

Guest Speaker Katherine Creighton Crook

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SPEAKERS

Anuradha K, Katherine



Anuradha K 00:02

All right, I'm so excited to have Katherine with us today. Oh my gosh. So if you don't know Katherine, you really need to tune in and listen. And I met Katherine a couple years ago and just in through a common connection. but she offered me to work with me in this way to support my body in a way that I was really at a time I was struggling so much. And in that work, which we're going to talk about today, then you can see how it can really support our bodies to do this work. So I'd love for you to take a moment Katherine, and introduce yourself, tell us a little bit about you, and this new kind of work you're doing.



Katherine 00:46

Thank you very much. So hello, my name is Katherine, and my original background was as a massage therapist, and then I started working with the viscera and started exploring the body more and seeing how our body actually holds all manners of things, and not only that, but often the memories and the emotion and the energy that we hold in specific parts of our body can be a factor in the pain that we experience. So for example, lower back pain might be linked to having some sort of emotional memory in the lower left large intestine, and when you connect to your body and release that then that pain goes away. And so I, I've come to realize, through my work, that our body just like our higher self, our intuition is here to be a partner with us in helping us do the work that we're meant to do in the world, but unfortunately, the way that we're socialized in society is very often that our body is an obstacle, that our body is an accessory that we just have to put up with because either we're really spiritual beings, or we're really intellectual beings, or it centers around the brain. And so I work with people to help them connect to their body to release the things that they're holding that are creating pain or meaning they can't show up the way that they want to in the world and then build that relationship so going forward they're able to hear what their body has to say and receive that support from their body instead of seeing their body as a burden or something they're constantly having to work against.



Anuradha K 02:21

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And definitely, I will say in the work we did together over those several months last year, that's exactly what I experienced. There was, I was in a lot of pain, that typically having like migraine pain of up to pain point five or six on most days, you know, and that was impacting my ability to show up and do this really important work. And I can imagine that for so many people listening, they are overwhelmed with inflation with all that with climate change, like with everything on their mind, they want to do something good, and they are also feeling bogged down, right, like you're saying disconnected from our bodies. How can we start to have that conversation? How can we partner with our bodies?

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Katherine 03:07

That's a great question. So I think the first thing to remember is that most of us, many, many of us have cut off in some way or another our ability to connect with our body. It may be because, like, socially we've had a lot of mixed messages around what our bodies should look like or what our bodies should be able to do. It may be that we don't feel like we identify with the body that we have in whatever way that might be, and it can be related to trauma. If we have a history of trauma it may have been safer to disconnect from our body than to connect with it. So the first step, I think, is to recognize that if you feel that it's difficult to connect with your body, that you're definitely not alone, and it's definitely not something that you should feel bad about, and it's not something that is gone. Another reason that we can have trouble is because we maybe have had chronic pain, or we've had problems and we feel like our body is working against us. So to answer your question, the reason or the way that we can start to connect to our body: Number one, it's really important to know that you always feel safe. So one of the things that I'll do with clients is I'll have them bring their awareness down into their body, and let's say that we feel pulled to a certain area, and the first question I ask is, "Do you feel safe to do this?" and feeling safe, like if you don't feel safe, it'll feel like you feel nervous, you feel anxious, you might feel your heartbeat increase a little bit, you might just feel uncomfortable. And if you do, don't go any further than that, because that's your body or your mind telling you it's not safe to go forward. So the very first thing that you can do is to just build that awareness of taking a couple of breaths, closing your eyes if it feels safe, and imagining that you're bringing your awareness in your head down into your body. And even just that, even just trying to drop your awareness into your body, that may be the first step that you have to work on for a little while because you might notice when you drop into your body, you start to feel nervous, or you start to feel worried, because you're not sure what you're gonna find, or your mind is not used to connecting to your body. So that can be a good first step is just like maybe every day or every couple of days, do that awareness. And then another way that is good to connect to your body when you're just getting started is to ask yes/no questions. And this is one of the things I do with my clients a lot. And it can be something as simple as like, if you're trying to decide what to eat, you can, you know, put these things in front of you, and you can go, "Okay, do I want this or this, yes or no?" Bring that awareness down into your body like you've been practicing, and it will feel like it's a yes or no from the neck down. It won't feel like it's coming from your head. And again, this will take practice. So if you can't do it immediately. Don't worry. But those are two definite ways that you can get started, and then you can graduate up to something like a body scan, where you start to notice or ask your body where it's pulled. But I would say start with those two things first, and then you can subscribe to my email list, or you can have a look on my website, because I have tips on that as well. Taking that further.

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Anuradha K 06:20

Yeah. You mentioned feeling safe. So I wanted to just spend a little time with that. Because as you said, if we have chronic illness things we live in a fat phobic world, capitalism is constantly trying to kind of turn us into machines, in a way, right that we are mechanized to keep going despite these limitations. How can we cultivate - not just - so you're giving us this tool about starting to look into our body and connect with it, ask what it wants to eat, right? You know, this is this is a really powerful thing. But how can we cultivate that safety in in the world? Because we really need to have that right? How can we create that safe space? Not just internally, but beyond that, too?

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Katherine 07:08

Well, I think that the thing with safety is that the first thing we have to recognize, well, the first thing I would say is that we should not judge ourselves for any feelings that we have. Like one of my big pet peeves is when people say, "Oh, like, this is a low vibe emotion or this, you know, you should change. You shouldn't have these negative emotions," because emotions are actually your body sending you signals. Like, if you think about it, we call them feelings, right. And so the first thing to do if you notice that you're not feeling safe, I think, is to figure out why you don't feel safe. Because there are very legitimate reasons to not feel safe in our world, especially depending on, you know, race, gender identity, sexual orientation. And I think sometimes it's very easy to say, "Oh, just, you know, just feel safe," when we're not recognizing that there are very real things. And I think, kind of counter intuitively, one of the ways to start building a sense of safety is to acknowledge that you have legitimate concerns around safety, right? And then you can start to create strategies of "How can I increase my sense of safety by like 1%, or 2%?" And I think I think one of the ways that you can do that is, the more connected to your body you are, the more your body can send you signals about what's going on around you, and you can start moving away from things that you can feel - because I don't know if you've ever had this experience, but like, I've definitely had it where I'm in a situation and on paper, it's fine. But I get a bad feeling like I get a feeling like there's something not right here. And that I would either move away. I mean, I don't think I've ever stayed with anything that ended up really badly. But, you know, we're taught to ignore our feelings and our bodies as if they're less intelligent or less valuable, but often our body sends signals to our brain about things that our conscious or intellectual mind might not notice, and that can help us. But I'm not sure I'm answering your question? Because I think safety in the whole world is such a big issue because it depends on so many factors that are external that we can't control.

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Anuradha K 09:28

That's right. That's right. But bringing our awareness to it and, like you said, in ways we can start to make that happen. I think both of you, you and I both share this passion that we want people to go far and succeed, right? We want to be, you know, a lot of the people you're supporting right now are doing big things or want to do big things in the world, and it is this, you know, this safety piece or the trauma piece or the pain pieces, or things like that that are holding them back. That was certainly true for me. So I want to gush on you for a moment that before our work, I was barely sleeping. Right? I was, I had most of my life at that point was high pain days, whether that be from my migraine or other pains, and and that was stopping me from showing up, right? So with your, with your help and some of the other people that I'm uplifting in this whole series, it was that kind of intense work with all of you with this team of

people this, you know, practices like Qigong going to hypnosis doing this work with you, that that, and I never had that. Like, I remember being a little curious about what's this work going to be like, and e"Wre going to talk to our spleen today." I don't know what to make of that. Right. You know, like, okay, I never really ever thought to check in with my spleen, but apparently, my spleen has something to say today. And that was really an eye opening thing, right? The messages, the visceral images, the feelings, as you said, even things like hunger and so on, right? We start to suppress these things. That's a feeling as well, right? Besides the deeper emotions, like anger, and so on. So I just wanted to give a shout out. But that's the kind of work that's possible. And when. So I just want to look over my notes and review here that where people where people are starting to connect with their bodies, then what is the next step? Like, how can they do this to be more visible? To do this work - the internal work, yes, but then this external work? That's the shift I'm interested in to talk. Can you talk to that a little bit?

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Katherine 11:46

Yes, definitely. So and I think this is a great question, because the knee jerk reaction that most people have when their body throws up something, and also, it's good to expand what we say when we're talking about the body throwing, throwing things up, like throwing up blocks. I've had clients where it wasn't necessarily a pain, but every time they would get a great idea, they'd go to execute it, and it was like a fog was coming over them, and they couldn't remember what they were doing. And so it was like, there was a block there. I have had people where they would make some progress, and then they would get sick, or they would get migraines, and it was like their body was stopping them from moving them forward. And there's a lot of different ways that your body can throw up, you know, put up blocks or things to try and slow you down. Now, the body 1. wants to help you, in my experience wants to help you achieve what you're here to do. Right, it literally wants to support you. But 2. its main job is to keep you alive and safe. So if it feels like, based on past history, or something that is making an association with the thing that you're trying to do might put you in danger, it will throw up things, and again, this is in my experience, right? This is an experience working with clients. It will be like okay, well, if they have a migraine, then they're not going to be able to do this. Or if they can't focus, they're not going to be able to do this. So when you feel feelings, or when you have pain, what we tend to do is try to push through. We tend to go up, you know, mind over body, you know, my mind is stronger, I'm just going to push these sensations down and move forward. Now if anybody has had like a niggle, or something small that they repeatedly ignored, you know, usually happens with that the body just gets louder and louder until you literally cannot ignore it anymore. It will be like, you know, oh, your shoulder hurts, I'm gonna ignore it. Your shoulder hurts, I'm gonna ignore it. Now you have a spasm and you can't move your shoulder for a week, right? Because your body will eventually make you listen to it, right? So what you can do instead is as you connect with your body, when something comes up, you can have that practice where you take some deep breaths, you connect down into your body, your bring your awareness down. And like one of the things that I say, and I have a body connecting audio on my website that that's free, that walks you through this process because sometimes it's easier if you have someone guiding you, which is you know, one of the reasons that people come to work with me instead of doing this on their own. But the body connecting audio will walk you through this, and it's basically once you bring your awareness down you go "Okay body, where is the thing that you want me to know about?" Right? And you might then feel pulled to a specific area. You know, it might be in your chest, it might be in your lower abdomen, it might be like even in your knee or your ankle, right? These things are very interesting places. And then you can bring your awareness there and then you can open up your mind and you can say "Okay, body show me what is here." And then the body can show

you images. It can show you memories. It might be colors or shapes. And this is usually where like people will come to work with me, because one of the things I do is I help people translate the stuff that's coming up. It's not always obvious. Like one time, I had a client's body show her a plastic picnic sandwich, like do one of those little sandwich toys. And obviously, she was like, I don't know what that means. But we were able to translate it as we worked through the associations and things. But if you're doing it on your own, and you connect into your body, whatever picture you get, what you can then do is you can go to free writing, you get out a notebook, write down where you were pulled to and what you saw, and then set a timer for like 10 minutes, and then just go, "Okay, what is this related to?" and then I find it easier to write it out. And you spend like 10 minutes writing the first three to four minutes are probably your logical brain trying to spit out ideas, and then stuff usually starts to come through, where it's like, "Oh, this picture that you had of a mall relates to when you were a kid, and you were there with like, friends, and they made fun of you, because you did this. And then that links to you being too much," et cetera, right? Like I've had people find things in their bodies that they had been, you know, that they tried to resolve and talk therapy, but because it was living in their body they couldn't. And it is something a lot of clients I work with do go to therapy at the same time, because then they can take what they find in their body and go talk to a therapist about it. So I'm definitely not in any way saying that talk therapy isn't useful, because it definitely is. But because sometimes things are almost stored in our body, it can be hard to pull them out just through intellectualizing them. So that's the way that I would say that you can start pulling things out when something is starting to stop you going into the body and going, "Okay, why am I feeling this? What is this?" and then it's through conversing with the body and seeing what's there that you can come to a solution. Now, there's one really important thing that I always like to say, when we're talking about this. When you start to connect to your body, and your body starts to tell you things, you don't submit yourself to it. This is not one of those things, where it's like, oh, you have to do whatever your body tells you. You are still the authority in the situation. So if your body's like, "I don't ever want you to do any marketing ever again. I don't want you to ever do work again." Like you don't have to listen to it. I like to make the analogy of it's like negotiating with a child, right? The child might have a desire, or maybe like another person on your team. But I don't know why I like the idea of a child because sometimes the body feels a little bit childish. And it says, "Oh, I don't wanna do that." "Okay, well, we're going to do this, but how can I make this more comfortable for you? Or what are the things you need to have in place for it to be comfortable?" I think one of the reasons that people maybe shy away from listening to their body because they don't want to feel like they're, they're having to like submit to something else that isn't them. You still get to be in charge, you still good to have the preferences is just your body's giving you additional information, and as you work with it, it can then make it easier for you to move forward. Because you're not fighting with the body. You're working together with it

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Anuradha K 18:12

Together. Yeah. And it's interesting, you're kind of almost coming to the place of the this kind of duality of mind and body. And I don't think it needs to necessarily live like we don't need to live in there. Like we're not. When we say we're us, like I'm not saying I'm me here, right? I'm I'm not saying I'm my thoughts, right. So it's because of capitalism is because of these kinds of things that there is that separation anyway. So like you're saying, "How can we partner?" is a really strong approach, I think, that we're not taught. We're taught too that our brain or body should be submissive to the brain in some way. And that's where identity is like, right? And yet, we still have this whole body to work with, right? So yeah, I like that you're addressing that in a deeper way, with your work as well. And it's something that we do need to slow down and listen

to those messages, and from my experience, that trauma does live in our body. And it might be subtle things that we might not even like, oh, I never thought of that in so many years. That's coming up. That's interesting, right? And, you know, this is also I like that you talk about having a team of people who can help with this, right? Because I was doing hypnosis, and your work, and therapy, at the same time, EMDR, which is trauma based care therapy. So I just I like that you're giving a shout out to different pieces that we can do some of these things on our own and sometimes it does help to work with a professional to do these pieces. So we're basically as we wind down for today, what do you think is like the thing that you didn't you wish you had gotten to say right now and how can we find you out there?

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Katherine 19:56

So one thing I will add that I think is always good to throw out there especially for people who that had chronic pain or chronic illnesses is that that can feel like it's a really big barrier to partnering with your body because you feel betrayed by your body, because you feel like, "Why aren't you working?" especially if you're very proactive with physical therapy, and seeing doctors and trying different things to address the problems. Now, sometimes when you connect with the body, you can find like the emotional energy, that's a factor in that, and that can decrease your symptoms. But that's not always the case. So I don't want to be are like, "Oh, you can get rid of everything, it's possible." But one of the reframes that I have when I work with my chronic pain clients is that it's not you against your body, when your body has chronic illness or pain, it's you and your body, against the chronic illness or pain, right? Your body doesn't want that problem any more than you do. Right? And it can feel like, like, it really can feel like a betrayal when your body is in chronic pain, or constantly breaking down, or not giving you the energy that you need. And you can be like, "Well, my body clearly doesn't want to support me because all this stuff is happening," but the reframe that I like to make is whether it's like a genetic mutation that's caused the problem, whether it's like a historic issue, whether it's something like ehlers-danlos or fibromyalgia, that's just a chronic issue that we don't have a cure for, it's not your body that's doing that your body doesn't want it just as much as you do. And if you start to connect with your body in this frame of mind of like, "I know, you don't want this as much as I don't want it, can you give me some guidance as to where we should start excavating things or looking at things?" Because the body like I've worked with people, and I've had the body go, "I need zinc," and then the person goes and checks with their doctor to make sure it's okay with their medication, and they look it up, and then zinc really helps them or the body will be like, "I need you to run, or I need you to release the legs," you know, it's not always emotional energetic the body, "I need you to eat more broccoli," like it can be very specific, right. And when you start to work with your body in that way, it might give you clues on what you need. Oh, and sorry. And there's one more thing that I obviously make it really quick. The other thing I say is, make sure that whatever you're doing to try and take care of your body that you're doing with your body instead of to your body. So a lot of people will be like I'm running, and I'm doing yoga, and I'm having healthy smoothies, and I'm eating really like high protein/low carb or whatever, you know, whatever you're trying to do that's healthy. But if you're not talking to your body about what it needs, it's kind of like if you imagine that you're hanging out with someone and they're like, I'm going to take us to see this movie, and I'm going to take us to this restaurant, and then we're going to do this activity, and you're sitting in there like, "Do I get to say any of this or?" Right? And it might be a great movie, and it might be a great restaurant, but how would you feel if like they didn't ask you like they didn't take your preferences into account? So when you're doing like healthy stuff, and you're being healthy, try to establish that relationship with your body so that your body can be like, "Actually, I prefer strawberries to blueberries," or something, whatever. So that's the other

thing. Those are two things and how you can find me I am on Instagram at @healingmiscellany. And same on Facebook. And my website is miscellany.me.uk, which I'm sure will be in the notes on this. And I have a free body connecting audio you can get on my mailing list. I send an article every week about stuff going on in the world and stuff that relates to our body and it's very broad. That's the miscellany.

 Anuradha K 23:36

Yeah. That's awesome. Thank you so much for your time today, Katherine, I've learned so much, and I've really appreciated that you're really here to help us set the stage for thriving. So thanks so much.

 Katherine 23:48

No worries. Thank you for having me. And thanks for organizing. This has been really great.