

A dark, textured circular shape, resembling a watercolor blot or a dark planet, is centered on a solid blue background. The circle has irregular, feathered edges and a mottled dark grey/black interior texture.

welcome to
RESILIENT

I am Lindsey Lockett.

Fave places on Earth:

- > my house
- > the forest
- > Lake Superior
- > Cozumel, Mexico

Dream Destinations:

- > Faroe Islands
- > Scottish Highlands
- > Maldives



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Basically, don't steal my shit. ;)

**RESILIENT is the fifth workshop in the
Feel Without Fear series.**

The group coaching call for this workshop
is next week:

Wednesday, October 30 @ 5pm CST

JUST LIVE: GET OFF THE TRAUMA-HEALING HAMSTER WHEEL

11/14 @ 1pm CENTRAL

**Group coaching call on Tuesday, 11/20 @
2pm CENTRAL**

This workshop is about taking everything we've gone through in FWF and applying it to real life instead of life being "the work" all the time!

WHAT IS RESPONSIBILITY?

RESPONSIBILITY

noun

1. the state or fact of being responsible, answerable, or accountable for something within one's power, control, or management

2. the ability to respond

Synonyms: authority, liability, power, trust, duty, obligation

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

What it IS: awareness of your emotions and nervous system state and your responses/reactions, owning how your choices/dysregulation have created your present reality, taking accountability and apologizing/repairing when necessary, using your agency to create these changes, setting boundaries with Self and others to support your own well-being and the well-being of relationships

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

What it IS NOT: taking the blame for everything, making everything your fault or your problem to fix, taking on other people's emotions and problems because you're a "good friend" or a "good person", hyperindependence, "I can do it all myself".

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY MEANS...

- > taking ownership of what you CAN control

You CAN control your:

- > behavior
- > reactions
- > choices

- > emotions (at least how they affect others)

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY MEANS...

- > you admit when you've made a mistake and you attempt to correct it; it's ok to say you wish you had done something differently**
- > you acknowledge others' feelings WITHOUT holding yourself responsible for how others feel**
- > you take accountability and attempt to repair when you've had a part in ruptures**

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY isn't just about how you're responsible to show up around others. You also have responsibility **TO YOURSELF...**

- > to be authentic**
- > to be in awareness**
- > to support your body, mind, & spirit**
 - > to live with purpose & intention**
 - > to love & trust yourself**

You CANNOT take responsibility for others.

X their reactions

X their feelings

X their choices

X their happiness

X their mistakes

X their words

“We may not be responsible for another’s addiction or the life history that preceded it, but many painful situations could be avoided if we recognized that we are responsible for the way we ourselves enter into the interaction. And that, to put it most simply, means dealing with our own stuff.”

— Gabor Maté, *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction*

“Self-care is an attitude toward ourselves and our lives that says, 'I am responsible for myself'.”

— Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others & Start Caring for Yourself*

"Self-care is an attitude of mutual respect. It means learning to live our lives responsibly. It means allowing others to live their lives as they choose, as long as they don't interfere with our decisions to live as we choose. Taking care of ourselves is not selfish as some people assume it is, but neither is it as selfless as many codependents believe."

— Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others & Start Caring for Yourself*

"A codependent person is one who has let another person's behavior affect him or her, and who is obsessed with controlling that person's behavior. [...] The heart of the definition and recovery lies not in the other person — no matter how much we believe it does. It lies in ourselves, in the ways we have let other people's behavior affect us and in the ways we try to affect them: the obsessing, the controlling, the obsessive 'helping', caretaking, low self-worth bordering on self-hatred, self-repression, abundance of anger and guilt, peculiar dependency on peculiar people, attraction to and tolerance for the bizarre, other-centeredness that results in self-abandonment, communication problems, intimacy problems, and an ongoing whirlwind trip through the five-stage grief process."

— Melody Beattie, *Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others & Start Caring for Yourself*

We're all co-dependent in some way.

David and I are co-dependent at times. We recognize that the nature of our intimate relationship means that, logically, we can't make each other feel anything, but emotionally, the nature of our intimacy means we are affected by each other in real ways.

This comes up in our triggers, which we lovingly and patiently work on in the safe container of the relationship.

Ultimately, we are striving for INTERDEPENDENCE. We are NOT striving to be 100% INDEPENDENT nor 100% NOT CODEPENDENT.

Still, I cannot be responsible for David's happiness, nor he for mine. If, despite all my efforts, communication, boundaries, and expressions of feelings, desires, and needs, David is unable to meet me in a way that feels authentic to him, he is responsible to tell me that, just as much as I am responsible to put effort, communication, boundaries, etc. into the relationship. And vice versa.

We are hurt in relationship, so we must heal in relationship.

I strongly encourage you to establish safe, committed relationships (don't have to be sexual or romantic; I call my BF my "platonic life partner") so you both have a container to work through stuff like this in and heal each other.

You don't have to remove all co-dependency from your relationships to heal patterns. The co-dependency will naturally decrease over time as each person is responsible for being aware of themselves, regulating their nervous system, healthy communication, and being authentic.

Still, when it comes to co-dependency, a common pattern is **FALSE RESPONSIBILITY.**

FALSE RESPONSIBILITY is when we take responsibility for things that are not ours.

This can include apologizing for something when you did nothing wrong; or apologizing for someone else who refused to apologize.

This can also include taking responsibility for an adult child who is capable of being responsible for themselves, but refuses or deals with addiction, ADD/ADHD, anxiety, depression, etc.

**I could teach a whole workshop on
co-dependence and false responsibility, but
essentially...**

**It's YOUR responsibility to know what's yours
and what isn't yours.**

**It may take some time to figure that out.
Having awareness will speed the process up.**

Being responsible for our reactions also means we're responsible for what we do or say when we get triggered (outside our Window of Tolerance).

Your triggers are your responsibility.

No one else is responsible for what
triggers you.

You have an opportunity to face and
heal that trigger every time you're
triggered.

**Whether you react in ego and fear or
lean in and heal is your choice.**

It is OK to let others know about your triggers if relevant to the relationship and ask that they avoid that around you.

People can certainly accommodate your request if they choose, but they aren't required to. And, they're not "bad" if they don't accommodate you.

They have a responsibility to themselves to be authentic, just as you do. Your needs and accommodations can't interfere with others' authenticity.

Obviously, if you have a disability and need to be accommodated for a wheelchair, walker, sign language, or hearing aid, have an anaphylactic allergy, etc., those are reasonable accommodations to expect.

And, it's waaaaaaay outside the scope of this workshop to talk about varying levels of neurodivergence and/or autism that may require accommodations. That's a whole other beast!

but since I mentioned it...

Let's talk briefly about adaptations to trauma like neurodivergence, Complex PTSD, and ADHD.

**There is overwhelming evidence that
C-PTSD, ADHD, autism, and
neurodivergence are caused by chronic
emotional trauma.**

**These are adaptations of a chronically
dysregulated nervous system. They are
symptoms, not diseases.**

RESEARCH SHOWS...

>> trauma changes the size and connectivity of certain areas of the brain

>> trauma enlarges the amygdala (fear center) so that non-threatening things are perceived as threatening

> the hippocampus is smaller and less active in traumatized people, which can cause difficulty with memory and problem-solving

“We are learning more about how people exposed to trauma learn to distinguish between what is safe and what is not. Their brain is giving us insight into what might be going awry in specific mechanisms that are impacted by trauma exposure, especially when emotion is involved.”

— Benjamin Suarez-Jimenez, Columbia University

> when emotion was evoked by a threat, people with PTSD could not complete tasks in the same way that non-traumatized people could complete tasks with emotion involved

> the possibility of threat can change how someone exposed to trauma reacts (triggers, cough, cough)

> "PTSD is driven by remarkable dysfunction in brain areas vital to fear processing and response."

— research from the Institute for Neuroscience at the University of Rochester

Basically, I'm saying I know your brain is changed by what happened to you, and that's not your fault. We need to have grace and compassion for ourselves and others.

But, to the extent that you can heal your brain and nervous system — through awareness, feeling, embodiment, healthy coping skills — you can begin to unlearn some adaptations gone awry.

These adaptations once served you by helping you tolerate otherwise unbearable circumstances.

If they negatively affect your relationships with others and Self now, it's worth getting curious and asking yourself how, where, and what you could choose to start shifting patterns.

If you can help others out by sharing what you know about yourself and how it could affect them, that's an acceptable level of personal responsibility.

You are also allowed to ask for reasonable accommodations from others, and that is a way to fulfill your personal responsibility to your Self.

Part of personal responsibility is also the understanding that others are allowed to say no to your requests and behaviors. They should be free to exercise their own agency without being called ableist or discriminating.

I'm speaking as someone with a whole lotta lived experience with trauma's effects on my brain, and subsequently, my entire life — how I think, feel, engage socially, interpret communication cues, perform my tasks, and more.

I have diagnosed conditions like GAD, MDD, and PTSD that create very real challenges for me. I have also diagnosed myself with CPTSD and ADHD.

I'm not speaking from an ignorant place.

So, let's hold the complexity of this...

I can have challenges that make relationships and work difficult for me.

And also... I have developed some conscious and some unconscious adaptations in reaction to these challenges.

And also... Those adaptations often create problems in current relationships that make it hard to communicate, give and receive intimacy, experience pleasure, interpret non-verbal cues, and deal with emotions.

And also... Many of my adaptations were not my choice, but were necessary for survival.

And also... They still affect people I love in very real ways, ways that could possibly hurt or harm them or create a lack of safety in the relationship.

And also... I am capable of noticing myself and allowing others' feelings about how they're affected by me.

And also... Sometimes, I feel defensive about how I am and can go into a victim consciousness of it not being my fault and others need to accommodate me and remember my sensitivities to things.

And also... That's an unreasonable thing to expect because it is my responsibility to meet my needs and set my boundaries in relationships and also to not hold others responsible for my shit.

And also...

And also...

DO YOU SEE HOW COMPLEX THIS IS AND WHY IT
REQUIRES SO MUCH CURIOSITY AND A WILLINGNESS TO
ASK QUESTIONS AND COMMUNICATE???

Ultimately, I believe we each have a responsibility to reduce harm.

The harm we cause ourselves through self-abandonment.

And the harm we cause others with our unconscious coping mechanisms — what Dr. Gabor Maté refers to as a "trait becoming a state".

The safest relationships are the ones where each person, as much as is possible, is aware of themselves; and where they are not aware — because each of us is often blind to our subconscious stuff — they are open to trusted feedback for how they can be a safer place for the other.

HARM REDUCTION

If we are NOT in awareness of patterns, behaviors, coping mechanisms, triggers, childhood traumas, C-PTSD...

We WILL unconsciously cause hurt and harm to others.

Not because we are "bad" people, but because nervous system dysregulation which is not met with awareness and conscious response (responsibility) has the potential to hurt and harm others.

HARM REDUCTION

Hurt and harm were done to each one of us by people who may not have had awareness of generational patterns, their own dysregulation, their own Inner Critics and parts.

We didn't choose this, so it wasn't fair.

But... when we don't take responsibility for how the harm done to us is being repeated by us on to others, we cannot reduce harm.

UNINTEGRATED EMOTIONS & HARM

REVIEW OF NERVOUS SYSTEM STATES & EMOTION

POLYVAGAL LADDER



social engagement
system

play

sympathetic fight

sympathetic flight

freeze

shutdown

ANGER

PERSEVERANCE

JUDGMENT

SHAME

REMINDER...

Dysregulation is normal. Getting outside your Window of Tolerance is normal.

The goal is NOT "I want to heal so much that I'm never dysregulated again" or "I want to have such a regulated nervous system that I never hurt anyone ever again."

Dysregulation is the body's protective mechanism. It's necessary.

And also...

But, CHRONIC DYSREGULATION or frequently becoming HYPERAROUSSED or HYPOAROUSSED are indicators that emotion is NOT INTEGRATED.

UNINTEGRATED emotions often result in UNCONSCIOUS REACTIONS which can seriously hurt Self and/or others.

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FIGHT

energy/emotion: ANGER

DYSREGULATED FIGHT: irritability, frustration, controlling, bullying, condescending

UNINTEGRATED FIGHT (hyperarousal): chaotic emotional responses, aggression, rage, violence, abuse, out of control, demanding, threatening

INTEGRATED FIGHT/ANGER: assertiveness, boundaries, motivation, courage, drive, leadership

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FIGHT

energy/emotion: ANGER

In relationships, the energy of anger serves to let us know when our boundaries have been crossed and when we might need to step in to protect and defend another or ourselves.

When not integrated and not met with awareness, the energy of anger is outside one's WOT. If anger is outside your WOT, you may be unable to hold the energy of anger without hurting Self or others. The anger becomes like a hot potato; if you can't hold it, you'll throw it at someone else.

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FIGHT

energy/emotion: ANGER

When we have unintegrated anger AND judgment about anger, we also can't hold the charge of anger, so we collapse.

We collapse because we repress (silence, stop) our own anger.

If anger cannot be discharged in service of bringing us back to safety — via self-defense, defense of others, setting boundaries — we will collapse into immobilization.

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FIGHT

energy/emotion: ANGER

When you are able to hold the charge and channel the energy of ANGER...

- > you can assert yourself calmly & firmly
- > you set & hold boundaries without being rigid; you know when it's necessary to be more rigid with boundaries
 - > the energy gives you courage & motivation
- > you can be in grounded, regulated leadership

UNINTEGRATED ANGER CAN HARM OTHERS

- > when our children are met with yelling or threats of punishment more often than not
- > when our partners, spouses, and friends are met with yelling
- > when our emotional outbursts are chaotic and cause fear and confusion for others
- > when we are demanding or controlling of others
- > when we can't hold our hot potato of anger and throw it on others

UNINTEGRATED ANGER CAN HARM SELF

- > when we repress our anger and it stays stuck in our bodies, leading to collapse and shame
- > when we collapse and then are unable to set boundaries or stand up for ourselves
- > HOW MIGHT UNINTEGRATED ANGER BE HARMFUL TO YOU?

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FLIGHT

energy/emotion: PERSEVERANCE

DYSREGULATED FLIGHT: stuck "on", worry wart, hypervigilant,
constant busyness, multitasking, perfectionism

UNINTEGRATED FLIGHT (hyperarousal): chaotic emotional outbursts,
anxiety, overwhelm, OCD, rigid, rushing, panicking, chronic insomnia

INTEGRATED FLIGHT/PERSEVERANCE: calm determination, know
when to retreat or disengage from conflict, grounded productivity,
industriousness, get stuff done

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FLIGHT

energy/emotion: PERSEVERANCE

In relationships, the energy of perseverance gives us the energy we need to stick it out through hard times and conflict and to invest the time and energy needed to repair ruptures.

When not integrated and not met with awareness, the energy of perseverance is outside one's WOT. If perseverance is outside your WOT, you may be unable to hold its energy without going into flighty states of busyness and ungrounded productivity or to turn "off" when you need to.

When you can't hold and integrate flight/perseverance energy, you can hurt others with obsessive-compulsiveness, being too rigid, or throwing your hot potato of anxiety on to them.

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FLIGHT

energy/emotion: PERSEVERANCE

When we have unintegrated perseverance AND judgment about productivity, we collapse.

We collapse because we repress our agency to choose slowness and calm determination.

If flight energy and unintegrated perseverance cannot be discharged in service of bringing us back to safety — via healthy retreat from danger or using our calm determination to stick with something — we will collapse into immobilization.

SYMPATHETIC ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FLIGHT

energy/emotion: PERSEVERANCE

When you are able to hold the charge and channel the energy of
PERSEVERANCE...

- > you know when to disengage from conflict that's dangerous or going nowhere/from circular conversations
 - > you have a spirit of industriousness
 - > there is a calm confidence in your ability to get things done
- > there is a sense of groundedness in your productivity (instead of human doing)
- > you are able to notice & tend to details without becoming overwhelmed

The energy of perseverance serves to give us the energy we need to get through challenges and see them to completion.

When not met with awareness, a dysregulated or hyperaroused flight state and the energy of perseverance is outside one's Window of Tolerance. Because one can't hold the charge of perseverance without hypervigilance, controlling, and micromanaging, it devolves into anxiety.

UNINTEGRATED PERSEVERANCE CAN HARM OTHERS

- > when we don't allow others to rest because we expect the same constant productivity/output out of them as we do ourselves
- > when we have a short fuse and emotional outbursts with our children, friends, and partners
- > when our anxiety leaks onto others, either making them anxious or making them responsible for reducing our anxiety
- > when we put standards of perfectionism on others

UNINTEGRATED PERSEVERANCE CAN HARM SELF

- > when we don't allow ourselves to rest because of the urge to be constantly productive
- > when we place standards of perfectionism on ourselves
- > when we micromanage and control our bodies, health, environments, etc.
- > when we are rigid and our bodies can't relax and release tension
- > when we rush and go constantly

SYMPATHETIC + DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FREEZE

energy/emotion: JUDGMENT

DYSREGULATED FREEZE: guilt, anxiety, procrastination, gas + brakes, "shoulding", want to do something but unable to move or don't know what to do

UNINTEGRATED FREEZE: panic attacks, extreme anxiety, agoraphobia, co-dependency, suicidality, overwhelm, stuck

INTEGRATED FREEZE/JUDGMENT: pause to weigh all options, take as much time as needed to make a grounded decision, discernment, judicious, intuitive resistance, poised readiness, acute awareness

SYMPATHETIC + DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FREEZE

energy/emotion: JUDGMENT

In relationships, the energy of judgment serves to give us discernment and judiciousness. We must slow down to carefully weigh our options and feel into what is right for us/for the relationship.

When not integrated and not met with awareness, the energy of judgment is outside one's WOT. If judgment is outside your WOT, you may be unable to hold the energy of judgment without getting overwhelmed and stuck. There is an anxiousness in the waiting that you can't tolerate.

SYMPATHETIC + DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FREEZE

energy/emotion: JUDGMENT

When we have unintegrated judgment, we are stuck between options. What "should" I choose? I "should" do this or that. WHAT IS THE RIGHT DECISION HERE?!

We stay in a state of exhausted anxiety, tired but wired, which quickly depletes our energy resources and leads to overwhelm.

If judgment cannot be mobilized so a decision or move can be made, we are likely to stay in this frozen state chronically before eventually collapsing into shame and a feeling of "I can't".

SYMPATHETIC + DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: FREEZE

energy/emotion: JUDGMENT

When you're able to hold the charge and channel the energy of
JUDGMENT...

- > you can pause to weigh all the options
- > there is space to lean in to resistance & determine if it is intuitive or fear-based
- > there is a sense of poised readiness — I don't have to be in action all the time, but I'm ready to spring into action when required.
- > there is a sense of grounded judiciousness & discernment & a willingness to slow down to come to the right decision

UNINTEGRATED JUDGMENT CAN HARM OTHERS

- > when we "should" all over others
- > when our extreme anxiety and panic bleeds into relationships, especially intimate relationships
- > when we are unable to make decisions in relationships
- > when our children learn this state from us through modeling

UNINTEGRATED JUDGMENT CAN HARM SELF

- > when we "should" all over ourselves
- > when we are stuck in overwhelm, panic, and extreme anxiety and literally stuck in life
- > when we are so afraid of making the wrong choice, we make no choice, which often means we don't make the choice to do the thing, say the thing, set the boundary, etc.
- > when we feel all resistance as "intuitive" resistance when most of it is actually fear-based resistance

DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: COLLAPSE

energy/emotion: SHAME

DYSREGULATED COLLAPSE: isolation, frequent short spells of dissociation, boredom, blankness, apathy, zoning out, mindless scrolling, helplessness

UNINTEGRATED COLLAPSE: severe depression, chronic fatigue, chronic dissociation, suicidality, "I can't"

INTEGRATED COLLAPSE/SHAME: stillness, peace, presence, mindfulness, shame serves to bring you back into integrity rather than keeping you stuck

DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: COLLAPSE

energy/emotion: SHAME

In relationships, the energy of shame serves to let us know when we are outside our integrity — when we have said or done something that isn't congruent with our character. This type of shame isn't unfairly put on us; no one is "shaming" us. The shame is a natural feeling that arises when you need to course-correct, take accountability, change behavior, and come back into integrity.

When not integrated and not met with awareness, the energy of shame is outside one's WOT. If shame is outside your WOT, you may be unable to hold the energy of shame without staying completely immobilized/wanting to hide or disappear.

DORSAL VAGAL ACTIVATION

nervous system state: COLLAPSE

energy/emotion: SHAME

When we have unintegrated shame, we live in a state of chronic shame. It ends up permeating every aspect of our lives and relationships.

Unintegrated shame leads to unconscious reactions like self-isolation, believing you can't do anything, and believing you're a victim.

The body produces analgesic chemicals to conserve energy, and chronically, leads to being bed-ridden or a "couch potato" — further increasing the shame.

If shame cannot be integrated to allow for deep rest OR mobilized with safety to bring peace, we stay in this stuck state and our WOT stays small.

UNINTEGRATED SHAME CAN HARM OTHERS

- > when we shame others
- > when we miss out on life with others because of depression, fatigue, self-isolation, and dissociation
- > when we model this collapse to our children
- > when we aren't present in relationships, especially with children
- > when we are ideating or attempting suicide

UNINTEGRATED SHAME CAN HARM SELF

- > when we get so stuck in our own shame we can't find our way out
- > when we miss out on life because of depression, fatigue, self-isolation, and dissociation
- > when we have an "I can't" mindset about life
- > when we want to hide or disappear and not be seen

WHAT IF...

> your anger was integrated to the point that setting boundaries with Self and others actually deepens your relationships and you have the mobilization required to use your agency to choose the boundary, to use your voice, to take responsibility?

WHAT IF...

>> your perseverance was integrated to the point that you could stick with the processes of this work, pace yourself, and trust that you're exactly where you need to be, you're taking the steps you need to take, and you're trusting that whatever you need next will be there right when you need it?

WHAT IF...

>> your judgment was integrated to the point that you could discern what is and is not your responsibility, and when something is your responsibility, you willingly take accountability for it?

WHAT IF...

>> your shame was integrated to the point that it could naturally bring you back into your integrity — which is exactly what we need to be in so that we can take responsibility for what is ours — and to be able to be in stillness and mindfulness without believing there's something "wrong"?

And for anybody with a Perfectionist Kid on your bus...

You are NOT going to be perfect at this.
You WILL NOT get this "right" 100% of the time.

Maybe not even 50% of the time.

It's a process. It takes time.

The key is staying aware of the Perfectionist Part who thinks there's a black-and-white answer to all this and maybe feels threatened or resistant to the idea that it's complex.

AGENCY & REPRESSED AGENCY

AGENCY (noun)

1. a feeling of control over actions and their consequences
2. the idea that people make their own decisions and are responsible for their actions
3. purposeful action

Agency is PURPOSEFUL ACTION.

Why do we repress purposeful action?

> institutionalized education system

**we don't get to exercise our autonomy and agency
in the public school system**

**a bell tells us when to go to a new class, we have
zero say in what we study, meaning we can't follow
our interests and choose what to learn about, we
have to ask an adult to use the bathroom, we can
only eat at a designated time, if we are tired, we
aren't allowed to rest if it's during the school day,
etc.**

> controlling, micromanaging, helicopter parents

**we don't get to exercise our autonomy and agency
we when we grow up with controlling parents.**

**NOTE: I am not saying parents with boundaries are
controlling.**

**the controlling parent decides for us what we eat,
what we wear, the schooling environment, our
religious/spiritual beliefs in many homes, we aren't
given space to explore and take risks**

> we are repeating the pattern of choosing attachment over authenticity

**we don't get to exercise our autonomy and agency
we when we grow up in a home where our autonomy and agency
are threatening to our parents and could result in loss of
attachment (punishment, time-out, shame, etc.)**

**the child cannot consciously choose authenticity; for survival they
must unconsciously choose attachment.**

**the pattern continues unconsciously into adulthood so
people-pleasing keeps us locked into the unconscious choice that
others approve of instead of the authentic choice we want for
ourselves.**

"When a child is born, the child has two needs. The first need is for attachment: contact, connection, love.

Without that, the human child does not survive. Humans are the most dependent on their parents for the longest period of time than any other mammals.

Attachment is a huge need, to connect, belong, be loved by, and to love. But, we have another need as well, which is authenticity. Authenticity is the capacity to know what we feel, to be in touch with our bodies, and to be able to express and manifest who we are in our activities and relationships."

— Gabor Maté

"What happens to a child when their attachment need is not compatible with the need for authenticity. 'If I'm authentic, my parents will reject me. If I feel what I feel and express what I feel and insist on my own truth, my parents can't handle it.'

Parents convey those messages unconsciously all the time. Not because they mean to or don't love the child or aren't trying their best, but because they are suppressed, traumatized or stressed. What does a child do with that?"

— Gabor Maté

"If they give up their attachment for the sake of authenticity, the child loses the relationship on which their life depends. There's no question. What becomes suppressed is our authenticity, our emotions. Then, we're 25, 30, 35, 40, and we don't know who we are. We don't know what we feel. We have a strong gut feeling, but we ignore it. At some point we found out it was too costly for our attachment relationships to be in touch with our gut feelings."

— Gabor Maté

"It becomes our second nature to suppress our feelings, to lose touch with ourselves, and to suppress our gut feelings. Then, we pay the cost later on with addiction, mental illnesses, and any range of physical illnesses. But it all began with this tragic conflict that children should never be confronted with but are all the time — between attachment on one hand and authenticity on the other. So many people are suffering because they want to be themselves, but they're afraid to be because they know, or at least they fear, that they're going to lose important attachments in their life."

— Gabor Maté

Choosing between attachment and authenticity is an impossible choice for the child. There actually is NO choice. They can't survive without the parent, so attachment it is.

They become used to choosing others, pleasing others, serving others, appeasing others, that they don't choose themselves or their authenticity.

Their authenticity is repressed.
In some cases, authenticity is knowingly suppressed.

> impossible situations where our agency was taken away & we never got it back

Examples of this are: sexual abuse, harassment, rape, victim of domestic or physical violence, being kidnapped or trafficked, parents/caregivers who controlled through abuse, threatened with harm or harm of someone you loved if you chose for yourself

SUPPRESSION

the conscious inhibition
of unacceptable
memories, impulses, or
desires.

&

REPRESSION

unconscious blocking of
unpleasant emotions,
thoughts, memories or
impulses from conscious
awareness

SUPPRESSION

the conscious inhibition
of unacceptable
memories, impulses, or
desires.

consciously stopping
yourself from thinking or
doing or feeling
something

&

REPRESSION

unconscious blocking of
unpleasant emotions,
thoughts, memories or
impulses from conscious
awareness

unconsciously stopping
yourself from thinking or
doing or feeling
something

SUPPRESSION

- toxic positivity
- want to call a toxic family member out but refrain because you don't want to cause drama
- intentionally distracting yourself from/avoiding unwanted thoughts or feelings

&

REPRESSION

- isn't consciously chosen; it's patterned
- afraid to commit to a partner but don't know why
- dissociation
- unknown, implicit emotional memories, such as a fear of dogs even though you have no conscious memory of the bite'

SUPPRESSION

We don't have "suppressed agency" because by suppression is conscious; it's a choice.

A choice to do nothing is still a choice. It's still conscious.

Agency has been exercised.

&

REPRESSION

We DO have "repressed agency" because repression is unconscious; it's not really a choice.

It's patterned and subconscious or unconscious; not on purpose or intentionally.

Agency has not been exercised.

REPPRESSED AGENCY

As always, we must commit to AWARENESS of our patterns.

As we CURIOUSLY notice our patterns, we can begin to ask questions.

What purpose is this serving? I wonder why I do this? Isn't it interesting that I feel the urge to zone out right now? I wonder what I'm not consciously choosing? What's happening in my life that I haven't chosen? I wonder what else I could choose?
Try differently?

As you get curious, more awareness will come.

For example...

Let's say you keep having an intuitive nudge to move your body more.

Maybe there's a voice that seems stronger than the intuitive voice and you notice that voice is loudly saying, "You really **SHOULD** go to the gym! Your ass has gotten so dimply! You really have let yourself go."

If you've never practiced awareness like this before, it may seem weird or hard. Like, asking yourself questions is really going to do anything.

Isn't that interesting?

Maybe you had another voice in your head thinking that very thing!

(I'm not a mind-reader. I just know the tactics of the unconscious to remain unconscious.)

Anyway, say you stick with it. You keep feeling the nudge or urge to go for walks, but you tell yourself you have to work later instead.

You notice that a voice in your head says, "Walking is wasting time! You could finish those emails you've been avoiding in the time it would take to go for a walk."

Another voice chimes in, "Nah, you know you'll be sore tomorrow if you do."

If you're still not aware of these voices (still asleep), you will ignore the still, peaceful voice of your intuition (soul, consciousness, Higher Self, God, etc.) because the voices you're not yet conscious of are the ones calling the shots.

You're not really actively choosing over and over to ignore the intuitive voice drawing you to move your body (unless you actually are, which is still a choice).

More likely, you're just unconsciously going about life and the voices of your unconscious (your ego or pain body and Inner Critic) have you living out the same old stories.

And because you're not questioning the voice that says you'll be sore, you're not choosing what Authentic You actually desires — which is for your best and highest good and for the good of all, actually, because we all come from the same source.

And because you're not questioning the voice that you SHOULD work later instead of going for the walk, you're not choosing what Authentic You actually desires — which is for your best and highest good.

I mean, it's ALWAYS better to go for the walk than to work later!

Furthermore, our thoughts, including the voices in our heads, are a reflection of the states of our nervous systems.

So, if your nervous system is chronically dysregulated or you're often outside your Window of Tolerance, those voices are extremely loud and drown out the voice of Authentic You.

Back to self-responsibility...

We have a responsibility to OURSELVES to be in awareness and have a willingness to notice ourselves curiously.

And back to agency...

We have a responsibility to OURSELVES to use our agency to **consciously choose** when we can.

In our movement example...

Our bodies are always speaking to us, and desire is one way they speak.

If there's a small desire, even a curiosity, to move, to join a gym, take a yoga or pilates class, dance, learn pole, stretch, etc., YOUR BODY AND SOUL ARE SPEAKING TO YOU.

Who knows why our bodies and intuitions
whisper to us, "I want to move."

"Pssst. Please take me for a walk. I want to feel
the sun on my face today."

"The dancing videos Lindsey posts intrigue me.
There's something about them that draws me
in. I wonder what that feels like?"

If you've been in the entire FEEL WITHOUT
FEAR SERIES, you know where I'm going with
this...



**HOW'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH PLEASURE?**

HOW'S YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PLEASURE?

We won't stay on pleasure too long today, but seriously.

If you're used to consciously suppressing or unconsciously repressing pleasure, you have to become aware of that and the stories you have about it.

Because it takes AGENCY to choose PLEASURE.

Ok, so the example about having an intuitive nudge to move is actually true.

it me.



I had the conscious desire to learn pole and sensual movement, but I had lots and lots of unconscious stories that kept me from signing up.

Voice: "You're 40, babe. It's a little late in life to start that, don'tcha think?"

Story: Part of me feels fear or shame about my age and has judgments about older women who own their sensuality and sexuality into late adulthood.

Highest Self: "That's silly! I don't believe that shit about age. I'd rather start owning my sensuality and sexuality NOW than keep waiting! Plus, it looks fun!"

Conscious Choice (Agency): signed up for a full year of School of Stripcraft, took furniture out of my office to make it a small dance studio/office, bought cute dance clothes, showed up for class, practiced in my free time, performed solo in a recital, ordering a pole for my studio/office next month!

Voice: "You should move your ass. Jesus Christ, you are so fucking lazy. You used to be in such great shape. You had a dancer's body. Look at you now! Your belly looks like you're 5 months pregnant. You probably need to start with core strength or you won't be able to do anything else. Your core is so weak. Why didn't you stick with the exercises the PT gave you? You never stick with anything. What is wrong with you? And you coach people?? Jesus fucking Christ. etc. etc."

Story: Part of me feels immense shame for how I look and is really full of blame and criticism while Self is nodding her head like, "We have big work to do, and we need energy, health, and strength. Support your body."

Highest Self: As I said, the loving voice of Self was part of the story, along with the critical voice. I was aware of them at the same time. (This begins to happen in more advanced self-work — the curious noticing of multiple voices/conflicting parts/Self/God/spirit guides.

Conscious Choice (Agency): I choose to stop speaking to myself so critically. It serves no purpose to be so self-deprecating except to keep me stuck and full of shame. I choose to hire a weight-lifting coach, join my local (very small, dumb) gym, join a year-long sensual movement class, practice, go for walks. I also choose not to weigh myself, and I have decided that weight is not a focus. My body clearly desires SUPPORT, not MANAGEMENT or RESTRICTION.

Remember: this is a COMPLEX topic, and it is often easier for me to explain concepts like this with real examples than with terms and explanations. I hope that look into my process is helpful.

This is basically my awareness, responsibility, agency process now, with as much as I am presently aware of. The awakenings and awarenences I'm having about myself and beyond myself have been happening so fast since I naturally developed this process with thousands of moments of practice.

It's also ok if your process of awareness is different. ;)

**LET'S TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN "SHOULDING" & AGENCY...**

Is "shoulding" a manifestation of...
UNINTEGRATED GUILT??

INTEGRATED ANGER: assertiveness, boundaries, courage, leadership, motivation, protection

INTEGRATED PERSEVERANCE: industriousness, resourcefulness, grounded productivity, sticks with it; knows when to stop/leave

INTEGRATED JUDGMENT: discernment, pause to weigh all options, grounded decision-making, takes it slowly when needed

INTEGRATED SHAME: brings us back into integrity, calls us to responsibility and accountability

Shame is "I am bad". Guilt is "I did something bad".

— Brené Brown

go with me for a sec...

**HAVE YOU EVER FELT GUILT
WITHOUT FEAR?**

What if you practiced Somatic Tracking when you felt GUILTY?

I believe there's truth in everything...
For instance, Anger, even when unconscious, tells our truth that our boundaries have been violated. Unworthiness tells a truth about a time when our needs went unmet. The fragmentation, ego stories, and patterns developed along the way.

So, what could be the TRUTH in the guilt we feel?

GUILT IS A MESSENGER.

If we can feel it without fear, it will show us where we need to take responsibility but aren't yet. It will show us where we aren't making conscious choices. It will show us where we haven't kept promises to ourselves or taken care of ourselves in ways we know are supportive.

Integrated guilt can bring us back into integrity, too, because it is within integrity to be responsible, accountable, and conscious of the ways you could be hurting Self or others.

**UNINTEGRATED GUILT: shame (?) because
continued (unintegrated)
judgment/questioning/second-
guessing about "should I say something/should I
not/what do I say/freeze" leads to collapse (shame)**

**INTEGRATED GUILT: takes responsibility for Self,
apologizes and repairs willingly, willingness to be
held accountable, knows that shame is worse to
feel that the discomfort of personal responsibility
and choice**

WHAT DO Y'ALL THINK?

**So there's more to think about
repressed agency that we don't have
time to go into today...**

**In my movement example, I was
REPRESSING SELF ENERGY (intuition,
loving voice). Self is where the desire to
move came from. Self is where the
personal responsibility and grounded
action came from.**

We can also REPRESS PARTS THAT ARE NOT SELF. We repress Inner Child (play, joy) and Inner Teenager (anger, rebellion, carefree) Parts.

We can REPRESS certain emotions, such as when we begin to feel anxious and we pick up our phones and without even realizing it, we're on Instagram. The unconscious pattern was a protector against feeling anxious and an unconscious repression of anxiety.

CURIOSITY QUESTIONS FOR AWARENESS OF REPRESSED AGENCY

- > What could I choose that I am not choosing?
- > I notice I'm "shoulding" on myself. There's truth in everything so there's truth here; I wonder what it is?
- > Do I feel some unintegrated guilt and that's where this "shoulding" is coming from? (ie. my guilt/shame for not moving for so long)

CURIOSITY QUESTIONS FOR AWARENESS OF REPRESSED AGENCY

- > I wonder what else is possible here?
- > So, maybe I "should" do this... How can I choose it with no guilt involved? I do have a responsibility to _____. Would I stop feeling guilty if I just chose to take responsibility for it?

"Agency is your sense of what you can do and what you think you can do. It is your power to affect your future. Agency takes your desires, make plans, and carries out the actions necessary to obtain them.

Agency is the sense of control that you feel in your life, your capacity to influence your own thoughts and behavior, and have faith in your ability to handle a wide range of tasks and situations. Your sense of agency helps you to be psychologically stable, yet flexible in the face of conflict or change."

(Source: Pattison Professional Counseling & Meditation Center)

Agency is your very own power, your ability, to affect the future.

Many people, however, believe they have very little agency in their life. They take the attitude that life has handed them their own certain circumstances, things are what they are, and they are stuck forever.

(Source: Pattison Professional Counseling & Meditation Center)

Responsibility sounds like:

I recognize that I have unconsciously chosen to avoid my triggers. I thought I was protecting myself.

Agency looks like:

I choose to live with more awareness of when I am triggered. When I feel the urge to avoid or run away from them, I will make an effort to stay with that discomfort.

Responsibility sounds like:

I acknowledge that my childhood/trauma was not my choice, but I am the only one who can be responsible for myself and my healing now.

Agency looks like:

I choose to call in support, work with a coach or therapist, read some personal development books, start a journaling or meditation practice, learn Nervous System Hygiene tools, etc. to assist my healing.

Responsibility sounds like:

It hurts to admit, but I have expected others to change and modify themselves to make me more comfortable and help me avoid my triggers.

Agency looks like:

I now choose to accept full responsibility for my state. I will equip myself with tools so that when I am faced with triggers, I have what I need to take care of myself and don't expect others to do it for me.

**BOUNDARIES... IT'S MORE ABOUT
SELF THAN OTHERS.**

Once you choose to take RESPONSIBILITY for yourself — your emotions, reactions, patterns, and triggers — and use your AGENCY to make choices that align with your desired outcomes, you need BOUNDARIES with yourself to hold your agency strong when the old programming creeps in and attempts to pull you back in to the stories of powerlessness, helplessness, and victimhood.

Ok, let's back up...

**We need to talk about binary
thinking + the nervous system.**

**"A TRAUMATIZED NERVOUS SYSTEM IS A
BINARY NERVOUS SYSTEM."**

(Source: Syanna Wand @syannawand)

There may already be a voice in your head trying to create black-and-white scenarios about self-responsibility (like, "I have to be responsible for everything" and "what if I need to be responsible for something but I don't even know what it is?!").

There may also be a voice of fear or anxiety about agency. "What if I don't choose the 'right' thing?" or "What if I miss my chance to choose and it's too late?!" etc.

First, let's talk about boundaries with others.

Every person on Earth has experienced hurt and harm caused by someone else.

Sometimes, that hurt and harm goes on chronically and the ways in which we cope with it (temporary states) become permanent traits (personality).

It is hard to know what's yours and what isn't yours. It's hard to know what boundaries need to be set with others and what boundaries you need to hold for yourself.

You are responsible for telling others how to treat you.

If you are currently in an actively harmful situation or relationship, your first boundary must be with yourself that you will no longer put up with harmful behavior from others when it goes on unchecked and unchanged.

So, although almost none of this is black-and-white, eventually, we do arrive at a binary which is...

Either I create space, distance, no contact, or limited contact with this harmful person or I don't. It's necessary for self-protection to set boundaries.

And, if your harmful person exists in your past and is no longer actively harming you, but those patterns still show up for you, it's necessary for self-thriving to have boundaries with Self.

The trauma brain jumps to the most EXTREME conclusion or perspective.

So...

If I say "avoiding triggers isn't how we heal, it keeps us stuck, keeps us in victim consciousness, etc.," and your response sounds something like:

"So you're saying I'm supposed to be friends with my rapist?!"

That's the trauma brain jumping to the most extreme perspective.

LET ME BE CLEAR...

I am not at all saying that facing triggers =
have coffee with your rapist.

*There is a difference between living in
avoidance of triggers and setting healthy
boundaries.*

**YOU ABSOLUTELY CAN FACE AND HEAL
THE PRESENT-MOMENT RESURRECTION
OF PAST TRAUMA WITHOUT ALLOWING
THOSE WHO HARMED YOU TO HAVE
ACCESS TO YOU.**

**Avoiding triggers keeps you from living in
your sovereignty.**

**Setting healthy boundaries is how to live
in your sovereignty.**

When you avoid setting boundaries with others out of fear of what they'll think, fear of abandonment or rejection, fear of being too much, fear of punishment, etc., you're essentially guaranteeing that they will continue to treat you poorly.

If you are repeatedly triggered in these relationships, your nervous system has to carry the load of that without any relief — and YOUR resiliency, capacity, and flexibility goes down, down, down.

When you avoid triggers, you outsource your power to conditions outside of yourself, and often, outside of your control.

When you set boundaries, you take your power back and use your agency to control those things you actually can control (such as yourself, your choices, your actions).

When you expect others to change themselves in order to prevent you from feeling triggered, you are in avoidance.

When you set boundaries, you are exercising your agency.

If this feels complex and nuanced, GREAT!

IT IS.

And if you're able to hold that complexity,
that's a great sign that your nervous system
and brain aren't defaulting to binary
thinking.

Real Life Example:

For the first 12 years of my marriage, my husband's brother was pretty terrible to me.

He used family gatherings and holidays to publicly humiliate me in front of the rest of the family. He poked and jabbed at me. Maybe he was trying to be funny; I don't know.

He even went so far as to say that David's whole family never liked me but that he was the only one with the guts to say so.

When we confronted David's family about this, they all reassured me that they loved me and were so happy I was part of the family. But that didn't assuage my fears and the triggered feeling I had every time his older brother was around.

The last straw was 8 years ago. I posted on Instagram about loving Kacey Musgraves' song Follow Your Arrow.

David's brother left a comment on that post: "Follow your misguided arrow. My daughters follow you on this app and you are setting a bad example of what a godly woman is to them."

He then took his disapproval of me to the family group text — more attempts to humiliate me in front of them.

None of David's family ever defended me, told him he was wrong, nothing. It took me years to heal from this.

Want to know where I am with it now?

The trigger wasn't David's brother. He was just a mirror for the REAL trigger — being publicly criticized and humiliated in front of people whose opinion of me really mattered to me.

I have healed that trigger. Being on Instagram has de-sensitized me to public criticism because I say a lot of things that a lot of people don't like.

If I was in avoidance of that trigger, I wouldn't be on Instagram.

However, we set a big boundary with David's brother 8 years ago. He is no longer allowed in our lives. We don't speak to him, follow him, he is blocked from following us, and we don't attend family gatherings if he will be there.

I healed the trigger without allowing the person who harmed me to have access to me.

Avoidance = I'm not going to deal with this even if I know I need to. I'll keep showing up in this relationship even though I'm being treated badly because what I'm actually avoiding is being alone, dealing with this trigger, the discomfort of setting boundaries, etc.

Boundaries = It's not avoidance if I'm dealing with my shit but refuse to allow this harmful person to have access to me.

BOUNDARIES WITH SELF

> requires me getting familiar with what being in integrity and being out of integrity feels like

> requires being able and willing to see my own patterns and take responsibility for myself

> requires energy, focused intention, and patience, and the understanding that I will get it wrong sometimes

Some of my boundaries with myself include...

> TAKING CARE OF MY BODY: eating well + eating enough, movement (gym + dance class + walking), time outside, attention to important health markers like cycle + sleep

TAKING CARE OF MY EMOTIONS: not self-abandoning, feeling without fear, not repressing/suppressing, asking or paying for support, communicating to others what I can/can't handle, not watching media that makes me anxious, learning NS support tools

Some of my boundaries with myself include...

> INTEGRITY: honesty, vulnerability, + authenticity always, no posting on IG when dysregulated, speaking my truth even if it means I lose something, apologizing when I've hurt someone, being open to feedback from trusted people who love me

When I don't hold my personal boundaries
with myself, I FEEL IT.

I NEED and CRAVE the structure of my own
boundaries. I feel better in my body and about
myself when I hold myself to eating + sleeping
well, being honest, vulnerable, and authentic.

BOUNDARIES, like personal responsibility and agency, ARE A DELICATE DANCE.

Most often, they're not static. They move and shift, depending on the situation.

For binary brains, this can feel threatening and there can be a sense of "BUT WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN I'M SUPPOSED TO DO IT???"

A chronically dysregulated nervous system will let you know where your boundaries may need to loosen up or tighten up.

Your own personal complexity with boundaries, agency, and self-responsibility is simply yours to figure out.

It's crucial that we learn to feel without fear because our feelings are precisely what tells us when something is wrong.

Chronic, background anxiety, depression, dissociation, helplessness, urges to control, perfectionism, people-pleasing, etc. are ALL communication from your body letting you know where you either need to have boundaries with Self, with others, or with both.

"Taking responsibility means recognizing that you're the one who can now begin to recognize those patterns (which until now have remained hidden and automatic) and start to do the work to change them – which is really just the work of honouring and (literally) embodying your own, true, authentic self."

— Gabor Maté