

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Full Episode Transcript



With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Welcome to *Joyful Marketing*! I'm Simone Seol, and I teach you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked without having to pay for ads, buy Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science and you can do it too. Listen on to find out how.

My friends, I truly believe that every one of us, every single coach has this infinite well of creativity, genius, innovation, and wisdom. And if I had to think of one cause, one reason why so many coaches struggle to really take all of it out and to use it and share it with the world and profit and help people, it would be the issue of safety.

We don't know how to feel safe. And we're, on the whole, not terribly skilled as human beings at creating conditions of safety in our bodies. And I think this is just one of the most important things for us to talk about when it comes to business.

I think that we so often think of our brains as these great big assets to enlist in our business-building. But then we don't get to use the full potential of our brains when our nervous system has shut down and has sort of blocked access to the best parts of our brains.

So this is really the first order of business. How to establish and create safety in your body. So that's why I've invited an expert on my show to talk about this. You're going to hear the conversation between myself and Sally Hardie, a brilliant coach with a psychotherapy background, who has an excellent grasp of the central nervous system and how it works and a really interesting way of teaching it to us.

We started talking and the conversation was so juicy that I actually had to cut it into two parts. It's really worth taking the time and the care to listen carefully.

In part one, Sally and I are going to talk about why marketing and selling can be so triggering and how actually the workings of your central nervous system explain why you're stuck in all the places that you're stuck in

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

around marketing, and how prioritizing creating safety for yourself is so important, and also how it's different from just sitting around with a blanket pulled up over your head going, "I don't know," and doing nothing.

And we're also going to discuss why sometimes we get stuck in feeling painful emotions that we can't seem to coach ourselves out of no matter what. And what to do about that. And we're also going to talk about what I think is really important to address, which is times when thought work could be toxic to your system and how to know when it's time to do something else and why, and how to do something else that's going to help and get you to a place where you can really use that logical cognitive thinking part of your brain.

My friends, I think if all you took away from listening to our conversation is an awareness of when your body is not in safety and know the steps to move your body towards safety a little bit at a time, I think that is literally a skill that's worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions of dollars over the course of your lifetime.

I think that is the highest skill that you could have, not just for your business but for all the other areas and dimensions of your life. So I offer this episode to you like a precious gift. Here's Sally and I talking about all things nervous system safety, creativity, and authenticity.

—

Simone: I invited you on because I wanted to hear your take on creating safety to market and sell in your business. So Sally's a member of the Sovereign Business Mastermind and she's a specialist, she's the expert on creating safety for her clients.

I've just marveled at the way I've seen her show up over and over again for herself and her colleagues to identify how our triggers show up. I almost think of it as a kind of self-nervous system fluency. I just made that up.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Sally: I love it.

Simone: It's kind of like be able to read what your own nervous system is doing and be able to skillfully and compassionately interact with that, as opposed to just always being in reaction to what your nervous system is doing. So I just made that up, self-nervous system fluency.

And this isn't the first time we're talking about nervous system and safety on my podcast. It's one of the themes that's the dearest to me. And I think you have such a unique perspective to offer here. And if you are newer to listening to my podcast, I just feel so strongly, it's a theme that we revisit over and over again, how marketing and selling - only a small part of it is about the tactical and the strategic and the what to do and when to do it and how to do it, et cetera.

Because we all have access, more or less, to the same blueprint, the same action steps, the same strategies that basically work. All of them work. And what thwarts all of us, and I count myself among all of us because I'm human too, is the thing that flares up in our brains, in our bodies, that says, "This is not safe to say. It's not safe to show up. We got this response, it means that we did it wrong."

And these kinds of responses from our own bodies that keep us in doubt, that keep us second-guessing ourselves, that keep us wanting to hide. And it puts us out of touch with our intuition, puts us out of touch with our own genius, it puts us out of touch with our creativity.

Doesn't matter the number of wonderful hacks and strategies and blueprints you have. Without that nervous system safety, you're not going to be able to put much of it to good use, and more importantly, you are basically living with all of your creativity and genius bottled up.

So that's my little introduction on why this topic is so important to me. So, Sally, would you introduce yourself? If there's anything I haven't mentioned that's important.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Sally: Well, one of the reasons that I did want to talk to you about this is I think that marketing in general is such a trigger for the nervous system, as you've covered, if you're in that stress response. You're not in flow. Nothing is easy. And in fact, really, if you're in that stress response, you can't chase your joy.

So when somebody says, "Imagine what the best outcome would be, imagine what your clients might want you to hear, how can you tap into their joy," frankly, if you're freaking out, there is zero opportunity for you to do that because you're in a stress cycle.

Simone: It's literally like putting blinders around your eyes so you cannot - possibility? What possibility? Joy? What joy, right? You can't see it. Your field of vision is literally - your brain is blocking those other things out so you cannot see them, even if you tried. Go ahead.

Sally: Yeah. You deal with this a little bit in your Joyful Marketing. You have a section in partnering with your central nervous system, which I thought was beautiful and I really enjoyed going through that module. What I wanted to kind of pull apart was along with kind of the partnering of your nervous system, what I have seen with a number of the peers and I felt it within myself as well is that point where thought work isn't working.

When you're just stuck. You don't know what's happening, everybody is coaching you to the nth degree and you're just white noise in your brain. Things aren't making sense. Thought work isn't working. And the reason that it's not working is because you're so in your brain, you're so in your prefrontal cortex, you're so in this 4%, but it's not your 4% that's in control.

You've basically had a coup in your body and it's your primitive brain, it's your unconscious, your 96%. People disagree on this. Some people say it's 91% unconscious, 9% conscious.

Simone: Everybody can agree that it's a lot.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Sally: A lot. The vast majority of our brain is what goes on behind the scenes. It's like the hardware. If you imagine buying a computer from a shop, it's what comes preloaded, and then what gets in built in those early, early years. So if you're in a stress response, there has been a coup in your brain.

Simone: Could you just pause and define what a stress response is? Because I think that's an expression that I bandy about, we bandy about. Not everyone might be familiar with exactly what we mean by that. And I want to really help to build everybody's nervous system fluency vocabulary so that we have more of it in our culture with whatever influence I have. I want everyone to know what a stress response looks like.

Sally: So, so important. And I'm glad that you stopped me because my brain is running at about a million miles an hour.

Simone: That's what I'm here for.

Sally: Absolutely perfect. Okay, so I imagine if you're thinking about stress responses, if you imagine a triangle and if the level of activation, so the level of how your body is responding to something, and bearing in mind at this point, we're talking about neuroception. We're talking about your body receiving data from the world.

This is not so much perception. We can talk about that in a minute. But this is neuroception. So this is literal data. This is touching a hot stove. This is noise. This is smell. This is what your body is receiving from the world. The very lowest level of activation where your central nervous system is feeding information to your brain is when we are in fawn or fit in.

These two are more rarely talked about. People usually go, oh, stress response, you're talking about fight or flight. But fawn and fit in are the lowest level. They are in your what's called ventral vagal parasympathetic nervous system, if anybody fancies Googling that.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

And what this means is that you will behave in a way that pleases other people, or you'll behave in a way that keeps you kind of middle of the pack. So you don't want to be ahead and you don't want to be behind.

Simone: Okay, examples.

Sally: Examples of...

Simone: Example of fawn.

Sally: Not making so much money. So I don't want to make lots of money because then I'm going to stand out. And we've got expressions like the tallest poppy gets its head chopped off, and there's a Japanese expression of the tallest nail gets hit. So there are all these expressions with people that are too far behind.

But equally, I'm not there yet, I'm behind, I want to be closer, I want to be in the pack. So people who maybe haven't achieved - thinking about it in a business sense, people who haven't achieved a certain amount of money in a certain period of time.

Simone: I haven't had my five-figure month yet, I haven't had my six-figure year, I'm not fully booked yet.

Sally: Right.

Simone: So therefore I don't belong.

Sally: The success or the lack of success can trigger a stress response, can activate you. So that's the fit inside. The fawn side, let's say from a marketing perspective, you put something out there and maybe a family member doesn't like it, or you get a troll, you get somebody who has negative feedback on what you say. And your response is oh shit.

Simone: Or your coach says something and you're like, oh shit, I did it wrong, or my coach is mad at me, or whatever.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Sally: Right. So it's the taking the shiny apple into school. You want to please the teacher. You want to get on the right side of people. And both of these are so that you could fit in to the tribe, when we're talking sort of anthropologically speaking, evolutionarily speaking, so that we'll fit in to the tribe.

And they're used and they have been used as a way of getting people to obey the rules, be they spoken or unspoken. So this low level stress response is a cultural root to getting behavior of people that actually people want to "be around." People who are in the tribe.

But the issue is that now things have moved on where this response is being preyed upon and extended. So if you are not fitting in - you don't have the right trainers, you're going to get bullied. You don't have the right so-and-so, you're not fitting in, you're not pleasing everybody.

And this is where it starts to get quite interesting with neurovariants as well because this happens quite early on in life. You're not doing the right behavior. If you have any kind of neurovariants, you are not "doing" the culturally accepted behavior of very, very early age, which means that this stress response is going to be activated and stronger from a very, very early age. The step up from the fawn or the fit in stress response is fight or flight.

Simone: Before we move on to fight or flight, I want to just take a moment to acknowledge how often fawn or fit in as you call them come up in marketing and how a giant percentage of the things that my clients bring me to be coached on about their marketing are either fawn stress response issues or fit in stress response issues.

We gave a couple of - I want everybody to not just intellectually understand that and move on, but really think about wow, this is exactly how this shows up in my life over and over again. Even when you're writing a piece of copy, I think we are - we have multiple layers of awareness where we are both

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

unconsciously thinking, “I hope this doesn’t offend so-and-so, or this is going to be acceptable to so-and-so.”

And there might be unconscious layers of that going on and there’s conscious layers of you actively thinking, “I hope this sounds good to whoever,” right? So there’s a lot of people pleasing happening in something as simple as writing one piece of social media copy.

Sally: I think it’s really important as well for it to be really heavily underlined that this is neurological. This is not your fault.

Simone: It’s not your character or personality. It is literally how all of our brains are wired. So I just want to highlight that that’s how it shows up. I want to please them, I want them to think that I’m doing well, I want them to approve of me. I love that you brought that up Sally. It’s not you. It’s not your personality, it’s not your morality, it’s not anything. It’s how your brain is wired to protect you.

Every single one of us, if I say this, that’s going to get them to come for me, or I want to tell them all these nice things about coaching but I don’t want to make a direct offer because then they’re going to notice that I’m in business. Or I’m going to - such sneaky ways this shows up. I’m going to market and talk about coaching but on my business page, because on my personal page, people might be like, “What is she doing? That’s not the Sally we know. She’s a coach now? What is that? I don’t know what that is.”

So there it is, the sticking out, the tallest poppy syndrome where I’m going to attract attention. So we have this inner war between the part of us - if you want to market, we literally have to attract attention, right? Marketing is attracting attention and asking for people’s attention. And then on the other hand, your brain’s like, “If you attract attention, you’re going to die.”

Sally: Right, that’s exactly the thing. And actually, I think your container is so beautiful as an example of this because the people who are in Joyful

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Marketing, the people who are in your mastermind are stretching themselves for authenticity. They're stretching themselves to have an opinion.

And if you have an opinion, as you teach us, if you have an opinion, some people are going to love it, they're your people, some people aren't, they're not your people. But holy crap, you're not fitting in. If you have an opinion and some people don't like it, you are the tallest poppy and that is incredibly triggering for your brain.

It really activates your central nervous system. And I think particularly when you've got people who are - I wouldn't say that we're non-conformists, but we are certainly stretching for our own individuality. We are stretching to find our voices, we are stretching to embody and live how we coach and coach how we live, to be working role models, to put into practice that that we coach on.

Simone: To have that congruence in what we say and what we live in.

Sally: If you see the world where the more congruent you are to you, the less congruent you are to culture, then we have this massive trigger.

Simone: And your body thinks you're going to die.

Sally: Your body genuinely thinks you're under threat. That is the point of the central nervous system. You're under threat. And I mentioned earlier on about the kind of coup that goes on between the 4% and the 96%. And there is this little thing in the brain called an amygdala, which is - I imagine him, I don't know if you ever watched Thomas the Tank Engine. You probably will coming up now, you're going to watch so much Thomas the Tank Engine, you're going to be professional.

But there's this controller and he decides which railway line the train goes on. So if you think of this little part of your brain, this amygdala sucks all the data from the world. It's like a Hoover for all of the things that are going on,

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

the noises, the smells, the sounds, takes everything in from your senses. This is neuroception. Not perception. All the data comes in.

And this little controller, train track controller is like, okay, life is good, life is fine, all of this data can go off to the prefrontal cortex to be filtered, to be filtered back, you can go be imaginative over there, you can be super creative, you can figure out what you want to do in your future, you can daydream, you can rest, you can do whatever.

But if it senses that something isn't safe, if it senses a threat, it slams on that change of direction and all of that data goes straight into your unconscious brain. It goes to the parts of your brain that are really good at keeping you alive. It shuts down.

Simone: Shit at everything else.

Sally: Well, you say that actually, but there's so much that's held in that unconscious brain. All pre-programming. I like to call it pre-programming. So prefrontal cortex being fully formed.

Simone: But when your brain is in survival mode in that we do this or we die, when you're in that mode, it's not the time for creative thinking, it's not the time for existential musing. It's just like...

Sally: I see what you mean.

Simone: That's what I was talking about.

Sally: Yeah, looking at naval fluff. It's not the time for that. It's don't worry about which pair of trainers to put on. Just start running. And you head out the door stage left. But also within that unconscious brain is - the part of the brain rather is really, really thick, old strategies that we've used to survive.

So you will recognize that you are - your body is telling you that you are under threat, even if you are dissociated with your body because you will be back in old programming. So things that you thought you dealt with,

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

behaviors that you thought you'd dealt with, it's this part of your brain that people will talk about when they say, "God, that was so out of character for them to do that. I don't understand how - I know them, they would never do something like that." People do things that are so out of character because their prefrontal cortex isn't the boss anymore. It's not in charge.

Simone: So what's coming up is something way older, way more - I don't want to say primitive. Primal maybe.

Sally: The number one priority is keep you alive. I don't care how I do that. I don't care who you piss off. I don't care about fitting in or fawning anymore. We are just in survival. This is not - this is really primal. And I think when at this point, people start to start to thought work their way out of it...

Simone: So give us an example of a time in marketing or selling where this might happen.

Sally: When you don't make offers, for example. Let's say you have gone through - so the garbage challenge is really good. You have the garbage challenge, which is 100 posts in 30 days I think it is.

Simone: This is something we do in Joyful Marketing. We practice showing up and taking up space in the world where if you're at a point in your business journey where it's painful, if you're taking five hours to make a post, this is the challenge for you.

The intention is to override your inner perfectionist instinct and to teach your brain that you're going to live and that you're going to survive. And you might even have fun and connect with people and sign some clients if you just lowered the expectation in your own brain about what each post is supposed to be like.

I call it a garbage challenge in a touch and cheek way, in that you have to learn how to allow each post, each email, each video, whatever, to be garbage, as in you're not expecting it to be amazing, life-changing,

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

excellent, A+. But you're like, I did it, it's got English words in it, it's posted, it's shared, it's out there.

And you do 100 of those in 30 days. That's the challenge. That's what we call the garbage challenge. Just for context. It's something that we do inside Joyful Marketing. It's one of the most - it's one of the things that people have the most fun with. So what were we talking about? So when people make offers doing the garbage challenge.

Sally: So that is kind of like the antidote to perfectionism really, isn't it? Through practice. But I've noticed within people posting within Joyful Marketing and I find it within myself as well. The concept of doing that, I was like, hell no. Hell no. Because if it isn't something that - it gets couched in such nobility.

If it isn't something that I'm going to be proud of, if it isn't something that in 10 years time I'm going to look back and think that was excellent work, if it isn't something that x, y, z, then I'm not going to do it. Or you put something out there and you...

Simone: People torture themselves with is this providing value? That's another - the mask of nobility. You want it to be helpful, we want it to be valuable. And that's exactly the same reasoning that makes people take five hours crafting a post. It's just another guise of perfectionism. It's another way for you to beat yourself up and say, "Well, that wasn't good enough." However you define being valuable. It sounds so good. Be valuable, be helpful. But then you can really use it against yourself.

Sally: You can. And being valuable and being helpful, if that's - each of those things can be done from a place of safety or a place of panic and fear and threat. So you can be doing exactly the same thing on both sides of the wall, for want of a better expression. And one of them is going to feel great, might be little bit scary, but you know that you are safe. You know that you can find and come back to your own sense of safety.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

The other one is I am out there and I'm going to - I've watched this happen and I might have done it myself a couple of times is that whole Nike thing. Just do it. Force yourself through it. Just keep going, keep going, and eventually you'll build up a tolerance.

Well, you might build up a tolerance for throwing yourself under the bus. Is that what you want to build up your tolerance for? Or do you want to build up strategies of developing safety and pushing - I use this example. I'm outside a lot, I walk my dog a lot, I do almost all of my IGTV little videos are when I'm walking outside with the dog.

And I had this little section of IGTV videos which is called Lessons from My Lab. That's for Labrador. Things that I observe the dog doing that happen when I'm with the dog. And there we go.

And I did this one on safety and it was in response to a client feeling like she was kind of flaking out because she's like, "I just want to be safe. I don't want to do it. I don't want to do it." Then don't do it. You're allowed to feel safe.

She's like, "If I don't do it, I won't achieve the thing." That's just crazy pants. Who taught - why would you think that? Have you ever tried a different way? No, but this is how I've achieved the things in the past is by being mean and by bullying myself and by basically creating this threat to herself that her action to escape the threat was to change the circumstance, to get the thing done so that she didn't feel the threat anymore.

And I was like, wow, let's take a couple of steps backwards here. So when I'm out walking with the dog, she moves away from me and she comes back to me. And she moves away from me and she comes back to me. And it's usually about the same distance that she moves away.

So she'll head off, not even a minute, maybe 45 seconds or so, then she comes back and she touches her nose to my hand. I'm her safety. I'm her

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

base. And then she'll go off in a different direction and she'll come back. I'm her safety, I'm her base.

And I like using this as an example because she still gets to explore to her limits of where she feels comfortable, and she comes back and touches base. But the base is always moving in the direction that she's pushing her limits, that she's exploring to the edges. So if I'm walking down a road, every time she comes back to touch base with safety, I am in a different place, but I am still her safety.

Simone: That's genius. So that's like people think that if they have to keep touching base with their safety, they're never going to make progress or they're always going to be circling in the same place. But it's not true.

Sally: Yeah. It is the safety. I don't care what anybody says. You cannot grow, personally evolve to the extents that you may want to if you don't do that from safety. That is not the same as sitting in a bedroom doing nothing, which is this kind of polar view that people, "If I'm safe, then I won't do anything." Bollocks to that.

You move in the direction that you want to and you'll come back to safety and recover. And then you'll move in the direction that you want to. So when you're in safety, you can then analyze the data. You can then be the watcher. You can then do thought work because you're in your prefrontal cortex. You're safe. You're not in survival mode.

Simone: I am in love with this idea. I would bet that lots of people listening either feel like, I'm just sitting on my bed with the blankets pulled up and I don't know what to do and I just feel frozen, I'm not doing anything, and I'm judging myself for it. So they're either in that mode a lot of the time, or actually they're probably in that mode a lot of the time.

Or they might have memories of I ventured out and did this thing, I was courageous one time, and then this horrible thing happened. Somebody left a trolling comment, I gathered up all of my courage and made an offer and

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

nobody responded and my body had such a stressful reaction to it that I don't want to go near that again.

So I'm betting that a lot of people find themselves in that place. I set a goal last time and I didn't hit it, I don't know, three months in a row, and now I don't even want to set goals anymore. So I'm sort of metaphorically in that sitting on the bed, that sort of position again.

So how do you take meaningful, skillful - how do you do that exploring? Get out of bed and do that exploring, and then how do you know when it's time to come back and touch base with your safety and how do you do that in sort of pragmatic terms?

Sally: If it's okay with you, I'd like to look at it the other way around, which is when you are sitting in your bed with the duvet, thinking I don't want to do this again, because then you are already in a stress response. Your body is under threat and it will continue to anticipate being under threat.

Simone: So you're not in actual safety. You're still in threat. You're just on your bed and in threat.

Sally: Exactly. Yes. So how I like to explain it is everything is in cycles. Breathing in, out, life, born, die. Everything is in cycles. For women, there's a monthly cycle. For men, there's a daily cycle. For women, there's also a daily cycle. Everything cycle.

Stress itself also has a cycle. There's activation and then there's recovery. So if you imagine like your baseline "regulated" day where your central nervous system is regulated, if you get triggered, you peak up out of that and your central nervous system will kind of take over and then you're in your unconscious mind, and it's survival based.

You must recover that fully. You must complete that cycle. If you don't complete that cycle, you stay in that activated section, that high activation where you think you've recovered but you're just tickling along. And then

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

another trigger comes in and boom, you're back up. And then another trigger comes in and boom, you're back up because you've never fully recovered.

So let's say you set a goal and you don't achieve it. What do you do then? I would argue that the recovery way is to be really fucking upset and to cry and to do whatever it is. But we're so dissociated from our body that when we don't hit our goal, we try to think our way of it. It's primacy of thought. There's no embodiment there whatsoever.

And what this primacy of thought does is it keeps us in the stress response because we're trying to think our way out of something that is a physical body reaction.

Simone: So what does that look like? Give me an example of what someone in that position, how that person might try to think their way out of it. I didn't hit my goal again, so how do they do that?

Sally: So let's say month one, let's say it's a monthly goal. Month one, they set the goal and they make zero. Let's say it's \$10,000, they make zero. And they have a response to that. Now, that response has probably been building over the month. Not just on the day that they looked at their figures, but they will have becoming activated and more and more activated because they have set a goal and they're not going to achieve it.

And at the zenith of that, the peak of that, they're like, okay, I'm not allowed to now feel sad, bad, angry, whatever. I've just got to figure out what it is that I did wrong, what it is that I didn't see, it's definitely my thoughts because I know that my thoughts control my feelings, which control my actions, so this feeling of feeling like crap or feeling self-doubt, I'm not allowed to feel those things because it's my thoughts that are generating that.

Simone: And these feelings are creating the opposite of the result I want, so it's double bad feelings that I'm not allowed to have, and so I have to

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

banish these feelings ASAP by fixing the thoughts that are creating these feelings.

Sally: And if you're a coach, well, I should know better, I should have done better, I should know how to manage - you should all over yourself. So without the completion of the cycle, you're going to tickle along up in this activated - so whenever the next month's potential lack of money start coming in, you're making offers, what kind of offers are you making? Because you're in this kind of I need to change something to make it right, what am I doing wrong?

Simone: There's a blindspot, I don't know what it is.

Sally: Which is frightening, right? So you're re-triggering yourself because of this disembodiment and not allowing your body to experience the extent of whatever it is that it's experiencing and validating that, and we're staying up in our brain. Our body is going we need to send a stronger signal because you're not listening. So the next time this happens, we're going to hit you double hard.

Simone: So what the body wants...

Sally: Because what we did the first time round didn't work.

Simone: When the body says you're not listening, what the body wants is for you to feel the feelings, right?

Sally: Right. The process that I take my clients through in recovery is very first and foremost is awareness that we're there. Because it's - so many people slam themselves with thought work or with a change in the things that they're doing. Yes, addressing the feelings, but as something to be fixed. As opposed to - as something to escape. I don't like this, it feels awful, I don't want to feel self-doubt, self-doubt's going to make my marketing really, really shitty.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Simone: I'm supposed to be confident and certain and calm so I have to get rid of all these feelings.

Sally: Exactly. But your body's going, no, just no. That was an awful experience and I'm not sure I want to do it again, and you're putting me straight back into it, we haven't even recovered from the first one. What the hell are you doing? I don't trust you.

The ramping up or the non-completion of cycles, ultimately, the very peak of that triangle is actually death. So when we are in the cycles, our body knows more than us. It knows that if we keep going, it knows this, it might not be a linear path, but if we keep ramping up these levels of stress, levels of activation, there is death as an option.

So when our primitive brain is going there's death, there's death, there actually is. There actually is, and it's not just being taken out by the friendly neighborhood sabertooth tiger because you're away from the tribe. There is a physiological possibility of death from very, very high levels of activation.

When we are in really any kind of stress response, it doesn't have to be fight or flight. Any kind of stress response, it's knowing that we are. And I know that that sounds really daft, but when thought work isn't working, that's a sign. That's a symptom. When we are feeling panicked or anxious or worried, when we are crying without - we don't think without reason, when we are having body responses and we don't know why, that's a symptom. It means that we're activated and we're not managing it.

Simone: I didn't know all of this frame and all of this language, but I think what I kind of instinctively felt my way in to is noticing when I was feeling triggered by thought work, when thought work doesn't feel like an ally to my system. When it doesn't feel like a comforting, nourishing presence that is my ally, I think at some point I instinctively realized, okay, that's time to put down the thought work.

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Because if it's not an ally - this isn't intellectualizing what an ally is. It's supposed to be good for you, that's how you self-coach, but no, in your body, do you feel - does it make your shoulders go down? Does it make you breathe deeper? Does it make you feel more taken care of?

And so I think I stopped doing thought work in those times, realizing oh, this isn't what's going to help. And I think after that, I saw so many coaches around me try to persist with thought work, even when it feels like a weapon, using against themselves, rather than - don't know what the opposite of a weapon is. Medicine, ally.

Sally: Comfy blanket.

Simone: Yes, exactly. So this is my echoing Sally's message to say...

Sally: Sally's mess. I think that's quite accurate.

Simone: Sally's mess of genius musings. Thought work just like anything else in the world, it's not in the brain-body state. If you're not in the right nervous system state for it, anything that's meant to be helpful in the world can be weaponized. Anything that is meant to be medicinal and can be medicinal can feel toxic and is indeed toxic to your system if deployed in the wrong context.

When your body wants to move through feeling an emotion, when you want to - when something wants to be embodied and you slap thought work on it instead, that is taking medicine and using it as a toxin against yourself. So please, permission from Sally and I to drop the thought work when it doesn't feel healing to you.

It's nothing against thought work. I'm a number one fan of thought work. But anything in the world can be harmful when you're using it to override your own body's wisdom. Did I say that right?

Ep #156: Healing Your Nervous System for Authentic Marketing with Sally Hardie

Sally: So beautifully, beautifully said. And likewise, I'm a Life Coach School certified coach and I absolutely love thought work. It's brilliant. And there's a whole body going on.

—

Okay my friends, that was part one of this conversation. Stay tuned for part two next week. And to get in touch with Sally or to find out how to work with her, follow the links in the show notes. We'll see you next week.

Hey, if you want a shot of fresh inspiration and actionable tips to improve your marketing every single week in your inbox, you'd better get on my email list. Sign up to receive my free e-book called *20 Unsolicited Copy Tips*. It's been known to get people to come out of the woodwork and ask to work with you. So get on that. Link in the show notes, and I'll see you in your inbox next time.