

Ep #46: My New Year's Vision for You



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With Your Host

Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

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Hi, my name is Victoria Albina. And while we've likely never met, I love you. I love you because you're perfect, whole, and amazing just as you are. And if you're anything like me, all the messages from the world, from the patriarchy, from your culture and society, from your parents or family of origin convinced you that you are something other than completely whole, magnetic, magnificent just as you are.

I'm here to set the record straight and to share my wish for you for 2020 and beyond. Each of us is born magical. You were born magical, born whole, born radically lovable and worthy of love from go. There is only one you. And you are uniquely qualified to share your opinion, to have and to experience your dreams, to live into the magic of having been born, which is such a marvelous thing.

And, my love, my love, this world needs you. I believe it so deeply in my heart; the world needs each and every one of us. And it needs us loving ourselves up as much as we can, healing the collective unconscious and radiating that healing and love out for all the world to see and feel and be changed by in the most beautiful ways.

It may be challenging to receive these words, to believe these words. And I get it. Receiving was so hard for me for so long. In your heart, there may be stories and you may feel, "I'm broken. I need to be fixed. I'm stuck. I've tried all the things, all the therapy, all the everything and I'm so tired of not getting better. I just want to feel sure of myself, to not doubt myself, and to act like I know my value, to not be so easily irritated, annoyed, resentful, to not lash out at others or myself, to feel secure in setting boundaries without guilt and shame, to take care of myself, mind, body, and spirit, without worrying what someone else may think about it. I want to be my own weird and authentic self and to love my life on my own terms."

I know, my love, I feel in my heart what it feels like to be there, to feel exhausted by your own old stories. Your life as it was and is and to be

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scared about the future, to not know how to take action to feel better in your mind, body, and spirit, to not know what to do next, to begin to believe all of this, to begin to feel like you're healing from your childhood, from your past, healing from it all.

In my own childhood, I learned that I had to perform the role of perfect child to be lovable, to hide parts of myself to please others. I had to succeed, excel, push myself to the breaking point in order to be lovable. Then, it wasn't safe to ever fully rest; one eye always open for the next emotional lion attack. My nervous system learned that it needed to protect me from life as I knew it, and so I learned that living a go, go, go life was the only way to feel psychologic and emotional safety.

It was a vital way to prove myself to the world, and it was only through external approval that my nervous system could relax and my mind, body, and spirit would know that I was safe. I learned that I had to be thin and pretty and pleasing to be lovable. After all, an Argentine woman can never be too thin.

I learned that I had to get loads of degrees, certificates, honors, awards, proof of my goodness and value, to be lovable, acceptable, someone to be proud of. I learned that I had to put other people's needs ahead of my own, to say yes when I meant no, to anticipate other people's needs and to do things for them that they could do for themselves, which I later resented them for.

I learned to not show my disappointment, sadness, or anger; that was too dangerous. I learned to communicate passive-aggressively because being direct was so scary deep inside, and to avoid conflict for the same reason. I learned to not set boundaries and instead to seethe in resentment when things didn't go my way, the way I hadn't voiced for fear of upsetting someone else by having needs. And I learned to protect my tender heart by not feeling my feelings.

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And when I couldn't keep it crammed in anymore, I learned to constantly talk about how I was so overwhelmed by everything, a verbal buffer against actually feeling my feels. And as a result, I got sick; like really sick. I had wicked irritable bowel syndrome, terrible heartburn that wouldn't let me sleep the night, adrenal imbalance, chronic pain, and a lingering depression and anxiety that I just couldn't shake.

My poor belly was a hot mess. My adrenals went on strike and I had no idea what my mood would be like from one day to the next, sometimes one moment to the next. I was so irritable, resentful, angry, annoyed. I had no idea what I was feeling from moment to moment because I was so out of touch with myself, with my body, with those tender loving signals our nervous system sends us through our digestion, our muscles, our pain response. I heard not one of those subtle sweet whispers until they became so loud they were unavoidable, and I ended up collapsed with the weight of it all, so, so sick.

And yeah, I kept taking me to the gym, eating well, going to therapy, taking my supplements. I kept doing all the actions of self-care, but none of it made me feel deep self-love. I had fallen out of love with myself and I couldn't even remember what it felt like to love and accept myself unconditionally, to trust myself in my decisions, to not live in constant self-doubt.

So, from that place of self-doubt, from that visceral feeling need for external validation, I did what I was taught to do as a certified smart kid. I kicked butt in school. I mean, like, I aced it, you guys. I took all the APs, I did the summer college programs in high school, all of it. I got a Master's degree in public health at a top university, got the international internship everyone coveted. I trained in western medicine and became a nurse practitioner in the best program in the country and got all the fanciest certifications.

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I interned, trained, taught, and worked at some of the most highly respected institutions in the country, pushing myself onto the next golden ring, the next thing that would show the world that I'm competent, smart, valuable.

I spent my 20s and early 30s dating people who didn't have my deepest values of self-care, spiritual growth; people who couldn't see me for me, who were unable to meet me in a real way and I put their wants and needs above my own, betraying and abandoning myself in this codependent morass day after day, caretaking others because it felt scary to fully take care of myself.

And so, logically I stayed sick, tired, grumpy, unwell, exhausted to the bone, and deeply unsatisfied. And about a decade ago, maybe a little longer, it dawned on me. I was reaching for all the wrong things. I was looking for ways to make my outside shiny and lovable, not accepting, feeling, knowing just how amazing and shiny my insides are.

And by learning to support and regulate my nervous system, by learning to manage my mind through life coaching, by attending to and deeply healing my inner child and my physical body, by practicing daily breathwork journey meditation, I have been able to return home to me in a real and profound way.

And sure, I have work to do. We all do. And it feels amazing to be in process in such a real and tangible way. And all of this is the work that brought me here to you, sitting in front of my microphone in my Brooklyn apartment, sharing the lessons I have had the privilege and honor to have learned over these many years.

And what I want so much for you to know, feel, think, believe is that you're whole, perfect, healed, healing, healable. Your past doesn't have to define

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you. Only you, today you, present tense you, gets to say who and what you are.

There is so much room, energy, power that comes from shedding the old BS of thinking you have to live to please anyone else, to make anyone else happy, to do what anyone else wants you to do or be. It feels expansive, like a lightness, an ease in mind, body, and spirit.

I am here to testify that it is so lovely to not compare myself to others like I used to, to worry less and less every day what other people think of me, to worry less in general, to not future trip but to future plan, to set boundaries and to hold to them more and more each day because I know I'm worth it. I'm fine. I'm perfect.

I'm loved because I am love, and so are you. You already have everything you need, you truly do. You have the power to make the changes you want to make, and you get to make those changes because you want to, not because you have to, to be lovable. Hospice nurse here saying life is really short. And it's also really long if you've been living it without self-love, living it with anxiety, self-doubt, not respecting and honoring yourself, your word, your promises, your dreams.

And I want to encourage you, as we move into this next decade to begin the journey towards deep and powerful self-love, to start with one sweet word to yourself every day, to gently pull yourself back when you find yourself being anything less than kind to yourself. And you can't heal hurt with more hurt, my angel.

And it is us who have been most hurt, who have survived trauma and familial stress and growing up with whatever you grew up with, be it codependency, narcissism, alcoholism, being raised by unhealed people with inner child wounds they never knew they needed to heal, who had children while still being emotional children.

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It is us who carry the habit of being mean to ourselves, a faux-protection, a way to hurt ourselves before the world can hurt us. I see you. I get it. And you don't have to do it anymore. And you certainly don't have to go it alone. You can let all those old stories go and you can choose to see yourself as the perfect ad ever-growing adult child you are and can speak to yourself, knowing that you're just a tender, perfect, amazing baby in a grownup's body.

You're here to learn, to meet yourself, to become your own watcher, and through it all, to learn to truly cherish yourself, to tenderly, kindly, gently learn to love yourself along the way. Doing this work is a choice and it's challenging while you're in it, but everything new is. And once it's your new habit to choose the kind word for yourself, to choose gratitude, to choose self-love, it really does flavor everything you do, say, think. It becomes a part of you.

The way you do anything is the way you do everything. And I know you can love yourself the way I already love you, with full heart, without judgment, with radical acceptance and self-compassion. I believe it in my heart of hearts because I learned to do it for myself, to recover from so much and to be a person I'm truly proud to be.

This is my wish for you in this new decade. May 2020 bring you so much to be grateful for, knowing that gratitude is a choice of thoughts and an action, and yours to choose to engage with, no matter what transpires in this human lifetime. This is not to choose fake positivity; never, ever, my love.

You get to choose to show up with love first, love forward, for the challenging things, the divorce, the death, the birth, the eviction, the cancer, the struggle, the strife, the hard things in this life, knowing that the way to show up for yourself and those you love is indeed to feel it all and to return to love and acceptance always.

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The anger, the sorrow, the stress, feel all of it. there's nothing to buffer against here. And then, when you're ready, in your own time, return back to love, back to the choice of the next thought, the next feeling, the next action, the next breath. May you find the peace, the joy, the confidence, the courage, the self-esteem, the release from anxiety, worry, illness, and familial baggage that you long for. And may 2020 bring you a bounty of beautiful things and may you love yourself so deeply, daily, in the small and big ways.

May 2020 be the year that you finally feel in your bones what it means to say, "Me first, you second, with love." Thank you for listening. I hope that this has brought you some peace and continues to. I'm so proud of you, so inspired by you for attending to your perfect self.

Remember, my love, you are safe, you are held, you are loved. And when one of us heals, we help heal the world.