

Ep #165: Style, Confidence, and Feminism with Judith Gaton



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. This week I am beyond delighted to be joined on the show by my friend and colleague, Judith Gaton, who is a stylist, a master certified life coach, author, and former lawyer. She's just a badass through and through.

Through confidence coaching and mindset work, Judith helps her clients to see that they can dress and love the body they are in right now. When style and confidence are dialed in, women can go do the work they were created to do in the world. Her ultimate style philosophy, confident women build legacies. So just from that, you can see why Judith is a perfect fit for *Feminist Wellness*.

We had a really delightful conversation about the difference between style and fashion. Why really getting clued in and connected with your own personal style is so important. And, of course, we talk so much about body love and we laugh and have a hilarious time, so it's really going to be a blast. I hope you enjoy this episode. And I'll talk to you soon, be well, my love.

Victoria: Hello, hello, my love. I hope this finds you doing so well. I am so delighted to be here with Judith. Hi, Judith.

Judith: Hi. I love that you say hello, hello, because that's how I start my podcast too.

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Victoria: I love it. I love it. And I call them my love, Argentines always call everyone mi amor, like every waitress, every cabbie, everyone's like que tal mi amor? So it just comes out.

Judith: It's just part of the thing, yeah. And I think I got it from my aunties who were like, "Hola, hola." So it's like hello, hello.

Victoria: Hello, hello, quel tal. Well, I am so thrilled to have you here today. I know there's so much for us to talk about. So much goodness.

Judith: I'm so excited.

Victoria: So much. So I can imagine that the listeners of Feminists Wellness, are like, "Wait, you're talking about style? But isn't this a show about self-worth and self-love through codependency, perfectionism, and people pleasing?" And I can imagine I'd be having that same thought too if I didn't know you, right? And if I hadn't thought so much about this for myself.

So I'd love to hear from you, how do you think about style, and self-worth, and self-love? I'll just make it really vague because I know you can go on and on.

Judith: Let's go. Let's go.

Victoria: Let's do it.

Judith: Well, and I think it's a great natural next question, especially for our feminist peeps, right? Who are like, "Wait, what? You want to talk about what?" So I just want to say, hey y'all, I understand. And this is actually a really common objection or concern I get because my people that I coach

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are really like smart feminist leaning, irreverent, amazing women. So they have the same concerns y'all have.

So let's dive into, first, the definition of style I use which might be different from the understanding you got from your mamas and your aunties and the magazines. That way we're all talking about the same thing and when we use the word style, you understand what we mean by that as differentiated from fashion. Because I think those are two different concepts that we need to, just groundwork.

So style, as I define it is the outward expression of your thoughts and feelings about yourself. So you have a thought about yourself, you feel a particular way. And then you decide to dress a particular way as a result of how you're feeling and what you're thinking. And that means style can be way more inclusive, it accounts for a myriad of experiences, thoughts, feelings.

It accounts for the fact that it's independent of your shape, your weight, your size, your skin color, your hair texture, your age, fill in the blank, right, all the intersections of where you show up as a female. Like none of that really matters, it's really your thoughts and feelings about yourself. So it becomes way more inclusive than what we call fashion.

And fashion is really like the fads, the trends, what's happening on the runway. It's external sources that are saying we you now say this thing is fashionable, but I like to call it like the circus parade. So that's the circus parade that's going by and we get to decide at what moment in time we want to participate in the parade. Do we want to try some fringe, some glitter, some sparkle, like feathers, whatever your pleasure, right?

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We can participate in the parade whenever we want, but we don't have to. We can enjoy it as a spectator without it creating any urgency in us to do anything. It's just a paradigm shift for a lot of people that use those words interchangeably and then think that it's some external callings required to do certain things to your body. And that doesn't have to be how we see style.

Victoria: Yeah, I love that differentiation. I also see fashion really, as part of this sort of white settler colonialist objective of telling everyone how to look so that we're all the same, right? And so we're really partaking in this capitalist framework, right? You have to buy the next thing and buy the next thing and buy the next thing. And the way you talk about style is so different.

Judith: Yeah. And I mean, sometimes I get on my pedestal, on my soapbox, and my clients are like, "Oh, whoa, I just asked about bras. Okay, I'm sorry. Okay, I'll stop." But if we track just the fashion history of certain things, it's fucking fascinating how these weird trends evolve, usually around a war and usually around depressions. And then we all of a sudden require some really strange things of women's bodies as a result of something that just happened politically.

And I think it's just like if you track, and I won't give the whole spiel, but oh my god, and it's all bullshit. It's all bullshit that was imposed on us. Like at one point in history we're allowed to wear brassieres. Like we go back to the medieval period and there's proto-brassieres and like women had so much more freedom. There was no corsetry, there was no boning, there was no steel cages. Like we had way more freedom in our clothing way back when.

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And then somewhere along the way introducing like monetary systems, and wars, and dudes in charge of shit. And suddenly, we're all trapped in steel cages and we can't breathe and we can't move. And like it somehow becomes a sign of wealth to have these weak feeble women who can't do anything.

Like if we listen to the industrial era, women who are free and not wearing corsetry are factory workers, right? Like to have more freedom of movement, but that's considered passe and out of mode. Whereas to be in the fashion of the time is to literally not to be able to breathe. How insane is this?

Victoria: And it also makes perfect sense in the patriarchy, right?

Judith: Right.

Victoria: They're like don't make your own decisions about what you want to look like, and by the way, don't breathe.

Judith: Right. Whereas like robust women who could breathe and bear children and who worked, because for most of human history women worked, now becomes this thing where like I like my women feeble. What is that? Like seriously, what is that? I have so many questions.

Victoria: I'm not swiping right on that, by the way. I like my women feeble?
No.

Judith: Like I'm cool, I'm cool, I'm good. I'd rather be like stocky and fluffy as fuck if that means I get to wear like a regular bra. Like just the insanity of it, I mean, and then we can track some of the similar thoughts towards World War II, coming out of it. And then the shape of breasts that we glorify

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during different decades and different eras depending on what was fashionable at the time is just another insane thing to track.

But yeah, I mean, women and the expectations on our bodies, here's the beautiful thing, is because we know it changes so much over time, we know that there's no actual hard and fast objective rules for any of it. And if we can wrap our arms around just that idea, like it's changed so much and it's all such bullshit, okay, now there's some freedom in that.

Victoria: Right, right, right. It pairs so well, you know, we both teach thought work, right? That you can think whatever you want to think about your relationship to life, to dating, to love, to brassieres, to your hemline, right? Like it really is, it's about the choices you want to make about the story, the narrative, you're telling about your life in relationship to the world around you.

You don't have to just wear what your mama or your tias told you is the right thing to wear. And you don't have to date the same way. You don't have to communicate the same way. You don't have to do anything the same way if it's not what is authentic to you.

Judith: Yeah, exactly. And, I mean, one of the powerful things in one of the online communities that I host fairly frequently, is I ask them, what is a fashion rule or a style rule that was given to you by someone important to you, your mom, your grandma, your auntie? And some of the stuff in there, you're like no way someone said that to you. But no, yes way. Like these are the things we pass down to our daughters, to our nieces, to the little humans in our lives.

And we do it almost inadvertently, like it's kind of just like it's in the air. We say these things and we're not realizing the impact they have. Like you

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have to carry a purse or you're a prostitute. You're not allowed to wear blue eye shadow or you're a hoe. You're not allowed to wear red lipstick because you're a hoe. You have to have your purse and your shoes match so people will think you're professional. You need to straighten your hair so people think you're professional. If you walk with too big of a stride, you're manly and unfeminine. I mean the list goes on and on and on.

Victoria: Right.

Judith: And it's stuff we don't really think twice about because it came from an authority figure who we admire and we love. But now because you're here and welcome to the podcast, we get to rethink all of it. Like the quippy things that just sound like truth, you get to question all of it.

Victoria: Right. Right, and you get to start to tell your own story, right? And it's fascinating to look at how much sexism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, racism, anti sex work, right, like how much is folded into all of that. And we don't even know it. Like you said, right, we don't stop to notice it because it's the water we're swimming in.

Judith: Yeah, and I mean, that's one of the funny things about body image, is in where things get really interesting and the way human brains work is like we learn these things from our, you know, people who we love and adore, who are trying to tell us things, really to keep us safe in their own bizarro ways. And then we internalize it and then it feels like truth.

So by the time we have a weird relationship to our body and we have negative body image, I often hear my clients say but it feels so true. I'm like that's the first part to dismantle, my friends, and like to kind of just pull out those threads. I'm not a huge fan of asking all the time, like is it true? Because if you have a super powered amazing brain you're going to try

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and logic your way to find truth in something that feels crappy. But really, is this helpful? Is this useful? Do I want to continue to think this?

Victoria: Yeah. Yeah, and does it serve me?

Judith: Does it serve me?

Victoria: Does it serve me, that's my big question because I was definitely raised with a sort of strict understanding of what the like appropriate clothing to wear was, right? And definitely the appropriate size, which is as small as humanly possible. Which is just not, I was built to pull an ox plow. You know, like I got about thighs. I'm small, right? I'm like five three, but I got some thighs on me, thank goodness, right? Thick thighs save lives.

Judith: You're built for labor.

Victoria: But yeah, I was taught all those tricks to like make them look smaller in the way you cross your legs, you know.

Judith: We have to work with your flaws.

Victoria: Yes.

Judith: And it's like, baby girl, what if you got no flaws?

Victoria: Can we hear that one again?

Judith: Like really, what if you have no flaws to try and mask, or work with, or hide, or cleverly disguise with the right whatever, fill in the blank.

Victoria: Right.

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Judith: What if there were no flaws?

Victoria: No flaws, perfect belly, perfect thighs, perfect nose. Yeah.

Judith: And lips, all of it.

Victoria: I remember my mom always talking about how her nose was too flat, like that was some kind of problem.

Judith: Yeah. My mom tells stories about her trying to shape our noses when we were babies. She's like I would just pinch it every day.

Victoria: Yeah.

Judith: And I have Filipino friends who describe the same, their moms had the same thoughts about their noses. Because we put a premium on pointy noses. I have so many questions about humans. God help all of us.

Victoria: Yeah, God help all of us. May all the gods please help us all.

Judith: We get into our heads that somehow wider nose is what?

Victoria: Well, it's not white enough, it's not European enough. Therefore, it's not good enough, right?

Judith: Yeah.

Victoria: Yeah, it's sneaky, it's insidious.

Judith: It's insidious.

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Victoria: It's insidious and so much of my work is about somatics, about our connection with our bodies, right? And so I think so much about how these early messages, right, that your breasts are too big, your breasts aren't big enough, your stomach is too big, you know, like keep us in these postures that keep us small, right? That keep us hiding, that keep us tense.

And those tension patterns that start usually at menarche, right, when we start getting a period for those of us whose bodies do that, or ever did do that, right? We start to hide, and to shape shift, and to chameleon our physical form to try to be acceptable. And then we wonder 20 years later why our jaw hurts, and our neck hurts, and our back hurts, and our hips hurt, and why we're not speaking up for ourselves, setting boundaries, taking care of ourselves. And this is all a part of that because it gets written on the body.

Judith: It gets written on the body, and I mean this is where the intersection of that work and my work come beautifully. Because so many women wear clothing that's uncomfortable.

Victoria: Yeah.

Judith: And they're told beauty is pain. That some discomfort is normal and required. And bras are the notorious place I see this, but I also see this with their panties, I see this with their shoes. Oh my God, the discomfort women tolerate in shoes, and then they wonder why they have that tension in their neck. And I call it turtling where their head goes down, their shoulders go up, and they don't know why they're so tense.

I'm like, maybe can we just uncurl? What if we just let you uncurl? What if we got you in the right bra? Or you can have a bra-less experience if you want it, but one that cares for your breasts if that's what you want. Or if you

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want to be pantie free, let's just make sure you have a great pantie free hygienic experience if that's what you want.

I mean, if we think about the model and our thought work and how this works, like if we have a physical sensation, it can start a cascade of thoughts, which creates an emotion, which shows up in your body and then your actions. So, you know, I done a bra workshop recently and this woman typed in that her back was hurting her. And it had been hurting her for years. And it was almost like she was so embarrassed to mention it and like, could this be related to my bra? So we checked her bra size, she was wearing four sizes too small.

Victoria: Ouch.

Judith: Because we get caught up in that paradigm that it has to be a smaller number, it has to be a smaller cup size, but not too small. Like the right size, it was craziness, right? So she was wearing four sizes too small, which literally meant that her band probably was like a full inch thinner than it could be to protect her breast tissue and hold her up.

So I was like, hey, let's try a bra that fits you. You know, look for four hooks as opposed to two. Let's get you some comfort and then report back to me, I want to know how it goes. And she wrote me this lovely message, it makes me get emotional, like this lovely message.

She had gone 30 something years in a bra that didn't fit because she was so ashamed when her breasts first came in. And she didn't bother to get fitted because she was so ashamed, then the size drama. And she's like for the first time in my adult life I'm wearing a bra that fits me and my back doesn't hurt. And like I didn't know, I just didn't know.

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And that, to me, is like it's not about the bra, y'all. It's about like we had a woman who finally said I'm in physical discomfort, I'm going to speak up for myself. I'm going to ask questions to get myself help. I'm going to be brave and courageous and go do this thing I really don't want to do.

I mean, anyone can relate to, all of us have some story like whether it's going to the doctor and getting our hoo-has checked or getting a breast exam and having pain or physical discomfort that we're unwilling to admit because of the shame surrounding it.

I just want to love on y'all right now. If anyone is in pain or discomfort take the bra off, take the pants off, like fling those panties across the room, whatever you got to do. Get it off your body because you deserve to feel comfortable.

Victoria: Yeah, agreed. And this is where perfectionism as well is so insidious and so sneaky. And people pleasing, right? We want to be pleasing to the people around us. We don't want to be a bother. We don't want to inconvenience anyone by having someone whose job it is to fit bras fit our bra. But really in our head we're like, oh, I don't want to bother her. You know, I don't want to be trouble, right?

And so we stay in that discomfort. And we stay in that perfectionist story that we should have it figured out. We should know how to do this right?

Judith: I should know this.

Victoria: Right, I'm a 20, 30, 40, 50 year old person who's had breasts for a large portion of my life, I should know this.

Judith: And it's like, well, why should you?

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Victoria: Why? Yeah.

Judith: Like as much time was spent on preventing us from getting pregnant during our formative years and the time and money that's spent on worrying about us having sex before we're "supposed to." Somebody could have sat down for a 10 minute chat about hey, here's what you want to know about your breasts and your lady parts.

Victoria: Right.

Judith: Like aside from the fact that, you know, menstruation is going to be good. Like can we talk about them when they're not sex and they're not milk? Can we just have a chat about them? How different would so many women's experiences be as a grown up if someone just sat for 10 minutes? But you don't know what you don't know, and that's okay.

Victoria: Right, but that's where I see in my own life and in my clients lives, we beat ourselves up because we don't know what we're never taught.

Judith: Yeah.

Victoria: And because we're doing what we were taught, right? We're dressing in a certain way that doesn't feel good, doesn't honor us, doesn't honor our gender, doesn't honor our authenticity. It just doesn't honor us and I think it's really important to pause and to give ourselves some compassion and some grace to say, how could you have known this until you sought it out?

Judith: Yeah. Yeah, and I think it's beautiful that you and I are able to have this conversation because then we can bring like our specialties, like the way we teach to be like, hey y'all, guess what? There's another way.

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Victoria: There's another way, yeah. So much of what I talk about is authenticity and intentionality, right? So when you are in that codependent thought spiral you are sourcing your self-worth, your authenticity, not your authenticity but validation rather, from everyone and everything around you. You're looking to everyone to tell you you're good enough, you're okay. It's okay that you're alive and breathing and taking up space.

And so from there, the thought of dressing authentically and showing up as the fullest expression of you is, what? It's like wild, right?

Judith: Yeah.

Victoria: So how would you guide someone? If a client of yours was like, "Oh, help." How do I step in?

Judith: Oh my God, this is my favorite.

Victoria: I know it.

Judith: I say this about everything too, I'll be like that's my favorite. But I like to think of it like, you know, sort of like a ladder, right? So some people teach the thought ladder, like we work our way up to a thought that feels true and better in our bodies. But we don't start with the loftiest thought, we work our way up there.

So similar, I think, with style and really stepping your toe into dressing more like the woman you envision in your head but maybe you have been afraid to admit that it's the woman you envision in your head, or the human you envision in your head, the person. So I want you to just kind of like answer this question. And whatever comes out, really just like know really with all the love in the world we're not going to justify, we're not going to excuse,

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and we're not going to press it down. We're just going to let whatever comes up, comes up.

So if my body was not a problem to be solved, what would I wear? And like, just let that sink in. If my hair texture, or color, or my skin color was not a problem to be solved. If the size, weight, shape of my body was not a problem to be solved what would I allow myself to wear? Because part of it is like you really giving yourself permission over, and over, and over again.

And I'm not saying you have to go full out. If you're not ready, it's okay. But what's one place you could start? And it could just be a secret between you and you that you're doing it. So whether that's going to be you start with your undies, or maybe you're just going to use a really expensive moisturizer that nobody's going to know about. But you're going to hit at that chin and that neck, right? Like nobody's got to know but you and you.

Maybe if you want to foray into makeup and you're like, "Well, what will people think?" However you identify and you want to make that foray, well do what I tell everyone to do. Start with some lip gloss, just get used to having something on your lips. And then we can change the pigment of it to make it more saturated in pigment. And then eventually you're going to rock a red lip, if that's your pleasure. But you have to get used to it. And it's twofold, to get you used to it, but also to get the people around you acclimated to this is how you roll. This is how you show up now.

And it's a process. I think sometimes we see these movie montages on, you know, movies from especially from the 90s, it's like 30 minute glow up to the right song. That's not really how makeovers work, they're a little more painful than you might expect because you have to shed some shit and like let you be you for the first time ever maybe. That process is not for the faint of heart.

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Victoria: Yeah, I mean, it makes me think of the process of setting boundaries, right? Going from like I need everyone to like me, it's really important that everyone like me. I need everyone to think I'm okay. I need everyone to think? Do you like me? Am I okay? You're okay. I'm okay. You're okay. I'm okay. I'm okay if you're okay. Do you think I'm okay? To slowly saying I'm not available for that. I'm not interested, thank you. Like no, I can't, thanks for asking, right? And slowly stepping into having your own back. It sounds like a really similar process.

Judith: Yeah. And the plight of the people pleaser is that we poll to see if we're okay. But then we're resentful if we don't get the exact response in the right particular way that we want it. So part of is managing both, like yeah, you're going to stop polling the room. But you also have to drop the expectation that people are going to respond to you in a particular way so that you can feel better. And like that's, woo.

Victoria: Yeah.

Judith: That hurts so good. Like that's where the transformation takes place. So not only am I going to drop the, is this outfit okay? Do you like this? Is this okay? Did I do okay? And also drop that the compliment doesn't come in the way that you want it to.

Victoria: Right.

Judith: And having to be okay with both, like it could feel funky. Or even, and this is the funny part too, it's not even the people pleasers, I have a lot of those folks. But I have the folks who get compliments and then don't know what to do with them.

Victoria: Right, receiving is hard.

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Judith: Receiving is hard.

Victoria: Receiving is hard until it's not, right? Until you've done the thought work and it's less and less hard. But yeah, what's your advice around how to receive a compliment?

Judith: So part of it, we have to understand there's like a weird social contract around compliments. So I think it's just good to have a kind of understanding of it. Especially if you're in a western country, it's very strange, the social contracts with compliments, it's actually impolite to just say thank you. We're required to do some sort of self-deprecation after our thank you. Especially if you're a woman or socialized as a woman. There's this weird expectation on you that suddenly you have to be like, oh, this old thing, or this is how much I paid for it.

Victoria: Right, I got it on sale.

Judith: I got it on sale. Or here's my fat, like you think I was skinny over here, well check my jiggly arm or whatever. Really declining the invitation to self-deprecate.

Victoria: Yes.

Judith: And noticing the itchy desire you have to do it.

Victoria: So uncomfortable.

Judith: Like you're going to be a little uncomfortable because you're like, "Thank you." And the person is going to look at you and kind of expect for the thing. And you're not going to do the thing and you're just going to stare each other. It's going to be great.

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Victoria: Yep.

Judith: Stop talking.

Victoria: Yep.

Judith: I mean, that's a tall order, friends, I do realize that. But it's so powerful once you start to practice this. Like, thank you, and then the staring.

Victoria: The staring happens.

Judith: Nothing's coming. Nothing's coming.

Victoria: Just know I shall not throw myself down the well so that you can feel more comfortable. Not available. Not into it. I didn't sign up for that, I'm not here for it.

Judith: Yeah, it doesn't do either one of us any good.

Victoria: Zero percent. N

Judith: Nothing, nothing comes of that.

Victoria: Yeah, I'm dating someone right now who every time I give them a compliment, the other day I was like, "You're just so amazing." And they were like, "I know." And I was like, "Oh my God, that's so hot." Like it's so hot.

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Judith: My husband is the same way, he'll catch me staring at him and be like, "I'm hot, huh?" And he just like goes back to doing whatever he was doing. I'm like, damn, you are.

Victoria: Confidence. Yeah, self-confidence is like the sexiest outfit ever, though.

Judith: I think so.

Victoria: I completely agree. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

So let's talk some more about confidence, right? About self-confidence, it is something we talk about a lot because when you're taking your life back from codependency, it's a really big theme. So I'd love to hear your thoughts about confidence because I think you're such a confident person.

Judith: And it's funny because I hear people say that and they're like, "Oh, you just do what you want, and say what you want, and dress how you want." And I think it's so funny, because I'm like, "Really? Wait, what?" Like your perception of me is amazing, but I don't always feel that way. And I think that's the part about confidence that we all have to kind of normalize for each other, is it's not like an arrival point for all time for all purposes.

Victoria: Right.

Judith: So like even when you think about your vision of your future self and the version of you that you want to be and, you know, he, she, or they is very confident, I want you to pause and really just recognize. And this is back to perfectionism, right? They're not going to be confident always.

Victoria: Right.

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Judith: Like, really just shift. Don't have that expectation, drop it completely, because then you'll think something has gone wrong if you don't always feel confident about all the things all the time. Like that's an ebb and flow just like life, boo, just like life.

Victoria: Just like life, sometimes you set a good boundary. Sometimes you forget about it and you say yes when you mean no. That's life.

Judith: Yeah, and you end up at a weird birthday party for your mom's cousin's friend's daughter who you don't know.

Victoria: Who you don't know, but you bought a gift because of course you did. Yeah.

Judith: Right? Like especially if you're extra Puerto Rican, you show up to everybody's birthday party. You don't know who this person is, it's okay.

Victoria: You don't know them, you just show up. Wait, hold on. So there's Puerto Rican and there's extra Puerto Rican? As an Argentine I need to check in.

Judith: Well, like I feel like it's normally like, okay, so if my sister has a party for her kid, anybody whose kid is aged that age is invited to the party. But the extra part is like then their grandma and their auntie are also invited if they know anybody the same age of that kid. So it's like you don't know who's going to come, you don't have a head count, you just like hope for the best.

Victoria: You get food for 900.

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Judith: Right, I'm like, "Mommy, I don't know them." Doesn't matter, you have to come. It's my friends blah, blah, blah, somebody, somebody.

Victoria: Okay, great. I wanted to know what the line was.

Judith: Yeah, there's a line.

Victoria: That's the extra Puerto Rican.

Judith: Yeah, it's like the next level.

Victoria: That's so good, that's so great.

Judith: But it's so real, right?

Victoria: It's so real.

Judith: It's so real. It's like confidence is not, y'all, it's just not an arrival point so please take that expectation off yourself. And the way I like to teach it is there's your belief in yourself, and then there's the action you take from that place of belief. It's kind of an equation.

Victoria: Yeah.

Judith: So sometimes belief is high, but you're not doing a damn thing. And then sometimes you're taking all this action and you feel like booty, right? Like we kind of want a balance of both and you'll have to check in with yourself. Like how's your belief in yourself? Are you just like productive procrastination, taking action but feeling like crap? Or does it feel more like it's in line and it's in balance and like no matter what happens when I take

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this action, I've still got my back? That's the sweet spot that you want to be in.

Victoria: That is that sweet spot.

Judith: Yeah, just knowing you'll always take care of you, right?

Victoria: Yeah. And that, for me, ties back in with that authenticity. Because when you know yourself, you can start to hear that voice within that says here's what I want. Here's what I need. Here's how I'd like to try to get it. Here's what I want to do to move my life forward for me and my authenticity. And not just because it's my mami, or my tia, or my abuela, it's what they want for me.

Judith: Yeah.

Victoria: Right. Not that we're like throwing the whole patriarchy under the bus.

Judith: No, I love my patriarchy. I wouldn't be me without them. But they're fucking hilarious, they say crazy stuff. Like, you know, my family, an adage is ponte chu-ching, which I don't know if you have a similar one. Ponte chu-ching is like get dressed up. But you have to like, put on chu-ching is the literal translation. Chu-ching doesn't have an actual translation, I didn't even know how to translate that.

Victoria: That's phenomenal.

Judith: Yeah, ponte chu-ching, I'm like, okay, sure. But like every time you leave the house somebody will tell you that. I love that, I think the sentiment

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is good, we just have to sort of translate it for where I am now. Do I have to get dressed to the nines to go to Target? Maybe not.

Victoria: Maybe not. God, I remember when I was a girl my mom would, like this is so Latina. Like so pan Latinx, the like Sunday best embroidered dress with like the embroidered smoking at the top and like a little ribbon in our hair to go to see the pediatrician, to definitely to get on a plane, or a train, or anything like that. Like to go to the dentist she's like putting bows in your hair. Like the whole thing.

Judith: Yeah, the little shiny black patent leather shoes with the ruffle socks.

Victoria: Yeah, the white ruffled socks. I did love those socks. I destroyed them in about 12 seconds because I was like, oh, now I'm dressed up it's the time to chase the dog in the yard and be a little monster. But, you know, back to authentic self.

Judith: Back to authentic self, right? And my version of that was to sit perfectly still because like in my head I couldn't get dirty, I wasn't allowed to get dirty. So every little kid is going to have some version of this. The beautiful thing is you're now grown up, you could keep the ruffle socks if you want to, or not. You can wear your Sunday best, whatever version of that. Like right now that could be jeans and your cleanest t-shirt.

Victoria: Your cleanest, mas o menos.

Judith: Yeah, mas o menos, we make allowances, right? But like if factors in your whole human experience. Like perfectionism not required, what would you like to wear today if you weren't trying to problem solve some part of your body? And what color could it be? And what texture do you

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want it to be? And we can go play, what if this became dress up again like you never experienced when you were little?

Victoria: Yeah, of course my mind goes to inner child work because it's so much of my work. Like what if you just let yourself wear all the bright colors, right? Like I'm wearing a silk shirt with pink leopards on it, tigers, leopards, right?

Judith: As one does.

Victoria: As one should, let's be real. Yeah, we can make them Argentine and make them jaguars. My Argentine accent. Jaguars.

Judith: My husband thinks it's funny that my dad called me Judi.

Victoria: Yeah, that sounds Puerto Rican.

Judith: Yeah, Judi. And he's like, "That is not your name." I'm like, "Just go with it, I've been called Judi since I was little. And then he has a very thick accent, my dad, he's really funny. But Judi when I'm in trouble.

Victoria: I love it. Well, all the Latinx folks listening are like, mm-hmm, my name changes from country to country wildly, I am aware of this.

Judith: I'm okay with this, I'm here for the party. Here we are.

Victoria: So one of the things, to shift gears quite a bit here. A friend of mine recently, we were talking about style because, you know, I'm a Leo. I'm all about the hair, I'm all about the fashion. Take it back, I'm all about the style, not the fashion because I have no idea what's fashionable, but working my style.

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And she was like, you know, particularly as someone who's really politically active and politically engaged, I find style really frivolous. And I'm curious, I know when I said, but I'm curious what you would say there.

Judith: I hear this a lot.

Victoria: I bet you do. And I've gotten really funny emails, like this is silly. Or I got one, this is what coaching has become now. And the just whole diatribe was very, this woman was clearly very upset. Clearly has never listened to my podcast, which is very funny. So I got this and I understand it. I really understand it. However, I wonder to what degree that thinking is still part of the patriarchal thinking.

And hear me out for a second, y'all, especially if any of you are bristling. The idea that women aren't allowed to hold two separate thoughts, and I say separate in air quotes, at the same time is fascinating. And I think a lot of very intelligent, really smart women, very politically active women have been told that they don't have to worry about the style stuff. They don't have to worry about their self-care or beauty in any form because they're smart. So they only have to worry about being smart.

As if somehow by putting moisturizer on their face and doing whatever their version of self-care is or style is for them, somehow diminishes how important their work is or somehow diminishes how they're going to be taken seriously or not. Or diminishes their value or worth of what they're saying and what they're thinking. And I find that really fascinating and a little disheartening because surely we've come as far as being able to chew gum and walk at the same time.

You're allowed to wear lipstick and still be politically active. You're allowed to wear the biggest, most ridiculous fucking hat in the world and still

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advocate for people that you feel very strongly about serving. They're not mutually exclusive. So if we redefine styles, your thoughts and your feelings about yourself outwardly reflected, whatever that means to you is how I want you to show up in the world because I personally believe confident women are going to change the world.

And I believe firmly that style is a conduit to a woman's heart and mind. We can teach confidence through style, that's one of many ways. If that doesn't jive with you, that's totally fine. But be very leery of suddenly saying that we shouldn't care about that or that's silly or somehow incongruent with your other values. Because I think that really buys into this patriarchal idea that we can't chew gum and walk at the same fucking time.

Victoria: Right, agreed. So deeply agreed. Thank you. I do love it when you get on your soapbox. It's like one of my favorite things now. I mean, it takes me back to my 20s. And like I went to Oberlin College in the 90s, like weirdo school at the late 90s. And as I was learning, you know I had always identified as a feminist and always my style was very much about fitting in with the kids that didn't fit in. Like the JNCO jeans and the dust and the pixies shirt, and oh my god.

Judith: It's a whole vibe. It's a whole vibe.

Victoria: It's a whole energy, you're feeling that 90s, right? You can like see me with my bad home hair cut that I loved.

Judith: But like ironic but unironic home haircut, yeah.

Victoria: Totally. Totally, emo before that was a word. I definitely like spent all of seventh grade like babysitting, and mowing the lawn, and doing like extra chores to save up to buy cherry red Doc Martens to wear to the first

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day of eighth grade. I still have them because back then they were solid, right? And I take good care of my shit like a good little immigrant. You know what I mean? And you got expensive shoes.

Judith: Don't you have that cloth that you like spit on the shoe and like it's this special cloth? Yeah, I feel you. The toothbrush to whiten your sneakers.

Victoria: All day long. You know, so I took that and went to Oberlin and started taking what was then called Women's Studies classes, now gender studies. And started to understand my queerness and what it meant to be a queer Latina and what it meant to explore masculinity and femininity. And spent some time really rebelling against femininity and really seeing it as problematic to dress in a feminine way because it didn't feel feminist.

And then I went home. Then I went home and spent part of my junior year back home in Buenos Aires, lived with my Abuelita, like lived with my tias and really started to have this reclamation of my Latin love and to like really step into a different cultural understanding of femininity through style, right?

And then through that I started learning about queer femmes and an entire reclamation of femininity as powerful, right? As a marker of power and I'm just watching your face light up and I'd love to hear what's sparking for you.

Judith: I mean, I think it's like delicious. That's like a whole delicious intersection of all of you. And then at some point you were like, "I'm going to pull from this influence and then I'm just going to make it my own and be me." And that's what we're calling all of you into. So your reclamation of whatever part that you want to reclaim, like, welcome, friend. Whatever that is for you.

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So for some of you that's going to be reclaiming the idea that you can be feminine, whatever that means to you, and fucking powerful. And we can be both, we can be all. It's a yes and.

Victoria: Yes and.

Judith: And the juxtaposition between the two things that seem disparate, that's the delicious part. So like to say like that's antithetical to this, like no, let's put them together. That messy middle where it feels discordant and kind of like messy, that's the sexy part, y'all. That's where we want to be. And for each of you it's going to be some different version of this. And I'm just so excited for whoever is listening and is ready to do that journey because it can get really cool really fast.

Victoria: Yeah, it really can. Yeah, I definitely came back from Buenos Aires with like blonde streaks in my hair and like wearing ponchos to class. I was working it all out.

Judith: Yeah, it's a mood and a vibe and the whole thing. Like I remember probably about my fifth year into legal practice, I mean, I was a litigator, I was in court all the time. And at some point I was just like, I'm going to show up as myself to court. And everybody is just going to have to sort of handle whatever that is. And I love 1940s, 1950s fashion. I love bullet bras and having my tits up and like pointy and conical. Like I'm here for this. Maybe not everyone was here for this, but I was here for this.

So I started with like bright red lip. And then I started with the vintage hair. And then I started with the like vintage car coats. And then slowly before everyone knew it, like a year had gone by and I was just like a pinup in the courtroom. It didn't make me any less credible. I thought for sure that it

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would somehow diminish me in the eyes of my colleagues who were, you know, men in their 70s and 80s. I got quite the opposite reaction.

The more I showed up as me, the more formidable I became. And I didn't expect that. I expected what most, you know, staunch feminists, especially I think white feminists think, that somehow if I give into these feminine ideals, I have failed my feminist sisters. And no y'all, what if it was the thing that made you more formidable? And that's how you find your fierce. Like really embracing those things where you're like, am I allowed? Can I? Whatever that is.

It was beautiful to see my own transformation and the funny reaction sometimes from my older counterparts, like the fashionable Ms. Hoover has arrived, that's my married name. You know, like she has arrived. I'm like, yes, fellas, I have arrived. What are we doing today? I still curse like a sailor, I was still a badass, none of that had changed.

Victoria: Right.

Judith: But how like the patriarchy to think that if you dress me up a particular way, that somehow my behavior would change. And what a beautiful rebellion to say I'm going to dress however I want and still show up completely in my badassery.

Victoria: Yeah, I love that. I love that. I feel like that is the most perfect place for us to close this out because that's just so beautiful. Showing up as you is showing up in all your badassery. Someone get me that on a t-shirt.

Judith: Welcome friends, come join us.

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Victoria: Yeah, I love it. I love it. Judith, everyone's going to want to follow you now, how can they do that? Where can they find you?

Judith: Yeah, so you can listen to my podcast, The Style Masterclass Podcast. There's a big picture of my smiling face with like a bright purple coat on in the picture, so you can't miss it. But come hang out with me there, come listen, and that's probably the perfect entry into my little weird world.

Victoria: Beautiful. And if they want to follow you on social?

Judith: Yeah, it'll be just Judith Gaton, not pronounced with a che or a Y. J-U-D-I-T-H G-A-T-O-N.

Victoria: Perfect. Beautiful. Thank you so much for being here with us today.

Judith: This was so good. It was fun, let's do it again. Yeah? Okay, great.

Victoria: I can't even wait. Thank you.

Judith: Let's do it. Thank you.

Thank you so much for listening in. Such an amazing conversation, Judith is a powerhouse and so are you. And if you are interested in working together with me to build the kind of confidence and self-love that Judith and I talked about on the show, here's your chance. The Anchored group started in May of this year is well over halfway full.

So if you have been wanting to work with me, to get coached one on one in this beautiful community, to be a part of a collective of humans who are

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really doing the work to make their lives, and thus the world, a better place for us all, now's your chance. Head on over to victoriaalbina.com/anchored to learn more about the program and to apply now. Why wait one more day to live the life you want to live?

All right, my beauties, let's do what we do. Gentle hand on your heart, should you feel so moved. 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 darling, 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.