

Ep #267: The False Protective Mechanism of Taking Things Personally



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 was coaching a client in Anchored, my six-month coaching program, the other day and we were talking about taking things personally.

How this really young part of her, this inner child, really takes things to heart. Really sort of preemptively makes things about her, that when she pulls back and we're coaching and she can really get a little cognitive distance she can see those things actually have zero to do with her. But in her heart and in her soma, in her body, she's reactive ahead of time, just in case.

Over these many, many, many years of working with us, us emotional outsourcers... folks with codependent, perfectionist and people pleasing thought habits... I've come to see just how much we take things personally, and generally things that have absolutely 0.0 things to do with actual us.

I get why we do the habit, and I also see just how painful it really, really can be. So, I recommended that that client listen to this episode all about taking things personally. And I thought, "Hey, why should I only remind her?" If it's up for her, maybe it's up for you. Maybe this is something that's going on in your life.

Maybe your tender, tender, tender ravioli feelings are getting hurt left and right. Maybe you're on the other side of it and there's someone you love and care about who's constantly offended or always gets their feelings hurt and you want to understand them more, so you can bring in more compassion, less judgment, more acceptance, more care, and can be well, less annoyed.

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Because before I really understood this, it's interesting to pull back with... you know, 20/20 hindsight... and realize that there's this whole period of time where I was doing the taking things personally, right? I was getting offended. I was making things about me that had nothing to do with me. While simultaneously being incredibly annoyed by this one particular person in my life who really takes taking it personally to a PhD level art form, and is chronically offended by strangers on the bus looking at her.

So hindsight, right? It's this really interesting thing, that when we're bothered by something it's often because it is something interpersonal, not geopolitical. But when we're bothered by something interpersonal, it's often because it's a reflection of something that we would benefit from working on. Something that's happening in our own lives. So, that's something.

That's something right there for us to think about. And yeah, this is a really important theme, really important topic. I'm excited to share it with you because it is so poignant, so evergreen for us. I mean, you've heard me say it before, I'm not going to stop. The core, essential human needs that are lacking for us in our codependent thinking are that deep sense of belonging and connection with others for who we really are, for our authentic selves, have profound sense of self-worth.

And of course, safety; somatic safety, bodily safety, emotional safety; all the safeties. We believe we cannot source any of those from within, so we outsource and look outside of ourselves to try to get them. And so, if we think we're not worthy, safe, and we don't belong, it's so easy to get offended because we're on that razor's edge. Right? We constantly think there's something wrong with us.

I could go on about this probably the length of a whole other show, just tangentially, because this is a really important thing. So, I'm excited to share it with you. And when this goes live, the April 2024 cohort of

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Anchored, overcoming codependency, my six-month coaching somatics, breathwork, embodiment program will be coming to a close.

The enrollment will be coming to a close and the group will be starting. So, if you've been listening to the show, coming to my webinars, and hearing about me and my work, and you've wanted to work with me, this is your chance.

Come on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/Anchored. It takes about legit four or five minutes to apply. Just fill out the little form. It's worth it. Put a little heart into it, why not? And you could get on a call with me. We could talk all about the program, see if it's a good fit for you.

I want to promise you this, on that call there will be no salesy blah. It will really just be me coaching you and chatting with you to see if it's the right fit. If it is, great. If it's not, great. I just want you to make a strong decision that you feel really grounded in and supported around, and that's the purpose of those calls. So, I can't wait to get on Zoom with you, and then to meet you in Anchored.

Alright, enough for my yammering. Take it away past me.

Hello, hello, my love. I hope this finds you doing so, well. So, last week we talked all about drama, drama, drama, drama. And, one of the ways we unwittingly create drama in our lives is by taking things personally. And this is a topic that deserves its own whole show, because being a person with the habit of taking things personally is a whole mood, indeed.

It impacts every area of your life, all of your relationships. And it is a central feature of being an emotional externalizer or outsourcer, AKA having a codependent mindset habit. Taking things personally is one of the most common tools in our survival skill set.

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Meaning, the skills we learned in childhood to get through life, that we continue to have in adulthood until we pause, really take a good look at ourselves and our internal child scripts, and hit pause on those old cassette tapes.

So, let's dive in. What are we talking about here? Well, when taking things personally is our habit, we can apply this lens to everything in our world, and can find something to be offended about.

From a casual comment a loved one or a colleague makes, to feedback from a professor or supervisor to a look a stranger seemed to be pointing your way in the supermarket, to someone not hearing you and asking you to repeat yourself, to someone setting a boundary.

When taking things personally, as part of your survival skill set, you are on the constant lookout for possible offense, and make everything or many things in life, all about you as a false protective mechanism. This habit continues to put our focus on other people instead of on ourselves, which is what we do from our codependent wounding.

We externalize our experience of life, instead of staying present in our own bodies. And my darling, it's exhausting to be constantly looking outward and making perceived slights mean something about you, that you then have a reaction to; thoroughly and completely exhausting.

And I'm not out here saying we need to dismiss our intuition, our discernment, our perception of the world. We don't need to just look past someone giving you a 'look', right, and just be like; oh, it's totally, always fine.

I'm also not saying we need to dismiss other people's thoughts, feels, and opinions, wholesale, of course not. I'm saying that what feeds us, what

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nourishes us and supports us in being present, is remembering how to come back into balance.

To remember how to honor yourself and your opinions, so you can step back into your agency or self-led power, in order to discern whether you want to take feedback or a critique to heart or not. So you can start to pause, before having your same old knee-jerk reactions to another person's facial expressions, or posture, or the words they say. So you can put some space between yourself and your sense of self, and worth, and other people's experience of you.

Sometimes folks have super helpful feedback. And when we can pause and can remind ourselves; they are talking about my behavior, not the core of who I am. Their thoughts are not an indictment of my worth. Then, we can actually hear them, and we can make change should we choose to.

And that's the goal I have for my own life and the life of my clients, to be able to choose, instead of to continue to function from our habitual, unintentional habits, which we talked about in Episode 84, Living an Intentional Life.

Reconnecting with choice and agency; core feminist values of mine and is central to my work. To restore our collective and individual knowing, that we can choose how we want to respond to life. Which is a powerful way of living, indeed.

So, recognizing that taking things personally is super exhausting, keeps us out of presence, sows all this discord in our relationships, why, oh why, do we do it? Well, I want to start, as I am wont to do, by normalizing this habit, my perfect, darling panda bear tails. Taking things personally is something that we do as emotional outsourcers.

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We're constantly looking outside of ourselves for others to tell us that we're okay, that we're safe, that our nervous systems can relax, and that we are worthwhile as humans. So, of course, we freak out when our nervous system believes that there is the slightest hint that we are being judged.

Let's get into the reasons. As humans, we are vigilant little mammals, indeed, which is a historically useful skill. We are built to constantly scan the horizon for lions and marauders, in the proverbial savanna of evolution, so we can get ourselves out of danger.

So, how do we learn what safe, who's safe, where's safe, if we are safe? Well, if in childhood, we had what Dr. Donald Winnicott, a researcher from the 50's, called "good enough" parenting, well, that means we were attuned to the way we needed. Our adults were able to show up for us or hold space for us the way we needed, at least 30% of the time.

And, let's just pause on that. If you're a parent, and you've been beating yourself up for not doing everything 100% personally, the data... And Winnicott's studies were repeated, folks with kids need to show up for them 30% of the time, and that's good enough, right? Obviously, right? Continuing to do your best to show up 50 or 60% is glorious.

But like, please don't beat yourself up if you snapped at your kids one time, when mostly you showed up with love. Okay? Okay. so, attunement. Attunement means, that when we cried because we were cold, our caregivers gave us a little blankie or a sweater. Instead of 'misattunement', which would mean they shoved food in our mouth.

When we were tired, they were quiet and cooed gently, maybe rocked us. Misattunement would be putting on *Fraggle Rock* and singing along at the top of their lungs. When we had feelings, they met them with love. Whereas misattunement would be negating them or telling us how we should feel.

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And when we are more attuned to than misattuned to, when our adults show up for us, when they are present with and for us, then we start to believe that the world and our families are safe for us. That it's okay to not be so vigilant, to be ourselves, to relax into the world because we trust will be safe.

Because we've been shown that our caregivers are safe. We can trust them to protect us appropriately, and can thus build a secure attachment with them. Which we talked about in Episodes 129, 135, 184, and 185. As you can tell, I'm pretty into the attachment stuff.

And that secure attachment taught our nervous system; that it's okay to live in the safe and social experience, which is ventral vagus. And if you're like, wait, what is a Vegas, Las Vegas? What are you talking about?

I nerd out specifically about polyvagal theory and the nervous system, in Episodes 48 and 174. But also, casually and constantly in like 1,000 different episodes, because the nervous system is my jam.

So, if we don't get attuned to the way we need, then our nervous system has less capacity to relax into life, to feel safe. And in childhood, we started to believe that others wouldn't keep us safe. So, we learned to not just be regular vigilant to possible attacks, we became overly vigilant. Thereby, misreading or misattuning to the world.

So actually, in childhood, we may have been properly attuning to an unsafe environment, right? But then, we take that into adulthood and misread the world, and thereby take things to heart as personal attacks because that is actually how they feel to our nervous system.

And this vigilance can sometimes meet the criteria of what's called "hyper vigilance", which is when that vigilance feels all-consuming and totally jacks our nervous system; makes a lot of sense, right? This teaches us to

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scrutinize everything around us including tone of voice; facial expressions, the smallest word choice, as being about us, as a way to not miss possible danger.

And I find that this happens a lot when a childhood involves shame, blame, guilt, as is common in codependent households. When there's role confusion, when we are parenting or being a therapist for someone who should be in a parent or caregiver role.

When there are high expectations, like in perfectionist households, right, where love is tied to getting that A+, that gold star. When there is neglect, which leads us to think we don't matter at all, neglect or abuse. Or, when our caregivers model this kind of relating for us.

Now, I'll share an example here: So, my client, Bettina, shared that her mom got super angry, upset, offended, because B's son wasn't paying enough attention to her, and didn't want to be with her. Her son was nine months old, and teething, and wanted Bettina, his mom, instead of his grandmother. Who took his desire for his mama, as a personal slight against her.

She was so personally offended and took this as meaning; the child doesn't love me. No one loves me. I'm not safe here, is what her nervous system was saying. And, she literally left their family vacation. She drove herself home.

So, if you grew up with ninja level, taking it personally-ness, being modeled for you, by the people who are supposed to be the emotionally mature adults in your life... Clearly, Bettina's mom was demonstrating all kinds of lack of emotional maturity here, and probably a lot of stress, distress, and trauma in her past. I don't know the woman but just, you know, assuming.

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Baby, baby, baby, of course, your brain goes to right there, immediately. Because it's what was shown to you, what was taught to you. How you saw your grownups seeking safety for themselves. And I mention this because compassion is what's needed here, my darlings. So much compassion, care, and curiosity; always.

Going back to that worthiness wound we talk about here so often, we can see that the list of things that we can take personally, from the story in our hearts that say we're not worthy of love, is pretty much endless. Our minds, bodies, inner children say; I'm not important enough to call back after a date. I'm not being treated well, ever. I don't matter. I'm not worthy of not being bumped into in a crowded airport.

We go to there, subconsciously, right? What we might say is; ugh, why he bumped into me? Didn't he see me here? But we go to; I'm not worthy of not being bumped into, so quickly. My sweet tenderoni, we take things personally, because deep inside, we don't believe that we're worthy of love or care. And so, subconsciously, we want everything to be about us. Because we're so scared that nothing is about us.

It's a way to falsely create a sense of worthiness and belonging because it's saying, look, I must be important enough for them to be rude to. And we don't realize, of course, that that's what we're doing. And so, the remedy here, lies in reconnecting with our inherent value. The worthiness that is our truth because we were born, and so we matter.

A key way to rewire this, is to pause, when you see that your brain is going to there. To find your grounding in and through your body, perhaps connecting with your breath, two feet on the ground, to come back into presence.

And to remind yourself, using whatever words work for you, I matter. I don't have to take this personally, to feel worthy of love. I don't have to tell the

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story in my heart, that other people's actions or lack of action, has anything to do with me, as a human, as the animal that I am, in order to feel safe.

Another thing that's part and parcel of our codependent habits, is perfectionist thinking. Often, from that same unworthiness, unlovability wound, plus a hefty dose of late-stage capitalism and productivity hustle culture. Along with white settler colonialism, and modeling from our family of origin.

And if your personal brand of perfectionism is the externalizing kind, which I call the “social perfectionist”, then your nervous system has an intense reaction to the thought of others not liking you; not thinking well of you, of seeing you as a human with flaws and imperfections.

And that belief, that you have to be superhumanly perfect to be okay, will keep you on that merry go round of defining your worth by other people's opinions. Thereby, taking everything personally, to attempt to protect yourself.

Like we talked about last week, of course you care what others think of you, you're a social animal. The problem with living from social perfectionism is that you are super mean to yourself for caring what others think. Instead of just accepting that it's part of being a human and refocusing on remembering what you think instead.

And so, the remedy here is to find that compassion for yourself. You learned, at some point in your childhood, in growing up from your family, that it is vital that others like you. And if they don't, it's a huge problem. So, accepting that, honoring that, befriending that, those are the key remedies to starting to shift and reframe that habit.

When it's your habit to be super judgmental of and mean to yourself, you unwittingly, and I'm gonna keep saying the word unwittingly,

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subconsciously, we're not doing this on purpose, my loves, right? But what we end up doing, is degrading our sense of self, our self-confidence, our self-esteem.

And of course, of course, of course, of course, someone not liking your work, or your cooking, or your parenting, or your partnering, will lead you to quickly beat yourself up, instead of seeing their opinion as just their opinion. Because you were already there. You were already beating yourself up. That is the neural groove of least resistance your brain goes to, where it always goes, because conservation of energy.

So, if you're beating yourself up, you're going to hear everyone else as beating you up. And in so doing, ah, we miss opportunities to receive potentially supportive feedback that can really help us to grow, and shift, and change. So, instead of thinking; she's right. I did oversalt the pasta and I can be more careful about that next time. From that super judgmental mean to yourself, you go to; I suck at cooking, I'm terrible at this.

Instead of thinking, okay, they didn't like my PowerPoint™. I'm curious how I can make it more accessible and workable for next time. Your brain goes to; I'm the worst. I'm a loser. They think I'm a terrible employee, and I'm going to get fired. And, they are attacking me personally about this.

From these habits of putting yourself down, as a knee-jerk response to life, you strengthen the habit. And when you start to slowly remove the negative self-talk from your inner and outer dialogue, including those self-deprecating jokes. I see you my darling, they're not really funny. I know you think they are, I thought they were for a long time.

When we start to step out of that pathway, then we can start to step away from taking things personally, and can start to build a more supportive and loving sense of self, by changing our habitual thoughts. And we do that by

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using thought work. To slowly start to build our belief that we do, in fact, have beautiful and amazing characteristics and strengths.

That there are things about you, about me, about us, that are so worthy of being proud of. And if you're struggling to think of any, that's normal, and okay. You can use your skill, of emotional outsourcing, to ask the people who love you what they love about you. And, can practice believing those things until they feel solid and true.

And can then, start to look inward to ask yourself what you love about you. And when that's your habit and practice, to find the 'good enough' and from there, the great about you, you don't believe other people's crappy thoughts about you. Because you are solid in your own loving stories about you. Their experience of you doesn't stand a chance against your loving sense of self.

Let's go back to that sense of vigilance about the world. That story within that says, you always have to be on the lookout for an attack. That is to your brain and your nervous system, nigh. So, you see danger everywhere and take everything personally, in an attempt to prevent being sideswiped by the lions of life.

The way through, to the other side of the survival skill, is a slow one, indeed. Because it's about rewiring our nervous system to shift our orientation towards the world, away from seeing danger everywhere and towards believing that we are safe with and within ourselves. And in there, trusting ourselves that we will respond when there's actual, literal danger. And we don't have to call everything dangerous, in order to be safe.

There are many steps to this process. It truly deserves its own show. And the core of it is this: We need to develop more capacity in our nervous systems, to stay present in ourselves when we are activated. And we talk all about nervous system resources, the process of pendulation,

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befriending our emotions, and so much more, in Episodes, you ready? 135, 172, and 174. And then, befriending, is Episode 180 and 181. Really important episodes.

And in addition to those episodes, of course, I talk about this like, all day, every day in Anchored, because learning to regulate our nervous systems and expand our inner window of capacity, is a key focus of ours as we learn to overcome our codependent survival skills, and to step out of externalizing our lived experience.

Which is a beautiful segue into this: Taking things personally can often come from a desire to have control, or what feels like control over others, from the belief that that will help us to feel more in control in general, and to thus, feel less helpless in life.

When we felt helpless or at the whims of others in our younger days, it makes sense that we would want to do anything we can to not feel that again, because it's existentially scary to feel helpless. And I'm going to say this one slowly; when we take things personally, we are creating an illusion of control by believing that we caused the other person's thoughts and feels.

Which leads us to believe that we can fix their thoughts and feels, and it's imperative that we do by changing ourselves. And that doing so will keep them from rejecting and abandoning us, which is the ultimate lack of safety.

So, taking things personally is a way to avoid the pain of potential rejection from others, by rejecting ourselves as a way to try to control them. So, we try to be perfect, and attempt to sidestep or buffer against our feelings of being helpless over them. And thus, to avoid the pain of their beliefs, unwittingly creating a different kind of pain for ourselves. Ouch. Right?

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So, my love, what is the remedy? Well, it's to begin to accept that you can't control others, or change their thoughts, feels or behaviors. And there is no amount of you being "perfect" that will make someone intent on being a meanie pants, be nice to you.

Jerks are going to be jerks. Racists are going to judge you if you're a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) person. Fatphobes are going to critique your perfect fat body. Homophobes and transphobes will have their prejudice against you for the way you love and live. Harsh critics are gonna criticize harshly, no matter how much you bend yourself into an emotional pretzel to try to please them. On and on and on.

And, as I'm saying that, it bears saying, accepting that they have their beliefs that you don't agree with, that I don't agree with, isn't condoning them. There is a big difference there. Listen, I know it's challenging to accept that others are the way they are.

And finding your way into accepting that and not trying to change them, if they aren't open to changing, is a huge key to finding peace in your heart. And not taking things personally, that simply aren't about you.

And key to that, is accepting that feeling helpless to change others is a fact of all of our lives. This is another moment when befriending an emotion is so key. And it's a moment when a lot of resistance can come up, which is normal and natural, and does keep us spinning.

And when we aren't taking things personally, we can stand in our power. We can find our way into ventral vagal to speak our truth, to stay in our integrity. And to say; it didn't feel good when you said X,Y,Z, from our power and not from the collapsed energy of making whatever they did or said, about our core being.

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Another reason why we take things personally, can be our socialization in the patriarchy. Many of us, particularly those who are socialized as women, are taught that being nice is the most important thing. To be the good girl, and to demure, to put others ahead of ourselves.

And when we grow up in a codependent family blueprint, all of that is multiplied. And we often learn to be passive in our communication, which we talked about, way back in the day, in Episodes 31, 32, and 33; All About Direct Communication. We learn to prioritize not upsetting others in this people-pleasing way, over getting what we want and need. Which reinforces the story in your mind and your body, that what you think and feel isn't as important as what other people think and feel.

See where I'm going here? If other people's opinions, their experiences, are the most important, of course, you take what they do and say personally, because their thoughts and feels are coded as more important than your own.

So, what's the remedy? To remember how to be radically honest about what you're thinking and feeling. And I say, remember, because every newborn knows how to do this. So, we do it with ourselves at first, then with someone it's easy to be honest with. And that can be a pet, a baby, a best friend, a plant, whatever nervous system resource, it feels easier to be honest with.

And from there, you can practice being honest with others. Starting with those it feels most comfortable, safest, to be honest with. And working from there. The more you're able to own and speak your truth, the more you'll value your own opinion. And, the easier it will be to not take things personally. Because you know you have your own back.

And that brings us to boundaries, a perennial topic around here. Because as emotional externalizers, we sure don't know what boundaries mean and

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look like, what they feel like. They were often not modeled for us when we were smaller, so we take on other people's thoughts, feelings, wants, as facts about us.

Because we're not quite sure where we begin and end. So, we can lose track of ourselves and who we actually are in the world. We believe what we hear from others as fact and gospel, because we've been putting them first all this time. So, we're used to putting their experiences of us above our own.

So, we don't know our boundaries, we don't speak them, we don't hold them. And when someone crosses them, we believe that they're correct. And when someone sets a boundary with us, it's super common for us to take it personally, as an affront, or slight, to make it mean that they're criticizing us. And, not just talking about what works for them and what doesn't.

Remember that boundaries are simply each of us saying what works for us and what doesn't. And that never has anything to do with the other person, ever. For more on boundaries, check out Episode 5 and 41. It's important to remember, that when we set boundaries with the goal of self-care, and community care, and resentment prevention, which is what boundaries are, others might not hear it that way.

And that too, is something to be prepared for. For example, someone I love historically takes boundaries very personally; makes them into an attack when they're simply a request. And I get to be ready for that response, when I say what works, and doesn't work for me.

For example, I was with this person some time ago, and they had a cold, and I asked them not to drink from my cup. And when they did, I reminded them that I would like to do what I can to avoid getting sick, so, to please,

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not share my beverages. And they took that as an insult, my saying that they were bad, somehow.

And I expected this because it's happened before, and because I know how they move through the world as an emotional outsourcer themselves, who takes most things personally, and is frequently hurt when other speak their needs or preferences.

On my end, I've done a lot of work, to bring in more compassion for this person and their wounding. A lot of somatic work to stay grounded in my body around them. And a lot of thought work, to decide what I want to think and thus, feel, ahead of time, when moments like this arise.

So, with that thought work and somatic work in my back pocket, I was able to say; I hear you. That this feels like I'm saying something about you, as a person. And, I assure you that I'm not. I'm just taking care of myself by stating my needs here, which is to not share beverages while you're sick. How can I support you in understanding that?

And I must say, that felt really good. Because I would have been super annoyed, irritated, taking it personally, not that many years ago, right? Pre-thought work, pre-breathwork, pre-somatics; I would have made it mean, hoo, that they were disrespecting me. That they weren't hearing me, right, that it was something about me.

And in this situation, I was able to recognize that the person wasn't able to hear me, because that's how they move through the world. And when they continued to express that they felt personally offended by my request, I was able to have my own back and to let them have their own feelings. Without taking their emotions on, as mine to fix. While also showing up for them and for me, with compassion and care.

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I left that moment knowing that I had shown up with self-love, and love for them. Had communicated directly, kindly, respectfully, and lovingly. I was able to let their reaction go. Not taking their response to my request, my boundary, personally. Because it wasn't, and also not taking their inability to honor my boundary, personally. Because that wasn't about me, either.

My tender raviolis, it's time for yet another nerd alert. I giggle every time I say it. Here comes some phenomenal big science words. So, my brilliant friend, Leanne Wren, PhD, a super dope neuroscience nerd recently shared about this exact theme.

So, when we remember that so much of our human communication is about projection, we can remember that behind every criticism is a wish, or a desire, a hope, for things to be different or to change in their life, my life, our life. And you get to decide if you want to entertain that desire, and to make change or not.

Leanne offered the response to criticism; what are you wishing, hoping, or wanting here, as an alternative to taking it personally? As an option? Instead of going to our habitual shutdown in dorsal vagal, or getting pissed off, and grumped, worked up in sympathetic activation, fight-or-flight? This question can help you to stay in conversation and connection, and to do so from ventral vagal.

Because when we label, the wish or need, that brings the neocortex back online, shifting us out of the fight-or-flight, reticular activating system, which is the 'bouncer in the nightclub of the mind'. And back into the ventral lateral prefrontal cortex, which is where we can find our grounding, some calm, some peace.

And from there, we can remember that sometimes folks say something that sounds critical because, well, to be frank, they're just not a great communicator. Or, because being critical is their primary tool for

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connection, because it's how they were communicated with growing up. Or, because they, themselves, have trapped gas and a bellyache, and they're projecting their pain and discomfort on you. Or, they just don't know how else to communicate.

When you can get curious about the underlying wish, want, desire, hope under their words, you take yourself out of the equation, and can decide if you want to either support them, to get what they want. Or, if the comment is one you can just let go of, and not grasp onto as something with any kind of meaning about you. Such a great offering. Thanks, Leanne.

And as we wrap for today, and of course, I have more to say about this, so I'll do a follow up soon enough. I want to say it clearly; feeling criticized can hurt. And that's normal, natural, human. Someone being prejudiced or discriminatory against you, mean to you, harsh to you; Oof! That sucks, to say the very absolute least.

And I'm sorry, lo siento, right? There's no good term in English for that; lo siento. I feel it, along with you, for the hurts in your life. Either from people operating from their own hurt, or from the shitty stories about other people's value and worth that they learned from the patriarchy and white settler colonialism.

It's okay for it to hurt, for you to process that feeling through your body, to come back to presence, and to decide what you actively want to choose, to make their words mean about you, your life, and your work.

I'll also share, that in my own past, what I historically heard as a harsh tone from others, often wasn't a harsh tone to the speaker or to other people in the room. But it sure was to my nervous system when I lived in a less regulated, less self-assured way.

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And learning to map and befriend my nervous system, while simultaneously managing my mind with thought work, to shift my stories away from; there being harsh to me. And instead, reminding myself that my nervous system is reacting to their tone. And that's just my body protecting me with love.

I don't have to make it mean anything about me as a person, or about them, or our connection. I can soothe myself. So, I can use my prefrontal cortex, the executive function part of my brain, to ask myself; if this is something inappropriate that needs address? Or, if this is feedback that could be useful? Or, if this is something I can let go of?

And learning how to do this, but really knowing how to do it in my body, somatically, woof has changed my life in innumerable ways. Because it brings me back to my agency, to the power within.

Finally, I'll remind you that you never ever, ever, ever, ever have to take on anyone else's thoughts or feelings as your own. You can always allow others to have their beliefs and opinions, and can choose your own thoughts in any situation. I know, easier said than done, at first, no doubt, for sure.

And the more you can focus on being kind to yourself, focusing on your values and your own beliefs, your own integrity, your own sense of self, the more you can come into grounded, embodied presence. And the easier it is to hear other people's words as an expression of their own lived experience, from their wounding, and coping or survival skills, and not as something about the core of you.

And from there, you can choose to take the feedback, to make change, to believe them, if what they're saying is resonating with you. From there, you can take action, if someone's being discriminatory or problematic. You can work to shift how you communicate. Can step out of relationships that don't

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serve you. Or, you can let it all slide off your back, like water off the perfect little duckling that you are.

Thank you for listening, my love. This was a good topic to talk about. And I'm glad we had the opportunity to share in this together. If you're enjoying the show, I would be so grateful if you could head on over to wherever you get your podcasts, particularly Apple Podcast™, and could subscribe, rate, and review the show.

A written review, in particular, is so helpful to bump the show up in Apple's algorithm, which helps it to get into more ears via the search feature. It's a super weird thing. It's the system we're living in; there it is. And the more reviews the show has, the more people can get this accessible, free help every single week.

So. I'd be grateful if you could take a moment and head on over and do that, and share on your social media. I love it when you share that you're listening to the show; quotes you love, takeaways. Tag me, VictoriaAlbinaWellness on “the gram,” I give good gram, so I can share in that moment. Because it just brings me so much joy when you share about the show.

And finally, if you're loving what you're hearing and you're ready to take it to the next level, with my expert coaching for six months, as part of the amazing community that is Anchored, head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/anchored. To learn all about the program, to apply now, and get on a call with my team to learn more about how you can join us for the next cohort starting so soon, which is so exciting.

All right, my beautiful love, 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.

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

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.