

# Ep #115: Understanding Beyond Mindset with Lauren Cash



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Victoria Albina, NP, MPH**

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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 am so delighted this week to do my first ever interview on *Feminist Wellness*. I kind of paused there because it feels so much more like a conversation than an interview.

So, I spoke with my dear friend and colleague Lauren Cash, who is a master time coach and she adores helping procrastinating perfectionists become easeful entrepreneurs. She believes in creating a life and business you don't need a vacation from. And you know that that is so aligned with everything we talk about here on *Feminist Wellness*. And so, it is an absolute delight to share this conversation that I had with Lauren.

We talk about the roots of perfectionism, nature versus nurture, how beautiful it is to recognize the complexity of our humanity when we're doing thought work. And how mindset is vital and important, but it's also not everything. Your genetics matter. Your insulin levels and your glucose levels matter.

She's also a registered dietician, so we nerd-out science time because, you know, that's what us nerds love to do. I truly loved this conversation and I know you will too. So, without further ado, here you go, me and the magnificent Lauren Cash.

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Victoria: Hello, Lauren. I am so delighted to have you here with us.

Lauren: It's so fun to be on your podcast now.

Victoria: I love that we did a tradesies...

Lauren: Right, so fun. Yours is actually one of the most loved podcast episodes on my podcast, so that's super fun.

Victoria: Oh, that's super fun. And I'm sure this one will be the same for my folks. So, yay. So, I would love to invite you to tell the folks about yourself, who you are and what you do. And I'd love to hear a bit about your journey as well, from being a super-fancy nutritionist to being a time coach, which is so cool.

Lauren: Yeah, so I'm Lauren Cash. And I use she, her, hers. And I am currently in Las Vegas, Nevada. I just moved here, I don't know, a couple of months ago, it feels like. And I am a master certified coach and I consider myself a time coach, like you said. Because I find time is a really fun medium that the mind uses to be able to coach people around. And a lot of that work surrounds procrastination and perfectionism, which I'm sure we'll talk more about.

So, I've been saying recently that I help procrastinating perfectionists become easeful entrepreneurs. Which I so much fun. And my story is kind of a long one, so I'll try to give you the very shortened version. But I had gone to school for what seemed like forever to become a registered dietician specializing in eating disorders.

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So, I did that by way of a psychology degree. I thought I was going to be a clinical psychologist with a Ph.D., dropped out of that, then became a dietician, was doing all the things to specialize in eating disorders, which was amazing and also has trained me a lot for the type of people I like to work with now in time coaching, which you wouldn't really think it does. But a lot of the perfectionism coming through is very similar. And even the skills of doing sessions and stuff like that really helped pay off in my coaching business.

So, what ended up happening was I finally finished my degree. I was going to sit for the RD exam. I had become a program dietician at an eating disorder treatment center really early on, which was amazing. And I was growing my private practice, because I had always known I wanted to be an entrepreneur.

I thought that was going to be through nutrition and body image and intuitive eating, health at every size type things online. But then, I discovered life coaching a couple years actually before that. And I thought I wanted to get certified while I was still in grad school. And at the time though, where I was with my money I was like, "Oh my gosh, that's too expensive to get certified." But now, looking back, it was so cheap back then.

But anyway, so I was listening to The Life Coach School Podcast and that summer my practice was growing a lot, which was really exciting. But then, as the program dietician, I had to do like 30 hours a week doing that. So, I was at this point where I needed to leave that but I didn't have enough clients to fully sustain me.

So, the Life Coach School was offering a position as part-time customer support and I actually, long story short, got that position which was

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amazing, and I was able to leave the program dietician role and keep growing my private practice.

And then, the longest story short is I ended up making my way through lots of promotions and getting lots of opportunities at the school, becoming certified as a coach, becoming master coach certified, and then about, when was it, almost two years ago coming this summer, I stepped down from my role there and restarted my own private practice.

So, for a long time, I was doing both. And then now I'm doing just coaching. But when I relaunched my private practice, I actually was doing both. I was doing nutrition therapy and coaching and trying to juggle both. But then finally last summer, I decided to narrow my focus and just coach people, which is the best.

Victoria: I love that. Yeah, what you just sparked for me was interesting, this connection between perfectionism and eating disorders and body image. And I've been on my own body image journey and it's been something I've been really wanting to talk about on this show. And I think this is the perfect opportunity to dive in. I'd love to hear about how you think about perfectionism, body image, using thought work. Talk to me.

Lauren: Yeah, so for a lot of folks, the way they see their body or experience their body, they can tend to focus on how their body is in the world and express that perfectionism. So, like stereotypically, there's lots of stories in the eating disorder community that it ends up coming from sort of this nature-nurture, where there are certain genes that end to be more focused on perfectionism and stuff like that.

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But then also there's something usually happening in that person's life and lived experience that's going on that's probably outside of their control, or the way that they were raised was very strict or something like that. That's not the case for everyone. I'm not speaking for all people.

But then, they find that one of the ways that they can sort of exert this control in a way that they have access to, maybe other things in their life they can't control as much, then they end up acting that perfectionism around maybe what they're eating. Maybe they end up starting to cut certain things out and only eating very specific things and controlling that and very fixated on the way that their body is portrayed or the way that certain aspects of their body is and really focusing on that.

And it ends up being somewhat adaptive in the beginning. It ends up being a way to cope with things that they maybe can't control and it feels really powerful. But then eventually, it becomes more maladaptive because it might go then to a more extreme where they're not eating enough for what their body needs or they don't have a great relationship with how they feel in their body overall after all of this time trying to manipulate their body size and stuff like that.

So, it's not always with anorexia and nervosa either. I would see a ton of perfectionism across the diagnoses. Or even if they didn't have a diagnosis, I would work with folks that didn't meet DSM criteria. But I saw it in a lot of those clients. And what I found really interesting was when I started coaching folks around time, I would see a lot of the same thought processes that I saw in the way that they related to food and body.

So, things like it ultimately all boiling down to, I'm not good enough. There's something wrong with me," all those things end up boiling down to that. So,

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tell us more about how you've seen your perfectionism come into play around your body story and what's been going on there.

Victoria: Yeah, so I'm Argentine-American and, I mean, not to brag but Argentina is the country with the most eating disorders on the planet, last time I checked...

Lauren: I do recall.

Victoria: Yeah, this country is very complicated. You know, it's interesting – well, I want to come back to nature versus nurture because I think that's so important to bring in. But you know, it's also really classed and really raced. There's a lot of racism that comes into it.

So, Argentina is, in South America, a country of European descent in South America. And so, there is the indigenous population here, the Mapuche and other tribes tend to be small, like short and stocky. And I think there's this underlying racism that's like, "We are different. We are thin. We are not..." It's a way to evidence that ethnic otherness, meaning like a eurocentrism, that we must be thin to show that we are not those indigenous people. And it is so pervasive. It is – it's fascinating. What were you going to say?

Lauren: I was just going to say, that makes me think of two books that, like, I have read, to really look at that as well, what you're talking about there. I just want to offer them if anyone's interested. So, one is – and I'm going to forget the author's name but we'll have them in the show notes for you. *Fearing the Black Body* is one. And then the other that I actually read really early on in my studying eating disorders that really changed the way I saw things, it was before I was ever confronted with the idea that you can be

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healthy in different body sizes. This was my entryway to that idea is *What's Wrong with Fat* by Dr. Abigail Saguy from UCLA. She's a sociologist.

And even seeing in that book, like, the racism and how it also correlates with people's ability to get care for things and stuff like that is huge. So, I just had to mention those two because that spurred my mind when you talked about that. But, please continue your story.

Victoria: Well no, my nerds love a good book recommendation. And those two are fantastic, yeah. Yeah, definitely there's so much racism in how we think about what a good and healthy body is. And that is tall and thin and blonde and blue-eyed and European.

Lauren: Yeah, and don't get me started on, quote unquote research on how that's been done and who that's been done with and funded by. And we then are talking about, well, but if we look at the research... But then we have to look at the research and how that's been constructed. Anyway, I could go on...

Victoria: Yeah, well I'd love to get you started on that. As a student of epidemiology myself, like, the way we do research sucks. There's just no two ways around it. And it has come to conflate body mass. And BMI is such complete garbage. This is not a, like, in my early 20s I had gained a lot of weight and I started exercising and dropped a bunch of pant sizes, dress sizes, whatever, which there's no judgment, there's no good and bad there. Just stating facts. My mass decreased. And my BMI went up because I started doing CrossFit. And so, I traded fat, which weighs three times what muscle does – the other way around, right, muscle weighs three times what fat does. But it's really fascinating that we tell these stories that BMI equals health, which propagates all the BS of hating ourselves for no good reason.

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Lauren: So then, were you saying you were growing up around that culture then, so tell us more about what that was like?

Victoria: Yeah, there's like a national dysmorphia here. It was actually really fascinating. I came to Buenos Aires in '99 and studied at the University of Buenos Aires for a year. And I couldn't find clothes. I wore like a six-eight in the US. I couldn't find clothes big enough for me. Like, it just didn't exist. So, it's this really interesting – it's like this compulsory thinness in order to be accepted.

And things have changed with globalization, as food has changed and life has shifted, but it's still that national identity. There's this joke here that Maté, Yerba Maté, our national drink, it takes your hunger away. And so, it's both the drink of the poor and the drink of the rich. Because either you can't eat or you don't want to eat.

Yeah, and so there's the cult of thinness here. Like, it really is the way to have social acceptance and to be seen as a good and worthy person is to be as small as possible. And of course, let's go ahead and loop on in the patriarchy. Because the Latin American woman feeding everyone but herself. And we can loop in codependent thinking there too of, like, everyone else's nourishment needs to come before mine on every plane, including physical food.

I think, for me, it's why reclaiming our bodies as they are is one of the most radically feminist things we can do. So, I want to loop us back to nature versus nurture...

Lauren: Yeah, let's talk about it, especially since you're an epidemiologist, that's super fun to talk about with you.

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Victoria: Super nerd... Well, because I think this thing can happen in the coaching world where it's like hashtag mindset is everything. And it's really refreshing and part of why I resonate I resonate so much with you both as a human and as a coach is, honestly, because I know you call BS on that. You see that mindset is vital, mindset is huge. And some things are genetics. And some things are, "Girl, are you hungry?" Like, if your F-line is angry, yes it's your T, but also, what's your blood glucose doing?

Lauren: Yeah, like at C-line, whatever we can measure going on in your body, that also is a factor. Which I've been playing with recently. This kind of goes into that conversation but is adjacent conversation. Like, C-line things – I'm sure you've talked about the model and they know. But energy, I find a lot of coaches are like, "Well, you create energy with the way you think." And used to coach more that way.

I think there is a layer of that, that is there. And I think there's a layer that also is just like the way in which that we are wired or kind of back to the nature part, and learning more about human design and playing with that, what if that was a C, like that would be fun to look at as an experiment. Like, how would I live if I really do believe this is the way I am wired energetically.

And so that's been fun because I find a lot of coaches, I don't know, like coach in the way that you're talking about, of almost mindset against yourself in order to just push through something that's not working, that may not be working because of your glucose situation, may not be working because you have some other, I don't know, health condition that we may want to factor in, or may not be working because, like for me, I'm a human design projector, and it might not be working for me because of how people experience me energetically when I'm not living more for what's beneficial for my energy.

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Victoria: Right. Yeah, and I think this is so important. As a nurse practitioner talking to a dietician, we understand this complexity. And I think it's so easy on Instagram to post some quote that makes it sound like, "No, babe, it's just your thinking..." But hanger is real. And like you said, it's a circumstance. That's the thing you're working with. But I think it can gloss over so much of the human experience.

One of the questions I often get asked on podcasts is to talk about my own journey of having been so sick with what was diagnosed as irritable bowel syndrome and later Small Intestine Bacterial Overgrowth. And I get asked a lot about my mindset and how that was a huge part of it. And it was because I was in victim mindset. I was in codependent perfectionist people pleasing thinking. That ruled my brain, which of course then slowed my vagus nerve, slowed the migrating motor complex in my small intestine. Science, right, because science, stuff wasn't moving. But also, there was a parasite.

And I think it can be, I want to say disrespectful, right, to say it's all mindset. Like, I had a client recent who has Lyme disease. And she had been working with another coach who was like, "You know, you just change your thoughts around the pain." And it's like, yes, we understand how the neurochemicals of pain work and positive buffering and, at the core, she has chronic pain because there's bacteria swimming in her bloodstream, right? And it, I think, can be such a disservice. And it's not exactly emotional bypassing, but it's like the word dishonest is coming to me. And I'm trying to work with that. It's not honestly looking at what's real. And I think giving it enough credence.

Lauren: Yeah, I think it completely almost like the bypassing doesn't go through accepting the what is right now part that's so essential. And I don't want to go to a place of necessarily saying it has to be that way forever and

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there's no hope and no empowerment. I think that then some people can almost go all the way to the other side and be like, "So, you just have to make peace with it and it's going to be like this the rest of your life." I don't want to go there. But I want to go to accepting what is and where we're at and having compassion for where you are.

Because if we layer that with judgment, talk about the perfectionistic thinking, judgment, and ownership not in the empowered way but in the, like, beat yourself up, why you have that in your bloodstream, that's not going to help you be well either.

Victoria: Right, it makes me think back to when I was doing functional medicine and I would have patients come in and be like, "Oh, well I have MTHFR, like effectively I'm effed..." And I was like, "No." Like, yeah, take your Folate and your B12 every day, like manage whatever genetics you were given. But in the same way, because you can see it as a problem, but it's like, my genetics mean I'm 5'3 and three quarters. And yes, I will always claim those three quarters. Which means if I want anything from any kind of shelf ever, I need a step stool. But it doesn't have to be a problem. I don't have to create that sort of crisis level, or what you said of, like, identifying.

So, when I had IBS and my digestion was questionable, to phrase it lovingly, I was very identified with that diagnosis. It was the cornerstone of who I was. And I don't think that serves me either. I think we can...

Lauren: Back to eating disorders, I would see that a lot too. Like, that was then the identity that they were forming about themselves as well. Similar with perfectionism too, or procrastination. I think I see it with procrastination more than perfectionism. I don't know if you've noticed this, but people

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identifying themselves more as, “Because I’m a procrastinator than this...” it’s kind of a similar thing.

But yeah, going back to your example of, like, your height, I think that’s a good example to use with what we’re talking about with what some coaches can do of, like, then trying to get them to believe certain warm and fuzzy rainbow beliefs, or even negating that the C-line is 5’3 and three quarters. They’re just completely taking that out of C-line almost. I don’t know, there’s something interesting going on with that that I don’t think is as useful as, “Yes, this is a fact, it’s 5’3 and three fourths, do we want to work on the acceptance maybe of that first and then decide what we want to make that mean in a way that creates what we want to create while working with that factor?”

Victoria: Right, and I think you just touched on something so important here, which is meaning-making. Whether we’re talking about body image, perfectionism, procrastination, my height, what is the T-line? What is the thought that you want to have about that C?

So, C is the circumstance. That’s the neutral court-admissible facts of what’s going on in your life. And then, what are the thoughts you want to have about it, meaning meaning-making. What’s the story that you want to believe and live into? And that’s where choice is. That’s where the empowering work we do lives, is in that story. Because I could be walking around being like, “Oh man, I am so short. This is unbearable...”

Lauren: Which I used to do. I’m an inch taller than you. I have the three fourths going on too. I’m 5’4 and three fourths. And I would do that for the longest time, in my 20s or even in my teenage years because I’m actually the shortest person in my family. And so, I was always super bummed because my mom told me, growing up, most likely I’d be taller than her. But

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I wasn't. She was wrong about that. And I was so upset because I thought that was supposed to happen.

And for the longest time, I thought it was the worst thing ever and I was too short and no partner would ever want to be with me because I was short. Then, later on in life, I realized I actually have many more partners available to me if I'm going to abide by the stereotypical wanting your partner to be taller than you and how it was socialized and whatever.

So, now I actually – I love my height and I'm totally cool with it. But it's funny how you can totally change stories about even things like your height.

Victoria: Totally. And again, on an airplane, my knees don't hit the seat in front of me. If you drop something under your seat, I will immediately go get it because I fit under there. Yeah, and so we can apply that same thing to the thoughts we want to have. Perfectionism, do you want to tell the story that you are not worthy of love and care and being taken care of in this world, being honored, if you are, quote unquote perfect or not.

And then, you get to dive into the further layer of meaning-making, like what is perfect? And I think what happens, what I see in my clients day in and day out is there's a belief that their story about perfectionism, what is perfect, what is loving, what is being kind, through the codependent thinking lens, what is being a good partner, a good child, a good parent? They're treating that internal narrative as though it were the O-line in a SOAP note, as though it were the objective fact of, "This is what perfect is. This is what loving is." And I think the power of thought work is to help us really see, like, "No, baby, that's subjective." From a loving place, "You're making that up." Meaning you get to make that up.

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Lauren: Yeah, which is the best.

Victoria: It really is the best.

Lauren: You get to decide. And I like that conversation of, like, how do we even decide what perfect is? But then, if we're making up this rubric about what perfect is, in my mind, it's that Mean Girls quote of, like, "The limit does not exist."

Perfect can't ever exist because, what we were just talking about, it's very subjective. And usually, whatever the bar is, is really unrealistic anyway. So, I like just going to the place of, "But we can't ever actually create that." And I've found – I don't know if you've found this, whenever you put a perfectionistic thought in the T-line of a model, usually what ends up happening in the result line, what they create through thinking that, feeling that way, behaving however, that feeling drives them to act, it ends up not creating anything of substance. And I feel like that's my nerdy proof of, like, "See, perfect doesn't exist in the R line." It just doesn't even give you anything to work with there in the R-line because there isn't perfect.

Victoria: Right, exactly, yeah. And again, I'm just going to loop us back to body image, what is fat? What is thin? Those things don't really – there's no objective truth. What is healthy? What is unhealthy? My dad's side of the family has type two diabetes. My aunt, who is probably like four inches shorter than me probably wears a zero-zero at J. Crew and she mostly eats meat and vegetables, always has. And this is just her genetics.

So, she is very thin and diabetic and what's the story in the middle about health, who is healthy, who is unhealthy? What's that narrative, right?

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Lauren: Totally, oh my gosh, it's so fascinating too. Like, who gets to decide what health is? And are you even going to define it with certain lab values? I don't even think that is useful. I don't know. Because then it would be an impossible thing for some people, like your aunt, to even be able to consider themselves healthy. And I don't know, I would want to be able to have that available to me to think that I am in managing whatever I'm given in my body.

Victoria: Right, healthy and type two diabetics thanks to some genetics. Right, because the thought that you're unhealthy precludes thinking that you are healthy. And so, how do you act from there? What are the choices that you make? And what happens to your self-love, your self-regard, your sense of self when you're telling this story, this is evidence that I am unhealthy. And what does that do to your stories about lovability? Just all these layers of – it's this morass of yuck.

Lauren: Yeah, that I-am statement too, it's like the identity and state of being then that you're like saying is that as well, which I don't think is useful ever to think that.

Victoria: Right, well it's so definitive that it's like where can you go from there? Nowhere good, I think. And I know for me being hyper-identified with my diagnosis, you know, with IBS and SIBO and intermittently depression and anxiety kept me from seeing any sort of way out, which is again not victim blaming, because things happen to your microbiome, which then impacts all the molecules of emotion and serotonin and dopamine. Your vagus nerve and all that stuff leaves you in that place of dorsal shutdown or sympathetic activation, which keeps you spinning in the same thought patterns.

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So, again, it's this place where the because science, the biology, and the mindset meet and again, it's just further evidence of how important it is to take in that complexity and not oversimplify for the sake of oversimplifying, I guess. So it can fit on a tidy Instagram card.

Lauren: Yeah, I've lived experiences that are much more complex than a little Instagram quote.

Victoria: Totally, totally, yeah. So, I want to sort of shift gears just a little bit. I love your shamanistic take on time.

Lauren: Thank you.

Victoria: Yeah, so will you tell – because we hold a similar idea, but I'd love to hear your take, how you think about linear time versus other concepts of time. I'll hush so you can explain.

Lauren: Yeah, so my belief is that time doesn't actually exist. It's a construct that the mind has made up in our 3D reality. We've put different things to this collectively agreed-upon construct. Like we have calendars, we have clocks, we've gotten all on a very similar time zone situation that we can sync up in the United States. We ended up having more synchronized time because of trains crashing into each other.

And then universally, being able to be on the same time zones and things is helpful for things like us getting on this call today. But I think it also can be unhelpful sometimes to think that time is very finite, that there's only a certain amount of hours in a day, a certain amount of hours in a week.

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I love playing with more bending of time and how could we potential have way more time, an abundance of time, because we're just making that up in our minds. So, we can do this on a small scale. We might think that we will need an hour to write a certain amount of emails, let's say. But what if it actually could take you a lot shorter amount of time if you just decide that you're going to write them in, I don't know, 30 minutes or something?

Or what if you could create a different process for something that's happening in your business. Right now, you think it takes all these very specific steps manually, but you can use more technology in order to automate some of it and it actually can be a lot faster. Things like that, I'm always thinking about and I like playing with different solutions to sort of break our mind's concept of what time is.

And I find that a lot of the time, the mind is really fixated on, "But time..." as an obstacle for creating something really amazing. Because I like to work with a lot of goal setting, or if you hate the word goal, like intention setting or whatever, creating something new in your life that you want to create, that seems really fun and magical, a lot of the times, our minds fixate on time being the reason why we can't create that.

So, I like really playing with that, playing with the mind of that time isn't the obstacle, that we actually can create it outside of time being that issue. Like, what if we didn't have that as the limit, like the time, what if we could think outside of that? Then things get really fun and playful because we could come up with brand new solutions that we've never even considered.

Victoria: I love that. I love that. So, I'm hearing in my head, my listeners who are parents working from home full-time with kids at home, you know, during the pandemic who aren't going to school. What would you say to

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them? Because I hear this all the time, “I have no time in my day...” the construct is I literally don’t have time.

Lauren: But you are, because you’re always living within this construct of time. So, I think starting to notice that thought that you’re thinking, that you don’t have time, what do you mean by that? Is it for something specific that you’re wanting to do that you’re not putting as a priority to do?

A lot of the times, when I have clients like that, it’s because they’ve really just decided that that thing is not possible and they’re not going to look at the five to 10 solutions that are available to them. So, I love playing with that, of what if that wasn’t true, what if you are in time always?

I hear you that you have kids, that you have a job, whatever, the circumstances, like we were talking about, but what could we do to play with those in a new creative way that would still allow for you to, I don’t know, move your body or be with some friends sometimes or whatever it is that is life-giving to you want to include in your life. And that will open you up to all of these options that you don’t think you currently have but actually are there.

Maybe you can get help from a neighbor or a friend or a partner or somebody you pay or you can include the kids in some fun life-giving activity or there are so many different options that are available, although I’m not a parent so I can’t speak to that lives experience totally.

But I love playing with that with my clients. Like, what if we didn’t believe that there’s this limit? And they usually come up with five to 10 other amazing options to play with.

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Victoria: Yeah, I'm already hearing how the perfectionism comes in, "But I want to exercise alone. I want to do my cassette tape by myself." Like, there's all these stories of the perfect way that it's going to get done, or it's almost like it doesn't count. It's almost like it's not worth it if I can't do it per some original A-plus story.

Lauren: Yeah, so then it's looking at, "Well, what are the ways that you could do it that way if you wanted to? But then maybe those options, you don't like how you would have to go about doing that. You don't want to devote the funds, you don't currently have the resources or whatever. So, then, what do you want more? Do you want to actually move your body? And what do you actually want? And convincing yourself – I like playing with the wants and desires.

Like, do you really want to want to do it alone when the option is to do it maybe with kids? Maybe you want to play with wanting to do it no matter if your kids are around climbing over you and maybe work on, back to our acceptance, being with the reality that you also have probably chosen in some way. That's kind of more to, like, then the extreme, playing with that as well, of the choice of you are choosing, even if you don't think you are, to be with the kids. And so, then playing with that too.

Victoria: Right, yeah. It's so easy to get stuck in the story that things have to be a specific way. Which again, we could loop back to everything we've talked about. It's a vehicle towards procrastination, to think it has to be some perfect way as though there was an objective truth about what's the right way to do absolutely anything. And it's not just a fun-killer, a freedom-killer, but it also blocks innovation.

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Lauren: And that's why I love to talk about effectiveness so much too. Like, what is it that you actually want to get out of the thing? Rather than looking at the perfect process, what is the outcome that you want?

So, if you want to have your body moving in some way and space in a day, there are so many options for that, can include the factors that your mind thinks are imperfect, like kids, like pets climbing over you, like getting interrupted while you're doing your exercise tape like five times. But did you get what you wanted out of it? Did you get your body moving? Yeah. And so, why can't that be what you desire and what you set your mind to being the outcome instead.

Victoria: And I think what's vital before we can even engage in that process, for my folks who are codependent perfectionist people pleasers is we have come, generally speaking, to be so detached from our own wants and needs and desires because we are emotional outsourcers, externalizers. Everyone else's wants, needs, opinions are so much more important than in the middle, we completely lose touch with our own desire, our own wants. Do I even want to work out? What do I want to eat? Do I want to love my body at the size it is? What do I want for dinner?

It all becomes this maelstrom of wild indecision when you're not anchored in yourself, when you are not your sacred touchstone, your guiding North Star, when everyone else is that. So, I'm curious what guidance you would give folks who want to reconnect with their own sense of their own desires and wants. Like, I know how I show folks to connect, but how do you?

Lauren: What came through for me as you were talking about that, because this would be kind of the antidote to some of the perfectionism too, because I think a lot of people think that they have to know the perfect thing that is them when they then learn about that. Like, that there's the one thing that is

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them and they need to find that before they start taking action or doing anything.

So, I think just relaxing into experimenting with things to see, like almost taste-testing the different flavors at the ice cream shop, of even if you don't really know what you want or what you like, what if you just started trying things on, or different clothes on? Like, that too? What if this week you just tried out some different things and saw whether you liked them or not and not put all this pressure on you to have to decide what you want right now?

And I would start with, like, the smallest littlest things, maybe. Like, things that wouldn't also butt up against maybe what you're working through and your codependency, like things that are already things you solely get to decide, I don't know, bodywash, what topping you put on your salad.

Like, things like that, that are like very nonthreatening, so that eventually as you start to get more of your sense of self and you are learning how to engage with this emotion and how you want to think about your relationship and all of that, then you can start to build the confidence to play with then the smaller decisions that might impact a relationship more, so that you can build on that and you're not just doing like, "Well, I want to move to Seattle tomorrow and that's what I want," and then it's like a whole thing."

Victoria: Right, and I love your use of the word nonthreatening and to translate it into polyvagal terms, staying in ventral vagal with yourself. Because if you start, like you said, "I'm going to ditch my life here in Boston and move to Seattle and join the staff of Grey's Anatomy tomorrow..." Oh, Grey's Anatomy. Okay, that's a different convo. You're likely to freak your nervous system out. I would say the same, like, "What socks do I want to wear today?"

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Lauren: Yes, so I've been having a lot of my clients are working on tapping into their inner voice and their intuition and doing more of, like, what that voice says rather than what their mind says. And we do the same thing with what can we play with, like nail polish color or something, that's nonthreatening to the mind. But we can just follow the inner voice and intuition and start to show our mind that we're not actually threatened. So, there's even this relationship within ourselves that we can play with that around too.

Victoria: Right, and discernment, bringing that discernment in. Because a lot of my clients, when I first started introducing the concept of intuition and listening to our inner voice and being our watcher, it's very challenging and I totally get this, to know what is that old cassette tape, what is that habitual thought of anxiety, of how can I make someone else happy? I need to prioritize them, externalize, externalize. And what is intuition?

And that's where, you know, I'm always encouraging my nerds to be scientists, to run the experiment. What's the hypothesis here and how can I have evidence towards or against it? It's so fun.

Lauren: I love playing with all that too.

Victoria: Yeah, I think one of the top things I love about you and your approach and your energy is fun, is play, right? And that you're...

Lauren: I'm working on being more playful so I'm glad you like that.

Victoria: I love it. You know, the work we do in life coaching can be about very, very serious things, right? And I did functional medicine, you worked with eating disorders, these are things that can literally kill you. We know

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how to do very serious. And there's something beautiful about bringing a lightness and an energy of just fun and play. Because I think it starts to put cracks in that perfectionist story. Because the perfectionist story is very, very serious. Everything is very, very serious.

Lauren: Yeah, have you ever read Chicken Little?

Victoria: Oh my gosh, like 1000 years ago, yeah.

Lauren: So, that's what I always see, is my client's mind going to like, "The sky is falling. The sky is falling." One of my private clients right now had actually never read that book. So, I sent it to them and they're reading it with their child now and it's so awesome. And they're like, "Yes, that is what my mind does."

Victoria: Totally, that everything has these life or death consequences. When it's really, it can just be a lot lighter.

Lauren: Yeah, I used to be so much more serious. Like, a lot of people were very scared of me in my previous roles at different places because I was very much in my perfectionism even more than I am now, and I think that I was very tense, very serious. And it wasn't really fun interacting with me. So, it's fun to get the feedback that I'm starting to be more playful because I feel like that's showing more of my personality coming out and me letting go of more of the perfectionism.

Although there still is some perfectionism. Yes, yesterday I did send a screenshot to my social media manager of a missing period on something in my stories. I will do things like that...

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Victoria: Get out the guillotine. That person is over.

Lauren: Well, in the past I probably would have been like, “That person is over.” And this time, I just sent them a screenshot and was like, “Hey, how can we have these things proofed? Thank you.”

Victoria: Thank you, thank you. I love it. Well, I would love to invite you, as we wrap up, to share anything you haven’t had a chance to share that you want to make sure the people know. And then tell them where to find you.

Lauren: Yeah, I think I’ll just tell them where to find me. So, I would love to have you all come hang out with me on Instagram or on my podcast. Those are the best places.

So, on Instagram, at least as of right now I’m @vivereco and we’ll have that in the show notes. And then, my podcast is called The Ease of Hustle, which is a fun cheeky title. So, come hang out with me there. And depending on when this goes out, I have a brand-new website launching with a shop, so you’ll be able to hear all about that if you hang out with me on those two platforms.

Victoria: Fun. Thank you so much, Lauren. You are a delight. You are amazing at what you do. And it’s been just so fantastic to have this opportunity to talk with you about all of this, so thank you, thank you.

Lauren: Thank you so much for having me on. It’s been a blast.

Victoria: Alright, be well. Bye.

Lauren: Bye.

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If you've been enjoying the show and learning a ton, it's time to apply it with my expert guidance so you can live life with intention, without the anxiety, overwhelm, and resentment, so you can get unstuck. You're not going to want to miss the opportunity to join my exclusive intimate group coaching program, so head on over to [victoriaalbina.com/masterclass](https://victoriaalbina.com/masterclass) to grab your seat now. See you there. It's going to be a good one.