

Ep #249: Introducing Healing In Synergy



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With Your Host

Susi Hatelty

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Male Announcer: You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hatley. 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 Hatley.

Welcome and welcome back. I'm so glad that you're here today because today I am sharing about the newest program that I have that really is a culmination of all the work that I've done so far.

So many people know me for the work I do with helping my people and clients get out of pain. They know and have heard the stories of what happens in our certification program and the results that graduates are getting, and even while they're trainees. They are, in many cases, in awe of just what is possible as a yoga therapist that trains with me. And they're a little bit like, oh, that's a really big commitment.

They also have heard about the Power of the Pits, they may have even done the Power of the Pits or the Power of Hip Rotators or the Power of the Tongue or even the Power of Pure Movement programs like the QL, the feet, the neck, and they think those are great. But there's this middle ground, right?

There's a distinction between the commitment that's required for certification and the short one hour to six hour programs that I also offer. It's like, where's the middle here? Where's the middle ground that I can kind of take in some of this approach, get it in my own teaching skill set so I can help myself and I can help my clientele?

So that's why Healing In Synergy was created. It really is that sweet spot in the middle of those two sides of the spectrum, really. And it takes what I have seen as kind of key concepts around embodiment of learning and how embodied learning is so, so important to understanding anatomy and biomechanics in a therapeutic context.

They need to break down movements into component parts and really understand the principles, the anatomical, biomechanical, kinesiological

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principles behind them, rather than relying on a one size fits all, which is so prevalent in the yoga and the yoga therapy industry. And, I mean, really a lot of therapeutic contexts are, all right, do this for the glutes or do this for the psoas or do this for X, Y, and Z.

There's a piece around knowing that information, which contributes to a certain confidence that then can be had around helping people really tap into their own inner healer and the power of the mind-body connection and how to actually go about doing that.

Because even though knowing the anatomy and biomechanics, as I just said, from a really embodied place, is helpful in developing the confidence to then support someone in becoming their own best inner healer and really tapping into what I like to call the whispers, there's also a clarity in how you're doing it for yourself and how to walk someone to that place of really feeling, because it can sometimes be a bit of a four letter F word, this feeling idea.

But yet we know that we can't change what we're not aware of. And in order to get to that place of awareness, it's important to help our people learn to feel, to sense, to listen to their body as opposed to simply the thoughts in their head, right? And so there can be an obstacle there around supporting people in getting to that space, that confidence in being able to help someone come into that space.

But also, the significance of the principles that really drive the anatomy piece and helping people become their own inner healer piece and how those principles are actually very similar to what's necessary in running our business. And when we can think about that place of yogi mindset, that place of a sacred schedule and how vital those are to really living our best life, crafting a structure for us to do this meaningful, very, very meaningful work.

So that's really kind of at a synopsis what Healing In Synergy is all about, really blending this body/mind connection, but not just for our clients, but also inside of our businesses. So it takes the trainings that I've done all

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through my career and brings them together in a way that honors and addresses and helps even respond to those three obstacles that I see time and time again, which is that there is a doubt around applying anatomy therapeutically.

You can know your anatomy. You might even be someone who doesn't have a lot of anatomy, right? So you can know your anatomy and not know how to apply it. You cannot feel strong at all in any anatomy training and then you feel kind of blank of how to even progress with the client. There can be a lack of confidence or clarity with helping someone who has pain and really helping them tap into areas of their body and their being that are necessary to come into awareness of in order to help them.

And they can also be overwhelmed with just running the business, applying all of the trainings you've had up to this point and really integrating them in a way. And then in some cases, those have a lot of conflict, but integrating them in a way that really is your signature sauce, your way of doing this, right?

And the aim here is to help address, again, the doubts, the confidence and clarity issues and the overwhelm. And I want to walk through this today so you get a really good feel about what this is, because I'm super excited about it. And my hope is, is that as you're listening, you're like, oh yeah, this is making sense. I understand where I could build upon and support myself in the trajectory of my own career, right? I'm talking for you right now.

It's like how this can really support you and taking your next steps as a yoga teacher, as a yoga therapist, as a health professional who's wanting to integrate yoga more therapeutically, because these issues arise across the board, whether someone comes from an OT, massage, or a physio background, or whether they're a yoga teacher or a personal trainer, and they want to integrate yoga. These issues consistently show up.

So much that I want to make a mention of there's currently a physical therapist in our certification training. And she was sharing with a couple of

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incoming trainees about how with all of her training, there are times when she was with clientele that was like, she's like, I don't know what I'm doing. And so often I hear yoga teachers saying, oh man, if I was just a physical therapist, then I would know what I'm doing.

And I'm here to tell you that there are a whole slew of health professionals who are saying, I don't know what I'm doing. And so this program really helps address those issues, that doubt issue, clarity and confidence issues, and the overwhelm issue. And I'm going to walk through these now.

So let's begin with the anatomy piece. As I've already mentioned, there are people who have a lot of anatomy training already, like the OTs, PTs, massage therapists who often come into my world. They've got a lot of anatomy training and yet they feel doubt because they're not really sure how to apply that anatomy training with clientele.

I think about also the yoga teachers and the Pilates teachers and the fitness folks who might not have formal education in anatomy or biomechanics, but they've done a ton of sort of post their certificate training in anatomy and biomechanics, and they got a lot of knowledge, a lot of data. They are clear about where muscles exist in the body. They are clear about what the function is of those muscles. They know more about myofascial meridians.

There's a lot about anatomy and physiology even that they know, but when it comes to the application of it therapeutically, there's doubt. And sometimes that doubt can arise out of the basic and common erroneous way that some trainings are taught, which is do this for back pain or do this for SI pain or do this for fill in the blank. When the reality is that there's no one protocol that fits all folks. So it makes sense, right? Then you try the thing, it doesn't work. And it's like, ugh, how do I actually work with this? So that's one area.

The other area, as I've mentioned, around anatomy is for the folks who don't have a lot of anatomy background. And they look to all those folks I just mentioned as saying, oh my gosh, they've got the anatomy background

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if only I had what they had. And there's that doubt which creeps in of, I don't know enough, and if only I had. And they see all these anatomy and biomechanical courses. It could even be that the anatomy and biomechanics scares them because it feels like this whole other language that they have to wade into.

And ultimately the reality for me, is that most of the people who run through my certification program, who go through most of my programs are in the category of not having a lot of formal training. And they actually come through really strong in understanding how movement works.

So the bumper sticker here is this is someone, me, coming from a kinesiological background. I've got lots and lots of understanding of anatomy, biomechanics, and kinesiology. And if you can learn about movement and breaking down movement into component parts and understanding compensation patterns and being able to teach those things, it really becomes a game changer because you start to be able to see very, very clearly and with a lot of confidence that one size doesn't fit all.

And it's just, it's not a big deal because what you're seeing is like, yeah, person A has back pain. Person B has back pain. Person C has back pain. And by looking at them moving, you see that person A has more stuff going on up in their shoulders that looks like it's significantly correlated to their back. And then person B, there's more significance around their feet or their calves. And the other person is like, huh, you know what? They're really gripping through their breath, right?

So there's this obvious trajectory that you can move each person through because you recognize that where the pain is, is not the problem. But you see the way they are moving, the way they are breathing, and it's clear as day to you. And you can take them step by step because you understand how the body moves through its granular component parts.

What also results from this is that they really are able to see the benefit or the inspiration of templated and protocol approaches and understand why

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those templated and protocol approaches really do work, but is or are they clinically relevant in this particular situation?

So there's a lot of critical analysis that can be utilized when there's this understanding about how the body moves and specifically how this particular client in front of you is moving and just following the flow of what's going on because you have all of those fundamental building blocks.

And it's interesting because this weaves into this next piece that also is about clarity and confidence, and it's around the pain issue. And what's so great in our yoga industry is I remember back in the mid-ish 2000s, cresting over 2010 to 2011, and I went to a yoga studio and I was talking to the owner who I knew quite well and their business manager. And I said, you know, I really want to run a workshop around pain.

And the business manager just looked at me straight in the eye and said, nobody, Susi, wants to talk about pain. Yep, we all know we have pain. Everybody knows that pain exists, but we do not want to talk about it and no one will come. And I was like, oh, all right.

And I understood that because I had run workshops at the Toronto Yoga Conference filled with 80, 90, 100, 100 or more people. And when I would ask people if there's pain, no one would put up their hand. Then I would ask the question in different ways, and these were therapeutic classes I was teaching.

And then I asked the question another way, and then one hand would come up and then more hands would come up. And then inadvertently, like in time, most of the room had their hand up when they were acknowledging pain. But it was so interesting how challenging it was for people to initially engage in a conversation about it.

Now, what's great is many, many years later, there's much more of a dialogue about pain. Not only pain in yoga, but also just pain. There's been an evolution in the medical world about pain. I remember when I was in my 20s, and that was a time when a lot of rehab here in Canada was talking

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about how you need to move through pain. That's the protocol that I worked with at the chronic pain center just after I graduated.

But yet, when I was in that chronic pain center, I'm like, clearly this isn't working. I mean, I was one of those excited, naive new grads looking at what was going on thinking, I am not going to keep people moving in pain when it's clearly not working. And so that's when I first started how about you move in a range that doesn't increase pain?

And so when I moved away from the city, where I was working at the chronic pain center, and I started to do more therapeutic aspects of yoga, that just became a living mantra of mine. Now, I did get pushback from many, many physical therapists in my city, like emailing me saying, you cannot tell people that you can reduce or eradicate physical pain. You have to tell them that they have to manage it.

That was the conversation of the day. But clearly, what I was seeing in my practice was not that. I didn't have to tell people to manage the pain. Because clearly, what I was seeing was not an illusion. People were telling me, quite clearly, and they were happily telling me how they were reducing and eradicating their physical pain.

10 years later, and I'm talking to the same physios who are like, oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, we're not saying that stuff anymore. We know that we can reduce and eradicate physical pain. Physical pain is a physiological reality. It is normal physiologically, it does not have to be a normal way of life. And to say to someone that it's impossible to get rid of it, I don't know, that just makes me want to puke.

So, addressing this idea then with my trainees is they can lack confidence and clarity because they don't want to hurt their person anymore. Their person's already suffering, struggling, wanting to get out of the situation, or they unfortunately still have a physician or other authority figure in their life that is saying to them, well, you just got to live with it. And they believe them, unfortunately.

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And so there can be that drumbeat of like, well, this is just the way my body is. And so then the yoga teacher or yoga therapist is saying, oh, God, how do I help someone move along the bridge toward this other reality? And they become scared around moving in that direction, or they even become anxious. They might even become resigned. The idea though, is they really want to help.

And a big piece of this is supporting someone in helping them become aware and become aware of what they're not aware of, because we can't change anything we're not aware of. So it makes a lot of sense that when they have heard from an authority figure that they've got to live with it, they stop the conversation at that point with themselves. Because someone has told them, someone who they respect tells them, well, this is just the way it is. Suck it up, buttercup.

Or they do want to make a change, they've tried, but it's just not working. It's so easy to just go after those surface-level symptoms, because those are the things that are screaming. And it can sometimes be really challenging to come into those spaces that we're not aware of, because we have to come into that four letter F bomb, which is feel.

And that feel word has a lot of stuff associated with it, which is why I'm tending these days to use perceiving and listening and tuning into sensation, which I know sensation can have its own other piece of it, because then if they're feeling sensation, they're feeling their pain.

But there's an artistry to this. And that's something I am really, really good at sharing with people, is this artistry of metaphorically taking a client by the hand, not dragging them, but just holding their hand like I would hold my seven-year-old's hand. And just say, hey, we're going to go on a journey. If you're willing and you're here and you want to step, I will step in line and with you.

And there might be a time when you say to me, I'm really scared to move on. Can you take a few steps ahead of me and kind of gently pull on my hand so I can see where you've stepped and I can step along with you?

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And there might be times when the client says metaphorically, actually, I want to take a few more steps kind of into a space that I'm not really sure of, but can you still hold my hand while I take those metaphorical next steps? And if I just take a little, little step in the wrong direction, you can kind of bring me back where I need to go.

And so there's this kind of cool healing relationship that starts to happen where we're in lockstep in a sense, where we're working together. Sometimes I might be ahead guiding them with a little bit more, come on, over this way. And sometimes they're like, no, no, no, I want to go this way. Can you just stay with me while I explore over here? And sometimes we're going right next to each other, onward we go. But we're going hand in hand. We're on the trajectory together.

We are in a healing relationship, navigating this grayish world of sensation safely, collectively, uncovering, gaining confidence of what's there. And it's a really, really magical and beautiful experience. And I know that almost sounds a little corny and a little woo-y, but it's so darn meaningful.

Think about it, like sensation for so long has had this like soft science-y. It's all the soft skills, right? It's not real science. Give me the objective muscular, myofascial data. What's the range of motion? Give me the numbers. I want to see that quantitative data. And that feeling stuff, yeah, yeah, yeah, it's nice.

But yet when you can tap into that feeling stuff, it's full of potent power. And yet, because it hasn't been worked with for many, many, many, many years, to be skilled at it is a true differentiator. People can feel when you are someone who has the space for feeling. When you are someone who has the space to listen to the subjective experiences that they are having, they can feel a sense of safety with you of being able to explore.

And when you combine that with the objective world of biomechanics and anatomy, applying that therapeutically as I've talked about as being the first step, amazing magic starts to happen because you are blending the

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quantitative with the qualitative. You are blending what you see with what you perceive.

It really is an extraordinary synergy between mind and body, between interoception and proprioception and what's actually happening in our movement. It's honoring the feels. It's honoring the body movement. It's honoring the magic that comes with healing because healing truly is magical.

I'm aware that when people come into my one-to-one space, that they will get better. There's no doubt about it. The how of it, I don't know what's going to happen. The trajectory of everyone's process is entirely different. And so I've just learned to bear witness to it, guiding them as we go, metaphorically hand in hand, teaching them about their bodies, exploring the anatomy, blending it together with what they're sharing and how I can help guide them through to a feeling, perceiving sensory process. It's a remarkable experience.

So there is this clarity and this confidence that starts to really emerge. You recognize because you've experienced that it's no longer this black and white world, that there isn't one exercise. And we all fundamentally know that, but we can fall into this default way of, okay, this is what we're going to do, especially when there's doubt and especially when there's a lack of clarity. Okay, I'm just going to pull out this protocol, which is fine. You can do that.

And when you have this understanding, as I've just mentioned, you can play around with it a little bit more and go, okay, hold on a second here, I'm just going to play with this, see how it lands for this client. I'm going to fine tune it as is needed, as opposed to trying to make your client fit the freaking protocol. And then if they don't fit just say, well, you know, it's just the client's fault. They're not ready to get out of pain. They don't really want to get out of pain and all the other stuff that is actually making my heart ache even as I say that out loud.

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As we grow as teachers, as we connect as teachers, as we tune into our own biomechanics and our own embodied experience and our own inner healer, we're just that much more able to connect with our own clientele in a remarkably connected way, which then leads to the fundamental next piece, which is our business.

And I know people, some people listening to this will be like, oh my God, business conversation, it's oil and water. I get it. So many trainings out there look at business as being this thing that is not aligned with yoga. And all I can say is this, when I am more and more deeply aligned with yoga, business is a whole lot easier, even when it's difficult. Because there are difficult things that happen in business, just like there are difficult things that happen in the other parts of our life.

And as we know that when we are approaching those difficult things with some yoga principles, they can still be difficult, but a little bit more simple and straightforward to move through. There may even be an easier way through the hard bits.

Think of it like climbing a mountain. There are times when we're having to go up the scree patch, the loose rock or the muddiness and our hearts are beating and our feet are slipping. We might even need to crouch down and pull up at the rocks and help us get ourselves up. It's not at all easy. It's not the walk in the park. It's not walking that plateau with beautiful spring flowers. It's hard.

And even when it's hard, there can be an ease to it when we are thinking and driving from yoga principles. You see what I mean? We can make it harder to do hard work. We can also make it easeful-er. Easeful-er, that's my new word today. And a way to play with that is what I like to call the yogi in the business.

And I build upon that from the days I taught yogi business programs and specifically those items of how to weave in these principles. And there are people listening who are like, oh, that's so ideal, Susi, but business is not

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personal, it's business. It's a dog-eat-dog world. And it's like, yeah, there's certainly aspects of that, for sure.

And there's also a lot of people out there who do not practice that way, which then leads to this idea of a sacred schedule. And holy smokes, this is so important. I like to think of this as being like my calendar, that schedule to my business is like my yoga mat to my yoga practice. It's my sacred space. If it doesn't show up in my calendar, it's likely not going to get done.

It's also the place where I can really craft and have artistry around how I actually run my life and where there's some intensity in terms of like program creation and marketing and communication and the work I do with my team, my vendors, the accountants and the tax and all that stuff, even the stuff I don't really like in that world.

And then there's also my resting time, my recuperative time, my other fun time. My kid time, my family time, my husband time, me time. And it sounds like there's a whole lot of things to schedule, and the reality is when you actually have your calendar out there and there's a kind of sacred space to it, it's interesting how things kind of land in a really perfect way.

And as you play with these ideas, you begin to recognize that it can be quite straightforward to grow your business in a way that really nurtures you and nurtures your client. You need to be technically strong and you need to have some business skills.

And as you do this, you start to really see how, even if there are conflicting pieces to the things that you have learned, whether it's through anatomy, whether it's through pain science, whether it's through business principles, you begin to see that there's a common thread through them all. And that thread is you.

And you get to pull from each of the things that you've learned and apply them for you. Take what resonates and either shelve or ditch the rest. Maybe you come back to it another time and the things that someone has shared with you actually now have different meaning for you and now fit, or

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maybe they won't. But the key is that just because someone, including myself, says something doesn't make it right for you.

You get to interweave and critically assess if it is for you. And you create and craft your world the way that you apply anatomy and biomechanics therapeutically with your clients and how you walk hand in hand with them in a power with healing relationship that helps them connect to that inner healer by helping them grow their awareness.

And in doing so, you're demonstrating and you're just being that yogi in your business. That honor is the whole sacredness of it and a map of that is your schedule. You see? So then all of a sudden the doubt or the issues of clarity and confidence or the issue of overwhelm start to transform into something else.

The energy that was caught into those places starts to move into just this remarkably potent aware and alert and engaged state. And what was holding you back is no longer holding you back. And that is what Healing In Synergy is all about. And I would love to work with you if this is interesting to you.

Now, here is a little tidbit. A little, little tidbit is that not only is this a three month designed program that you get ongoing access to, and not only do you get me, and especially in this first iteration you get me on a daily, on a weekday daily basis that you can ask questions to. So you get lots of contact with me in this first iteration. You also get to engage with a whole community of people and with people who've been through the process with me.

And so the community that you have to bounce ideas off of and share with and explore, and I get to be there metaphorically walking hand in hand with you. It would be so amazing for you to join me. And where you can go to read more is over at functionalsynergy.com/healing. You can read all about it there. And there'll be a link there where you can access our team and they can give you even more details if you've got questions.

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All right, so head on over to functionalsynergy.com/healing and take a read. It'd be so awesome to have you aboard.