

Ep #308: Somatics and Self-Trust



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 just wanted to note right from jump, my voice sounds like I have a cold because I have a cold. I'm pretty frustrated about it because I am extremely careful to not get sick, but you know, the whole other subject, we can talk about it later. I'm gonna keep today short and sweet because I need to get back to couch. But I wanted to talk about self-trust because something happened over the holidays that I really want to share with you.

So I've been thinking a lot about how to talk about somatics and why it matters. Why frigging bother? Why feel your feelings in your body? Why be present in your body? Why? Why do I run Anchored? Why is Anchored 6 months? Why is The Somatic Studio 3 months? Why do we need this? Why does it matter? And so, the universe very kindly gave me a pretty lousy evening that is so exemplary of why we need this and I'm here to share it with you.

So, 2024 in general was very challenging. Some big health issues, you know, we moved countries. Somebody said, oh, well, you're just moving to Canada. No, immigration is still a really big deal, even if it's the country next door, even if they mostly speak the same language. They say sorry a lot here. It's kind of wild. But it's been a long year.

And then someone, I don't know how to say this eloquently, someone really messed some major stuff up in November that made the last 2 months incredibly, incredibly challenging. It was like challenge after challenge after challenge, which my astrologer was like, yes, of course, because I don't know, Saturn's in your snout. I don't know what he said, but he was like, yes, that makes sense. And it shall soon pass.

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My point is, my resilience has felt particularly low. My resourcing has felt particularly. I have not felt resourced or grounded. And I've continued to do the practices that I know bring me back towards home. And honestly, coaching in Anchored, snuggling with Billey, and cooking are like, and movement, like yoga, are the most grounding things in my life. So shout out to the Anchored family.

I like, ooh, I feel so present in my body the millisecond that Zoom room opens. Like listen to my voice. Do you hear the change? I started talking about Anchored and I'm like, it jazzes me up because it's just so incredible to coach you all. And I love you all so much. Oh, okay. Okay. This would be an anchored love fest if I didn't make myself stop. Though I should record that for them. I will. I will.

Listen, I've still been doing my practices. I've been focusing on really, really coming back into my body even while things or maybe especially because things feel really swirly and really bananas. I mean, I also wrote a book in June. All the footnotes of my book were deleted. It's been a year. It's been a lot.

And I'm so effing grateful to have somatics, to have body-based practices, to have a way to come back to grounding, to agency and choicefulness. And so that's self-trust and choicefulness are the things I want to talk about today.

So, we made what feels now like a very bad decision, but whatever, hindsight, right? Decision to go to a gathering. The details of this don't really matter. What matters is I was explaining some science to this really sweet 19-year-old boy who I – he's just like the sweetest, kindest puppy of a kid. And I was explaining some science to him because that's kind of what we do. Like I nerd and he's like, yeah, tell me more, tell me more. He's awesome.

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And his dad, I don't know how he misinterpreted it. It doesn't really matter, but this over 6 foot tall dude starts screaming at me. Who are you to tell me what to do? Blah, blah, blah. And I looked at the kid and the kid's like, dad, stop. She was just explaining it to me. And the guy, like over 6 feet tall dude, I'm 5'3, just like is yelling at me, probably about 3 feet away from me. It was very unpleasant. I'm fine, thank you. And I'm fine because I've got these practices. I've got these skills. I've got these tools. So, what did I do in that moment?

Because I was present, right? So, I used to explain science just from my brain. It was a way to not be present and a way to like be a smarty pants and like not be vulnerable, not be real, not be in the room because I was being the science nerd. It was a role. It was like a persona. And because science is cool. But really, it was Beatriz Victoria Albina Cordero was not in the room. I was explaining science. Do you hear the difference in my voice? It was a character, right? It was like, no, I'm a professor.

But that's shifted as I've come back into somatic embodiment, which means being present in my body. I know, fancy sounding words, but like being here in the animal, present. I was explaining as me, which is like if you've lived in functional freeze, if you know what that feels like, and if you're new to the show, hi, welcome, I love you. I have so many episodes where I talk about functional freeze. Go to my website, Beatriz, B-E-A-T-R-I-Z, albina.com/podcast. There's a search bar, put in Functional Freeze, find those episodes. They're amazing.

If you've lived in Functional Freeze, which is one foot on the gas, one foot on the brake, right? All kinds of sympathetic with all kinds of dorsal. So you're like revved up and doing things, doing, doing, doing, doing, but you're not feeling anything because inside you is a frozen brick of emotions. It's just frozen. You're frozen to yourself. You're frozen to the world. You're frozen, but you're functional, right? You're like doing stuff

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versus full dorsal where you'd be catatonic, right? So that's functional freezing in a nutshell.

If you've lived that, as I did for like 30 plus years, you know what it feels like to not be present in your body, to not be in the room when you're in the room, for the lights to be on but no one to be home. And now my life is the opposite. I'm home. I'm here. Hi, I'm here. And so when dude started screaming at me, I didn't feel, you know, that kind of surprise where you're like, wait, what?

It was more like, okay, this is happening. I am present to this shift in the energy, right? Which makes me so much more available intellectually to lean on my smarts, to lean on my good communication skills, to lean on my nonviolent communication, to lean on de-escalation. I've been an activist my whole life. I've done a lot of protest de-escalation courses and taught them. I was able to lean on those skills.

But if we freeze in the moment, if we just go into freeze, if we just shut down, if we're not able to stay present, all bets are off. We lose our choicefulness. We lose our capacity to make the next right decision for ourselves. And that's when we find ourselves yelling back or completely shrinking and shutting down. But what we're not doing is standing up tall, proverbially, right? We're not standing up tall, we're not making a conscious intentional decision, and we're not able to trust ourselves.

And because we don't trust ourselves, we're not able to stay present, right? It's like a back and forth, right? It's a yin and a yang. No, it's like parallel, right? There are two parallel lines on the graph, right? As we're more present, we're able to trust ourselves because we're actually being ourselves. And as we're able to be ourselves, we trust ourselves and we're more present, right? They move together.

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And so in this moment, I was able to find my feet, find the ground. If you're in the somatic studio, you know what I'm talking about. I was able to ground myself, to orient. I looked around the room quickly. I resourced my nervous system. I caught eyes with the 19-year-old who I have a lovely relationship with. I really like that kid. And that was grounding.

Billey was not present to support me. She was in another room or I would have looked at her because that's what our nervous systems need. It's not codependent to lean on someone to resource and ground you in a challenging moment. It's human, it's natural, it's normal, it's vital. Actually, it's co-regulating our nervous systems.

So I oriented to regulate my nervous system, I grounded by feeling my feet on the earth, I mean in my shoes, in a kitchen, on a foundation, eventually the earth, but I felt the earth energy, right, bachamama energy coming up, and I coregulated. All skills that I have practiced so many times, they're now rote. They're now rote.

It's like we've been baking a lot since we've been home. It's like when I open the oven, I take my glasses off before I open it, right? And I don't think about it. It's just that implicit memory. It's just like, bloop, glasses off, right? Same thing.

I did those three things. And even as I describe them, like, way to go you. Because like this is, you know, I've been studying somatics and practicing it in some way for the last, since Oberlin, right? Since the 90s, the 1990s were like five years ago, but yeah, so like over 20 years ago. But really applying it to my life in this robust way that has really changed my life has been the last 10 years and then more intensely the last 567. What is time? It is a sloshing thing.

The point is I'm still like, damn, girl, way to go. So dude starts yelling. Kid is outraged. Me, orienting, grounding, finding a resource. And luckily, that

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resource was a coregulating human who was alternating being like, dad, stop, and looking at me and being like, what? Like making that like, oh my God, what face and you know, that hand gesture of like, what is happening? Really supportive.

So as his volume and tone went up, I knew mine had to drop. That was just my intuition. That was intuition and training. And so I said something to the extent of, sir, I don't understand. And I started calling him sir. I don't, right? But I wanted to show he's a guy from a very patriarchal religious sect. And I wanted to, because the patriarchy, I wanted to show him I was not like, questioning his man authority, which like, ew, but also like, safety first, right? Like, I didn't know if he was gonna try to smack me or something.

So, sir, and I just started talking really calmly. "Sir, the way you're speaking to me is not acceptable. It is not okay for you to yell at me. There has been a misunderstanding. I'm not sure what you think I said, and I'd like to address it, but we cannot address what's going on while you're yelling at me."

And he keeps screaming. And then he starts – this is the part where the self-trust is so amazing. He starts globalizing. He took it really personally, whatever he misunderstood. "I don't know why you're always talking like this to me." I've met this man three times. And then he globalized, "You always do this." I've met you three times, sir.

And I bring this up to say, if I didn't have the skill to come back into my grounding and I didn't trust myself, I may have believed him. He later told Billey, "She always does this, she always has to have the last word." Billey was like, "No, absolutely not. That's not my wife."

But I didn't believe it for a second. And this is the self-trust part. Because I am grounded, because I was actually present, I know that I didn't mess up. I didn't say anything problematic. I literally was explaining the way baking

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soda and vinegar work differently on surface pesticides on fruit and vegetable. I was quoting a study. I was about to give the PMID. We weren't talking religion, politics. I was literally talking about pesticides and a literal USDA study.

And 10 years ago, me, who was so beat down by being in an abusive marriage, was being gaslit so intensely and therefore was in such a potent functional freeze, was not present in my body because it was not a safe place to be. I was so deeply distrustful of myself. I would have believed him. I would have been like, "Oh, do I do that? Do I always need the last word? Did I say something wrong? Did I... what did I..."

But none of that. I experienced none of that because I was present when I was talking. I was present both when I was explaining the science and when I was attempting to de-escalate. And I know myself. Listen, if homeboy had said, "You're such a know-it-all," I'd be like, "Yeah, that's true."

But getting the last word, that's the last thing I care about. Please have it. I don't care. I'm gonna go sew. I'm gonna go knit. I'm gonna go for a walk. I'm gonna go read something, write something. I don't care about the last word. That's not my business. I don't even understand why that matters, right? But if I didn't have so much self-trust, I would maybe be questioning myself.

And come on, it's so part and parcel of white supremacy and the patriarchy that I, as a woman, as a human socialized as a woman, conditioned the way women are conditioned, it's all our fault. Everything's our fault. I should be guilty. I should feel shame when I legit did nothing. And, you know, those thoughts crossed my mind, but I didn't believe them.

Okay, so here's the other thing. Because through somatic practices, I know my body so well. I know my mind. I know my inner children. I know my

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parts. I know me. When someone says something that doesn't compute, it simply doesn't compute. And when there's a voice, that's the voice of a system, right? Like the patriarchy. Because the voice crossed my head as we were driving away. Like, did I do something wrong? Did I do something offensive? It wasn't me questioning me. It was a voice within me from my socialization and conditioning. I then was like, no, that's, nope, we're not playing that game.

And then I was able to step into self-responsibility to ask it not as a blame-shame question, but as a curious question. Did I say or do something wrong? No, I asked consent. I said to the kid, I'm trying not to say his name, do you want me to explain the science? But like the difference between how baking soda and vinegar work, one's an acid, one's a base.

And kid was like, yeah. And like looked at me with those bright eyes of someone who's like excited to learn. So I got consent. I shared data. I stayed calm and attempted to de-escalate. I was not able to de-escalate. He kept screaming and screaming even after I walked away. But I did not get altered. I stayed calm. I stayed grounded.

I stayed present in my body. I did not attack him. I did not attack myself. I mean, wow. And that is the work, right? That's the gift of somatic practice, of the work we do in Anchored and The Somatic Studio to overcome our codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing thoughts, because I did not people-please him. I people-unpleased him.

But this is the work to stay present enough, grounded enough that we can speak our truth and not question ourselves, not shoot the second arrow. Gosh, that's one of like the very first episodes. Look at if you're like, what's the second arrow? It's this amazing Buddhist concept that's super useful. Check out the first few episodes of the show. It's in there somewhere.

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Yeah, I didn't shoot the second arrow. I didn't make it about me. It is squirrely about him and his issues. And I think probably that no one tells him no. And this kind of behavior is just tolerated because he is part of this patriarchal religious sect. It's my guess. It's irrelevant. It's not my business. Maybe that's the most important part is it's not my business.

I stayed in intentionality. I stayed grounded. And that is my business. So I was then able to support Billey. She was able to support me. We were able to extricate ourselves from the situation. I feel really proud of how we took care of ourselves and each other in that moment. I feel proud of how I responded to him instead of reacting. And I know that it's somatic practice plus thought work that restored that choicefulness that I lost in emotional outsourcing. And that's pretty rad.

I do wish we'd left. He brought his other son who had a cold. And then myself, Billey's now starting to get sick, and an 82-year-old who they knew was gonna be there. She has been very sick. She has congestive heart failure and diabetes. I wish we'd left before we got sick. What are you gonna do? That part's hindsight, you know?

Thank you for listening. 20 minutes. That is short and sweet just like me. I hope this was helpful. My hope for you and your homework is that you start to notice the times and places where you dysregulate, where you leave presence when it's not actually necessary in the moment. It is not dysregulating when we go into sympathetic or dorsal for a reason, but it doesn't serve us to leave presence, to leave ventral vagal and stay there and lose connection with intentionality and choicefulness and agency, et cetera, in a situation that doesn't warrant it, right?

So just noticing what really supports your body to come back into grounding, to come back into presence, to come back into choicefulness, and start to practice that. Right, so if you like daydream off and drift off

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while you're, I don't know, doing some kind of task, honor that your body might need a break and then see what it's like to come back into presence.

And keep the stakes really low, right? And just start practicing it. Start giving yourself that muscle memory because that's really what it was for me. It was just neural grooves. It was just muscle memory. It was just what I do now. And gosh, does that feel great.

And that's my wish for you. That you, well, hopefully are never yelled at by a guy a foot taller than you for no good reason. I pray that happens to literally no one ever, any time ever. But when you are, it is my wish and prayer for you that you are able to stay grounded and present and here in the moment because it's super rad. It's so great.

All right, now I'm rambling. Thank you for listening. I'm so grateful you're here. I'm going to be announcing a set of workshops. I'm trying something new. I'm going to do this four-part workshop series. I'm really excited about it. I've been working really, really, really hard on it. It's gonna be dope. So keep your eyes out for that in the new year and take care of you and yours.

Thank you for joining me, my love. Let's do what we do. Gentle hand on your heart should you feel so moved. And remember, you are safe, you are held, you are loved. And when one of us heals, we help heal the world. Be well, my beauty. Happy New Year! Talk to you soon. Ciao!

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.