

## Ep #243: Overfunctioning



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Victoria Albina, NP, MPH**

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## Ep #243: Overfunctioning

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. When I'm recording this, not when you're listening to it, but when I'm recording it, it's the official two month anniversary of my birthday. Now, I am a Leo. Leo's, as you know, are generally pretty birthday obsessed humans. My birthday historically has been quite challenging.

This year was particularly a rough one, for lots of reasons I'm not going to go into, but it was a rough one. My friends, and my Billey, my partner, all rallied and took really good care of me, but it was very emotional. It was a really challenging one.

Maybe I'll do a show about birthdays and why they're challenging. But for now, I was thinking that I would really like a birthday present from you. It's this, head on over to where you get your podcasts and leave a written review and a five star rating for the show. Subscribe to it, follow it, share it on your social media, or share it with a friend. It really helps to get the show into more people's ears.

Making the show every week takes up so much of my time, costs so much money, and I do it because I'm so dedicated. I'm so mission driven; which sounds corporate but whatever.

I suffered for so long, we're about to get into it in just a second. But I suffered for so long with emotional outsourcing, and couldn't get help. I didn't see the way to live my life more differently. I have been so privileged to study Psychology and Public Health and Somatic Experiencing and Sensorimotor Psychotherapy, and to be a Master Certified Coach, which

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was also very expensive, and I want to share all of this knowledge with everyone who wants it.

So, you leaving a rating and a review helps bump the show up in search feeds; more people find it which means more people get free help. So, please help me help the people. I don't really think of myself as helping people. I'm not really out here in that kind of a colonialist framework, people are helping themselves. I'm simply providing material, but you know what I mean?

Please, in honor of the two month anniversary of my birthday, which is also the 10 month anniversary of my birthday-eve. Would that be it's my 10 month birthday-eve? Yeah, that's pretty cool. Anyway, rating and review, share on social tag me, please and thank you, @VictoriaAlbinaWellness.

Okay, with that aside, I'll also say that I am quite surprised to be recording this episode for you today, because I talk about this subject, which is overfunctioning, with my clients in Anchored, in the Somatic Studio, and my one-on-one clients, we talk about this or some manifestation of this literally every single, actual, for realsies, day. Because overfunctioning is such a core part of emotional outsourcing.

Which, if you're new around here, welcome, is codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits. We talk about that under the umbrella term of "emotional outsourcing." Overfunctioning is this thing that all of us who are emotional outsourcing kind of humans, we all do it. And so, I'm going to be really real with you.

This is hilarious to me. I was about 127.43% sure, like totally sure, that I had covered this topic about 3 ½ years ago here on *Feminist Wellness*. I totally thought it was long ago recorded because I hear myself talk about it so much. Then someone wrote in to me and my team, on Instagram, @VictoriaAlbinaWellness, and asked if I had something on this topic.

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Meow, meow, meow, meow, meow, I was chagrined to find out that I did not, and now we shall rectify this grave error in remembrance with this week's episode on overfunctioning; that old family favorite. We're going to do what nerds do: We're going to describe the problem. Talk about why we are this way. How it shows up and F\*'s with our relationships, and of course, what to do with it in your life and the life of those you love.

Let us start with a story. Once upon a time, in a bustling city there lived a woman named Carolina. Carolina's journey into overfunctioning began in her childhood, as these things often do. While her childhood looked pretty darn good on the outside. Her parents were still together, they were married to each other, they lived in the same household, there were no huge screaming fights on the lawn, or in the living room or anywhere else.

She had food, she had hot water, she had heating, she had clothes, she went to school clean every day with a lunch in her bag. There were after school activities. Things looked really good.

Meanwhile, her parents, Sarah and Robert, had a tumultuous relationship. They didn't really seem to like each other that much. The relationship was marked by frequent, hushed tones of whisper-fight arguments that were held behind closed doors and were never discussed with the children. And, there was significant emotional volatility.

Sarah, her mother, struggled with untreated mental health issues, including depression and anxiety. Which often made it challenging for her to fulfill her role as a nurturing parent. As a result, young Carolina, the eldest daughter... this is part of what we do. Eldest daughter here, but I think you guessed that like 200 episodes ago... Carolina stepped in to fill the gaps in a family dynamic.

She believed that by being the perfectest daughter, she could bring harmony to her troubled, and just really disconnected and emotionally

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checked-out family. From a very early age she became the family peacemaker and caretaker. Her role as the responsible and nurturing child was a classic manifestation of emotional outsourcing. Specifically, codependent experience.

She learned to read the emotional climate of the household, and would try to defuse conflicts between her parents, parents and siblings, etc. She took on responsibilities that were far beyond her years, such as preparing meals, ensuring her younger siblings were fed and cared for and had done their homework, and even helped her mother manage her emotional issues.

Carolina's sense of self-worth became intertwined with her ability to meet the emotional and practical needs of her family. She derived validation and a sense of purpose from being the fixer within the family unit. And, of course she did, she was really good at it.

Her mom, while well intentioned, was often emotionally unavailable due to her own struggles. And played a role in this codependent dynamic, living out what she had experienced with her mom and she had probably experienced with hers and hers and hers, for generations back.

While Sarah relied on Carolina for emotional support and stability, Sarah herself was inconsistent in providing the nurturing and guidance that Carolina needed as a child. In hindsight, Carolina can see that her mother was an emotional child herself, emotionally immature and unreliable, though always on time for pickup after school or after school activities.

Her mom always did the work, the activities, the doing of being a mother, but emotionally was not someone Carolina could truly count on to be the grown up. This inconsistency created emotional confusion for Carolina and reinforced her sense of responsibility for her mother's wellbeing. She

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yearned for her mother's love, approval, and true care, but receive mixed messages.

Sarah would sometimes praise Caro for being so responsible and independent, "Such a big, good girl." But other times she would lash out in anger or withdraw emotionally, as is typical of emotionally immature parents; Episode 167; leaving Carolina feeling generally confused and anxious and desperate for a sense of control and stability.

Which, by the way, is 1,000,000% foreshadowing on my part. Carolina's father, Robert, was a quieter presence in the house, but also contributed to the unstable environment. He struggled with his own coping mechanisms, not really having many. Often turning to work as an escape from the turmoil at home, not knowing how to feel his feels, and definitely not knowing how to communicate those feels in a healthy way.

This left Carolina feeling unsupported by both parents, and even more driven to maintain a sense of control and stability within the family. Again, pretty on the nose foreshadowing, my darlings. Growing up in this environment, Carolina internalized the totally understandable logical belief that *she* needed to be the dependable one.

The glue that held her family together, because she kind of pretty much did, especially emotionally. She developed an acute sensitivity to the emotions and needs of others, which she called being really empathetic; Episode 94; which served her well in the short-term, and was a super brilliant childhood survival skill.

But eventually it became a codependent-style burden when she, not just sensed other's emotions and needs, she took them on as hers to manage and fix; à la savior, martyr, saint. Carolina learned early on to take on the role of the responsible and nurturing child, the adult in the room, by eight years old.

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She believed, and had really significant evidence to back her up, in believing that being the perfect daughter would enable her to bring harmony, aka safety via control, to her troubled family. Remember, that one looked really great, on the surface by the way. This example is a super important one.

Caro had a pretty darn good childhood by most people's standards, and definitely would not have called her childhood a traumatic or even stressful one, likely. Because she was so focused on surviving and being the rock of her family, that she couldn't comprehend the impact on her sense of self and worth, her physiology, or her young nervous system.

This is classic “under-coupling,” which is a term we're going to talk about in a super-nerdtastic show very soon to come. This example is so important, specifically because there wasn't violence or addiction or abuse or death of a parent or a war, or any of the things that used to be associated with emotional outsourcing, with codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing habits.

There were no instances of what we used to call “big T” trauma; Episode 199. Instead, Caro suffered the death of her childhood by 1,000 tiny cuts. All of a sudden, a 10-year old was her mom's therapist. The one amusing her easily annoyed dad, while doing tons of chores no one asked her to do, to try to make the home feel emotionally stable. Nothing acutely bad happened.

Meanwhile, Carolina grew up not feeling attuned to. Meaning, her nervous system didn't get the coregulation it needed. Her feelings felt like a burden to her emotionally unavailable, self-burdened, mother. Her emotionally distant father ran hot and cold, saying, “Come snuggle,” one moment and, “Don't bother me, I'm listening to music,” the next.

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So, her nervous system never felt safe or secure, with either parent. And so, her little kiddo brain did what they do, it made her parents' shortcomings her fault.

She went into hyperdrive without even knowing it, striving to do, do, do, do more, to try to cover up for the obvious inadequacies in her character that led her parents to not show up for her the way she needed. To not understand her. To not support her. To not ask her, "Hey, baby, how are you feeling?"

Let's pause and take a breath. I can imagine so many of you are nodding your heads, being like, "Yep, it's me. There's so much of my own story in this one, for sure." Let's take a moment. Let's breathe a little extra compassion, curiosity, and care into our bodies. Let's soothe our inner children, who may be rolling around in memory-ville, by reminding them we are grown now. Yeah, that's it, breathe into it.

So, by taking on the role of the responsible and nurturing child/adult, Caro hoped to bring stability and calm her to chaotic family life. However, as she grew older and entered adulthood, these patterns persisted. Which, they will until we learn to take our life back. They began to take a toll on her own wellbeing and relationships. Which makes sense.

Without realizing it, she did what we do. Our nervous systems do something called "reenactment," where we act out the past in an attempt to have it turn out differently. So, she sought out partners and friends who needed her caregiving and problem solving skills.

She was constantly giving, giving, giving, and she dated people and was friends with people who were takers, who wanted someone who would give and give and give financially, emotionally, in terms of labor, in every way. Because that's what they were used to receiving.



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Meanwhile, when folks tried to give to her, she had no idea how to receive, and the love and caring others offered just kind of bounced off her, never making its way in, no matter how loving folks were with her. It would just strengthen the story that she was alone in the world, and had to do everything herself. I mean, it wouldn't get done otherwise, right? Oof, it definitely wouldn't get done right.

This pattern of seeking out individuals who required her help, also allowed her to maintain her role as a caretaker, part of her identity, and to continue to derive a sense of, yeah, identity, self-worth, and most importantly, safety, from that role. Because it's what her nervous system learned as the safest path through childhood.

In her career, you're going to be shocked, she excelled. Folks with codependent habits... I'll do a show soon about the benefits of codependent thinking. Because, man, we really kick butt at work. All right, putting it on the list.

So, Carolina, of course, she excelled at work. She took on extra projects, she worked late to ensure her team's success, I mean, she really went above and beyond. At home, she meticulously managed every aspect of the household... looked impeccable around there... from cooking nutrient dense organic meals to overseeing her child's schoolwork and activities.

Carolina's friends admired her as a reliable and selfless friend who was always there to help, regardless of what was going on in her own life. Which makes perfect sense, because emotional outsourcing and codependent thinking is characterized by a lack of healthy boundaries, an excessive focus on other's needs, and a difficulty in recognizing and meeting one's own needs. Because the nervous system says, "Don't you dare."

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Carolina's story exemplifies these traits, as she struggled to set boundaries, prioritize her wellbeing, and kind of didn't even realize she had needs, because she had spent a lifetime pushing them down and negating.

As the years passed, her overfunctioning habits began to strain her relationships. Her partner, Sam, felt increasingly disconnected from her. As if she were the captain steering their ship, while Sam was relegated to being a passive passenger. Constantly failing to make or keep Caro happy, no matter what Sam did.

Her children, although super well cared for, missed out on quality time with their mother as she juggled her many responsibilities, and prioritized the activities of being a mom over the emotional presence of being a parent. Much like her own mother did.

Deep inside, she believed that she had to keep moving, moving, moving. She would feel a queasiness somatically in her body, that she didn't understand and didn't have the tools to explore.

Deep inside, she believed that she had to keep moving, moving, moving. And, should she try to rest, or even watch a show or a movie with her kids on the couch without doing two or three other things at the same time, she would feel this somatic queasiness in her body. This weird energy in her belly that she didn't understand and didn't have the tools to explore.

She didn't like that uncomfortable feeling that came with rest, so she'd find something to do, to cook, clean, to organize, to volunteer for. Prioritizing everything other than her relationships, Carolina's friendships dwindled. She rarely had time for socializing.

Carolina was not present in her life, and eventually her over functioning lifestyle took a toll on her physical and emotional health. She rarely, if ever,

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made time for self-care, and neglected her own needs, as her survival skill default. Stress became her constant companion, causing her nervous system to remain in the perpetual state of fight or flight that had marked her childhood.

I'll also put a little caveat here, there's definitely functional freeze in this story. I have a whole, pretty darn long, because it's really scientifically detailed, show about functional freeze coming up soon. That's another one where I was like, "Wait, I've been talking about functional freeze for a decade. How have I not covered this?" But anyway, she was in it.

She was in fight or flight, functional freeze, and her body showed her all about it. She developed tension headaches and migraines, anxious, restless insomnia, digestive issues; all physical manifestations of her overfunctioning. It was during a moment of profound exhaustion that she realized something had to give.

She was so overwhelmed by feelings of resentment and emptiness. She resented Sam, and her kids, her colleagues, even the dog; all things she felt like she had to deal with, manage, clean up after, not just be present. She began to question why her life, despite all her efforts, felt unfulfilling and stressful.

Carolina's story is so helpful. Again, I bet there's at least some part of the story that you're nodding along to, going, "Yep, it's me." So, let's pause the story, back it up, zoom out for a hot minute, and get nerdtastic.

This concept of overfunctioning, in the context of relationships and psychology, was first introduced by Dr. Murray Bowen, MD. A psychiatrist and pioneer in the field of Family Systems Theory. For Dr. Bowen, overfunctioning is an unhealthy pattern of behavior in which one person, or relationship or family system, takes on excessive responsibility, control, and caretaking roles.

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Often, at the expense of their own wellbeing and to the detriment of the relationship's balance; that interdependence we're always talking about here, as the remedy to codependence.

Over functioning is, in my opinion, also a buffer. It's a way to not pay attention to your rattled somatic experience of your life. To ignore your own discomfort or big old feelings by frenetically and, often a little obsessively, taking on everyone else's everything. I mean, living other people's lives for them is a really great distraction, for sure, right?

I'm being serious. If you're trying to not feel your feelings and not be present in your life, what's easier than living other people's lives for them? Again, zooming out, talking about where else overfunctioning can come from, and how else it can show up in our lives.

So, one, let's start with the nervous system. Overfunctioning is a sympathetic place to be. Like we were talking about, it can be this thing called "functional freeze," that we're going to get to. And in that, it can often mask this deep, underlying, dorsal or freeze state. In that, overfunctioning is super un-good for our nervous systems and our health. It impacts everything in a very negative way, from our blood pressure to glucose management, to mental health, to digestion.

Two, overfunctioning can be influenced in complex and also really simple ways by cultural and gender dynamics. In the patriarchy there are strong expectations that humans socialized as girls over function in their roles as caregivers, cleaners, cooks, etc. Which can absolutely establish and exacerbate this way of living.

This was definitely the case growing up Latina. The women would do one majillion percent of the cleaning after dinner, while the dudes retired to watch football or do whatever dudes do. There can definitely be a cultural

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indoctrination towards overfunctioning that leads it to become this huge part of our identity; “The Good girl” “The Good Wife” narrative.

And stepping out of it can be really, really challenging, because you're stopping doing everything you were raised to believe will get you liked, approve of, told that you're good, loved... Yeah, that's a lot. So, I just want to hold some space for how hard it can be to step out of this habit, and to give you mad props. Yeah, I'm showing my age with saying “mad props,” but I did it, and I shall do it again.

I want to give you mad props, if you're ready to kitten step your way out of this habit. If overfunctioning is what you saw modeled for you in childhood, and is part of your culture.

Three, in a family setting, a parent who constantly hovers over their child, micromanaging every aspect of their life, can definitely be an overfunctioner. This behavior generally stems from their anxiety and their desire to shield their child from any potential harm. I totally get that, and it can lead the kiddo to feel smothered, and incapable of making decisions on their own.

When parents over function, it can have a lasting impact on their kids. Who can grow up with a skewed understanding of responsibility and relationships. Which, of course, has a knock on effect into their adult relationships. Like, we might have seen with Caro's kids in the future if the family system hadn't gotten some support.

Four, in a professional setting, an overfunctioning employee takes on all the responsibility and tasks within a team, even when it's not their role. Well, obviously their nervous system and their habits lead them to do this, to gain approval and to feel some sense of control. It can create resentment among coworkers and can definitely hinder team collaboration.

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Employees who over function may take on way too much, leading to burnout and workplace stress. As always, this can be complicated when we bring in a Marxist lens and look at class of origin, or the class you were growing up.

We can also complicate this by looking at race, ability, immigration status, etc. All our reasons a person could over function at work, and potentially only at work, that is somewhat apart from this dynamic.

Five, healthy relationships are built on collaboration and mutual support. Interdependence between autonomous adults is essential for all parties involved. They contribute their fair share, respecting each other's strengths and limitations.

An overfunctioning partner might constantly seek to solve the other's problems, making decisions on their behalf, and providing emotional support to an excessive degree; see our recent episode on advice giving without consent.

While this can initially seem caring, like, "I just love you so much," it can really stifle the other person's autonomy. It can lead to one further into codependent living. This is a one way ticket to, you guessed it, Resentment-ville, USA. It's Such a great way to F\* up a relationship. It's a really good one; be someone's mom.

Okay, also, we're about to talk about intimacy. What is a quicker way to completely destroy the sexy than to effectively be another grown human person's, who's your partner, mom in the relationship? That sucks. I get why we do it. I totally did it. It is no good.

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I love watching my brain just start going on a tangent, and I'm like, "Alright girl, you can go for like four seconds, then I'm going to rein you in. Because if not, we're going to be here for hours."

Six, in friendships an overfunctioning friend may consistently offer advice, attempt to rescue their friend from difficult situations, and makes all plans. This 'so helpful' behavior can undermine the friend's ability to handle their own life, and creates an imbalance in the friendship. See Episode 110 "Codependent Friendships."

A client recently, was telling me that she was on vacation with her husband's sister, and the sister's family. The sister made all the dinner plans, all the daytime plans, and didn't check in with anyone. She decided what restaurants they were going, to what hotels, what activities. Way overfunctioned, in this way that really made my client feel pretty lousy.

Her vacation was being micromanaged by someone, without her adult consent, and made her feel really infantilized. It was really yucky.

Seven, in caregiver roles, such as taking care of an aging parent, an individual may have become an overfunctioner by assuming all kinds of responsibilities, without allowing the cared-for person to maintain their independence. This can lead to the caregiver's burnout, and the cared-for person feeling wildly disempowered.

Overfunctioning can have a profoundly negative impact on relationships in various ways. Resentment and power imbalances, as the person who takes on excessive responsibility often becomes the decision maker, as recently discussed.

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And two, that can, for sure, lead to a lack of intimacy. When one person is constantly in a caretaker role, there may be little room for vulnerability and sharing of emotions, which is crucial for deep connections.

Three, codependency. Overfunctioning can contribute to codependent thinking, as it is more classically defined, in which it's called codependency. Where one person relies heavily on the other for their emotional, physical, financial, well-being and functioning. This dependency can be suffocating and can prevent both individuals from growing independently.

Which brings us to four, stifled growth. The person on the receiving end of overfunctioning may not develop essential life skills, and may struggle with personal growth and self-confidence because they're not given the opportunity to learn from their mistakes and experiences.

Five, lack of trust. The person who is overfunctioning may not trust the other person to handle their responsibilities, leading to a lack of confidence in the other person's own abilities, because this person they love doesn't trust them to do the most basic of basic.

Six, those who over function may lose their sense of self as they become overly focused on meeting the needs and expectations of others. This can result in a loss of personal identity and fulfillment, and of course, just strengthens the old emotional outsourcing.

Seven, constantly juggling multiple roles or responsibilities without adequate self-care can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion.

Eight, overfunctioning can inadvertently enable unhealthy behavior in the other person. For example, if a parent constantly cleans up after their adult child, the child may not take responsibility for their actions and continue to rely on their parent, and is likely to put their partner in that parent role.



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I had an ex like this, who would say, straight up, that they didn't have to clean after themselves ever because, and I doth quote, "Someone else always has, and always will, do it for me." Wild, right? This was a 30-something year old grown up with a professional degree.

"I don't have to clean up, because someone else will always do it for me." Wild right? They put me in the mom role. I stepped right into it; it was a hot mess and did poorly.

Nine, communication breakdown. When one person is doing all the decision making, the other person is obviously left feeling unheard and unimportant.

Ten, overfunctioning can set unrealistic expectations for both parties involved. The overfunctioner may expect constant appreciation and recognition, while the other person may feel pressure to meet those expectations and to be a walking praise machine.

Eleven, ultimately, overfunctioning can lead to the deterioration of a relationship. The strain and imbalance created by overfunctioning can become so overwhelming that it becomes challenging to maintain a healthy, fulfilling connection.

Wow. So, that was a massive, heaping helping of 'argh,' with a side of 'oh my god, I was just trying to get through. Why are you calling me out?'"

So, what's this girl to do? Let's talk remedies. First, if you're seeing yourself, or someone you love, in this, as always, we start with the three C's; compassion, curiosity, and care. Pause to remember that it makes sense that you think, feel, and act this way. Of course, it does. It's a survival skill. It makes sense.

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Beating you up for doing it gets you absolutely, exactly nowhere. My darling, my sweet, tender ravioli, you can't heal hurt with more hurt. So, please stop being mean to you. Remember to love up on the little kid inside you, who's just trying to feel less scared in the world.

We need to unpack the many layers of our overfunctioning behavior to get to the other side. In Anchored, my six-month program, we bring in somatic or body-based nervous system resetting modalities, along with thought work.

Which helps us to change our automatic thinking patterns from childhood so we can evolve and mature into more adult ways of thinking about our relationship; to doing versus being, Episode 21; and to our need to over function for those around us, as a way to find safety.

To step away from the over functioning habit, we need that self-awareness. Where we recognize the signs of overfunctioning, and acknowledge that it's not sustainable. I think what's really important, is that we need to actively decide that it's not something that serves us. It's not something we want to do.

Because when I was deep inside it, I thought I was enjoying it. "It's just me, it's just who I am. I'm just this whirling dervish of activity. Oh, I love doing things for others." And I did, and I do. I am a generous person. I love doing stuff for others. But now I know how to give from my overflow and not pour from an empty cup. Right?

I was doing it without being intentional. We've talked in 400 million episodes of the importance of intention. Episode 84, for example, "Living with Intention" comes to mind. I was not in intention, right? So, we need to step into intentionality and ask ourselves, do I want to keep doing this? I, for one, did not.

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From there, we need to learn to say no. I know it's so hard. We want to please people. We want the people to be pleased with us, and they're not going to be when we stop. Facts, right? Like, just facts. But establishing boundaries prioritizes your wellbeing, and remember what boundaries are; they're resentment prevention. They're community care.

So, learning to say no, by supporting your nervous system to find more ease around 'no,' vital. Absolutely vital. And in that, we need to learn the importance, and this is going to be challenging too, to prioritize self-care practices such as mindfulness, meditation, movement.

And community care practices, like meeting with others, breaking the silence around overfunctioning, and talking to your friends. Because your friends are doing this too. They're doing it alone, and they're feeling alone, and we need to talk to each other.

Finally, we need to challenge gender roles, question societal expectations, and norms that are contributing to overfunctioning. Feeling like part of our DNA, as humans socialized as women, which is just completely garbage.

Carolina finally told a trusted friend how she was feeling, and our friend sent her to me, which was quite the honor. In our first session, I helped her to understand how her childhood experiences had shaped her overfunctioning tendencies and the ways this pattern was affecting her in every area of life.

We'll use somatic techniques to help her connect with her body and release the accumulated tension, stress, and bracing, in her system. She learned to recognize the physical sensations associated with her overfunctioning; a tightness in her chest and shoulders, or a pit in her stomach.

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These became the litmus test that would allow her, through her body, to say, "Hey, I think I'm starting to do that overfunctioning thing again. Let me go take a moment and take a breath, come back to intention and presence, and decide if I do or do not want to continue to do this."

Together, we worked on setting boundaries, practicing self-compassion, and gradually letting go of the need to control everything, by focusing on trusting herself to be chill with things, even if they're like, I don't know, only like 97.84% perfect. And, that was a stretch.

The whole concept of B+ work, it took us a while to get Carolina from A+ to A to A-. She also got to learn to trust that others will change their circumstances if they want to, and it's not her job to infantilize others and make decisions for them and do everything for them.

For example, if her partner doesn't think the kitchen is clean enough, then Sam can just clean it. And, she just trusts Sam to actually do it, instead of preemptively, paternalistically, doing it for them.

Carolina's transformation was gradual and profound. Slowly but surely, slowly but surely, she started taking time for herself; just a minute a day. She started re-engaging activities she had loved as a young person, and prioritize self-care with ever less guilt. I didn't say without guilt, with ever less guilt.

As she let go of the reins at work and at home, she noticed a significant shift in her relationships. Her marriage with Sam blossomed, as they began to share responsibilities, communicate more openly, as she started to really trust Sam, and was able to begin to receive love from them. Carolina has children felt closer to her as she spent quality time with them, rather than just managing their schedules and constantly doing for them.

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Her friendships rekindled as she learned to lean on her friends for support and companionship, and slowly with time was able to be vulnerable and open with them, and to trust them to set healthy boundaries with her.

Her career didn't suffer either. In fact, her ability to delegate and trust her team improved her overall efficiency and morale. She was no longer the overburdened hero. Instead, she became a collaborative and empowering leader. With the help of somatic coaching, she reconnected with her body, learned to set boundaries, and embraced a more balanced and fulfilling life.

Her story serves as a powerful reminder that healing and transformation are possible, even in the face of deeply ingrained patterns. And that by addressing overfunctioning, folks like you and me, can lead healthier, happier lives and can cultivate more meaningful relationships.

Carolina's journey from overfunctioning to self-compassion was a transformative one, and duh, took a lot of time at task, and Anchored, a lot of getting coached, a lot of leaning on the community, and a lot of tears. It's not easy. And, I will testify to that.

It is one majillion, kajillion percent worth it to live an interdependent life, where you trust the people you love to take care of themselves. You trust them and allow them to take care of you. You do beautiful things to show love and care to those you love. And, you let the love in too.

Oh my beauties, thank you. Thank you for being here. Thank you for listening. Thank you, as always, for tuning in to *Feminist Wellness*. I love making this show for you. So, thank you for listening in. I really appreciate it.

Once again, I will ask you for a rating, review, follow or subscribe and share on social. Let's get the word out. Let's do it.

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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 beauties. I'll talk to you soon.

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Feminist Wellness*. If you want to learn more all about somatics, what the heck that word means, and why it matters for your life, head on over to [VictoriaAlbina.com/somaticswebinar](https://VictoriaAlbina.com/somaticswebinar) for a free webinar all about it. Have a beautiful day my darling, and I'll see you next week. Ciao.