

Ep #143: Letting Other People Be Wrong About You



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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This is *Feminist Wellness*, and I'm your host, Nurse Practitioner, Functional Medicine Expert, and Life Coach, Victoria Albina. I'll show you how to get unstuck, drop the anxiety, perfectionism, and codependency so you can live from your beautiful heart. Welcome my love, let's get started.

Hello hello my love. I hope this finds you doing so well. I remember the day I stopped trying to convince other people they were wrong. I was studying the nurse practitioner program at UCSF and I was reviewing my notes in a cafe in San Francisco before going to my clinical rotation in the Mission.

And some dude started talking to me and said something totally wildly incorrect about the science I was studying, and I felt that old urge inside me, that deep desire to let him know exactly just how totally, very much fully 110% wrong he was.

And then something shifted. It was this palpable shift inside me. In that moment, I just didn't care if he was wrong, and thus thought that I was wrong about science I totally knew more about than he did. It was like, all those months of meditation and self-awareness and journaling and plant medicine and working on my relationship with myself just clicked.

It was like magic. Magic many months in the making for sure. I just didn't care. In that moment, I didn't make his opinion mean anything about me in this powerfully embodied way. And it felt like I had found this firm new footing on solid ground, like I was deeply connected to my own internal anchor of my knowing.

A deep internal stability. Long before the phrase was commonplace, I had simply ran out of fucks to give about what this stranger thought about me, and the deep relief, calm, and centeredness I felt, so powerful.

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I can bring that somatic memory up from the depth of my bones. I felt so grounded in me that everything else was really just everything else. Truly not about me. Not my problem, not my business, not mine.

In this deep and powerful way that has opened up so much connection with my authenticity and my belief in me, which was slowly, slowly, slowly replaced that old story that other people being wrong matters, and is something I have to jump to correct. Especially when they're wrong about me.

And it's so important for me to say, that was my stance on life. That was my framework. I thought if someone said something incorrect, I had to correct them, didn't I? That it mattered that I fought tooth and nail, got into these heated discussions with others about things that, in hindsight, I don't really care about.

But I felt that deep need to prove myself right and others wrong, especially when it touched in on my tenderness and what someone I loved thought about me. This theme has been coming up a lot in my own life recently, and so of course it's coming up for my clients in my six-month program, Anchored.

So this week, I want to talk about the magical secret to joy that is found in simply letting other people be wrong. Allowing them to have their own thoughts about you, about science, about fashion, about astrology, about what they heard you say, what they're interpreting, what they heard you say to mean, about all of it. Truly, all of it.

And this matters because it's such a huge topic for us coming from our codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing thought habits because we source our sense of self and thus our sense of embodied safety from everyone and everything around us.

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We feel an almost compulsion to micromanage our image, how others see us, what they think and feel about us, because we believe that their thoughts and opinions matter so much more than our own opinions about us.

So we spend our limited mental and physical energy, our time, our money, our emotional resources attempting to be seen in the most perfect light by everyone else always, which means jumping to correct others when we think they believe something inaccurate about us or the world, or when they are dead-set in misunderstanding us, or when we think that they are in wrong belief.

And we are deeply dedicated to believe that it is better to be right than to be happy, peaceful, calm. Let me say that again. It is more important to us from our codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing mind frames to be right, to get that dopamine rush of righteousness than to be happy, especially when your self-worth is based on the image you present to the world being a perfect one, which also comes down to being the most rightest one so often.

When that is your framework, you lose out on the chance to free yourself up and to go with the flow, and to remember the central tenet of the thought work protocol, which is that you have your thoughts created by your feelings, and so does everyone else.

So what we try to do from our insecurity is to convince people that we are right and they are wrong. We use logic to try to get others to see us as beyond reproach because our self-worth is always on the line, regardless of the topic at hand.

But here's the thing; logic rarely changes people's minds. I'm not even going to get into it around the pandemic and how much people are clinging

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to illogical beliefs because that's the whole point of this episode. That it's not my business to convince anyone that they are wrong. I'm not interested.

And logic is not what changes the way we humans think, feel, or act. We take action based on how we feel and how we believe we will feel when we take that action. So trying to convince someone that they are wrong about science, about a political stance, or about you is like screaming at the ocean to stop making waves.

It's unlikely to work and it's a waste of your time, energy, and effort, my darling tiny tiger, my perfect and amazing tender ravioli. And it keeps you spinning in the thoughts that other people's thoughts matter when it comes to your self-image, your self-worth, your understanding of the world, and that being right is more important than being happy.

Here's the thing to remember; the way other people think in general and definitely the way people think about you has exactly 0.0 things to do with logic and frankly, nothing to do with you. 0.0. We're all just projecting our own internal story onto everything and everyone around us.

Other people think the way they think about you because of the feelings those thoughts create for them. Not from some complex, underlying logical schema. So trying to convince someone using logic to have different feelings is just, well, illogical.

And listen, we all do illogical things, like when you have the thought that you feel distance with your partner, and that makes you feel insecure, so you snap at them about something silly when what most you want is connection. And yet, the result is more discord and distance.

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Caring about what other people think about you is living in judgment. Not acceptance. Because you're judging them for their thoughts you don't agree with, or you wouldn't be arguing your point. And not letting others simply be wrong about you keeps your focus on them, which is the cornerstone of codependent thinking.

We focus on everyone else and not ourselves, which keeps us stuck in our painful old patterns. This is a huge topic we talk about and coach on in *Anchored* because from that external other people focus, we defer our dreams because someone else might not approve of them.

We defend who we think we are because our belief in our self feels so shaky. We stay in jobs we don't like because we feel validated or worthy because of our title. We live in the past, worrying about what your ex-friend or ex-partner thinks or might think about you.

We live in the future, future-tripping on how others are going to think about our decisions. We don't speak up about social justice issues to not rock the boat. We fight to be heard instead of hearing ourselves. We don't start the business we want to because it might fail. We don't make strides to reclaim our lives from all the thoughts we've been conditioned and socialized to believe, so we stay small in the old stories of what's possible for us.

We push to be seen the way we want to be seen by people who have no interest in truly seeing us. And so we lose sight of ourselves more and more. We stay small and fight for others to understand us, to make them wrong so we can feel right because we don't yet know how to just decide to feel right within ourselves and to have that be enough, and to be comfortable with being wrong.

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My darling, I am wrong all the time. And that's okay. What this whole struggle comes down to is about false control and the false comfort of false control.

Fighting for people to think about you and the world the way you want them to think about you or the world is buffering. Trying to keep a painful or uncomfortable thought and feeling like, "Maybe I am wrong, maybe I am not being the best version of myself, the most loving version of myself as a partner, a parent, a child, a worker, a lover," whatever.

We try to keep those painful thoughts at bay by fighting to change someone else's mind instead of just leaning in and anchoring ourselves back into our own sense of self. Into your own inner knowing about your amazingness, which allows you to recognize the times when in fact, you may be wrong, and in fact, you can have your own back even when you are wrong.

Because being wrong is part of the human condition. And isn't something to fight about, but rather to embrace so you can learn from it. Let's look at some examples, my darlings.

So your mother-in-law tells you that she thinks you're not a good parent because you're employing the gentle interdependence-focused parenting skills you learned from my amazing sister, Genie Albina on episode 141.

So in that moment, you have two beautiful options. You can fight her to try to change her mind, giving her all these excuses, all these explanations, all these justifications, all these stories, all the while questioning yourself. Or you can ground yourself, can anchor you in you, and can allow her to be her.

A human whose neurons are firing a different channel than yours, who has a different understanding from her social occasion, her time, her place, how

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she was parented. You can accept her as who she is with the thoughts she has. And you can truly choose to let that be okay.

To say, “I hear you that that’s your opinion, you are welcome to it.” She has her opinion, you have your opinion, and that can truly be okay. You don’t have to fight for her to think differently for you to recognize you’re being the best parent you absolutely can.

And my brain just did this thing, it does this a lot, where I say there’s two options, and then it presents me with a third, which is to say, “I appreciate your opinion and I will think on it,” became maybe there is a pearl in there, right? Maybe it’s just a bunch of sand, I don’t know, but I bet you know.

Because when things touch in, when they hit close to the chest, sometimes it’s because there’s some truthy-ness there, and you get to sort it out without making her wrong, making her the villain, without making you wrong and saying I must be a terrible parent because one person doesn’t like how I’m doing this.

Instead, you can let everyone be right in their own minds, you can have your own back, and can ask yourself with love, is there truth here? Let’s say you’re in an argument with your partner or your BFF or your sibling and they just aren’t hearing you.

And they’re saying that you’re being some kind of way, let’s say they say you’re being stubborn or defensive. What’s really interesting to note is that so often, when we bump up against someone seeing us in a way we don’t want to see ourselves, we start to push back, to try to make them wrong.

We might say, “Well, you’re being stubborn and not seeing my point.” And what we don’t realize in the moment is that’s actually you digging your

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heels in and being stubborn. Living into that thing you're fighting against you being.

You may say, "You're not understanding me. That's not what I said, that's not how I said it." And what you may not see is that is actually you being defensive, right? These moments when we so desperately want someone to see us the way we see us are moments when we can pause and can see if in fighting against the mirror someone is holding up for us, if we are actually embodying that thing we say we aren't, and that we say we don't want to be.

And listen, sometimes the other person is wrong. I dealt with this in a relationship where I was being gaslit. I was being told I was being a way, but I wasn't. And in those moments, there is so much power in pausing, connecting with our breath, grounding ourselves in ourselves, which for me often looks like excusing myself to the washroom, putting some cool water on my face, and breathing.

Getting grounded in ventral vagal, in the safe and social part of my nervous system, checking in with my inner children to see who's activated here, who is speaking, who is reacting, so I can get into myself, into my adult self, so I can be my own most loving parent and so I can get real.

So I can ask myself, am I really being stubborn or defensive or not? What is my real motivation here to push back? To simply prove them wrong and to try to manage the way I see me by trying to manage how they see me? What do I think I would gain by managing their mind for them? What do I actually gain by having my own back and declining to argue about how they see me and instead, by focusing on the facts here?

Another example, let's say Friday night rolls along. It's time to go meet your friends for a hangout you planned months ago and it's quarter of when

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you're supposed to leave and your partner is on the couch in their boxers and they say, "You never told me about these plans," when you remind them it's time to go.

In that moment, you always have the option to try to make them wrong and you right. To whip out your phone and to show them the text, to show them that you wrote it on the calendar on the fridge. You always have the option to spend your time and energy getting frustrated, annoyed, and resentful as you seek to convince them that they are so wrong and they seriously F'ed up here.

Or you can drop that struggle. You can decide that you are done living in struggle and suffering and fighting with someone else's version of reality that doesn't match yours. And instead, you can focus on what you actually want, which is to leave the house in five and you can remind yourself that you get to choose what matters most to you in that moment.

To get out the door and on your way to social connection while it's still warm enough to hang outside. So you can fight to be right, or you can choose your own happiness. You can say, "Okay well, here we are. It's quarter of and I'm leaving in five minutes. You can join me or not and I'd love it if you did, and I am rolling out in five."

And that, my darling, is you focusing on you. The one thing you actually can control. And you getting what you actually want, versus spending your precious emotional energy making someone wrong so you can, what? Feel right for a second? Feel vindicated? Feel superior or better than?

Where does that actually get you, my love? Sit with that. Where does that fight in that moment actually get you? Versus just choosing peace, ease, to move on in that moment, and sure, absolutely to bring the topic back up in

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a calmer moment, especially if it's a chronic issue. To discuss ways you two can communicate better about plans in the future.

But in these moments, the moment where your mother-in-law is sharing her opinion you don't agree with, when a dude in a cafe is sharing their understanding of science that doesn't jive with yours, when your partner is saying you didn't do or say something, and your main goal is to get out the door, do you want to be right? Or do you want to be happy?

What do you really want in that moment? Important questions to ask ourselves, right? And of course, always important to caveat; everything is different when we're talking about an abusive relationship or one where there's actual gaslighting.

And yes, there's a show coming soon all about that. I'm not talking here about accepting being lied to or gaslit or being told something that's not the truth, especially when it's chronic.

I'm talking about fighting for someone to be wrong so you can feel right. And what you believe doing that is doing for you and your sense of self and worth and worthiness and wellness in the world. Because I assure you, it's not doing what you think it's doing.

It's not actually making you feel better or more loved or seen in the world. Because all of that, it's an inside job, my darling. Someone else saying fine, fine, fine, you're right, won't make you feel that way if you don't believe that for and about yourself.

So you get to start at home by focusing on believing in you and your worth, not by fighting to get someone else to see it. And what this is not as well is not about dropping responsibility for your actions and not caring about how your actions impact others.

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Never and not at all our goal. Our primary dictate here is kindness. True kindness. And we talked all about the difference between being kind and being nice in episode 132.

From that dictate of kindness, we take responsibility for our actions and their impact beyond our intentions. And the point here is to get out of other people's heads and to stop trying to change their minds. Like how you don't want others to try to change the way you think when you're not asking for that.

My beauty, from our chronic thought habits, from those codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits, we love to obsess about what we believe other people think about us. Again, it's an easy buffer to keep us from seeing the ways we don't have our own backs. The ways we truly don't value ourselves or take care of ourselves.

No one knows what's right for you and your life other than you. And the longer you focus on what others think about you, the less aligned you are with you. Because of course we fear that people won't love us if they misunderstand us.

But when we fight to be heard and seen in the exact light we want to be heard and seen in, we're pushing a boulder uphill, Sisyphus style. Versus accepting the sometimes painful truth that sometimes we are in relationship with people, be they family, lovers, friends, who are not really interested in or capable of seeing us.

And in my own life, the less I fight to be understood and the more I accept that some people just don't or can't see me in the realness of me, that some people aren't here to accept me as I am, the less I fight to keep those people in my life.

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Because those relationships don't serve me. And that also means I've left some relationships and that some relationships in my life have become quite surface because I'm not available to push someone to want to see me in my wholeness.

And does that hurt? Well, it hurt a whole lot at one point, and it hurts less and less every day as I see me more and more. As I have my own back and as I step into my deep amazingness and bring in more people, invest more in people who are dedicated to seeing me the way I see me, which can often mean kindly calling me on my bullshit.

My closest friends and confidants are amazing at that. They often tell me when I'm wrong and they do it from kindness and love, and I'm grateful every time. And I'm not fighting for them to see me the way I want to be seen.

In those true heart-to-heart connections, that seeing one another is simply there. And the more I grow in seeing me as wonderful, as complex, I'm a complex human who sticks my foot in it all the time, who fails all the time, the more I can love me for me, the deeper those relationships where I am being loved for me grow.

My darling, when you are deeply anchored in your passion, your excitement, your worthiness, your knowing of your brilliance, you can focus on what you think for and about you. And can then choose to consider the opinions that you choose to consider.

And can step away from indiscriminately borrowing other people's thoughts as though they were fact, which is something I used to do all the time. And by learning to move from your integrity, your discernment, from starting slowly but surely day by day to trust in you, in what you want and need and think and feel and do, you can start to move away from the story that says

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if other people don't agree with me, I'm inherently wrong, and the story that you need others to be wrong for you to be right, and the story that being right is more important than being happy.

Because none of those stories truly serve you, my darling. Not one. Meanwhile, truly and deeply believing in you, regardless of what others think and feel is a wildly empowering way to live your life. With your focus squarely where it belongs, on you, and your own deeply anchored self-worth.

Thank you for listening, my darling. If you are loving what you're hearing on this show, it's time. It's time for you to join us for Anchored, my six-month program, where we talk about topics like this, discuss them, coach on them, make them practical and real in our everyday lives together in a loving, generous, kind, and hilarious community for six months.

We work to honor our mind and to manage our own mind through thought work. We work to engage with our body and somatics through the somatic practices we share each week, and we connect with spirit through breathwork each and every month in community.

Anchored is a magnificent community and a beautiful collective. And the opportunity you've been waiting for to invest in you, not because you're broken, not because you're wrong, but because you are so right, so whole, so magnificent. And like all of us, there are skills and tools you may be looking for so you can live the life of your dreams.

If you're interested, head on over to victoriaalbina.com/anchored to learn more. The next group starts in February 2022 and we're enrolling now. There are several people already in the group and it would be a delight to have you join us.

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Thank you my beauty. I hope this has been helpful for you. Let's do what we do. Gentle hand on your heart if that feels loving. Attune to your breath. Ground yourself in yourself with yourself.

And remember, you are safe, you are held, you are loved. And when one of us heals, we help heal the world. Be well, my beauty. I'll talk to you soon.

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 to grab your seat now. See you there. It's going to be a good one.