



## The Body of Toxic Relationships

**Guest: Dr Aimie Apigian**

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**[00:00:09] - Alex Howard**

Welcome everyone, to this interview where I'm super excited to be talking to my good friend Dr Aimie Apigian. And we're going to be exploring the body of toxic relationships. How toxic relationships in our lives can also be mirrored in the lived experience in toxicity in our physical body.

To give you a little bit of background, Dr Aimie Apigian is a double board certified medical physician in both preventative and addiction medicine, and holds double master's degrees in biochemistry and in public Health.

She is the leading medical expert on addressing stored trauma in the body, through her signature model and methodology, The Biology of Trauma. A lens that courageously up levels the old methods of trauma work and medicine, by reverse engineering trauma's effects on the nervous system and body on a cellular level.

She is currently the founder and CEO of Trauma Healing Accelerated, where she bridges the two worlds of functional medicine and trauma therapy, with a mission to help adults accelerate the healing journey by addressing the biology of trauma that keeps trauma stuck in the body, mind, and spirit. And her provider's certification course teaches providers to do the same for their clients.

So firstly, Aimie, welcome. We always have fun, you and I, so I'm very happy that you're here again

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

I'm happy that you're doing a summit on toxic relationships. I think this is very needed, so I appreciate you stepping out and being the leader in this.

**Alex Howard**

Well, thank you. We just had a fun conversation about toxic relationships before we started, we're going to keep that one off camera.

Well, let's start with how toxic relationships in our outer life can show up in our physical body.

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

What I have seen, Alex, is that people who are holding on to toxic relationships in their life always have their body holding on to physical toxins. They always come together. So this is something

that if this is happening on the relationship level in your life, it's also happening on a cellular level. And so we have to be able to know how to work with our body, to let go of those toxins in our body, to be at the space where we can let go of relationship emotional toxicities in our life.

### **[00:02:50] - Alex Howard**

I think it's interesting, isn't it? Because often we're much more aware of things that are not right in the outside world, like what's wrong with the other person, or the dynamics, or so on. And then the tendency is to see physical symptoms as, oh, that's just a medical physical thing. And I think often people don't make the connection between those two things. And so it might be helpful to share some of the quite common physical responses that we can have, as ways of mirroring that toxicity in our outer relationships.

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

Yeah, and let me give context that, when we're talking about the toxins that the body holds onto every day, it's estimated that the average person is exposed to 700,000 toxic chemicals. So toxicities, whether it be relationships or chemicals, is something that's just part of life. So the idea here is not to never be exposed, the idea is to set up our body so that as it is exposed, it can also let go. And it doesn't get exposed and then our body holds on to it.

So as we look at the different types of categories of toxins that we have, we have heavy metals. Heavy metals being lead, mercury, even copper can be a toxicity in excess. We look at industrial chemicals, we look at medications. Even medications are a toxin that the body has to detoxify to metabolize and get out. We don't usually think of medications as being toxins, but it goes through the same process. The same liver phases of detoxification apply to medications. We also look at toxins from exposures to mold, or other infections like Lyme. Lyme, even viral infections can cause toxins that the body then is trying to deal with and depending on all of these factors in our life.

But I would say that from my experience, the primary factor is the state of our autonomic nervous system. And when the state of our autonomic nervous system is stuck in sympathetic and stress mode. Or has shifted and is now in this chronic functional freeze and trauma response, the body is not going to be able to let go of toxicities in either one of those states.

What happens is that as the body accumulates more toxins, the more it gets stuck in those states. And so it's a cycle that feeds off of itself. So what are the symptoms? How would a person know that they are holding on? And there's this whole biology of holding on rather than being able to let go. One of the most common symptoms is fatigue. And you and I both know this one well.

### **Alex Howard**

A bit too well in the past.

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

Fatigue comes with a lot of things. Fatigue is the most common symptom of autoimmunity. And yet, Alex, if you look at what's behind autoimmunity, there are always toxins that are part of a person developing autoimmunity. In fact, one of the biggest triggers for that final process to developing a diagnosis of autoimmunity is an exposure to a toxin, whether that's one of the heavy metals, or mold, Lyme. So we see that this idea of toxins is so much a part of the process for developing even diseases.

Fatigue is going to be your most common symptom. And often what it presents as is energy crashes, it's not... Yes, there's like this constant background fatigue and feeling exhausted, but then as you have different exposures... Or what happens is that toxins get pulled into our tissues, and they're actually stored in the tissues, they're tucked away. And if anything happens that pulls

them out of the tissues, and they're floating free in our blood, we actually have more symptoms from those. And that's when a person will experience an energy crash.

**[00:07:01]**

So a person may be experiencing an energy crash every week, every two weeks. There's some kind of pattern that they've seen of "I'm doing okay, I'm managing okay, and then I'm not. But I don't always necessarily understand that trigger. Something seems to just become overwhelming, whether that's an emotional aspect of my life, or maybe that I did too much exercise."

That would be another common symptom of toxins that the body is holding on to, is what's called post exertional malaise. Meaning, after you exercise you don't recover well. It takes you three, four days to recover after just exercising. And as people accumulate more toxins, and are holding on to more toxins in their body, I want to call it stress tolerance, their tolerance for exercise goes down. And so what they used to do for exercise, now they can't do as much, because it triggers one of these energy crashes. And so people start doing less and less, until eventually they're not even going on a walk every day, because even with a walk, their body just cannot recover to having energy and focus for the rest of the day.

I have also added a second category for what can cause these energy crashes. And I call it post emotional malaise, not just post exertional malaise, but post emotional malaise. This is where even with emotions, I would say the big emotions, whether it be joy or stress, they trigger this same type of process in the body, where the toxins get activated with the changes in our physiology, and we have these symptoms, and we have these energy crashes.

So some type of pattern around energy crashes is what you are almost always going to see with the body holding on to toxins. The other thing that I feel is really important, there are a lot of other symptoms, and that's the challenge, Alex, because it blends with so many other things, right?

Like it can be the bloating, it can be the sensitivities, it can be the histamine reactions. And so these sense of allergic, not necessarily true allergies, but just you're more sensitive or you're more reactive. Unexplained digestive issues, headaches, brain fog, skin problems. That's another big one, skin problems, eczema, changes with your metabolism, so you're not able to lose weight. Toxins get held in the fat cells of our body.

And so what can happen is that if a person goes on a rapid diet, say they want to go on one of these diets, that will make them lose 14 pounds in two weeks. And in that process, their fat cells are shrinking so fast, and they're dumping all of these toxins into their bloodstream, and a person will start to become so irritable, so weak, get headaches, they may feel dizzy. And it's because as they're doing these rapid changes, the body's not able to keep up with it. The body's not able to detoxify as fast as it's accumulating the toxins.

These are the types of things. But one aspect in particular that I'll mention is something that's called a herx reaction. Some people call it a herxheimer reaction, some people call it a die-off syndrome. But this idea that when we do good things for our body, and for some people that's maybe doing some IV treatments, IV NAD for example, or maybe they're going to do some ozone, maybe they're going to do some hyperbaric oxygen treatments, maybe they're going to do cryotherapy. So they're looking at these great and good things to do.

But what happens when they do them is they actually feel worse for a time. And that's because, again, we're dumping these toxins into our bloodstream as a result. And our body, we haven't done the phases, there are three phases for actually just preparing the body to let go of something, and we haven't done that work yet. We've jumped to the last phase, and we're feeling worse because we're actually creating more exposure to the toxins inside of our cells and our blood.

### **[00:11:21] - Alex Howard**

One of the things I think is really important to highlight in what you're saying, is that sometimes people can think, well, I know that when I'm around this person, or when I'm in this family situation, I feel terrible afterwards. And I think sometimes people can not understand the mechanism of what's happening there. It's like is it just psychosomatic? And what I really appreciate in the way that you're laying this out, is there are very real physical imbalances and processes that are happening, which although narrow mainstream medicine perspective might only measure the symptoms of, that there are underlying pieces that can be addressed. And of course, one of the challenges that people have, is that the more they get overloaded the less resilient they become, the more easy they get overloaded. And I think people can forget that because something is triggered on a psycho emotional level doesn't mean that addressing the physical underlying issues, and imbalances isn't going to really help and make us a lot more resilient in those situations.

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

Absolutely. And that's why I've come to see that the most important factor for having symptoms from toxins, toxic exposures, toxicities, is really that state of the autonomic nervous system. And so when we have an emotional trigger, we're sometimes going into sympathetic, but most of the time we're going into some form of shutdown. And that literally is shutting down our cells, it's shutting down our mitochondria, it's shutting down these aspects that are helping our body function as well as it can with the toxin overload that it has.

All of a sudden when it gets this message from the vagus nerve, the dorsal vagus nucleus, that says, all right, shut everything down, now it's not even at a place where it can try to manage and overcome the toxin overload. And so we get these symptoms. So is it all in your head? Is it psychosomatic? Absolutely not. We know this now. We understand that this autonomic nervous system state is really what dictates all of this. There is this cell danger response. And the cell danger response is a cell on a cellular level going into a shutdown mode, where it actually turns down energy production, and it becomes more relaxed in its boundaries. So things get through that shouldn't be getting through, and things are leaving like toxins, that really the body is not prepared to deal with those toxins yet.

And it's interesting that both trauma and toxins trigger that cell danger response. So the same thing is happening on a cellular level, whether we're dealing with a toxic relationship and an emotional toxin, or a physical toxin, because we're not eating organic food, because we're drinking from plastic water bottles, because we're putting products on our faces. All of these other toxins are going to cause the same cellular response as an emotional relationship toxin.

### **Alex Howard**

Someone who's watching this, that's starting to hopefully make sense of their experience. They're realizing that there isn't a disconnect between these external relationships and physical symptoms. But also that relationship is a little more complicated than it's just to the psychosomatic, there's actually real imbalances that are happening. Where does someone start in terms of making more sense of that, like, how do they start to bring some diagnostic clarity, what's happening? And of course, we'll start talking about some of the ways they can address it.

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

The challenge is, Alex, is that it's not always easy to test for toxins, for physical toxins.

### **Alex Howard**

Say there's one test that we can do that's going to tell us all the answers.

### **[00:15:24] - Dr Aimie Apigian**

I wish, right. We're still working on that one magic pill that will take everything away, but I think it's called safety. I think that's our magic pill.

But when we look at toxins because they're stored in our tissues we can't test our blood, because they're not necessarily in our blood, it's in our tissues. And same thing with testing our urine, or testing our poop, or testing our hair. It's just where are these toxins being stored. Lead a lot of times gets stored in the bones. Are you going to go do a bone biopsy? Please don't, that would be overwhelming for your body if it's got this accumulation of toxin overload. So it's hard to test.

I would say, Alex, that again, what I'm looking for is just this pattern. Are you holding on to toxic relationships? Are you in toxic relationships where it's providing you some benefit because you're still holding on to it? And if you're still holding on to that, I know that your body is holding on to physical toxins.

I also know that if you have had mold exposure and you're still having symptoms, if you have long haul symptoms from Lyme, from COVID, or if you've got these other symptoms going on, I know that the body's in a place where it just doesn't have the energy to let go of the emotional toxins in our life.

We actually have to have energy, so one of the things that we look at, we see happening in the liver. There are two phases in the liver for detoxification, and that process of detoxifying, of actually attaching glutathione to a toxin to remove it, it takes energy. And when you're already at a place where you don't have energy, you're going to not have the energy to deal with the emotional toxicities in your life.

So just looking at that big picture, I'm looking for the pattern of, are you holding on to toxins? And whether that be toxic relationships, toxic habits, toxic coping mechanisms, toxic self-talk. Those are all signs for me that you have a biology of holding on, rather than this biology of feeling ready and resourced to be able to let go of toxicities. So then we can look at, what are the phases that we need to go through in order to even be ready to be resourced to let go? Because that's where our work is. Again, most people think that I just need to let go, and they try to force themselves to let go.

And they use a lot of mindset, or pushing themselves to, I know that I need to do this. I know that I need to cut myself off of this relationship, or I know that I need to have this hard conversation. I know that I need to. And they try to force themselves to do that without doing the first two phases. And without those first two phases, if you're just jumping to trying to let go of anything, physical toxins, heavy metals, parasites, or relationship toxicities, you're not going to be successful. It's actually going to cause you more symptoms if you try to just jump to that, and not have done the foundational work.

### **Alex Howard**

So let's talk about that foundational work. So somebody that's watching this, that's like, okay, I get it, but where do I start? And of course, we're talking about a number of quite different complex pieces here. What are some of the foundational pieces that in a way are going to impact everyone, at least to start that process?

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

Yeah. So there was a toxic relationship that I was in, and I could see that I was not able to let it go. And it bothered me, Alex, because of all that, I know all the work that I've done on myself, I could see that this was toxic, and I could see myself not being able to let go. And so I started leaning into, all right, what am I missing here? What am I not giving myself, my body, that I'm not able to let

go of this person, of this relationship? And in the process that's when I discovered that I was having all of these symptoms, and I had mold, I ended up having parasites as well.

**[00:19:53]**

And so we discover that through this phase, there's two phases that we have to do first, before we can actually let go of anything. And those two phases are actually resourcing the cells. I call this the preparation phase, so there's the preparation phase where we start.

Then the second phase is actually opening up the channels. And if we think of a house, maybe that's had fire inside the house and so the smoke, the ashes have even become embedded into the curtains, into the carpet, into the furniture. And yet the place that we need to start if we try to do the deep cleaning of the furniture and the carpet first, without opening up the windows, without opening up the doors, to let things leave, as we do the deep cleaning, it's actually going to make the smell worse. It's actually going to make the air quality worse. So what we need to do in this phase two is open up the channels, and bring in movement for the toxicities to have a place to leave.

And then the third phase is actively removing. So we're going to go find these toxins, we're going to bind them with something else, and we're going to release them. But even that process needs to be paced.

So the three phases, again, the three phases of actually letting go of anything in our life that is toxic is one, preparation. Phase two is opening up the channels, creating those vents, opening up those drainage pathways. And then the third phase is casing the active removal of toxins.

So with this first phase of preparation, what does that mean? Preparation involves a few different things. One would be replacing deficiencies, and you can look at it on an emotional level. And what are you deficient in? Are you deficient in quality relationships, that you're willing to hold on to a relationship that's toxic because you're deficient in touch, love, whatever it is.

On a cellular level, what are you deficient in? If you're deficient in zinc, which is one of the most common vitamin deficiencies with those with mood or mental health challenges, your body is going to be holding on to things, and it's even going to create the setup for having a heavy metal toxicity. With copper, you can have all kinds of deficiencies. Magnesium is one of the most common deficiencies across the world right now, and it gets depleted in times of stress, or certainly when you are in this chronic functional freeze or a trauma response.

And so things like that are very basic but are still creating deficiencies. And when the body is in a biology of deficiency, it will always hold on. It will always hold on to what it has because it has at least something. If I don't have this, I wouldn't have anything, I wouldn't have anybody. And so when the body does not have what it needs, and it's in a state of deficiency, it will always hold on to toxins. So the preparation phase involves, requires replacing deficiencies.

The other aspect of the preparation phase is this idea that we have to bring balance to our biochemistry. And there are common biochemical imbalances in those who hold onto things, and hold on to toxins.

These are methylation imbalances. And methylation impacts our detoxification system so that we can have impaired ability to detoxify if we have a methylation imbalance. Now, there are some people who are over methylators. Most people who have a methylation imbalance are now under methylators. It has shifted on a social level, which is interesting, that's a whole other conversation around generational trauma. But the methylation, our methylation impacts how good, how effective we are at detoxifying things.

### **[00:24:03] - Dr Aimie Apigian**

When that is impaired, given that we're exposed to 700,000 toxic chemicals every day, we're going to be overwhelmed in that process. We're not going to be able to detoxify everything. And again, as we hold onto physical toxins, that same process happens on an emotional level, and we see ourselves holding on to toxic relationships. So we have to bring balance to our biochemistry as part of this preparation phase. And then we need to resource.

### **Alex Howard**

Just before we come to resourcing, I'll ask questions, so in terms of those deficiencies, what's your way of approaching that? Is that in an ideal world to do some basic testing to assess that? Or is that to have a baseline of protocol that everyone starts with?

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

There are some places that are safe to start for everyone. For example, it is safe for everyone to start on zinc, 15 milligrams. It's also safe for everyone to start taking magnesium every day. Those are very safe places.

However, you know me, I like to be very targeted and very intentional in what I'm doing, because that's how I have found that I can accelerate the process. If I don't know which deficiencies I have, I may miss one. And so I may have magnesium and zinc now, but my body still has this other deficiency I don't even know about. And so I'm still noticing that I'm holding on to things, because I just didn't do my work in figuring out which deficiencies I'm working with. So, yes, in terms of the biochemical imbalances, that's actually one of the tests that I almost always start those who are coming in for a "Biology of Trauma" health coaching session, because they are so common, they play such a huge role in creating this biology that we hold on to things. That's a very common place when I'm doing a test that looks at their copper, their zinc, their copper to zinc ratio, because, again, if that ratio is off, copper becomes a toxic heavy metal.

I'm looking at their methylation status, and then I'm looking at something that's called pyroluria, which is a genetic condition and it causes a functional deficiency in zinc and B6. What that results in, is a person becoming very sensitive with their senses, so they would notice it by their light sensitivity, their sound sensitivity. They don't like bright lights, they don't like loud noises, and people start to overwhelm them. And so these are also generally people who relate to being very empathic, and you're highly sensitive people. And they are highly sensitive, not only to emotions, but also to foods. And so they tend to have all kinds of sensitivities, and their sensory overwhelm is a common theme in their life. Again, that causes these functional deficiencies.

So knowing these, and then we can do some other basic lab tests that look at... I do micronutrient testing, so that I can see on a cellular level what are the components for what should be in your cells. What is in your blood is not necessarily what's in your cells. And so sometimes, depending on what a person wants to do, we can do both. We can do blood and cellular, or that micronutrient testing. Oftentimes I will just go to the micronutrient testing if you need to really be careful with money. So that we're looking at what is actually on the cellular level, and it's being perceived and experienced as a deficiency on a cellular level.

### **Alex Howard**

So we look at those deficiencies, and then let's come to this next stage in some more detail.

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

With the resourcing, here is where we look at, what does a cell need in order to really thrive? Well, in its essence, it needs oxygen. Oxygen is what it needs in order to make energy. So it needs the

nutrients, it needs the oxygen to make energy. What does it need for that? It needs blood. Our blood is what carries oxygen. So we look at, how can I resource my cells? How can I bring more blood to my cells?

**[00:28:25]**

Most of us in our society are not moving a lot. And especially if we are in this autonomic nervous system state of shut down, and we're in that dorsal vagal response, everything gets shut down. Our blood flow gets shut down. Our Lymphatic flow gets shut down. Movement stops, that's part of the immobilization of the freeze response, is the lack of movement. We need to start figuring out how can I resource my cells to get more oxygen? How can I resource my cells to get more of these nutrients? So that we're not operating at the minimum level, but we are well resourced.

Then we can look at some of the ways in which we can bring more oxygen, and bring in more blood flow, and bring in more elements for our cells so that they are actually resourced. Then we can go into this next phase, which is actually opening up these drainage pathways and channels after we've resourced and done this preparation phase for our cells.

**Alex Howard**

I think that distinction, which you've now given the context behind that you made earlier, I think is really important because there's a lot of people that have tried to do those detox protocols, for example. And as you said, they've just ended up feeling worse and worse. And I get the temptation, and I think particularly some of the chronic Lyme patients that we've dealt with over the years who say, I just want to go and do these really intense protocols. Slow down, it's like you're just going to get worse doing that. Or they want to do protocols which are very heavy antibiotic protocols, which are going to really impact the gut. And it's not say those protocols haven't got a place. They do have a place, but you've got to do them in a wider context of having enough overall capacity and resilience.

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

That's exactly right, Alex, until the body is resourced again, if we try to do treatments, and we try to do treatments too fast, things will actually get worse. And that's again, where we bring in these words around like a herx reaction, or the die-off reaction. Especially with some of the antibiotics. If you are killing off all of these bugs, they release toxins as you kill them off. And where are those toxins going? If you haven't resourced your body, if you haven't actually worked with opening up the channels, then those toxins are just sitting there, and they're recirculating because that's what our body does. The toxins that are not bound and released get recirculated.

So you will feel worse unless you've done this initial foundational work that you've set it up for, that those toxins can get cleared out and we can avoid some very painful detox experiences. But I would say the same thing with relationships, right? If you're trying to let go of a toxic relationship before you have resourced yourself, it's a very painful process. It's extremely painful. It puts you into a place of overwhelm. It will actually cause your body to go into a dorsal vagal trauma response because it's not ready for that. You actually have to have the body ready to let go before it can let go, and have it be a safe process.

**Alex Howard**

It's exactly the same thing, in a way it's connected to what you're saying but, it's the same thing when it comes to emotional healing that people come in and go, want to get all this stuff out. And it's like if you don't build safety in the nervous system, you don't learn how to self-regulate, you just retraumatize in that.



**[00:32:09]**

I think there's something really important in this point around the sequencing of what we do. And in a way, what often happens is we try to address the problem from the same psychology that's been driving it, right? And so we try and push through the healing process, but then part of the reason we got stuck is we've been pushing through too much in our life.

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

So I liken releasing toxins, and again, whether that's emotional or physical, to having a baby. Alex, I know you don't have any personal experience with this, however, work with me...

**Alex Howard**

But I have witnessed it three times.

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

There you go. All right, so there are phases of delivering a baby, right? And in the initial phases, as contractions are starting, that's the body preparing for the actual process of letting go and delivering the baby. And if we try to push through that, if we try to start pushing at that point, it actually causes more harm, more pain, because we're not at that phase yet. So it has to open up the channel, it has to open up the cervix, that takes time. And that process involves gentle pressure of the baby's head on that cervix. If we try to push at that point, that is extremely painful, and harmful to the baby.

So it's this process of giving the body what it needs resourcing Mom. Like making sure that she's going into that process emotionally resourced, physically resourced. She's strong, she's healthy, and then she can relax throughout that process. Giving her body what it needs. And the pain is what paces the process. Which is fascinating, because even if you look at the interplay between the adrenaline and the oxytocin that happens during a baby delivery, it paces naturally that process.

I don't see people pacing their detoxification processes, like you say, they want to do it all now. And I get it, I've been there, I want to feel better yesterday, I don't want to wait. You're telling me that this might be a several month, even a year long process of gently, safely building this container, and allowing this process to happen. I don't want to wait for that, so let me push through. But the consequences and the results of that, as you say, Alex, we end up retraumatizing ourselves in the process of trying to detoxify.

**Alex Howard**

Before we come to how people can find out more about you and your work, I'd love you to say a few words about what is possible when it comes to healing. I'm mindful we've been talking about the pitfalls and the challenges along the way, and I know that ultimately your work is a big message of hope. So maybe just say a few words around sequenced, right... And approached in the right way, what's possible?

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

So when I realized that I was holding on to toxins, and wasn't able to actually get to a place where I was able to let go of things. What I ended up doing was getting on protocols for mold exposure, getting on protocols for parasites. I did not have testing that confirmed either one of those. Those were just a high likelihood, given these patterns of holding on that I was seeing in my body.

So I start on these protocols, and as I have just said that people should not do, I went too fast, and brought on some energy crashes, so I got to learn this from personal experience. But in the process, six months later, I passed this parasite. Alex, I understand that you're not a medical doctor, so for you, for your audience, this may gross you out to talk about this kind of stuff. But for me, this was fascinating because I was like, oh my goodness, I actually had a parasite. When did I get this parasite? How long has he been there? Talk about a toxic relationship, a parasite in your gut.

### **Alex Howard**

And how many of his friends are still in there?

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

That was my next question is, how many more are in there? When I passed that parasite, though, I definitely felt this shift. And the longer that I was on this mold protocol, I felt this shift and I felt myself becoming and feeling resourced.

So what happens is that over time, I started realizing, wait a second, I now feel ready to be able to let go of this relationship. I now feel ready, where I feel resourced I actually feel like I don't need this, because I have all of this over here. But for me, that's the possibility, Alex, until we let go we're not able to receive. And we can see that, oh, there is the possibility of so much better health. There is the possibility of me being able to exercise like I used to, and go climb those mountains and ride the bike. There is this possibility of actually a healthy relationship. But until I let go of this, I can't even receive because I'm holding on.

As I started witnessing this in my own body, and it was directly related to my physical toxins, and being able to do this preparation phase, the foundational work. And then go on to these protocols and do it gently, and I just started things slowly shifting. And it wasn't a process that I was consciously controlling, Alex. For me, that was the beauty of it, it just is happening as I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, which is support my body, resource my cells, actually address the physical toxins.

So I got to this place where one day I felt ready. I don't know any other way to explain it. It was just like, I don't feel like I need this anymore. And so even that, I planned it out right, and I planned out, well, then how am I going to bring closure to this? What would that actually look like? And so for that, I personally use the somatic and parts work combined in order to figure out what do I need, what would I need to have emotional closure and be able to let go of that relationship.

Once I came to that realization of what I needed, it was now the process of just preparing myself for that. It was going to be a hard conversation with a friend, and I wanted to go into that conversation resourced, and also not wanting to be a toxic experience for that person. If they're not ready for this, I don't want to push my needs onto them. I knew that I needed to go and resource, that even if she was not ready for this hard conversation, I could let that be okay, and I would still be fine. I had done what I needed to do, which was just make the intention, try, and so I did. I had this conversation and guess what happened one week later? I passed another parasite.

### **Alex Howard**

That wasn't what I was going to guess, but there we are.

### **Dr Aimie Apigian**

So for me, and this is what I see in the people that I work with as well, with the health coaching sessions, they go hand in hand. As I release some of the physical toxins, I become able to release emotional toxins. And as I release emotional toxins, guess what happens to my body? It's now

having more energy and space to release even more physical toxins. And so it's never going to be this, well, you have to do all of this first. They go together, this is our body, we can't separate the emotional impact of toxic relationships from the impact of physical toxins. It's all having the same impact. And so we can do them in synergistic way as we are working with our body and resourcing it, doing the foundational work, and pacing this process of actually letting go.

**[00:40:20] - Alex Howard**

That's awesome. Aimie, for people that want to find out more about you...

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

Don't want to hear more about the parasites?

**Alex Howard**

You're going to tell me more about the parasites?

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

No.

**Alex Howard**

I'm just thinking about our audience thinking, I'm not going to end any toxic relationships because I don't know what's going to come out of my poo the next week. People that want to find out more about you and your work, where's the best place to go and some of what they can find.

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

They can come to my website, [traumahealingaccelerated.com](https://traumahealingaccelerated.com). That is where they can find out about the Biology of Trauma health coaching sessions, have a one-on-one health coaching session. And figure out where would be the first place for them to start, given where they are right now, for supporting their biology, and actually helping them resource themselves for their stress response, their freeze response for toxic relationships, and being able to move through that process.

**Alex Howard**

Amazing. Dr Aimie Apigian, thank you so much. I really appreciate your time.

**Dr Aimie Apigian**

Thank you Alex.