

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives



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. We are starting a wee series today, beginning with a conversation about what trauma is. And this is going to be a mile-high view. It is a huge topic, for sure, that I have spent a decade studying, and we'll just be scratching the surface here today. This is going to be a long episode. So, buckle up.

Next week, we'll enter into a conversation about intuition, and how to tell if it's trauma or your intuition talking. Followed by a discussion around making decisions and listening to your inner discernment. So, let's dive in.

I feel like everyone is talking about trauma these days; it's very the mode, you know. And overall, I'm so, so, so glad that the zeitgeist is turning towards talking more about stress, distress and trauma; something previous generations sure haven't had access to.

And as someone who works with the nervous system, I've been doing that for a long time now. Who talks about and coaches from a polyvagal framework, here and on the Daily in *Anchored*, my six-month program, I believe it's high time we pause and talk about what trauma is, and how it can shape our lives. Because it really, really matters.

So, trauma occurs when life gets too 'life-y' for our nervous systems to handle. When something terrible happens, and we don't get the co-regulation or outside calming support that we need in that moment, to be able to regulate our emotions and our nervous system. To calm ourselves,

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

and to come back to a felt sense of safety, and 'okayness' in the world, and in our own bodies.

So, a thing happens. Your nervous system activates to respond to the thing. And no one comes to support you in feeling safe and coming back into your body. And so, that experience gets coded as stress, distress, or trauma by your mind, body and nervous system. And that's the sort of order of the level of it. Things can feel like just a stressor, You get more overwhelmed, it's distress. And then, boom, life threat, trauma.

You know, I love my metáfora, so with winter just underway here in the northern hemisphere, we are all getting our winter woolies out. Imagine you open a big old box of wool sweaters, and you find one you put away right after your last big hike, last winter. Not realizing it was super sweaty and stinky. Over time, the stink flourishes in the darkness. So, that box under your bed then infuses itself into the fabric of the garment.

You don't even notice until you put it on and get it all warmed up, and boom; a year ago, sweat. The permastink of life is making itself known in a subtle, or dramatic, way. Trauma is like that stink. You might not even realize it's there until you start to get a little whiff and think, "Oh, that couldn't be me. I showered this morning."

And then, slowly, as the day wears on, you realize that yes, in fact, the proverbial stink is coming from inside the house. Or, rather, the sweater. There was an event, a hike, and it imprinted on the sweater. And, comes to the surface under stress.

The beautiful thing is that like your aromatic sweater that can be washed and 'destinked', trauma can find healing and care and regulation, so that your nervous system doesn't have to react to the world like you're a scared

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

little kiddo in a traumatic situation, anymore. Which is, so beautiful. Trauma can find healing. So, let's talk more about it.

First up, you may have heard folks talking about “Big T” and “Little T” trauma. Where Big T means things that are potentially or actually immediately life threatening; like, war, assault, abuse, vehicle accidents, natural disasters, shootings, etc. Those are called the Big T traumas; kaboom kind of trauma.

And then, the Little T, are the things that many of us wouldn't call trauma per se, but certainly count in my book; interpersonal conflict, a partner cheating, moving often, legal/financial trouble or worry, getting a divorce, or your parents getting a divorce. I would, of course, add the impact of living in a body marginalized by the patriarchy, white settler colonialism, ableism, xenophobia etc.

Developmental trauma, early trauma, or attachment rupture trauma are all terms used in the literature to describe childhood trauma such as chronic abuse or neglect, or other adversity in one's childhood home. And definitely, can include the impact of chronically not being attuned to the way we need it.

Which means, that we experience stress that was too much for our tiny nervous systems. And our caregiver wasn't able or willing to reduce this stress with us. Or, they amplified the stress, sometimes without realizing it. Or, is the cause of the stress.

Evidence shows, studies show, that parents are deemed “good enough”, that's the term in the literature, if they show up the way we need at least 30% of the time, and attune to us as children. And if you're a parent, I hope

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

you're breathing out a big sigh of relief there. You don't have to be perfect to not traumatize your children; 30% or more will do.

When we don't get that attunement, when we're chronically not attuned to or showed up for, our nervous system cuts to believing that we are alone in the world. And, we don't matter. That we aren't safe at home or with our people. That our emotional self, our authentic, whole self isn't safe. And, those are all terrifying things for a wee kiddo to believe. That is developmental trauma.

Because it registers in our brains as a huge sign of not being safe. And the kind of developmental trauma we often experienced when we were raised in homes with codependent, perfectionist and people pleasing caregivers, led us to learn, really early, to hide ourselves away; to stay small and quiet, to put ourselves last, or to always steal the show, to clamor for attention and care and love, because we don't think we're worthy of it.

We learned that we're not okay. We aren't safe if we aren't A+ gold star perfect. And so, we become go-getters at a cost to our peace, our joy, our spirits, on and on. And, there's a trauma there that's around our conceptualization of self in relationship to the world, and safety. And all of that, is often referred to as "Small T".

But I sure don't think the impact of those early childhood experiences is small, at all. And in fact, something as seemingly innocuous as early childhood surgery, immigration, a big move away from family, or feeling disconnected from your caregivers, chronically, more than 30% of the time, can have psychologically, physiologically, and neuro-chemically, enormous impacts on an immature nervous system.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

If a child's nervous system is not able to fully digest the events of life, to really comprehend the upsetting feelings they may be feeling, particularly if they are left alone to carry and process them. Then, they can remain highly attuned, aka vigilant or hypervigilant in nervous system speak, to situations that remind them of the upsetting event.

For example, a child who's lost a beloved grandparent with whom they were very close, who was a truly safe person for them. Without adults showing them understanding, and helping them to really connect in with their feelings about what the loss meant to them, may have difficulty allowing themselves to get too close to others.

As adults, the slightest whiff of potential loss, rejection or abandonment, can bring that trauma experienced to the surface in confusing and painful ways. We can then push away connection, when connection is what we most want.

My beauty, I don't love that “big, little T” language. Because trauma isn't what happened, it's how your nervous system reacted to it. And the impact on your life from a kaboom, or a slow burn, 1,000 knives kind of trauma, can be similar in how it impacts you, your sense of self, and how you relate to others and the world, in the long run.

I particularly don't love this language for us emotional outsourcers, my term for folks with codependent, perfectionist and people pleasing habits. Because we tend to minimize the impact of the things that have happened to us. And because we're so used to tolerating a whole lot of b.s. to just get by, we rationalize. Believing it's like this for everyone, so it's not like, a big deal, right?

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

Which leads us to shame ourselves for reacting to life in ways that could be seen as dramatic or an overreaction. So, we stuff it all down, buffer against it, harming ourselves even further without even realizing it. And we don't even realize the profound impact of those so-called 'Little T' traumas on our sense of self and worth; on our ability to form, sustain and thrive in healthy relationships, interdependent relationships, across the board.

That is to say, this stuff can really mess you up. If I was a baby, you believe that you need to freeze your emotions against your environment, in order to make it through. And you're led to believe that you cannot source your safety from within, or from your caregivers. Of course, you shut down to that world. In that state, walking around the world frozen to your own feelings, you may be functioning and successful in the world, but internally, you're completely shut down to yourself.

When we can't feel our emotions, or tell what our bodies want and need, we lose attunement to self; much like we didn't have attunement with our caregivers. And because our safety and danger signals get confused and thrown off, we live in a survival state. Which can show up in 1,000 ways, including worrying about the future, ruminating about the past, and living in high anxiety.

This way of living, this framework, impacts how we think, how we work, how we experience life, love, connection. It impacts our health, and our relationships to self and the world. Because we can't heal this early nervous system and somatic imprinting just by reading books, or talking about our day-to-day struggles. We need to get to the core of it, which is what somatic or body-based practice does; is help us return to the self that lives within ourselves, in our body.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

All of this is to say, one of the most overlooked aspects of Small T traumas, is their accumulated effect. One instance of being snubbed or negated by a caregiver, no biggie, for real. Kids really do bounce back, they're amazing. But over time, the impact compounds, leading to stress, distress, and eventually, trauma.

Meanwhile, the 'ole Big T trauma and its ongoing impacts, are easier to see. The acuity of the distress can be more severe, and can interfere in profound ways with daily functioning in more visible ways. And can lead to avoidant behaviors, buffering, that are a natural reaction to trauma left untreated.

Which brings me to an important point, which is that we often don't recognize our own Small T trauma. And I'm gonna keep using that language for a little minute, because while I don't love it categorically, it is useful here to indicate what I'm talking about. So, we don't recognize our own Small T trauma, particularly developmental and chronic trauma, attunement trauma.

We don't see it if it's not big, if it's not kaboom, or to the level of PTSD or C-PTSD. Which means, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Which, both leads to us not seeing how it's impacting our lives, and can stop us from getting the help and support we need and deserve to live happier, freer lives.

So again, trauma isn't what happened. Meaning, that something that's traumatic to you may not be traumatic to me, and vice versa. It's how your individual and perfect nervous system reacted to the event or string of events. For example, siblings growing up in the same house, are soldiers in the same foxhole, may come out of those situations with very different experiences.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

One may feel traumatized, and one might not. Because, again, it's very individual, even in the same situation. While science doesn't fully understand all the mechanisms at play, what we do know from Polyvagal Theory, the work of Stephen Porges, PhD, is this: An event will register as stress, distress, or trauma, based on whether your nervous system sees that event as a threat to your life and safety.

And if it does, it sends you into sympathetic activation, which floods your body with adrenaline and later, cortisol stress hormones. If that happens enough, or if the stressor doesn't stop, then your nervous system seeks to keep you alive by taking you into dorsal vagal.

The disconnected, checked-out part of the nervous system shuts you down, and eventually sends you into a feigned death state, where you're fully checked-out of life, detached from others, from self, from your emotions. For more on Polyvagal Theory, and I go into a lot of detail, listen to Episodes 174 and 48, in that order.

Okay, my beauties. We know, we have a picture, an idea, of what trauma is. It is an intense bodily nervous system reaction to a life event or series of life events. So, how do you know if you have trauma? Well, my darlings, nerd alert; it's study time. To ground our conversation in the science, like we do around here on *Feminist Wellness*, because we are a bunch of magical and amazing nerds, we turn to a database of over 15,000 adults.

The study, known as the Adverse Childhood Events, or ACE's study, which was started in 1995 in California and is still ongoing, looks at the association between developmental trauma, and physical and mental illness. In this groundbreaking study, adult volunteers were asked to recall their early life experiences, and were then assigned an ACES score based on the number of these experiences that they had.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

Statistically significant and exponentially higher rates of early illness, serious physical health outcomes, so called high-risk health behaviors, and all-cause mortality, were found in those with higher numbers of adverse experiences. The data collected and analyzed since 2010, show that, and I do, quote, “There is a strong dose-response relationship between trauma and poor health outcomes.”

Which means, in less nerdy speak, that the more developmental trauma one had as a child, the more illness you may have as an adult, when you disregard or control for high-risk health behaviors. Disconcertingly, when the study was expanded across 33 U.S. states, 20% of adults reported an A score of three or more. Which, is a *not* insignificant amount of trauma to have lived in one's childhood.

So, we know that many of us have had traumatic experiences with acute or shock trauma, the accident, the assault, the big kaboom event, the symptoms can be more clear cut. I want to focus the rest of our conversation on the more subtle traumas. The chronic traumas of everyday life. The developmental trauma that impacts so many aspects of our lived experience and is harder to see, because it's quieter, or comes out as like, “She's just really bad at relationships,” but when the root cause could be trauma.

Many of us live for decades or a lifetime, not understanding how health struggles, challenges in relationships, friendships or work, money issues, failure to launch, can be tied to early childhood or developmental trauma. And, sadly, time doesn't heal these kinds of wounds.

We need to take action to support ourselves in new ways, to create a new way of living, to ‘destink’ the sweater. And to start living the way we want

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

to, less reactive to life from our old traumatic wounds, and more responsive from a regulated nervous system.

Some of the signs that early trauma could be impacting you include, and are certainly not limited to, chronically feeling stuck. And like, there's internal resistance to change; which we talked about in Episodes 180 and 181.

When all the affirmations and thought work in the world just aren't leading to the kind of change that you, or if you're a clinician or a coach, then your client or patient, wants to see in life. When you feel like Sisyphus pushing that eternal boulder up a hill. Like, there's something inside blocking you from growth and change.

Next, fatigue and exhaustion are your norm. No matter how many doctors and health gurus' advice you follow "to the T". And it's like that boulder is living on your shoulders forever, and you just can't find your way out from under it, no matter what you do.

Now, could that be low B-12, low D-3, Lyme disease, depression; totally. And it could also be underlying experiences of stress, distress and trauma, in addition to those other factors. And, this is really important. This is where the truly holistic approach to life, to health, to wellness, is vital.

I had low B-12 because I wasn't able to absorb it. Because I had chronically slow digestion. Because I had chronically low stomach acid. Because my nervous system was dysregulated. Because of early childhood trauma. And, because I had a parasite and a bacterial overgrowth, right?

So, it's not just the one thing, when you're looking at systems as complex as the human mind and body. And please, don't trust anyone who like

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

whittles it all down to, “Oh, it's just your trauma. Oh, it's just the parasite.” There are many things interplaying, right?

Next, living with a lot of fear and anxiety, even though rationally, there's nothing to be afraid of. This may be a sign that stress, distress or trauma interrupted your ability to source your own sense of safety within your body and your life. One of the things that happens when we have what the literature calls a “trauma response”, is that we get activated or shut down in our nervous systems.

We leave ventral vagal, the safe and social part. And that experience takes us out of this present moment and takes us to the past, to the moment of trauma; generally, the first or the worst instance. Taking us out of presence with our capable adult selves.

A beautiful remedy is the practice of orienting. And you can get a free guided orienting practice on my website, VictoriaAlbina.com. So, right at the top of the page, there's a banner and you can click there, and it will take you to that offering. You can download it F-R-double-E, because I love you.

Orienting is a really vital skill for all of us to have for ourselves, and anyone who's in a moment of anxiety or panic. So, again, complexity there; there's a lot of reasons for fear and anxiety; stress, distress, and trauma may be one.

Next, you find yourself chronically numbing out or buffering often. And, it's hard to stay in your body or feel emotions. This was a huge one, for me. I lived the first, I want to say like 35-ish years of my life, in a deep internal freeze. Not really able to feel my emotions other than sad, mad and glad,

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

because I was living in a dysregulated nervous system, secondary to trauma.

Which had taught me that feeling my feelings and being in my body, which was one of the sites of early childhood trauma, was not safe or smart. So, I didn't reside there. I wasn't living inside of me. I was living externally, out in the world, getting the degrees, getting the accolades, getting the certifications. But not feeling my feelings.

Next up, your romantic and other intimate relationships never seem to satisfy you. You're chronically discontent, and are living life as an emotional outsourcer. Searching for some kind of external relief that never seems to arrive. You try to set healthier, more self-loving boundaries, but don't seem to ever be with people who are ready, willing, and able to hear, respect and honor those boundaries.

This is so common for us, because without realizing it, we're recreating our childhood caregiver relationships in our romantic relationships. In an attempt to source or create a different outcome with the same old behavior. So, we find ourselves chronically living in and managing unhealthy relationships.

Taking on too much of the burden, too much of the blame. Feeling the sense of urgency to fix that other person's life or to change them. And, feeling disconnected from self; unsafe in an emotional way with ourselves and in our relationships.

Finally, your health is challenging, and you just can't find the help you need. New symptoms emerge seemingly out of nowhere, and you just can't manage to feel actually, truly, well. You may have been diagnosed with concerns like chronic fatigue, fibromyalgia, or chronic pain, or may struggle

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

with migraines, interstitial cystitis, severe PMS, digestive concerns, anxiety or depression.

You take all the medication and the supplements, you go to the specialist, you change your diet, you do all the medical everything. And despite your most dedicated effort, things don't really resolve. Or, if they do, your symptoms come roaring back again and again, especially when you're stressed out or life gets really 'life-y'.

Again, this is not an exhaustive list, at all. It's just a few of the top things I see in folks with developmental trauma or interpersonal relating trauma. You can also know that you have trauma if you remember trauma in your lifetime.

Not all of us develop symptoms. We don't all develop the same sort of responses, or reactions, or ways of showing what we've been through. It's super individual. So, trust yourself, trust your body, and trust that what you know to be true about your life, is your truth.

As we always do here on the show, I want to make sure to spend some time talking about the remedies. This is, in absolutely no way on earth, an exhaustive list. It's just a few things you can start to do to support yourself. First up, is remember that none of the following things are a magic silver bullet. It's about adding one little thing at a time, kitten-step style, trusting that it will add up to healing magic in its own time.

Baby, baby, baby, this is slow work. Remembering that, is the most important first step, my love. And can help disperse a bit of the shame and guilt and urgency that come with the territory here.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

Two, get real about it. I didn't even realize how much trauma was living in my body, and how it was shaping my relationships for so long. Getting real about what you've been through and how it's impacted you, is so vital, my darling. And if you don't remember what happened, but you know it happened, trust your body.

My baby, getting Real about it is really important, because you can't heal what you can't see, after all. And shoving it down, trying to buffer against it, it doesn't work. Working with a coach, a therapist, even a beloved trusted friend, to start looking at your past to see “what the what” is there, can be really helpful.

Alternately, you can start with “what the what” is now. The science around trauma and trauma treatment shows us clearly that we do not need to retell the story of our traumas to shift or change them. I cannot emphasize that enough. You don't have to retell the story. We can start with how we're thinking, feeling, and living now.

We can start with our somatic or bodily experiences of life now, as the roadmap to making change; and that's, personally, my preferred avenue. To start with what's alive in your body now, instead of throwing ourselves headfirst into the murky water of what happened then.

Three, psychoeducation. It wildly and radically changed my life, to start to understand what was happening in my body when I was getting activated into sympathetic or shut down into dorsal. Before I learned about Polyvagal Theory and started mapping my own nervous system, I thought I was just friggin' bananas. And like, “Oh my god,” so dramatic and so demanding and making a big stink out of nothing.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

By learning what was going on biologically? Oh, my nerds. What sweet relief to realize that I'm not broken, and neither are you. I'm just a souvenir-sized mammal; mammaling along, reacting to the past like it's happening right now; because, science.

And that has been so deeply liberatory just to understand my brain is doing this. There's nothing wrong with me. For more on the science, see Episode 174. And my workshop's Somatics 101, and Polyvagal 101, which you can find on VictoriaAlbina.com.

From there, learning to befriend your nervous system and start to understand, what within you is a regular reaction to life being 'life-y', like a normal human reaction, and what is actually a "trauma response". And learning to listen into our bodies through somatics, so our bodies no longer need to scream at us. And instead, we can hear the whispers.

The subtle cues of dysregulation are really vital work here. And this is the work we do in Anchored all the time, because having space held for this work is really one of the most beautiful ways to deepen it, and enhance the power of connecting in with your own nervous system, in community and with a loving guide.

And you know what? While I'm on it, while I'm talking about what the literature calls a "trauma response", meaning you leave ventral vagal, you leave safe and social, you get jacked up into sympathetic, or collapse into dorsal. I want to say, I don't love that language either.

I like to think of it as a self-love response. Because at its core, that's what it is; it's protective. Your body was once in danger, or believed itself to be, so it created this reaction to that life stimulus. It's from and for and of love, for you, from you, by you. And it's been super supportive for me, to call it that.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

As a way to remember, that even though it's wicked annoying; that's "hella" annoying for the West Coast, just want to translate there. Yeah, wicked or hella annoying to get shut down, or checked out during conflict or a challenging conversation, my body isn't doing it to be a jerk. It's doing it because it loves me and wants to protect me, as yours is for you.

And when we can see our big reactions to life as self-love, it's so much easier to walk with them, instead of pushing against them. That is to say, you can stop fighting them when you realize it's just self-love.

Next up, get support. Please, don't go it alone, my darling, a coach, a therapist, a peer support community. Trauma makes us want to isolate ourselves. So, it's understandable you might want to do that. And challenging though it may feel, reaching out to get support is so vital ,my darling.

Now, onto some nuts-and-bolts stuff; movement. So, studies have shown that exercise can improve the symptoms of PTSD. And pumping up the good feelings with endorphins, it just feels really damn good. Walk, bike, race your wheelchair, dance it out; whatever gets you moving.

I have been drastically, dramatically, down the deepest dark well of depression, and I get it. When you're wicked depressed, you're not like, "I'm gonna hop on the Peloton® today," like, come on. That's ridiculous. Walk two extra times from your bedroom to the kitchen and back. And then, the next day may get three extra times, right? And then the next week, give yourself a week, and then make it four. You see what I'm doing?

Make it slow, make it steady. Check out your minimum baseline here, right? Set a minimum baseline that really supports you. And if you're like, what's that? Episode 78 is all about it.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

Next, is journaling. So, there's an evidence base behind journaling, as a way to help with anxiety, which is a very common symptom of underlying trauma, as well as, low B12, right? Holistic here, my darlings. But you know what? The journaling can help either way, it's pretty fun.

I'll be sharing all about something called "affect labeling"; that sounds like a cool term. And a special kind of journaling I love, in an episode coming soon. So, take a moment, just do it right now. Make sure that you're following the show or subscribed to the show, so you don't miss a thing.

Next up, get creative. There is evidence behind creativity as a helpful tool for reducing stress and anxiety. And it's super affordable to grab a box of Crayola's®; what, are they like, 99 cents? And stackable junk mail to color on; it doesn't have to be fancy.

So, don't let some like, "I'm not artistic. I don't have the right supplies," story get between you and letting yourself do meditative practices; like drawing, coloring, making little sculptures out of mashed potatoes, which my sister and I really loved to do growing up.

I could go on and on, on and on and on, about the things that are helpful in healing trauma. There is so much from my training and somatic experiencing, and sensorimotor psychotherapy as a coach, that I bring to my work in Anchored, every day.

This episode could be 600 hours, so I'm going to pause. And I'm going to promise you that I'll do more episodes on this. So, I want to end with two notes. One, while it is so great, and I mean it, it's so phenomenal that we are talking more about trauma, I want to say this very clearly: Everything isn't a trauma response.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

You getting upset is not the same as you getting clinically triggered. It may mean you're annoyed, irritated, but getting triggered like, we're using that word way too lightly. Getting clinically triggered, as someone who has been clinically triggered, it is a very big deal. And it's usually not what's up, for most of us, when something is a bother, right?

I believe in naming what's real. Trauma is pervasive, and something to be addressed with love and care. And, I believe it undermines our resilience to say that we are all traumatized, that everything is a trauma response. And that every time we leave ventral vagal, we are experiencing or reacting from trauma.

There are important gradations here, and trauma is a big reaction. It's more accurate to say, that the experience of overwhelm in the nervous system, most of the time is due to stress or distress. And that is something we humans are able to adapt to, to manage, to handle.

Thought work, which is a practice based in neuroplasticity, teaches us that the more we say something, the more we believe it. So, the more we say something is traumatic, the more we say, "Oh my god, I'm so triggered," the more identified we become with trauma.

And the more we react to life just being 'life-y', as though it was something that rises to the level of a life threat event, which is what a trauma reaction response is, well, that's often not the case. My beauty, it's okay to say that something was stressful or distressing or just friggin' lousy.

We don't need to label it as traumatic, for it to have sucked. And to be something that we want to work with or on, something that is upsetting. It is valid to be upset, and to work with stressful and distressing experiences. They don't have to be traumatic to count.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

And thought work also shows us that what we say about ourselves, we live into. So, I want to invite you to feel into the difference between, “I’m so stressed out, right now,” and “This deadline is so traumatic.” It feels really different, right?

My beauty, you know me, English as a Second Language kiddo over here. I can get a little particular about finding precisely the right word, and this isn't about that. It's not about somatics.

We are starting to see studies that show that an expanded, and sort of too broad, definition of trauma, is correlating with lower resilience to stress. And, I will drop the PMID (PubMed identifier) in the show notes. That is the opposite of what we are trying to foster, when we open our hearts and our minds to working collectively with the stress, distress and trauma that is alive and well on this planet.

In this moment, it is absolutely necessary that we start to see that the things that we once believed were the causes of trauma, Big T trauma, kaboom trauma, it's so much more than that.

We need to continue to open our thinking, our definition, our conceptualization of trauma. While at the same time, being really careful not to take away our own capacity to be resilient in the face of life being ‘life-y’. And experiences being difficult, by simply labeling it trauma, and not believing that we can support ourselves to move through it.

I get it, this is nuanced. This is complex. And, I'm seeking to do it justice here. And yeah, I just want to say that; it's nuanced. It's complex. And it's so important that we're talking about it.

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

Finally, I will say this, if you have a trauma history, particularly one that meets the PTSD, C-PTSD, criteria, coaching with a coach who is *not* also a therapist, is not the first step for you, my perfect darling. Therapy with a specifically trauma trained therapist is one who knows things like; EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), internal family systems, other trauma-based work.

Once you are stabilized, and able to function in the world the way you want to, then coaching is a gorgeous and glorious next step. My beauty, come join Anchored, it's the perfect place for you.

And stabilization, first; being able to feed yourself, showers, get groceries without being clinically triggered. That is step one. And, that is the arena of a trauma trained therapist.

So, my love, thank you for listening. There's something exciting I want to share with you. Which is, next week is the 200th episode of the *Feminist Wellness* podcast. To celebrate this momentous occasion, I am doing a giveaway. Head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/200Giveaway to join us.

The prizes are incredible. First prize is a 50-minute coaching session with me. Wow, that's going to be so great. Second prize is a pep talk for you on the topic of your choice. Whatever you need some love, some care, some support around, setting boundaries, using your voice, being more embodied, whatever it is I will record you a pep talk for you to download, keep on your phone, have with you at all times.

And third place is a seat in my next Breathwork group session. It's going to be so amazing. Head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/200Giveaway to get all the details about how you can enter today and I will announce the winners

Ep #199: Trauma: What It Is & How It Shapes Our Lives

first thing in the new year. So you've got until December 31 to join us. So get on it.

Alright, my beauties, let's do what we do. A 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 gonna be a good one!