

Ep #221: Marketing and Codependency with Maria Victoria Albina

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With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

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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.

Simone Seol: Hey, what's up people? Today is your lucky day, because you know why? We're going to talk about the good stuff. I'm talking codependency and how the nervous system gets fucked up. And it keeps you from doing the shit you want to do, like have an amazing business. I cannot think of a better guest to have with me, to offer us all kinds of wisdom, which I know is going to blow my mind and it's gonna blow yours, as well.

I have with me, Maria Victoria Albina my dear friend and colleague who is... Where do I even start with you? She's a nurse. She is a nervous system teacher, decolonization teacher, all things mind-body teacher. And, I just want you to hear from her. Hi.

Victoria Albina: Hi, I love you.

Simone: I love you more.

Victoria: Impossible.

Simone: Okay, I feel like we should just jump straight in, instead of like, introducing you more, with all your, you know, credentials and such. I just think like, people just need to hear from you. So, let's go.

Victoria: Right on. But I do want to say I'm a coach.

Simone: Oh, yeah.

Victoria: Because that is important.

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Simone: Yeah, she's a coach. I thought that was implied. But no, she's a coach. And she runs fabulous programs, where she teaches you all that. So, right before I hit record, we were talking about such a juicy topic. Which is that, I honestly think that 99% of marketing problems that people come to me with, are, I mean, can be essentially understood as codependency issues.

Victoria: Right on. Yes.

Simone: And, that's what Maria Victoria majors in. And so, tell us about how that shows up? Or, what that is. What is codependency? How does that show up?

Victoria: Right. So, I define codependent thinking as the habit of chronically sourcing our sense of wellness, validation and worth, from everyone and everything outside of ourselves, instead of from within. And two common manifestations are, perfectionism and people pleasing. And I renamed this whole complex of thinking, feeling, being, and doing, as emotional outsourcing.

Simone: Oh, that is so good. Hold on, pause, because that is so good. So good, right?

Victoria: Emotional outsourcing. Yeah.

Simone: We can start naming ways that shows up in business, but we'd be here all day. Maybe, possibly all week. Like, for example, I am scared to tell people I'm a coach because I'm afraid about what they will think. I can't get consistent with posting because I just get so frozen, I just get stuck in feeling like it's just not good enough. I have trouble making offers because what if I'm not that good and my clients don't get results. And then, if they think, this, this and that, then I'm going to feel bad. What if, you know, blah blah blah... And all of it.

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That is such a wise observation. It can be broken down into either people pleasing, meaning, I have to act this way, think this way, express myself this way, contort myself in this way to get them to think nice thoughts about me and like me. And what was the other thing? People pleasing and perfectionism. Which is, I don't feel like I'm enough to show up as I am, in this moment, right now. Man, that is everything, and to call that emotional outsourcing... Effing brilliant.

Victoria: Juicy. Thank you.

Simone: Okay, I just wanted to make sure we paused there.

Victoria: Yeah, thank you. You know, the thing that I was just thinking of, is we don't price our offers in a way that sustains our survivability, our livability, in late-stage capitalism when we're not valuing ourselves. And when we want others to think well of us, when we want to people please them, we undercharge.

This is a conversation our girl, Judith Gatton, and I had the other day. We were talking about scholarships and I said, "You give scholarships, you lower your price, when you do know your worth. When you do know your value. And you know just how valuable, amazing, important, vital, life-changing, world changing, your work, your brain, your coaching is. That's when you give it away for cheap, for free.

Simone: Because you're doing it out of big, generous place.

Victoria: Service.

Simone: Yeah. And it's not like, "Oh, maybe they'll buy if it's more affordable, because blah, blah, blah.

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Victoria: Absolutely not. Right. From your worth, from 'what I have is a wild gift to the world. And I recognize that not everyone is dealt the same hand. And so, from a place of service, not a place of obligation or people pleasing, right? Raise your prices for the people who can pay. And then, from your worth, massive discounts.

Simone: Not discounts.

Victoria: Scholarship. Sliding scale.

Simone: Yeah. That is such a different energetic frequency than, "If I just lower it a little bit, more people will want it."

Victoria: Yeah, "Maybe, maybe they'll like it. Maybe. I just don't want people to think I'm greedy. I don't want people to think that I like, you know, like to have enough food to eat or to keep the heat on. I mean, it is getting cold here, but like, I can put on another sweater. I'll just undercharge, maybe then they'll love me. Maybe."

Simone: Aww.

Victoria: Aww.

Simone: That's not good.

Victoria: No, but it's also understandable, right? When we grow up... So, there's two major systems at play; our family of origin, and what we learned from our family blueprint, what's modeled for us. And, the socio-cultural. Most of us, but particularly humans socialized as women, are trained, we're inculcated, we're taught by the patriarchy, by white settler colonialism, to not live from our worth. So, that makes you bitchy. And that makes you selfish. You know, all these stories about the terrible women who know their worth.

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Simone: Yeah, yeah, women and all non-men. Amen. Okay, so, emotional outsourcing. Tell us more about that. Like, I bet what people, the people that are listening right now, being like, “Oh, my God, that is me.” Right? So, break it down for us. How does it happen? And, how do we create a different pattern?

Victoria: Yeah, so if we go way back to birth, and we look at our nervous system. So, ages zero to seven is when our nervous system gets its main setting, right? The template from which it will live until we learn to intervene, to shift the stories in our nervous system.

When your nervous system, because of your family of origin, where you're growing up, what life is like. When you are taught that you don't matter; other things like, work matter more than you, a sixth sibling matters more than you. When there's stress, when there's distress, when there's trauma. When you're living in a family where the main archetypes of emotional outsourcing; like the martyr, the Savior, the saint, the fixer, are what's modeled for you, then...

Simone: Which, let's face it, most of us grew up in homes like that. Even in the most loving, well-intentioned parents, because I don't have enough modeling to the contrary, in general culture.

Victoria: Most of us. Agreed. Such an important point, right? And let me say this from jump, I'm never out here to throw our families under the bus. I don't think it serves us. I don't think it raises up humanity. I don't think it leads to change, to ruminate on like, “Oh, my parents sucked. They didn't do this; they only did that.”

Simone: But don't you think that that way of thinking, also sets us up to beat ourselves up and be horrible to us when we become parents. Right? Like, we're like, “Oh, my parents raised me wrong. So therefore, if I raise my kids right, they're never gonna have any problems.” And then, that

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becomes another oppressive standard. Many of our parents were doing their best, with what they had, which is what all of us are doing.

Victoria: Right. And our parents, your parents and mine, were immigrants, right? They were new in the U.S., and it was a weird and scary place in the 80's. Right?

Simone: Sure, it was stacked against them. I don't know if your parents spoke accent-less English.

Victoria: No, still don't.

Simone: They were probably looked down on, and it was a survival game.

Victoria: Yep. Yeah. No, I remember my mom, she was a high school Spanish teacher. And I remember her coming home from school, on multiple occasions, crying because the kids had made fun of her and her accent and her weird idioms.

Simone: And, she's a Spanish teacher?

Victoria: Yeah.

Simone: Imagine how that, like... I just have so many memories growing up with people talking to my parents like they were stupid. Right? Like they were, you know, not fully intelligent just because their English wasn't perfect. It was, it's horrible in all the ways you can think of. Yeah.

Victoria: Right? And we are white Latinos, we're from Argentina, and I remember, I can think of four separate occasions in my childhood where someone pulled up to us and screamed, "This is America, speak English," in Providence, Rhode Island.

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Simone: So, though, we have generational stuff. We have colonialism stuff. Yeah.

Victoria: Mm-hmm. And we start to believe that we are only important, we only matter, if other people are telling us we matter. If other people are validating us. If getting another certification, if getting a number of clients, if hitting a money goal, if getting another degree, if getting a number of likes, number of followers, on...

Simone: Belong to the right "in" group. Like, looking a certain way, where you look like you have it all together. Being in a certain kind of relationship. Going to certain places for vacation. Having a certain kind of car.

Victoria: Yeah. That all these things, are the things that will make us valid enough to be worthy, quite frankly, of being alive. And of being loved, and cared for, and being safe. Which is, what brings us back to the nervous system. The nervous system is always seeking safety. Basta. That's it. That is the most important thing, is safety.

And if not speaking up kept you safe as a child. If playing the role; whatever good girl role was preferred in your family of origin. If being the scapegoat and keeping your sibling safer. Like, on and on, whatever you learned as a kiddo was the way to keep you safe, that's what you did. Right?

And the way a human nervous system knows it's safe, is through significance and connection. So, when we matter to someone, then when the marauders come, when the lions come to destroy our village, way back on the savanna of evolution, they'll protect us. They'll put tiny us on their hip, and they'll run to the highland.

Simone: And a lot of us have that nervous system programming active, working very hard all day long, when we go out to market. When we go out to offer our services. And, it's an uphill climb.

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Victoria: Absolutely. Absolutely. I recently hopped on a call with a coach, I, like you, am Team ADHD. Hold on, squirrel! Wait, alright, that's fine. It's fine. Were we talking about bikes? Do you want to go ride bikes? Let's go ride bikes. Wait, we're on a podcast. Dammit! Across the entire world. But we could ride bikes sometime.

Yeah. So, I was interviewing a coach and he didn't tell me his pricing. He didn't make an offer. And, those things happen when our nervous systems freeze, right? Our nervous system... I watched his eyes sort of glaze over towards the end of the call, and he was like, "Okay, so like, I could coach you?"

And I was, of course, you know, because I'm on consult calls all day, just kind of waiting to see if he was going to talk about the investment. I watched his body language change; his shoulder slumped, his face kind of got long...

Simone: Because you know how to look for that. Yeah, right.

Victoria: It's my training. I'm trained in sensorimotor psychotherapy as a coach, and in somatic experiencing. This is my passion. Is watching the body for the clues of nervous system activation. And I watched him go into dorsal, which is the disconnected part of the nervous system; the deer in the headlights part, the freeze part, that is just a couple of seconds away from what's called the "feigned death response", when you're just completely checked out. And he...

Simone: You're pretending to be dead, so the bear doesn't eat you? Is that what that is?

Victoria: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, because bears want some living prey. The classic example is the gazelle on the savanna. She runs and runs, if the lion catches her, she falls to the ground, plays dead. In that time, Broca's

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area is down regulated, endogenous opioids are up, which means you have more... You took a Tylenol, right? Like, you don't feel as much pain, your heart rate drops. I mean, the science is friggin' mind-blowing.

Simone: Because you're about to get eaten?

Victoria: Yes... So, okay, you're a gazelle. You see a lion. You say, "Holy shit, Lion's coming. Dammit. Run!" And, you all start running, right? Your nervous systems are what's called "co-regulating". One of the gazelle's saw the lion, her nervous system started speeding up; what's called "sympathetic activation". Adrenaline's racing through her body. Cortisol will soon come on board; these are stress hormones. Heart rate goes up. Breathing goes up. Holy crap! Here comes the lion.

Simone: I love having science people on, talking.

Victoria: Keep my head. You know I will, nerd. And nerd, is my greatest compliment, folks. I'm not insulting Simone.

Simone: Oh, I know.

Victoria: I know you know. I want to make sure they know it. So, her nervous system activates the nervous systems around her. All of their heart rate start going up. Isn't that friggin' magical? And then, they book it out of there. The lion catches the slowest in the herd, right? Or, somebody who stumbled on a rock, or was wearing high heels on the savanna that day.

And so, she feels the lion grab her. Collapses, right? All these endorphins are running through her body, all these opioids, and she plays dead. Her heart rate immediately drops. Blood's moving real slow, just in case she's bleeding. And the lioness is like, "Damn, I got some dinner." Because it's the lionesses that hunt, BTdubs.

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Simone: Right, right. Male lions are like deadbeats. I recently learned that and it blew my mind.

Victoria: Total jerks. I know, it's so wild. They're just sitting there with their gorgeous mane, and just like, "Whatever. My girl's gonna get some dinner."

Simone: This is enough, I'm not doing any more work. I have my mane.

Victoria: I've got my mane. So, she goes back and she gets her cubs, and she leaves the gazelle there. Because gazelle is dead; gazelle's collapsed on the ground. Right? And so, then, once the gazelle, once her nervous system senses that danger has passed, she's going to get up, she's going to shake her whole body.

So, that's called "completion of the stress activation cycle". Where the stressor is an actual lion. And all that energy, of that run that got shut down by the collapse, that's still inside her body. That needs to be shaken off, it needs to be discharged. And then she gets up, gives a good shake, and she books it out of there before the lioness comes back.

This is happening in our human bodies all day long, but generally minus the shaking, minus the completion of that stress activation cycle. Stress activation ramps up as you're on the sales call, or you're going live on Instagram, or you're doing whatever marketing thing you need to do. You're doing a webinar, and you get activated, activated, activated. All that adrenaline is in you, and then it's over. And you're like, "Okay, what's next? Let's do emails. Let's write a blog post." Right?

And so, that stress is staying inside of our body, and it builds up...

Simone: So that builds up, right?

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Victoria: It builds up and builds up. And adrenaline and cortisol, the stress hormones, are incredibly toxic to our tissues. And they stop vital life forces, functions rather. You don't think so goodly when you're in stress. Your thyroid doesn't work well. Your digestion is suboptimal. Because, let me ask you this, Simone. You're being chased by a lion; are you going to stop and digest a cheeseburger?

Simone: Nope.

Victoria: Excellent choice. Excellent choice. I knew you were brilliant. And so, living in stress not only directly impacts your marketing, but it impacts every system in your physiology.

Simone: This is how... So, I was never scientifically trained in this like you are. And the way I started to put this together, was that it made no sense to me, when I was in coaching, with all these coaches, it made no sense to me that these people were all reporting to me the same thing. Which is, "I don't know what to do. I feel frozen. Do I do this? Do I do that?"

And it made no sense to me, because I knew these are some of the smartest people I know. These are some of the most creative people I know. Some of the most passionate people I know. So, there is this giant honkin' fucking disconnect between who I know they are already and have always been, and the version of themselves they're bringing to me. Which is like, "Oh, I don't know. I'm confused."

All of their brilliance and creativity is there, it's just being, I don't know if this is the correct characterization, but it's like suppressed as hell by this nervous system response that has taken over. Where they are chronically not feeling safe.

And so, I was like, you know what? More mindset work cannot be the answer. More belief cannot be the answer. Reciting more affirmations, and

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following more business strategies, and putting more shit on your to-do list, and filling your calendar more, and downloading another blooper cannot be the answer.

Because whatever is coming in, all the input is being... Sorry, I say this word all the time, cock-blocked by your nervous system. Which is like, no, all of this is gonna kill us. And it's a hard no. No. We're gonna sit here, we're gonna lie here and play dead, in a manner of speaking. Which is why I want to like, cry.

And, I know you're on the same page with me on this. I want to just like cry out from the mountaintops: Everyone, stop what you're doing and do nervous system work. Stop it. Every single business person out there, I don't even care if you're a beginner, intermediate, or advanced. Like, I see people making multiple six figures, seven figures, probably the billionaires are probably doing the same thing. I'm like, stop it.

Whatever you want, in terms of life, business, stop putting more input into your brain, into your body. It's just adding more stress. Nothing's gonna make a sustainable difference until you do nervous system work.

Victoria: Amen. Sing it. Hallelujah.

Simone: I have to get yelley because I just want everyone in the world to put down all the other shit for a second, and tend to their bodies.

Victoria: Yeah. And I'll say it in my way, which is... On my show, *Feminist Wellness*, I call my listeners, my tenderonis, my tender raviolis.

Simone: Aww, it sounds like a pasta.

Victoria: Well, yeah, I call them my tender raviolis. Because what we forget, is that we all have these tender middle bits. Right? Our nervous system

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holds the lessons from our childhood. Our inner children live in our limbic system. And they need kind, gentle coaxing and love, for us to take massive action. And you can model till you're blue in the face, and it's not gonna do nothing, no kind of nothing, if your nervous system says, No.

You will have a shutdown of your cognitive capacity; because, science. That will make it impossible to ideate. You can't think. You can't brainstorm. You can't come up with the next brilliant and amazing strategy.

Simone: And your natural personality is going to be invisible, too, right? Like, you're going to be this forced stiff version of yourself, who is not interesting, who is not magnetic, who is not charismatic. When you, just being in your element and feeling safe, you actually are all of those things. And so, that's why, when I see so many coaches, the minute they begin "marketing" they become boring as fuck. When, they are not boring people.

Victoria: 100%. Right. Because that part of us that says, being authentically me was not safe in childhood. I'll use my own example. My parents should both have lived in a library; not been librarians, lived in a library. They are quiet people. I'm freakin' South American, we are loud as fuck, right? Like, we are loud and boisterous and fun, and sing-song. I mean, that's Cuban. But you get the point, right?

Like we are, my people are loud. But my parents, and I think it's secondary to their own trauma before coming to the U.S. You know, they left Argentina during a dictatorship, during a dirty war. But then also, since being here, a lot of them shut down.

But in their trauma response, they want quiet. They want to control the environment. And that doesn't work with two boisterous little girls; my sister and I are firecrackers, through and through. I'm a Leo. Firstborn immigrant Leo daughter.

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Simone: You have that mane, too.

Victoria: My chart is like, lousy with Leo. And so, growing up I always heard, Maria Victoria quiet, quiet, be smaller. Right? The size of my body was a problem. The volume of my joy was a problem. The amount of my self-expression was a problem.

Simone: Also, #ADHD.

Victoria: Also, #wanttogoridebikes? 100%. I remember my dad always saying, "Mari, finish what you start." And I was like, "But, but, but, but, but I don't work that way. I have 12 projects at once." Now, I understand why. But my point is...

Simone: At least for me, when I was growing up, I just thought, "Oh, I must be broken."

Victoria: That's where I was going. I have decided that the reason they couldn't appreciate me or accept me for exactly who I was, was not any kind of complex socio-political trauma based nothing. It was because... And this is because brains in children, aren't black and white, all-nothing. That's the limbic system, right? Because, safety; lion, tabby cat; cobra, stick in the grass, right? Parents don't accept me; I am unacceptable. Parents say be quiet; I am too loud. I am the problem.

Simone: Yes, we internalize that so fast, so deeply, as children.

Victoria: Of course, we don't have another option. Right? Biologically speaking, it's what happens. And so then, we bring that into our marketing. Right? We bring that into our field. We bring that into how we show up in the world. And like you said, we're boring as fuck. Because we're not being us. Because it doesn't feel safe in our nervous system to be us. So, we need to learn to regulate.

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Simone: [Crosstalk]?

Victoria: Okay, great. Well, here's a three-part plan now. No.

Simone: All you have to do is follow these steps.

Victoria: These three easy steps. Infomercial for healing ourselves. I almost said self-healing, but it's actually the opposite. It's community.

Simone: Mm-hmm.

Victoria: Because what is more white settler, colonialist, imperialist thinking than bootstrap based...

Simone: It's all about the individual. It's all about you. #self-care. #loveyourself. #putyoufirst.

Victoria: We do need to learn to put ourselves first, but we need to do it with community, with the collective. You don't learn to be lovable by giving love. This is evidence based. You learn that you are lovable by being loved, by being in community. Right?

There are so many studies. There are studies to back that up. Because a nerd is gonna nerd. Right? So, it starts with really prioritizing community and social connection. And that can be very challenging, if dorsal is your home place, right? I want to say that really clearly. It's so many things to healing the nervous system. First, is psychoeducation. It's understanding the nervous system. It's understanding that stress activation cycle I talked about.

Simone: That was the first part of this whole conversation. Understanding that is gonna go a long, long way. So that, when you are in that state, first of all, you're not shoving more actions and mindset work down your own

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throat. And secondly, so that you have a frame in language, to understand what is happening in your body. Without going to, “There's something wrong with me. Why can't I snap out of it?”

Victoria: Right? Yeah, it does so much to break up blame and shame. From there, from learning about your nervous system, the next step is really befriending it. When you feel yourself getting revved up when you're driving. When you're waiting in line longer than you think you should at the supermarket. When your partner starts saying something you feel yourself getting activated, worked up, sympathetic activation. That adrenaline; the lion's coming. Pausing, noticing, attuning to, which is different than changing. And, befriending.

Simone: Another way of saying that, just like bringing your own awareness to?

Victoria: Absolutely. And then, attuning to, for me, is taking it a step further, and feeling into the felt sensation in your body? Right? So, I'm starting to feel revved up. It feels like there's a red wave in my belly that's pushing up through my diaphragm. It's getting hotter as it comes up into my chest. Right? So, developing intimacy with the felt experience of your nervous system.

Now, there's going to be caveat after caveat. Because you and I are “trauma thoughtful” people, and that's a term I've been using. What do you think? Instead of trauma informed, because...

Simone: I love that so much more, because “trauma thoughtful” gets you acknowledging that this shit is nuanced. Trauma informed is not a list of to-do's and not to-do's. It's about adding nuance to everything. And so, therefore, anything you say about trauma is going to have caveats and subtleties, right? And being curious about all of that and attuning to all that, is what makes you trauma thoughtful. Fucking love it. A+.

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Victoria: Thank you. Great. So glad you liked that. Yeah, so from a trauma thoughtful lens; I'm saying, careful. Particularly if your body was the site of trauma, going inward and feeling your feelings in your body may not, is likely not, until you've done some big ass work, going to be a safe experience for you. Right?

And folks who have never been clinically triggered, not #triggered, but like clinically triggered, right? Being triggered means your nervous system is activated as though death was possible and likely. Like, you can actually see a lion. You can actually see a marauder. And, that can last for days. It can take folks with PTSD and C-PTSD, literally days and weeks to recover their energy, their capacity to be in the world, after a true trigger.

So, if you're hearing this, and feeling the sensations in your body starts to activate you, or make you nervous, or make you anxious, or make you revved up, or you just sort of start to check out; pause. Therapy, first. Coaching, second.

Simone: Ahh. Hold on. I just want to pause there, too. When you say therapy, do you literally mean like, go to a therapist?

Victoria: Oh, yeah. If you're having a massive trigger response, like full-blown trigger; starting to feel joy in your body, fear in your body, anger in your body? Yes, that's when we turn to Internal Family Systems work. Which I bring into my work, but I'm not trauma therapist, right? That's with EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), actual trauma modalities.

Simone: If you have clinical triggers, please go to a licensed clinician. Unless your coach is also a licensed clinician. This is so important, because I think, first of all, this is not taught enough in coach trainings, so that we completely bypass it. And not only does it harm our clients, it actually harms coaches, too.

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Because we take on clients, sort of bypassing when there is a clinical diagnosis happening, and think, "Oh, we could just help them with the tools that we have." And sort of like muddling the scope of practice gets us really struggling as coaches, with clients that we literally are not equipped to help. And that is not...

I want to be really clear, okay? So, if you are... I don't know shit about medicines, so I'm completely making this up. But if you are a pediatrician, or if you are an OB-GYN doctor, then you're not going to know the nuances of like, orthopedic foot surgery.

Victoria: That's the example I always give. I was a primary care provider for a decade. Once someone has a heart attack, they're going to cardiology. I'm not managing that.

Simone: "I could help them most of them. My tools can help them."

Victoria: Nope, that's not the scope of practice.

Simone: I think that comes from wanting to feel like, you know, your skills are valuable and enough. And they are, it's just not particularly suited to someone with a clinical diagnosis. So, have no shame in referring people. To say, "Hey, I think you need to go to a therapist first." Right? And I do also support...

By the way, you know, I'm launching a coach training, and we're gonna make it a requirement that everyone... If you are a coach, and you want to work with somebody with a clinical diagnosis, do it with approval from their licensed clinician and be part of their care team. Because I do think a coach can help them, but not as their main caregiver. Because we are not equipped. If you're a cardiologist you can't do foot surgery. Or, you probably can, but not as well as... Don't do it. I don't know how surgeons work.

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Victoria: No, no, no. My mechanic is like, Mike's a great guy, but he should not be doing my taxes. Right? It doesn't make him any less good at his job. Which brings us back... I mean, it's about integrity and values, right?

Simone: I don't want you to feel bad about yourself if you didn't know about this, because we're not taught.

Victoria: No, we're not taught.

Simone: So not taught in coach trainings. We think, "This tool is all you need. This tool can take you far." Yes, if you are at a certain baseline, that's different from someone with a clinical diagnosis. Okay, so important; therapy first, coaching second.

Victoria: Agreed. One more caveat, because this has been on my mind lately. In my coach training, my original coach training, a woman brought up that she had misophonia.

Simone: What's that?

Victoria: When people are... When the sound of eating... It's a big thing in ADHD. The sound of eating, like slurping soup, like gulping your water loudly, or chewing, really just like aggravates you. She didn't know the word misophonia. But I remember watching my coach instructor tell her it was all a story; it was all in her mindset. Right? She was thinking about it wrong. And, you know, maybe if she came with unconditional love to her husband, she wouldn't want to murder him.

I remember saying like, "Actually, hey, that's her nervous system reacting. Like, that's not a story." And, I was dismissed. I was told, "That's not what we do in coach training."

Simone: They didn't know what you know.

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Victoria: They had no clue, right? Yeah, we were also taught to like, have that stoic, non-responsive coach face. You know what I mean? Like, don't frown and smile. Just be a blank slate.

Simone: Don't bring your personal emotions into it.

Victoria: I think there is, in some ways, there's something important about the tabula rasa, a blank face of like, "I'm not judging you." But what we need to know, and I just want all the coaches listening to know this, one of the first ways our nervous system knows if we're safe or not, is by reading facial expressions. So, when someone smiles and you have crow's feet and crinkles, and you have crinkles and wrinkles, your body reads that as safe.

Simone: Because, "Oh, I'm talking to a human who is sympathetic to me, and is not going to murder me.

Victoria: Exactly.

Simone: Whereas, if you're telling the saddest story of your life and the person in front of you has zero facial expression, then your unconscious mind is like, "That could be a serial killer," right?

Victoria: Absolutely. The monotonous voice...

Simone: I'm sure, Victoria and I, I'm sure we would agree on this, the nuance here is like, we're not talking about any extremes. Don't go overemote. Don't be overly stoic. Just be you; be normal. Be human.

Victoria: Yeah, be a human. And in order to do that, what we need to do, is build up, what the literature calls our "window of tolerance" in our nervous system. So, it's how much input the nervous system can tolerate, until it

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leaves what's called, "ventral vagal". Ventral vagal is the safe and social connected part of your nervous system. That's where I feel now.

My heart rate's probably in the 60's. My blood pressure's nice and a low healthy. I feel calm. I feel like my brain is fully firing. I'm present. I'm here, I'm with you. I'm connected with you. I feel good. I can think goodly, I can talk well, you know? I'm here.

And so, if you were to say something, one mean thing to me, I might move towards the edge of that window. If you said another mean thing to me, I'd move closer to that edge, right? And then eventually, would leave my capacity to be present in my body.

Simone: Tragically, a lot of coaching clients are...

Victoria: That's why I'm bringing it up.

Simone: ...that outside, and they're trying to absorb... They're doing their best to try to absorb what's being offered, and they can't.

Victoria: They can't. It's not your fault. And it is within your responsibility to do your best, not just in session, but in your marketing, in your connection with your people, on your consult calls, to support their nervous system. It's in your best interest and that of your client. And I do want to say this, I don't call it the window of tolerance in my work, because I am sick of women tolerating a goddamn thing. So, we call it the "window of capacity", or the "window of bodily dignity", which is a term from my teacher Jane Clapp. Window of bodily dignity, right? It's so good.

Simone: I'm like, in tears, that's so good.

Victoria: It's so gorgeous. So, when you are in your bodily dignity and you're on a sales call, and someone says, "I can't afford it," you have a

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wildly different response in your physiology. And, you can show up for that person with love and care. “Darlin’, tell me what's going on? What's going on that you can’t afford it? Talk to me.”

Simone: And by the way, someone could teach you to say that as part of a sales script, or a sales template, whatever. When somebody says, “I can't afford it,” then you say, “Tell me what's going on.” It's not the words, right? Like, your tonality of voice, your facial expression, your body is going to communicate what kind of nervous system state they're in. Which, is going to signal to their body whether they're safe with you in that conversation or not.

So, it's not about... It drives me crazy how so much of sales is taught in terms of what to say, but also like, what to think. But what precedes all of that, is whether your body thinks you're going to live or die. Whether you're in or out of your dignity, which is such a gorgeous way of putting it.

Victoria: One hundred percent. There's the term co-regulation, which we talked about with the gazelles, and that's when our nervous systems impact each other. So, across Zoom, across the phone line, my nervous system was responding to yours and vice versa. Again, say the most perfect thing with the most perfect prosody of voice, which is that sing song tone that lets the nervous system know we're safe. But if you're jacked inside, or you're shut down inside, good luck.

Simone: It's like the most intimate internal process. I think there's no way... It has to be taught in the context of your body and nervous system. Which this is all just me, different ways of saying, people, please, please, please, please, please prioritize learning this stuff. And, being competent in this stuff, before you go learn any fucking marketing sales strategy. I just don't know how many more times I can say that, because I just feel so strongly. Like, it literally impacts how safe your clients feel with you, which literally

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impact your sales. It is the most pragmatic thing you can learn, in my opinion.

Victoria: Right. And then, how many clients continue, and refer their friends, and tell everyone how amazing you were? And, karmically, right? Let's talk about some karma. The amount of good you're putting into the world when you show up to a session with a regulated nervous system, I have had sessions where neither one of us says much. We just sit with our hand on our heart.

Simone: It's presence.

Victoria: It's presence, not...

Simone: what you say.

Victoria: We've been taught to buffer against presence, because it's not valued in our society, at large. It's not productive. It's not a means of capitalist success. Right? It's not going to like get you there. And I think, the opposite is completely true. We can look to the Nap Ministry. I mean, once again, who has all the answers? Black women; 1,000% since the dawn of time, right? We can look to the Nap Ministry. We can look to the power of rest. We can look to the power of regulating our nervous systems as a tool to decolonize the world, starting with our own mindset.

Simone: This is what I wanted to really like, stopping you to think about how this actually is the key to the thriving you want. Yes, in your business, but also in your interpersonal relationships. In you having the body that you want. In you managing your money. In the way that you show up to your career, to your spirituality.

Actually, speaking of spirituality, I think, you know, I've been thinking about this a lot. How a lot of people, even people who consider themselves very

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spiritual or religious, and have a very active spiritual/religious practice. This is literally very new in my brain. I've just started thinking about this a couple weeks ago. But I think a lot of them don't get as much mileage out of their spiritual/religious practice because their nervous systems are shut down in this way; when they pray, when they do this...

And so, they are like, "I'm talking to God and I'm open to signs from Divine. I'm working with the Divine, but I'm not showing up in a regulated way where I feel safe and empowered and sovereign and dignified in my body." Which brings us to a kind of, you know, a Christian... And I say this as a Christian. Like, sort of image of, "Oh, I am a worthless sinner. On my knees in front of Almighty God. And, I am worthless. Please save us..."

That kind of, which is, of course, not all of Christianity. But I think a lot of us get into this place of feeling very undignified, disempowered, when relating to spiritual entities. And I think that makes our spiritual/religious work less effective.

Like, "Hey, I'm praying to God,"... And I, you know, have very many clients who are Christian in a more traditional way. And I'm like, "Hey, you know that God made you a powerful being? God made you out of love. And God made you... You're a unique kind of brilliance and genius and creativity. Please, get up. Like, don't be on your knee. Get up, hold your head up high, and know that you are co-creating with God."

And I don't mean to say if you're a Christian you're on the same level as God. Obviously, that's not your worldview. Even for other types of spiritual people, you know, it's like... Again, this is very new, so I'm exploring this in my mind. But I think that if you show up with a different nervous system response, I think if you show up fully in your body, in your power, I think the Spirits/God/the Universe are more likely to collaborate with you in a more effective way, and give you what you want.

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Because we've all been in group projects or partnerships where the other person is, "I don't know, I'm confused. I'm just dumb. Can you help me?" It's like, exhausting. It's really hard to get anywhere if you're working with a partner like that.

We all want to work with partners who are empowered, and who are feeling safe, and who know how to self-lead and step into self-leadership. And in your spiritual relationship, in your religious relationships, do that. You know what I mean? Anyway, just a random thing I was thinking about lately.

Victoria: Yeah, I think it's really interesting to explore, you know. And what comes up for me, is that folks often ask me how to regulate their nervous system. It's not a how to, it's a way of being.

Simone: Say more about that. What does that mean?

Victoria: It's not about, you know, reading your list, like your sales script; "Now, I will do a figure eight with my arm. Now, I will shake my body. Now, I will do this..."

Simone: A lot of people approach somatic work that way. And, I did too. I used to, too, because that's how school works. You know?

Victoria: Exactly. Yeah. Yeah. That's how, you know, capitalism tries to keep our thinking small, and regulated and reined in. And so, of course, yeah, that's what we think makes sense. But it's really about a way of being. It's really about presence. It's really about remembering that your anchor, in yourself, is your greatest power, your greatest gift, and your birthright.

And so, coming back to present and your anchor, in yourself, I feel like that's divinity. That's a prayer, in and of itself. Because the Divine is within each and every one of us, and it lives in presence; whether you're

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Christian, whether you're Buddhist, whether you're Hindu, Mussulman. It's, divinity is within.

Simone: Regarding yourself, relating to yourself, with kindness, gentleness. Regarding yourself as though you are worthy of love and kindness and gentleness. I think that is where it starts. Don't go anywhere, to your tools and tricks and techniques and whatever practices, before you have covered that first base. Right? How you're relating to yourself. How you're looking at yourself. What kind of energetic environment you create in your own body, by the gaze that you cast upon yourself.

Victoria: The gaze that you cast upon yourself. Oof.

Simone: That's got to be a loving, kind, gentle, gaze.

Victoria: That language, that's just so, there's so much embodiment in it. And, there's so much beauty. Ever the poet, my Simone. Oh, thank you.

Simone: You are.

Victoria: Aww, thank you.

Simone: This podcast is us, being like, "No, you're great. No, you're great."

Victoria: I love you.

Simone: But that's also part of it, right?

Victoria: Coming back to community and the collective. Surround your ass with women, people, humans, who say, "I love you. You're amazing. You're so great." And, who will call you on your bullshit. With love and gentleness. I have a committee. And the committee has some rules. If you see me

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doing XYZ in a relationship, I will need to hear about it. Right? Because I know my patterns.

I know what my relationship patterns feel like in my body. So, if you hear me saying this..., it likely means that, and a girl needs to get called in, and called in hard. And you can have that... I'm talking about relationships in the way Simone and I relate as friends, but that's why we create masterminds with our friends. That's why we create groups. And it's really important to reality check our lived experiences, with people we trust.

Simone: So, if people want to co-regulate with your people, what are their options?

Victoria: I so many fabulous options. I have a present for your listeners.

Simone: Oh, present?

Victoria: Isn't that a delight? I love presents. If you head on over to VictoriaAlbina.com/Simone, you can grab...

Simone: Oh, my own URL

Victoria: Your own URL. Ain't, you fancy? You so fancy, my darling. My darling, my darling. Do you like my mid-Atlantic accent from the 50's? My darling. You can grab a suite of meditations, inner child practices, nervous system exercises. One is called "Orienting", and that is the place to start when we're working with our nervous system.

And that is a practice that is generally safe, for folks with stress, distress and trauma. So, that's why it's my first offering, and it's all free.

Simone: I have to say, that is brilliant marketing. Because guess what marketing means, people? It means helping people generously, joyfully,

[Joyful Marketing](#) with Simone Grace Seol

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with no attachment, no expectation. Just, “Hey, here's a whole bunch of really good stuff that's going to be massively useful to you. Enjoy. You're welcome.” That's what good marketing is. And this is good fucking marketing. Why, thank you, Maria Victoria.

Victoria: My pleasure, Simoncita.

Simone: Tell us more about your programs.

Victoria: I shall. You can follow me on “the gram”; I give good gram, @VictoriaAlbinaWellness. My six-month coaching and somatics and breathwork program is called, Anchored. Because you are the most important anchor. I want you anchored in you. VictoriaAlbina.com/anchored

And, exciting announcement; I am putting together a Somatic Advanced Certification for coaches and healers. So, you can get on the waitlist at VictoriaAlbina.com/SomaticAC for advanced certification.

Simone: Okay, any final words, Maria Victoria?

Victoria: Thank you, Simone, for the work you do. I feel like you are... No, I know that you are elevating the importance of nervous system work in a community that has not been hearing about it. And, I'm just grateful. I'm grateful for the work you're doing, because this is it. This is the most important work of our lifetime, is to get right with ourselves.

Simone: I think that is the unskippable step number one, of getting right with each other and the Earth.

Victoria: Pachamama needs us.

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Simone: Exactly. Well, thank you for being a brilliant pioneer in this world, as well. And we will keep spreading the good word from our respective corners.

All right, everybody, go check out Maria Victoria's work. It's brilliant. And, I hope you found this conversation as mind-blowingly wonderful as I did. And, we will talk to you later.

Hey, if you want a shot of fresh inspiration and actionable tips to improve your marketing every single week in your inbox, you 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.