



## **Building Safety with Myofascial Release and Somatic Work**

**Guest: Phaedra Antioco**

**Alex Howard** Welcome everyone to this session where I am really happy to be talking with Phaedra Antioco. Firstly, Phaedra, welcome and thank you for joining me.

**Phaedra Antioco** Thanks so much for having me here, Alex. I'm so excited about this topic you're bringing forth to the world. I feel like sometimes I live in a secret world as I went through my own traumas and learned how to heal them and now help others do the same.

**Alex Howard** Well, I'm really excited to get into this with you, because I think we're going to be talking about some really important stuff and particularly bringing together a few different ways of working which I think it sounds like, have a kind of magic, which is more than just those parts on their own. We'll talking about healing pain, but from the perspective of both myofascial release and somatic experiencing work.

Just to give people a bit of Phaedra's background, Phaedra Antioco is a somatic experiencing practitioner, occupational therapist, pain and trauma coach and movement educator with over 20 years' experience. Phaedra teaches her clients how to overcome the challenge of physical and emotional pain, trauma, stress and even a life that just doesn't seem to be working. Looking for the root cause of pain, Phaedra investigates the hidden traumatic events that may be preventing a healthy lifestyle. And she teaches her clients how to reset their nervous system, free fascial restrictions from their body and make simple and easy changes to live better.

Phaedra, where I'd love to start, I know you had your own journey with physical trauma, but I'm sure that was more than that, that was part of the healing journey, where you had a serious car accident back in 2008. So tell us a little bit about what happened.

**Phaedra Antioco** Yeah, I was 31 years old, it was the most perfect day at work. I was driving home, looking forward to getting home, well, fed, ended the day early, all my homework and paperwork was done. And I woke up two weeks later from a coma, and I had a roll over car accident, I had a brain injury. The seatbelt had strangled me and broke my thoracic spine, multiple rib fractures, punctured my lungs, I was 3 millimeters from a spinal cord injury. Seat belt cut through my stomach almost got the organs, thank God it didn't, and my leg bones came out. And look at me now. Yay! I like to carry, I show pictures to people.

**Alex Howard** Yeah you showed me one before we started filming. It's quite something.

**Phaedra Antioco** As a practitioner, I just really know pain. And so here I am in a full body brace and the trauma had started the moment I woke up. The moment I woke up, someone said to me, don't get out of bed or you'll have a spinal cord injury and I froze. Because I'm a

therapist, I treat spinal cord injury, I treat brain injury. I'm not supposed to have one. Well, that didn't give me a get out of jail free card. So I was the therapist who then became the patient. I was in one of the top in the country, neuro rehab here in the United States, neuro rehab, and that's where my journey began.

I had the accident, so I had full body physical trauma and then I had the emotional trauma of, oh, my God, am I going to get better? Am I going to have this - whether you have a diagnosis of cancer or an autoimmune disease - am I going to have to live with this forever? I'm broken. And even to this day, many, many years later, I still have to believe that I am okay and I'm safe. So that's one of the huge parts of healing. So there was the rehab journey, there was getting my endurance back up and there was one therapist there, he was an occupational therapist like myself. My leg hurts so bad, even to this day, you guys, if you have pain and you think about the injury that caused it and you're still clenching, and bracing, that's trauma that needs to be dealt with.

So I can vividly remember how disgusting my leg looked and that nerve pain, how bad it was. And he gently put his hand there and it was such comforting, loving touch. And it was the one thing that made me feel better and that was myofascial release. But not all practitioners, by the way, are the same. So it depends on who you're working with. So I don't want you to say, oh, this is the treatment, I got to go find it, it's gonna work. Explore it, but be open to it, I blend it with somatic experiencing. Now that helps my legs feel better. I went and got training. They touched my diaphragm to do a diaphragm release, it was exactly where the seat belt was. The seat belt strangled me. I don't remember the car accident, but my body did and on the treatment table, I went into a full on fear, as in terror, as if the car accident were really happening.

And if we have trauma and physical trauma, whether it's a bad shoulder or a bad back, I help people explore that hidden traumatic event that might be causing it. And then the last thing is, I knew somatic experiencing and myofascial training, we learned about Dr. Peter Levine. I know that that he is gonna be here on this series, that trauma gets trapped in the body. So I said I got to explore this. And I was at a training with him and he took me through what he calls the eye of the needle and helped me work through those little micro traumas that happened during the car accident, from the rollover, from the seatbelt strangulation, to being intubated on a ventilator, to the surgeries. And my body was coughing, deep, bronchial coughing. You would think that I was going to spit something major up, I would shake and tremor.

And so I want people to get that, if you're trying to heal from something and you're not quite getting better, and you've tried everything because that's who I work with, is people are so discouraged by the time they come to me, they don't feel like they can make any more progress. We treat the nervous system, we look at the hidden traumas they've experienced, which could go way back to childhood and our belief systems we have. Example, say you have autoimmune and you're sick all the time and mold is challenging, all these things keep creeping up. Well, maybe you had a parent who was sick all the time and maybe you had a parent who was in the hospital and as a child, that was your normal. So then you create and have those behavioral patterns. So it's healing after you've tried everything and you're not getting better there's usually a hidden trauma underneath it. And that's the work that I do.

**Alex Howard** There's so many pieces there that I want to explore in more detail, but I want to take just one thing particularly you said. Because I think there'll be people that have signed up for this conference that are like, well, I don't really have emotional trauma. I had a physical trauma. I had an injury. I had a thing that happened.

And then there's two pieces here that I'd like to explore in a bit more detail. One of which is you mentioned about the psycho emotional origins that can underlie physical trauma. But also, when we go through a physical trauma, there is almost inevitably a psycho emotional trauma just dealing with the impact and the consequences of that in our lives.

**Phaedra Antioco** Absolutely. I have so many examples I could share, and just the other day I had people fly in, we do intensive treatments and we get a lot, we do a lot of prep work. I get their trauma history and what are those challenges. He was playing shortstop in a baseball game and he drove to catch the ball, and the guy running the bases ran into him and nailed him into the neck and the head and he blacked out. And six months later, spending thousands of dollars on chiropractic, physical therapy, everything, trying to get better. He was able to deal with, 'my life has not been the same since six months. I can't do the exercise that I want to do. I feel not worthy of myself as a husband. I could barely function at work'.

So the trauma then causes so much more trauma. So we're sitting there and I work with like co-regulation and I do touch work and just quiet the noise, get people into their body, out of your head, out of the fear and the worry. And all of a sudden his body softens, he's sitting in the chair and his neck and head move, and it's shaking, and he's like freaking out, which is normal because, 'my body's doing this and I'm not doing this, I have no control over it'. And it was only a second treatment and he's freaking out about this and he's like, whoa. I'm like, 'it's okay, this is good, injury, shock, it gets trapped in the body, you're gonna be okay'. He was like, 'wow, this was an amazing session'. He messaged me the next day, his symptoms of that brain fog, the buzzyness, the nerve pain, zapping in his head is down 50 percent. And I did some manual therapy techniques and cranial manipulation. But really, I was guiding - and it's almost like the body, the fascial system, it's this fluid system and it's by the electrical currents run by the nervous system. It's a hologram and that injury got stuck and he never got to process it. And you know what? The guy who ran into him, never said 'I'm sorry'. That came up.

**Alex Howard** That's interesting.

**Phaedra Antioco** Right? And so that guy goes on with his life. And here, the person who is injured, is paying thousands of dollars, getting into debt, trying to find a way to fix himself. So the story is to be continued. Another fella came to me, 62 years old, bone on bone knee pain, right, knee couldn't walk, was really hurting him. I take a trauma history. When he was 10 years old, he was playing with firecrackers. He had a whole bunch of them in his pocket and thought he'd be funny and he lit them and he couldn't pull them out of his pocket and he ended up, they went off. He got a third degree burn, he was 10 years old, it was Christmas time. Thirty days in the hospital. He didn't get to open his Christmas presents and guess what his brother did? His brother opened that racecar track for him, so he never healed the trauma of the wound, of the firecracker wound. We dealt with that, we released it. I texted his wife during the session, go to the store and get a race car. And she walked in and we

renegotiated and recreated that trauma and the knee pain went away, the next day he was walking.

These are those things, that when we quiet and with the right space, we can unravel things and then renegotiate them. Where he completed that fight flight or freeze response from 10 years old at 62 years old. We all live with them. We all have chronic stressors, chronic trauma. You've heard of repetitive stress injury, carpal tunnel. Well, we have these little traumas that run through our lives as well.

**Alex Howard** One of the things that I think is particularly interesting about the way that you're working is that you're working both with the physical piece of the trauma, like the, how it's held in the muscles and in the body. But you're also working from a somatic point of view with the psycho-emotional element to it.

Can you say a little bit about the how of how trauma is held in the body? Like for something there's been there - like in that example - for 50 years, that trauma has been held in that knee. Say a little bit about how the body does that. I mean, it's, when you think about it, it's sort of incredible, really. The body can do that.

**Phaedra Antioco** Yeah. And you know what, Alex, I really I don't know how. And I think it's the healthcare of the future, it's quantum physics. And I really don't think that we know. But it does happen and it can get trapped there in the fascial system. And I had another thought and it's kind of left me. But it's really amazing when you're getting treated or I treat clients and I do work remotely with the somatic piece. It is about getting a person, bottom line, to feel safe.

So let's just say, whoever's tuning in, you saw the word trauma body, okay, I want to watch this Summit and learn about it. It's like, well, do you feel safe in your everyday life? Do you feel safe? And chances are it started as a child. My clients who break free from pain fast, who get better fast, they had a stable childhood, they had all their basic needs met, they felt loved, they had food on the table. They didn't want and didn't grow up or without things and they just had parents who were there with them, which builds their capacity for self-regulation.

And so we definitely need to target the self-regulation. So when I work the energy of it and the emotional piece, I could work virtually and get equally good results. If they're willing to ask for help or willing to reach out, and that's called co-regulation. So one of the big things with somatic experiencing, I almost think about, a baby needs their parents to soothe them because they don't know how to do it yet themselves. Well, if you have a little glitch in your childhood, in your nervous system wiring, you're going to have a hard time doing that, which might lead you to the work of Gabor Maté talking about addiction. Are you addicted to drugs, alcohol, sports, gambling, shopping? Being busy is an addiction. And I think that so many, especially women, can be prone to that. But when you're busy, you don't have to go in and feel. When we stop and we pause, that's when stuff can come up, for sure. Not talking about it, somatic experiencing isn't about talking. We do talk, but it really is about present moment in the moment, feeling that you're safe, that the tiger isn't chasing you. But let's face it, modern day life is really stressful, really stressful.

**Alex Howard** Let's say - you mentioned self-regulation and co-regulation, for people that aren't familiar - what you mean by regulation and why that's important. Maybe just say a little bit about that, because I think it's a really important piece that many will be familiar with, but some won't. So yeah. What do you mean by that?

**Phaedra Antiocho** Right. So self-regulation can have some healthy things, you can go for a walk after work, go exercise at the gym, go for a hobby, enjoy a movie. But if you were escaping in Netflix for hours and hours every night and there's so much you want to accomplish, but you're just not doing it, you might be stuck in freeze. Or maybe you seek out relationships and you're in one relationship after another and really have a hard time being alone. Chances are you're using that other person as a co-regulator, perhaps even blaming them for not fulfilling your needs.

There can be a wounded part of you, a wounded inner child in there who can literally throw a tantrum. So also, alcoholics, if you're using the alcohol to numb yourself, you're not really feeling, you're using that to make you feel okay, you're using that for self-regulation. So that's what addictions usually do, just to help us feel safe.

So in this moment, are you breathing deep? Are you in your belly? Do you feel relaxed or are you all up in your head? Are you holding your breath? Because when we're stressed out or in trauma, we're in fight flight or freeze in a sympathetic dominance, our body is literally running for its life. In modern day society, the Internet, instant access to everything, that's a lot of the ways many people are running. And then it starts to, what does our nervous system do? Well, it runs our entire body, it's going to say run, fight this isn't safe. Blood leaves the digestion of the belly, of your lunch and then it runs to the extremities so you have the energy to run away from the tiger that's chasing you. You have tunnel vision, I'm running, I got to be safe. You're not feeling creative. So if you've lost your spark in life, you're not feeling joy, you're not feeling happy, chances are your nervous system is on high and you're spinning in the trauma vortex and you're getting sicker and sicker. You're having more pain, you're feeling fatigue, chronic fatigue, exhaustion.

So lots of times, the work I do combining can really help people overcome those autoimmune diseases, chronic illnesses, and not necessarily need thousands and thousands of dollars in supplements, doctor bills and fancy functional medicine testing. If we can get you to get to bed on time, to feel safe, to breathe, your lungs will relax, your heart will pump normally and you'll feel better. And so that's kind of the way I approach things through my own healing journey. I was given a gift that day, as hard as it was, but it also gives me the opportunity - and I tell people this, when was a time where you conquered something, where you were at the top of your game and you felt amazing? With working in co-regulation, I take people there and they can get in touch with those body sensations of when they were out climbing a mountain didn't have any pain, they felt the top of their game. For me, it was, I had to take myself back to the car when I was driving at 31 years old and my broken self had to go sit next to her and I got to experience my body whole again. So it's the stories we make up, the beliefs we have, the meanings we put to things. But really tuning into the sensations and sometimes, again, guiding with the right practitioner, right coach, you can really move through and make progress.

**Alex Howard** I'd love to explore a bit more as well, just to dovetail with the other piece, of the way you're working, about how myofascial release works? And maybe just to kind of strip this right back to the beginning of this piece, when we talk about the fascia, what we're talking about? So just to give people that piece of the jigsaw as well.

**Phaedra Antioco** Right. Well, fascia, in the medical world, used to be thrown out and not regarded as important. Research used to be done on dead people. And now we have Dr. Jean Guimberteau, who's French, and he is a surgeon and he's using an electron microscope camera to film the fascia. Which is this lively hydrated system that webs through, it's a web through all of our organs, all of our tissue and scars can be created, and again, it's quantum physics, but emotions and memory can get trapped in there. And I know this because when I'm working with people, sometimes it feels dead, it feels stuck, like nothing's moving, or empty, especially if they're up in their head they're not in their body.

And research used to be done on the cadavers, dead people donating themselves to science. But really, there's so much more life into that. So getting fascial work done - and there's not a lot of us trained in it - I feel like it is the health care of the future. And what we do is, we hold and we do a sustain hold for several minutes. This is not massage. Massage is on off, on off. If you think about the nervous system and the sympathetic system and fight or flight, if that massage therapist is working your hot spots like your shoulders and your neck, and you're like, ouch, ouch, ouch. Well, every time they do that, you're going into fight or flight. Am I safe? Am I safe? Am I safe? I don't know.

I go in steady and sometimes we go to ground zero and we go to that pain point and then I get you in your body and we can renegotiate the trauma. So, say a woman desperately wanted to have her baby naturally, she's got the doula there, she's ready to go, having the baby, but then all the sudden there's a problem. The baby gets stuck, the cord around the neck and an emergency C-section. So, example of how I treat the fascia, scars get trapped, emotions and all get trapped in there. I will take her back to that day in the delivery room and we renegotiate the trauma. My hands are on her and I simply say, 'now imagine the baby's coming out naturally' and all of a sudden, the scar, the C-section scar and the pelvis just unravels under my hand.

So there's something to be said about our thoughts, our belief systems getting trapped into the fascial system. Again, it has to be steady, there's not enough research on this. I just know that it's true when I'm working on a client and I can imagine they moved out of the way of the truck that was at them. Their neck pain can go away because they were able to protect or complete the fight flight or freeze. So I'll give a tip to the audience. If you fall, this could go for anyone who's had a sports injury in high school, a car accident, a fall off a bike. You're embarrassed, you don't want to... 'Come on, I gotta get back in the game' and you brush it off and sweep it under the rug.

Well, a couple years ago, I was walking down my stairs - and my accident is the gift that keeps on giving, my left leg is not perfect - and I slipped and I fell, and I caught air, and I slammed on the ground and I broke my back. And I was trapped and I didn't have a phone. And I just did my trauma work and I just stayed in that position. When you fall or you hurt yourself or you bang your elbow walking into the room, hold it. Feel the freeze, feel the clench, feel the brace, don't move it - let others help if they want - and then you'll notice that

it'll start to release. That got me out of the hospital. The paramedics came, luckily I had a friend who was on his way over, picked me up, carried me to hospital, four days, got out Saturday. Tuesday I was back in the office seeing patients. So the trauma got trapped and it moved through my body. But again, if you fall, if you hurt yourself, if you stub your toe and you think 'I broke my toe', hold it, freeze, you'll clench. Let the clench be there, orient yourself to feel safe. And then it'll unravel and you'll probably have less soft tissue damage. Crazy, right?

**Alex Howard** It is. There's something about that, part of what I'm reflecting on is, is something about the holding which, the physical holding and emotional holding, of course, as well. But the physical holding, which is somehow giving the body permission to feel safe, to relax. In a sense, the co-regulation therapeutically is providing safety. But there's something about physical holding, which is also providing the safety.

**Phaedra Antioco** Absolutely, and we do touch work and it's just a very, like just imagine if you're being touched in a solid, predictable way. When you squeeze those knots, it hurts and that's going to send you into fight or flight. So in my sessions then - whether they're virtual, it works equally effective as in office - they get an experience of what it's like to feel safe, joy. I mean, those people in your lives that are the most challenging people, or you go out and you're at a store and someone's really mean. They're probably holding on to a lot of trauma, a lot of trauma. So have mercy on them. And their body has been holding on to it. So it's really about our nervous systems and how they're interacting together.

Let's say you grow up with a dysfunctional home and then you grow up and you choose the wrong types of people. A lot of codependents develop codependency because they had to please their caregivers in order to survive. Their caregivers were oftentimes narcissists. So then what happens? Love addiction, codependency, choosing the wrong partners, low self-worth, self-esteem. But it's this repetitive pattern over and over again. So again, our childhood sets up our nervous system, which helps us cope with our life. So you've got a dysregulated nervous system from childhood. You've got to work hard to keep it in check and that's where these therapists can help.

**Alex Howard** And sometimes the root cause of the beliefs and the emotional trauma in the body is clear. Like, for example, if there's a physical accident, you've got a pretty big clue in a sense there. Other times it's, of course, less clear and I'm wondering what your process is to find those root causes? What the pathway is to get in touch with that? Is it an intuitive approach of allowing someone to feel into it and see what arises or is a more of a different method to that?

**Phaedra Antioco** Yeah, it's weird because I'll just sit back and watch and then I'll get an intuitive hit. And it'll say, have them focus their awareness to their right leg or touch their shoulder and I touch that and it just sends them into this whole experience. But often times and I do have the five step process and the biggest thing is, number one, we have to look at what's not working in your life. If you are in a job that you hate and maybe you're codependent and everyone keeps coming to you to fix their problems and so and so's not doing their job. And so every time that person comes into your office, every time that boss walks by, you're bracing and you're clenching, then you hate your job.

So we have to look at what are the triggers in your life that are making you brace and making you clench. And you might not be willing to look at it. You might not be willing to leave that marriage that's not serving you, but you know what? If you finally feel safe enough, you can leave and eventually be very, very happy. But it takes work to break through and to go through those challenges.

So the first step is, look at what's not working in your life. Now really take a hard look. Then we have to explore and release the past traumas. With my one 62 year old client laying in the hospital bed, didn't get his race car, and then it led into a life of enabling his brother. His brother then became an alcoholic and died early because he felt guilty and had some animosity towards his brother and maybe didn't treat him 100 percent like he should. So then we have to explore and then release those traumas, but then you have to look at rewiring the brain. Okay, you've had this physical pain or emotional pain and you've been depressed 20 years. Well, let's figure out how to rewire your brain so you can be more positive, so you can have hope again and believe.

And if even in one session, I could provide someone with hope, which is a lot of times what I get, then that can be huge to move them forward. Then we have to look at how you move. So there are repetitive traumas. We're all on our cell phones. If you have neck pain or shoulder pain, oftentimes I could trace it to your thumb and how you're holding the phone. So I also like to step back and say, well, how do you sit on the sofa? Are you sitting on the left side of the sofa for 20 years? Same sofa, is the cushion indented in? And you're twisting over to the left? No wonder you have sciatic pain. So we look at that and then, eating the right foods.

Now we all know about emotional eating, especially with kind of all the pandemic and all of that and being isolated at home. A lot of people reporting, oh, I can't stay more than six feet away from my fridge. Well, what are you eating and putting in? Because those foods can be inflammatory and your eating habits can be related to trauma as well and self-soothing and it's comforting. I remember, I was doing a strict diet or something and I just wanted ice cream, I had an emotionally upsetting day. Well, when I was a child, we had the most amazing mom and pop ice cream store. That's such a positive experience in somatic experiencing, we say a "Bulloo." It was like a really positive experience. And so that would be my go to for the warm and fuzzy. And so we have blues where positive experiences and we have red.

So when I'm rewiring the brain, my clients are in the red. This is, I'm in pain, I'm depressed, so upset, life is hard, life is miserable. They're so wired to that red trauma vortex. And I'll listen in and I'll find one positive thing. Oh, I heard this beautiful song on the radio. So I'll take them back. So as a practitioner, I'm always looking to those positive moments in events they're talking about. And they might seem - because I fired my first somatic experiencing practitioner, I was like, this is stupid. She's just being nice to me and whatever and re-parenting me. And after going through the training - and my clients, they often at first say, I don't get what you're doing and I don't really think it's efficient, effective. But then all of a sudden, they're calm, they sleep better, they have more joy, they can handle being on their own. They start doing art projects. They start getting in touch with their creativity and just, they can manage their husband and their children better. I swear, I see it all the time just by orienting people to positive things. And it is a retraining of the brain.



**Alex Howard** Yes. And one of the things I'm also really hearing you say, that there's something around creating the right environment for healing to happen, the environment in someone's life, the environment, someone's inner life, the environment in someone's body. A lot of what I'm hearing you say is that the body has the capacity to heal. But we have to create and invite the environment that makes that possible.

**Phaedra Antioco** We have to stop and we have to pause, we have to work with intention and believing that we can get better. And I think what gives us that capacity - I am super resilient, I have not had an easy life, I am super resilient, I'm single and I haven't been married, so it's always been me taking care of me. But if your childhood was that of trauma and maybe all kinds of things, if you were given everything, you didn't have to work for it. It just depends on your capacity and your resilience to make those changes in your lives. So I hold the space, I mean, 12 years later, I still have a broken bone in my leg, I literally do, I can show you a picture, but I'm pain free and so I hold that space.

Anyone watching, if I can be better, even with a broken bone in my leg, it's my fibula, it's long and it's cracked. I know that you can, too. So I'm not going to buy into your story that you can't get better. And I have one of the most challenging trauma cases right now that I'm dealing with and I have to keep myself in check because I keep buying into her story. But we're making progress we really are and it's not an instant - sometimes we have to rebuild the nervous system.

**Alex Howard** And I think one of the challenges can be that, when people have suffered a lot and they've been through difficult experiences, they've found their way to get through and often their way as part of the reason why they're stuck. Part of the reason why there's a perpetuation of the trauma patterns, but it can take a lot of courage for people to break out of that. And I guess I'm wondering, in your experience working with people, I guess part of this probably, safety, like, building that safety. What helps people? You mentioned a couple of times the example of leaving a destructive marriage, for example, for healing to happen. What helps people do that? Because that can be really hard sometimes.

**Phaedra Antioco** People need people and this is the Polyvagal Theory in action. So why I fired my first somatic experiencing practitioner, she was literally just having conversation with me. Helping me feel safe, having someone to talk to and it could be fun. Like if a client's talking to me, let me just think of a recent one. She was telling me how, and again, my challenging client was telling me how she met her husband. He's a very positive thing in her life. She grew up being mixed race. She didn't feel like she belonged, kids in school were not nice to her, and she never felt like she fit in, in the black community and in the white community. But she's got a white husband and he loves her so much. So I have conversations with her in our therapy session when she's excruciating in pain, she hasn't slept in a year fully. But if I can bring her to that joy of when she went on her first date with her husband, she starts to smile. So I capture that, I hone in on it and I bring that awareness. She doesn't know what's happening, but she leaves the call and she feels safer. And you know what? She was intimate with her husband after a year because of our session, she felt safe to try.

**Alex Howard** That's beautiful. One of the things that also is on my mind is that, in somatic work, and part of what you're building the condition for in the work that you're doing, is there's those moments of release. Those moments where that trauma that's been held in the

body is allowed to finally release and let go. And that can be a very beautiful and magical experience in a sense, when that happens. I think most people could be afraid of that. Like, 'I'm not going to be in control' or like 'something's gonna happen that I'm not going to like'. Can you say a bit about that experience and the magic of that experience and the potential for healing of that experience?

**Phaedra Antioco** Sure. That was me when I had the diaphragm release. I, and again with my training, we - God help us - we were at a regular hotel in Sedona. By the way, here's a side note. Men, I find, are really walled off and they have tough fascia, tough muscles, but we need to feel it. So me, I'm literally the fear and the terror, I'm crying, my heart rate is just beating. But you got to go into it and with somatic experiencing, we tiptoe in, as Dr. Peter Levine says, we titrate it, but sometimes we got to go deep and land it. So I'm constantly listening and monitoring and I do like to go deep because this was me and I want my clients to get better so I do work a little harder.

But what we want to do is, once you have that release. I want you to marinate in it, I want you to just be with that, I don't want you to be on the phone on the way home after a session. I want you just to pause it and be gentle with yourself and really soak it up. That's what somatic experiencing is, you experience something and you release it and you feel the relief. And I had, there was a time when I was 12 years old, there was a very traumatic experience that led to my parents' divorce. And at a training, I was able to renegotiate that trauma. And my mom sat with me and said, its okay, honey, daddy's having a hard time right now, he's going to get help and he'll be okay. If my mom had done that to me, my whole life would have been different. So in my 40s, I had to go back and feel that as if it happened. And you can renegotiate the trauma, experience it in present time as if it's healed and you can let it go. Does that make sense?

**Alex Howard** It does make sense. And there's something about that which is sort of beyond words and beyond - like, I think its somatic experiencing, like it's an experience as opposed to a cognitive event that happens, it's not just a shift in an awareness, it's a shift that happens in the body. That's something that was once held, is now released.

**Phaedra Antioco** In the system of the body. And just think about it, we're all nervous systems together and one of the hardest parts of my job, marketing my website is writing what I do. Having people to trust this works. But again, releasing trauma from the biofield is the health care of the future and my client's husbands start to really appreciate after our sessions. They know, client gets worked up, the husband will say, oh, just call Phaedra because there is this decompression that happens. You can cook that healthy dinner with vegetables that your doctor says you should be eating because you had someone listen to you.

Either you didn't have parents - they were so busy surviving that they weren't there for you and you've got all these survival strategies going on, these behaviors that are not serving you. You're sick and tired of it. You don't want it anymore. You want to get better and that it is literally about your nervous system first before you decide, oh, I'm going to have my stool test sent in or my heavy metals test. That's important to some degree, but you guys need to feel safe here in the moment.

**Alex Howard** I'm mindful of time, but I want to come to some more practical pieces people can put into play as well. I think a lot of people would have been inspired and moved by the potential of processing on a physical level, processing and releasing trauma. But I'm also mindful that there are habits and things people could do and their daily routine that can help support and lay the foundation for this. So say a bit about some of that.

**Phaedra Antioco** Sure. I guess the biggest thing is really start to notice what your triggers are. What are the things, who are the people that are triggering you? So name that, name what an alarm is. The alarms are going off in your day. What are they? What are things that feel pleasant? You may be driving and there's a full moon, pause and feel that, so tuning into alarms. Because when your brain is on fire and you're just so activated, we need to orient you to that, so finding out what your triggers are. Do your best to change them.

Going with the work of Stephen Porges or Peter Levine, Bessel van der Kolk. We need people, we need connection, all you need really is one friend, one friend. But then the issues of, 'Oh, I don't want to bother, I don't want to be an impact'. You are worthy to ask for help. So ask for help if you don't have a friend, there's [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) where you meet up. You could do a 12-Step meeting, codependents Anonymous, adult children of alcoholics or really it's ACOA, adult child of dysfunctional parents, so there's three. There are Facebook groups that are free.

But realize, when you connect with a friend or talk to someone about your trigger going off, you will most likely feel better so those are two simple things. And then being out in nature. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Really look out the window right now and look at the tree. Look at how it's swaying in the wind. Look at where the tree ends and the sky begins that orients you to that present moment that you're here right now and you're safe. So you can orient outside your body for pleasure. And then you can go inside and maybe you have sciatic and bad back pain, or you hurt all over. See if you can tune into a place that doesn't hurt or maybe it hurts less.

**Alex Howard** That's very cool. And I think what often people forget is how powerful those fundamental things can be as well. People can be so into, as you said a few times, like I need to find the perfect supplement protocol or testing protocol. But before one does anything, those foundations need to be there. And that, as you're saying, you really have to look at how that history is being held and stored in the body.

**Phaedra Antioco** Find yourself first, and just pause, get out of your head. Just like tune into what am I, oh, wow, I'm doing, like I'm 5 right now, he really pissed me off. And that's your inner child, your angry child. Sometimes we act from a childhood place and act from an angry teenager. So we need to identify that, too.

**Alex Howard** Yeah. Phaedra, for people that want to find out more about you and your work. What's the best way for them to do that?

**Phaedra Antioco** Sure. There's a group on Facebook called Live Your Life Pain Free, I've lots of free training and you can ask me questions there. And also on my website it's [PhaedraAntioco.com](https://www.PhaedraAntioco.com). It's a hard one, thanks Mom and dad!

**Alex Howard** Phaedra, that's awesome. Thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it, it's been great.

**Phaedra Antioco** Thank you, Alex. I hope these people really get so much from this Summit. And you're just such a pleasure to talk to you and thanks for doing this it's so needed.

**Alex Howard** Thanks Phaedra.