

## Ep #151: Resolutions, Regret and Commitment to 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. Happy new year. Feliz año nuevo. I hope you had a lovely, lovely new year's. A nice chill one hopefully, a safe and healthy one. That's what matters most.

Tis the season, my beauties, where so many of our thoughts turn to making wildly perfectionistic, fantasy-based resolutions for the new year. Studies show that only a very small percent of resolution setters will actually keep our own resolutions.

And yet, we do this whole dance with ourselves year after year after year. We tell these ridiculous stories that on December 31st I had x, y, z kind of behavior that I don't like. For example, I was overthinking, I was over-functioning in my family, I was taking on other people's emotional wants as needs I have to fix. I was spinning in the past, I had all my old people-pleasing habits that had me putting myself last all year, all lifetime.

And here comes the magical thinking. And now, January 1st, this is the magical day in which it shall all be so wildly different. If you're nodding your head because you've been here, then you know what this whole resolution spiral is all about.

It's all about setting ourselves up for an awful lot of ouch by believing that changing the date on the calendar means we will magically be different people with different behaviors who take different actions just like that. Poof.

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And what I've been musing on is how we can unwittingly of course use this process of setting resolutions as a buffer against our own regret for the change we didn't make in the last year, the last 20.

So way back in episode 14, we first spoke about buffers, which are anything that we put between us and feeling a feeling. The unintentional, unconscious distracting things, like overeating, overthinking, overdrinking, over-exercising, doom scrolling, the things that keep us from bumping into a feeling, which is why it's a buffer.

And that is the process also known as actually experiencing it and processing that feeling through our body. And when we push our emotions away, we can't process them. They live on in our bodies as tension patterns, as habitual energies in our bodies because science.

Energies that keep us swirling in the same old painful experiences of life. Plus, spending six hours on the couch with Netflix on, mindlessly scrolling our phones at the same time. Wildly not present to life.

And note, buffering is different from conscious distraction, which is a gift we give our nervous systems and is detailed in episode 108. So back to buffering.

Try as we might to push away the regret, the resentment, the frustration, the sadness, grief, anger, insecurity, those feelings, those challenging emotions, and it's worth noting for so many of us coming from codependent thinking, happiness, joy, peace, calm, quiet, those are all challenging emotions too.

And try as we might to push them away, they will find their way to the surface. I mean, sure, they may come out sideways, but to the surface they shall go. They've got wild amounts of buoyancy and know how to find up.

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And so, we can without realizing it use resolutions, the promise of a shiny tomorrow, the story that now it's January everything will be different as a buffer. A way to continue to not look at the feelings, I'll say most often regret at our lack of changing, that keep us in our old action cycles.

And before I get all thought work-y about it, let's slow down for a second and remember the central tenants of thought work, also known as the think-feel-act cycle. And if you're new to the show, I detailed this in episodes 35 through 37, 59, 72, and 110.

So the thought work protocol is based in cognitive behavioral theory. This theory is the understanding that for humans, about 20% of our lived experience is top down, from our brain sending information into our body, and posits that our thoughts create or spark our feelings.

And our focus here on *Feminist Wellness* is looking at our chronic habitual thoughts from our socialization, our conditioning, our family blueprint. Those thoughts that left unchecked run like cassette tapes in our mind and keep us stuck in our codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing spirals.

So we have thoughts and they become and shape our identity, our experience of life as they create our feelings. And we understand from this theory that we take action as humans based on our feelings and create a result. An effect in your own life based on the actions that you chose to take.

So for example, if you have a thought, "My partner is upset. I can't stand it when they're upset. I have to help them. It's on me to do this for them." Then you may feel anxious. So the action you may take is to put your own needs aside and you jump on in to fix their life for them, whether they want it or not.

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And the effect of those actions in your own life is that you strengthen that neural groove, that old cassette tape in your head that says someone else's needs are more important than your own. So this is the think-feel-act cycle. Thought work in a nutshell.

There's a circumstance that happens in life, a situation, you have a thought, creates a feeling, you take action and create a result, and those results, that's life, baby. That's the life you're living is made up of all of those results all squished together as a life.

In Anchored, in my work as a coach, we take it a step deeper by bringing in somatics or body-based practices along with a focus on our nervous system and the 80% or so of our life which is bottom up, meaning that it starts with the sensations in our bodies, which then sends a signal into our mind.

We then as humans interpret those signals. My hands feel clammy, my belly's kind of woozy, I must be anxious. And that thought, I must be anxious, is where the thought work comes in. Taken together, this process of thought work together with somatics leads us to be able to take a look at the complete whole of us, to look at 100% of your human lived experience.

Your body, mind, spirit, within the context of your socialization, conditioning, and family blueprint. And when you buffer against your feelings, my darling, you block yourself. Not only from understanding your own mind and body, you block yourself from changing and growing and creating new outcomes, new results in your own life.

And so looking at this framework for understanding our lives, we can see how vital, how important it is that we pause and we get in touch with our feelings. Either our feelings as those that come from our bodies through our

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somatic felt experience of being alive, or the ones that are created from and by our brains.

I mean, either way, it's the same neurobiology, the same neurochemicals. All the serotonin, oxytocin, dopamine, norepinephrine, noradrenaline, cortisol, all swim in through our bloodstream, leading to the sensations that we have come to call a feeling, an emotion.

And my sweet one, it is very human to want to buffer against our feelings when we don't know how to process them, when we don't have the tools to be with them, to manage our minds, and to address our feelings, to feel them, when we are habituated to living from the neck up and don't remember how to feel our feelings while also feeling safe in the world and with ourselves.

And from this place of buffering against our feelings, we set resolutions. Grand, perfectionistic, prognostications of how this year we'll do it all perfectly. Instead of really looking at why we've been living the way we have been in the last year, and why we didn't meet our goals last year either.

And come on, I mean, let's be real here folks. Hello pandemic. It's been a challenging minute to get a lot of stuff done, right? Give yourselves the grace. But that's the point.

Instead of looking at what's real and giving ourselves the grace, the compassion, the love we need, and I said need, in order to make lasting change, we jump to action.

We use resolution-setting as a buffer against the regret of another year of not making the changes we want to in our lives. We're like, let me slap this

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resolution on it and then I won't make myself maybe feel so bad, maybe? A little distraction will do the trick, right?

Alas my darlings, it shan't. I love the word shan't. But really, it shan't, it won't, it can't. So what is the remedy? How do we stop doing this while also making the changes we want to make in our lives?

To stop spinning in the constant anxiety of people pleasing and the constant hypervigilance that's part and parcel of trying to keep everyone happy, the constant codependent drama of trying to get external validation. How do we start moving our bodies the way we want to? Eating in nourishing ways, setting boundaries without the guilt?

Well my darling, the remedies are presence, self-compassion, and commitment. I start with presence and compassion because they are the antidotes to buffering. When you're present, really there with yourself and in your life, you are not buffering by definition.

You're holding space for yourself. You're at home in yourself, you're not trying to escape or evade yourself. You're right here, present with you. And when presence is paired with self-compassion, which is the ability to show yourself understanding, acceptance, and love, oh my, what a beautiful thing.

With self-compassion for your inner children and all the survival skills you learned over the years, you can make a promise to not beat you up, to not be mean to you from your perfectionist habits, to show you the firm loving kindness that helps us to learn from the past and grow and change for the future.

And from that presence and self-compassion, you can get real with your feels. You can let yourself feel them slowly, slowly my darlings if this is new

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to you, in a way that feels safer for you. You can process them through your body and can then connect back out with the world.

A skill called pendulation, which I will be nerding out on in a show soon to grace your very ears, my love. And you know I love foreshadowing, so there you go.

So my darling, darling, darling love, we show up with presence. Really being here in self-compassion, loving the human that's here, that's you. And then we commit to ourselves. Our lives, our futures, our goals.

So often what we think we need is motivation, which we expect to come like a lightning strike. So we wait around. And we wait around and we wait around for it. But that's not how it works.

Sure, you can create motivation with your thoughts. It's a feeling. You can always have a thought that creates a feeling. Absolutely. But in my experience, motivation can be a fickle friend indeed, my darling.

What we need is to face what has been with presence and compassion. Take responsibility for ourselves and our lives with love and care, and we need to commit. Commit to our goals, commit to our boundaries, commit to showing up to feel our feels and to live our lives the way we dream of.

Because motivation, whether intrinsic or extrinsic often comes and goes. And if it works for you, great. But for so many of us, motivation is not something to be counted on, to see you through when the going gets tough, when it seems easier in the moment to go along and get along, rather than speak your truth, when that old desire to self-sabotage comes to pay you a midnight visit.



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Motivation as a noun is a great place to start from and I'll posit that the feeling and the verb that keeps you going through thick and thin is commit. Mi cariño, my darling, resolutions fade into the February snow. But commitment, that's the real deal.

So what does it take to commit? It starts for me with a promise to myself not to buffer with resolutions or false stories of change that always sound like stories about how I'll start tomorrow. Always start tomorrow, right?

It starts with really truly pausing to look at my thoughts and the feelings they create so I can sit with and process those feelings, so I can hold them with love. And look at the stories that created them and the actions I have taken in the past and want to take in the future with presence and self-compassion.

And it starts with recognizing that we tell the story that we need to make this change for the reasons we talked about in the last three episodes. Because of how we believe that change will make us feel. And we often tell the story that we need to make this change when it's not actually the change we're looking for.

What we actually want and need deep down is nourishment, care, and safety. So what does it take to commit? For me, it comes down to really truly believing the thought I matter enough to me to nourish, to take care of me, to make me my priority, and to give to my community from my overflow.

And when I talk about nourishment, I mean speaking my needs without guilt, exercising, doing daily thought work and somatic practices. Nourishment can mean asking someone I love to co-regulate our nervous systems, which means to connect heart to heart, to calm our minds and bodies.

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Nourishment can mean committing to only speaking to me in a kind and gentle way. And nourishment can mean going for realsies gluten-free because seriously y'all, that stuff makes me so tired.

In my own life, I have recently made a very, very, very big deal commitment. And that commitment and those of you who follow me on the 'gram and watch my stories may be a little shocked by this, but here we go.

I have committed to stop drinking Yerba mate, in American, Yerba mate, which is the stimulant drink of my people. And in so doing, to completely eliminate caffeine from my life, having ditched the coffee years ago.

My commitment is to live the most authentic and intentional life I can. And I know that while I love mate, and I believe in my Argentine heart that mate loves me back, my nervous system does not currently love mate. It really impacts my energetic field, it really speeds me up, which I duh, of course, it's a stimulant, but whatever.

And most importantly, it's a barrier between me and truly knowing myself. And because caffeine changes the way I show up in the world, it's a buffer in that way too. So I'm committed, I'm coming all the way off mate so I can see who I am in the world without any exogenous outside stimulant in my body.

I'm bringing this up because I'm not motivated to not drinking mate. Let's get this clear. But I sure am committed to myself and the outcome of stopping. I mean, mate is a vital part of my culture, my identity, it's a part of who I am, or rather I guess who I have been.

Let me count. Just sitting right here in my office, there are seven different mates. So the tea itself is called Yerba mate, the mate weed. And then

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what you drink it out of is the gourd, those beautiful decorated gourds we use. Those are called mates.

So you drink mate from a mate. There you go. So anyway, there's seven in front of me, which is typical of homes in the Southern Cone. You have like, the one or two you use, and then you have decorative ones.

But I'm just pointing out, this is a big part of my life, y'all. It's one of the first things I do in the morning, I drink mate throughout the day. I forgot to cancel my auto-ship and yesterday I got my - every month I get five pounds of Yerba, of mate tea from yerbamate.com.

And by the way, I highly recommend them if you're looking for organic, fair-trade, family-owned, Argentine family-owned mate. Not sponsored at all. I mean, please, I'm not even drinking the stuff anymore. I love them so I want to give them a shout-out.

Anyway, get back focus, Vic. My beauties, it's so funny. I felt so calm in sharing this whole episode to you and I started talking about mate, this beautiful teacher plant that I just have not been in right relationship with. And all of a sudden I feel jittery.

I feel wired. It's very interesting. I didn't feel distracted or unfocused throughout everything else I was sharing until I got to this point. Just taking note, y'all. And I'm also just out here to say do I want to not drink mate? No. I want to drink mate like a llama wants to eat the sweet tender springtime grasses of Patagonia.

But I'm not going to do it because I'm committed to present me and future me. I'm excited to get to know the me that's not all jacked up. I'm excited about that commitment and to meet the me underneath the mate. Does that mean I am happy about not doing a thing I want to do? No.

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But I am committed. And so I'm doing it. Or not doing it, rather. And I'm committed to the bigger goal under the task at hand. The goal of stepping into ever greater intentionality, integrity, authenticity, and just plain wanting to know me more.

So here's the difference for me. Resolutions are not usually based in deep work. Commitments are. Commitment to me is a whole-hearted dedication to see something through that creates courage and determination. That empowers us to figure it out, to make it happen with curiosity, and even possibly excitement.

And this is something we've been talking about a lot in Anchored, my six-month program. How amazing it felt to commit to Anchored as a commitment to self, to growth, to living in a new way and getting the support you need each and every day on that path.

So exciting to see people saying yes to themselves by committed to six months of coaching and community. And what's important to me is that commitment doesn't mean rigidity. Just because you're committed to something or someone doesn't mean you can't be a flow state with it, can't decide to meet the same goal in a different way, or to shift it up.

So for example, I am committed to exercising, to moving my body each and every day. And I don't make assumptions for my body. Every day I ask me if I want to hop on the Peloton, if I want to do a workout tape, or yoga, if I want to go for a run or a walk or just stretch.

Because I want my body's consent. That's part of my broader commitment to my body. And so my own daily buy-in matters because consent matters. And I am dedicated to, committed to that broader goal and not the day-to-day how.

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I'm not attached to that story that the how of it matters, which is something we talked about on episode 149 of the wants and needs series. So if there's part of you that's like, I'm scared to commit because then I'll have to do it the exact same way every single day, it's not necessarily true.

There could be space. You get to decide, you get to commit, it's your commitment after all, what it looks like for you on the daily, if that's what works. So a lot of people do have some sort of issue with that word commitment because we can feel stuck in our commitments when we forget that we are the ones that chose to commit.

Isn't that so funny? It's like, well, I don't want to make the commitment because I don't want to get stuck in the commitment. But it's like, you made the commitment. You can take it back.

My tender muffin top, you have agency. You decided to commit and you can uncommit. You are in fact the boss of you. So there's nothing to fear about commitment because it is after all you ruling your own roost here, my darling.

So you get to ask yourself some loving questions as you commit to the change you want to make in your life. We'll start by checking your thoughts. Asking yourself why. Why do I want to commit to this goal? What will future you think of your past commitment?

What is your relationship to yourself and your goals? Do you believe that you can carry your own plans out? What stories about your past commitments are you bringing in that may be blocking commitment now? Such as I always bail or fail, I never follow through, or whatever it may be for you.

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If you find yourself saying those things about you, I'll invite you to use my favorite trick, which we talked about in episode 101, The Power of Yet, and you add a little yet to it. Such as, I have never followed through on a commitment yet.

Yet opens up so much possibility. It really does wonders for my brain. Try it on. And I'll also invite you to check out episode 81, Minimum Baseline Thinking, all about how you can use teensy tiny little goals as a way to build trust in your capacity to show up for you and your commitments.

Next, I'll invite you to check your intentions. So, why? Why do you want to set the resolution? What's it doing for you? And why do you want to commit to this change?

When I did this exercise, I found that the results were really quite different. My reasons, my rationale, my intentions, different. So sit with it, play with it, see what comes up for you.

Next, you can ask yourself, what do you believe you will feel if you do commit to this commitment? Next, and this is a juicy one, what do you believe you will feel if you carry this commitment through? If you commit to this commitment.

Remind yourself, you can create that feeling for yourself now without doing the thing. And you can choose to do the thing, to commit to the commitment, from that place of wanting to. Not from that place of believing that getting the thing, doing the thing will create your feelings for you.

Because getting a thing and doing a thing can never create a feeling. Your brain and your body do that, my sweet pea, and that is a beautiful, beautiful gift of agency and empowerment.

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My sweet one, commitment to self feels freaking amazing. When you choose you day after day, when you show you that you matter to you, baby, that's when the magic happens. The real magic, and not the New Year's Eve false magic of fake resolutions.

By committing to one small change, even if it's not to use resolutions or anything else as a buffer in your life, you start to believe that it's possible for you to keep choosing you in every area of your life, in every relationship, every scenario.

And you get to believe that you will continue to choose you again and again, celebrating your commitment to the one life you've been for sure promised. And of course you'll falter. Of course you'll take a day off from that intentional commitment. Of course you'll backslide because that's human.

Healing isn't linear. I mean, my beauties, because science, right? And what matters is that you come back to you and you recommit time and again. You choose to get anchored in you because my darling, you are worth committing to.

Thank you for joining me. I hope your new year's is off to a beautiful start. And I hope you take some time to commit to you today and every day. And if you're ready to commit to getting compassionate, professional coaching to help you meet your goals and change your life, to meet your own commitments, you're going to want to join us for Anchored, my six-month program, to support you in releasing those old codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits so you can replace them with self-love and self-commitment for the long haul.

Let's do what we do, my darlings. Placing a tender hand on your heart if that feels good for you. Attuning to your breath. Remember, you are safe,

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you are held, you are loved. And when one of us heals, we help heal the world. Be well, my darling. Happy new year. 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](https://victoriaalbina.com/masterclass) to grab your seat now. See you there. It's going to be a good one.