

Ep #266: Real-Life Coaching from Anchored: Overcoming Codependency



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.

This week I'm excited to share a recording of a live coaching call I had with Kelly, a member of the Anchored family. And I'm sharing it because it is so powerful to witness someone else's growth and to do so with an open heart and mind that helps you to see yourself in their process. To learn about you as they learn about themselves.

And this is what we do in Anchored, my 6 month somatic and thought work coaching program. It's an intimate, sweet, lovely group and we come together to learn from and with each other, to build our capacity in our nervous system, to be with life, to coregulate, to show one another what is possible – and it's so inspiring!

It's also really special to be in a group of women who are as dedicated as you are to growth, to finding and implementing solutions. A group of amazing smarty pants who really get it, who understand the shame that so many of us live in, that comes inside our codependent thinking, the guilt when you set a boundary, the struggle to make decisions and stick to them. That whole daily rumination thing.

The judgment of self and others that plagues us, on and on. Whatever you're dealing with, the women of Anchored get it and will support you, and I will coach you live every week and in the forum legit every weekday to make massive and most importantly sustainable change that lasts a lifetime.

And because you're part of a cohort, a familia, together for six months, it really helps open our hearts to be seen in our wholeness, really allowing all

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parts of ourselves to be seen and held, especially the parts that we don't necessarily love about us. Anchored is a safer space to practice true vulnerability, to make a ton of new friends, and to let yourself be witnessed by other women who really care so you can let yourself shine.

So you can step into being the most powerful, regulated, present version of you. And together we take a good hard look at what's blocking us from doing exactly that and come together to learn how to live differently, interdependently, in our autonomy and authenticity and with greater resilience so life doesn't just knock us down all the darn time!

This is just a taste of what we do in Anchored. We also have a ton of fun because being silly and laughing and dancing and just BEING together is healing. It truly is. And also like what is the point of doing all of this healing if not to be both a force of good in this world, and also to have more fun? Listen, I'm a former hospice nurse, life is very short! And it's very long if you're not having fun. Come on now! More fun, more better.

Listen, if you've been wanting to join Anchored, now is the time, my beauty. It's newly revamped, all shiny and new, very exciting. And you can apply now for one of the remaining spots left at victoriaalbina.com/anchored.

Come on! Join us! It's the best time ever. And I can't wait to welcome you to Anchored. And now, without further ado, and you know I love ado, I'm so excited to share this coaching that I did with the magnificent Kelly.

—

Victoria: Hey Kelly. Thank you so much for joining me here today.

Kelly: Good morning. Thank you. Happy to be here.

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Victoria: Great. So what are we coaching on?

Kelly: Well, I just took a solo backpacking and road trip and just noticing all the different thoughts that came through and then had a couple of events on the trip that I just want to make sure I'm landing in a healthy place around.

Victoria: Right on. Yeah, let's dive in.

Kelly: Okay, so I just celebrated the two-year anniversary of being divorced, which that part...

Victoria: Celebration.

Kelly: But still definitely getting used to the not being a part of a couple or a team, not being with my kids for periods during the summer. So this year I decided I was going to take a solo backpacking trip and drive from the Bay Area to Seattle and then stay in Seattle for a couple of weeks while my kids were visiting their dad. And it's just nothing has turned out the way that I expected it to. So it's been an opportunity to notice my thought patterns. Shall I go into some of them?

Victoria: Yeah, please. What feels like the thought or the thing that came up that you'd like some coaching support around?

Kelly: So I would say the first thing is this thought pattern around when things don't go as expected. So I put it out to a few people that said they wanted to do something with me. The first is my friend Amy who was like, I really want to be on an adventure with you, and so she committed to going backpacking with me.

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And then about two weeks before, as we were making plans, first she was going to invite another person who has kids, and so then that was the little challenging conversation of me having to say okay, I've been with my kids nonstop for quite a long time, I was thinking about going backpacking.

And I have this continual thought in that moment of that person shouldn't even be asking. They should know. They asked to be on my adventure with me, and then I have this feeling of this kind of imposition, that I have to have this uncomfortable conversation.

Let's say that's where it started. And I did a decent job there, but definitely had some building. And then in the end, it got so hard planning with other people I ended up just going by myself. And I couldn't really tell if that was a really conscious thing, or if it was a repetitive pattern that I have of feeling disappointed, let down, don't want to have those conversations, resentful, angry, and then I just go and do my own thing, and then feel a little sorry for myself that I'm alone and I didn't mean to be alone. So I kind of vacillated back and forth between that at the beginning of my trip. So that might be a good starting point for us.

Victoria: Yeah, let's start with that one particularly because you said the word resentment, and for us who are working to do this life-long work of healing our codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits, resentment is that quick ego go-to. That I've been wronged, that so often doesn't even really line up with reality, right?

So I think it could be really fruitful to dive in there. And I just want to do a check-in. Do you want to start with a cognitive approach using the thought work protocol or do you want to start somatically, checking in with your body to see where all of this lives?

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Kelly: Such a good question. I feel like I do so much of the cognitive approach on my own that it feels like somatic feels like the right way to start.

Victoria: Right on. Well, thank you. Alright, so I want to invite you if it feels safe for you in this moment to close your beautiful eyes, I want to invite you to attune to your breath. There is nothing about your breath to change. You just get to bring your awareness to it.

From that awareness, see if perhaps a hand wants to come to your chest, to your heart. No pressure. Just check in. Some gentle compassion in there as you connect in with your own heart. I want to invite you to feel into this moment where you had planned this trip, this celebration of you, this energy of freedom and independence I know you have worked so hard to bring in, not just to your mind, but into your body, into your being on this two-year anniversary of your divorce.

I want to invite you to bring to mind and into your body that moment where you're talking with Amy, you're planning this trip, there's perhaps excitement. And then she says I'd like to invite someone who would bring children along on this trip.

After you've spent the last year and a half in COVID pandemic quarantine with your kids 24/7, I want to invite you to feel into what happens in your body as you picture yourself in that moment. And as you're willing and able, I'll invite you to share what's coming up for you.

Kelly: Well, I'm really connected to the fact that it's a very much childlike place. So there was this feeling of being like free and getting to run and play and having playmates that want to play with you, and then this kind of contraction of I've gotten in trouble, I don't get to play anymore, I have to go inside, I have to do something, follow some rules, and I'm not free

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anymore. So there is this feeling of kind of opening and then this kind of contraction of like, shoulders down, head down, I don't get to do that thing anymore.

Victoria: And as you feel into that, that story that lives in your body, that feeling of I must have done something wrong, this freedom is being taken from me, as you feel into that, where does it live in your body?

Kelly: It literally lives all through my midline, I can feel this tight contraction and it's vertical, which is kind of interesting. It lives in my sternum. It's kind of this tightening, contract in, type of feeling that contracts in around my ribcage.

Victoria: As we start to visualize it, as we get into contacting, create a relationship with it, does it have a color?

Kelly: It has a non-color, it feels like black and smoky, like the absence of vibrance and color.

Victoria: So the absence of color and the midline along your sternum. Feeling of freedom being taken away from you. Does it have a temperature?

Kelly: I immediately wanted to say cold, but then I really just wanted to check in to see if I actually felt that. I would say cold came to me right away because I just want to go like that, which I associate with that feeling of being cold.

Victoria: So it's a space with the absence of color. There's no light there and it's cold and contracting. Is it solid? Is it amorphous? Does it have a texture?

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Kelly: It's more amorphous. Kind of moving, smoky, hard to define, hard to wrap your arms around. This feeling of you can't quite grab it because it's moving and it'll move when you try to grab it.

Victoria: So it evades you.

Kelly: Yes.

Victoria: That resonated.

Kelly: There's something about it being that smoky, like there's something behind it and I just can't see and I can't get it to move and this kind of feeling like I just want to swipe it away.

Victoria: There's a part of you that really doesn't want it to be there, huh?

Kelly: Definitely.

Victoria: So in order to see what's behind it, my intuition is telling me that first, befriending it may help. How's that landing?

Kelly: I feel totally like I want to befriend that, the little girl that just wants to play. I can't feel that I want to befriend this thing, but I feel the real need of wanting to befriend that desire, to feel free and unencumbered and with other people.

Victoria: That makes a lot of sense to me. These energies, these dark amorphous shifting lines within us can feel challenging to want to befriend, to want to even get to know, because they feel - there's that heaviness. Oh hi.

Kelly: Hi, yes, I really wanted to connect with you.

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Victoria: Yeah, let's co-regulate. Okay, so as we co-regulate, your nervous system, my nervous system kind of ding together, I want to invite you to check in and it can be a very surface level check in to start. Does it feel safe for you emotionally, energetically to go back in to look at that shadow part? Because there are other options.

Kelly: No, it definitely feels safe. Yes, it feels safe.

Victoria: Okay, well next let's check in with desire. Do you want to look at it right now? Is this the morning to look at it? Or is there another option?

Kelly: No, I definitely want to look at it. As many things do, it surprises me.

Victoria: Will you tell me more about it surprising you?

Kelly: I really connected with this kind of deep-seated story that I did something wrong.

Victoria: Sounds like an old one, huh?

Kelly: Totally. That's really sad to attribute so much of life to you did something wrong.

Victoria: I hear you and as always I'm here to support whatever feeling supports you and serves you. I think it's fair, normal, and fine to have some sadness about carrying that. And I'll propose this and we'll see how it feels. What about looking at that shadow, that amorphous energy that says you've done something wrong, what about looking at it as a protector part? As a part that just loves Kelly so much it wants to keep you safe.

Kelly: Yeah, that's where the befriending comes from.

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Victoria: As always, I'm not ever saying that to negate you having any feeling. Have all the feelings. But what I'm saying is in your own time and in your own process, having felt that sad, for me in my own life, it's been so helpful to come into allyship and to see how that's not working against me, it believes it's working for me.

Kelly: And then it's not rejecting it.

Victoria: Yeah, it's pulling it in closer. It's in a way saying - no, it's directly saying thank you. I see you, I see your plan here, buddy. It always makes me think of dogs. My dogs would always lose their minds over squirrels in the yard. Or if someone they knew would come to the door they would bark and bark and bark and bark. Because they thought they were protecting me. They had the one job.

Kelly: Well, in that way, I just literally got a burst of energy of like, yes, let's go in, let's meet. Because before I was like, I just want to see behind you, I just want you to move to the side, I just want to get back to some color, versus I actually want to meet you. So yeah, I feel energized to do that.

Victoria: I'm so glad. And I'll just say it plainly once more. Of course you wanted to push that aside. That makes sense. It makes sense that your psyche is like, do not look behind that curtain. Totally fine, understandable, makes sense. But yeah, okay. Right on.

So I will remind you and all the parts of you that this is a feminist space and consent that is freely given is freely taken away. If at any point you're done, you're done. You open your eyes like you did before, we co-regulate, and we come back to this when your body agrees that it's the right time. Sound good?

Kelly: Yes absolutely, thank you.

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Victoria: Beautiful. So I'll invite you to close your beautiful eyes again. Really ground yourself into your body as much as that feels safe in this moment. I want to invite you to get present once more with that sensation in your chest, that dark, amorphous, hard to grasp energy that runs along your sternum, along the midline, that energy that has no form, has no color, for it's the absence of color. As you attune to that energy, I'll invite you to check in with it, to see if it is available and if it gives consent for connection.

Kelly: Yes, absolutely.

Victoria: Beautiful. As we get to know this part of you, this energy in your chest, it can be so helpful to know its name.

Kelly: So funny how much I fight sharing. So I recently through doing holotropic breathing with you, connected with one of my inner guides and it's a very wise, old feminine being and she goes by Apha. And I'm very much being shown two things. The reason why this energy is vertical is because then it can move through my body and go where it needs to be, versus horizontal, it's just blocking everything off. And the second is just that this is kind of my ninja warrior energy. Black for stealth and I'm seeing a little jujitsu move.

Victoria: So is this Apha's energy?

Kelly: Yes.

Victoria: And Apha uses she/her pronouns? Did I get that right?

Kelly: Yes.

Victoria: Thank you. Yeah, so this is Apha energy, this wise energy that runs along the midline, perhaps channeling and moving energy. This

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warrior energy, this stealth energy within you. So as you continue to hold connection with Apha, I'll invite you to ask her, why do you need a stealth protector?

Kelly: So many thoughts going through my head. I'm trying to slow them down. I, in addition to having my codependent thought patterns, I just really, really am a very sensitive person. I can really sense energy and it really overwhelmed me as a child. Especially being in a home that was very chaotic and unstructured and organized and rage.

It was so unpredictable. I kind of just lived in fear. I was so afraid. And then I also really believed that I needed other people to protect me. That I couldn't do that for myself. Maybe that's actually a really healthy thought because I was a kid.

Victoria: Yeah, I was just thinking exactly that, my love.

Kelly: But especially having a twin sister, I thought of her as stronger than I was and that I needed to kind of toughen up. And I feel like this energy is my toughen up, face things, I was really afraid of the dark and I thought I shouldn't be afraid of the dark, so there was something about it being dark that I'm supposed to befriend or something like that. That's the jumble of thoughts I'm having right now.

Victoria: I will reflect back that it doesn't sound jumbled at all to me. I think you're making so much sense. We are conditioned with these stories that humans socialized as women were supposed to be quiet and meek and we're told we're not as strong as the boys, we're given all those messages from parents and family and teachers.

Like I need two strong boys to carry this to the office, right? And then when it's scary as a child to reach out for the support you need from the adults,

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from the big people who are actually supposed to support you and protect you because that's their job, it makes sense to me that little you would create these stories, that there would be this complexity.

And I have a wondering, a curiosity, let's see how this resonates. It may not resonate at all. But I wonder if Apha and this Apha energy, this protector energy may be coming up now to support you in being kinder to you around knowing what you want and need, around letting it be okay that you were scared, around letting it be okay now that conflict sometimes feels challenging and scary because your inner children are logically, understandably scared of conflict because it was actually dangerous.

Kelly: I felt full-body systemic relief when you said that. I have tears right now but there's kind of like, just this softening. Just literally feels amazing to think that you have - and I want to externalize it, someone protecting you. That's why I paused because I was like, well, it's me protecting me but it feels like you can relax. Feels really good actually, a giant relief.

Victoria: Let yourself revel in that. Let yourself soak it all up. Feel that relief of not just knowing in your mind but feeling in your body that you deeply have your back.

Kelly: Yeah, totally.

Victoria: And you have since little. So wise of your child self to bring in this great protector, to bring this Apha energy in, to make it a part of you, your identity, your psyche, your body.

Kelly: Yeah, that was a really interesting experience because I feel like my body 100% accepts that I have my back now. But when you said that I had my back as a child, I got this like, did I? And then I really started to accept

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that like, wait, you did, you always did. That felt like that's the missing connection is like, really allowing myself to believe.

Because I think healing as an adult, there's still some hook to oh, if you would have done something different, x, y, z times, then you could have skipped all these things. So even still this belief that I did it wrong, to end up here, versus I did it exactly beautifully the way it was meant to be for me.

Victoria: Yeah. And you did the best you could with the skills you had at the time. You were just a children.

Kelly: Exactly.

Victoria: I think it's really important whenever we're talking about resiliency and the amazing, incredible resiliency of children, I think it's really vital to honor the fact that I'm calling this a fact, that it sucks that you had to be resilient. I think it's really important to allow ourselves to pause here. I'm sorry, lo siento, that you had to be resilient instead of just playing.

And that's one for later thought work and later somatic work, to shift our relationship to that story, but at first it's so important to just let it suck and be really pissed or sad or whatever feels come up.

Kelly: Again, just such relief because that's the storyline that keeps me stuck is there was some healthy way to get through these super unhealthy situations, versus unhealthy situation, things happened, you roll and you heal and you do the best you can.

Victoria: And I would posit that the "healthy" response is the one that you as an actual child, your inner children, your nervous system, with the attunement it got in this family system, with all the components of your

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environment, these were the healthiest choices you could make given where you were.

Kelly: Yes.

Victoria: What were you going to do? Move out at six?

Kelly: Well no, I was going to heal and change everyone. I was going to be Joan of Arc and lead us all. That really resonates with me what you just said.

Victoria: And let's all also pause to remember how Joan of Arc - there was a pyre involved at the end of that story, right? But sure, the great protector in the middle. And what you 100% showed up to do is to protect you. And that is so beautiful.

Kelly: Also what I just got clear as day is that energy is there to help me release that it's my job to try to protect anybody else. I think that's why it's still alive in there because that's the part that I need to befriend and also accept.

Victoria: Yeah. And for me, bringing us back to Amy, I just always remind myself that other people also get to show up for themselves and let me pause, check in. Some eye contact, hi, good, I'm here. How's your body?

Kelly: My body feels good. Also, I can tell when I have an end to being able to not to stay in it without my brain trying to take over logically and that's where it was happening.

Victoria: So let's honor your window of bodily dignity, the window of tolerance, that your nervous system just gave you this super clear message, basta, we're done. That's it. We're done.

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Kelly: I like it in Spanish.

Victoria: Everything is better in Spanish. We're done. How beautiful that you felt that shift and were able to vocalize it? Thank you for doing that for you.

Kelly: Thank you for allowing me to do that. And also just it's quite a journey to be able to open my eyes and be seen. Because usually these are moments where I'd want to look away, hide, shut down, so there's really something about that I want you to see me, I want to be seen, that was also - that's really important.

Victoria: What a gift. What a gift to co-create this safe space with each other. That is beautiful. Thank you. So let's run a quick check in. This could be a really great place to pause the work for today and we can just come back to it next week and talk about ways you can show up for yourself in those Amy moments because they will happen. They will continue to happen because that's life. Or we could talk about it now if you check in. Where you at?

Kelly: I mean, I could definitely talk about it now. I'll go with your guidance.

Victoria: I'm open.

Kelly: Yeah. Let's do it. It feels like it could be fruitful to...

Victoria: Beautiful. So if we go back to that moment with Amy, you thought you're going to go just with her, and then two weeks before she says oh hey, I want to invite so-and-so and their kiddos. And this Apha energy comes up. What accompanies that energy in your mind?

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Kelly: There's kind of immediate frustration towards the other person. In this particular case, there's you said you wanted to go with me, I didn't ask you, and then I committed to going with you and didn't make plans with other people, and now at the last minute you're changing the plan. All of that is very, very, very familiar, of like, you put me off, so I didn't do this other stuff, and now I'm in this bad position.

And I make it into a bad position immediately without even asking the other person. I don't even know who the other person is. I don't even know how old their kids are. For all I know, they're in college. But already I'm like, with this big imposition. And you've put me out and now I'm in a bad spot and I'm going to have this bad trip because you weren't thinking of me. That's kind of where my head goes quickly.

Victoria: I mean, given all we know about Apha and how you felt as a girl, this all lines up, right? It makes sense that you would go right to there, right? So when you have that thought, is it fair to sum it up as you're not respecting me or I'm being disrespected? I'm going to take some notes for us.

Kelly: It's not respect. It's like, I'm being de-prioritized. My needs don't matter.

Victoria: Yeah, what else is Apha for if not because your inner children think - have heard this story before. My needs don't matter, so that thought, what's the feeling that thought creates in your body?

Kelly: If it creates a more soft feeling, it skips real fast to anger, frustration.

Victoria: Those are a little different, right? Anger and frustration. Which one resonates more? Which one feels more right? More true?

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Kelly: Anger.

Victoria: Yeah. So what's the action you take when you're full up with that anger at Amy?

Kelly: Well, a lot of - I completely forget who the other person is. Kind of like, venting. I also kind of dramatize the story. The timeframe, the way they asked, I play it out and its worst scenario. I usually withdraw from the person because I don't want to respond with anger, so I kind of withdraw and shutdown and I don't respond or ask any questions.

Victoria: Yeah, and as part of that, what's the result that you're creating from all that?

Kelly: Well, the result is I stay in this kind of disconnected space with Amy. I've withdrawn and shutdown and I'm not talking with her. I mean, the results also - I feel let down and isolated. And then I also - another result is I don't feel good about the way that I've interacted. I don't even with the other person a chance. I've created all this story in my brain, I've shutdown and withdrawn from them, and then what usually will happen is I'll go off and do my own thing and never really circle back. So I've kind of created this monumental story in our relationship that's going to be a roadblock.

Victoria: And I would posit and I'm just going to share the thought work with you here as I'm writing it down. So I'm also wondering if the result is yes, you stay disconnected from Amy, you feel isolated, what I was hearing was also you make it that the other person's needs don't matter. And in that, neither do your own because you didn't get time with anyone. You were in this isolated place, right?

Kelly: Yeah. So I haven't even asked a single question about anything, what she's trying to accomplish by inviting this other friend.

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Victoria: And what's interesting, one of the things that we often do, remembering the core wound of codependent thinking is about worthiness. It's that I'm not worthy unless someone else validates it. I'm not worthy unless I'm taking care of others.

So I have found that often, when we feel that the tides are turned, that someone isn't giving us that codependent style prioritization that we give everyone, when we feel that our own needs don't matter, we dismiss the fact or the possibility of someone else's needs mattering.

Kelly: Yes, absolutely.

Victoria: It's a way to justify, right? Well, if my needs don't matter then neither do yours then, forget about you. We brush it off so it doesn't, from the story and the belief that thus it won't hurt as much. So let's create an intentional protocol here, which is when we take this work we've done here, our unintentional protocol, our habitual thinking, and having checked in with our bodies and I'll invite you to check in again and see where you're at. We decide how we want to think, feel, act, and the result we want to create in our lives. So if you check in with your body, do you feel ready to shift around this? Do you need more time to sit with it?

Kelly: No, I absolutely feel ready to shift.

Victoria: Beautiful. So our circumstance is always going to be the same, a court-admissible neutral fact. Here, Amy invited others with kids, but we're keeping it short. I'm not making too much clickity-clack noise. So how would you rather think or feel about the totally neutral fact that Amy said, hey Jane, do you want to come with us? What action would you like to take or result would you like to create for yourself? Remember, we can start anywhere in the new protocol.

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Kelly: Yeah, well the result feels so clear, so let's definitely work backwards from there. So Amy is a beautiful, supportive friend who without her friendship the last few years would have not been nearly as pleasant as they are. So number one is to just nourish. That's the word that just came to my mind. Nourish the relationship with Amy. There's also a clear result I have around honoring my needs for rest and relaxation, fun, adventure.

Victoria: Does it feel in your body, in your mind that those two can coexist? Because I wrote while.

Kelly: When I am regulated, absolutely. But when I'm in that other stuff, no. It's either my needs or their needs.

Victoria: Totally makes sense. If Apha is present, is Apha is right here, of course that makes sense.

Kelly: But yes, right now, I really - I mean obviously, it's the culmination of our work is that yes, you can nourish a relationship with someone while honoring your needs, while honoring their needs. I absolutely believe in that. Just because I haven't been able to do it yet doesn't mean that's not what I want. That's not true either what I just said but...

Victoria: I was about to call you in on that one. Oh brains, they love these extremes, huh?

Kelly: Yeah, so that feels very clear what the result is.

Victoria: What are the actions you would need to take when the circumstance is Amy invited others to move you towards this result?

Kelly: So number one is honoring that it is okay that I have an emotional reaction, that I can just honor it and let it do its thing. Because I think what I

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want to say is be curious, be open. But when I'm having that emotional reaction, there's just no way to do that. So kind of honor it, do this, talk to you or talk to someone else...

Victoria: Yeah, do your somatic practices you learned in Anchored.

Kelly: Yes, exactly. And then ask her a question, ask for more information, check in with myself about what I want and don't want. So from there, it's really just like, what are your wants, what are you trying to accomplish with this ask, what are my wants, and let's talk. The actions would be open dialogue once I get back into...

Victoria: Open dialogue. What would you need to feel?

Kelly: I mean, I guess just neutral. That her ask doesn't mean anything, doesn't have anything to do with me. It's just a thing.

Victoria: Yeah, so is that the thought, her ask has nothing to do with me?

Kelly: Yeah, definitely.

Victoria: So as we read this back, circumstance, Amy invited others on this camping trip. Thought, her ask has nothing to do with me. Your feeling is neutral, and from that neutral place, meaning your nervous system is regulated, you're in ventral vagal with yourself, with Amy, you're not going up the ladder into sympathetic, you're not dropping down into that dorsal freeze, that contraction that you talked about, nor are you getting anxious, you're just right here.

From there you can have that open dialogue that honors you and honors her, leading to the relationship of nourishing your relationship with her while honoring your own needs. I'll also add while honoring your own needs and

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reminding myself that other people's choices have nothing to do with me, something like that?

Kelly: Yeah.

Victoria: I think that's really important to bring in because again, from that protective wounding of my worth is decided by others, of course we take things personally. Of course we take things as slights. So every time I can start to rewrite that neural groove, nothing to do with me, nothing to do with me, it helps it truly feel somatically in my body, like it has less and less to do with me. How does that sound?

Kelly: Yes, totally.

Victoria: Beautiful. So let me check in. How are you feeling around this shift in body, in mind, around this situation?

Kelly: Really good. Also kind of have this little moment of feeling proud of myself that I am totally safe to explore with Amy. I have created that relationship. And I feel really like what a great place to practice. I feel really grateful. And as we were working, there were so many other thoughts that would lead me to very positive growth, like one is which I've been that person she's invited to things before because she welcomes people into her life. And so there's all these thoughts of like, wow, there's a lot of ways to really work with this one. And that feels good.

Victoria: I'm so, so glad. Beautiful. So should Apha come up again in that sort of take your breath away kind of way, I just want to make sure we end this conversation with you having a tool close at hand, either a somatic practice, a movement, a thought, something that you could tap into to connect inward. Does anything come up for you?

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Kelly: Definitely. So there's this practice that I kind of just made up and it's a combo of some tai chi that I learned when I was in Asia and deep breathing. And I often feel like while I'm doing it, I think I'm doing it wrong, because it helps me so much because I've really realized I'm doing it exactly the way that I'm supposed to.

And so I do this thing where I kind of bring in energy and then I push it wherever it feels like it needs to go. Out or across or back in. And I can just tell which way it's supposed to go and I think that feels really connected to that Apha energy because it's there because it's meant to kind of move to where I need it. It's not supposed to stay stuck in my sternum. Anyway, that practice, which is just bringing in stuff and pushing it.

Victoria: Beautiful.

Kelly: That feels like a good Apha practice.

Victoria: I'm so, so glad. Beautiful. Thank you so much Kelly.

Kelly: You're welcome. Thank you so much.

Victoria: You are absolutely welcome. I'd love to close by taking a deep breath together if that feels good for your body. Let's take a slow deep breath in, long exhale, thank you, thank you.

Kelly: Thank you.

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Be well, my beauty. I'll talk to you soon.

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