

Ep #112: Key Conversations About Pain: When the Pain is Gone, Am I Fixed?



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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.

Welcome and welcome back. With this episode I want to dig into one of the key conversations that I have with my clients, particularly when they begin to feel better. Many people believe that if they're feeling better, that their job is complete. That the pain is gone. That they're over the hump. That they can get back to the things that they were doing before, not a problem.

It's as if they are thinking that now the symptoms are gone, they must be fixed and good to go. With this episode my hope is that I can debunk these two myths, that is when they feel better it means the job is complete and that if the symptoms are gone, they must be fixed. And in place of these myths, what I'm hoping is to provide a full option that is filled with more possibility, more hope, more freedom, and more love.

First off, it makes sense that people believe these myths as being true about their bodies. That when their symptoms go down, that they feel better, then they must be fixed. We have long lived in a culture that suggests that pain symptoms are related to damage. So if pain symptoms go away, it must mean that that damage has gone away as well, hence why they can get back to doing everything they were doing before.

The reality is, is that symptoms don't correlate to tissue damage. Yes, there could be tissue damage, but not always. And particularly not with chronicity or a persistency of pain.

I realize that for some people listening this will sound incredibly odd, especially when there's that burning feeling in your back, or your SI, or in your QL, or somewhere in your body that you can specifically point to and it feels like it's on fire. Surely, I mean surely there is something wrong there. Surely there is something damaged.

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I see this all the time when people come to my practice. And then we begin to move. We settle out their compensation patterns. We help them to breathe better and calm their mind. And in one session, within one hour, their pain reduces.

It can be a bit gob smacking at first. Often they'll ask me, "Why do I feel better? Like where did it go?" Some of my clients will actually start to move around a little bit trying to find it as if to say like, "Where is this long lost sensation that I've had for so long?"

Here's my response, pain symptoms let us know that something is up. They let us know that limitation that is present is creating a dysfunction, that it's creating a scenario that isn't working for us. Yes, the symptoms are grabbing our attention. They're directing our attention, honing our focus, because in a sense they are gathering our resources to support a process for change.

I say to them that the fact that they feel better says that they can feel better. How do I know this? Because they feel better. Their system has already proven it to me. Their system is communicating to them and to me. The key here is communication. And communication isn't a one or done thing. It's a dynamic relationship.

Think about any other relationship in your life, your spouse, partner, friends, kids, co-workers, all of those relationships rely on communication. Communication that is back and forth, that is dynamic, that is clear, that is respectful, that is basking in love, provides a listening ear when needed, perhaps a shoulder to cry on when needed. Perhaps a hug.

This is no different with your body and brain. Those symptoms, those are communication strategies your body and brain are using to let you know what is up. Yeah, yes. See, as you understand their dynamic nature that is unique to you, the more understanding you will have for what they are saying and asking of you. The more you can grow a relationship that really

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nurtures you and ultimately helps you live a life with less or eradicated pain or other symptoms you are experiencing.

I know this can sound hard, and difficult, and tiring. Especially when all you want is to get your body back on board to get on with your life. But here's the thing, listening to your symptoms and engaging with your body in this communication dialogue is actually the ticket to have you get back to the life that you want. And perhaps even a better life because of the relationship you will grow with your body. Listen to your body when it whispers and you won't have to hear it scream.

So let's come back to the symptom reduction. That point where there was some gob smacking insight of experiencing less symptoms, perhaps none of those symptoms. As I mentioned earlier in this episode I like to tell my clients that they can have this experience long-term because their body and brain have just demonstrated this to be so.

If you can have it at a glimpse, if you can have it at a small level, you can absolutely have it at a big level. But to get there, you need to build a habit. You need to build a habit based in new patterns of neuromuscular dynamics, the dynamics between your brain and your body.

Now to do this I ask my clients to do two things. The first is I ask them to notice this good feeling that they now have with the symptoms being reduced or gone away. I ask them to notice this good feeling when it begins to fade so that when they come back for their next session with me they can tell me for how long the new pattern lasted.

I also ask them to notice what else they notice when the good feeling fades. Is there any breath holding, emotion, things outside of them that perhaps contributed to the symptoms showing up? The more that they can notice, the more that I can help them with. And no matter what, whatever they bring to that session is going to help them get to that next place.

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Now by doing these two things, asking them to notice when the good feeling begins to fade and asking them to notice what else is present when that good feeling fades, I'm asking them to channel their awareness and their attention. Not in a grippy or an anticipating sort of way, but in a curious and an exploratory way.

Because we're now in a pattern recognition phase and habit building. We know the symptoms will come back because we haven't had a long enough period of time to train the habits so that the symptoms don't come back. So we know the symptoms will come back. There's, generally speaking, a more relaxed state.

There's an understanding so that as a result, when my client returns to their session they provide me with a remarkable amount of data that we can then work with. More about their breathing, more about their sleeping, more about what's going on in their environment, more about what other body parts get on board to help compensate.

And then by the end of that second session, their symptoms are now down further. And not only that, their awareness of ease and freedom is higher. They leave with more understanding of the way that their body moves and how their body and brain interact. And invariably, the length of time between feeling good and the symptoms returning gets longer and longer.

And their ability to tune into their body's communication system is higher. They're becoming more refined, they have more capability for listening to their body when it whispers. They can pay attention now to the screams but not in a way that is grippy. It's like, "Aha, I realize why that now happened." It's the communication strategy.

They understand that communication back and forth. They are now understanding more of the indicators, more of the whispers that are letting them know what is up. They're also more able to intervene more easily, more quickly. And they have longer and longer durations without the pain or the other symptoms that they've come to see me with.

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And as a result their lives have opened up. There are more opportunities for activities and living the lives they want to live. And here's why, because ultimately we didn't fix anything because there wasn't anything to fix. It's because they were paying attention, that they listened, that they tuned in. They followed the pattern and they built a habit of respect, and of love, and of deep caring for themselves.

And by doing so, they were able to take more steps in the direction that they wanted to go. From small steps they were able to take bigger steps, and bigger steps, and bigger steps.

Now here's what's interesting, it's not uncommon through the process of my working with my clients that they will have a setback. It's not a linear progress of upwards all of the time. That they will have setbacks, they will have flareups, that's a natural part of the process.

But here's what's distinct with my clientele, is that often what I can coach them through is, okay, what are we now aware of? What are you now noticing that contributed to this? And if you're not sure, then let's work with the not sureness. There is always something that is contributing and it may simply be under the level of awareness.

We can still take those same principles in a time of flare up and support the process to move forward. And in fact, what I have noticed with my clients is that when that flare up does happen, it's actually an indicator that a big gain is about to come because what they.

Become aware of as a result of that flare up can be oftentimes really revealing about how they are with their body, how they are with their brain, how their body and brain interact, what healing means to them, what recovery means to them, how they channel their very, very best skills to support themselves in their own transformation. It's powerful stuff, this healing and recovery process.

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Now, I just want to make a note before I finish up here. Some of you listening to this are well over the age of 50 and you might be thinking, “All right, I get what she's saying, but I'm too old for this.” Here's the thing, I have consistently worked with people who are older than me, and I myself, am now over 50. I continue to work with people who are older than me, well into their 60s, 70s, and 80s.

Here's the thing, no matter your age, tissue can change. No matter your age, your brain and body can grow a better and better, clearer, more dynamic relationship. So I gently offer to you to think again. Change is possible. Possibility is available to you.

If you have resonated with what I am saying, if you recognize this relationship between body and brain. If you innately and inherently know that you're not broken and that there is a way out, you are ready and willing for change and transformation, you simply need someone to hold your hand, to guide you, to show you the way.

The way that so many other people have traveled and opened up their lives, reconnected with their bodies and brains, and did the activities they want to do with less or no pain you will love *Healing And Revealing Your Human Potential* where we dig into all things about brains and bodies, how to recognize these patterns.

You will work with me three times a month in a group teaching setting. It's a fabulous experience with like-minded people who are on that path. To read more about the program, go to functionalsynergy.com/synergy. It would be an honor and I would love to work with you.

If this episode has resonated and you're looking to deepen this idea of getting your body back on board, of listening deeply to your symptoms, of listening to the whispers so you don't have to hear the screams and you're looking for one to one support or professional training, then reach out to us at health@functionalsynergy.com where we can customize your learning

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path. That's health@functionalsynergy.com. Looking forward to hearing from you.