

## The Role “Enough” Has in our Food and Body Healing with Kimberly Ann Johnson – Insatiable Season 12, Episode 3

[INTRODUCTION]

**[00:00:09] AS:** Went vegetarian, then paleo. You stopped restricting. You're trying to love yourself more, but nothing seems to be working fully, and you might feel hopeless about ever feeling good in your body. And every time you fail, you trust yourself less.

As the larger world feels increasingly in peril, caring about how you feel in your body may feel frivolous and even more hopeless. We are at a time when our individual and collective stories about what to do for our bodies, health, and the world are crumbling. Because these stories we have, they aren't working for how our bodies or our world actually works. And I believe centering our bodies, all bodies, not just thin, white or “good” bodies. And what all of our bodies need to thrive will help orient us in a better direction.

There's no one-size-fits-all diet, exercise or way to bio hack. Good health is much less about willpower or discipline and more a complex interweb of our societal structures, food choices, emotional history, environmental exposures and privilege. There is a great loss of certainty in safety when we initially have to face what is real versus the half-truths we've been fed. But the loss of these stories creates an opening. If this opening is pursued with curiosity and discernment, we can discover our awe-inspiring ability to create and embody a new body story for our physical and political bodies and the earth.

I'm Ali Shapiro, and I host the Insatiable podcast. So we engage in the type of conversations that will lead us to radically new body stories for ourselves, each other, and the earth. To do that, we discuss a more truthful approach to freedom from cravings, emotional eating, bingeing



and being all or nothing. We explore the hidden aspects of fighting our food, our weight, and our bodies and dive deep into nutrition and behavioral change science and true whole health.

But fair warning, this is *NOT* your parents' health care or the conspiratorial crazy of the wellness world. This is a big rebel gathering to those who want to hold nuance, context and complexity in order to lead the way to a healthier future for all, because our lust for life is truly insatiable.

Hey, everybody, Ali here. Before we get to today's episode with Kimberly Ann Johnson, I just wanted to let you know that in episode one I talked about a workshop that I'll be doing in November. That workshop has been moved to December. Still hashing out the final details, but I'll have all of them in episode four that comes out in November. So keep an eye out for that. And if you're on my list, you'll be the first to know. Get first tips on seats. But it's going to be a good one. So I hope you'll consider coming.

And before we get to today's interview, I just want to tell you a little bit about Kimberly. She's been on the podcast before. She wrote the book *The Fourth Trimester*. So in our fertility season. I enjoyed interviewing her, but she's back because she has a new book out called *Call of the Wild: How we Heal Trauma, Awaken Our Own Power and Use it for Good*. So we're going to talk about that today. But Kimberly is a sexological body worker, somatic experiencing practitioner, yoga teacher, postpartum advocate and single mom. She's working hands-on in integrating women's health and trauma recovery for more than a decade. She helps women's heal from birth injuries, gynecological surveys and sexual boundary violations. And again, her new book is *Call of the Wild: How we Heal Trauma, Awaken Our Own Power and Use it for Good*, as well as *The Fourth Trimester* and is also the host of the Birth, Sex, Trauma podcast. I think you're really going to like today's episode. So sit back and enjoy.

[INTERVIEW]

**[00:04:19] AS:** Hello, everybody, and welcome to Insatiable. I'm here with Kimberly Johnson, who has been on the podcast before with her *Fourth Trimester* book, which was really helpful in me planning my own, I guess, runway into being a parent. So thanks for that book Kimberly. It was hard enough with that. I can't imagine not having had that book. So thank you for that.

We're here today to talk about your new book, which is *Call of the Wild: How we Heal Trauma, Awaken Our Own Power and Use it for Good*. So lots to talk about. Before we get to that, our season theme that was voted on by the community is trusting satiation. And I look at everything on a physical, emotional, symbolic level. So I'm curious when I say satiation, what does that mean to you?

**[00:05:10] KAJ:** Satiation to me means knowing what's enough, and feeling what's enough, and being able to give space to what's enough rather than looking ahead, or looking forward, or looking at what's next, or, yeah, contentment with what's now.

**[00:05:30] AS:** I love that definition, because I think what is enough is really hard for people to answer. We're always trained for more. One of the things I want to talk to you today about is how you talk about the addiction to intensity in your book and in general. So I think as a culture, and individually, we have such a skewed version of what is enough. It's a really powerful question to live into.

So as we get started on today's interview, I've heard you say in other interviews – First of all, I just want to let everyone, I'm such a fan of your work. I don't normally fan girl over people. I mean, I can have a healthy respect for people's work, but I think you're really brilliant and brings such a unique perspective to the world. So I just want everyone to run out and get your book. We've talked about it in my insatiable community. I've recommended it to clients and they all say it's been really life-changing, the exercises in the book and everything. So just want

to thank you for birthing this and you're work [inaudible 00:06:23] working this book.

Everyone's like, "I want to write a book." And it's like, "Do you know what's actually involved? It's a lot of labor."

So I've heard you say that with this book, the subtitle is how we heal trauma. And in an interview, you talked about trauma being part of the human experience. And I would love for you to you know kind of ground us in your definition of trauma as well.

**[00:06:43] KAJ:** Sure. Yeah, I think trauma is a big word these days, and it means a lot of things to different people. I think there's an attempt to normalize trauma, which is maybe where some people might find that I lie. But being alive and the things that we go through and living, some people would even say, "Well, all birth is traumatic." But I would say like birth is a stressful event, but it doesn't have to be traumatic.

So trauma is that which is embedded in our bodies and hasn't yet had a chance to complete itself physiologically. So in some ways, it's as much about what has happened as what hasn't happened. So we tend to think about trauma as an event, like this thing was traumatic. But instead we might look at it as how has our system been able to move forward and maintain the same level of responsiveness to the environment that we're in.

**[00:07:42] AS:** Yeah. I like that. I think about my own experience recovering from cancer. And I had such a strong family unit that helped. However, there wasn't the – We're the first generation of childhood cancer survivors. So there wasn't the emotional understanding of what would happen. And so in some ways, I loved how you said it. It's what we also didn't have. So in some ways there was like all this safety and security within my family, but then there was like the emotional and physical trauma that happens to anyone when they go through some sort of intense medical process. So I think that's really important for people to think about. What happened and then what didn't happen in terms of your support.

**[00:08:18] KAJ:** And I think when you say that too, it just reminds me of what a culture of perfectionism we live in and that there would be some way that we could do it all right, right? There's no way that we're going to come through experiences and somehow we're going to be completely unscathed and receptive and be available to everything. I think that's the maturation process is, as we get the nicks and scars because those things also inform how we move, how we relate the world that we see. So really, I'm looking at a relative level of health, right? Not perfect health. Not perfect resiliency, because part of resiliency is developed through adversity, is developed through an encounter with things that we couldn't conceive of or feel unimaginable.

So I think in the trauma world, in the therapy world, we can sometimes – In the personal development world, we get really fixated on these things that are called goals, and bucket lists, and regulation, and attachments as if there's like perfect secure attachment and we can have a regulated nervous system. These aren't destinations. They're processes. And I think that's maybe what you're getting out of like how I see trauma, because it's just being in this world.

And we've also said – In my book I say wild animals don't experience trauma, but humans do. But we don't know that for sure. And we just know that the way that wild animals metabolize events usually makes them still able to perform or be biologically available for things that are mammalian. And somehow, with our species, we're at a place where those things have become difficult.

**[00:10:04] AS:** Yeah. I love that you use the word metabolism, because, I mean, I can help clients with their metabolism. But we also look at the symbolic. People always hear you are what you eat. But I say it's actually what you absorb and metabolize, because that reminds me symbolically of it's not just what happens to you. But, again, to your explaining, absorbing and metabolizing or what didn't and didn't in the process of it never being perfect. I think that's the obstacle and path to get super heady and philosophical. But that's where process comes in,

because, yeah, life is dynamic, right? There's no static point. And so how do we grapple with that? I'm kind of getting off topic, but you sent me in a different direction than I was expecting.

So one of the things I want to ask you about is what is enough? Especially as today, we talk about – I want to talk to you a lot about how our social engagement nervous system when we're really body conscious affects us. And also how a lot of times people, in my experience, are using food or binging when they're in overwhelm or freeze to act, or all these different things. So I want to first set up for you is why does satiation matter? Because in the context of trauma, we often think, "Oh, I've got to go to the deep, dark places all the time." And actually in my truce with food work, it's about developing a healthy enough ego that you feel like you can have influence on the world regardless of what you weigh or the state of health that you're in, your diagnosis. And I see that as equally important in my own experience learning that I was able to do a lot of physical healing from the chemo when doctors weren't helping me with that. And again, maybe it wasn't their job, but it was this huge like, "Wow!" sense of agency that I had. And I found that was so important for me to then be able to go back and do deeper work around some of the emotional loss that happened and stuff like that. So I'd love for you to talk about why you think satiation matters and what you talk about in your book between going back and forth between red and blue.

**[00:12:01] KAJ:** Yeah, in some ways, satiation. So when you're referring to red and blue, for people who aren't familiar with the book, blue represents something that feels pleasurable in our system. And red represents something that feels dangerous or painful in our system. And most of us spend a lot of time in the red and not too much time in the blue. And if it is blue, it's more on like the false positivity side of things of like making the best of it, or reframing it, or like let me look on the bright side, or I should do a gratitude list, or all these things that we could do to try to increase blue. But as most people listening know, a lot of time that just feels like a band-aid. It feels like you're faking it because you don't actually feel good.

And because our culture has so much intensity involved, so much stimulus, more is better. You hit one goal, set the next goal, or you might be lazy. I just wrote a book it came out in April, people are like right away they're like, "What's next? What's next?" It's like nothing's next.

**[00:13:03] AS:** You didn't agree. What just happened?

**[00:13:05] KAJ:** Nothing. Like there's nothing that's next. Like I don't have an answer. I don't know. I don't actually even want to know. I just want to be satisfied with this book, right? Satiation comes from the same route, I think, as satisfied. And throw a rock in a pond, you could just pick another one up and just keep throwing them in or you could like watch the ripples that happen from and then you could watch the stillness after it. And this compulsion for more just speaks to the emptiness that most of us are reckoning with, because we don't have intact culture. We don't even have a common ground for discussions anymore. We're not looking at a similar spread of facts. We don't even have a way to say like, "Hey, I don't know if that relates." We don't have a healthy understanding of how to have conflict between one another and still regard each other's humanity. So just like the intensity together with the polarity, and both of which are responses I think to this hungry ghost feeling of like where is the meaning? Where is the fact like you're saying, to develop a healthy ego? To me that also speaks to the fact that we have it wrong about how we would develop self-esteem or a sense of a self. The making of a self comes from things we do with our hands and a relationship we have to the earth or to each other. Whereby that level of consideration might not even occur to us because we would be so satisfied by what we're doing. And because so much of our work, including mine, happens a lot through a screen, happens a lot through sitting in my kitchen, which is where I am now, which is just weird, because it's where I make food, it's where I eat, and now it's also where I work. We don't have the same feeling that we do that all of us know when we have whatever is the equivalent of a good day's work. Meaning, you climb the, mountain or you had to walk to a creek to get some water, or you had to wait till something. We have everything at our fingertips and yet we're unhappier than ever.

So that's why satiation is important, because what a gift to be able to eat a meal and sit in the space of, "Wow! That was truly satisfying." It was satisfying in the amount. It was satisfying in the tastes. I don't feel like now I need to just go eat a piece of dessert. Or I don't feel like, "Oh, I need this or that." It's like that kind of a meal where you're like, "Oh, gosh. Yeah, I just want to sit with this for a while," and to allow ourselves to have it. And the same is true with sex. To have a sexual experience, wherever it goes and however long it is, and be able to just feel that and let that sink in, right? That we don't have to escalate intensity.

I think postpartum is very much that. It's like can we just kiss our partner and be so involved in that? That we don't have to anticipate what else might come from that? Or an interaction, can we put the period on the end of the sentence and say, "That's enough." I was thinking about it today. I'm teaching a class tomorrow, and it's a free class. So we usually get a lot of people to come. And we run ads sometimes so then the ads, you pay a certain amount of money to get a certain amount of people to come. It's kind of how it works, if the ads work well. And it's like does it matter if there's 1500 or 3000. I mean, in some ways, yes. Because, technically, the conversion rate will be higher in all of these things. But it's really never ending. If I just think, "Well, the more is better." So how many people on my list is enough? How many followers on social media is enough? Is it just an endless game of continuing to do it?

And I was thinking about it, because I think this year in my business I'm going to earn less than I earned last year. And there're a lot of reasons for it. But it's almost like why does that even require justification? Like who cares? Like who cares? As long as I have enough, which to me for right now is enough that I'm not living month to month. I can pay my bills easily. If something comes up I'm not super – Like yesterday, a tree fell on my car. I mean, that was just the most random thing. So it dented the top of my car. And I'm not really that stressed about it because I have some money. And so if it's going to cost a lot, it sucks, but I'm not like, "Oh my god! Now what am I going to do? I'm going to have to schedule 10 more clients and I'm going to have to do this." Because now I have some savings and now I have some things in place that I didn't have for a long part of my life.

But I think that this question, like this is the cultural question. We're 18 months into a global pandemic. 12 months of which was a lot less movement, a lot less air travel, a lot less traffic. We saw that the environment thrived with that. We saw more species proliferating. And so will we learn anything from that? Will we do anything differently? From the looks of it, no. So then what does that mean? , it means at least if you're listening or you and I can continue to come back to the sobriety of what it means to reorient away from not just what's enough for me, but like what's enough around me, right? And that we can talk about privilege and we can get more nuanced in our labels for everything, but the real question is what are you willing to relinquish? Not even what is enough? But like what would you be willing – What is truly enough?

And in my 20s, I was really like a minimalist. I mean, not like as much as some people are, but I didn't really have any furniture. I didn't want to accumulate anything, because I felt if I accumulated more other people would have less. And I was kind of like – I wasn't a dietary vegan. But I was sort of like living like a vegan. Like, “Well, I'm going to be this minimal, minimal, and I'm not going to earn much.” It's not really that. I mean, we all have to participate in the system that we're in. We're all part of the government. The government is not out there. We are part of the government. We are part of what makes big pharma. There is no big pharma if we're not supporting big pharma. Then it's, as Stephen Jenkinson said, “Then it's a little pharma.” So we're a part of all of this.

**[00:19:24] AS:** Yeah. I think we need little pharma, right?

**[00:19:26] KAJ:** Yeah, there's monolith. There's no one thing. It's not one – We can't just put it other and out there and make it bad without reckoning with the nuance of it, right? You had chemo. That's little pharma. Like you needed it. You're alive because of it. And the fact that I haven't needed it, really, to me is luck. It's a combination of probably genetics and luck and privilege. Like there's really no – We want to control everything and believe that we know why everything happens and believe that we can use our emotional deductive embodiment skills. And therefore we will know psychically what in our past made it happen in the present. That's

for each person to reckon with. But it lacks humility. And I think that enoughness is really about humility. And when we obsess over the way that our body looks or the things that we eat, those things – Again, we're back to the cult of the me, the cult of I, I, I, I, my body, what I eat. That's different than a healthy ego.

**[00:20:35] AS:** Yeah. Well, I think, though, what happens is at least – Because I work a lot with like how we've been socialized versus what's actually our lived experience and how – Because we've been socialized to believe that our weight does really matter, right? And there is thin privilege. There's we live in a fat-phobic culture. However, I think we've also been taught that our power, especially as women, is in beauty and thinness rather than developing the healthy ego to have the skills that we need to actually create that healthy ego, right? It feels like it's fantasy thinking. Like once I get to this weight, then this will happen, because the culture has told you that. And of course, it doesn't happen, but it's a really powerful escape fantasy, I think. So I think that's part of it. And I also think – You have to deconstruct, I think, what weight means to each people. But people have been judged for their weight and comments have been made and stuff like that. And I think that's where the social engagement nervous system comes in, is that when I'm with clients, like we look at weight more. Like we have to deconstruct what food means, what weight means. But a lot of it is around safety and feeling like do I belong, right?

So in my work, it's about like stepping out of how we've been socialized to be like, “Well, first we have to belong to ourselves, because we've also been socialized all of us, really, to look outwards,” right? Which I think comes back to this and not what's enough. Okay, if I'm this size. If I dress like this, if I have these signals of wealth, right? Because a lot of beauty is about what can you pay for, right? It's at least the way that we define beauty in our culture. I think it's important to recognize that our weight isn't often about our weight. It's about these deeper symbolisms of things. So that's at least my take on it.

**[00:22:20] KAJ:** Are you asking me what I think about that?

**[00:22:21] AS:** Oh, no, no, no. I was just going to say, like, I think sometimes we need a healthy sense of me. And you even talk about this, and maybe not around our bodies. But I think our weight is an attempt at that. Even though it's really not about the weight, it's like this symbolic attempt at having weight in our lives. Because I've heard you, and that's actually one of the things I want to talk to you about, is a lot of us train ourselves out of our preferences, right? And I'm not talking about weight. Because my work is really about clients realizing what do they need, right? Because they eat when their needs aren't being met. And so food is symbolically about attachment and feeling safe.

And so once we start to realize what we need, we can then develop that inner sense of safety by looking out for ourselves and finding the people who want to be cooperative with what we need rather than thinking we have to go at it alone. So you've talked about us training ourselves out of our preferences. And I think that's a part of where we need the healthy me that maybe we haven't learned to have, which can start to help us with that enough question.

Like, I was thinking about what you were saying with food, and like there's a different sense when you go to the farmer's market and get food from a farmer's market versus even Wholefoods or Costco. I was at Costco the other week, and like we buy snacks for our son, Essa, from Costco, because we don't have the time to cook everything homemade. But I was like there's such a different feel to this, right? Then if I were to make this at home, or Carlos was to make it. And so I'm kind of going on like in tangents. But I think what we need and what is enough, often, we've been socialized to think it's something like weight or an anti-inflammatory diet that's going to save us from death and disease, versus looking at what we really care about. So can you speak to a little bit about knowing what we really prefer versus kind of this more intensity, more burnout, more work, all that kind of stuff? If that's clear. Have I gone off on too many circles of how I understand my work?

**[00:24:18] KAJ:** Well, what's making me think about is slowing down. And I think that satiation and enoughness requires slowing down. And in a time when our place in our culture is not clear

because of how the nuclear family structure and then reckoning with like some really urgent problems, like climate change, it's hard to slow down and deal with the level of grief and heartbreak that I think are really warranted right now. So knowing the difference between being in collapse and depression versus grief. And it sounds like if people are making their way to your work, there's been a significant amount of struggle up to this point dealing with something that's so elemental and then probably a lot of self-judgment about that, right? So I hope that someone's not listening to what I'm saying as some kind of recrimination. What I'm actually trying to suggest is that we're in an impossible situation where our community, it's also a different feeling to sit down at a table of people and eat than it is to come home to your apartment by yourself at the end of a long day and sit down and eat.

I only have one other person in my household right now, my daughter. Very different for us to eat together and to have people over. It's a different kind of a feeling. It's a different settling. It's a different enjoyment. It's a different pace of eating. In some ways what we're getting after is that in order to do any of this, we really have to have an oppositional gaze. And if we've swallowed what's been fed to us without anyone either offering us an alternative in a lived, felt sense, then there is a lot of work to do in deciding for ourselves, I guess, what our values are. But again, that's such an individualistic way of – I mean, in a way it's all that's offered to us and maybe also when you have group programs. So that's partially I think the resurgence of groups, is like now we aren't just doing it by ourselves. We're doing it in the context of other people that might be asking the same questions and may have interpreted the cultural messaging and internalized it in similar ways. So we see ourselves in each other.

I'm from Southern California, and for those – The people listening who can't see me, I have red hair and freckles and I don't have a stereotypical Southern California body type. And for those reasons, I think just from a really early age I already just decided like it's not even possible for me to be that. So just kind of F it. It's never going to work. So why would I even try? And then seeing the misery of my mom and my grandmother and their relationships to their body and just knowing like there's no way that I am going to arrive at 70 years old and still be worried

about my stomach. Like there's just no way. So how about I just start now at 14 and like just decide that I'm good with it?

So in a way, for me, it really was like a rational mental decision. And so to be in a space where it's fundamentally a rejection of – Well, let me say this. There's no way that we can continue on with a world view that is about what's best for me based on an external list of goals like to-do lists, bucket lists and even positive contributions to the world that we think that are ours to make. Because then you do it. So you say, “Okay. So I checked off these to-do lists, and I'm doing better with this, and I'm doing better with that.” That still engenders you having to continue to do that without having the underlying connection to what it is that propels you through this world. That is yours to do. That doesn't really have to be identified as something. So I don't know. I think we're like – I'm definitely in a stage of reformation about how I think about a lot of things based on what I'm seeing in the culture as this unraveling, right? Like we're just in a place where we're not even looking at the same horizons anymore and there's such a high level of insecurity and instability that's showing itself through a crisis.

**[00:28:51] AS:** Yeah. No. We definitely – Yeah, I'm thinking about – I mean, it's kind of a tangent, but with Covid and what I've seen happen in the wellness world, because a lot of – Well, the white wellness world I should say. There's this meritocracy viewpoint that we have in America gets transposed onto, “Well, if you were metabolically sound and this individualistic meritocracy.” And there's no humility in it, as to your point earlier. And yet there's – I'm just thinking. There's some truth to it, but we also know that what academics call social determinants of health, which is really racism, right? So it's like some people have some control. And then the people that we're blaming don't have as much control. And if we can't all see the lenses that we're looking at, I think of through health, like if people who've been really successful – Like I'm someone who's actually been – I was never like a natural health person, but it just was like what has worked for me. But I also, to your point, know that western medicine saved my life and it destroyed my body. I can hold both. And I call it the great

mystery. You call it luck. Yeah, it's like we'll never know why ultimately, because God is the mystery, right? Like we're never going to know. But people become so scared.

I think the people who are like, "Covid is just about vitamins and vitamin D and eating well." They're afraid of certain things. And then the people who are actually in it and don't have those same privileges or access have no control. Or it's like this good person identity that I'm seeing like in my circle with people who's like, "Well, you have to care about others and all this stuff." And it's like assuming other people don't care about others. I see what you're saying. Yeah, it's just a mess.

But I also find that in-person – And I also live in a place that is pretty rooted and grounded in Pittsburgh that I find people in-person aren't quite as polarized as like if I explain to people like I had Covid and I have natural immunity, and I have a history of immune cancer. And so I'm waiting to get the vaccine if ever, right? Because people who have natural immunity and then get the vaccine are at two to four times the risk of adverse reactions. And so if I explain that to people, they're like, "Oh, that makes sense," in-person. I mean, now I've said it on the podcast. I don't normally talk about it because it's such a controversial topic and I don't feel like I have so many people who are just very like they're in a pro-vaxs or anti-vaxx, instead of like there's this middle of discernment based on individual health histories. But I don't know. I don't know how I got on that topic.

But I think that's the power of the social engagement system though as well, right? We have to be in a camp. And I was wondering if you can talk about the social engagement nervous system and what happens when we feel – In my work, we talk about when we feel at risk for unbelonging. And that either is because of our weight or because of our needs. We feel our needs conflict. Because, to your point, we can't have healthy conflict. And then we go into these different responses that then can escalate our sense of risk or make us feel more discomfort, which then means we turn to food even more. So I was wondering if you could map for people the social engagement nervous system and what might happen if we feel we're

going to be judged, rejected based on what we eat? To your point, being the vegan community, I know you come from the yoga community. That's a very popular way to belong. Or for some other people, it's like I want to be healthy and my family doesn't care. And then more deeply, it is about the fear of rejection, criticism, judgment from how we look. Not just our weight, but aging, beauty, all that kind of stuff. So if you could tell people some of what happens in the social engagement nervous system, I think they might understand themselves a bit more.

**[00:32:27] KAJ:** So the social nervous system is the ventral vagal system in the body. So the vagus nerve has two main branches. And one comes up from the heart through the throat, the jaw, the ears, the sensory organs in the face, and it's what is regulating our affect, which means affect is kind of like how our personality shows through our face and our sort of emotions together with our facial movements. So we're always looking at each other and we're looking to see are we safe with the other person or not safe? Do they approve? Do they disapprove? Are they on my side? Are they not on my side? Which is an evolutionary function, because especially for females who have more estrogen on average than more males, estrogen is a bonding hormone. And so that is why females are so much more preoccupied with things like fitting in. And so when we feel safe in the social nervous system, we feel like we belong. We feel like we can be ourselves. We can differ from the group, but that won't sacrifice or threaten our belonging to the group. So you can be who you are and you'll still be accepted in a part of the group.

But on the other side, if we feel like we're under threat, we have two choices. Our physiology chooses to either go closer to that threat, called fawning. So that's like when you're being super nice, and you're appeasing, and you're coming closer or you're code switching, you're speaking the language of the people that you're around. It's a power dynamic where you're acting like the group or person that has more power so that you won't be harmed or you won't be separated. And the other response is called fitting in. So that's camouflaging. So that's behaving like everyone in your group. So you mentioned maybe the possibility of being ostracized for being overweight. But then now we have fat as a descriptor in culture, which is where now

you've got a new group to belong to. If you are fat, you can just call yourself fat and you have a new sense of belonging. So there's all different ways that that can work, because it can be, yes, you're trying to fit into your family system. You're trying to fit into your religious system. You're trying to fit into the place where you live and like the norms of where you live. It's very different bodies from place to place. Like if you live in Rio, a “good body” is someone who has really super muscular thighs and a big butt and then a small waist. And only like 20 years ago did people in Brazil start getting boob jobs and because breasts weren't a thing. No one really cared that much what your breasts look like.

But if you go to Colorado, a good body for a woman is like you look like you're ready to climb a 14er. So I would say that like the “good body” in Colorado probably is like 25 or 30 pounds heavier than a “good body” in Southern California. Which in Southern California, a good body is try to be as skinny as you possibly can. So you just got really narrow hips, really you know long legs if possible. And it's just a totally different thing based on where you are. So that would all be about fitting in and feeling like you don't belong to this group of people if you aren't that thing.

**[00:35:49] AS:** Yeah. It's also what people think that means, right? If you don't fit in, right? Again, this could stack too, and it's individual for each person, but what we project on to the “good body”, right? Because we may see someone with a good body and what we're projecting on is, “Oh, they have their life figured out,” right?

**[00:36:08] KAJ:** Well, we have no idea how that person feels in their own. We might have some idea, because I think you can tell when someone's comfortable in their skin and you can tell when somebody is really like holding it together or completely dissociated. I mean, there's a felt sense feeling of that. But we certainly don't know who's in pain and who's not in pain or things like that. So the idea that the body is a fixed thing, like a body is a process, it's an emergence. And we would do well instead of comparing each other to other people, which is inevitable. It's part of being human. It's part of finding safety. But also that we be attending to our relationship

to the actual earth that we live on and the other creatures on the earth as well. But I really usually try to teach about the social nervous system just so people can understand why are they spinning out or looping. And social media just becomes something that feeds and exaggerates that process of comparison. So we get – Just like I was saying earlier, the slowing down is how you start to cultivate a relationship to what we would call sex or pleasure hormones. Whereas these other functions are feeding into our stress hormones where we're getting dopamine hits off of likes on posts, or we're getting cortisol hits from, "I don't look like that person. My house doesn't like this." And we're not even consciously thinking that. It's just happening in quick succession. And so if we can slow down and we can start to perceive some of those pleasure hormones, then there's slower burning and it takes retraining. But we can start to find a different ground in something that is actually more real, because social media is actually not real. We don't have relationships with people on there. Those people don't like have our backs. They're not our emergency contacts. That's for sure. So we can rein it in in terms of our physiology.

**[00:38:10] AS:** Yeah. Will you talk a little bit more about stress and pleasure hormones? And I know you talk about it in the book. But I think it's really important for people to realize, because if we're in stress, and we're fast, and we're – And actually, I want to back up. What you were saying, if we could even perceive. Because I think so many times we leave the body in comparison, right? Because we have our own stories about what it means. What someone's eating? What we look like? And so those stories we project onto other people. But it's all – We're not even in our felt sense of perception, I think. Like definitely not on social media. When you're using the example of social media, I don't think most people are realizing like, "Oh my god! Maybe I'm feeling so tired and I'm going for the dopamine hit to get some energy." I think it's just like why am I doing this?

I think, in my work, so many clients are like, "This makes no sense. Why am I doing this?" And it's because they're not even in their bodies perceiving. It's all just the intellect and the meaning making from – I don't even want to say mind, because the mind is technically a projection of

our thoughts and our body. But that's like a whole other topic. But it's like more intellectual, I guess, I could say. More cognitive.

**[00:39:17] KAJ:** It's also muscle memory. I mean, it's also proximity, right? It's just have it, right? It feels our phones becoming like another limb. We don't even feel like ourselves if we don't have it. And like every time I purposefully leave it at home, there's something that I screw up because I don't have my phone with me. Like somebody who tried – My daughter trying to get a hold of me. I mean, so much is programmed into our phone. Like you'd need a watch, and an alarm clock, and record player, and how many things we do with our phone. Like we are contending with something that's somewhat bigger than us, because it's orchestrated to keep hitting that dopamine cycle again and again and again. That's pretty much just attached to sales in some way, shape or form.

**[00:39:59] AS:** That's a great point. I love when you framed it like that. It is. That's what it is.

**[00:40:03] KAJ:** So all of these things are – I'm not saying it's a conspiracy. Actually it's very straightforward. I mean, it's just attached to late stage capitalism that's trying to gear us into feeling deficient so then we need something else to absolutely not be satiated. Because if we're satiated, that means we don't need to buy the latest thing, and we don't need to update our phone, and we don't need to shop for this thing. I mean, can you believe how good those Instagram algorithms are? They're feeding me clothes I want all the time. Like 24/7 I'm like, "Actually, I do want that dress." "You know what? That pottery is beautiful." Well done algorithm. Like very rarely they send me something that I'm like, "That's lame." So they're good at what they do.

What you were saying about the hormones though is hormones work reciprocally. So they can't be happening at the same time, which is the same thing why like if you get synthetic pitocin during labor, your body doesn't produce oxytocin. Because once you're producing one kind – And I'm not a biologist. So I don't know exactly how it works. But I know enough to know that

the receptors are only receiving one thing. So we have category of sex hormones. Those are oxytocin, estrogen to a certain extent. Testosterone is over there too. And then we have stress hormones, that's cortisol, adrenaline, dopamine, endorphins. Endorphins are a little bit more complicated where they go.

But essentially, and this model comes from Dr. Claudia Welch in *Balance Your Hormones, Balance Your Life*, which is an incredible book. She's the one who first made the distinction to my knowledge, which is that if you're producing more sex hormones, you produce less stress hormones. And I think this is interesting in terms of eating and just this – I think it's pretty widely known. Like people have gained a lot of weight during the pandemic. And it's like, “Oh, yeah, because I'm eating more and I was at home more and I move less.” Yes, but it's also because we're all handling a lot more stress.

So digestion and metabolism is mostly happening on the parasympathetic side of the autonomic nervous system. So if that affects everything, not just what we're eating and when we're eating, but the state that we're in while we're eating. So how could you use that practically? Well, you could take a moment to check in and notice how you are when you're eating or when you're preparing your food. And you could – It's sort of the same thing that I help people do like retraining porn addiction. Basically, when you feel like you're doing something to get that dopamine hit or to get an adrenaline drop like caffeine or something like that, then you do something else like give yourself a slow face massage for a minute or two. Or feel yourself and feel contact. Or give yourself a hug until you feel oxytocin. And then you make a step from that place, right? So you allow yourself to shift back into a non-stressed state in order to make the next movement.

**[00:43:06] AS:** I love that. It's almost like a re-centering, because you're going to the other side, which then leaves you in the center. Rather than – Because I think a lot of people, what they fear is they go, go, go, go. And then because they're go, go, go and not paying attention to the need to step back, then they just end up crashing. And so then they're afraid that they're never

going to get started again in a way, right? Or you can use that with work, with exercise, with like – I don't know what people do intensely, with parenting. They're just always intense to me.

Yeah. Do you have any – I mean, I know you talk about this more in the book, but do you have anything for listeners of like is it just when they feel like they want to go towards that intensity if it's social media? Or I think a lot of sugar addiction. I mean, I don't know if I really – I think some people can be addicted to sugar, but for the most part I think it's sometimes a need for intensity because it's such a rush, especially because food companies design food this way. They design it to be very much short-lived pleasure instead of that longer, slower release of feel-good chemicals that you're talking about. But I like that. So they could like do a face massage or just like something that starts to produce a little oxytocin to get them back so they're getting some of it naturally rather than having to get it synthetically, I guess, or –

**[00:44:24] KAJ:** Well, so you're doing something rather than just discipline, right? You're doing something rather than I shouldn't do this. Or you're doing something to actually change your state. So you could also do 25 connected breaths. You could also do 5 push-ups, or 10 squats. Or you could walk around your block. But you would be doing something. Instead of just restricting or eliminating, you would be offering something.

**[00:44:52] AS:** I love that. I feel like that slowly gets people more comfortable with rest and slowing down, right? Because I think a lot of people who come to me are all or nothing, right? So when they hear rest they hear – And what I work with clients is the reason that you're like on the couch all weekend with Netflix or even at night is because of so much discipline during the day, or so much discipline during the week and not paying attention to those limits that the body does have. And they're not bad limits. I don't even like to put them in that good-bad binary. But the body has real limitations. And I think they're pretty wise. So I love that. It's like allowing and giving yourself something rather than just – It's like crowding out in a way. Kind of like when you add more green vegetables, your taste buds change, and you don't need as many sweet things because of the bitter flavors and stuff like that.

**[00:45:44] KAJ:** I think if you do some of these things, you're also tending to what we were sort of talking about earlier, which maybe felt a little vague. But for instance, if you're feeling impulsive or you're feeling like you're doing something that's harming yourself ultimately or it's not in alignment with what your bigger goal is, but it's an immediate thing. We live in a touch deprived culture where people – Where in it's more touch distant than ever even though it was already very touch deprived. So it's like well what would happen if you asked your friend for a hug? What would happen if you – I mean, I'm in a relationship that it's relatively new. And I can't imagine anything that could “regulate” my nervous system or change my eating habits or whatever the case may be than just consistently knowing that someone has my back, right? And you could say, “Well, I don't have any control over that. And what am I supposed to do? Just like go find a boyfriend?” Obviously, it's not that simple. But on some level, like, for me, choosing into the relationship that I'm in now was choosing love that was already coming towards me rather than choosing based on a bunch of factors externally that I used to think were important. And it was choosing based on does this make my system feel soothed? Do I feel more safe? do I feel calmer? Not like is this like mind-blowing, earth-shattering person my intellectual equal going to complete all of these things? It's s like what actually makes me feel more connected to myself? And what feels like an accurate mirror?

And we can get that through friendships and we can get through sometimes mentoring. But I think that it's worth saying that if we do some of these other things, like give ourselves touch or pleasure, ask for touch or pleasure, we just might find ourselves not grip so hard on the thing we think is the problem, which is I think what you're saying, is that you deal with all different kinds of aspects that contribute to satiation or contribute to eating. Because as you said, the all or nothing just ends up in endless pendulation that makes people trust themselves less. Because it's like, “Oh, I tried it already. It didn't work. Why try it again?” And I relate. I mean, I'm really good at like no screens or screens all the time. Like it's very hard for me to like use the screens in a way that feels like that I'm using them rather than they're using me.

**[00:48:17] AS:** Yeah. Oh, I like that. I hate being controlled by anything. So now I'm like, "Oh, you're controlling me? Bye."

No. Well, and I'm glad that you – I think your example of the relationship is really great, because people who listen this regularly are my clients. We talk about how when we start worrying about our weight or even turning to food, we have a story where we feel at risk. That it has nothing to do with weight or food. But part of what it is it blocks real intimacy, that story. Often it's a deep fear of having needs because we'll be thought of as a burden, or needy, or whatnot. And so we then block the very connection that we need to regulate ourselves. And so then we're looking for all of these surrogate sources. So I'm glad that you brought up that example, because I think everyone in their lives – I mean, I even think about it. Since moving from the east coast, like most of my good friends are there, and I'm slowly making new community here in Pittsburgh. But we came, and then I was pregnant, and then the pandemic happened. And so it just hasn't been – And parenting's just kicked my ass for the past few years. I mean, it's hard, but it's like I never used to understand how people would be like, "Oh, I only got to see my friends or talk to them like once a year." And it's like I see myself like my one friend, she's an older mom too. She's like has three different businesses. She's selling one, but it's like we are just texting anymore. Like it's so hard to sometimes – Like when sometimes I think about calling her, I'm like, "Oh, but she's so busy. She doesn't have time." But sometimes it's those simple things that we just have to like pick up the phone or if we can be in-person if that's available to us. But I think doing the thing that we think is going to be scary is actually what we need, including trusting pleasure or comfort. Because I think a lot of times, at least with people, it's like, "Oh, if I do that, I'm never going to stop." Again, but that's that all or nothing.

**[00:50:04] KAJ:** That's why the little things over time are the things that seem insignificant. But like sometimes if somebody calls me on the phone, I just made it a habit for myself that when I get a phone call then I'd go outside and I walk around the block while I'm talking.

**[00:50:20] AS:** Oh, I love that.

**[00:50:22] KAJ:** Because I don't move enough. I'm a mover. I love moving. And the ways that I like to move, a lot of them come from being a dancer. So I like being in dance studio. I like being in a yoga studio. I like moving with other people. And that's not really so available right now. And so I find myself. And that, also, with my life stage and writing a lot is sedentary and all those things. It's like none of us really move enough. And so moving in and of itself is like, if I can say, "Well, you know what? Yeah, I didn't go on an hour walk or a two-hour walk, but I did walk around the block." We have to have those little habits, right? And now it's just second nature. I'm trying to teach my daughter to do it too. Just like get up and walk around the block, because we're not even doing these 10,000 steps that is known to be like that's the average we should be doing. That's not exercise.

**[00:51:15] AS:** Oh, I was going to say, it's actually based on a Japan fitness company. It's like a marketing thing, the ten thousand steps.

**[00:51:21] KAJ:** Yeah. But I think it's kind of reasonable. I mean –

**[00:51:24] AS:** It's reasonable, for sure.

**[00:51:26] KAJ:** And that wouldn't even be exercise. Like when I lived in New York, it was like I was 15,000 a day just because I was walking to places instead of driving places. That's part of why I moved there, because I prefer to live without a car. And it makes much more sense from an organic human perspective that you would have an impulse, you would want to go to that place, then you would move your body to that place and then you would have satiation. Because when you got there, you would have the satisfaction that you got to the place that you had, the impulse, that then you completed and you finished. But we've just thwarted and skipped over all of those steps.

So all that to say that doing 10 minutes of something may seem like nothing, but we all know that it changes something. It's much different than – Or five minutes, or two minutes. And so people are like, “Okay, I’m going to like go get my new exercise outfit, and get the new water bottle, and the new shoes, and that's going to get me started.” And it usually works for a little bit, but it doesn't stick unless it's connected to something else that feels like it's really satisfying that you like.

**[00:52:31] AS:** Yeah. Well, and one of the patterns I try to help people out is the building up, right? So it's like if it's more organic, just you can go out your door, versus I need all these things. And I think it comes back to what's really going to help me versus I think what I’ve been sold is going to help me, right?

One thing I want to – Because I know that our time is running up, but I want to talk to you. You said about Covid, like there's a difference between grief and depression and freeze and collapse. And I want you to talk a little bit about that, because in my work, I’ve seen that people, a lot of times when they're overwhelmed, and often they think they're overwhelmed. It's like people in traditional emotional eating, it's like, “Oh, you're numbing out from what you're feeling.” But I’ve seen that people actually can be in that free state so they're not feeling anything. And so sugar or binging gives them that charge to try to start to feel something. And so I was just wondering if you could talk a little bit about those states in the nervous system so that people might understand what's happening with them and maybe why they can't feel what is enough right now. Or maybe they're unclear if they're in maybe some of those stages.

**[00:53:32] KAJ:** So in the nervous system, the next level of the nervous system below the social nervous system is the sympathetic system, which is when we're feeling safe. It gives us energy. It's what wakes us up in the morning, motivates us. And then the parasympathetic is what slows us down and what allows us to rest, to sleep well, to digest for our sphincters to release. And so when we're under threat, in the sympathetic system we have fight response or flight response. And emotionally, that correlates the fight to anger and the flight to anxiety. And for the freeze,

it relates to resignation, apathy, collapse. Like nothing I do matters. So why even bother kind of thing? So there're specific things from past experiences that could contribute to that.

Overwhelm, usually the system floods and results in immobility. So it's hard to really do anything because your system just feels like a deer in headlights or maybe all the way into a complete checkout. So it can be important to notice where you are and which of those things you might be feeling and then you would go a different direction depending on which of those branches you feel like you're inhabiting.

**[00:54:54] AS:** Yeah. And everyone, can you still get the first chapter of your book for –

**[00:54:58] KAJ:** Yeah.

**[00:54:59] AS:** Yeah, because you outlined this. It was like very brilliant, I think. Where can people find that first chapter?

**[00:55:05] KAJ:** [kimberlyannjohnson.com/chapter](http://kimberlyannjohnson.com/chapter).

**[00:55:08] AS:** Okay. Great. We'll also put that in the show notes. But I think it's really important, because what Kimberly is saying, everyone, is you want to harmonize. We often think about balance. Like, “Oh, well if I’m –” But harmonizing, I mean, that’s more ayurvedic and traditional Chinese medicine. But it's also true. It's just a life truth. So if you're feeling flight, you want to kind of complete that and then come back and stay, right? Or if you're in freeze, you want to mobilize maybe after you cry. But I think that's important, especially because for a lot of my clients, they end up in freeze and people are telling them to calm down. When I’m like, “No.” And I hate how diet culture has, again, hijacked exercise. I’m like, “No. You actually need to move right now and not to burn calories or anything, but so that your system feels like you, again, have that healthy ego, which I’m calling healthy ego or a healthy sense of self that

you can change things. And so I just want everyone to know about that, because I think, often, people are told to calm down when what they need is some mobilization. And I think that's –

**[00:56:10] KAJ:** Definitely. I mean, that's pretty much why I wrote the book, because so many books on trauma are written by men and focusing on calming down and taking long exhalations and all kinds of soothing things. But I'm sure that, in some ways, to have somebody get angry about the fact that the way that they're responding and to their body or to food is really just some bullshit that's fed by the culture that they're internalizing and get mad about that. That can actually give some impetus of like, "This isn't my personal fault. This is just like the world that I'm living in." And, yeah, I'm responsible that I digested that and that I like swallowed it without actually having a critical mindset towards it. But that, also, it is the waters that we're swimming in. So I think you know there's a lot of confusion there because people are reckoning with a collective problem on an individual level. And that's part of what feels so overwhelming. But it also is part of what we have to understand, because in some cases, this might mean that you feel more separate from your family group. Or in my case, there just came to a point where I told my mom, like, "Mom, you're just uninvited to conversations about my body."

**[00:57:25] AS:** I love that. That's such a clear boundary though. I mean, that's like a healthy sense of self and differentiation.

**[00:57:32] KAJ:** Yeah. And it doesn't always work. And does she always not comment? No. Because that's just her worldview is like either I've lost weight or gained weight. Like she just can't help herself but comment. And usually it's not even right, or like I'm just like, "I don't know." And my daughter is 14, and it's not like just because I have a "healthy relationship" with my body, whatever that is. It's like an acceptance or a framework that I'm not viewing myself as if I'm outside of myself all the time and critiquing that. I'm just living in the body that I have. That doesn't mean that my daughter isn't having to reckon with all of these cultural ideas. Like just because I broke the lineage or whatever doesn't mean that somehow that shifts everything. No. She actually sometimes feels more guilty because she'll like have her period and

be like, “I hate this, but I know I’m not supposed to because you're like the period person. And I know I’m supposed to think this is like sacred and great, but I hate it,” or whatever. And so there's like an added level of how she's relating to it and how the culture is and how I am.

**[00:58:38] AS:** Yeah. I love that you said that about, because I think that's such a – I think of it how we're orienting towards the world. But you were saying like not being outside of ourselves, critiquing ourselves. And you said so beautifully early on about how the body is a process, an emergent. And I think that ties that into, when you're in your body, what you're perceiving what your experience emerges. And I think that's a really important distinction for people, because so many people are living outside and critiquing. What does this look like? Their social engagement nervous system doesn't feel safe. So it's like what will this look like? What do they think – What if I say this, right? And so coming even into the body, I think. And that's what I love about your book, is you start to give people language for what's happening so it can feel safe. Because I think language, it has its limitations, but it can be really helpful to give a name to something when it just feels like I’m swimming in a sea of being lost. Like I don't even know where I can locate myself. So I think language helps us with that. So thank you for even bringing that up, that the body is a process. That's like a really beautiful, beautiful concept and truth.

So two questions I have from our community, one person. In your book, you talked about you think we can be our own healers, right? And I love that you're democratizing healing. And someone wanted to know if you really think we can do that or we'd get greater results working with someone. And just curious your thoughts on when it makes sense to work with someone versus do some of these things yourself? Because I said to the person, I’m like, “Kimberly would probably say it depends.” But that also letting people realize like somatic healing isn't like a silver bullet. Just like nothing else is. So I just want to kind of make people realize, because a lot of our culture tells people this is the answer. And so we think of it as something built up for better or for worse. And so I just would love your answer or your thoughts on that.

**[01:00:27] KAJ:** I don't think there's anything we can do alone. I don't think we're a social specie. So I don't think there's anything that we can do completely alone. I think that mirroring is really important, and it depends on how many external influences people already have. Because sometimes people think, "Okay. Well, I'll hire a higher personal trainer, and I'll hire a coach, and I'll hire a somatic practitioner, and I'll hire a doula. And that doesn't necessarily mean that they're getting the support that they need in order to transmute something. Certainly there's acute trauma, like a sexual assault, or a car accident, or – And again, those things are metabolized differently by different people. But I wouldn't recommend taking the thing that you consider to be the most traumatic thing that's happened to you in your life and try to renegotiate that yourself. That needs to happen with someone else. Unless you've just done a whole lot of processing on things that are similar to and that's kind of like the final frontier. Then maybe you would have the capacity to walk through that. But even so, like I wouldn't do that myself. At least, if I was going to try to do it myself, I would have a friend that I trust that can hold space with me in the room while I was doing it.

I don't feel no one's getting any badges for doing more things themselves. If you talk to the somatic experiencing teachers, they are the people least likely to go to a surgery alone, to go to the doctor alone, to go to a dentist alone. People have the idea that, "Oh, they're the teacher. So they must just do everything themselves. And they must be fine in all situations." Wrong. They know how their nervous system works. So they take someone with them when they're getting a root canal. Who puts their hand on their diaphragm, and puts their hands on their legs, and make sure that they feel supported, and that they have the advocacy that they need, and that their animal body feels safe? So I absolutely do not think that we should even feel like we can do it ourselves.

What I do feel is that there's specialized knowledge like decent sex education and nervous system principles that most people, including me, only learned in specialized practitioner trainings that should just be part of middle school education and should just be part of skills that we practice as part of life skills. So I definitely don't think that one should try to do

everything alone, nor feel bad if you cannot do it alone. And you can practice the small skills of tracking your body, learning somatic and emotional language, learning to communicate through that language, which are the earlier chapters of the book, which gives you more tools when you would do a session so that that session would actually have some results.

**[01:03:22] AS:** I love that. And then they wanted to know, if they are to seek out someone, what kind of qualifications? Because as you, I'm sure, are well aware, and trauma is really a hot topic right now and it seems like everyone is an expert. What would you look for when you were going to work with a somatic practitioner? What would you recommend?

**[01:03:42] KAJ:** Well, I would ask people that you trust in your community who they recommend. Somebody that you admire that you think has a nervous system or a perspective on life that feels calming and grounding to you. You can go to [traumahealing.org](http://traumahealing.org), which is the somatic experiencing site. When people ask me for recommendations in places that I don't know people, I go to that site and I look at people's pictures and I look at what they write. And based on I choose people who are coming from a body background. So people who come more from like massage, craniosacral, dancing, body-mind centering realm, that's how I choose, because I'm not looking for a psychotherapist. I'm looking for someone who can deal with the trauma. But that's my preference. And then you can talk to the person as well to see is that somebody who you resonate with, because it's important that if you tend to be overly trusting and overly outsourcing of your authority that you use some discernment and maybe don't just take the first recommendation. Or if you tend to not trust that you have a few moments to decide if that person's way feels like a way that you like.

**[01:05:02] AS:** I love that you said focus on who's calming and centering, because at least in the wellness world, so much of it is about like – Especially from non-trainers, it's like, “Go big or go home.” And often that can be the cycle we're trying to get out of. But we think that that's what's “good”. So I'm glad you said calming and centering. So that's a really good – Or a really

helpful guidepost, I think, for people rather than, “We're going to do it all.” I mean, there's just –

**[01:05:27] KAJ:** Yeah. My friend recently took a somatic training, and the first meeting the people said they were going to try to be intentionally boring, which I was like, “Wow! That's brave.” And like I don't – But, yeah, charisma is one thing. And I know about it because I have a fair degree of it. But you want to feel that somebody is – Training training's important when it comes to trauma. Just because you've been traumatized doesn't mean you're automatically in a good situation to help other people with their trauma. You need to have some years under you. Personally, I'm 47, I like to work with people who are older than me. I like to work with people in their 60s and 70s because I don't have that opportunity in my daily life that much. And I feel like miles on the road matters.

**[01:06:15] AS:** Oh, yeah, yeah. I'm in that boat as. Well, Kimberly, thank you so much. We will, in the show, notes have a link to your book and your website. And where can people find more of you? And if you have any parting words too, anything I didn't ask you that you wish I would have.

**[01:06:31] KAJ:** [kimberlyannjohnson.com](http://kimberlyannjohnson.com), or Kimberly Ann Johnson with some creative periods uh between the names on Instagram. There're some upcoming classes, like you can go to [kimberlyannjohnson.com/jaguar](http://kimberlyannjohnson.com/jaguar). We're having like the full monty course in October, which is this kind of the sexuality addition.

Parting words, the nervous system is something you can actually feel and perceive. It's not an idea. It is a tangible – I mean, tangible means something you can touch. You would have to dissect to touch it. You can touch your skin externally and perceive some of the shifts of it. You need the intellectual framework so that you can drop into the felt sense perception, but you can feel these hormonal shifts. You can feel when you have a state shift. So don't let somatic awareness become one more thing that you're just intellectualizing. Take some time to

perceive when you're in a parasympathetic downshift or a parasympathetic collapse. Take some time to perceive when you're in your front brain, when you're in your neocortical functioning. You can also perceive when you're overwhelmed and saturated and notice what happens, because it's the sensory perception, it's the location that is your starting point.

**[01:07:51] AS:** I love that, which means you have to get back into the body, because people will feel different things at different places. So that was beautiful. Well, thank you so much for your time, Kimberly. Everyone, I cannot recommend the book again. Again, it's *Call of the Wild: How we Heal Trauma, Awaken Our Power and Use it for Good*.

Thanks, Kimberly.

**[01:08:10] KAJ:** Thank you so much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[OUTRO]

**[01:09:41] AS:** Thank you, health rebels and visionary storytellers for tuning in today. If you know someone who would benefit from this episode, please share it with them. And remember, we have transcripts of our episodes at [alishapiro.com/podcast](http://alishapiro.com/podcast) for your non-audio friends and family. And if you can, I'd love it if you can leave a review on Apple Podcasts. It helps more people find the show. And both actions, reviewing and sharing with others helps us change the cultural narrative around food weight and our bodies. Thanks for engaging in a different kind of conversation. And remember, always, your body truths are unique, discoverable, profound and *liberating*.

[END]