and dinner table conversations were generally around pretty snooty, mug things. Scholarly achievements and pursuits more hoity toity than kid focused, for sure.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

Her home was filled with more books than toys; her parents had written a bunch of those books. And her parents made it pretty well known that they really wanted a quiet home. And for there to be no child fingerprints on their first editions. Their living room had more awards and citations than family photos.

From a young age, Naomi was groomed to excel academically, attending top tier prep schools, and participating in really nerdy pursuits like International Science Olympiads and other deep nerd nerdity. Since her parents were busy at school, Naomi spent a lot of time in the care of babysitters and in after-school programs, and felt like her parents didn't really care about *her* as a person.

Family dinners were less about family and more about renowned scientists. Authors and researchers often graced her family dinner. It was not uncommon for young Naomi to be asked about her recent test scores or what she was studying or what fancy things she wanted to be when she grew up.

Her parents celebrated her achievements with praise, but rarely acknowledged her as a person beyond what she had accomplished. On rare occasions, when she'd bring up her passion for painting or her recent weekend hike, or all the poetry she was enjoying writing, she was met with dismissive remarks or was overshadowed by discussions about achievements. The topic would quickly revert to academia.

Or worse, for her young nervous system, she'd say, "I love this thing I've been painting," and the room would go silent. Her parents, while well meaning, were emotionally distant. Feelings, emotions or discussions about well-being were seldom on the table. Her parents' own relationship was characterized by silent treatments and passive aggressive behaviors. And her mom often tried to triangulate with her, trying to get Naomi on her side about what a jerk her dad is.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

All of which Naomi internalized as normal. Her childhood was marked with thoughts like, “If it's not about success or achievement, it's not worth sharing. I need to be perfect to earn their attention. Maybe if I excel more, they'll be happier in their lives. They only care about school stuff, not who I really am. My paintings just don't matter to them. Why bother talking if they don't listen?”

And the one I find the most painful, “I won't be loved for my real self, my artist self. So, I better figure out someone else to be quick.” That's generally more of a subconscious thought. Similar ones were definitely subconscious for me; I didn't realize I was thinking about them.

That's the beauty of thought work, right? It helps us to actually see the subconscious thoughts rolling around creating our lives. Thoughts like that deeply impact the trajectory of our lives. It's what guides our experience of being us in the world and in our families.

These kinds of thoughts led to feelings like loneliness, a pressure to achieve, a deep yearning for genuine connection. Which is holding hands in our psyche with, “I can never have real connection as my true self.” That, paired with self-doubt and low self-worth, led Naomi to really step away from being *her* in the world.

These kinds of feelings led to actions like, questioning her worth and capacity. Despite being multitalented, she only pursued activities that would gain her parental approval. She smartly learned to live in a false self, keeping her real self at bay, frozen in her chest.

As she entered her teen years, she was president of her school's Honor Society, and a regular participant in debate championships. These achievements finally made her parents smile, but also deepened her sense of isolation for them. Because while they were beaming at her, she was gaining their love by being someone she really wasn't.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

The more she accomplished, the more isolated she felt from her peers, too. She hesitated to invite her friends over, fearing they'd be quizzed about their academic pursuits, because they often were. It was so cringy and awkward, that Naomi preferred loneliness to the experience of her friends' discomfort, and the rejection she knew would follow.

Now in her 30s, Naomi excels in her career at a top-tier consultancy, but struggles in social settings. Her benchmark for relationships were skewed from jump. She believed that love was transactional, based on what one could bring to the table, primarily in terms of accomplishments. Deep down she struggled with the fear of being seen beyond her achievements, because she didn't think anything beyond that matter.

In social settings, especially where personal discussions took the forefront, she would have totally freeze and would default to talking about snooty mug stuff, avoiding anything personal. This freeze was her defense mechanism, a way to shield her vulnerable self from potential judgment, or the pain of perceived inadequacy.

During corporate events, if conversations shifted away from work, she withdrew. In romantic relationships, emotional intimacy made Naomi feel trapped and kind of panicky. Unable to express or even generally recognize her feelings, she would go into a state of shutdown. Causing her partners to feel that she was distant, not fully present. Which she wasn't. She wasn't there. She was there, but she wasn't there.

She went on a series of first dates, but they seldom progress further. She struggles to share personal anecdotes or to engage in lighter nonacademic conversations, because they were never modeled for her. They were never supported. It was never okay to just be her.

She identifies with all three components of emotional outsourcing: Codependency, perfectionism, and people pleasing. Those thought habits

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

are all her norm. And she lives deep in functional freeze, thanks to her childhood experience.

Next up is Elena. She was raised in a blue collar suburb, in a tight-knit community where everyone knew everyone. Her parents both worked long hours in manual jobs to keep the family afloat. She had four older siblings, making her the baby of the family. Her household was a cacophony of activity, with family members from cousins to grandparents, aunts, uncles always coming and going.

Which, side note, makes me think of being a little kiddo in Argentina, lots of generations in the same household. Totally has its benefits, for sure. Sadly, Elena's parents, always tired from their demanding jobs, had little time or energy left for in-depth conversations or emotional check-ins with their five kiddos.

While they worked super hard and did their absolute best to provide for their children's physical needs, emotional nurturing took a backseat, as it had with their own parents. Elena's parents didn't know any other way to parent, or to be in the world.

Arguments between family members were frequent. They were always loud and short lived, with no subsequent discussions or resolutions. Just bursts of screaming, maybe a punch on the shoulder, and then back to cooking dinner and laughing. An emotional arc that was a bit steep for Elena's tender nervous.

As a kid she had thoughts like, "It's best to stay quiet and not add to the noise. If I speak up, it might just cause another fight. I can't be a burden to my family. My parents are already working so hard." And the subconscious thought, "Conflict is scary, and never gets resolved, just ignored. I don't matter in this household."

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

Overwhelmed by the chaos, a powerful longing to be noticed, and a fear of causing conflict, were Elena's big feels as a kid. Growing up, she often felt invisible amidst the bustle of her family. In school, she naturally gravitated towards similarly quiet peers. Their friendships were characterized by mutual understanding, but also a shared hesitancy to delve deeper or share personal feelings.

As she grew older, she became adept at being the peacemaker in any group. Often, suppressing her own feelings or opinions to maintain harmony, continuing to avoid conflict like a champ. From her fear of loud confrontations, and mostly her fear of the lack of processing or closure after fights, which was the norm in her childhood, Elena's nervous system would do my favorite combo; the functional freeze fawn experience. Which, for the record, really sucks.

She would often agree with her partners on everything, fearing that asserting her own desires or opinions would lead to conflict or abandonment. Because that's what she learned in childhood. This, in turn, made friendships and romantic relationships alike quite challenging.

At the same time, her nervous system only felt really safe when there was another person around. So, Elena was a chronic dater. Chain smoking dates, moving from one partner to the next to the next to the next to the next, out of a deep fear of being alone. Combined with a low capacity to be present with others in a deep way, leading to, well, let's just call it a "hot mess," shall we?

In situations that required personal sharing or confrontation, Elena would withdraw. If a topic too personal, or she felt her opinion might be unpopular, or would even just bother one person, she'd blank out. Unable to find words or form thoughts, this classic functional freeze experience left Elena feeling like her body couldn't be trusted.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

Meanwhile, this was her body's way of protecting her from the perceived threat of conflict or negative attention. This happened in her romantic relationships. She couldn't remember what she said in a heated moment, or what her partner said. She had no idea what was really going on because she would go so deep into freeze.

This would often lead to even bigger blow ups, as Elena often picked dates who were large and intense personalities. The stress of her childhood was also what her nervous system knew best, and thus, gravitated towards; because that's what nervous systems do.

Over time, this functional freeze response meant that Elena often felt disconnected in social settings. Friends and partners felt like she was holding back or not fully present, leading to misunderstandings and feelings of isolation. Meanwhile, her hyper vigilant sympathetic state led to a lifetime of belly aches, muscle pain, and a creeping, icky anxiety when she was with other people.

Functional freeze city, over here. Poor, sweet, Elena. I want to hug her up; consensually, of course. But that's challenging, right?

Now, on to Rachel. Rachel grew up in a small town. The middle child between older brother Max and a younger sister Katie. The family lived comfortably. Pop's was the manager at a local factory, and their mama stayed home to raise the kiddos.

Her mother was a dominating force in the household, and had all of the big feelings, lots of them. Because she, herself, was living that emotional outsourcing life and was rather emotionally immature, Rachel's mom would seem totally fine, thank you, and then big feelings would come out of nowhere fast.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

She had a habit of reacting intensely to rather minor events, when they would be that last straw on her invisible knapsack of stress and overwhelm. Rachel knew she could count on not knowing how her mom would react. Unpredictability was the theme of her childhood, while over reactivity was also the theme. So, that's a real setup for functional freeze. Am I right?

An accidental spill of a cup of milk at the dinner table could lead to a shouting match. An A-? Oof, an A- on a school report would cause a week's worth of weird, yucky, passive aggressive comments like, "With all I do for you, you can't even seem to apply yourself at school."

Rachel's mom would mutter these kinds of things while collecting Rachel's laundry off the floor. Something Rachel had offered a dozen times to do herself. Her mom would complain about doing the laundry too, while never actually taking Rachel up on her offer to lend a hand. You see the emotional outsourcing there? Rachel's mom is a perfect example of the self-abandonment cycle.

So, if you haven't heard those episodes, listen to the rest of this, and then go listen to 163 and 164, "The Self-Abandonment Cycle" and "Healing the Self-Abandonment Cycle". It is such a pivotal part of emotional outsourcing, and really does play into functional freeze. So, learn about it. It's good stuff.

Rachel's like, "Mom, I'll do the laundry. You don't have to do it." Her mom was like, "Oh, but I do." Just insisted on doing it, get resentful, and then use that as part of her passive-aggressive ammunition against Rachel. That's a lot, right?

Also, her mom was very judgmental and controlling when it came to appearances, frequently commenting on Rachel's weight, her food choices, really pushing her to do sports that she had absolutely no interest in. Really, with the main goal of trying to get Rachel to lose weight. While often making lousy, painful comparisons to Rachel's friends or even celebrities.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

Meanwhile, Max, her older brother, seemed to live under a completely different set of rules. He was celebrated for every minor achievement, and was rarely reprimanded, even for very significant missteps. Rachel's mom could also be counted on to overreact, and have really, really large feelings about small things, that were really all about how she was feeling, and not her kids' experience.

An example of this is, if one of the kids, let's say they were playing outside and somebody fell, and was like, "Ouch, I hurt myself." Her reaction was so enormous. "Oh, my God, are you okay? What happened? Let me look at it. You need to go to the doctor?"

Huge reactions, which then, on the backside, would also turn into anger. "I can't believe I have to deal with this. What's going on? Can't you be more careful?" So, it was this intense worry. But then also, Rachel's mom was stuck in the self-abandonment cycle. She was then also, really resentful and pissed off that she had to take care of her kids.

So, that huge reactivity, and especially when paired with anger or annoyance or resentment or frustration, but even just the huge over reactivity, that alone tells the child's nervous system, "Hide yourself away. Don't feel your feelings. Hide your feelings. They're not safe. They're not okay. They are a problem."

Her childhood thoughts were, "I can never do anything right. Wow, Max must be so much more important than I am. Mom will get mad if I eat this. I have to hide my feelings so I don't freak mom out." Subconsciously, what she learned was, "I don't matter. My Grades, my looks, my weight, that, all of that matters. But me, my true self? Nah."

The feelings she felt were constant anxiety, feelings of inadequacy, resentment towards her brother and her mother, suppressed anger towards her mom, a deep worry that her feelings were way too much. She felt

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

abandoned by her father. She knew he was working hard, but also, where was he while this was all going on.

She developed a keen and wild capacity to read the room from a young; ahem, hypervigilance. Always gauging her mother's mood before speaking, acting, looking up from her phone. With hyper awareness, it made her exceptionally tuned in to the emotions of those around her, but at the expense of her own emotional expression. Which she suppressed her connection to, in order to focus on everyone else in the room.

In school, and later, in college, she chose friends who were more passive, avoiding dominant personalities reminiscent of her mother. She became the caretaker in most of her relationships, always ensuring others were okay, but rarely voicing her own needs or feelings.

Romantic relationships mirrored her family dynamic. She often found herself with controlling partners, playing the role of the appeaser, much like she did with her mom growing up. Whenever confronted or placed in situations where her opinion was sought, Rachel would also blank out. A wall going up in her mind.

Oof, God, I remember that feeling like it was yesterday. Y'all I think a lot and fast, and I talk a lot and fast, and just to think back to those functional freeze, blank wall moments, oof it's intense to not have access to any words.

All right, back to Rachel. This functional freeze became her default response to any form of potential confrontation. Her fear of explosive reactions, shaped by her mother's volatility, meant she would often remain silent, or agree with others even if she felt differently. Over time, it took a toll on her self-worth and led to feelings of isolation, as those around her felt that she was distant and uncommunicative.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

All of it strengthened her functional freeze state. Rachel also didn't know how to accept help. Remember, when she said, "Mom, I'm hurt," she got panic, she got freak out, she got banana boat full freakout. So, when she was hurt, when she was upset, when she was sad, when she was lonely, when she wanted or needed help, she kept her little mouth shut. She kept it quiet; she kept it to herself. She kept it private.

In that process, she suppressed her own capacity to receive love. Receiving love and care became, well, not something she did. Thank you very much. "I'm fine. Do you need something? Can I get you something? Do you need a cup of something? Do you need help? Hey, how are you? How is work? Tell me all about it."

So, of course her romantic relationships felt one sided. Of course, she felt like no one took care of her, because she never let them. And so, eventually, they stopped trying. You know, it makes sense. Her nervous system was just doing what nervous systems do. It would look for folks who, frankly, didn't want to show up for her.

This is what often happens. People living in functional freeze become givers and attract takers. On the other hand, her sister Katie, she checked the entire way out in her relationships. Choosing partners who had that same domineering streak their mom had.

Dating go-getters who would get it done, so she could dissolve into the couch, buffering with TV, checking out of reality, because she learned in childhood her opinions, needs, wants didn't really matter, if they weren't aligned with her mom's.

So, she realized she didn't really matter at home. She allowed others to take over and run her life, and would freak out, like her domineering mother, if her partner asked her to participate emotionally or physically in the relationship or household. Like their mom, Katie would gaslight partners

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

who asked for her to do things any differently, because being checked out and not present was her safe place. Being asked to be a real person in a relationship was way too scary.

Let's take a breath. We're going to breathe in; long, slow out. If it is safe for you to stand up, if that is within your physical capacity, give your body a little shake. That was a lot. There's a lot to identify with there, right? Yeah, give your body a little shake out. Come back into the present moment. Orient yourself to the here and now. You're alright, baby. You're here. It's okay.

While there was a lot to identify with there, there are so many other lived experiences that can lead to functional freeze. I mean, that was just three examples that I put together from my lived experience, from my clients in Anchored, my six-month coaching program.

I have coached hundreds of women over the years, so I pulled together these experiences, and I tried to keep them really, really simple so we could see ourselves. I will say we didn't even touch on the complexity of living in a marginalized identity, in the patriarchy, white settler colonialism, late stage capitalism, Neo feudalism.

We didn't talk about what that does to a nervous system. That's some complex business, for sure, that we talk about a little bit pretty much every week, but it's huge, right? The impact of systems of oppression on our nervous system, on our functional capacity to be with ourselves, present in our physiology, or not. I mean, ancestral trauma, it plays a massive role in our experience of functional freeze and fawning.

And right now, we are really looking to understand the basics of what this nervous system state and experience looks like, so we can start to see ourselves in the people we love. So, we can start to shift.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

So, my loves, we are going to pause here. Let this marinate, let this soak in, let your nervous system create a little space to actually hear this, identify with it, see yourself, possibly be like, “Ooh, it, me,” or whatever, “It's somebody I love.”

Next week, we're going to talk a little bit more about how all of this impacts our everything. And of course, we're going to start moving towards remedies. Because it's really important to know that there's hope, that there's the possibility for change.

I'll remind you, that this was my whole life, was living in functional freeze and fawn. It's just what I did. But life's really different now, and I'm really grateful. So, take heart, dear one. Take heart, my sweet love. Really, truly, life can get so much more better. I love my life now. Life used to feel really challenging, and my life did not feel like a life I wanted, a life I enjoyed, a life that was good and healthy for me.

It really does now. It really, really, really does now, and that is just, oh, it's just magnificent. I'm so excited to talk with you about some of the things I did to really step out of this mix nervous system state, to step from somatic self-disconnection into somatic connection.

So, make sure that you are following the show, you've subscribed to the show, so you don't miss a thing. You don't want to just stay for the challenging bits and miss the fun, huh? Or maybe you do. If you do, then don't listen next week. I highly recommend against it.

Alright, my beauties, my loves, let's do what we do. A gentle hand on your heart, should you feel so moved. And remember, you are safe. You are held. You are loved. And, when one of us heals, we help heal the world. Be well. I'll talk to you soon.

Ep #247: Functional Freeze (Part 2): Real-Life Stories of How It Came to Be This Way

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Feminist Wellness*. If you want to learn more all about somatics, what the heck that word means, and why it matters for your life, head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/somaticswebinar for a free webinar all about it. Have a beautiful day my darling and I'll see you next week. Ciao.