

Ep #178: Your Future Self



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

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 think I might just go ahead and say this every single week of the entire summer, forever and ever which is; I love the summer. I love the heat. I love, actually, enjoy the humidity. I mean, my curls don't, it's like Frizz Ball City USA over here, but there's product for that.

I just love summer. I love the long nights and all the sunshine, all the flowers, the birds. Oh my gosh, in my yard the other day, there were four robins, a groundhog, two bunnies, two brown bunnies with perfect white tails, endless squirrels. And wait, did I mention the groundhog?

There was a ground dog. I think he was a groundhog, something of that assortment. He was so cute. He was brown and maybe like a little foot-ish, or so tall. And he kept standing on his back legs and looking around. And no, it was not a mere cat, though that would be... I was about to say that'd be fun, but poor guy, he'd be a little out of sorts in the Hudson Valley.

But anyway, I just love it. I love it all. My garden is exploding with color. The dahlias, the lavender, the peonies have gone to bed, but they were stunning. My day lilies are gorgeous. And it's lousy with bees out there, which is of course, a total dream come true.

So, my darling, my perfect tender ravioli. We talked recently, you and I, about our past self and how vital it is to give that version of us love, care and compassion. For doing the darn best we could, with the skills, and tools, and mindset, and somatic embodiment we had at that moment in our

Ep #178: Your Future Self

lives. Beating ourselves up for doing what we were taught to do. Being who we were taught to be by our family systems, the patriarchy, white settler colonialism, late-stage capitalism, does absolutely nothing to move our lives forward.

In fact, it just keeps us rolling around in the past, doing the old shoulda, coulda, woulda, which, you know, gets us absolutely, exactly nowhere in life. Well, it does get us somewhere; it gets us into that old pit of despair, right? That's a tricky one to climb out of when you keep piling the guilt, and the shame, and blame onto yourself for just being who you are taught to be.

I've said it before, and I will say it again, my beauty, you can't heal hurt, with more hurt. So, being kind to our past selves is one of the most important things that we can do in this life. As we grow, as we change, as we heal, as we regulate our nervous systems, being kind to the version of us that didn't know how to do those things is imperative for change.

Because we talked about this, when you're being mean to you, you are putting yourself into sympathetic activation, or dorsal shutdown, instead of staying in ventral vagal with yourself. And if you're like what on earth are those words? What is this woman talking about with a dorsal what? I dug all about it in Episode 174, Polyvagal 101. So, you can refer back to that.

But my point is, when we're mean to us, our bodies react, our nervous systems react, our inner children react, and it is so much harder to make change from that place. And, it's important to simultaneously recognize that we are only alive in this one moment. This very one.

And every time we talk about the past or the future, we are choosing the story we want to create about that time. Nerd alert: Science supports this, of course, my darling ones. We rewrite our memories every time we retell that story. So, there's a story we tell, about our past self and our future self,

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

is within our control. We get to choose the story we want to tell. And come on, it's me, right?

Not in some b.s., lying to ourselves way, or some negating way, or some sugarcoating, silver lining, “Oh my God, my trauma was such a vessel for growth,” kind of way, when we don't believe that. Because, well, super yuck to force that on ourselves or anyone else. Which is not to say we can't transmute and alchemize trauma, but that's a topic for a different day.

Rather, what I'm getting to, is that we get to decide, as our adult selves on purpose, how we want to think about ourselves in the past, and the future. We get to create our self-concept, our identity, the story we tell about ourselves, moving forward, in order to create the life we most desire. A life free of codependent, perfectionist, and people pleasing thought habits. We were interdependent in all our relationships.

So, this week, we're talking about the concept of the future self, which is the version of yourself that is yet to be. We all talk about our future self all the time, but in this unintentional way. “Next week, I'm going to... In a month, when we go on vacation... When I graduate my PhD, I will... Someday, when they change, I'll finally be happy.”

And what I want to encourage you to do, what we always aim to do in the *Feminist Wellness* family, is to get intentional about it. And we talk all about living with intention, Episode 84. We get to decide to think about and dream up our future self, as an active practice towards creating the life we want.

This is particularly important for us, from our codependent, perfectionist, and people pleasing habits. Because, part and parcel of these habits, is to focus on everyone else in the world instead of ourselves. We live from external authority. Doing what he thinks is best, what she would like, what makes them happy, instead of living from our own internal authority, based in our authenticity.

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

We can use the concept of our future self as a way to connect in with our most authentic self, and to take the steps to step into being that version of us, that's our very most favorite one. And, of course, we will situate this within the science, right, my nerds?

So, our subconscious mind has created thought habits, beliefs, stories about ourselves, based on what we learned in childhood and from the world. And we believe these stories because we have neural grooves, in our mind. I like to think about it like a wheelbarrow between the farmhouse and the barn. When you push the wheelbarrow from one to the other, and you go over that same place in the soft dirt every day, back and forth, and back and forth, it creates a little rut, and it becomes the path of least resistance for the wheelbarrow.

So, too in our minds, the stories that we have heard and thought over and over and over again become neural grooves; the thoughts our brains automatically go to, without our even thinking about it. Which is why thought work is so incredibly important. A key part of thinking new things about ourselves, is to start to imagine what we want to believe about who we are, how we are; to get meta and think about our thinking.

Further nerd alert, this one's nerd heavy in these really interesting ways. So, there are three biological imperatives for human mammals. From those biological imperatives, those mammalian drives within us, making change is challenging, right? Because the body says conserve energy at all costs. And so, in order to be able to meet that drive within us, that says; don't change. Living in this way that's been painful, harmful, sad, frustrating, etc. Well, it hasn't killed you yet, tiger, so, don't change it.

What's really needed, what's vital here, is to learn how to pause and to hold space somatically for that change. Not just in our minds, but in our bodies. And to be able to build the skill, because it really is a practice and a skill of holding space for discomfort. Not just pushing it aside, not just moving on

Ep #178: Your Future Self

to the next thought work, or the next distraction, the next buffer. But rather, really learning to sit in the discomfort of the potential discordance between who we've been, who we are, and who we want to be.

Somatic, or body-based practices, broaden our capacity within our nervous system. The literature calls it the “window of tolerance.” But Lordess knows I'm not out here trying to teach humans socialized as women, or anyone else, to tolerate anything more than we do. Am I right? So, I like to call it the window of capacity.

These practices, expand our window of capacity, and allow us to slow down and to not get reactive, right? To stay in ventral vagal and then not go to sympathetic or dorsal, so we can be with our future self. And we can really hold space to create this new concept of ourselves, by resourcing our nervous system in that moment. We do that by connecting in somatically, because when our bodies are on board, then we don't need to rely on willpower.

Let's get real, willpower is some weak sauce compared with embodied somatic alignment. Because when you can feel in your body, this new sense of self, you're ready to become it. Likewise, willpower doesn't hold a candle to learning to manage our minds around who we want to be in the future.

So, we start with getting clear about our thoughts and feelings about ourselves, now. Locate the resonance of those feelings in our body. Check in with our nervous system. And from there, we can decide if we want to keep or change our habitual thoughts, stories, and reactions. Which are skills that, thought work paired with somatics, give us. Thought work also teaches us how to create a new reality. Because a key part of the process is aligning our nervous system and our thoughts, so we can take action to become the “us” we most want to be.

Ep #178: Your Future Self

For example, if you're working to overcome people pleasing, you start by envisioning a future version of you, that is very different from the you you've been showing up from. And in so doing, you're intentionally creating the new version of you with stronger, more loving and flexible boundaries. Because remember, boundaries aren't brick walls, they're flexible. That's the beauty of them.

We do this, this visualization work, because the evidence shows that visualization changes our brain chemistry, which is just stunning. There are functional MRI studies that back this up. We really feel into and visualize that new version of us, so that when your habitual thinking, from your reptile brain says, "Just say yes, that's the path of least resistance. They'll like you so much better if you just abandon yourself again; that's what they're used to," you notice it.

You feel what that feels like in your nervous system. The way I said it with some activation, a little sympathetic. You honor that, you breathe into that, you regulate your nervous system around that. And you then come back to your nervous system resources within yourself, to support change.

I talk all about nervous system resources, and the process of pendulation in Episodes 135, 172, and 174. And of course, like, all day, every day in Anchored, because it's a key focus of ours.

We connect in with our nervous system resources so we can bring more flexibility into our nervous system. So, we can ground ourselves and can stay in presence when life gets life-y. By grounding ourselves in who we want to be, how we want to show up, and staying dedicated to that, we stay in presence.

When we are present in our lives, not checked out, not freaked out, but present, we are most in our power, and can reconnect with our agency to make the next right choice towards the future we most desire.

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

And it's vital to understand with love, always with love, then, of course, our primitive brains want us to do what they've always done, right? Even when that thing has always sucked for us. So, as I walk through the remedies, the how-to, and as you start to bring this practice into your daily life, I want to remind you to connect in with our three C's: compassion, curiosity, and care. So, you can show up for yourself with so much love along the way.

When we access our true desires for the future... Which I know I can already hear you saying, "True desires for the future? I have no idea what I want to watch for TV. I have no idea what I want to wear today. I'm an indecision machine." I hear you. I see you. It is super common, from our codependent thinking, because we've always had that external focus to not know what we want.

And that's why this practice is so super incredible and life changing for us. Because it's an opportunity to sit down and really ask ourselves, and I'm going to walk you through it, don't worry, who I want to be. And in that process, we build a self-image that allows us to live into it. To choose our own adventure.

It's like one of those books we used to read in middle school. We get to decide what the next step is intentionally, versus just spinning and doing what we've always done, because it's what we've always done. This allows us to take ownership for our future. What's beautiful about this, is that it reminds us that the circumstances in life don't have to create certain thoughts and feelings within us. We do get to choose how we want to interact with, respond to, react to the circumstances of life.

You really do get to play a huge role in deciding how you're going to think, feel, and act about your own lived experience. So, how do you do it? "What's the remedy, Vic? What do I do now? This sounds great, help me do it."

Ep #178: Your Future Self

So, to start, I like to think about the future self in three timeframes. Because when we just start to think broadly about “the rest of my life,” it can be a little overwhelming to the nervous system, in the mind. The inner children may say, “Whoa, that's too much.” So, I pause. And I think about short-term; who will my future self be, at the end of the day? At the end of the week? End of the month? Medium term; end of the year? Next three to five years? Long term; 10 years from now? And up until the end of your life?

The thing to do is to ask yourself; how do I want to think? To feel? To be? What actions do I want to take? What goals do I want to set for my life? For this month? For today? For the next 550 years. And, of course, because of course, you'll have a different set of goals for each timeframe.

You can ask yourself; what you need to believe about yourself. your capacity, your ability, your possibility, in order to move towards that goal? So, for today, you might want to let your partner have one feeling, without stepping into fix it. For this week, you might want to notice one time when you felt the urge to people please and didn't. For the next year, you might want to focus on being a person who notices the ways you show up from codependent thinking. And, to practice being a person who lives from interdependence, in all your relationships.

Notice I said the word “practice,” right? I'm not saying you're going to, like, have it done and dusted in a year, but we are noticing, we are practicing, we are shifting, and we are really connected with the future self who does that. Who doesn't mean to or want to, but who *does* it.

In the next year, you might envision yourself as a coach who has launched their business. In the next three to five years, you could envision your future self as someone who's partnered in a healthy way, or who has a successful business, by your own standards, or whatever that means to you. In the next 10 years, you could picture a future self who is in a

Ep #178: Your Future Self

mutually supportive, reciprocal relationship. A you who has done and is doing the work to show up from your authenticity, and from deep self-love.

Then, the next step is to write out what the heck that means. So, what does it mean to be in your authenticity? I grew up hearing I was too loud and too big, and now I embrace it. I am way too loud, for many people. I am energetically way too big, for many people. And, I embrace that about myself.

I'm also able to socially modulate, come on now. But I'm me. I love me. I'm hilarious. I'm gregarious. And there's nothing wrong with being me. If someone else thinks there is, I and my future self, hold that person with love, and care, and compassion, because they get to have their thoughts and feelings. And I get to love me. Right? So, get really detailed. What does it mean to show up with deep self-love, self-trust, self-care? Write it out. The more detail you can get, the more you can feel into it.

From there, I like to visualize my future self, and to decide who she is, on purpose. I like to spend five minutes in the morning, and for my folks with perfectionist leaning thought habits, set a timer, right? Because we build self-trust, when we set a timer.

And, you know, if you told yourself five minutes, don't make it 10. Don't make it 47. Because the next day or two days later, when you go to sit down, your brain is going to be like, "Excuse me, you told me a lie. You told me five minutes; I was emotionally prepared for that. And then, it was an hour and 23 minutes." So, set a timer. Unless, you hit five minutes and you have a conversation with yourself, in which you're like, "I actually do want to extend this," and it's a conscious, intentional thing.

I guess my overarching point is, be intentional, my darling. Okay. So, five minutes in the morning. I spent five minutes focusing on my future self for that day. So, who will I be today? How will I show up today? Who is the

Ep #178: Your Future Self

'me' that I'm living into and embracing today? As well as, the medium and long-term.

And when I do that, it's not just thinking and writing. I do recommend pen to paper, if that's within your physical capacity; it's a beautiful thing to do. Another thing that often works, for my brain and my ADHD-ness, is to do voice notes. I'll record myself talking it out, and I'll use one of those transcribing apps that can be really beautiful.

And, I'd like to bring my nervous system in through my senses. So, what does your future self, eat? And, how delicious is it? How does she eat? Does she eat with peace and calm in her heart, which I think is the most important part of any nutrition plan? What are the scents in her life that she's brought in? Is she a lavender lover? Is she more into juniper, and pine, and cedar? That's my jam. I love the woodsy scents.

What does she do on the daily? What's her morning routine like? Does she give herself breaks throughout the day? Does she let herself rest? What's her evening like? What does she wear? What are the clothes feel like on her body? What do they look like?

What does she think? How does she relate to others? What are her boundaries like? What does she say when someone invites you to people please them? How do you show up in conflict, or with people, or in situations that have been challenging for you historically? More on conflict and how to have healthy conflict, in Episodes 160 to 162.

What this boils down to is, what is working now that you want to be the same and perhaps to do more of? What is not working now and hasn't worked historically, that you want to do differently? How do you want to show up differently? Does future you worry less? Try to fix others less? Ask others to rescue you less? Self-abandon less? More on that in Episodes 163 and 164.

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

Is your future self, able to regulate her nervous system? Is your future self, someone who stands strong in her integrity? Really write it out. Really visualize that “you.” Every inch, down to the socks and the shoes, the hairdo, and the connection with self, all of it.

Next, how do you want to feel in these three timeframes? How do you want to feel about accomplishing your goals? And we do this, of course, without bs'ing ourselves, right? We don't do ‘positive vibes only’ with ourselves, with goals. We don't say, “My future self will be 100% happy all the time,” because, come on now, we don't do that.

Instead, we might say, “I am able to be present to all my emotions. I'm able to meet them somatically, through my body. I'm able to manage my mind regardless of what comes my way. I am able to regulate my nervous system 80% of the time, and the other 20% of the time, when I do get dysregulated, I give myself so much love, and grace, and care.”

You can also decide, “I'm not available for emotions that don't serve me to stay in,” and hear me clearly, *to stay in*. So, “When I feel one of those emotions, I will start with accepting them, honoring them, loving them up. And instead of holding on to them in a way that hurts me, I will process them through my body to release them. But my future self, no longer spins in emotions that don't serve me like; self-doubt, self-criticism, beating up my past self, judging myself, or others.”

And you can decide ahead of time, what you'll do when your most common challenging feelings arise. For example, “When I feel disappointment, I will ask myself; what expectations and judgments am I bringing to this interaction, that are creating disappointment for me?” Isn't that lovely?

So, go through the top emotions that you feel in any day, week, month, year and do this work. Decide ahead of time what you're going to do when

Ep #178: Your Future Self

they arise. And my love, I see you. Please don't let this be another perfectionist thought-fantasy, my darling, tender, sweet, little buttercup.

From our codependent thinking, we want to control everyone and everything because we think that will help us to feel safer. And so, we have the habit of focusing on others in this very perfectionist way, instead of creating our own lives. And, we can get wicked perfectionist in our own lives, too.

Instead of deciding, "In five years, my partner will have worked through all of their codependent habits. In 10 years, my kids will show me respect, always." Instead, focus on you. How will you show up to meet yourself and your partner? How will you show up to meet your kids? Your parents? Your friends? Your co-workers? Your boss? Regardless of how they show up, how will you meet yourself, not from perfectionism, but from giving yourself the grace and being compassionate, curious, and caring?

I've done and do this work all the time. In little ways, for the hyper short-term, and for the medium and long-term, too. So, for example, if there's a task on my to-do list that my brain wants to avoid, I'll think of the "me" in five or ten minutes, the "me" at the end of the day, that will be so stoked to cross that task off of the old task list. I think of the "me" that is committed to meeting my goals. And that gives me the impetus to get to it, and to do the thing now, for the benefit of future "me."

About five years, five-six-seven-eight years ago, I decided that my future self is so embodied and so regulated, and is able to regulate herself so much more each and every day. And so, from that decision, from visualizing that version of me, really feeling into how she carries herself throughout the day, I got to it.

I worked with amazing therapists. I studied at the Sensorimotor Psychotherapy Institute as a coach, which is like somatic experiencing. I

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

learned all about polyvagal theory, and started to apply it to my life. I decided that my future self speaks her mind; values being, overdoing, is connected deeply with Pachamama/ Mother Nature, runs a thriving coaching business.

And is dedicated to being of service to thousands of people through Anchored, my six-month program, through my workshops, and this show. I decided that my future self has wild self-trust, and makes all her decisions from that place. And, for the best and highest good for all, always. I decided that my future self is aligned, and lives through my integrity. She doesn't let herself sweat the small stuff. She no longer complicates things, which to brag I had a PhD in both drama and overcomplicating things; let those go.

My future self is easy-going, and embodied, and is dedicated to living into the essential human task. Which is to live from our authenticity. To express ourselves as fully as we can, in each moment. To not hide or conceal ourselves. To be fully present throughout our lives, and to live from our big open hearts; aka, the opposite of codependent living.

I decided my future self exercises more, manages her blood sugar, and takes such good care of her body; having spent 30 years or so, sick as a dog, with belly troubles. And a part of living into all of that, was really taking the time to picture that me. To feel into being that me, and to visualize her in every detail.

Recently, I'm laughing at myself for sharing this, but I was doing my future self-work, I was journaling and meditating on it. And really, I was in it. And this voice inside me said, "My future self will have a very, very nice brown dog. And will connect with that dog as a beloved nervous system resource," which felt very sweet, because I sure do love dogs. Cats are great, but dogs; I love dogs.

Ep #178: Your Future Self

And sidenote, while we're side noting, I used to have the pleasure and privilege of being the mom to two wonderful rescue dogs. There was a tan one with a brown nose, they both weighed around like 45-50 pounds. They were good, perfect mutts. So, the tan one, with the brown nose, was called Francis Bacon, she went by Frankie.

And then, I adopted a little sister for her, because she really needed another dog in the house. And she was black, with a brown nose. So, they were the inverse of each other. And her name, you won't believe it, but it's true, her name was Grace. So, it was Frankie and Grace long before that TV show. Isn't that funny?

Anyway, that was quite the digression, my darlings, but I'm bringing it back. So, I also love to do this work when I have a decision to make. When my current brain is bouncing back and forth. You know, the pro-con list is in full effect, do I stay or do I go now, right? Do I do the thing or not do the thing? Instead of torturing myself that way, I will picture my future self and I'll get really in contact with her through some meditation, and I'll ask her what she wants me to do, and how she wants me to show up.

I'll also ask my body, because I believe and trust my body now, in a powerful way. And when I make decisions from my future self, I know my intuition is guiding me. And I can't possibly go wrong. Which is pretty friggin' rad, when I think back to how much analysis paralysis and indecision I used to roll around in. Because my future self never tells me to worry, to stress out, to spin indecision, or to ruminate.

It's a purely coregulatory, ventral vagal relationship. Because the thing to know, is that we can coregulate with our future selves. How cool is that? I do it all the time. And it's also so calming and supportive to connect in with that version of me, to ask her for advice. Because I know she always has our best interest at heart.

Ep #178: Your Future Self

I found my future self gives really great guidance; she really helps me to put my focus exactly where it needs to be, to move my life forward towards stepping into being her. And that keeps me focused and directed towards that growth.

I want to say this, doing this work is not frivolous or a luxury, it is 100% worth the time; this work is vital. When we prioritize our inner work, we show up to create the lives we want, by stating it in 'I am' statements. As my future self, I am more loving, less grumpy, less irritable. I am less resentful. I am more generous, emotionally. I am a being that is embodied. I am standing in my integrity.

When we do that, when we live into that, it ripples out into the world. When we are living lives we love, and don't have to escape from through buffers or retelling lousy stories about ourselves, we are ever more able to give from our overflow. To be kinder. To give more. To be the loving shoulder someone cries on. Because we are showing up from 'I want to' energy, not obligation energy, which is that energy that says, "I have to do this, to prove my love, so that they will know I am worthy."

Because your future self knows, trusts, and believes that you are wildly worthy of all the love, all the good things. And it makes all the difference in our lives, and thus the world. Because when our cups are full, we're able to volunteer, to donate, to show up for the communities and causes that matter to us. And, we are able to be agents of massive change when we step into this loving relationship with our past, present, and future selves.

Thanks for listening, my love. It has been such a delight to share this topic with you. It's one of my favorites.

And, I need to let you know, Anchored starts in just under a month, and it is over halfway full. So, if you have been listening to the show, coming to my workshops, coming to my webinars, coming to the private somatic coaching

[Feminist Wellness](#) with Victoria Albina, NP, MPH

Ep #178: Your Future Self

experiences that I have just for Anchored applicants. And you are loving this work, you're loving these teachings, and you're applying it to your life, and you're ready to go deeper. To really turn everything you've learned here, into the change you want to see for your present and future self, I want to invite you to join us in Anchored.

Head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/anchored to learn more and to apply now. When you apply, my team will be in touch to offer you a complimentary call with me. As well as, access to those private somatic coaching events, that I do each and every month, just for folks who've applied to Anchored. So, that's exciting. You could get some coaching right from me, right on those calls. How fun, right?

Anchored is my absolute favorite place on Earth. I'd love to have you join us there. 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 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!