

# Ep #260: Receiving Compliments, Giving Consent, and Being Seen with Danielle Savory



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Victoria Albina, NP, MPH**

## Ep #260: Receiving Compliments, Giving Consent, and Being Seen with Danielle Savory

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'm really excited this week, we are talking with Danielle Savory. It's an amazing conversation, my heart just feels so alive having spoken with her and having her in my life, and I know that one of the reasons why we have such a deep trust-based, vulnerability-based connection is because we're both living in our authenticity.

And I know that when I was deep in my own emotional and outsourcing habits, I was so far from authentic, right? I was doing a thousand things to try to do what we do, which is to source our wellness worth and value from everyone and everything outside of ourselves instead of from within. It's the definition of emotional outsourcing after all. I was not living in my authenticity.

I often had no idea what I truly wanted for dinner, for a career, for a relationship. Like I just was so deeply out of touch with me, or I had some inkling of what I wanted, but it wasn't embodied, meaning like my body wasn't behind me. It was just my brain going, I kind of would like to have, I don't know, pho for dinner or whatever, but I didn't have the internal strength to be like, this is what I want. And if it's not what you want, that's cool. You go get sushi and I'm gonna get what I want.

You know what I mean? So stepping into my authenticity has been one of the greatest gifts of my life. It has completely changed my life. It is a practice like anything else. It's not a one and done and you gotta start somewhere. So Tuesday, February 13th at 8pm EST New York City time. That's 5pm Pacific Standard Time, and you can do the math everywhere in

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between, I'm doing a webinar. It's free. I'm going to be talking about how you can step into embodied authenticity.

And if you've not been to one of my somatic webinars, it's not a bunch of fluff, it's not just theory, I mean I love theory. But this is like for realies, right? So I'm gonna teach you an actual tool. We're gonna do it together. It's gonna be amazing.

A laugh, you'll cry, it'll be better than cats. And it's one step on this path towards stepping back into being the you that you want to be, whatever that is for you. You always know what's best for you, I never do, but I can offer what's helped me. And what's helped me has been somatic practice.

So to register, head on over to [victoriaalbina.com/260](http://victoriaalbina.com/260). Those numbers, that's the episode number for this show. There will be a link right in there. You can put your name and email in and get registered. I can't wait to see you there. I will be answering questions live, so join us live if you can, 'cause it's... it's so much fun to connect with you all and to be in conversation, but if you can't make it, NBD, which means no big deal. You'll get to replay the next morning in your email inbox, so join us. Okay, that's enough out of me. I wanna kick it on over to Danielle because she's a goddess, so here we go.

Victoria Albina: Danielle, thank you so much for being here. I'm just so delighted to be in conversation with you again.

Danielle Savory: I know, me too. Thank you for having me. I am so honored to be on this podcast. And I love how deep we get to go together.

Victoria: Yeah, let's do it. But first, will you tell the good people who you are, what you do. I know they're going to be so excited to hear from you.

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Danielle: Well, my name is Danielle Savory. And I am a sex and pleasure coach, at least that's what I call myself. But as we know, I think all roads lead to one place sometimes. And so, I use the lens of sensuality and sexuality, really, to help women reconnect with themselves, reconnect with their desires, that inner knowing. And I find that starting with sexuality and sensuality tends to be the quickest path for us to get there.

Victoria: That makes so much sense. As someone who does somatics and somatic experiencing, it makes sense. It's such a direct portal into the sensorial bodily experience of being a mammal, right?

Danielle: Yeah. And it brings up all the stuff really quickly.

Victoria: Ooh, it sure does. I was thinking this morning, as I was taking my vitamins, I was thinking about what the sexiest things our partners can possibly do for us are. I was thinking that as... I'm writing this book, and we were just talking about how I'm in this shift right now, where my creative juices are flowing overnight, which has never happened before. I've usually been like a '10 o'clock go to bed' kind of gal, but I was up till 4:30.

And so, Billey, my wife, she left for work this morning, and my vitamins were laid out. I've been loving having Toad in the Hole for breakfast. She cut the little circle out of the bread and left it out for me. She left me a sweet little note, and my maté is set up. And I was like, "This makes me want to have sex with you. This is the sexiest thing on earth." Yes, she goes to CrossFit. Yes, she's like, all that stuff. Yes. But also, vitamins laid out.

Danielle: Yeah. It's so interesting, because I get this question a lot, what can we do to kind of... When I'm working in heterosexual relationships, men are like, "What could I do to really help my wife be more into me?" And it does tend to be these little things, "Hey, I see you. I'm thinking about you. I care about you," that help create that safety. We're like, "Oh, there's my

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desire. There it is, right there. Because I just feel cared for and loved and safe in my body.”

Victoria: Yeah, it lets trust blossom. And what’s sexier than trust? The trust that allows for safety, and the safety that allows for trust. It’s a two-way little street there.

Danielle: Yeah. I do find for myself, sometimes it varies, depending on where I’m at in my cycle in the month. So sometimes it’s the very explicit, hot, erotic, like, put the gray sweatpants on situation for me. And then, the other times it’s like no. It’s making sure the humidifier is by my bed. Those little things that I know nourish me and take care of me, and are more likely to have me opening up.

Victoria: Yeah, I mean it’s also, when we think about the invisible emotional load that I will say is generally placed on humans socialized as women, I think that’s pretty fair to say, right? We carry that load around the house. And so, it’s challenging when you’re carrying that to really put it all the way down, if you’re carrying it alone, in order to get turned on and to be available for sex.

To think that that’s really a possibility when you’re thinking, “Do we have enough toilet paper? Do I need to wash socks? Did the kids outgrow their underwear? Whose bake sale is next week?” Etc., etc., etc. So yeah, the dehumidifier is a really big deal.

Danielle: It is. We just started doing this thing, this week actually. So typically, with my family, my kids and my husband, we do Rose, Thorn, and Seeds. Which I think we heard from the Obamas years ago. Where it’s like a celebration of the day. Everyone goes around, and says what’s our Rose of the day. What was challenging or kind of hard, and we didn’t like? And then, what’s our seed? What do we want to plant an intention for, tomorrow or for longer?

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Then we added on, what did you see that you just did? And then, we all thank each other for it. I forget, there was this woman on the internet, she called it “see, do” and I just loved that so I brought it to my kids. But it is about this emotional and mental load. And so, oftentimes, I think, especially in relationships, we're looking at our partner to share that with, instead of the entire family unit and all of the individuals in the house that can think and can see and can do; and of course. age appropriate.

But that's been such as beautiful conversation. Where it's not like I'm looking, for me, to my husband like, “Oh, you have to help take care of this.” No, this is actually something we want to teach everyone in the house as they're growing up. When we see something, we do it. And then we get to celebrate each other for that seeing and that doing.

Which feels like, I think, especially as a mom, it's almost like you're helping me out. Where it's like, why would I have you focused on this? This isn't a “me” thing. Because even in that thing, ‘thank you for helping me’, would assume that it is my job to start with. And so, really spreading that mental and emotional load amongst all of us, but then celebrating each other for those things that we see and do.

Victoria: I love that. I love the celebrating. It's a huge part of my work, helping my clients, supporting my clients, to remember to celebrate ourselves. So yeah, a huge part of my focus is perfectionism as a part of people pleasing and codependent thinking.

In perfectionist thinking, we don't pause, because nothing's ever good enough, right? Nothing's ever smart enough. Good enough. It never measures up when you have impossible standards in your mind, right? When what you're doing is towards the goal of actually creating safety for you, nothing will measure up. Because that's impossible, it's an inside job.

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And so, when we pause... I have folks in my program, in Anchored, celebrate the absolute most mundane things. like, you just drank water, I would invite you to put that on the Slack. Because it builds so much of that self-trust, that 'I will see me.'

I think this brings us around to talk about sex and sexuality and being seen. And what an important part of true connection with our own sexuality and with sexual partners being seen is.

Danielle: Yes, absolutely. I love how you said that. Because hearing you say that, and talking about the celebration in your program, that so much of what we do too with me, because it starts with us seeing ourselves. Because oftentimes, so much in partnerships, our partner actually does see us.

And it feels sometimes like a threat because it's so not practiced with ourselves. We hear this, "Oh my gosh, you're so beautiful." You're like no, no, no. You immediately resist it. You push it away. It's impenetrable... It's not how you say that word, but you know what I'm saying.

Victoria: We're very postmodern around here. Yeah, make it up.

Danielle: You don't really allow it to penetrate. You don't allow it to soak in and to become part of you, because we haven't practice seeing that beauty in ourselves. We haven't practiced our own sexiness. We haven't practiced. And so, when you talk about these women celebrating, that really is where it starts.

Because if it's not practiced, that practice of receiving and letting things soak in and become a part of us, it doesn't matter who says it, it's just going to keep bouncing off. We're going to keep repelling it until we can drop into that practice of really opening up to receive it from ourselves to start with.

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Victoria: I want to talk about, and hear from you, how you support folks to shift into being more receptive, and more having more capacity to receive. First, I want to nerd out with you, though. Because you're such a somatic nerd like me.

What do you think is going on in the nervous system, when people are like, "Oh, it's fine, I'm not that pretty, it's fine. Don't worry about it. Oh, I got this on sale. It's fine. No, my hair, it's so dirty," whatever. Instead of letting it in, what do you think's happening there?

Danielle: I mean, there's a few things happening. I think the first part that's happening is, when we were socialized as women, we were taught to stay small, to stay humble, to not really have the light shine on us. And there is this fear, because we're all swimming in the same water.

And so, as women, even looking at women, we will also have judgement of other women who allow themselves to think that they're pretty, or are dressing in a feminine way, or whatever. Because it feels like this 'less than' the qualities that we as a society lift up. Like, "You worked really hard. You're so productive. Look at your strength, your resilience," all of those sorts of things.

Those kinds of compliments with our appearance, or our beauty. or whatever, it's the subconscious thing of 'those aren't actually good qualities, because those are not revered in our society.' And when they don't feel safe for us, it's like, 'well, let me make myself smaller, so I can create safety. So, I'm protecting myself. So, I don't get kicked out of the tribe for really letting myself have it.' It's this/that.

I think what's happening really, in those moments, is this fear of 'if I don't accept this the right way, then I won't belong.' Like there's a way to accept a compliment, which is basically to push it away. Because if I really let



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myself stand in that, then this person that gave it to me might change their mind, or they might not like me.

And then, as we know with the nervous system, if we feel like we're afraid or under threat, then it starts repelling to that, and going to the fight-flight or freeze, or whatever our habitual response is. I think it really goes down to something about our fear of what receiving would look like for that person. "Maybe I won't belong, and then they'll have more thoughts about me. So, if I keep it here, then it stays safe."

Victoria: I mean, I grew up in the great state of Rhode Island; greatest state in the Union. Puritans, man, right? That puritan way of thinking; the being humble above all, work is the most important. It's amazing how deeply it permeates the collective psyche of this country, of life here on Turtle Island. It's pretty, pretty wild.

There's definitely something there about women being selfless. Meaning, we are so encouraged to not have a self. And so, if you're like, "You know, I am a really great friend. You're right, I am a great mom. I am gorgeous. I am great in the sack. I am just amazing." it flies so in the face of what a good, humble, Judeo-Christian woman is.

I think that's really important, and specifically for the folks listening in here to *Feminist Wellness*. We talk a lot about the danger of being seen when we grow up in emotional outsourcing, in codependent culture, where scapegoats are everywhere. Particularly when there's a problematic parent or emotionally immature parents, somebody has to be the fall guy, right?

And so, we go, "I don't want to get looked at. I don't want to be identified patient. I don't want to be the problem. I don't want to be scapegoated even harder. So, I'll just fade into the wallpaper. Thank you, very much."

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Danielle: Yes, absolutely. You know what else came up to me as you were saying that? I think also, it's like, in those moments, too, if it hasn't been practiced, even though we might be practicing at home, or with our somatics, or creating safety, or opening up to receiving, oftentimes, we're still going to have that first thought, the first dart, the first arrow, that triggers when someone says that.

And that feeling of, even if maybe you've tried to say those things, "Oh, I am a good friend, you're totally right," that creating safety around how uncomfortable that might make, especially if it's a woman-to-woman relationship, right? How uncomfortable it might make that other woman feel.

So, it's not just creating safety that I'm going to bring myself into this place of truly receiving a compliment, truly receiving what this other person is gifting me, but also, I have to have safety in 'they might be really uncomfortable with this response.'

We know about the mirror neurons, we can pick up on it, we see that, and if it's not the safety of, "I'm okay to say this, and I can create that in my nervous system and open to receive it. And I also am going to have to create even more safety on the back end, because they might be very put off by this. They might be very uncomfortable. They might start saying other things. Am I also prepared for this?"

Obviously, we're not consciously thinking this, but this is really going on in so many layers in the back of...

Victoria: Yeah. This makes me think of Episodes 27 and 28 of this show, which all about giving and getting emotional consent. And it's something I talked about early on, like four years ago, because it's such a cornerstone. Both of my feminism, and I had the great privilege of going to Oberlin in the

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90s, growing up in lesbian culture where consent... Like, "Hey, can I share a thought? Can I share a compliment? Hey, are you available?"

I'm just so grateful, now that it's part of the larger conversation, to have grown up in that. I feel so privileged. Thanks to the pack of wolves that raised me. I'm super grateful. But yeah, taking that moment to check in is really, really powerful. And it's such an incredible way to coregulate before you even start a conversation.

Could we demo it here? I feel like one of the things that really, really helps my people is when they hear what it really sounds like. Because it's so good and cool to talk in theory, but, "Hey, Danielle, I'd like to give you a compliment. Are you available to hear that?"

Danielle: I am 100% available for that.

Victoria: Thank you, I'm so glad to hear it. I just wanted to tell you that I think you're really brilliant and amazing. And the work you do is incredibly powerful, and is really revolutionary and liberatory in a way that's just really inspiring. And, you're really pretty.

Danielle: Aw, thank you. I receive that. I just felt it go through my whole body. I love that you demonstrated that, because it feels so different than if you were just to come out and say that, where I normally feel really awkward. Right? Not normally, but like that's my first response. I'm like, "I don't know how to take that in. Thank you so much, I'm so honored."

But when it's that question and the consent before, just so everybody knows what I'm experiencing in my own nervous system, was I got to pause and decide whether or not I was available for it. And I also created a receptacle to bring it in, by first putting my hand on my heart; because that's always my place I go. That's my, "You're okay, baby girl. I got you. You can bring this in."

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It was such a different experience than having somebody... I don't want to say they assault you with compliments, but have you ever felt that?

Victoria: Oh, I mean, yeah, to be receptive, we need to be in ventral vagal. We need to be in the safe and social part of our nervous system. We can have a little sympathetic excitement, like, "That's cool." But we need to be here. And so, consent allows us to orient. Even if it's not conscious, our nervous system is like, "I'm here." Because we have to be here to say we're fully embodied; yes or no?

Because yes, I think we've all consented in a non-embodied way, in a words only way. We can actually get into that, because I think that's really interesting. But it's really embodied consent. And it can only come from presence.

Danielle: Yes. I love it. And it made me think of how different it would be, with couples, when you're like, "What do you think of this? Do I look cute in this? Do you like this outfit?" Having that other person be like, "Are you open to hearing me share a compliment with you right now?"

Really, what are you looking for in this? Because I think it's such this habit. That we're just like, "Does this look okay? Does this look cute?" It's pausing and asking that person that just asked that question, "Are you actually open to me telling you, you look good?"

Victoria: I love that. And not just, "Are you open to my shit-canning your outfit?" More consent, more better, huh?

Danielle: Yeah, turns out.

Victoria: Turns out, studies show.

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Danielle: I'm going to tell him what I just learned on this podcast that I'm being interviewed on. I think we need to work this into our conversations.

Victoria: More consent, I love it. It is really nice for it to just be the sort of standard.

Danielle: Yeah, absolutely.

Victoria: Unconscious, just, "Hey, are you available for...?" And that's the language. So, if you're listening and you're like, "Ah, I've got to take one thing," it's "Are you available for...?"

And then the flip of that is, "I am not available for..." Which that's not a full boundary. Right? If you do X, I'll do Y, is how we talk about boundaries. But it's a pretty darn good limit. "I had a shit day shit day at work. Do you have space to hear about it?" "I love you, and I'm not available right now. Let me get home, let me have a cup of tea. Let me arrive, and then possibly. But currently, having just walked in the door, I'm not available."

Danielle: I tell that to my kids, actually, all the time. And it was interesting at first, because I've had other moms with this assumption that we should be available for everything that our kids need from us, emotionally, all of the time.

I'm just like, "Hey, if you and your sister are working through something, totally great. But my nervous system right now, as I'm cooking dinner, I'm not available for this. I'm not available to listen to it. I'm not available to regulate. I'm not available to anything. You need to go somewhere else if you're going to keep arguing." Done, not available.

Victoria: I feel like we make life so friggin complicated. But you want to prevent resentment – I'm not available.

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Danielle: Yeah. No, thank you.

Victoria: “No, thank you. Not arguing right now. No, thank you.” One of my nephew's at Christmas was doing that whiny... And I picked him up and I looked at his tiny eyes, and I said, “Hey, buddy, I love you. And that tone is not working with me. I'm not available for that tone.” I was firm and loving, and created a container of safety. Where I was like, “You know we've got a special thing going, guy, but not without tone.”

And he was like, “Oh, okay, listen, I would like a peanut butter sandwich. But I'm not hungry. My mom asked if I'm hungry. I'm not. I just want to eat it.” And I'm like, “Okay, bro, I'll make that.” It's just creating that safety, and being seen. It comes back to safety and being seen. What are we, monkeys or something?

Danielle: Yeah, absolutely. It totally does. “I'm not available,” is my favorite phrase for myself, more than anything. That is what I consistently have to say for myself. All of those voices and those feelings, I'm like, “Hey, Danielle, I love you, and I'm just not available to entertain that right now. I'll come back to you. I don't want to dismiss you.” I always have that conversation, especially when it's coming up in a time where it could be something I need to be with and spend time with.

“But right now, in this moment? I'm not available.” Just like you said, with a partner, you can go get a cup of tea, do these sorts of things. And I'm like, “Hey, if this is really important to you,” this is a conversation between me and me, “I will revisit this after I have my cup of tea, after I've wound down when I'm sitting on my couch. But right now, I'm not available to entertain all of these self-doubtful thoughts, or whatever it might be. We're not going to go there.

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Victoria: I love that. I love the idea of making a date with yourself. Yeah, like, “Hey, hot stuff. You and me, nine o'clock, meditation cushion? Let's have a hot date.”

Danielle: We can unpack all of this, right? Usually, I get there and it's like, “No, I'm fine now,” because you regulated, you did all this stuff. And it's all coming out of the dysregulated nervous system anyway. And then, once it's fine, you're like, “Oh, is there's anything else?” And sometimes there's other things. Sometimes there's deeper things that inner knowing wants to share. But oftentimes, it's like, actually, “I'm good. But thank you for seeing me and thank you for making the time for me.”

Victoria: I call it the opposite of that, having an ice cream sundae for breakfast. Sometimes our body had two eggs and some delicious sausage and protein and fat and the quality carb. Sometimes our brains have an ice cream sundae for breakfast. And there's few skills that serve me as much. Listen, I couldn't do this for the first 30-some-odd years of my life. But now, mid-40s, I'm like, “I see you, circus pants. I see you, circus encephalon. I see you, forebrain of foredisaster. I get what you're doing. Mama's not playing. I'm not interested because I'm not available.”

Danielle: “I'm not available right now. You need to go eat a wholesome meal and bring the sugar-high down.” It's just like my husband, he was like, “We're not having any of these conversations until after dinner. You need to eat. Please do not speak to me until you eat.” He was like, “I am 100% available to talk to you this after dinner. I'm not going there.” And I'm like, “This is a real thing.” And he was like, “I'm pretty sure it's the hangry.” That's when they call me the Momster.

Victoria: Momster. I love that. No deep convos before calories; after. The best treatment, I talked about this recently here on the show, my best treatment for ice cream sundae brain, is tramping. I got myself a little tiny trampoline. It's 40 inches tall. I'm 63 inches. It's 40 inches wide, right? It's

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just a little thing that sits in the corner of the house, and it is amazing for my lymphatics, amazing for the nervous system.

In somatic experiencing training, Peter Levine talks about the magic of the trampoline. Kathy Cain, who's a goddess, talks about all the diaphragms of the body, energetic diaphragms. And how a trampoline can help to get those realigned. It's mostly when I feel bonker-pants. I just could tramp it out, and 10 minutes later I'm giggling, laughing, I'm getting endorphin...

I think you need to get one. I got it off Marketplace, it was like \$60 bucks. It's in great little condition, because when people buy them and don't use them... It's highly recommended.

Danielle: I mean, I jump on the bed a lot. Every time I'm doing it, I'm jumping with the girls and we're giggly and being silly. But then I'm like, "Okay, guys, this is enough."

Victoria: Yeah, tiny trampoline is a great choice. This is going to become the trampoline network. Where in every episode I somehow weave it in. Just kidding, folks.

Danielle: I mean, maybe we can make it onto Barstool Sports.

Victoria: I mean, maybe we could. I mean, a girl can dream. That's all I can say. So, when we're talking about presence, and being in our bodies and receiving, I said that I wanted to ask you how you support your clients? Because you're an incredible coach. How do you support your clients to be able to receive more, should they want to?

Danielle: Well, we do it a number of different ways of course, as we all do, but it really comes back to helping them create safety in their body, first and foremost, always; however, we do it. One of the things that I love to help



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clients with, is to start to become aware of the different ways that they can get into that safety.

Because it's not always one way that it works, and one way works every single time. Being somebody who typically loves to be in my head, but then I know everything about the body and somatics, it's like I've wanted to fight... just go straight to my body, straight to my body. And sometimes I actually need to go through my head in order to access my body. And a lot of my clients are the same.

And so, helping them understand that there are so many different ways that we can help find that regulation and that safety. We work on a few different ones, starting to understand the tone of that dysregulation to begin with. What is that vibration, or that tone, or that feeling? And what is the sister that beats that one? Like, what is the best counter to that tone?

Because if I'm raging and you just tell me to take a deep breath, I'm like, fuck you, that's the last thing that I want to do, right? I think understanding our brain is going to resist a lot of times, depending on where we're at, in finding safety because we don't feel like we need to, or we're feeling righteous, or we're feeling outraged, or whatever it might be.

And so, starting to think of these things ahead time, so even when you're in these places, you kind of have a go-to list. Because I know for me, when I'm really upset and really dysregulated or whatever it might be, I don't have access. Even if I've been practicing this for 10 years, it's like I don't have access, I'm not thinking about those things.

But if I have a Post-it note, or list or something like that I can just pick and choose from, it makes it so much easier. But reception always comes down to creating safety; safety, first and foremost. Because we cannot open up in any capacity. Think about just even opening your arms, like you're giving a

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big hug, that feels really scary to stretch and open if your whole body is tight.

So, it's reminding ourselves, even just in that physicality, of how we can. There are a few different ways that we can do that. But it's always about safety.

Victoria: Thank you for that. This can get all so theoretical, so philosophical, and so esoteric, and we need to make it really manageable. I'll share, that movement from understanding, that sometimes we just start in the head to get to the body, like you said. I call them "9-1-1 cards."

And so, the thing I have folks do in Anchored, is write out: When I am feeling rage, here are the thoughts I'm likely to have. So, literally writing ahead of time: I hate my husband. He doesn't respect me. And then, in parentheses, I have them write who they're actually talking about. This is the part where I get flicked off a lot. "He doesn't respect me (my dad.)"

So, while you're chill, while you're in ventral vagal, who's projecting onto whom around here? Because we don't know what we're doing. When you're in ventral vagal, when you're chilled, when you're coaching with me, when I've been coaching with you, and the pressures not on, it's just us hens, right? Who are you projecting? When your eldest daughter acts up, who is that? Who are you actually mad at?

Write that down while you have your full cognitive function, because, you said, your brain doesn't work; and it doesn't work because, science. So, folks who are new to the nervous system, when you are worked up, when you're in sympathetic fight or flight, dorsal freeze/collapse your brain is focused, your body is focused on one thing, which is run or hide. Don't be lunch, right? It's like, get out of there, do not get snacked. T-rex is coming.

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Of course you don't have complex thought, because you wouldn't want to have it. I don't want to have it; I want to run. I'm going to get under the bed. So then, having those thoughts as a place to anchor the brain.

My clients are generally ridiculous smarty pants, I'm assuming yours are very much the same because we are a smarty pantses. Oh, sorry. Hey, Danielle, can I give you a compliment?

Danielle: Yes, yes.

Victoria: You're a smarty pants.

Danielle: Thank you. Hey, can I give you one?

Victoria: Oh, my God. I'd be really honored and grateful.

Danielle: You are such a smarty pants, that sometimes I get intimidated by all of your big words. Because my vernacular isn't quite as large as yours.

Victoria: Oh, my goodness. Well, thank you for the compliment.

Danielle: I always understand, but I'm like, I have just a very small amount of words that I can use in response. But she loves me.

Victoria: Also remember, I'm an ESL kid. So, the part of my brain around linguistics, right? Because I heard, two, often three languages growing up. My parents didn't teach us Italian, they kept Italian as a secret language between them. But also how cool is that? And so, speaking Spanish, English, and then my mom mixing French in, my brain loves words.

Danielle: You loves words.

Victoria: I loves words. I find them deeply fascinating.

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Danielle: Even as you said that... This is such a tangent for all the listeners; all the places we're going. When you just said, part of my selfconsciousness has always come because there's something that doesn't connect correctly in my brain since I was little. Where I can hear stuff, but I can't say it the way that I'm hearing it. And so, even if someone repeats their name multiple times for me, I have a really hard time.

My dad's the same way. I have a really hard time speaking it or saying it in that way. And so, I think that I've kept myself to a very small vocabulary to keep safe. Because if I get into the other words, then maybe I'll be looked at as not being smart because I'm saying them incorrectly.

Victoria: How interesting. Yeah, I can see how that would lead one to want to be smaller in that. Yes, yeah. Would you be available for a reframe? And we'll see if it lands, and if it doesn't... So, I think the diversity in the way our brains function is the most beautiful gift, right?

Because it engenders this creativity within us to work around the sort of normal, typical, ways of thinking and using words and using vocabulary and SAT words, right? And so, I actually think that it's a superpower of yours, versus, "My brain doesn't work right."

So, what if it's, "My brain has this extra invitation towards creativity that it offers me, as this way to find a way to be understood, that is perhaps even a million times more creative than it would otherwise be if you had the whole dictionary in the palm of your hand."

Danielle: Yes, I love that. I'm glad you caught that I said that, because I don't normally refer to it that way. But it's still there. Right? It's like, "Oh, it doesn't work right." But honestly, the one thing that I do love, and what a lot of my clients like, podcast listeners like, is I take these very complex things and I make them sound easy.

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But it's just because of the way that I talk, and it effortlessly comes in to making these concepts that really hard more simplified. Because I'm constantly coming up with metaphors or ideas or the way to say them, Because I don't want to use all the big words for them.

Victoria: Will you correct me if I'm wrong, but what I'm hearing you say is, that your brain is actually a magical superpower machine that takes complexities and makes them really simple. Is that what we're actually talking about? How magic and amazing you are. Cool.

Danielle: Okay, so okay, we're talking about smarty pants, about our clients.

Victoria: And how we go into the brain, because that's the safe place in this society, in this culture. And for a lot of us, particularly for those of us whose bodies were the site of stress, distress, and trauma, growing up, being in our bodies; not so smart. So, we go to brain.

And so, we were talking about receiving and being seen, and having openness and being prepared for the nervous system to say, "Oh, no thank you," for that compliment. To protect us from the potential danger of being complimented, by going into brain. And so, we were talking about having these 9-1-1 cards, in my world. You talked about Post-its; that's lovely, I love Post-its. My house is covered in them.

To help us to like come back to center, to come back to heart, to soothe brain. Because that's another thing... I'm wagging my little finger; put your finger down. That's a thing that can happen in the #wellness #somatics meow, meow, kind of world. Where it's like the primacy of the body becomes this whole project, as though it could solve for the Cartesian primacy of the mind.

We've spent all this time, as humanity, being like, "Oof, bodies, those are dumb. Brains is everything." Just being like, "Just drop into your body, feel

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it all in your body,” is not also not the answer. No, the dichotomy is never the answer.

Danielle: And for those of us that are very intelligent in our brains, we like to think through stuff, understand how things work. It's like, why would we ever work against what works for us? We can include the body, but when we deny all of the brain...

That's why, when I first got started in this work living in Portland, Oregon, where it is very crunchy, it's very granola. When I was first introduced to mindfulness... This was before there was Mindfulness magazine, and it was on the cover of all the books... It felt so woo to me. It felt so out there. I really had to work hard to find my teachers, like Richie Davis, who was first getting all the neuroscience, getting meditation into neuroscientific labs.

Like Rick Hansen, he's my favorite teacher. Because I *need* to understand and I *need* to be able to have access to just my brain. So, I kind of went through it, for my own process, from backwards. Where everyone was teaching me about body, body, body, but it felt so inaccessible because I hadn't accessed the gatekeeper, which was my brain.

I hadn't accessed this part, which allowed me to land in my body. Because they were like, “Just feel this feeling,” and I'm like, “Screw you. You have no idea what is happening right now. You told me just to feel and take a deep breath.” It would enrage me.

And so, working with my clients, it's like... Really, a lot of times I have to start with, when I'm talking about tone, what is that match? That's why I knew my husband was going to be my husband, because I met my match, right? He challenged me. I felt safe with him. He was my match in so many ways.

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We have to find our match with what's going on in our brain. So, what is my match when it's anger? What is my match when I'm insecure and in selfdoubt? For me, a lot of times I have jingles. I like to have jingles that I sing to myself, or funky songs.

It's almost like the belonging thing. The belonging, or Everybody Hates You, that's like one of my favorite tunes. So I'm like, "Oh, this is your everyone hates you song again. This is your everyone hates you. Nobody likes you and you don't belong." when I sing it like this, I laugh.

Victoria: It takes the air out of it.

Danielle: It makes me smile. And I'm like, "Oh, my gosh. Oh, baby girl, there you are again. This is so silly. This is an old thing. You're totally fine." It's those jingles for when I'm feeling really alone and down and don't belong. I just want to play into that. And humor it away. Humor brings me up and out.

When it is anger, anger is so much bigger for me. It's this huge emotion. And so, I have to have a little bit of a different energy, because humor does not counter my anger. Bringing the jingle in at that point doesn't make me laugh. It makes me want to punch the clown.

And so, that's what I'm saying about the tone. When we start to understand these tones and what works for us, then we can find safety when we find that counterpart.

Victoria: It's beautiful. Two things are coming to mind. Well, first of all, this jingle thing is like, please sing this from the mountaintops. It's so incredible. I also walk around the house singing all day, and my BFF, Alessandra, and I just sing to each other all day long.

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Yesterday, I sent her a text message where I just said the word “hamster” about 20 times, and then she just responded by going “tweet” for a really long time into the phone. That's all we said all day. It was magical, and my heart felt so connected and so seen in my total weirdness and her total weirdness.

And that's the safety, right? That's platonic, true love. But that's the kind of thing, being seen in all of your weirdness. And not just accepted, but like, “Oh, match set, girl. You want to sing hamster at me? I will squeak at you.”

Danielle: I will do it right back.

Victoria: You are going to get it, and that creamy. So, I'm loving jingles. Two things are coming to mind. One, it sucks to have your smarts problematized. I am part of a meditation community that I love, and is incredible and really, really works deeply to reconnect us with our heart. That's very much the work is living life through a big, open heart.

The guy whose lineage we are a part of, calls it the essential human task to live from our authenticity and our open heart. And, I love that. And, I think it's beautiful. And, I have spent many years in this community feeling like my smarts are really problematized. I'm told, “Tet out of your brain. Oh, you don't need to understand. You just need to feel.”

And I get where they're going. But I don't agree. I am with you. It does serve me, who I am, how I experienced the world, how I find safety in my nervous system, to understand first.

Danielle: Yes, absolutely.

Victoria: I don't think it's a problem when we stay there. And when we argue for all brain, yeah, we're cutting ourselves off from the richness of the human experience. But do you think I'm doing that, Danielle Savory? Do



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you think I'm cutting myself off from the richness of the human experience?  
I think not.

Danielle: Absolutely not. I think you're enriching it. And I'm the exact same way. This is why I studied neurosciences. This is biology. This is why I continue to like, because for me to access my body, I actually need visuals or need something...

That's something I learned for myself. When I can picture how the chemicals look, or when I can picture the brain, when I can picture the clitoris, when I can picture all of these things, then I can tell myself, "Oh, this is what's happening. This is what's going on." And then, I can actually be in my body.

I can't just straighten my spine, or like feel like my spine is really in a proper position, until I've studied what the spine looks like. I need to have that. And then, all of a sudden, I can access it as a felt sense. So for me, it can come to actually feeling only once I understood what the clitoris looked like. Then I could feel it, I could access more of neurons with my mind because I could see it in my mind's eye.

And so, I think there's so much... Instead of, "Oh, just feel. Just feel this feel." For those of us that live in our head, give us an in. We need that lubrication to get into bodies. This feels too harsh. I have no consent from my brain yet, that we can even go there. The analytics and understanding helps us.

Victoria: I think it just hit me how problematic it is, because it is overriding the brain without its consent. So 'just drop into your heart, just go into your heart, go into your body, just go into your body. Versus just gently saying, "Hey, brain, I get that you're a smarty pants."

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My brain has been my biggest protector since I was so much small, right? I've been able to think my way out of pretty much everything, including having feelings. So, I'll own that. But I can also, by inviting my brain to not be my ally but my coconspirator, then I can step into the fullness of life through heart, by living in my mind through my heart. Does that make sense? Bringing heart to my mind, as opposed to shutting my mind down in service of heart.

Danielle: Yes, absolutely. And we can get there. And it's why I tell a lot of my clients, "Hey, if you have a very active brain, then we want to keep it active as we're accessing your body. Give it a problem to solve." If your brain loves to problem solve, if your brain loves to go on treasure hunts, which mine does, give it a treasure hunt. Give it a question that you need it to answer.

All these tricks that I developed, really, in meditation. Because all these cues and prompts that I was getting... Over a decade, when I was first learning meditation... weren't helping me. They weren't helping me actually get into my body and feeling my breath and all of that. I was like, my brain needs more than that. It needs more information. It needs a task. It needs somewhere to go. This isn't helping.

And so, to assume that everybody could drop into meditation the same, or we could just feel our breath or do all these things, I think that's where we miss so much. Of really bringing somatics to highly intelligent people, because we forget that there is a really big gatekeeper. And like you said, we can be coconspirators with that brain, collaborators. rather than one or the other. Right?

Victoria: Yeah. I was just writing about how there's self-care for every season, it really needs to be our framework, right? And there may be a time when there's things going on in life or there's not much going on in life, like whichever it is for you, that makes the brain go into a more activated state.

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I don't mean sympathetically activated, but a more thinkering kind of moment. Maybe it's just your astrology, or maybe it's your period, or whatever it is.

There are days where I can sit down. Billey, my wife, is a Tibetan Buddhist. And so, she meditates at least once a day, and it's a really big part of her life. I sit with her often. And it's just really interesting. She's incredibly intelligent, and there's periods where it's easier to sit and just be quiet. And there's periods where I get the opportunity to see myself more deeply. “Yeah, that's what it is. Okay, let's work that reframe.”

It's not like Barnum and Bailey in some bad way. It's really, “Oh, okay, my brain has given me an opportunity to remind the entirety of me that we are partners.” And that my brain is not bad, thinking is not bad, thinking doesn't mean I'm not spiritual. That it's not a problem, right? And my brain is just reminding me how much it loves me, because that's what brain chatter is. Right? It's just, “I love you. I love you. I love you. Don't I? Don't I? Don't I?” But it sounds like, “Do we have laundry soap?” You can tell I really do need to do laundry, because all of my distractions today have been laundry themed.

Danielle: Yeah. And I always like to ask, where's your growth? Because there's certain times, for me, where I actually need a more disciplined meditation, because that is something that I'm working into. And then there's other times I'm like, “No, I actually need to listen to what my body is asking. I need to listen to bringing in more movement,” and not having this discipline.

So it's like, what is my focus? Is my focus to keep my brain more focused? Or is my focus to listen to my body here? Where is my growth in this season? And that often can inform which way. But that's why I think there's no black and white answer for this kind of stuff. Because it's really, as you

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tune in more, as you increase your awareness more, there are so many different avenues to go.

But you're choosing one that feels like it is your growth edge. And not just, I call it "listening to our siren voice." It's just another distraction. Where we're possibly crashing into, or crumbling against the weight.

Victoria: That's right. Yeah, we were talking the other night about how three years ago we both needed daily meditation, needed things like CrossFit and needed hot yoga. Need in this sort of graspy, urgent, life's a shit-show, I need, need things. And how neither one of us really needs much anymore.

And so, it is that invitation to... Is it yoga body? Yesterday, instead of doing anything meditative, I took the iPad to the YMCA and watched the TV show on the elliptical, which felt amazing. It was perfect. Zero meditation, because I knew the plan for writing was to do this eight-hour overnight stretch.

And so I was like, "Alright, girl, let's just watch Retta show us America's ugliest homes. It is exactly the show for exactly that moment. Thank you, Retta. Thank you. I'm indebted. The somatic practitioner's indebted to you for the somatic break that you gave me. Plus, her outfits are amazing.

One of the things I was thinking about when you talked about jingles, is the thing I get the most hate mail for. You ready? My sweet talk. Sometimes people don't like it when I'm tender, and I call them my little kittens, and my tender raviolis, and squash blossoms.

Danielle: Really?

Victoria: This was amazing, this was the first one. This woman left a comment on my website. I was going to actually publish it. But it said, "I

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love your podcast. It's so great. And I love the intersectional feminism. But I don't think it's very feminist for you to be calling us these pet names. It's not feminist.”

And I was like, really? Interesting. I would love to have her on the show. Tell them what is not feminist about being tender. And I can imagine it's something like, “Well, men used to like call a sweetheart to put us down.” And I'm like, yeah, sure. But also, who's talking here, kitten?

Danielle: Who's talking to us? Like when I say “baby girl,” right? To me, it is one of the most endearing terms. It immediately brings my nervous system down.

Victoria: Oh, my whole body melted.

Danielle, Oh, yeah. I'm like, Oh, wait, girl. Oh, I love you. And it feels like oh, so like, juicy and exactly the words I need to see. But we could easily be like, there's so much about “baby girl” that could be misogynistic. That could be demeaning. That could be like playing into a bazillion different things. But the reclamation of particular words and phrases, and where it's coming from, in and of itself makes it feminists.

Victoria: Agreed, and choice and consent. It came up for me again around this nervous system context, of it not feeling safe to be seen and not feeling safe to not be in sympathetic, not feeling safe to be in ventral vagal, the safe and social part of the nervous system, and not feeling safe to be adored and to be thought of tenderly, and to be treated well.

I know when Billey and I first got together, we were both just like, “Wait, it can be this easy? It can be this easeful? You can be this kind? You can be this loving? I always give this, but I can receive it now? Wait, what? What's the catch here?” But I get so many sweet messages and DMS; keep them

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coming, please. I got mad at myself the other day, and then I heard your voice calling me a “tender ravioli.”

Danielle: That’s the most DM’s I get. I get, “This might sound weird, but your voice was going through my head while I was having sex again.” The amount of sex I’m having all over the world, if we’re just including my voice, is so fun. I am having the best sex with all these partners, all over the world. Because my voice is in their heads. “We can come back. It’s okay, baby girl. Just drop into your vulva.”

Victoria: It’s amazing. What an incredible thing, Danielle. I think my cheeks might break from smiling so hard.

Danielle: I will go into all of your bedrooms, please.

Victoria: Listen, I’ll go with. We’ll hold hands. We’ll do a little somatic practice, and drop in, and it’ll be a good time.

Danielle: It’ll be so fun.

Victoria: Danielle, I adore you. Thank you so much for coming on the show. I just realized it’s been an hour.

Danielle: I know, and we haven’t really talked that much about sex. But this is also about sex, everyone, opening to receive.

Victoria: Earlier, when you were like, we can reclaim words and make them not demeaning. I was like, how are we not talking about King? Yeah, absolutely. Okay. I think both you and Sarah Fisk and Judith, all my girls, we just need to do circuit parties. We can talk about King. We’ll use podcast circuit parties. Where we’re always in these conversations, because I feel so vibrant and so alive and so happy. And I’m just so grateful.

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Anyone who wants to work on these issues; on sex, on sexuality, on relationship with their body and partners. They should work with you. I have no financial connection to Danielle Savory. I just have a heart connection, y'all. This is not a sponsored ad. This is love. This is platonic sister love. Could you tell the good people... They should join your group Tangled. And they should learn more. How can they learn more?

Danielle: You can go to my Instagram. It's the practice of pleasure, because it really is a practice. As I said multiple times, we practice this. So, for anybody that wants to find me, you can find me on Instagram @thepracticeofpleasure, because, of course, all of this is a practice. We really need to like learn how to receive more pleasure. The podcast is, *It's My Pleasure*. And then, if you want to, I have this amazing morning starter Guide called Savory Starters. And so, it's really how to infuse every single morning with your sensuality and with your pleasure. You can get that at [DanielleSavory.com/feminist\\_wellness](http://DanielleSavory.com/feminist_wellness).

Victoria: Oh, my God. Wait, is that special just for our listeners?

Danielle: Yes, it's just for you guys. It's just for you all. It's just connecting brain and that body. So, we're really talking about that container, especially for you smarty pants. It's going to get you in your body right away and your sensuality, but it's also going to give you prompts for your brain of how you can start welcoming more pleasure into your day.

Victoria: That is such a delight. Thank you for making us treats. We love treats. I just say "treat" and there I have a chihuahua on lap right now Damn it. You'd think I know better at this point? What are you going to do? Danielle, you are magnificent. Thank you for being here. And I'll talk to you soon.

Danielle: Thanks for having me. Ok, sounds good.

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Victoria: Ciao.

Thank you so much for listening, my loves. That was such a beautiful conversation. I love all the nooks and crannies we got into, that we're not actually just plain talking about sex, which is what I thought we were going to do. But we went to some places that are so foundational, so important and so vital. I adore Danielle. I adore you. Thank you for being here. You are indeed a tender, tender ravioli and I love you.

I got a DM not that long ago that's like, "It is so insincere when you say you love me when you don't even know me." I'm like, you know what? There are a lot of people who hate, with no basis. They hate people they don't know, for the color of their skin, for who they love, for their politics. Why can't I just love? So, I do. I don't know you. I don't know you from a hole in the wall, but I love you because you exist, because you were born, and that's a beautiful thing. I trust creation, I trust the universe.

Oh, sorry, I almost forgot, Anchored. It's coming up again, we're going to do another Anchored. It's been almost a year, but we're going to do an Anchored later this spring. So, if you're new to the show and you don't know what the heck that is, or it's been so long since you heard me talk about it you can't even remember, Anchored is my six-month program.

It's a somatic and cognitive, behavioral coaching program all about getting you back in your body so you can reconnect with pleasure, with love, with life, and can step into interdependence in your relationships, and out of codependent, perfectionist, and people-pleasing thought habits. It's a self confidence, self-love program, and I can't wait to see you there.

[VictoriaAlbina.com/Anchored](http://VictoriaAlbina.com/Anchored) is where you learn more.

Okay, 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,



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when one of us heals, we help heal the world. Be well, my beauty. 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.