

You will come back much more, self-confident much more focused and you might realize the thing that you thought you needed to be doing really in the bigger scheme of things is not the most important thing that needs to get done, but even if it needs to get done, you're going to be able to do it in less time now because you're going to be more focused and you're going to be able to calibrate the amount of effort you give to it, to what it really demands in my experience when we're really tired or we've really been pushing through and we've hit burnout, we don't do a very good job, calibrating the amount of energy and effort to what something really deserves.

Let me try and say that differently. We get caught in this perfectionistic sense of everything needs 110% when actually the task may only really need a 60% effort, but when we're really burned out, we can't really calibrate that to know that doing this at 60% is actually more than enough and gives us more space.

But if we took the break first, we'd see that. And then we actually can have gotten the break in and still get the thing done. Welcome to therapist, uncensored building on decades of professional experience. This podcast, tackles, neurobiology, modern attachment, and more in an honest way. That's helpful in healing humans.

Your session begins now with Dr. Ann Kelly and Sue Marriott.

So many of you across the world have been under an extreme amount of prolonged stress, especially over the last few years from COVID to racial tensions and political unrest, to financial, emotional strain and isolation, and now a war raging in Ukraine. So many of us have been taught to just disconnect from traumatic stress and just, you know, just power through it, override the body and keep going.

However, this really does have a devastating impact on our bodies and on our relationships. We are just not meant to live with unprocessed stress and trauma. So in today's episode, I get a chance to talk with our guests, Dr. Elizabeth Stanley, you're really going to love her. She shares her extensive research into coping with adversity, stress, and trauma.

So Dr. Stanley is an associate professor at Georgetown university, and she has an emphasis where she focuses on neurobiology of stress, trauma, and resilience. She holds degrees from Yale, Harvard, MIT, so powerfully smart. She's also a certified practitioner of somatic experiencing therapy. But what I really love about our dialogue is that she is so personal in her experience for why she started in this process to begin with.

So she is a US Army veteran with a PTSD diagnosis for herself. So she's able to really speak about recovering from stress and trauma from a very powerful, impersonal, personal place. And so it was very, she's so relatable, but one of the things she really gives us in this episode is she really can talk about the stress that what happens to our body in this process.

And ways to train our brain and our body to actually thrive during stress and recover from trauma. So she has created a mindfulness based mind fitness training program, which you'll hear

about in today's. Before we jump in, I'd like to thank our patron sponsors and you all help make this show possible.

So I want to do a big thank you. And for those of you who find therapists and, and are helpful to you and your personal life to your families and friends or to your clients. And if you can, because not everybody can, if you can jump in and help support the program, you can do so for as little as \$5 a month, we would really appreciate it.

And you'll not only be part of the therapist's uncensored mission of spreading security, one conversation at a time as a patron. You'll also see. They have different study opportunities, et cetera, as well as by the way, ad free episodes. So it's a win-win for everybody. So if you can jump into therapist and sensor.com backslash join and become a patron or a nerd as we like to call you also just a reminder.

We have our live therapists, uncensored community meetup coming April 22nd. Sue and I are super psyched about it. The hub is going to be in Austin, Texas, but we have wonderful volunteers helping to host local meetings, popping up all over the U S and actually across the world. Again, we have everything from New York to Milwaukee, Philadelphia, San Diego, to Sydney, Australia, all over the place.

So if you were interested in either joining or hosting, something like that, we have lots of details who talks about it at the end of the program, and more details you can wait and hear about it then, or you can jump onto therapists and censored backslash meetup. Okay. Let's jump into my talk with Dr.

Elisabeth's. I was so intrigued by your book title, widen the window visit. So in line with therapists and censored and what we talk about about co-regulation and regulation and stress tolerance. And of course the widen the window concept. So when I saw your title, I was just, okay, I've got to read this book.

I'm so interested wanting to have her on the show, but I have to say what was so interesting. And I was almost just totally thrown off is that I'm like, oh, let me go learn about the other. And so I go and I jump into your history and it's not anything that I expect. Am I right? It's like, it's so amazing, really diverse and interesting.

And wow, could you take us along the way of like, how did you get from your history in the military and public service to a book about emotional regulation and stress, because it is an intriguing direction and I think you're going to do it the most. Thank you. And thank you so much for having me on the show.

I am so excited for this conversation and yes, it does feel a little bit like a very circuitous path. If you had said to me when I was 18 or 20 or even 35, like I would end up doing this. No, no way. How could that ever happen? But I do think sometimes for those of us who. Our in our research and teaching field, we end up researching and teaching things that we need to know ourselves.

And that was certainly my own situation. I am truly exhibit a, this particular mind and body are exhibit a of everything that I write about in terms of how humans move through stress and trauma. And to hopefully in resemblance, I experienced a lot of chronic stress and trauma early in my life, and it was through many years.

Childhood adversity and sexual violence as a child and as a teenager. And then I had an ROTC scholarship and served in the military, a comfort along military family and was deployed overseas, did two deployments, peacekeeping deployments in the Balkans. I had a near death experience in Bosnia and as all that was going on, I ended up resigning my commission after I needed to become a whistleblower, to resign to a sexual harassment situation in my chain of command.

And I found myself in graduate school, I'd applied while I was still on active duty thinking. I was going to go teach at West Point. That had been the plan. And here I was now in graduate school, a civilian and not knowing what I was going to do and coping with, you know, two and a half decades at that point of all of this dysregulation that I had been shoving under compartmentalizing and suppressing.

Powering through with hyper achievement. The way many of us in our culture have been socialized and rewarded for doing, but my life was falling apart. I was really having a lot of physical symptoms and then insomnia and migraines and chronic respiratory problems. And, uh, I developed depression and PTSD, and that was kind of my doorway in to start this journey.

And eventually it got me through a period of time where I lost my eyesight. That was, I guess, the mid-year or maybe the apex, depending on which way you want to look at it. And it sent me in a different direction. I was in a PhD program in political science. I was looking at the domestic politics of ending long wars.

I was doing an MBA and focused on technology strategy at the same time and stress and trauma were not on my radar, except my mind and body had gotten me to a point where I needed to address it. And it sent me off in this other journey, my own healing journey, a lot of intensive mindfulness practice here.

And I spent some time in a monastery in Burma. I did a lot of therapy myself. I did some clinical training in some of the body-based therapeutic techniques. And through all of that, it was really important for me to realize how much what was happening with me was not personal to me. And it wasn't that I was doing something wrong.

It was actually very lawful. It was what happens when a mind and body have been experiencing this much chronic stress and trauma without recovery. And that really helped me take. All the noisy self judgements and the shame and the very negative thoughts about myself I had, but it was somehow me that was broken or wrong.

And it gave me some context to understand that wasn't the case that was actually quite liberating. And it helped me find the choice points for opening up new ways of, of doing things, to realize these were conditioned patterns, but they didn't have to be my destiny. I could do something different. And that then as I saw those shifts in myself, I wanted to share what I had learned with others.

And I created mindfulness-based mind fitness training, a resilience training program. I had some neuroscience and stuff. Physiology research partners. We ran several studies with troops, preparing for combat deployments, to Iraq and Afghanistan, and saw some real improvements that can come from just the basic choices of how we're directing our attention, which habits we're feeding or we're letting atrophy.

And all of that arc kind of came together then in the book and in an online version of the course that I've developed to be able to share it with lots of people more broadly. Yeah, it started in my own mind and body first, I wanted to share as much of my own journey in that process, as well as the journey of many of the men and women I've trained, because I do think there is still this cultural sense of if we're suffering from anxiety or depression or having a hard time regulating our emotions or.

Coping with techniques that might not actually be helpful. We take it somehow that it's a weakness of ours. And I don't think that's the case. And I wanted other people to understand that too. The points that you make about the cultural impact, as you were talking about all the buildup of stress and trauma and stress and trauma in your body.

I think the thing that was really weighing is how you weren't aware of it. You mentioned that you couldn't even feel your own anxiety, right? Your own stress, the old buildup, you were focused on getting the goal, getting the dissertation, doing the achievements. And I really love and would love for you to talk a little bit more about the cultural impact of that, that what leads us in that direction to be so driven and so disconnected from our bodies.

It is so endemic in our culture, especially in high stress organizations, but across the entire culture, actually. And I think at core, we have collectively. Segmented stress and trauma is two different things. And stress is something that is romanticized. We take it as this like badge of honor, to be able to claim that we're exhausted and run ragged and super stressed, that those are signs that we are important and that we're busy and that we're successful.

And that's how we have collectively equated it. And in the digital age where we have social media and people can be posting on what they're doing, it creates this extra level of kind of everybody else is busy. You know, doing so much, I should be doing the same. And it feeds this rat race. In some ways, this FOMO kind of addiction towards stress being, you know, this good thing.

And at the same time, we kind of divorce trauma and write it off as that's what happens with weak people or people who can't hack it. And so people who are really suffering that way. They

don't really want to admit it to themselves or to anyone else because that somehow reflects on them that they're somehow broken or wrong or weak or powerless.

And in ways that really isn't true, you know, stress and trauma are actually a biological continuum, but we've divorced it this way. I think what I hear you saying is if I can handle a lot of stress and I can take it and I'm doing so much and I'm accomplishing so much and I can cope with it and handle it and look at the outcome that somehow then that's the sign that everything's good.

And if I'm feeling the stress and if it's taking a toll on my body and if I'm feeling depression or exhaustion, But that's a sign of that I'm weak and then I should overpower it, push through it. Absolutely. I cannot tell you how many people have read my book or have taken the ethic course and have said before I read your book or took this course, I thought I handled stress really well.

And then when we get to the module where we look at the list of all of the ways that a dysregulated mind and body can manifest, and they're taking down the list and like, well, I have bad, I have bad. I have that. They're like, whoa, how can I be this out of whack? If I thought I was doing it well, and that's the other aspect of our cultural problem here, which is.

We disconnect the costs of our choices today, often those costs they take a while to come do, because the way that the mind and body build alostatic load, it happens over time. That wear and tear is happening over time. And for people who are good at shoving it under and compartmentalizing and keep going, they're good at even as it starts to come up, kind of pushing it out of awareness.

So they kick the can. And then at some point it erupts in a really big way. Like it did with me losing my eyesight was like, you know, this cosmic frying pan upside my head. I couldn't not attend to it at that point. I think for many of us, we're kind of moving along, not paying attention to this cost that we're kicking down.

And then when it comes due, we have disconnected it from what we were doing that contributed to it. And that I think also feeds this sense of powerlessness or I'm weak, or there's something wrong with me. And I'd love for us to see these pieces get pulled back together because they are co-running, those choices are leading to these outcomes.

We're just choosing to ignore it until it becomes too loud. But if we became more aware of it, as it was happening, it would open up tremendous choice points, both individually, but also like in the way that we're structuring our work environments and the way that we'd structure schools or communities.

So I do think the cultural piece. Exacerbates it. And I wanted to address it because I've worked with so many people who are suffering by themselves and assume it's something wrong with

them. And they don't really understand how much, the context of the way that we're setting it up together is actually making it so hard.

You had mentioned earlier about those individuals, especially high-achieving individuals that have learned to kind of disconnect from their bodies. If you will, in a way you can't feel it. And there's some pride in that and they can keep going and going and going. Not only does it impact their own body down the road, but it very much impacts their relationships with themselves and other individuals in their lives, because if they're disconnected and they're not holding their own stress, somebody got.

Right. So it could be their children, their partners, their employees. So it's, there's a way that somebody is going to pay. So if you're going to disconnect and you're not going to feel the ongoing stress in your own body and keep going and going, there's going to be a cost. And I think that's part of your point in there.

There's going to be a cost maybe to your physical self. Even if you want to disown that and say, now I've got it. You don't realize it. I have it. I'm one of those ones that can keep going and going and look how healthy I am. But I think what you're saying is if you just keep kicking it down the road, there really is a chronic impact in your relationships in our community.

There absolutely is. And I like how you said it's both blocking our ability to have contact with ourselves. And our ability to really have contact with others. And those two things are always going to operate at a similar level. The more we are in touch with ourselves and our whole selves and allowing our full selves to be part of our awareness and part of our decisions, the easier it is for us then to be aware of, and allow and compassionate for others full selves.

And that allows for real connection where all of those pieces, all of our human vulnerabilities can come to the table and can deepen the connection between us. But you're absolutely right when we're walking around these little disembodied brains, completely cut are cut off from everything, you know, below our neck.

We have no awareness of how that is affecting and coloring the way we're taking in information, the way that we're making decisions, the choices that we're making and how we're spending our time, how we're investing or not in our relationships. And we're often then externalizing it completely unconsciously as you put it, you didn't present harshly, but it is often very completely externalizing.

All of that pent up discomfort and pain and intense emotion where we're putting it on other people. And it shows up in, in conflict, in relationships, it shows up in. The coping mechanisms we use that have kind of ripple effects, you know, substances and alcohol and violent behavior, or even self-harming behavior that then it has costs on others.

It fuels around. And when you look at some of the trends in social violence in this country, in the use of substances, in the opioid epidemic and the drug overdose deaths and the suicide rate, all

of these things are showing how this externalization is happening on a collective level, because we're not investing enough in really being aware of what's going on in each of us and doing what we can to regulate.

Let me put this as a question in my experience. And I'm wondering if it's born out in some of the research that you studied, by the way, I love how empirical you are, because I think bringing the research in, especially for those of us out there that are higher achievers and want to go, go, go, go, go. I have found bringing research and real data in is a point that will catch people's attention.

So one of the externalizations I think when we're disconnected from the body that I've noticed is that we experience a great deal of impatience and intolerance and lack of flexibility. And that externalization often is because what happens is we have to tune into our own body, right? If, if somebody isn't moving as fast as we are, then we have to sort of slow down.

And if we have to slow down, we actually feel our body and we feel our heart rate go up and the pressure. And then instead of going, oh wait, my body's getting overloaded. It's you're not moving fast enough or you're not following, or you're not succeeding. That's one example that I have found that is that externalization that we not might not be aware of, that we are externalizing.

We just see everybody else's too slow. Too resistant or not bright enough. Is that consistent with things that you have found in some of the studies that you have done? Absolutely. In the book, you know, I talk about thinking brain override, where we live very much with this kind of compartmentalization and suppression and for people who are in thinking brain override, they're not just lacking connection to what's going on in themselves, right?

The research also shows that when they're in that space, they're more likely to end up with us versus them thinking they're more likely to be unable to pick up on social behaviors or attempts at cooperation and constructive communication from others. They're more likely to read ambiguous situations as threatening and then get more activated and it can see this escalation you're right.

If someone were to slow down and actually tune in. In some ways that is threatening for them. And so they kind of keep moving forward and keep putting the blame outwards. But I think as we've seen over this last number of years, and as social media has really exacerbated, it's driving tremendous amounts of divisiveness and polarization and lack of tolerance that only gets both sides, both survival brains, both people activated and feeling unsafe, and it starts these very vicious cycles.

It can be in a couple, it can be in a community. It doesn't matter. It's just the way our social wiring works. And you're right. Part of the process to interrupt that and to start deescalating that is having both parties slow down enough and feel into what's going on in themselves and taking

responsibility for that and trying to reregulate that to down-regulate it so that they will not be quite so externalizing.

But that is not a skill set that we are teaching in schools. It's not a skill set that most people are familiar with. Like any other skillset that's involving our mind and body. It requires consistent practice. It's possible. Anyone can do it. It's just, that's not our default right now, collectively. Well, and I can't imagine a better time for us to be talking about this.

You just mentioned social media, but you've talked about in your book. And I think we'll probably jump into that in our discussion today. But the chronic stresses that end up adding to our personal dysregulation, having to do with feeling like we don't have any agency and feeling like we're in constant threat and with COVID and the ongoing nature of COVID, it's not like our bodies are set up, aren't they to like, okay, I'm going to get already for stress.

I'm going to have. And then I'm going to have the resolution. And yet we just keep staying in this place and the ongoing war, the ongoing political divisiveness, our bodies, it seems like, are just constantly under these small constant threats combined with the big threat of truly losing our lives, losing our loved ones or losing our relationships.

So it just seems like imperative for us to be teaching the kind of skills you're talking about. Doesn't it to learn how to slow down. It absolutely is imperative. One of the reasons I like to think about the way stress works as an equation is to highlight for people how much as we come into contact with something that our survival brain finds threatening or challenging.

If it has that perception, the arousal is going to happen. It can't not happen for so many of them. Who might be feeling like we're not managing it? Well, we then take it personally that the stress has started and we feel guilty about it. Or we start all of these different thinking brain narratives to judge it and kind of dismiss it.

Like, you know, well, I shouldn't be stressed about this. So-and-so, hasn't so much worse. Like, you know, I, I should have done that differently. I could have done that differently. What, this is no big deal. Why am I making a deal out of this? And that only actually makes it worse, but you're right. This is a hardwired unconscious process.

We actually were wired to be able to mobilize this energy, to manage those challenge and then recover. But since most of us are living as little brains disconnected from our bodies, all of the ways that we relate to any experience, including stress come from our thinking brains. So for many people during COVID yeah.

COVID is a stress or that has all of the characteristics that lead to high arousal levels. It's novel. It was something unfamiliar. It's unpredictable, it's been uncontrollable and it is physically threatening to our survival. Our physical survival could be threatened by this. It's also threatening to our identity to some case because some people have lost jobs and it's had identity affects too.

So if social isolation and social isolation, so it's, it's created all of these things that are going to lead to a lot of arousal. But all these disconnected brains, not in touch with their bodies, they don't want to feel that. So they go to find ways to help their thinking brain feel safer. And for most people that's gathering information.

I'm going to go out and watch the news, read the social media, or they're going to sit and spin with, well, what if this happens, then I'll do that. What if that happens and all of this kind of future planning in their heads, all of those things might help their thinking brain feel calmer, but all of those things are actually still going to be perceived as threatening and challenging for the survival brain.

So all it does is turn on more stress. And as a result, people I've been turning it on and they're never turning it off. And that has this real material effect on narrowing. There are windows. Can we jump into that for just a second. Can you describe the window of tolerance? I think of the window of tolerance to stress arousal.

We each have one everyone's is slightly different. It's the result of our repeated experiences. To this point, when we are inside our window, we have both our thinking brain functions and our survival brain functions online. And they're able to work together in an allied way, meaning we can access all of our thinking brain functions, but we are aware of and can be aware of our stress levels, our emotions.

And we can use that information to inform our decisions as part of the input for well-balanced decisions. And when we're inside our window, we can experience arousal and we have still the capacity to have social engagement online so we can connect with others during stress. You can ask for help. We can receive help.

We have a lot more capacity to be tolerant with uncertain situations. We can flow pretty easily and adapt. If life throws us a per ball and we can recover. We can still get some of the base of recovery functions like sleep and coming down downregulating to stay so that we can communicate. But for many of us, our windows get narrowed.

And in the book, I lay out three pathways by which that can happen. And as our window narrows, that allied relationship between the thinking brain and survival. Becomes adversarial. And that's when we default into kind of one of three patterns. The first is that all those thinking brain functions get degraded.

So our attention becomes much more distracted and we might have short-term memory problems. That's when we have biased input to our decisions, us versus them thinking get very defensive in our reasoning. We might be very anxious and we might have a problem making plans. And following through our willpower gets shot.

Willpower is actually a thinking brain function. So we have a harder time interrupting impulses or cravings and giving in to bad behavior and having a hard time following through on the good behavior. And so that's also where we're going to do thinking brain override or would compartmentalize, like we've been talking about now, the other way that it really shows up is we might end up in survival brain hijacking.

And this is where. Our stress and emotions start driving our decisions. Our actions become very impulsive and reactive. This is when we're going to be much more likely to get impatient with others and not tolerant and blaming them. And everybody can end up in these blame and shame cycles that get very conflictual intense.

Yeah. I think a lot of people have been flipping between kind of holding it together, maybe at the day job with thinking brain override. And then in the evening it switches and they become survival brain hijacking, and they have a big fight with their family members. They lose their temper or they lie in bed awake with anxious racing thoughts.

So we can alternate between those two. They're both outside the window. They're both kind of an adversarial relationship. I'm surprised in here in DC. When I teach in high stress, high achieving audiences, even when I'm teaching on campus at Georgetown, how many people resonate with being able to hold it together and look like everything's fine.

And while they're at in class or at work, and then they leave and they, the road rage on the beltway. And then, you know, all of the dysregulation showing up with survival brain hijacking at night and they move through the world that way, just alternating back and. And then getting upset at themselves with the parts of themselves that are falling apart rather than realizing that's probably the healthiest part coming through saying paying attention to me, pay attention to me.

It's it's I think if it is like the toddler for those of us that are parents and we can recall dropping our toddlers off and then you go to pick them up and they're happy and everything's going well. And all of a sudden they get in your car and they just fall apart. And it's, it's kind of a similar process as they've been holding it together all day and now the safe space.

And so one of the things I hear you saying is that fall apart is communication that your body's in overload. Absolutely. But we, again, collectively don't see it that way. We haven't been socialized to think about it that way. So when it happens instead, most people's interpretation is something's wrong with me.

I'm not managing this well, when it actually is an invitation to acknowledge, wait a minute, my system really. Is overloaded. I need to pay attention to what's going on and I need to help my system get back to down-regulate here. As we learn how to do those things, both the paying attention, and then making choices based on what we're learning from inside ourselves that actually helps the survival brain begin to feel a lot more agency in any stressful situation.

And that's a key part of the rewiring for helping us to widen our window because when we have arousal and the survival brain also perceives us as helpless or powerless and lacking control, that moves us into the zone of traumatic stress. But if we can have arousal without necessarily feeling overwhelmed by it, that we know that there's certain things we can do certain choices we could make that can work with this in a constructive way, that kind of protects against the very high arousal of trauma.

And. That was really a revolutionary thing for me to learn in my own mind and body. And I've watched many other people figure that out for themselves. And it really does change our relationship with what stress is. Not that we're romanticizing it or we're avoiding it, but that this is something we can naturally move through because we're wired to do so stress as part of our lives.

The goal here is not to cut down, cut all well, maybe cut down, but not to cut out all the stress. So what are you saying is, is that it's how we internalize and how we incorporate the experience of the thread of the outside world and our body's response to it and how we incorporate it. So that we're actually, I don't know, is it the right word is digesting it, but we're actually able to do something with it rather than brush it off or not recognize it's there.

I'm not having any stress. This is the way it is. You're saying that we need to incorporate, this is stressful. My body is getting tired. I need to attend to it. Yes. Not just because that's going to help us feel better, but because these are important inputs to the current situation and we will always make better decisions, more appropriate decisions for a context when we're aware of as many different inputs in that context as possible.

And I was socialized when making decisions to pay attention to all the people around me and what was going on with them and making sure that things were okay with them paying attention to the wider environment, making sure that was sorted, but I was never socialized to pay attention to what's going on with me and let that be part of the decision too.

So as a result, many of the decisions I made and it said a lot of my trauma reenactment over multiple years of my life. Was making choices that did not take into account my own limits, my own emotions, my own stress levels, and learning how to do that and to recognize it as just as important to the input for decisions.

That is a really important thing for effective decisions, because sometimes that information needs compensation. Like sometimes we might know I'm really angry right now. Okay. My angry bias is sending me this direction. How can I compensate for that bias? So I don't be driven by it, but sometimes the information is I'm overwhelmed and the answer is, oh, wait, I need to say no here.

And we've just been conditioned not to do that. Right. And then that just sets us up for more stress and more dysregulation in the future. You speak a lot about resilience. So we're talking

about things that narrow the window and widen the window to how do you relate widening the window to developing resilience?

In my understanding someone who has a very wide window is resilient because they have a much bigger zone of arousal that they can tolerate in themselves. And then people around them without losing connection to what's happening in their minds and bodies, and without losing the capacity to integrate the survival brain and body input with their thinking brain, their thinking brain still fully online.

So someone who has a wide window can go through very big waves of arousal. They might have a very, very stressful experience, but still be able to keep thinking brain online, keep social engagement online. And then after whatever that big challenges past to recover from it and learn and adapt from it and be able to be ready for the next thing, resilience, isn't a static process in our minds and bodies.

It's actually quite dynamic and we need to be able to move and function well through lots of range of arousal, but for someone whose window is narrowed, the more narrowed our window is the more our survival brains, default programming and defensive strategies start driving us. So we lose choice and we lose the capacity to see the current situation.

Clearly. We're much more likely to like put templates of prior learning prior, stressful learning onto the current situation. And it may be really mismatched for what's going on right now. It makes it harder to connect with other people. It makes it harder to come to effective outcomes. So resilience really is very based in our ability to regulate ourselves and because of our social wiring, because we, as humans are wired to connect to others when we are not in a resilient place, we're conveying that dysregulation and those emotions and stress to others.

But when we are inside our window in a resilient place, we're conveying that in kind of a grounded way to others. So our own window has. Ripple effect in the collective window of our family or other social groups, not organization. And I'm particularly interested in that intersection where we start moving towards talking about how we collectively can be resilient and the collective tolerance for stress levels.

And I think right now, Even prior to the pandemic, the collective window was kind of narrow, but especially over two years of the pandemic, our collective window is quite narrow. Our collective resilience is quite undermined well. And part of what you're saying is the collective resilience is undermined because we have been under such a chronic state of little T traumas, constant state of that.

And without agency to get out of it, as well as like you mentioned the threat. So all of us as a collective society have probably a smaller window of tolerance right now. Would that be fair to say? Absolutely. Yes. And it can help us understand, like when we start to read these stories, which is I'll admit sometimes just baffling to me to read stories of people on the plane, getting furious at other people or at teachers.

The level of anger and reactivity out there right now. And sometimes I can get baffled and this helps me understand it. It helps me actually feel compassionate, even for those that I can get pretty angry at for acting out and I can ignore my own acting out, but I can stand over there in judgment of people acting out.

And I don't mean to, but it helps me understand that as a society right now, we've narrowed a window as a society, right. We absolutely have. And we are seeing all of these different signs that the school shootings, the violence against flight attendants on planes increase in depression, the children, adolescents, the anxiety, and our kids right now being so incredibly high with increased with increases in domestic violence, increases in substance.

Use the increase again in suicidality in our country over this last year. There's all of these ways that is showing up. And you're right. Sometimes when we're not necessarily thinking about it from the window perspective, we read some of these stories in the news and we're like, how can someone be doing that?

And yet when you begin to think from the perspective of the window, it's very easy then to recognize these are people whose windows are very narrowed. They probably don't even know what the window is. They're probably surrounded by a lot of other people whose windows are narrowed. They have not been resourced.

To be able to cope with all of the different stressors that are out there for us right now. And they don't have the skills to be able to understand how they might interrupt those patterns. And when someone has been chronically stressed for a long period of time, we're all more likely to end up in a traumatized place because we're all more likely to end up feeling a little helpless and powerless about how do I change this?

How do I interrupt this? How can I make it different? And that's really hard. It's really, really hard for many people at this time. There were, we feel powerless. You mentioned earlier, we become more black and white thinking and more judgmental, you know, and that's, I think me and my admission of like, how can they be doing that?

Isn't that ridiculous rather than developing. It seems like what we need to call upon is both individual self-compassion and compassion for others. And I really, really appreciate your emphasis on the social and the collective. That's. One of the reasons that made me excited to talk to you today is that I could really feel your focus on that and that if we can understand that collectively we're experiencing such high stress and such a low tolerance of our own regulation, the narrow window is that, is that a reasonable.

So that if we can understand that, that as a collective group, we want to widen the window. We don't want to just stand in judgment. I think of that in partnerships, when your partner is completely dysregulated and you're standing back and judging them for hitting the ceiling and not being able to regulate themselves rather than going, okay, wait, I need to take care of my

body first and really learn to regulate my own body and develop self compassion, and then turn to others because the focus, it seems imperative right now.

And I think we would agree that we need to widen the window as individuals, but especially as a community and as a culture, I fully agree. And, and I love that you highlight because it's so important that we have to take care of ourselves. First, when we get into that thinking brain override, judging others place, we are disconnecting from ourselves.

So when we do that disconnecting from ourselves, paradoxically, it opens us up to be more likely to pick up on stress and emotion contagion from others, because we're not really into with where our own system is. And so we're not grounded enough in our own system to keep our own survival brain calm and grounded and stable.

So it opens the doorway for others, stress and emotions to come through and to activate us and get our survival brain freaked out, and then we're feeding it further. And so instead when we have that urge to read one of these stories and be baffled and start judging someone else for their reactive behavior, if we were instead to use that moment as a cue, like, wait a minute, I'm noticing myself getting judgmental what's going on in my own body right now.

First, can I redirect my attention to noticing my butt in the chair, my feet on the floor, some of these target objects of attention that help our survival. Really recognize that we're supported and grounded. Our whole system can settle. It creates space for us, and it helps turn on the hormones that protect us from moving into our defensive mode in terms of our nervous system.

So it helps protect us from turning on fight or flight or falling back to freeze. It helps protect us from someone else's stress and emotion, contagion, and activating. And so someone else around us might be extremely reactive. And instead of meeting them in reactivity, if we can stay grounded, we can actually interrupt what could have been a very vicious cycle.

But again, that's not what most people are doing. But this time and this collective narrow window is the opportunity for us to be practicing that. And that is the way for us to interrupt it in little one, two by two people, you know, interacting together or in small groups that interacting together. And as we do that over time, it will help to widen the collective window.

That's incredibly inspiring because just the idea of being able to have an impact. Cause you mentioned earlier that it's a lack of agency that is probably some of the most powerful thing that can happen in our body. And so to have a belief that I can do something to widen my own window, which will help widen the window with my relationship or with my children and then with my family.

And we need that so much right now, isn't it rather than the alarm bell. And, and I think we think that we talk about it on the podcast. And you mentioned the word externalizing that often when we feel that that threat and that dysregulation, we think we have to manage what the threat is. And get that threat under control so that then we are regulated and the emphasis on a weight,

I've got to regulate myself, go inside what uncle so-and-so just said at the Thanksgiving table is actually incredibly offensive.

We don't have to doubt that. But if my answer now is to attack uncle so-and-so because it's so offensive, that is just the stress upon stress upon stress, right? Uncle so-and-so is not gonna go, oh my gosh. You're right. You know? Um, so th th the ability to kind of have got to go inside and widen my own window to be able to tolerate the stress that's coming from.

This table so that I can be more present and connecting, but I know that's not easy to do, you know, it sounds easy, doesn't it like? Yeah, it does sound easy. All of this sounds very simple. It's not the principles, the scientific principles behind it are pretty simple, but the actual doing it, it takes practice because even just as we're talking about it right now, and we're both totally fine and regulated, it's still, it's hard to redirect and stay in communication with someone while you're also in communication with yourself.

And so we have to be practicing it all the time. Not when we're just in the conceptual situations. We have to learn how to redirect our attention to these target objects that help our survival. We're going to get grounded. We have. Train ourselves all the time to recognize as social beings that are resonating with our environment, we need to learn, even when things are totally fine to check in and say, oh, well, this is what it feels like when the environment is very calm, like take a walk in nature and sense inside and get a sense of that.

Because if we can't do that, when things are calm and by it, we're definitely not going to be able to do it in that moment. When someone has set a really a pheasant offensive comment at that point, we're going to get right into fight response, and start attacking the uncle. Or we're going to go into flight response and leave the table and we've broken the connection.

So these are things we practice. And the reason to practice is so that our survival brain can trust that we can access these skills in those challenging moments. And when we do access it in a challenging moment and have that, and then watch how that shifts the dynamic, how it helps diffuse the situation, how it helps empower us to not feel self silenced in that moment.

All of those are little wins that are showing we're not in this helpless place. And we do have this capacity to be effecting both what's going on in us, but affecting the environment around us. We always have that choice. It just takes a while for us to recognize that we do. If we have been habitually, not letting that happen.

My also habitually in a place where we haven't had agency, I think just thinking about the habituated things like systemic racism and sexism and these things that are so understandably chronically harming your agency and really is real. And to be able to have some recognition that that threatened your body is very real and needs attention.

Absolutely. Constant exposure to that has created default programming for your survival brain to think that you don't have control or to immediately assume that this is not a situation that you

can speak up in or for your survivor to immediately assume this is really unsafe. And I have to be quiet. I can't do something different.

It can be very empowering to do it. And I also want to really name when we're first experimenting with this, it can feel quite scary. And so to acknowledge, okay, it might be uncomfortable to try and take this and try it differently because we're living with this history, not just in our own mind and body, but collective history of collective racism, collective sexism that has been kind of structuring the way that our human societies have been operating for quite some time.

And. As we make those shifts and we start to practice different ways of being in community with other people that actually will have shifts beyond just us, because it does shift this wider collective

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Okay. Let's get back to the show. Could you maybe give our listeners out there who are going okay, I'm ready. I really want to slow down. I'm really bought into what she's saying, and I want to be more aware of my own collective stress and I want to not just disown it, but I actually want to tend to it, which I think is part of what you're saying.

What keeps stress from coming to trauma is actually having some resolution, having some ability to attend to it. And so what are some suggestions that you found. In research that are really effective and helping us actually not just disappear from stress, like, or maybe I'm sitting there and watching social media over and over and over again, just to be able to not feel my body.

What are some suggestions you have out there for our listeners? These are three, four, maybe even five go-to things that you highly really record. I have three principles. I want to share first that explain why those things are important. First principle is where we're directing our attention consciously or unconsciously is having tremendous ripple effects through our survival brain, our nervous system in our body.

We might consciously be directing our attention somewhere, and then it's having ripples. We might unconsciously be directing it. So like our mind might be lost in worrying thought and we're directing to those worried thoughts, but we're not aware of it. And it's then rippling down and creating anxiety in our body.

So first principle where we're directing our attention. The second principle is we are always resonating with our environment, especially our social environment. So the people around us, but also things like the electromagnetic spectrum and traffic and LA loud noises, and they're having effects on us too.

And then the third thing is everything about our minds and bodies. Is the result of repeated experiences and the science in the last 20 years, it's super clear that what we're doing in a repeated way, it affects the function and structure of our brain, of our nervous system. It also affects which genes we've turned on or not, or off with, with epigenetics.

So with those three things in mind, habits are important where we're directing our attention is important and what we're resonating with, which environments we're choosing to put ourselves in knowing those three things about ourselves. If we invest in habits that support recovery, and we invest in ways to direct our attention.

In ways that help support recovery. And we put ourselves very consciously into environments that are going to be regulating and avoid environments that are going to be really activating as much as possible, having some limits and boundaries around them. That helps us begin to think about how we're structuring our days, which habits we want to be investing in.

The biggest payoff habits for recovery are sleep, getting enough, sleep eight hours a night, preferably, but definitely at least seven every night, you can't make it up on the weekend. The research is super clear. You know, you can't like sleep less than the week and trying to catch up on the weekend, just doesn't work in terms of its effect on our cognitive function and our, on our immune system and our hormones and on our emotions.

So getting enough sleep is the big first habit. I would say the second habit, I would say. Investing in relationships where your system feels safe. So where you can be in communication with someone and being fully in your body and not have your body going bonkers. And some of that initially will be realizing that many of the people that you thought you liked to spend time with are actually not going to be helpful for your mind and body.

They might be very anxious or very restless or very angry or toxic in some way. That's not to say cut them out of your life, but it does suggest then you're going to be more boundaried about how much time you have with them, that you really invest time in relationships, where you can be fully in your body and feel safe while you're in communication and having at least a handful of relationships like that because isolation and social isolation and loneliness are real contributors to a range of different mental and physical health problems.

That's the second recommendation I have. The third recommendation I would have is we need to be moving more. We do a lot of our recovery during cardiovascular exercise. So if you're not getting your heart rate raised at least three times a week for half an hour. That needs to be a priority. And then when you cool down from working out, sitting down and letting your system, you might direct your attention to your button, the chair, or open your attention widely, be hearing and let your system do some additional recovery as you do that.

Cool down. And then the fourth recommendation I would have is to actually train our attention and your listeners can get the first exercise in the mindfulness baseline fitness training, the emphasis core sequence I have as a five minute audio file, you can get it from my website as an auto download around your phone, listen to the instructions.

It is how to direct your attention so that your survival brain can downregulate. And if you practice it every day, that skill will be available to you when you're talking to someone and it will definitely then become available to you during stressful situations so that you can redirect your attention.

In ways that help your survival brain feel stable, even in the midst of stress so that you won't add anything else on and they can, can then recover afterwards. Those would be four

recommendations I would have. It's the last one I, I would have has again, to do with the environment. Nature is so regulating.

So in addition to moving your body, spending some time with people who are regulated, we talked about that just spending time outdoors in nature is actually very down-regulating for our system. So if you've ever noticed when you've been very anxious or very stressed or very angry, you go out and dig in the garden for a bit, or sit under a big tree or take a walk in the park.

How much better you feel, how much more perspective you have nature is regulating in our systems. Pick up on that. So limiting the toxic contact, but also then making time for contact. That's really going to help support our systems to record. I find kind of getting back into the idea of the high achievement.

I find sometimes it's really hard to help clients realize how important it is to stop and take a break, because what happens in their system, they think about going out for a walk the whole time, they thinking about the, what they're not getting done. And this belief, if I could just get this done, then I would feel better.

Right. So if I'm going to go out here in nature, or if I'm going to go, then I'm going to be just more stressed at the end of the day. What would you say? You didn't have any particular words of advice that I could use to kind of convince somebody knows stop there. And that's a little bit of why bringing in an empirical research, because that really impacts people when they go, no, no, wait, this is actually science.

This isn't just a feel good thing. This isn't us just saying, oh, get out there in nature because it's good. Like this is hardcore shot. There is a lot of empirical evidence. Now that shows the reregulating effects of being in nature. Several peer reviewed studies that have made that quite clear in terms of what to say to the person who's like, well, I can't take the time for this.

It's just going to get me further behind for the day. And it's just going to make me more stressed later than I used to be that person. So I totally relate to your clients making this comment to you. And if I'm going to speak as if to myself back in my younger days, when I was at that place, if I could go back to that me and say to that younger ne listen, your choice to keep going right now and thinking that if you just finished X thing, then you're going to feel better.

You know, somewhere deep inside, that is not true. You know, that when you get to that point, then your brain, your thinking brain is going to lock onto the next thing and say, well, if I only just do this one more and it becomes a never ending cycle. And instead, while you're doing that, You are continually overriding this important piece of information that your survival brain is giving you, which is that you need a break.

You've hit a cognitive limit. You've hit an emotional limit. I might get a physical limit, whatever limit is that has given you the urge to go take the walk. If you override that and override that

limit, you are setting your survival brain into a place where it is going to feel powerless because it has given you information and you're not listening to it.

So. Putting your survival brain into a powerless place. And you might think it makes sense to keep working right now, but you've actually just traumatized yourself in doing that instead, if you could just take that information and take that on board and say, okay, yeah, I'm looking at the rest of the day.

I am getting a little bleary. My I'm getting distracted. I'm not paying attention very well with what I'm doing. Can I take 10 minutes if I was supposed to be on another zoom call, can I say I'm going to be a little bit late to the meeting and just take a brisk walk around the block. Does that have to be a long time, but get the body moving, get it outside your survival brain will then be inside saying yeah, I sent some information about listened to and it sets your survival brain into this very relaxed posture.

So that you will come back much more, self-confident much more focused and you might realize the thing that you thought you needed to be doing really in the bigger scheme of things is not the most important thing that needs to get done, but even if it needs to get done, you're going to be able to do it in less time now because you're going to be more focused and you're going to be able to calibrate the amount of effort you give to it, to what it really demands in my experience when we're really tired or we've really been pushing through and we've hit burnout, we don't do a very good job, calibrating the amount of energy and effort to what something really deserves.

Let me try and say that differently. We get caught in this perfectionistic sense of everything needs 110% when actually the task may only really need a 60% of. But when we're really burned out, we can't really calibrate that to know that doing this at 60% is actually more than enough and gives us more space.

But if we took the break first, we'd see that. And then we actually can have gotten the break in and still get the thing done. The training that you're speaking about, you are training our military forces with it. Tell us a little bit about what it is that you feel like the military, that the individual, the military need from it and are gaining from the training.

How did the military go? Wait, we really need to help our troops really learn how to attend to themselves and to regulate themselves. So the doorway in was not necessarily understanding self-regulation that was not necessarily where they were when I first approached them, you know, more than 15 years ago at this point, but they were interested in performance enhancement and they were also interested in and knew from longstanding organizational habits around the role of physical fitness.

And they work out on a regular basis as a unit. They do PT together. It's the longest standing habit of all the organizations in our society. The military was the first to adopt physical fitness

habits collectively over a hundred years ago. And they understood that. And I knew that there was a parallel and that was how I approached them about it.

And they began to realize that doing the kinds of self-regulatory attention training exercises and self-regulation exercises that we teach in, in. Was very complimentary to their PT, to their physical fitness training. So that was the doorway in once they were very interested in the performance enhancement and resilience, they didn't really think about the other pieces, but then as they started seeing troops practice and having those effects show up in those troops individual lives and in their families, they realized it actually has these other very, very important effects in terms of mission accomplishment, in terms of being able to handle all of the maladaptive coping habits that have been developing during the multiple deployments to the different wars that have happened since nine 11, the chronic stress, the suicide rate, the substance abuse, alcohol abuse, the family violence that had been happening.

Th this was a way to begin to get it under control. So we've taught in, uh, a number of different military environments and in law enforcement environments in medical ER environments, there's a lot of high stress organizational environments that that emphasis has been taught. And last year I partnered with a company called sounds true to create an online on demand version of the course so that anyone who wants to take it can, and anyone who's working in a public service role, whether it's, you know, someone in frontline, in the hospitals, during the pandemic or public school teachers, as well as first responders and military and veterans, anyone who is in one of those roles can take the online course by themselves for free.

There's a, you go to my website and there's the link for how to request that complimentary access so that even if you're not in an organization where the organization is being trained to. You can still individually be trained right now and any of your listeners can be trained. And if they are not in one of those roles, they still can attend the training.

It's on demand and self-paced over eight weeks. And so for our listeners out there, all of this information will be in our show notes, following some of the talks that you have done, you spoke about how military training and trying to prep our bodies, if you will prep their bodies so that things are not unpredictable.

So if we run them through a drill and we really teach their brain and their body, that things that could be traumatic or there that they can be, it's not surprising. It's predictable. They have an idea of what to do, and your point is so amazing about, but if we do that and we don't treat their bodies to have recovery, then their bodies stay in that state.

And it made me think also of the drills that we keep doing for kids out there with the active shooter drills. What is your thought about active shooter drills? Do you feel like they're effective? Do you feel like they're more traumatizing? Do you feel like we're doing enough to do repair afterwards or to do the recovery?

What are your thoughts? I think active shooter drills really fall right in this cultural preference towards stress inoculation training that we've just been talking about. And. There is something to be said that we have trained our system, that in the moment that something big unexpected happens, we know where the rally point is, what the immediate steps are.

When I was in elementary school, we used to, I was a army brat, spent a lot of time overseas. We used to do drills. You might even remember them. And I don't know if you did them in your schools for nuclear attacks, how to get down and cover your eyes and put your hands on your ears and getting under your desk and your desk and, and directing your, and so we used to practice for nuclear explosions and, you know, at the time it felt really odd, but we also used to, when we were deployed in Germany, my family was deployed Germany, used to practice, getting to rally points, to then be able to leave and evacuate.

And it was important to go through that because there were a lot of logistical pieces that had to go together and then you knew what needed to get done. And then if that had ever happened, People would not have completely frozen up. So there is something to say for these kinds of trainings. I, I'm not saying that they're completely wrong.

And I do think with a number of mass shooting events that we've seen in this country in the last number of years, it's important for teachers and students to feel that they can know what to do. And not everybody get caught in a freeze during, during the headlights. But I do think sometimes the way it is taught or the way it is practiced without an understanding of how that can be potentially traumatizing and without giving the space to process.

The emotions and stress arousal that come from doing this, that, that actually can turn arousal on and set people into this narrowed window state over the longer term. So I would say it would be very helpful when they do run active shooter drills, or even fire drills that afterwards that there is a conscious period of time built in to allow students to recover.

And for children, children naturally know because they have not yet been socialized the way we adults have to shove it all on. There are systems know how to move through stress and recovery with a lot more ease. They have many fewer decades of all that override conditioning. And I think some of the best ways that that happens is through physical movement and play.

So if it's at all possible, send them to recess afterwards, let them run around, have the group tell jokes. There's a lot of reregulating that happens when kids are giggling together and they get sort of punched drunk and funny, all of that laughing and giggling and moving their bodies and getting no feeling waves of heat.

And those are all ways that the system is actually doing recovery. And I don't think it would be very hard to tack that on as part of the transition after the active shooter drill. Before you go back to people sitting down and paying attention in math class or reading, or, you know, doing some other social science class or something, I think it would be a little bit more.

Organic. They would go through that arousal. They would go through the event. It would have a chance to, to move their bodies. And, and, and then you sort of have unstructured play for a bit. Get some of that out of the system, come back into the room, maybe have a conversation to sort of set that stage and see if there are any emotions that need to be processed as a group, and then go back to class.

But in my experience, one of my sisters is a special education public school teacher. And she's talked about when they've done active shooter drills in horse school, they'll do the active shooter drill and then they'll come back and sit them right back down in the classroom and immediately like go right into math.

And those minds, those kids' minds and bodies are not available. To to learn in that moment, you know, their thinking brain is not fully back online in a way to do that. So having a more gradual shift back, I think would be helpful if they're in the survival hyperactive mode. And then they're saying, okay, now we're going to do math.

The in congruence. Yes. It's, we're teaching them in a way, but so it's where we're starting that cultural lesson. Isn't it? The overripe that's where we're teaching the note. Now, now you have to shut it down. Yeah. We just scared the hell out of you. And now we're going to pretend that everything's fine and we're going to jump.

So it's not necessarily that you believe those trainings are bad. I love how you pointed out that it would help the kids move out of a freeze response. And I guess the, unfortunately the most recent school shooting is sort of commented that, that the kids didn't know what to do. They went into action. So I guess that tells us survival brain, that there is agency, right?

There's agency, there's actions to be taken. And that really helps. But for parents out there that are really struggling with, are we traumatizing the kids. I th I think what part of what I hear you saying is helping them process it, rather than this horrible thing just happened to you. You need to go through this.

This is teaching you it's unlikely to happen, but if it does, but less, how was that for you? But it doesn't necessarily have to be immediately. We're going to sit down and process because young kids aren't going to be ready for that. It's the movement into the body and movement into laughter. And that will help set recovery helps that integration.

Yes, the system in an unstructured way knows what to do. And the adults, the teachers, parents need to create the environment to allow that to go and move through. And they'll sense when their students are starting to begin to settle when, when they sort of spent themselves out from running around and playing tag and they sort of know, but you can't put a timeline.

Yeah. I actually think having watched now from listening to my sister, talk about her experience with her kids coming back and her special ed students. She's like the kids come back from

doing virtual schooling. They're feral. They don't know how to do limits anymore. They don't how to regulate their emotions.

They want something immediately right now. They're so self-absorbed and what's going on in them. They can't be in a group and the schools have wanted to go right back into sitting them down in desks and expecting that they're going to be ready for learning. And the parents are assuming that that's going to be happening and the schools have been assuming, okay, we're going to go right back into the makeup for the last time as if nothing's happened as if none of this disruption had any effect on those minds and bodies.

And in some ways that's just setting the kids up. And the, certainly the teachers up for failure because it's disregarding. The reality of what this experience has been for for everyone. And it's disregarding the fact that they need to learn to be re socialized into being in a group of people again, and that that part takes time.

And, and so I think sometimes in our regimented goal oriented results oriented structure, not just in schools, that aren't our workplaces as adults, too, that we are then rewarding that overriding, that drives what we talked about at the beginning of our conversation. And in some ways, this recovery from the pandemic is this wonderful invitation to enact and set expectations in a different way to recognize it would be a win.

If we get through this year with kids healthy with teachers, healthy with students having regained what it's like to be in community in a classroom again, And if they learn anything well, that's a bonus. I mean, if they learn any books, things they're going to be learning a lot of other things. And that's important learning for being a functioning human on the planet these days.

And it's so valuable. We're not just losing time. What I hear you saying is teaching them probably one of the most essential things that we want them to know for emotional health and emotional intelligence in the future is how to really stop and integrate themselves in the process and not just pretend it didn't happen and to let it be part of the whole body.

I know that a lot of times, I'm glad you mentioned work because there's individuals that they have to go back to the office. And they're recognizing that they have a lot of anxiety where they didn't have it before, because we were a bitch waited. We didn't think about it. We just went to work. And now the whole idea haven't been socially integrated or with people in the idea of really heightens the anxiety in people's body.

I'm so glad that people can talk about it because otherwise people believe, I shouldn't feel this. This is silly. I shouldn't be feeling rather than normalizing these different traumas that we've been having and that our bodies need to be reintegrated and reconditioned and hopefully in a, even a better way and not just integrating in ourselves, but to be able to then talk about it and integrate it collectively.

And that is a part of widening the collective window, because if we can learn to move with some fluidity and some collective compassions through this and integrate it as a group, integrate in our organizations that is going to make the entire organization much more resilient for the next curve ball that the planet throws us.

And let's be clear. With climate change with the future, very clear that we will have other pandemics in our lifetime. It's super clear that the science is showing that's the case. We're going to have more and more of these kinds of curveballs coming. We need to build this capacity to not move through it brutally, and then pretend it didn't happen, but to move through it with some flexibility and adaptability collectively.

That is an, a very important point. And I hope that it resonates with a lot of people out there with hopefulness, right? It's a hopeful statement is what you're saying. I know we're saying pandemic is going to continue, and that feels really painful for that realization. But I think with the new variant, we all know that is to be true.

And so what we're talking about is having agency and the things that we do have agency to help our whole body or whole collective. Consciousness together, adapt in a more functional way rather than a more brittle way, which we have to do that we can't just hold and wait. We have to integrate in my day job, I teach about international security.

And so I'm very interested in how, how these dynamics affect domestic conflict, international conflict, resolving conflict, both at an individual level and at a collective level because stress and trauma drive the way that so many people are relating in the world. And if we can get clearer about having more agency in our own minds and bodies about it, it will open up a lot more pathways for us to do it at a social level, across the planet, to what a lovely and wonderful goal.

And we love to talk about our packets of this way of trying to spread security. When episode at a time and, and bringing you on, I believe is part of that endeavor of just helping people really learn that the element of self care is not selfish. That is in fact, one of the most essential parts of being able to be a big community impact out there and to make a difference.

Yes, one of the biggest gifts we each give the world around us is our own, self-regulation our own presence. When we are in a self regulated place, we are able to really contribute best to the collective. Good. And you're right. That is a tremendous thing that we can be giving. And for those people who might be feeling like, how, how can I help?

What can I be doing? The world is just, it's on fire right now. This is actually a very concrete step and it does make a difference really. Thank you so much for taking the time to come on the show, we really appreciated our listeners are going to gain so much from you. I knew they would, but thank you so much for what you're doing.

And thank you so much for having me. I have so enjoyed our conversation. I can't believe we've been talking over an hour. It just went so fast. Hey everybody, before you go, we've got a very

cool announcement to make. We're going to list a couple of the cities that alive meet up with other therapists.

Uncensored listeners is going to be occurring on April 22nd. So this is what we have so far. We're going to be meeting here in Austin, Texas, of course, with Ann and myself, but also we've had these incredible listeners volunteers and raise their hands and offer to host so far. These are the different areas I've got long beach, California, Brisbane, Australia, Denver, Colorado, Bozeman, Montana, and Arbor, Michigan Scottsdale, Arizona, Sydney, Australia, Ottawa, Canada, Los Angeles.

Aptos California, Waynesboro, Virginia, and Houston, and the sugar land area. So if you hear your city's name or your area's name, that's great. There's already one happening. If you didn't hear your city's name, but you would like to meet some of your neighbors that might listen to the show, then shoot on over to therapists, uncensored.com backslash meetup.

You can also see kind of what's happening on our Facebook page in the events section. So that's coming up and we really hope that we can help you connect with other lists. If that interests you or even maybe you're shy or you're in an area that's not having one, you can also connect with our online community as little as \$5 a month.

You can join our neuro nerd online community as part of Patron or as part of super cast. And basically what that means is that you'll get access to a ad free feed, that you will get extra episodes that you get unique learning opportunities. There's a small reading group studying together. It's a professionally led group and they're studying Peter Levine's book, somatic therapies.

So there's all kinds of things that pop up and we really want to invite you to join that's therapist, uncensored.com/join. And then finally, if you want to support the show, if you're liking this content another way of doing it is just heading over and supporting our sponsors better help.com, backslash therapist and censored or simple practice.com backslash therapist since insert.

They are really helping make the show accessible and free. We're committed to doing that. So you can do the live meetup. You can join our online community. And then also, you know, if all of that might be a little bit too much, then we just encourage you to share the show with anybody that you think might be interested and, or to leave us a rating and review on wherever you're listening to your podcasts.

That's another way for us to be discovered. We really appreciate it. And of yourself. Let us know what you think.

therapist uncensored is Anne Kelly and Sue Marriott. This podcast is edited by Jack Anderson.