



“BEING HUMAN IS MORE THAN ENOUGH” ein Interview mit Magda Bebenek

Bevor du startest:

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Viel Freude beim Hören & Mitlesen!

Iza

All right. Hello, lady. And my voice goes weird.

Iza

Good morning, Magda. It's so great to have you on the podcast.

Magda

Good morning, Iza, and everyone listening. Hi.

Iza

Hi. So, yeah, we just talked a little bit behind the scenes before I started recording.

Iza

We were kind of just like wondering, how are we going to start this conversation?

Iza And so I've known you for a little, a little bit now. We've seen each other a few times and, you know, did a lot of fun things together. And I've realized also that I probably never ask you that question myself, which is you were actually a very functioning human being doing a lot of things, writing books, being adventurous, traveling.

Iza giving TED talks, and all of that.

Iza And what happened? Or how did you come to the nervous system work, actually? Like, what was your turning point, if you'd like to?

Iza

Start your own introduction with maybe that that story that would be great sure well I kind of smile to myself when I hear you say I was a highly functional human being because i'm not sure that's the case like yes i i had a period of my life in my early adulthood so after graduating university where i started traveling the world which had been my dream ever since I was a kid.

Magda

And yeah, also since a very young age, probably like.

Magda

Mid teens, at least I also knew that working like a nine-to-five at an office, a corporate job, that was just not my thing, that I could not do that. So in some ways, I'm lucky, because I've always had a degree of clarity around what I loved, what I was passionate about. I was always interested in learning languages. I was always physically active. I always loved to dance. I was always interested in other cultures and, you know, reading. Books about anthropology and different indigenous peoples since I was, I don't know, in middle school or high school.

Magda

So those parts were always there. And so, when I finally graduated university, kind of felt, you know, I had done what I was supposed to do, quote unquote, supposed to do through this educational path.

Magda

I had been working also since a very young age. I was tutoring English since I was 13.

Magda

So I had been saving up for my travels and then, you know, obviously saving up whatever money I got from family occasions, whatever.

Magda

And so, as a... Sorry, that's my... my alarm going off? I'm gonna switch that off and I'm gonna pick back from where I said.

Magda

So, as a 23-year-old, I guess, was I 23 when I graduated? Probably somewhere around that. I knew that I had enough money to last me for a while and to just go and travel. So that's what I did.

Magda And then, you know, from one crazy adventure to another, I would usually travel at the very last minute, oftentimes buying one-way tickets, ending up in all sorts of crazy situations, crazy good, but also crazy dangerous or reckless.

Magda

that i would put myself into um because of my trauma patterns, a lot of discernment, a lot of differentiation, I'm still learning those.

Magda So yeah, and like, you know, one thing would lead into another.

Magda

It did oftentimes feel like I was a bit guided.

Magda

you know, from one adventure, one location, one job to the next. And as you mentioned, you know, as a result or a part of this journey, I had self-published a few books. I had co-organized or organized some projects.

Magda

I was always very niche.

Magda

Apart from very short periods of time in my life, I had always professionally done exactly what I wanted to be doing. and things that I was passionate about. However, at the back end of all of that, or at the foundation of all of that, There was extreme amounts of unsafety, internal chaos, not great romantic relationships. I've always been very lucky with my friendships, but my relational issues.

Magda were very visible in my partnerships. And so yeah, there was this mix that, you know, I'm guessing a lot of people will know where on some levels, yes, I was functional, I was doing great things, I was enjoying life.

Magda

Um, I truly was like, it was not a lie or, you know, a front I was putting on to sell anything.

Magda

And at the same time, there were a lot of things that were really difficult and very painful and that I was struggling with.

Magda

And, you know, I had been into some sort of personal growth or self-development from a pretty young age, like looking for answers.

Magda

you know, recognizing some of the things that I had experienced in my family system growing up that I knew had their consequences.

Magda

And so I went through this journey of, you know, first self-development. Um, well, no. First, the traveling did a lot of, like, give me a lot of very potent ground for growth and self-examination and self-confrontation and and changing the way I understood myself, other people, other cultures, seeing other role models, realizing, oh, not everyone, not every culture does it this way. Or, oh, this is possible in parenthood. And, you know, so I got some of those pieces through travels. Then I had a brief, but very intense. period of being in kind of this commercial Western self-development world, which I've come to see more as ego development and self-development, but that's a different story. Then, from then on, I started opening my eyes and heart a lot more to the situation in the world.

Magda

And then that was a difficult, painful, dark period of really kind of beginning to feel the suffering of

other people across the globe, of the ecosystems, of other than human natural beings and elements on this planet.

Magda

Through that, there was, you know, a time of really emerging myself in different indigenous frameworks and a period of kind of social justice, ecological activism.

Magda

And, you know, throughout all of that, obviously there were pieces that were landing, that were healing, that I was understanding differently. And yet I was still struggling with a lot of things. And, you know, yes, I would publish a book and I would organize this big project around it. And it would be great. And I would be feeling like I was on top of the world.

Magda

But, you know, a few weeks after the launch of the book, I would just burn and crash because the way I do the cool things and the things that brought me joy was completely unsustainable.

Magda

So, you know, I would do those cool things. And then I'm in my relation, this regulation, basically, right? And ease and trauma. And at a certain point.

Magda

You know, I realized that I had spent several years with different psychotherapists. So I was constantly looking for ways to heal. Also, you know, from a very age, I knew that I wanted to be a mother. And from a very young age, I also knew I needed to heal a lot of things to be the kind of mother that I wanted to be. And so that was also always one of my really big motivations in looking for healing.

Magda

at a certain point I just I don't remember I think it might have been a friend of mine who sent me a course like a somatic course that she had done with someone and she like record and it's and if And so I think it was through the person offering that course that I came across Irene Lyon, who we both know and have both mentored with.

Magda

And, um, yeah, it took me a few months to kind of really dig into Irene's stuff. And then at some point something just clicked and I got hooked and I would have, you know, marathons of, of Irene's YouTube videos. And then I joined, um, her first course.

Magda

And then a few months later, I joined like her main curriculum. And then, yeah, like from, you know, already going into the course, I had been through my earlier explorations through things that I just kind of organically.

Magda

started experiencing i was already doing some sort of like what we i guess could call somatic healing quote unquote because my system has always been very responsive i have always been very kind of body based even though it's not very embodied And, you know, I was highly emotional,

not really in touch with my emotions, like all of the distinctions that I only later started being aware of.

Magda

So from the very start, just like even watching the educational videos, I would be processing a lot and a lot of things would be clicking for me. And then, you know, I started with the first practices and the first course and I was just immediately having a lot of responses, a lot of experience. And so then I continued for... I think like a year and a half, almost two years. I almost did something daily, whether it was a practice listening to a video, listening to a training call or a Q & A call or, you know, whatever else. So I really dove deep into the topic and most of all into the practice i was actually blowing myself up all the time i was doing too much uh but because i was doing this work by myself like yes guided in the course but at the end of the day by myself yeah i didn't really have a guide there with me who could help me navigate what is too much. Because again, when we spend our whole lives living in extreme intensity, intensity seems normal. It doesn't feel like too much. Even though it is completely overwhelming. So however, like I was still noticing a lot of shifts.

Magda

And yeah, and that's like already by the time I was registering for Irenes longer curriculum, I already knew that I wanted to learn about it also in the context of later utilizing it in my work with others. I had already spent, I think, about two years trying to figure out where I wanted to go back to school or what training I wanted to do. I was considering doing a psychotherapy school, which is, you know, four years long, because I like, I had always worked with other people.

Magda

Either as a teacher, an educator, you know, doing projects that were always focused on a level of healing or empowerment, or just like lifting people up and supporting others. And so I knew that's what I wanted to be doing. But then I couldn't quite find a modality or a teacher, an institution that I could really resonate with, that I felt I could trust and that I could afford. Yeah. And so kind of all of those pieces came together when I found Irene. And then, you know, a bit into my journey with her courses, I learned that she was preparing to do a professional training for others. And so I was like, okay, this is it.

Magda

And then, as I was waiting for that to come along, I did a better module of her training.

Magda

Someone from that module led me on to Dr. Stephen Terrell or rather to his trainings, because I had heard of him before through Irene, because he's also one of Irene's teachers from way back when.

Magda

And yeah, and it turned out that there was a training in Ireland. That was his only European training at the time. And yeah, I basically immediately signed up. And so I did my trainings with Steve in Ireland.

Magda

In 2023, 2024 um and 2024, and then, sometime, we're in 2025, right now, right? So sometime in 2024, a bit over a year ago, I came across a therapist who is deeply trained in what we call pre- and perinatal work in the lineage of Raymond Castellino.

Magda

Um and i'm not sure if she trained i don't think she trained with william emerson who's another kind of pioneer in the world of pre and perinatal work And so through my process of working with her, I started a lot more consciously tapping into the in utero and birth patterns. And I started realizing that. okay, yes, nervous system regulation definitely needed amazing work, vital. And there are things that are underneath it. And those are the patterns that are even earlier than what we would call nervous system regulation or dysregulation.

Iza

Um, because there is not a nervous system developed, I think that's important to note.

Magda

Yes, the nervous system already develops in the environment of the organism that we are, as an embryo, but also obviously in the environment of the mother's womb and then in the relational kind of energetic field of the mother, the father.

Magda

The whole family system, cultural system, and intergenerationally and all of that. And so, yes, those pieces— pre and perinatal work, the nervous system regulation work— have been crucial in my own process and they continue to be.

Magda

And also in the work that I do with others, because the more I dive into the pre and perinatal pieces, the more it shifts my work with my clients, even though I'm using the same modalities, the same tools. So those would be transforming touch. That's the mentality developed by Stephen Terrell that you're also training in or training.

Magda

And then what Irene calls neurosensory practices.

Magda

And I'm bringing a lot of..

Magda

what I'm experiencing with my therapist and my own process into how I offer those tools right now. While also, of course, continuously educating myself on the topic in kind of this professional level as well.

Iza

Yeah. So thank you for your story. Thank you for telling us a little bit about yourself. And I would like to kind of sum it up for a moment, because I think this is very impressive, actually, how you know you say there is there are still parts of me there were parts of me from the beginning who kind of like knew who I was what I wanted what I enjoyed in which direction my life should move um forward to um and at the same time there were other areas of my life where it would just like not click and it would be difficult and it would be painful and I think this is Also, one of the parts of current coaching culture where you have like the circle of life, you know, and there you have your relationships, family, religion or spirituality, business, hobbies, you know, and people tend to rate how fulfilled or how happy they feel, you know, in each one of those fields.

Iza

And there is kind of like this narrative, like the good life is when you are like 10 out of 10 in each and every one of those, you know, and I think.

Iza

Um, it's, it's, it's quite delusional to be honest. And it's also a part of it. It's just kind of like, how can I fix myself? Like, why am I not at a 10 yet? Um, and then, you know, you also kind of like slid into that, what you called Western. self-development culture I think you met Tony Robbins right so you were like really really a part of part of it for a moment and so what I the reason why I'm why I'm going into it is because many people I see and observe do all of this personal development stuff and they do experience some shifts into a positive where you know their circle of life maybe moves upwards the scale goes up or whatever but the bigger question is Is it sustainable? And I think that's the question that you ask yourself. It's like, you know, there was a part of you that was like never really, that was still hungry to discover.

Iza

Like why, for the amount of work that I've done, for the amount of things I understand, I reflect about myself. I learned through traveling, through meeting people, through learning. Why is it still?

Iza

So difficult to, you know, like be who I really am at this part of my life. Right. Yeah. And, you know, I sing.

Magda

I guess I, you know, I see the utility of kind of looking at different areas of our lives and, yeah, maybe a scale of one to 10 and like, you know, mapping up our goals. That's not really my thing.

Magda

For me, it's more like there were good things in basically every area of my life. It's just that the circle was being drawn on an already petrified, terrified, repressed, dysregulated system.

Iza

Of course.

Magda

So it's not so much about the circles.

Iza

what is it drawn on and what is it drawn with and and also i think oh sorry you weren't finished go ahead and i think also that the degree of happiness and fulfillment that we would like attached to one or the other area you know it's like if it comes from a dysregulated system it actually basically means that we rate our functionality Yeah, really, and not really who we are. Right. Yeah.

Magda

And, and also, I think that, you know, that's something that I still can get caught up in a bit, much less than ever before, definitely much less than last year, two years ago, and so on.

Magda

But because our culture is such a traumatized and traumatizing, dysregulated, dysregulating culture,

our standards, what we deem successful— what we promote— what we expect, or kind of herald as, you know, living your potential.

Magda

That, you know, while there's nothing wrong with having adventures and traveling and living a big quote-unquote life, I think for me...

Magda

again, like traveling, living in different countries, being with people from different cultures, that was always a part of what I wanted ever since I was a little kid.

Magda

And it got mixed up with my trauma, with my adrenalized way of living. And with this culture that tells me that I have to be somehow impressive.

Yeah.

Magda

A good life means like that life to the maximum. Intense life is a good life.

Iza

Vision board life is very in now. Vision board life. I'm living inside of my vision board.

Magda

Or inside of an Instagrammable feed or whatever, right? Yeah.

Magda

And so for me, you know, because I always, there was always a part of me that felt I had a lot of potential, whatever that means.

Magda

But it was very misguided. Now I see that. And I do not regret my travels, my adventures.

Magda

They taught me so much and they nourished me so much in so many ways.

Magda

And the more...

Magda

My system regulates, the more safety I feel in my own physiology and my relationships, the more I recognize I don't actually need any of that.

Magda

To be content with my life. And there's a big difference between happy and, you know, always feeling like, 'Oh my God, this is the best day of my life.' No.

Magda

And I think the fact that we expect that of ourselves, that's one of the issues as well.

Magda

As you and I both experience in our own therapy and our training, especially with the pre and perinatal and early developmental trauma, it's about welcoming all parts, right? So, oh, today is a shitty day. Today, I don't feel like doing anything. I'm not excited to start today and jump out of bed. And that's okay. That doesn't mean there is anything wrong with me. It just means it's that kind of a day. And it's okay to have that kind of a day. I often think about it, you know, in terms of deep ecology, in terms of seasons changing.

Magda

we live in such a disconnected, disembodied, unnatural culture and unnatural disembodied ways where, you know, in nature, imagine if, you know, Many of us are aware of what we call climate change or climate shift, right? And we're so afraid that soon we'll cross certain thresholds in the, you know, temperature of... seawater of like the atmosphere everything and that life will not be sustainable anymore at least life as we know it life that can sustain and support human beings right so imagine if And especially that we come, we both come from Central Europe. So from a place where we have seasons, we have four seasons and then kind of two seasons in between.

Magda

So there is that.

Magda

constant motion that constant change that seasonality where which in some other parts of the world that's not a part of it right but that's a part of our dna of our culture of our experience of life and the ecosystem that we live in so imagine we only had sunlight all the time life would be impossible the way we know it yeah and yet somehow in our culture we've come to a place where we demand of ourselves to be in constant summer constant Constant, you know, sunshine, constant happiness, constant this and constant moving forward.

Iza

Yeah. And I think a very important part of.

Iza

of this work is you mentioned also you found this work in the education and that moment you dove into it kind of with the same energy that dysregulated you in the first place. Right. So it's like, oh, now I've got this thing. Now I found it. And then we kind of like push ourselves into it. And as you described it, like you really blew your system every time because you did too much. But then again, how do you know if intensity is all that you ever felt? And I know that a part of my journey to kind of like close the circle to how we feel about ourselves and what we demand of ourselves and what culture and environment we've grown in is that I remember when I stopped having those huge energy swings in between feeling like i'm on top of the world versus i'm crashing which is also a part of your story as you as you told us uh while doing all of your projects um a few years back is When life gets quieter inside, I remember the first time I was like, oh my God, am I constantly depressed?

Iza

Because I wasn't feeling as much of this adrenaline and dopamine, and I wasn't feeling as much pain of like true freeze and not being able to move or do anything, right? So like those both extremes kind of got quieter, and then it got me so confused.

Iza

Yeah, because I was like, 'Who am I now? Am I... am I am I... depressed all the time? What is this thing? Am I... not happy anymore or joyous anymore or excited for anything anymore? And then I was like, 'Oh shit, this is actually what you feel like when you're just content, when you're just okay.

Iza

But I never knew it. And it was so foreign and so weird to be like.

Iza

Who am I now?

Magda

Yeah, yeah, for sure. And, you know, I don't remember when it happened exactly, but I do remember the moment where I realized that. What I had always called excitement, that was not excitement.

Magda

That was a huge stress hormone cocktail. I was like, oh, this is so great. Yes, this is it.

Magda

Yeah. I remember like, oh, wow. I started discovering excitement can actually be very subtle. Yeah. It can be so quiet. And so gentle. So good. Yeah. It has nothing to do with what I used to call excitement. That was stress, stress, stress.

Magda

And, you know, to your point, I've, I've had it many times and I think I'll still have it many more times where I land into, you know, another experience of something new and something different.

Magda

And yeah, being exactly like that. Well, who am I? Yeah. What do I do now? Like, what is this?

Magda

Because, and, you know, I also remember having moments where I'd be processing some pain.

Magda

Some shame maybe, or you know, realizing some of my patterns and my behaviors that are not great for myself for people around me. I would literally feel and have this image of like wanting to crawl out of my own skin.

Magda

Because I would like feel all of that, you know, all of that armor, all of those masks, or all of those self-protective. I wanted to say dysfunctional. They're actually not dysfunctional. They're functional, you know, mechanisms that I found to stay safe in the world.

Magda

And being like, this is not me. Yuck. Like, I just get out of it. And I don't know how yet. Yeah. Because it's not yet safe to go there. To do it. Yeah. I think for me, you know, one of the game changers, no switching gears a bit, has really been. More and more learning to see everything through the lens of safety.

Magda

And it helps to normalize things so much. And it helps to take away the edge of shame.

Magda

and feeling like thinking that there's something wrong with us and you know i know that those patterns go very deep for some of us for some of us that's already the moment of incarnation conception and so on that are like that's already stewed So it's not like, you know, we can just change our mindset and think some affirmations and that's going to change. It's not.

Yeah.

Magda

If those patterns go this deeply. And I know they don't go for everyone. Not everyone has had the experiences I've had. But for me, those have been a part of the fabric of my being, my whole existence. So it takes a while. It really takes a while.

Yeah

Magda

And it takes many experiences of being met in a different way.

Magda

of being welcomed in a different way, of being mirrored and reflected in a way that I had never experienced before that I'm experiencing now, to slowly, slowly untangle that. And it can be confusing as hell. Because if we've never been safe and suddenly we're beginning to kind of tap into that true, deep, spiritual, relational.

Magda

physiological sense of safety what the hell do we do with it yeah it's sad like our whole life was about survival our whole life was about How do I protect? How do I not show myself?

Magda

How do I avoid potential abandonment through abandoning myself?

Magda

Like all of those things. And suddenly when we have those moments of like, oh, that's no longer needed.

Magda

What the hell do I do? I remember a moment in one of my therapy sessions where I felt and understood that I was safe at this very deep level.

Magda

And I just kind of, and it was just this ludicrous notion to me. And I literally just asked my therapist, like, what do I do with safety? What happens now?

Magda

It's just so unknown.

Magda

And I also am very aware that, you know, some of the people might be listening to us and they might be like, what the heck are they talking about?

Magda

Because I think with certain things that happen at this...

Magda

deeply felt relational level it's like we might think we understand it but we don't cognitively we might or we might think we know it i know i have many times i would hear you know one of my teachers Or my therapist say something or my friends say something. And I was like, oh, yeah, yeah, that makes sense. And it would only be, you know, months. later that I would have that experience myself and be like, oh, that's what they meant. Okay. And I know that many of my clients say that, oh, you know, you told me this a few months ago. I was like, yeah, yeah, whatever.

Magda

And now I feel it. I'm like, oh, this is what she meant. Yeah. With this work, like, yes, education is important. Yes. Talking through things and sharing them like we are right now is important.

Magda

And I don't think there is any way to describe really those experiences or to share them verbally because they just happen at such a different level.

Yeah.

Iza

It is a felt sense that you have to experience to be able to really know what it's meant when we try to express it. Through and with words, right. I think this is very confusing for so many people. Just as you mentioned, you know, like mindset or affirmations, and all of that— like we're so used to contributing effectively to our own process of healing. There is this narrative that you have to do something for it, right? You have to actively do this exercise, you have to show up for yourself. And then there comes this part that actually is running the show—something underneath all of that. And you communicate that, and say, 'Well, you could actually heal.

Iza

Without needing to do anything other than rest in support of someone else's nervous system.'

Iza

And people will be like, 'What the hell are you talking about? How is this supposed to work?' Right. And then when they're when they're when they're curious enough and kind of like dive into this work, then it's like, 'Oh.

Iza

I've been working on that piece for years.

Iza

And now that I'm doing this nervous system work, this early developmental trauma work, this pre-paranatal work— like now I'm actually getting in contact.'

Magda

with it and that's a whole different story yeah right and i think you know to be fair many of us need to first do many other things and then you know not all not all of what we call nervous system work is created equal yeah and there are many modalities and many practitioners who work you know differently and have their own frameworks and but yeah like what you said at the end of the day if we really go back to what was supposed to happen from the beginning is we were supposed to just be chilling in the womb in a safe nourishing welcoming loving kind expecting environment yeah and If we come to a place where we feel safe enough to be with

Magda

Another person in a therapeutic relationship, because for many of us that will take time where it might never happen. But if we come to that point through whatever else that we use.

Magda

And we slowly start experiencing that. Well, first of all, in the beginning, it can be completely terrifying because, as we've just shared, you don't know safety if you don't know someone's presence.

Magda

If your system doesn't understand someone being loving and kind towards you, you can go to a session and it can be completely overwhelming, even though in theory nothing is happening. But just that meeting with something that is so unknown.

Magda

Even though objectively we could say that's safe, quote unquote, but subjectively for our system, it registers as like, run the hell away. This is not okay, right? So I think it's something that I've started talking about more and more.

Magda

To raise awareness that just because we go into a space that with a practitioner that is subjectively really present, really skilled and so on, doesn't mean it will feel good. It might not feel good for quite a long time.

Magda

Because it will be so triggering to us because it will not feel safe to be seen because that's our whole life is working towards not being seen and protecting ourselves from being seen and really witnessed, right? Because we didn't get it in the beginning. And so, yeah. Again, if you look back at the very beginning, what was supposed to happen, well, then that's probably where the healing is, actually having, recreating or creating the conditions that we never got.

Magda

But yeah, for many of us, myself definitely included, it's been a very long journey to get to the point where I'm now beginning to experience certain repatterning or, you know, kind of repair.

Magda

Of very very early experiences that you know for me it's been I'm 38 so it's been a while living with all of those experiences and those patterns and yeah it's it's truly been For me, coming across Transforming Touch, which is a modality in which the client is not expected to do anything other than show up.

Iza To just come to the session, yeah.

Magda

Yeah, just come to the session.

Yeah.

Magda

Yeah, it's been truly life changing to start experiencing just receiving. And I know, you know, one of my clients who has also been doing a lot of work with, you know, with therapists.

Magda

And also by herself with some, you know, self-guided practices tools. I remember at the beginning, we started seeing each other for sessions.+

Magda

She just couldn't believe it for months. I think that transforming touch would work without her having to do anything. Yeah. Because again, in a culture that glorifies effort and hard work and tells you in a culture that is so individualistic.

Magda

And, yeah, it just tells you, you have to, you know, be self-reliant and self-independent. But that's the issue, right? A lot of parents, when they have infants, toddlers... They'll expect too much independence too soon, fearing that if they give too much support, if they give too much affection, then that's going to make the child grow into an adult who's not self-sufficient— when it's actually the very opposite.

Yeah.

Magda

We need to nourish and feed and love and support in copious amounts.

Magda

So that that our need our early need for that support and that nourishment and that safety, which comes from another, gets satiated and in an organic way, we can start differentiating, individuating, and then we don't need it anymore. Yeah, but the reason so many of us have such a hunger for affection, touch, and presence is exactly because we didn't get enough of it at the developmental stage that we were at— so we could then organically process to something else.

Iza

This is exactly what I talk about always when I say everybody tells you you need to get out of your comfort zone to grow. And I'm like, none of us has ever, ever in their entire life felt what comfort zone is. Exactly. We need to grow our comfort zone. We need to grow our comfort zone and not grow out of it. Like I want you in it. I want you to be pampered in it.

Yeah. For the first time to actually feel comfort. Yeah.

Iza

And then, just as you said, organically, you know, like my daughter is two.

Iza

Like she doesn't, I don't push her out of her comfort zone so that she climbs or does anything. Does it by herself. She just does it organically because she feels safe and pampered. And this is such a huge shift for so many people because.

Iza

Just as you said, like if you didn't get it, you never, you don't even know what comfort zone feels like. And speaking of experiences of comfort zones and safety, I remember it was maybe, I don't know, six, seven, eight months ago. where I told my practitioner, like I had to cry, there was something that was coming through. And then she looked at me and she was like, 'It's okay that you're like crying right now.' And it was the first time in my life that I could viscerally feel. And I told her, 'I don't believe you.' Yeah.

Yeah.

Iza

And that was such a huge moment for me to like look at a person and say, 'I don't believe you.' Like, you're saying all of those nice words. You're saying all of me is welcome. You're saying I'm going to be here waiting for you to find me until you're like ready to do whatever feels right. And I can tell you I don't believe you because that was the first time I could like viscerally feel I don't trust her. yes and that is the moment i knew i was healing actually you know and it's and it's crazy because we're like oh i have to save person i have this wonderful practitioner i've been doing this for so long and she's so cool You know, and then you're like, so I always tell my clients, the moment you tell me you don't trust me, I'm going to like really dance with you. You know, kind of like celebrate that, the fact that, that you can tap into it, into that. that fear and into that shame. Right. And then moving to the point when now I experienced a question of, can I rest with you being my favorite one?

Iza

Yeah. You know, so it's just like you said, it takes time until our system learns to safety and gets to be terrified of what do I do with safety? But I think also it's very important to mention that the journey itself.

Iza

is a reward because you know, with like every piece and bit, like we start to reconnect with with us with something we never had— our authenticity. And so, kind of, tapping into that comfort zone, and being like, 'Oh, maybe it could feel okay.' And then getting out of it again, and being, 'Okay, I have to protect again.' So, like, this kind of natural pendulation of healing, right?

Magda

Yeah. You know, to be fair, to feel, 'Oh, I don't trust you,' and to express that to someone, that means there's enough safety and a relationship for us to do that.

Iza

Yeah, of course.

Magda

Yeah, I remember that was one of the things that I really loved hearing from Steve and in our training from Stephen Terrell is that, you know, there's such a big difference between cognitive trust and somatic trust.

Magda

And that clients will come to you and they'll say, 'I'll trust you.' They're lying to you. Yeah.

Magda

A hundred percent. Sorry? A hundred percent. Yeah, exactly.

Magda

And, and I remember like hearing that, I'm really like, 'Yeah.'

Magda

And, you know, realizing, 'Oh, that's where I'm at as well.' Right. In this in this very training, you know, with my practitioners, with my friends, you know, with everyone around me, basically.

Magda

And, yeah, and I remember he also said that, you know, just because someone's been coming to you for therapy for, I don't know, for years, doesn't mean they trust you. Yeah.

Magda

And I think, as a practitioner, we have to be safe enough in ourselves to be able to hear that, not take it personally, not, you know, think that, oh, what do you mean they don't trust me? You know, whatever it is, but be like, oh, yeah, that makes so much sense.

Magda

And, and yeah, and at the same time, he said that, you know, as a therapist, with some people for a very long time, you're the perpetrator.

Magda

So you might think you're like, you're the good guy, you know, but actually, for the person's system, you're the perpetrator. And I also think that's such an important piece for us practitioners to have. I just started a few weeks ago, a mentorship.

Magda

With a somatic coach, practitioner, educator, Shelby Lee, who's also, you know, and then one of the first calls.

Magda

She also mentioned, like, I don't want you to trust me straight away. I want to earn your trust through how we show up for each other, through rupture, through conflict, through having differences.

Magda

And, you know, coming from my background, conflict has always been terrifying.

Magda

Conflict in the sense of even expressing a need or a dislike or this didn't sit right with me or this hurt me. I'm so used to justifying, explaining things, letting things go. repressing, you know, the whole repertoire. Yeah, I know. Um, and and really beginning to understand that wow, conflict boundaries rupture and repair that's actually what builds relationship that's what's built what builds trust that's what builds intimacy because unless we have those, we're all just wearing masks and we're not actually relating.

Magda

We're playing a game. And I don't mean that, you know, in a negative or kind of...

Magda

I don't know like manipulative way consciously unconsciously yes we're trying to manipulate each other but I don't mean with like any ill intent simply because we don't feel safe enough to be ourselves which means we're not really connecting right because there needs to be a level of authenticity self-disclosure vulnerability for there to be true intimacy and for there to be a relationship to speak of um so yeah these are and again like of course i'd heard that so many times It was actually, I had an experience, you and I both were at an intensive, so at a workshop with Irene, her team, and our other colleagues.

Magda

And I had a moment of...

Magda

you know, kind of touching into some pretty deep early material. And I was with one of the assistants from the training who was just with me to, you know, process and settle.

Magda

And he kind of invited me to.

Magda

to for our kind of forearms to touch a bit so I could feel your presence and the grounding and the connection there and and that was my first experience of kind of viscerally understanding that boundaries are not something that divides us— you know, kind of puts us against each other or anything like— boundaries are what allows for connection, yeah. Boundaries are what allows for a relationship.

Magda

And I remember at that moment, even though, you know, my process in theory was about something else, but I was like, wow.

Magda

And, you know, it will still probably take a few years for that to erase. The experiences of me not setting my boundaries. The experiences of me not reacting really well to other people's boundaries.

Magda

you know for it to slowly slowly really seep into you know into my being so yeah there it's just freaking fascinating yeah i think this whole process and And I also recognize that I'm able to see it as fascinating now because I've built a lot of capacity and I've been supported enough to have, to be able to hold it like this because, you know, a few years ago, I would not have told you that this

was fascinating, right? It would have been very painful and disorienting, and it still can be. And having arrived finally to a point where I relish in support.

Magda

Where, you know, when was that? Two days ago. I had only one client in my calendar.

Magda

So the day before, I was like, 'Oh, I could actually use an extra therapy session.' And I just, you know, wrote my therapist like, 'Hey, are you free tomorrow?'

Magda

I would love to meet for a session. No emergency. You know, it would just be nice to be supported.

Magda

So it's, oh my God, it's such a shift to be here versus.

Magda

Oh, if I ask for more support, that means there's something wrong with me. Or I'm not doing enough and that's why I need support.

Magda

Or, you know, somehow still going for support because I still have been doing that for years in many different ways.

Magda

Really landing into that sense of like, 'Oh my god, I love this. Yeah.' But what I'm just here and someone's watching over me— you know, energetically emotionally in the relational field— and I can just be here.

Magda

And finally, because again, I don't really have those experiences as a prenatal, as an infant on this emotional level, because I have been taken care of. You know, materially, logistically, and practically, which I know a lot of people have not—yes, you have that experience. But emotionally, relationally, and energetically, I did not get that.

Magda

And so, to finally be able to get it, but then also recognize, oh my God, you know, I'm 37 and this is the first time in my life that I really feel someone is energetically, emotionally taking care of me.

Iza And that's because someone truly cares.

Magda

Yeah, and that's not because I have not had people in my life care for me. I have plenty of people, right? It's just that I had not been able to receive it that way at that level. Because I have received a lot of support from many beautiful people, both, you know, in my family, my friends, strangers, people I met in travels and trainings, like all of that. So of course, yes, I have received that. But in that kind of vulnerable pre and perinatal context of a therapeutic space, those are very new experiences. And then I can literally see sometimes week to week how I'm shifting and how I'm showing up differently.

Magda

Just quote unquote, through having the embodied experience of someone else being there for me, reflecting to me, holding me in a very specific, you know, way that.

Magda

really kind of gives a different experience to my prenatal self and to my birth self and, you know, to the infant experience that I still carry in my body.

Iza

I think this is exactly, well, at least this is exactly what I always mean when I talk about accessing our embryological potential.

Iza

It's like nourishing those parts of us that were never nourished, so that we can actually start unfolding and shifting into the being we were supposed to become.

Iza

Actually, this is kind of what I mean when I talk about potential. I don't mean like this—higher, quicker, you know, vision board, more successful, whatever person— but exactly what you're saying: through nourishing the parts of me that were deprived of the most basic needs of a human being, of a human baby, of a human embryo, by receiving and nourishing those, receiving support and nourishing those parts, I get to shift, maybe, week to week. Like I can really, this is what you said, right? To like really see myself changing.

Magda Yeah. And the term you use— that's, you know, we know it's through Cherionna Menzsa Sills, who's an amazing expert in perinatal psychology and many other things. And yeah, it's, it's, and you know, in some ways, Steve's talks about it just in a different way. Many people, yeah, also talk about it a lot.

Iza

Jaap van der Wal.

Magda

Yeah. So many, many people in this world of kind of working with the earliest imprints, they talk about the fact that, again, if.

Magda

If we were developing in an environment that felt registered, toxic, unsafe to us, then of course we were too busy surviving to actually develop into the fullness.

Magda

of our expression of our health, of our essence. And going back to that kind of potential as we know it in our culture, you know, that's the thing that I had been landing in for a few years. of and also grieving you know that that version of me that lived this big quote unquote life that's traveled intercontinentally on a whim you know, just to have some crazy adventure, to take this class, to do that. I have grieved that person who, you know, was super spontaneous, very naive, very optimistic.

Magda

And what is interesting that, especially in the past year, I've kind of been embodying the same thing, but from a very different space. So yes, there's still spontaneity, there's still... you know, an

enthusiasm, a joy, a zest for life, and it comes from freaking seeing a bumblebee in my garden. Yeah. I don't need those things to feel, right? To feel alive. Because many of us do all of those intense, extreme things to feel alive. And it makes sense because when we have a lot of repressed survival energies in our system, when we have many different layers of what we call functional freeze in the system, we need a lot more stimulation to feel. And/ or we're just so used to intensity, we need to keep it up, right? Because we mentioned before that, you know, many of us will go into healing, like we do any other thing, which might mean too much too fast.

Magda

And that will be true for people who are more kind of sympathetically dominant, which is as far as I understand you and myself. But then there'll be other people who'll start this work and they'll have to go super slow because their system is at the other end of the scale.

Magda

Just to mention that our scenario is not the only scenario. It's one of the scenarios, right? However, in general, whichever part of the scale we fall onto, Well, if we do everything else from survival responses, then we'll do healing from survival responses. Whether it's through more of that parasympathetic freeze and shutdown, whether it's more through the fight-flight side of things.

Magda

yeah in the beginning that's just what it will be because we we we cannot you know there is no oh i live every part of my life from this regulation but this part oh no this part i've got it yeah yeah Yeah.

Iza

And I think what you said about like grieving the part of yourself who was in that functional freeze, who was fun and spontaneous and would travel the world. I remember when I started like. realizing oh my freaking god everyone is in functional freeze like every single person and then i got so sad because i was like would we like never do anything fun or discover anything anymore as a humanity if we you know like i got like really concerned for us humans and I was like that function of freeze is so cool like imagine you're like 90 and you're like oh you know I climbed those mountains or I did this iron man or whatever like there those are things that you're gonna like remember for the rest of your life and I was I was kind of like Oh, but if everybody, like, stopped doing that, like, wouldn't we ever do anything as humans other than just be?

Magda

And I, you know, and I think that's such an interesting question because where I'm at, I'm like, yes, please let's stop all of those things. I know, but there is still a part that. But yeah, yeah, for sure. Like, you know, we would not be where we are.

Magda

In so many ways, if we were a healthy, sustainable, regulated, securely attached culture.

Yeah.

Magda

And imagine that. You know, and to be fair.

Magda

I am getting more and more into a place where I wouldn't actually mind many of the things not being here that I'm used to. I know it would be an adjustment, but I think the payoff of getting off that track.

Magda

You know, if you look at my life outwardly, if 10 years ago you had told me this is what my daily life would look like. I would probably cry. I would be like, 'Oh my God, that's so sad.'

Magda

That's what I'm alive for. Going to the park to read the book and then going to the sauna and like working a bit and sitting in my garden. Do you remember the fly at the intensive?

The fly?

Iza

That you're so related to, and then on the last day the fly came back— it maybe it was a different fly, but it was just a great symbolism and you were so touched because a fly came and so I was because I was really connecting with... I know. But so all of you who are listening, you probably think we're crazy by now.

Magda

So, so again, and, and, you know, I'll, I'll often stop because.

Magda

I'll have, you know, this year I've been the most social, active and outgoing than I have in a few years, because also, you know, as we go into that deep healing process.

Magda

For many of us, it comes with a lot of exhaustion and a lot of tiredness. And so there is a period of time where maybe for a year or two years, we just go to sleep really early. We don't feel like going out. It's like our lifestyle changes completely.

Magda

And then slowly, slowly, we start building ourselves back up physically. And that's my case. Like this year, I can really feel, okay, I'm solidifying again in what I can do, but not from that overriding and pushing. Although I have done that some this summer.

Magda

But, you know, going to sleep way too late and, you know, sleeping too little and so on. But so, yes, I've been, you know, around people a lot more and my lifestyle is very different to most people. Like I have a lot of time to myself. I prioritize that.

Magda

I have a lot of time to just sit, slow down, lay on a pranamat, listen to an audiobook, like do my self-studies, have therapies, you know, when I want to. And I know I'm very privileged to also be in a situation where with relatively little work.

Magda

I'm able to afford all of this for now. Right. But, you know, oftentimes people say, 'you can't have, you know, a slow life these days.' And I would like, yes, you can.

Magda

And, you know, it's I sometimes think about that because.

Magda

Truly, like in the culture, like ours nowadays, to live a slow life.

Magda That is such a rebellious act. Yeah.

Magda

You know, for many years before really finding the nervous system work and then the early trauma work, I had been very invested in deep ecology and social justice and indigenous frameworks.

Magda

You know, when I think about the process of decolonization, of decapitalization, not consuming, not working, not producing.

Magda

Those are actually the antidotes. And it's kind of the same with healing trauma, right? In a lot of spaces, it's like the idea is still mostly because, you know, many of the facilitators, practitioners are—well, themselves— are you know in those spaces.

Magda

It's all about the catharsis. It's all about, oh, my God, the experience I had and it was life changing and this and that. And, you know, nothing wrong with having beautiful experiences.

Magda

However, the more we kind of deep dive into the safety side of things and the slowness side of things. Babies and prenatates need everything to happen really slowly.

Magda

They process very differently than adults do, or at least healthy, regulated adults, right? Because many of us as adults are actually babies and prenatal physiologically. That's why we get overwhelmed so easily. That's why we're in society. Because it's actually those earliest parts that are so afraid, that are overstimulated all the time, right? So when we learn that in deep... what I consider to be smart and informed trauma work, we actually want to go really slowly and we want to go softly and we want to go gently. Yeah. And it's kind of the same with, you know, the social. Ecological shifts that I think so many of us want and need, and yet the way we approach them by default, just like we talked about approaching healing, we do that from survival.

Magda

Yeah, so yeah, I think there are just so many things that come with with going on this journey that yeah are just not easy, that can feel pretty isolating. Um, That might mean certain relationships no longer work.

Magda

That might mean that we don't necessarily feel as much belonging to our family systems, to our cultural systems.

Magda

However, the upside is that we find a lot more belonging within ourselves, within the wider natural world, within the human family, I think.

Magda

So, yeah, it's it's it's a process. It's a process.

Iza

And I think it's I think it's really, really beautiful because it's exactly the opposite of of what we also see when we come back to, you know, like this. Living out your full potential. And I've reached my next level of who I am. You know, and it's the same for me.

Iza

I remember how I was, I would be excited if there was something I understood about myself, you know, that came from like this classical personal development field.

Iza

And then the more I do this work, and I know for you it's the same, and it's also when you observe people who really embody this work we're talking about, there is absolutely no need to be...

Iza

to be validated. There is no need to be loud and proud about it. You're just so soft and so quiet and so...

Iza

I don't know, it's so small and so big at the same time. It's like feeling so spacious and so rooted and thus powerful.

Magda

And that's the potential, right? Because if you actually were to embody all of your cells, all of your organs, all of your tissues, like... That's a lot. That's big. Yeah, of course. And that's where the fullness of life and being alive comes from. It's not from, you know, climbing the 4,000, 7,000 meter mountain. Yeah. It's from embodying your liver and, you know.

Iza

And millions and billions of cells.

Magda

Exactly. And, you know, being able to freaking marvel at the. miracle and galactic that lives at the top of your little finger like yeah i know yeah and then yeah and then you don't need all of those extra things you don't need all of that stimulation Because you're just a living, sensing, breathing being. And that's enough. And that's in itself.

Iza

That's plenty. Yeah. That's alive in itself. Aliveness in itself. Yeah. That's why I also laugh.

Magda

Like I did have some ambition at some point in my life. I don't think I have much left.

Magda

You know, sometimes I'll talk to people like, oh, but you could be, you know, growing your business this way. You could be doing this therapy with these people. I'm like, I could.

Magda

Yeah.

Magda

But at this point, also, because as I mentioned, I'm at the stage where I'm also replenishing a lot of my own energy for myself, which is also a huge shift. Because in the past, had I replenished any tiny bit of energy, I would immediately create a project that would be... Super intense it would be really great, but it would be completely unsustainable. I would immediately put that energy that I had barely gotten back for myself and immediately put it out into the world.

Magda

And so what I'm really learning to do is just like, nope, keep it in. Keep it in.

Iza

What if I could just have it for myself and not need to move, do, and grow anything? It's a little funny, "funny", because this was exactly my epiphany just, you know, like four weeks ago. I was like, what the hell are you doing? Like, like, really? Like we were talking about when we were when we were.

Iza

on WhatsApp, but this was exactly the turning point for me this year to be like, what the hell is happening? Like, why am I doing this? There it was again, you know, the pattern of like pushing and surviving when I didn't need to, you know, so. That's kind of like, I'm also like, is my ambition gone? Is my drive gone? Do I not love what I do anymore? And I'm like, oh, what the hell? I really do. But it's just, again, this intensity and stimulation changes and then we're confused at first, right? Yeah.

Magda

Yeah, of course. Then again, when we look back, we were not made to live in a world where we're interacting with thousands of people, where we know the news from every part of the world, when we know about every tragedy that's happened.

Magda

We developed to live in small communities where you take care of yourself, you take care of your family, and you take care of your immediate community. So I think it is only natural that as we heal, we go back to that. That ambition, quote unquote, that this culture teaches us— we should have, that this is ambitious. This is what it means to be, you know, developing, fulfilling your potential, using your skills for the good of, you know, whatever spill.

Magda

That we hear around, I think it only makes sense that we actually just go back to wanting to be human beings.

Magda

have some, you know, basic security and safety, and then have good people around us, have good food, have our families or friends or, you know, whatever chosen community, however big or small.

Magda

enjoying the beauty of the natural world around us taking care of our bodies of our minds of our souls and spirits and and that's kind of enough like yeah that's kind of more than enough yeah yeah Yeah, I think that feels like a good place to close the convo, yeah.

Magda

Being human is more than enough.

Iza

Yeah, yeah.

Magda

It's just a question of how do we get to be human?

Iza

Yeah, I remember the client of mine, one sent me a message and she was like, you know what?

Iza

I've just kind of realized that my daily life is more than enough.

Yes.

Iza

And then I really teared up and I was like, oh, that is that is exactly the point. You know, like having your cherry on top and traveling if you want to. But have it all be just a cherry on top because you actually don't need anything because you have yourself. So, yeah....

Iza

All right. Magda, thank you so much. Is there anything else that's like that wants to get out there right now? Any last thought or sentence?

Magda

No, no, I think we've said plenty.

Iza

Thank you so much for this beautiful conversation, for your time, for your sharing, for your expertise, for your wisdom.

Iza

And I'm going to see you and hear you probably in 10 minutes on WhatsApp. But for.

Iza

Yes for our listeners, thank you for listening, thank you for being here, and thank you for for your time. Thank you, thank you, bye bye.