

Ep #47: Healing and Human Potential



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With Your Host

Susi Hately

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Male Announcer: You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hately. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hately.

With this episode, I want to dig into feeling, and how feeling is a hub between our brain and our bodies. And when we can tune into feeling, we can make incredible progress in recovery and healing, and dare I say pushing the boundaries of human potential and our own self-mastery. So let's dig in.

You know those times when you realize that you're talking about a concept with your clients or students, and you are noticing that you're doing a great job at talking about this, but that you're not really living it. You can intellectualize the concept; you speak very eloquently about the topic. But then there's this obstacle to actually living it.

You know how you can do it. Whether you sit on your cushion, or you're doing your practice on your mat, you can feel that which you've been talking about with your students and your clients. But yet, when you're out in the world, when you're off of your mat, when you're off of the cushion, it's that circumstance where you feel less and less connected. That's the gap.

You're out in the world, almost numbing out, living more at a superficial level and not necessarily tuning into your body. You're losing connection with that deep rest, that vitality, the connection to yourself that you had grown when you were on your cushion and when you were on your mat.

The good news about this is that you're in good company. I hear a version of this a lot since many of my clients come already having a meditation, mindfulness, or a yoga practice. And then those who are training with me professionally, they've had enough study of tuning into themselves that when they're in practice or having conversations it's easy to connect. But then when they're out in the world it fades away like a slow IV drip of disconnection, of numbing out, of almost desiring from one's inner self.

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When they bring this up to me I actually really, really like it because it lets me know they're at a crossroad of big, big shifting. They will often say some version of the following, "You know, I am smart. I am smart. So why can't I figure this out? Why can't I figure out how I can have more connection, that I don't lose the connection I gained on the cushion or on my mat? How can I just keep coming back to myself easily when I'm off the mat, when I'm out in the world?"

So here's the reason why, they're trying to figure it out solely by using their brain and not by using their brain and their body. Let me say that again, they're trying to figure this out solely with their brain, and not with their body and brain. Curious, isn't it?

Many of my clients have used their brains to great success in a variety of fields. Many of them lead big lives and they make a huge difference in the lives of many other people. They have it all together and they know how to have it all together. But then when things start to break down and there isn't this ability to hold it all together, then what?

Now, many of them have been well trained to bring themselves back to their mat, to bring themselves back to their cushion to reconnect. But what they really want to be able to do is to connect more often outside and off of the mat and to have more stamina with that connection. They want to be present more consistently. But they keep missing out the what of how to make it possible.

So here is what I suggest, when you have finished your practice, notice what you feel. And if you're someone who has had pain, or you have flare ups, and you've been seeing another medical practitioner, so you're not quite doing your practice per se. But you're seeing another medical practitioner and that medical practitioner has helped you feel a whole lot better, this goes for you too.

So you have finished the practice or you have finished the session with a medical practitioner or other practitioner, notice what it is that you feel. Can

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you name it? Can you articulate it and can you locate it in your body? What is that feeling? Is it connection? Is it grounded? Is it lighter? Is it younger? Is it taller? Is it spacious? Where do you feel whatever that feeling is in your body? Can you name it and locate it?

That gives your brain something to anchor to so that when you're out in the world can you start to feel it beginning to fade? What I call the yellow lights or the whispers of it fading. In the context of this episode I'm talking about the yellow lights or the whispers of becoming disconnected. Noticing that you're losing stamina, of noticing that that IV drip that I mentioned before, that IV drip of disconnection, is starting to pick up some speed.

You might even notice that you're entering into a no man's land of fogginess, of just been spacey. And that quality might indicate to you that you're no longer on your mat, or on your cushion.

I like to share with my clientele that the term Asana is loosely translated as sitting comfortably and still. It's not really translated as posture. It's more about a state of being than a thing like a posture. So can you take this idea of state of being of comfortable and still, can you take this feeling into whatever it is that you're doing? Whether it's out doing the grocery shopping, whether it's out for a run. And then notice when you stop noticing that feeling? And where do you notice that you're now noticing you're not aware?

There's a lot of notices there. Where do you now notice that you're not aware? This step that I mentioned, can you notice the feeling of not being connected? And where do you now notice that you're not being aware? This is a key step towards integrating and becoming more integral and more congruent between your body and your brain. And in turn having more stamina around having more connection off your mat in a consistent way.

It's fundamental to building your presence. It's fundamental for having this consistent, better feeling more of the time. This might seem like it's a lot of

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work. And yes, initially it will feel like that because we are not taught to be deliberate with our noticing. Not with our bodies, and certainly not with our thinking. So it's a skill that we get to develop.

And what I'm asking you to do is as you develop it or in order to develop it, just notice what it is that you feel after your practice. And then as you head out notice when those feelings start to shift. What else do you notice? Because what will happen is you will start to get clear on what the actual obstacle or problem is that actually exists, not the one you thought exists.

An example of this that I like to use is back in 2010 when I fell down my stairs, and I sprained my coccyx. I landed square on my pelvis. I took a step down the stairs in my socked feet and I had a box of files in my arms, and I just slammed hard down the stairs.

At the same time, I was going through a divorce and my mum had been diagnosed with cancer. I was super tired and I had a ton to complain about that was very, very valid, you know. And then one day I was sitting in front of my computer, I was full of complaints, I was very tired. But I noticed something. I noticed how my pelvic floor was getting more and more spasmy around the coccyx that I had sprained.

Now, a lot of people would say, "Well, that makes sense. You sprained your coccyx. Of course your pelvic floor would be getting more spasmy the longer that you sat." But something dawned on me that there was a connection between the complaints, i.e. my thoughts that I was having in my head and what I was feeling in my pelvic floor.

And it dawned on me that if these complaints that I was having were really true, and I mean, like a big T truth, that wouldn't my body be opening to these thoughts and not closing into a spasmy space? And with just that one thought my pelvic floor released. That was interesting evidence.

So curious about this I then asked myself, "Well, maybe there's another way to go about this thought process." My pelvic floor released even more,

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I'm like, "Huh, well that's an interesting other amount of evidence to ponder." What was interesting though, is I still knew that I was right about my thoughts. And I laugh when I say that, but really, I was right. Now, there's a distinction here between right and righteous, like there were some things that I was right about.

But the truth of the matter is, and this is the important part, is the complaints were very small T truths. Yes, I was right. But there was a very strong distinction that I came to realize between being right and being congruent. And what my pelvic floor was telling me was that sure, I might be right but I am certainly not being congruent. There is an integrity that is lacking between my brain and what I was thinking in my body and what it was feeling.

I found myself asking, "What do I want to be? Do I want to be a bitter old ninny? Or do I want to get back to my skiing, to my yoga practice?" My pelvic floor relaxed even more. So then I continued to engage with my brain and what I was thinking and what I was feeling.

My brain got more and more evidence of this link between what I was thinking and what my pelvic floor was doing. So I could keep helping my brain come away from the complaining and back into my body. And my pelvic floor became the measurement, it became the barometer of what was going on in my brain.

As I continued to practice this way, I was able to tune more clearly and concisely, and I was more connected for a longer period of time and way more congruent. My body got to experience more ease and less tiredness. And I started to improve quicker with my pelvic floor, because my pelvic floor was getting less spasmy more often, as my brain was becoming less cluttered in terms of what it was thinking.

Now, I will not tell a lie, there were times my brain still wanted to go off into the land of complaint. But then I was able to show it the result of what happened when it stayed there, right? One that was a little bit more

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depleting, less vital, versus the one that I was actually training for, which was more energy, more fun, more skiing, all with less pelvic floor spasming.

Now, I should note that it's not super common for a person to heal from a coccyx sprain. And I did, right? This is what's at the heart of feeling, and how it can bring together the cognitive aspects of our brain and of our life, and the workings of our body.

So now I bring it back to you, I want you to notice the state that you're in. Are you in a state of Asana, sitting comfortably and still? Or are you in a state of one of complaining, of resignation, tolerating, or righteous? Now check back into your body and just notice what each of those states feel like in your body?

Now, what I really want to emphasize is the one of complaining, and resignation, of tolerating, and righteousness. Those are all very valid states. I'm not dissing those states whatsoever, I mean, there's a reason why those states exist. The question that I love to ask is check back to your body and recognize if there's a big T truth there. Because if your body is closing down around it, chances are there's something that is not integral.

And if your aim here is to have more consistent presence over a longer period of time, more ease in your body, then just consider how this state and body relationship is working for you. Does your body feel vacant and vacuous? Or does it feel connected? Does it feel tight or is it in a place of anticipating, bracing or gripping?

Consider that maybe these feelings of anticipation, bracing, gripping, vacant, vacuous or whatever other quality you would like to use to describe it is evidence to your brain of when you're disconnected. Evidence for your brain to say, "Oh look, I'm not in Asana right now."

This is step one. Yeah, because now you have the feeling of not being in Asana, you now have the feeling of not sitting comfortably and still. You now have the feeling of not being connected. And this is when you get to

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ask more clearly and deliberately, “Is this what I want?” And so when this is really clearly laid out, you now have choice.

This is really, really different than just complain about something but not being able to connect it to your body. Because we can complain about something and say, “Man, I got to fix this, I got to fix this, I got to fix this.” But now we're back up in our brain, we're trying to fix it by just taking actions. We're not pausing long enough to actually feel what's going on and really see what is contributing to the whole scenario. We're missing out on a key piece of what's going to help us make a choice that has us creating what it is that we want and desire.

So in the falling down of my stairs scenario, I wanted to get back skiing, I really wanted to get back to my regular yoga practice. That was what I wanted. And in my complaining state, my pelvic floor was clearly showing me I was not going to have any of that, no skiing, no yoga practice, because I just couldn't do those things with a spasmy pelvic floor.

So I realized the complaining state was not what I wanted. Right? I got clear between those two options. It was clear as anything, complaining state pelvic floor tight. Looking forward to skiing and yoga and not complaining, pelvic floor release. Huh. So then the work now to shift the state, it was to notice the whispers of when either state was coming on or leaving. Very, very tangible. Very noticeable on a feeling sensation level.

And then what I noticed, and what I'm offering to you to notice, is that as you play around with this tangible state, you'll also begin to notice other feelings and sensations that arise that let you know before the disconnection state arises, before the complaining state arises. They just let you know they're the littler whispers, the quieter whispers and they can just help you reconnect again. You can simply ask, “Remember, where am I going again? What am I being reminded of? And is this helping me get there?”

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As you practice this it becomes a very creative process of reconnecting with your body. Of listening to your body, but also connecting your body with your brain. So if you were someone earlier in this episode who was nodding their head and saying, "Oh yeah, if I was so smart, why haven't I figured this out yet?" Because you need to reconnect with feeling and your brain, with feeling and thinking, with brain and body.

You need to use your intelligence. You need to re-channel that intelligence so that your body and brain are engaging in a better way. More effective, more efficient, and way more meaningful and significant to you.

So why is this important? I'm going to take this one more step to finish up. As humans, we have an animal-like primal instinct. When there is a congruity between your brain, your thinking, and your body. Everybody can feel it. You don't have to convince anybody of anything. There's just this resonance and this radiance. They feel you and they can feel the big T truth of you.

But when there's incongruity between what you are saying and that primal instinct that's inside of you, other people's primal instinct, they can feel it. They might not be able to specifically name it, but there's an incongruity. There's a messiness, it's sticky, the message isn't clear on that energetic level. You're saying one thing and they're feeling something else at that deeper subconscious, primal body level.

Now, I will admit that most of us humans will not typically explore this until there is some kind of trauma. Some kind of injury or illness and we're forced to come here, right? We're just not in a world that honors this as a process, as a general process.

But what I can tell you for sure, is when you step into this world, as you practice it, it is so invigorating, so heart and mind expanding. Because you're now connecting to that very vibe, that vitality, that energy of who you are. And this is how an injury or illness can help transform and evolve and move you to mastery.

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Over the next few days try this on. When you've finished your practice, whether it's on the cushion or the mat, I just want you to notice what it feels like. Can you name that feeling? And can you locate it in your body? Give your brain something to tune into.

Now, you might find yourself off your cushion and off your mat out in the world and starting to feel the yellow lights and whispers of being disconnected. And at that point, you might be able to intervene. But what's more important is that you name that feeling, and you locate it or notice where the location of it is disconnected.

You might need to bring yourself back to your practice when you come back home or you might be able to intervene in that moment. But that second part is not as important as simply noticing you've become disconnected or you're noticing the whispers of becoming disconnected.

It's so, so important. Because if you notice that, and your brain can really tune into it without disparaging your body or yourself, then you now have this data point of going, "Okay, that's what this feels like." Now you can bring yourself back a lot faster and don't build up a more grooved pattern of being more disconnected over and over and over again.

You can bring yourself back to that connected place more and more often. You can train your brain just like you can train your body. And you can train the two of them to continue to talk and connect.

I'm going to be talking about this more in the next episode. So tune back in for part two. In the meantime, have a great time exploring your brain and your body.

If this episode has struck a chord for you, like oh yeah, this makes a lot of sense and you're wanting to become consistently more present. You want to become consistently more connected between your brain and your body, you will love our upcoming program on healing and human potential. We're running it this summer, we are launching registration really, really soon. So

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if you want to be placed on the priority list, do send us an email to health@functionalsynergy.com. In the meantime, have a great time exploring and we'll see you for part two of this episode next week.