

Ep #302: How Emotional Outsourcing Leads to Financial Self-Sabotage with Paige Pritchard



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.

This episode goes live on the day known as Thanksgiving in the U.S., and I want to take a moment before we dive in to acknowledge that we're commemorating some pretty effed up stuff today, right? Like the colonization and murder of the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island.

And so I just want to take a little moment, hand to heart, to acknowledge all the pain and misery that came from this colonization. To send a little love to all the Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island, and to acknowledge that I too ... I came to the U.S. when I was four or five ... I too am a settler on this land, an immigrant settler.

It's important to name what's real, right? It's one of the things that doesn't happen in emotional outsourcing. We don't name how we really think, feel, what we want, what we need. There's so much fear of being judged, being criticized, of someone not liking it. And that's totally understandable when you're sourcing your safety, worth, and belonging from outside yourself that makes sense.

So we're honoring all that's real, and we are deciding what's next. We're living into intentionality, right? That's our whole goal here on *Feminist Wellness*, regulation, choicefulness, intentionality.

One of the places that so many of us are not intentional and choiceful is in our spending. I had a beautiful conversation with Paige Pritchard. She's a freaking powerhouse, but also a stop overspending coach. She's a finance

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coach, and she's really brilliant. I really like her work. We had such a great conversation on her podcast and I want to share it here with you.

Because if you're hearing this on Thursday of Thanksgiving ... What's tomorrow? That's for Indigenous People's Day, but also Black Friday. It is a day when we are incredibly encouraged by capitalism to overspend in extractive ways, right? In ways that are not about just commerce and community and getting what we need, but getting gah, overspending, overconsuming, over, over, over. Which is what capitalism is at its core, right? It's extractive, it's over, it's more, it's beyond need.

So I thought, what better time than to share this amazing conversation with Paige, all about overspending and our emotional outsourcing habits. I'm going to have her back on the show in the spring to talk more with us. And for now, I really hope you enjoy this conversation.

If you do, please head over to Apple Podcasts, or wherever you listen to *Feminist Wellness*, give the show a five-star rating, please, and a little review. The review can take two seconds, "I like show," done, easy peasy. "Beets, Bears, Battlestar Galactica," that is a review that I would not just accept, but I would probably print and put on my wall. I would frame that.

Not in that chintzy where it's like, "Hey, I'm behind plastic." I'm going to go to the thrift, I'm going to find an ornate gold frame with really nice archival glass. I'm going to pay \$2 for it. I'm going to be thrilled. The thrift is going to be like, "Oof, one more of those gone," and I'm going to frame that review. So make my day. Come on now.

All right, cutie pies, I'm so excited to share this with you. Oh, if you don't know the podcast world, the more rates and reviews a show has, the more ears it gets into because the higher it comes up on search. And my goal in doing this show, that I spend an awful lot of money on and time on and

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energy on, is to be of service. And so I want to be of service to as many peoples as possible, and I need your help for that.

So I am giving thanks for you. I want to invite you to give thanks to your beloved community, your chosen family. If you are with your family of origin today and it's not feeling great, I want to encourage you to remember the most magical room in any building, which is the bathroom. Go to there. Excuse yourself.

If people think you're having GI issues because you're getting up from the table every time racist uncle Kevin opens his mouth, so be it. Get up, go find your ground, find your feet, orient your nervous system, and breathe.

If you're like, what is 'orient my nervous system?' Welcome to my world. Welcome to this world of nervous system healing. I'm so glad you're here. Head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com, at the top of the page download my meditations. There's an orienting exercise in there. It's yours to keep. Do it. You don't have to get up from the table to orient. Yeah? Go get your downloads. Go on. Take good care of yourself today and always.

All right, without further ado ... because you know I love "ado". Why do I love "ado" so much? Who knows? But here we are. Love you. Enjoy the conversation with Paige. Ciao.

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Paige Pritchard: Victoria, welcome to *The Money Love Podcast*. Honestly, I feel so lucky that I get to talk to you today; just all about the cost of fixing other people's problems.

Victoria Albina: The feeling is completely mutual. The work you do is so important. And we're not talking about money in these complicated ways... Except we are; you and I are. Listen, it's a tough job but we're here for it.

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Paige: Exactly. Well, before we get into the nitty-gritty and you start to just share all of your wisdom with us today, just give us a little background on you. Who are you? What do you do? I know you also have a wildly popular podcast, so just give us the little rundown on Victoria.

Victoria: Yeah. So my name is Victoria Albina. I use she/her pronouns. I am from Argentina. I was living in New York and recently moved to Toronto. My training is as a functional medicine nurse practitioner. I trained at UCSF. I have a master's degree in Public Health.

I was working in primary care and functional medicine for many years and realized that the *real* chronic issue that my then patients were really dealing with was mindset, somatics, or their relationship to their body, the stress, distress, and trauma their bodies were holding. And sure, they had all the symptoms they were experiencing, but I was never going to support them to do their healing the way I wanted to if I wasn't doing the work I now do as a Master Certified Somatic Life Coach.

So I shifted gears, closed my clinic, and started this practice. And I am absolutely loving it. It's so much fun to coach people and to get to do the work we do. My show is called *Feminist Wellness* and my passion is helping humans socialized as women to overcome codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits.

Paige: I can tell you what, I need your help. I talk about this on the podcast and what I'm always telling people is "Yeah, I know my work lies in the two Ps." My two Ps are... what I refer to them as the two Ps in my life: people pleasing and perfectionism. I'm like, that's me.

Victoria: Yeah. I mean, it's a whole thing, right? I feel like most of us are trained, trained up from little girls to always be the "good girl" and "don't make mommy unhappy. You made him mad." And yeah, it's on us to manage other people's feelings and thoughts and experience of life. How

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else could we turn out but as folks with perfectionist and people-pleasing habits. It's like the math is mathing there, you know?

Paige: Yeah. It's really funny. I have a two-year-old daughter, and I've caught myself several times... It comes out of my mouth before I even realize it's coming out of my mouth. It comes out of my mouth and I go, "Oh, can I catch it?" But it's already out of my mouth and into her ears. She's two. She's in that toddler phase... tantrums and stuff like that. And right now we're working on hitting. Her new thing is hitting.

I find myself so quickly and so easily, when she does something like that, where she hits me or even when she yells and screams or she's expressing emotion, how quick I am to say to her, "When you do that, you hurt mommy's feelings." And then I say it and I go, "Whoa." I feel, at least, I'm at the point where I catch it after the fact.

It's been a really interesting growth journey for me as a mom to even go, "That came flying out of my mouth so fast," before I even realized that I was projecting that onto her and being like, "What you just did hurt me."

Victoria: I mean, that's what socialization and conditioning are all about, though, right? It becomes the soup you're swimming in, and you have absolutely no idea that you're doing what you're doing. We were talking... I run a six-month coaching program called Anchored... and we were talking the other day about overfunctioning. I don't know a mom who doesn't also overfunction in life.

And no one in the room put their hand up when I was like, "Who's overfunctioning?" They're all like, "I don't think I do that. I just do the stuff that needs to get done." And then we talked for an hour and everyone was like, "Oh, I absolutely delay my own care. I put myself last. I don't even think about my wants and needs. And then I resent the hell out of everyone

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I love, and strangers too, because I did their life for them instead of doing my life.” And it's our conditioning, right?

I really hope you're giving yourself the grace on saying those things to your kiddo, because we're all just doing the best we can, given how we came out and what got ingrained and patterned into our psyche, into our brains, into our nervous system as the “right” way to say something or deal with something.

Paige: Yeah, I know. Speaking of that, one of the things that jumped out to me about your work... I think just having recognition and compassion for not even where it comes from, but just how it's just so subliminal. Like you said, it's like you're a fish in water, and you don't even realize that you're swimming in water. It's just it feels like your world and it feels like your environment.

And I even look at my mom. My mom, one of her taglines... me and my sisters talk about it all the time. My mom is... I love my mom. If I talk too much about her, I'll get too emotional so we won't go down that rabbit hole. Because she's fantastic and amazing and the best mom ever.

But one of her taglines is, “I need to be needed.” So she was always telling us, “If you need this, let me know. If you need this, let me know.” My mom is like anytime anybody needs anything, she's the first to drop everything and and be the first one there. But she's always telling us, “Well, you know me. I need to be needed.” It's just interesting to hear her say that.

Victoria: Yeah, I mean, so here's the thing. I think as coaches we talk a lot about this. You can do the same action from really different drivers. And I think that's what we need to take a look at. So here's where I'm going. I love helping. I identify as a helper. I love to help. I love to help strangers on the street. If your bag breaks and your stuff goes everywhere, I'm the first one to jump in and help. Because I like to do.

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I've done thought work about this. I've taken a good look at it, what we do from our codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits. And I'll share my definition of "codependency". It's when we chronically and habitually source our safety, belonging, and worth from everyone and everything outside of ourselves instead of from within, to our profound detriment.

Meaning, it hurts us time and again because we don't believe 'I can be safe within myself, with myself, that I can create felt safety for me.' Can you make me feel safe? Can this purchase make me feel safe? Can being needed help me feel safe? And the same for belonging and worth, which are these absolutely essential human needs that most of us didn't get met in childhood. We weren't attuned to in these ways by our grownups. And so we don't think we're worthy of it. So we're chronically trying to source it.

So I love helping, but not because I think I need you to make me safe. I know I've got my back. I don't need you to let me know I belong. I have a vibrant community. I belong with me. I take care of me and my inner children all day long. And worthiness. I'm good. I'm good. But yeah, "You're moving on Sunday? Let me help. I'd love to help." That's the shift right there.

Paige: Yeah. How do you know the difference between the two? How can somebody distinguish the difference between 'I want to be helpful' and 'I want to help this person because I genuinely want to'? Versus, I'm doing it from that place where it's to my detriment.

Victoria: I think there's a lot of different ways. One, look at the result. So when you went... and let's stick with helping a friend move. Did your back hurt but you did it anyway? Did your knees hurt and you did it anyway. Was that Sunday that you helped her, was that the day you were really looking forward to resting after a super long month of overworking? What did you put off in your own life?

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Or had you just had Friday and Saturday off? You'd really been filling your cup. You'd gone to a concert with a friend, or a museum. You were feeling really good, and you were energetically giving from your overflow. And so Sunday, after you close the U-Haul at your friend's place, you felt tired or not 19 anymore, but invigorated. Good. Full up.

And so we can look at what's the result. We can back it way up and look at the feelings we're having while we're doing the thing. Are you resentful? Are you pissed off? Are you irritable? Are you itchy and scratchy? Are you a little hissing cat? "No, no, I love helping," but under it you're like...

How much grumbledom is happening in your mind and your body, coming out your mouth, when you're doing things for others that often no one friggin' asked you to do and no one actually wants you to do but you're doing it because you need to be needed?

Or while you're doing it, are you feeling so connected and you know that your friend's going to be so grateful because you're in charge of moving the fragile and you're really good at it? The movers are moving the big stuff, but you're moving the paintings and the plants. And she just keeps looking over and saying she's grateful and your heart just feels...

So then we can scroll back to the thoughts. What are the thoughts that were driving you? And I think, for many of us, that's the hardest one to get to. Because on the surface, we're just thinking, "I want to help my friend," and we really need to do some big introspection to get under that.

And that's where somatic or body-based practices can really come in, to really help us feel into our body. This is one of the things I teach my clients, is to map what that true yes and true no feel like in our bodies. So that in the moment of, "Hey, Paige, can you help me move on Sunday?" you can feel into your body and just intuitively know.

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Paige: As somebody who is really trying to work on people pleasing myself, I think that something that has been really big for me... I think when I get asked for something, when there was a request being made in the past, there was really no time or gap between the request being made and me giving an answer. It was an automatic yes. It didn't matter who was asking. It didn't matter what they were asking.

They could have been asking me, "Hey, do you want to go and just do something..." whatever, something I would never do. And I'd be like, "Sure, absolutely. Of course." I literally just got into this habit, and this pattern, of yes, yes, yes. Always saying yes. Always saying yes.

And something that has been really helpful for me is just not giving an answer right in that moment. I'm just kind of giving myself a pause so that, to your point, so that I can kind of tune in to, "Is this an actual yes or is this a no?" And not just automatically, "Yes."

Victoria: Yeah. I love the 48-hour rule when you're working to heal this habit and listen to your intuition. For some people, I say the 72-hour rule. And I actually had a client recently where I told her it was a two-week rule. "You cannot say yes or no for two weeks." She was like, "What the...?" And then she came back a month later and was like, "That was amazing." And I was like, yeah, yeah. So, minimum 48 hours.

If you're a trauma surgeon, it's different. I'd probably just say yes. You know what I mean? If there's not fire, flood, or blood, 48 hours. And really letting yourself feel into it. I also put all of my clients on a no "sure" diet. Like "unsure", but the opposite. "Do you want to do this? Sure." That is not consent. "Sure. Sure. Fine." No, no, no. Mama's not having it.

From your heart, from your spirit, from the animal, I'm going to need a yes or a no. I'll take a 'let me get back to you.' That's fine. Buy some time. Guy

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a gallon of it. Buy a little extra. But, “Sure, sure, sure”? I don't know what to do with that.

I came up in such a feminist context where consent was such a huge part of the conversation, as it should be everywhere. I decline to accept “sure” as consent. And I don't think we should allow ourselves to “sure/fine” our way through life. Either you want to do it or you don't. Either it's in support of your goals... And that goal can be living in more interdependent, supporting your friends, being in community, filling your cup by being of service. Cool. But give me a yes or give me a no.

And it's such a potent gift to give ourselves, to say, “I will be neither wishy nor washy on this. I will be firm.” It creates all this spaciousness within our bodies to feel into what that yes and no feel like. And to let that resonance support us to be more choiceful and more intentional and more in our agency, everywhere in our lives.

Paige: As you're saying that, what's been an interesting realization for me is I used to be so terrified of the word “no”. I used to just be so terrified to tell anybody no to anything. It was like telling somebody no is the worst possible thing that I could do to somebody.

And so to your point, there were yesses. But there were also “sures”, to the things that I really wanted to be saying no to but I was actually saying yes to. But the no's were always “sure”.

And as I've gotten more comfortable with the word no and telling people no, it's been such a cool realization for me to realize that this thing, this word that I had so much fear and anxiety around, when you can give a firm no, it feels so good. It feels way better than the “sures”. I'm like, “Oh, this is fantastic.”

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Victoria: Here's the swap I tell people to have in their minds. When you're saying that, "sure," when you want to be saying no, instead of saying no ... And I get that it's scary. I want to honor that ... Instead of saying no, what you're saying is, "Yes. I will resent you." If that's not a freaking stake in the heart. "Yes, I am agreeing to resent you. Yes, I am going to be annoyed with you. Yes, I'm agreeing to talk shit about you behind your back."

"Yes, I'm agreeing to not answer the phone the next time you call because I don't want you to ask me something and I have to say no, because I'm not going to say no, I'm going to say yes. And then I'm going to resent you. So now I'm going to ignore you. I'm not going to answer your texts."

And life unravels. Friendships unravel. But I don't think there's anybody listening who's not like, "Oh, God, I've done that." We've all done that.

Paige: Yeah, I think that that's the confusing part about all of this. Because on the surface we feel so much good is being done. We feel like we're doing the right thing. We feel like there's a lot of good being done by us, like showing up and helping and being the one that's there. When really there's actually so much damage being done.

Victoria: Well, it's the intentionality piece, right? It's, what is your intention? What is your capacity? So if you show up to help me move and you're so tired and burnt out that you're dropping plants, that you drop that expensive framed art and smash the frame, it's not helpful. Please don't.

Or have you ever asked a friend, "Oh, Laura, can I unload? I've had such a shit day." And someone says yes. And then, halfway through, you can tell they're glazed over? So it's about prioritizing presence and stepping into intentionality. So I say yes when I can be fully present. Not physically present, who cares if I'm physically in the room? I don't want my friends physically in the room, or my partner or my parent.

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Be here energetically. Be here in spirit. You know what I mean? Be here, or don't. Take care of yourself, because taking care of you is taking care of me. Because now you're not creating this weirdness in our friendship where you half show up. You know what I mean?

Paige: Yeah. Or you're there moving, and maybe physically you're doing an okay job, but you're just in a terrible mood.

Victoria: Being grumpy or trouble to be around. No, thank you. So the intention is really... it just matters so much. And intention, of course, creates impact in most situations that we're talking about.

I just wanted to add one thing that I think doesn't get said enough. It is normal, natural, human mammalian to people please. So you and I, dear Paige Pritchard, we live in a very, very small village on the Sahara a majillion years ago. It's you, me, and 40 other people against lions. Lions mostly, and scorpions and snakes and, you know, scary things.

So I want you to like me. It's pretty frickin' important that you like me, because when the lions or the marauders come, I'm five three. You know what I'm saying? I need someone bigger than me to grab me, throw me over their shoulder and bust a move up a hill. I do not want bad vibes in the village. No.

That legacy, I said "a majillion years ago," but it wasn't that long ago in geological time, right? We're a pretty darn new species kicking around here. It's important to be liked. That's not the problem. It's the "to your detriment part." That's the part to keep an eye on.

Paige: Yes. I was telling you about this before we started recording, but I feel like, when we think of people pleasing and the costs of it, we often forget about the financial costs of it. And how freaking expensive it can be to be a people pleaser. I have women in my community who have told me

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that they have kind of become the ones in their family that people come to for financial help or financial assistance. And they will oftentimes give whatever this person is asking for.

But to your point, it comes back to 'it's almost always to their detriment.' Like, yes, they have the money. But, oh, that money I was actually going to use to pay off this credit card. Oh, this money I was actually going to use to fund my trip next year. And now I can't do it because I've given the money to this other person.

And it's confusing to them. And it's hard. It's so hard because they genuinely do want to help the person. And I think they've this mindset of 'I have more financial resources than this person does. So because of that, the right thing for me to do is for me to give this person money.'

You see this with parents; people having to give money to parents or give money to family members. And it's hard. It's hard to know that distinction. Because on one hand, you're like, "I want to." And then, on the other hand, you're like, "But it's also creating all this other mess over here."

Victoria: Yeah. And I think it's really important to ask yourself, what is this going to keep out of my life? To your point, did you want to take that meditation class? Did you want to invest in yourself, fix up your home? Do something that will improve your quality of life?

Paige: Let's talk emotional outsourcing 101. I love this topic that you teach. Take us through emotional outsourcing 101. Let's go to class for a second.

Victoria: Yeah, put on your pocket protectors, my nerds. Here we go. So I spent my whole life putting everyone ahead of me, staying with people I didn't really want to be with because they wanted to be my date. And so who was I to say no? Just chronically holding myself to A+ standards. You see where we're going. Doing all this stuff.

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But when my good friend Becca said to me, “God, girl, you are so codependent.” I was like, “Wait, what? No, I'm not. I don't even know what that means.” And we're like 25. And she was like, “And you're really a wicked perfectionist.” I was like, “Oh, my God. No. Do you see how often I eff up? I eff up every two seconds. Oh, my God. I haven't done a load of laundry since yesterday. I am way behind. There's one dish in my sink. Perfectionist?”

Paige: Even your perfectionism coming out in this conversation with her.

Victoria: Right? Like, the most. And then, “Wait,” wanting to people please her, “Do you think I'm these things? Because if you want me to be these things, maybe I am these things.” Ba-dum-bum. I couldn't see the forest for the trees, of terminology that just stuck. That just felt like they didn't encapsulate my experience. Because there's no way I was a perfectionist for being such a mess up.

I obviously wasn't people pleasing, because everyone wasn't thrilled with me. And codependent? I'm not a Midwest soccer mom married to an alcoholic man. Ha-hem. What? These are the stories that get into our heads about what these terms mean. And it was keeping me from seeing the ways that I was keeping myself, my nervous system, my inner children, my whole friggin' life on this roller coaster of codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits.

And so I thought we need a better term. These terms are tired and outdated. Codependency as a term comes from the war on drugs. It's garbage.

Paige: What does that mean? I hear that word a lot, but to be honest with you, I don't actually think that I could define it. What does that mean?

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Victoria: Codependency? I don't even know. I don't even know. What I was saying, I really think of it as if we were little kids. What every little kid needs is to feel safe. To know that when the marauders come, there's a big old grown up with a spear or an axe, or whatever their grown up has in their culture. They belong in the community... So when the marauders come... And that they are valuable, worthwhile... So when the marauders come.

It all boils down to survival, because we are small mammals. And if you're 6'3", cool. Look at a rhino. You are small and simple, right? And so we, if we don't get a firm grounding in childhood that shows us that these three things are true, we can be safe, belong and have value, we spend our childhood, our teenage years, our high school years, our early adulthood, our college years, our grad school years, our 20s, our 30s, our 40s, our 50s, etc. sourcing them.

It is mammalian and human to take our grown-up's lack on as our fault. Meaning, if your parents, your caregivers, aren't attuning to you the way you need them to, and you're four or six or eight or twelve, it is unsafe for you to believe that they could be the problem. Because they're the one with the axe when the marauders come, right?

You need to believe in them for survival. You cannot be in doubt. So, "Somebody has got to be an eff up here. Somebody's got to be the problem. It's got to be me. Who else could it be? I must be the goat for scaping here. It is me." And so we take that on. Which is this huge gaping wound in our hearts, right? "I am inherently bad. I am inherently a problem."

And we can throw other certain religious and societal traditions under the bus, as pushing this forward. We are our production. We are not inherently valuable. People in racialized bodies, marginalized bodies, women, we are not as... we're somehow less than. From the jump, from birth, from pink bow on your head. And so we spend a lifetime chasing good enough,

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worthy enough, safe enough, belonging enough. And that's what leads us to not be interdependent, but codependent.

“I am so scared of you having a bad thought or feeling about me that I'm going to contort myself, manipulate myself, twist myself up into a pretzel to try to keep you from having any feelings that make you not think I'm the best thing ever and save me.” That sucks.

Paige: I'm thinking about all the ways that this infiltrates the way that we spend money, too. Oh, my God, we could talk about that a lot.

Victoria: That's going to be part two.

Paige: Exactly. Like how you come up with “emotional outsourcing”, when I'm trying to come up with a catchy phrase for it. But it's just this notion or this idea of spending our money, or even managing our money, from a place of internal validation. “This is what I want to be spending my money on.” And also spending your money from a place of inherent worthiness.

Not trying to buy the approval, the validation of other people. Even for yourself. Think about how much... I'm saying for everyone listening, think about how much money you've spent on exactly what you just said. How much money you've spent, to your point, trying to contort yourself into this thing so that you can gain the approval of other people. Probably thousands to tens of thousands of dollars.

Victoria: Yeah. Including the checkout person at Neiman or Sephora or wherever, when you're buying something you can't afford, and those two seconds of anticipatory dopamine, they're going to be like, “Oh, wow, fancy brand sweater. Look at you!” Or when you're putting it on a nearly maxed out credit card. But for that millisecond, someone who's not you told you you're worthy of love and care. “You're impressive. You're spending big

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bucks. You must be worthy. We'll save you when the marauders come. Definitely. You're on the short list, babe.”

But like you said, that fades so fast, right? It's flash in the pan versus really doing that work. Which, in my world, I do through thought work, looking at our habitual mindset patterns, somatics. I'm trained in somatic experiencing through the Somatic Experiencing Institute. Peter Levine's work.

So somatics is when we look at the body. All right, what are the tension patterns in the body? Where are you holding on to emotional outsourcing in your body, that's keeping you buying the latest gadget, the latest makeup, the latest iPhone, the latest, the latest, the latest? Or I'm sure you have listeners who over thrift, right? It doesn't have to be about spending big bucks. It's just “over”. So anytime we're “over”...

I'm going to... Do you mind if I go on a little buffering...?

Paige: Yeah, please take us.

Victoria: Buffering. So when we're not in intentionality, which is the cornerstone of emotional outsourcing, we're not in our agency. We're not present in our bodies. We're not here. We're working you. We don't realize we're working you, but we're working you. We're not present with you. We're not present with ourselves.

And I think people get into that sort of fog when they're over shopping. I can imagine overspending. And so much of that is about buffering. Which I know is a term you've talked about before. Buffering is when we push our emotions aside. When we do something, say something, drink something, buy something in order to not feel a feeling that our nervous system does not have the capacity to feel.

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And so our brain, our mind really fears. That could be hunger. That could be sadness. That could be disappointment, frustration, annoyance, anger. God, so many of my clients have such a hard time with anger. I mean, no big, right? No one's shocked at that.

Paige: Not a big one.

Victoria: Women are not allowed to feel angry. And so instead of feeling the thing, because your nervous system thinks it's going to murder you right now, you push it away. And what better distraction than shiny object syndrome? Is that what it is, shiny object syndrome? Like seals, crows, monkeys. Shiny object self.

Paige: Ooh, I like that. I'm writing that down.

Victoria: Yeah, I'm good at these. So shiny object self. Because you're conflating the shiny object and your sense of Self. You're making them the same thing. "If I buy the latest water bottle," this one's from a decade ago, "then I'll be worth it."

Paige: There's truly so much that I see of that happening in my world. I call it the "hamster wheel" that we get ourselves on. And again, it's really like we've all been convinced that this is the way that the world works, or what our buying or consumption will do for us. And yes, in my world, we're talking about buying things, consuming stuff.

But to your point, it could be any type of consumption. Yeah. I feel like it's especially sinister with the stuff because it's the world that we live in. It's like every single day you are inundated with it. Whether it's on your phone or in your email inbox or when you're walking down the street past stores or whatever it is. You're exposed to this concept hundreds of times a day of 'stuff can change or add to your inherent worthiness or how valuable you are as a human being.'

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Victoria: I'm having this thought sort of starting to come in. Can we workshop it real quick? Like fleshed out? But I'm thinking about values, like what do I value? So a little different from how I'm valued. Here we go to a co-op, and most things are in bulk.

So you bring your used yogurt containers, and there's a whole stack of mason jars and used yogurt containers and Ziploc bags people have rinsed, right? The whole ethos is, "How can we consume as little as possible? How can we take as few new things?" What are your values? And what matters to you?

When you're living in emotional outsourcing, because you're not in presence and you're not in intentionality, most of my clients have no idea what their values are. They're just mirrors reflecting back. "Oh, you're wearing Gucci? I want to be friends with these PTA moms. They're all wearing Gucci, so I guess I should get some. I want to be friends with these crunchy moms, they all have really shiny, new mason jars."

I don't know if that's a thing in Berkeley somewhere, but probably. But you know what I mean?

Paige: Yeah, it's kind of like, "I saw Regina George wearing army pants and flip flops, so I want to wear army pants and flip flops."

Victoria: I knew I loved you, and then you reference Regina George and it's just over now. We're BFFs.

Paige: There we go.

Victoria: There we go.

Paige: But it's so true. Yeah.

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Victoria: But like, for real. And so what is it that you value? What are your values that can keep you grounded in Self and intentional? It doesn't fricking matter what Regina George has; you've got you.

And I think that's so hard, because with emotional outsourcing, in order to do it, we have to leave ourselves. Interdependence, which is two autonomous humans, who know their own worth and value, connect for mutuality and reciprocity. That's *interdependent*. So that's, "I love your sweater for you." New York over here is in all black.

Paige: I'm wearing a very colorful sweater, for anyone who isn't watching the video.

Victoria: It's adorable. You should you should watch it because she looks great. But, "You look great for you. And I look great for me. I get to value what matters to me, and you value what matters to you. And I can trust..." Ah, that's where it is. "I can trust that I am lovable and worthy and valuable in difference." That's what it is. That's what it is.

It's this drive towards sameness, homogeneity as safety, which that's a tale as old as time, right? If conquering armies took over Canada, we would all try to blend in and not be the one called out to the firing squad. Duh. But it is that consumption in the name of the safety of conformity.

Paige: Oh, I love that we're talking about this. This is so good. Even just looking at... Pick anything. Go around your house and pick anything, any object. I mean, I'll raise my hand and be first to say I have a Stanley Cup. I have one, though. I don't have 15. I don't have a rainbow, all of them. I have one. I think that's just a really top of mind example to where it's this pack mentality that we're kind of talking about.

And I think asking and really digging deeper and evaluating, do I actually want this thing or am I solely doing this because it feels safe to do this?

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Like, “It feels safe to buy this mug that every other girl in my,” whatever “group has. I don’t have to be the one girl who shows up to the group and doesn’t have the thing that everybody else has.”

It happens as adults. It happens as kids, when you were little, right? Like when you would go to school and everybody would have the brand of this or the brand of that. And if you were the kid that had to show up and didn’t have the thing, it was traumatizing in a sense. It can be.

Victoria: Well, because again, it speaks to safety and belonging, which are those core, essential human needs. We need to feel safe and like we belong. And I think it’s incumbent on us as the grownups... which it’s weird that we’re the grownups. That’s a whole ‘nother show... to shift the story for the next generation. And that as humans, we are pack animals.

It does make sense that we want to fit in, but again, it’s the ‘to our own detriment.’ Where are you outside your values? Where are you outside? What actually matters to you in order to fit in? In order to be the same? One of the big things we do in emotional outsourcing is we don’t realize we’re doing it.

So I want to be clear. It’s manipulative, in fact, but not an intention. Usually our whole vibe, our whole thing, everything we’re doing is about manipulating other people’s emotions so they’ll be pleased with us, think we’re perfect, think we’re good enough... marauders.

And so that’s what we do through our consumption, through our purchases. Through the kind of beer or wine we’re drinking, the kind of cup we’re carrying, the kind of wedding ring we’re wearing, the kind of etc. etc. etc. The way you and I have our makeup done, right? It’s all to that end of sending a message and attempting to make someone think and feel something about us before we’ve even entered into a relationship.

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So when you know yourself, you can be conscious about that. But 'what is cool' versus 'what I value'.

Paige: That's a really powerful question, "What is cool versus what do I actually value?" This is why I love this so much. Because I think when you can really understand the core of what you're trying to get at with things, it's not just about the phone. It's not just about the water bottle. It's not just about fill-in-the-blank, whatever.

It's about safety, right? It's about belonging. That's what I'm really after here. So when I can see that, and have conscious awareness of that, then it's like, how can I be that for me and not having to abdicate responsibility for that to a water bottle? "Dear water bottle, please regulate my nervous system."

Victoria: "Things are over between us," right? "I need you to regulate my nervous system because I am speculated around Regina George having a different water bottle, and that's a problem."

Paige: Yeah. Well take us here, because I would love to hear from you some good places to start. I know you said thought work and somatic work, and I would love to hear about both. And obviously I know we don't have all the time in the world to fully dive into... You and I could talk all day. But maybe let's start with thought work. Let's just start there. Because I, again, I feel like thought work is a term I use a lot, but it's still something that can be very foreign to people. I mean, a lot of people don't even... They don't even know that thoughts are thoughts. They think they're facts.

Victoria: Right. Yeah. So thought work, as I use the term, comes from Cognitive Behavioral Theory and it's talking about neuroplasticity, which is our brain's amazing capacity to change. We can change our brain, which is the meat, it's the organ. And our mind, which is the consciousness and the thinking part.

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And so we use thought work to look at our habitual, unintentional subconscious mindset. What are the thoughts that you're thinking on repeat? Like we started out a couple hours ago, when we started talking with you saying, "I'm looking at my sweet little two-year-old." I could tell from your tone, you love her so much. "And I'm saying some b.s. to her. What just happened?"

What happened was, that habitual neural groove in your brain got activated and fired, and words came out of your mouth without you realizing. And so thought work is where we can intervene before, during, and after those moments. To change the way we think about ourselves, the world, codependency, and our spending so we can live with more intentionality by choosing thoughts that serve us better.

This exercise of thought work is predicated on understanding that our habitual thoughts create specific feelings within us, where an emotion is the mechanical experience and the feeling is the story. The feeling is the sensations in the body. It's like the "What? Oh, I'm so disappointed." And so our going to, "I'm so disappointed when he says, 'I can't make it,'" that's a habitual pattern in the brain. And we can intervene.

Because I don't know about you, but I'm at a point where if I get home from a long day out and I'm taking my bra off, everyone can cancel. I'm no longer disappointed. Bra's off — I'm off.

Paige: That's the point of no return for me.

Victoria: Girl, please. I'm not putting that thing back on. I stopped wearing underwires in the pandemic — changed my life. Changed my leaf. But I'm not even putting a bralette back on. No, ma'am. We're done.

Paige: We're done for the day.

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Victoria: But that's the thing, right? So time changed that one, but we could use thought work to say, "He canceled. How do I want to feel about it?" And then we can see that our feeling is the fuel for our action. What do you do when you're feeling disappointed? You grumble, you complain about him behind his back. You people-please him. You try to ingratiate yourself.

You do things that you may not want to do. But when you realize you can make a choice, and you can, instead of feeling disappointed, feel kind of relieved, what's the action you take? Draw big old bubble bath, right? Fire up the office and relax instead of spinning. Because you chose a different thought, a different feeling to create a different action, and then create a different result in your life.

So if you're chronically overspending, over purchasing, this is what you're doing. What are the thoughts you're having when you pick up your keys or your Metro card, and you head to the subway or your car to go to the store? What's the thought there? What's your thought as you walk it? What's your thought as you peruse? What's your thought as you approach the counter? As you hand over your credit card? What are your thinkings? What are the feelings creating?

And so when we can really... If we were to summarize what we've been talking about for the last hour, it's the lack of presence and intentionality, right? That's tantamount. It's the cornerstone of what you and I both work on, which is why we can talk for hours. And so the thought work re-gifts us the pause that allows for intentionality. That allows us to say, "Oh, I don't need to buy. I actually don't even want to buy. I'm buying this out of habit. Oh, snap.

I saw a meme the other day that was like, "Girl, you don't want to go to Target. You just want to go to a museum and look at shiny things. Go to the Met." And I was like, that's actually it. We are magpies and we want to look at shiny things.

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I mean, if you're watching this video, look behind me. My office is like... I'm from Argentina. I call myself a Latin American minimalist, which means maximalism to its core. A shiny thing.

But what's the story you're making about your worth as an animal and the shiny thing? And do you really want to keep thinking that? As you're listening to this show, you probably don't, right?

Paige: Interrupt that.

Victoria: That's thought work, in a nutshell. How did I do?

Paige: Amazing. So, so helpful. The word that I'm really loving, that you keep using, is "presence". And I've never really thought about thought work that way. But it's coming back to yourself after... like how you've been walking us through today... how emotional outsourcing is this form of self-abandonment, where you're leaving yourself. And it's bringing yourself back and having that presence with yourself in an environment where maybe previously you kind of just would have been autopilot, right?

You get on autopilot and you just start going and going and going. You're taking the turns and you're doing the things, and you don't even realize it's happening. Have you ever gotten in your car and you drive somewhere and then you get to the place and you're like, "I don't even remember driving here?" "I'm here. I clearly did, but I have completely zoned out," for the past however long.

Victoria: Yep. Freeze in the nervous system is generally what that is.

Paige: We can talk about that in part two.

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Victoria: But yes, we'd end up at the elementary school on a Saturday morning when we were going to the grocery school. I went to grocery school. No big deal. Bragging again.

Paige: But it's like, how did I get here? And to your point, I hear this from women so often, what you were saying earlier about how we end up creating these lives that aren't really even about us or for us, it's for all the other people. But I hear this so often with women.

They're like, "I've gotten to this point in my life where my life doesn't really even feel like me. I'm living in a house that doesn't feel like me. I'm wearing clothes that don't feel like me. I've developed habits. I'm just going throughout my day in a way that doesn't really feel like me." And I think that that can be a really powerful realization. And a really great place to start to be like, "Hey, you can change this at any time."

If you're feeling that way, you're not alone because I know a lot of people feel that way. But it is just interesting how we just go through the motions and then we end up creating this life where we're like, "This doesn't even feel like me."

Victoria: Absolutely. And it's full of stuff you didn't need, didn't need to buy, but that are objects in service of a false self. Purchases in service of telling the story that you are not you. You're mini-Regina George. Regina George, the redux.

And again, I want to really, with a lot of compassion, curiosity, and care, invite us to get cured. Ask, why am I doing this? Why have I been doing this? Not so you can say, "Oh, you're right. It doesn't. No, there's no good reason." But actually to find the good reason.

And what I mean is, that little kid who was you 20, 30, 40, 50 years ago had a really damn good reason for pretending to be this false self. God, I

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remember this story. I love my dad. And I remember being at The Gap. I think I was like 12, and I had saved up all my little babysitting money and I wanted to buy this sweatshirt.

So I went in and I got it, not unlike a magpie. I've had this habit of going and visiting things. I wanted to buy that. It felt very expensive. It was probably \$15, but I was 12, right? And so I went and got the blue sweatshirt. I took it to them, to my dad, and I said, "This is the sweatshirt I want."

And I remember him saying, "Oh, do you want the blue one?" And I said, "Yeah, yeah, this is the one." He said, "Oh, okay." And you know, human ears are, particularly kid ears, are wildly attuned to tone. It's not what you say, it's how you say it. It's actually backed by neuroscience.

Stephen Porges just talks all about this in Polyvagal Theory, about prosody of voice. And so, of course, I noticed that little tone. I said, "Wait, what do you think?" Because he was my everything, right? "Oh no, you should get the blue one if you want it. But I just think... It's just my opinion. It doesn't matter. The green one would look so much better on you." "Oh, but I don't like that one. I like the blue."

"No, no, no. You get what you want. I mean, only a fool would turn down the green one, but you get what you want. That's what matters. I would get the green all day. That's what I would get." So what did I do? I bought the green one and I hated it. I never put it on.

It was this object that was attempting to people-please someone; attempting to do what I knew somebody else wanted me to do, at the detriment of my true self, my true desire, my true want. His approval meant more to me than how I was going to spend probably... I was 12. So what? Six months of babysitting money? Serious nest egg here.

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Paige: I mean, yeah. It's a lot of money to a 12-year-old.

Victoria: A lot of money. And we do that... Who cares about the sweatshirt? But we do that, to your point, we marry somebody we don't necessarily want to, have kids with them, go to a career we don't necessarily want to be in, stay in that career, get a promotion, live in a town we don't like. On and on and on and on.

We are living these inauthentic lives because our nervous system learned so early that that actually was the wisest choice. And our parents don't have to be monsters. You don't have to grow up in trauma. My sweet dad took me to The Gap, man. He hates shopping more than anything, and probably thought he was just sharing his opinion.

And so no one's throwing Jorge under any buses, but I think the point is a really good one. I was well fed, well housed, went to ballet and karate. This isn't a trauma story. It's a story of a misattunement that registered in my body as being me and wanting what I want; really dumb. So let me buy what will please others, and be what will please others, and contort myself to please others.

Paige: Wow.

Victoria: Sneaky. It's insidious.

Paige: So sneaky. It really is so sneaky. Can you leave us with just one practice that we can start implementing for the somatic piece? Really kind of helping us bring us back into that presence with our body?

Victoria: Yeah, absolutely. This is one of my favorites, because it is so simple and easy, and you can do it and no one will know that you're regulating your nervous system. So when we are revved up, we're in sympathetic activation. We're full of adrenaline, noradrenaline, we're

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making decisions at the speed of light, and they're usually really terrible ones. Because we're trying to outrun a lion, but we're actually 12 and at The Gap.

And so what we need to do is get ourselves out of our limbic system, which is the reptile brain, the lizard brain, and back into our frontal cortex, our smarty pants, executive thinking part. And we do that with math. We're not going to get complicated, don't worry. We do it with patterns and things that make the brain just hold onto a pattern.

We can do this if we're revved up, and sometimes when we're shut down. Again, 12-year-old me, "Oh, you want me to get that one?" Adrenaline, adrenaline. "Oh, I can't be myself and be loved here." Shut down. So we're going to do two exercises. One for, if you're just jacked, anxious or you're starting to get revved up. And one, if you're like, "I'm numbed out. I'm shopping, but I'm not. Where am I?"

So if you're going fast, you go slow. If you're going slow, you go fast. You're going to take your little paw, and you're going to take your thumb and you're going to tap your first finger. If you're going way too fast, if everything is sped up, as slowly as you can you're going to tap your first finger and your thumb and go, "One." Your New York finger and your thumb and go, "Two." Your ring finger and go, "Three." Your pinky and go, "Four."

Now you're going to come back — four, three, two, one. And you're going to go so slow it's super annoying and almost unbearable, but that's the point. From even these little ones, it's too much, too soon, too fast. Your sense of Self couldn't stand up to whatever the external pressure or impact was. And so the nervous system goes into a rev up and to try to get out of it, so we slow it down.

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Maybe that's your new rule. Before you're allowed to walk up to the cash register, you count your fingers — One, two, three. Do I really need this? Four. Four. Do I really want it? Three, two, one.

And if you're numbed out, you're checked out, you need to bring activation into the system. (Counting fast) One-two-three-four. Four-three-two-one. I already have this at home. Three-four. Four... And then just keep counting and working.

This is how my work is all about integrating thought work and somatics. So I'll use a new thought, a new mantra, and build it into a practice that engages the body. You're twice as powerful. Why leave half of you out?

So if you're numbed out, checked out, (counting fast) one-two-three-four. Four-three-two-one. And you can put your hand in your armpit, or half behind your back, and no one knows you're doing it. You can keep up a conversation, if your brain works that way. You can do it while driving. You can do it on a Zoom call. You can do it on a sales call. It's easy.

And it can buy you a little time. Like we were talking about, to not people please, to not say “sure,” to not default. But to actually default to, “I need a second.”

Paige: Thank you for addressing both of those scenarios. I think that both of those happen a lot too. And depending on what you're in, whether you're kind of in that more checked out, zoned out, type of space, or you're just feeling kind of supercharged and super activated. “Oh my God, there's a great sale.” That frantic energy.

Victoria: Right. Yeah. I can hear my frugal grandmother saying, “It's not a deal if you don't need it.”

Paige: I mean, she's not wrong.

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Victoria: She's 0% wrong. But yes, calm the nervous system. Listen, I love a deal, but yeah, calm. Calm. Regulate the nervous system and ask yourself if it's really a deal or something you need. Or if you're, again, trying to make a purchase, do emotional labor. It cannot do that. Neither can a glass of wine. Neither can whatever, you're watching another show. It cannot do emotional labor for you.

Paige: I've done a past episode where we talked about it. It's just interesting to kind of know, and again, have conscious awareness over this. Where most of the marketing that you're going to get, whether it's flash sales or this or that, or 24 hours or whatever, it's designed to dysregulate you.

Victoria: Yep. I'm always trying to do more ethical marketing, when I'm marketing Anchored. I always say, "We start in November. There are lots of spots left."

Paige: "Don't worry, you'll be able to get in."

Victoria: "It's totally fine. We do sell out every single time," but I say it with this tone — "That is a fact. There is no urgency."

Paige: If you are somebody trying to sell something, you see how effective it is. You've talked a lot with us today about fear. It just comes back to that fear. We're spending so much money out of fear, fear, fear, fear. But that will be part four of our conversation.

Victoria: Okay. We've got so many parts.

Paige: I know we've got... I think we're up to four parts at this point. So a lot we can dig into, but we're out of time for today.

Victoria: Yes, for sure

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Paige: Thank you so, so much...

Victoria: It was a delight.

Paige: It was. I honestly feel just so lucky that I got to spend time with you today.

Victoria: Likewise. Likewise. I have a present for your audience.

Paige: Oh, please. Thank you.

Victoria: So if you head over to VictoriaAlbina.com/moneylove, you can download a suite of meditations, nervous system exercises, orienting exercise, and inner child exercises for free — F-R-double E —just to say thank you for listening to the show and supporting your amazing work.

Paige: Oh, well, thank you. And I'll put that in the show notes too. Where else can people get plugged into you and your world? To that, and then elsewhere.

Victoria: Well, yeah. Okay, great. So my podcast is called *Feminist Wellness*, and it's for humans of all genders who want to overcome exactly this, emotional outsourcing. I have a book coming out in about a year, but we'll talk about that in part three, I think. Okay, part three. Someone take notes. And you can follow me on the 'Gram. I give good 'Gram [@victoriaalbinawellness](https://twitter.com/victoriaalbinawellness).

Paige: Okay, perfect. Well, we'll make sure that all that is in the show notes so you guys can find it easily. Victoria, thank you for being here.

Victoria: Thank you.

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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.