



EPISODE 003:

Transform Your Relationship With Stress with Lisa Burchartz

[00:00:00] **lisa:** For me, the impact of the suppression literally showed up in the form of chronic illness. I had had just repeating bouts of strep throat and walking pneumonia, and I kept going to work. I remember sitting in my office on the 35th. Floor and my husband and my children were about to go back to Australia for a holiday.

[00:00:24] And once again, like my work was in human resources transformation and change management. So whatever I was doing, it was always really important. Yeah. And I remember sitting there, And I literally just looked around me and it's like I'm missing one of the most important experiences I need to make a change.

[00:00:42] **Carolyn:** Lisa burchards is a somatic stress release practitioner, executive coach, and mindfulness guide who found her way to this work after more than 20 years in senior leadership roles. Her experience as a corporate change agent and human resources business partner makes her intimately familiar with the 24.

[00:01:03] Always on culture that keeps many high performing professionals overwhelmed and exhausted. Lisa focuses on self reconnection and nervous system empowerment with our clients, helping them transform their relationship with stress and cultivate resilience through evidence-based holistic practices for the body, mind, and heart.

[00:01:26] In this episode of. Lisa and I talk about transforming your relationship with stress. She introduced me to a concept called our inner experience. It was fascinating. I wish I'd known about it when I was leading



years ago. We also are gonna hear a few helpful somatic practices and ones that you can do right in the moment, and people won't even know you're doing it.

[00:01:54] And Lisa also is so generous in sharing insight from her own personal journey with burnout and how she learned to feel more empowered with her nervous. It's a fascinating episode. Lots of great practical learnings in this as well.

[00:02:10] **dan:** Welcome to Evolve a new era of leadership, a podcast for real leaders to join real conversations with business experts, practitioners thought leaders, and change makers who integrate head, heart, and body in all they do, who commit to compassion and curiosity, who commit to radical self-leadership in their quest to understand others.

[00:02:33] Two, because the only way to deliver real results is to understand what it takes to lead real human beings. This is a new era of leadership.

[00:02:50] **Carolyn:** I'm Carolyn Sora, and this is Evolve A new era of Leader. I met our next guest several months ago in a chance interaction at a virtual session. This woman just had a level of calmness and such a soothing. Demeanor about her that I was really taken by it and our connection didn't happen. There we were in this meeting, but several months later we reconnected.

[00:03:20] And I'll use the word reconnected loosely cuz I'll have to say really connected deeply for the first time a few months later. And so, Lisa Burchart, welcome to our program. Welcome to the Evolve podcast.

[00:03:34] **lisa:** Thank you Carolyn. I'm so thrilled to be here with you.

[00:03:37] **Carolyn:** Yeah. And so I wanna share with all of you listeners, what had me so transfixed and, and with Lisa and her presence in particular was, you know, as I said, this calmness, and I just felt like the stress level, I mean, so I was on this call with you, Lisa, and it wasn't stressful, but there was a bit of performance anxiety.



[00:03:57] Say cuz you know, we were collecting and talking about an event that we might all be participating in, which can elevate anxiousness. And Lisa was just so calm and present and it was just so calming and so I was not surprised when I learned more about you to see that the work that you do, Lisa, is about transforming.

[00:04:17] Our relationship with stress. So you clearly practice what you preach cuz you had a profound impact on me. And I'd love to hear a little bit about what does that mean? What does transforming one's relationship with stress mean? What does that mean?

[00:04:34] **lisa:** That's a great question, Carolyn, and I'll, I'll tell you what it means for me.

[00:04:39] My work around stress really came from a place of, of deep suffering. Mm. And burnout. You know, I had been a really. High performer. I was really driven to excel in the workplace. I was really attracted to these very big roles where there was constant deadlines and stressors, and over time, what I started to recognize was that I was really stuck in a pattern of hyper arousal, and that was, impacting my ability to be fully present.

[00:05:12] We can't do our best work from that place. No.

[00:05:15] And when you say hyper arousal, so Lisa and I have nerded out a little bit on talking about something. So Lisa, I just wanna bring our listeners back cuz that might not be a term that they're familiar with. What does hyper arousal mean to someone in the workplace?

[00:05:30] What could it

[00:05:31] mean for sure? So what it means is that we're kind of stuck in this. Doing energy, and so what we're noticing is that we're having thoughts of whatever I'm doing, it's not enough. We're kind of running ahead and we're worrying about like the deadline that's coming up two weeks from now, or we're ruminating about maybe mistakes we made in the past or what did or didn't happen and we're not.



[00:05:58] We're not actually operating. Deb, Dana and Steven, gorgeous. This is really based in polyvagal theory, but the whole premise around it is, is that when we are present and connected with ourselves, with our emotions, when we're really conscious, we're in this energy that's called ventral vagal energy, and that's where we.

[00:06:20] Access to our intuition, our higher minders online. But when we get pulled into sympathetic energy, and that's what happens when we have a stress response. Mm, our energy mobilizes and we get pulled into either that busy doing energy where we can't stop. It's kind of like we're running on a motor. Right?

[00:06:43] And we miss things. Yeah. Or we become overwhelmed. And so it's like understanding our fight, flight, freeze responses, right. In a nutshell. Yeah. That's the work.

[00:06:56] **Carolyn:** It's hard in the workplace because we need to be thinking ahead, right. And planning ahead. And we bounce from meeting to meeting to meeting. And so, and we also know that some stress is good stress, right?

[00:07:09] Yes. So I'm guessing, you know, this whole notion of transforming your relationship with stress, How do we start off transforming our relationship with stress, knowing that sometimes it's good knowing that there's this, you know, a theory that pushes us into over performance or, or hyper arousal, but like what's the right place?

[00:07:30] Like how can we help our folks listening? Nowhere to start with all of this.

[00:07:36] **lisa:** And it's a beautiful question, Carolyn, and it, it's honestly, it can be as simple as just taking a moment to check in with ourselves and just literally notice what's happening inside of me. Right now. Right, right. If I could just for a moment, and you know, maybe we can do it, you know, together.

[00:07:54] Okay. Right now. Okay. All right. Right. If we could just really for a minute, like, measure the energy in our body. So say for example, just like, wow



what's happening inside of me And from a one to 10, like measure our energy. So a one being extreme exhaustion and pr. Yep. Um, and a 10 representing, say like extreme restlessness, hyperactivity.

[00:08:21] Okay. And an inability to sit still. I'm checking in, where are you right now?

[00:08:26] **Carolyn:** Do I have to like cross my legs and do a zen pose at all? Or this is like, I can just do it with my eyes open

[00:08:33] **lisa:** anywhere, anytime. I like to just feel my feet on the floor. We wanna talk, like how do we bring this into the workplace?

[00:08:40] Right? Right. And so we go into a meeting, we might notice, oh my gosh, you know, I'm getting anxious. Coming into the podcast with you, right? Yes. I was feeling some restless energy. I was maybe at about it. And so just checking in with yourself, feel your feet on the floor and just notice where's your energy right now.

[00:09:02] So I'm gonna say I'm probably a seven out of 10, and I feel there's this vibration that's going on inside of me, and so I can recognize that now. After, you know, a year and a half of understanding myself a little bit differently and. And so I just wanna share that with the listeners. If you're listening and you're like, yeah, I feel fine, next , that's okay too.

[00:09:30] And hopefully you can build into a practice where you're able to sense some of those things because I'll be honestly, Seth. I never could. I was so out of my body and focused on getting stuff done that I couldn't even understand what that meant. And I would maybe just give out an answer and just say, oh six.

[00:09:51] So that's why I use the word vibration, cuz that's the piece for me. Now I can feel it and I can acknowledge it. So I'm curious if there's any other insight you could share with folks where this might be new or it's like, I don't know what I'm feeling, what am I looking for? What, what's, what should I be saying?



[00:10:07] Absolutely. And that's the whole so many of us, right. Myself included before starting this journey of, of just identifying and recognizing how stress manifested in my own body and life. We live in our head. Mm-hmm. , we disconnect like as a society. We're always on. You know, we're in these work cultures where we're constantly being pulled from one set of activities to another, and very few of us have really grown up being modeled to actually check in and to take note about inner experience.

[00:10:42] We're not rewarded for this. You know, we're encouraged on our, where we're awarded for our productivity, right? Getting things done. and multitasking. You know, I don't know about you, but for me, if I didn't have four or five things going on at a time, I felt like I was being lazy. . Yeah. That I absolutely, we know now the science showed us, us that it's actually a false type of productivity.

[00:11:05] But you know, when we are disconnected and living in our head, we don't have access to this wealth of inform. And it's very easy to become dysregulated. It's very easy to get pulled out of presence and into either like a sympathetic nervous system state that might show up for us as feeling like we've gotta control what's going on, that we've got to like find even more information.

[00:11:37] And you know, we get like stuck on our phones. Right, like right scrolling.

[00:11:44] **Carolyn:** Um, and that's the doing, right? Like when, when you say, we get stuck in the sympathetic state, so I'll come back to that higher number, like that vibration, the sense of like doing, doing, doing. That's our nervous system on overdrive, hyper arousal, right?

[00:11:58] **lisa:** That's exactly right. Right. And our brain and nervous system together, they drive things like compulsion and catastrophic thinking. And these disconnections happen because we don't wanna feel what's really going in in our body because for so many of us, these sensations of like, you know, anxiety or fear, we don't wanna feel that



[00:12:26] Yeah. We don't wanna go. Yep.

[00:12:28] **Carolyn:** And it's probably safe to say too, like who gets rewarded for that? I can't show that. I feel fear at work. Like who wants to do that? I mean, that's the way I was raised. Now I'm sure many others can identify with that. And really, how do we learn? How do you know, like we said at the, at the outset, how to transform that relationship with stress, because stress also elevates performance, right?

[00:12:53] If we were in this lower sort of, you know, called parasympathetic, when that parasympathetic part of our nervous system is most activated, we're calmer, we're more relaxed,

[00:13:03] but productivity's an okay thing when we do it in balance.

[00:13:07] **lisa:** Absolutely, and it's all about Carolyn, like this secret source of being in our window of tolerance.

[00:13:13] Okay? We need stress. Like a stress response is a biological response that mobilizes us to be able to respond to change. If there's not any stress, we actually. Don't experience change. We don't have the energy to actually get things done. And so, you know, when we have a healthy relationship with stress, We have the capacity to really sort of tune in and, you know, say for example, you know, I'm getting ready to come and talk to you.

[00:13:44] Yep. And it's like, oh, I'm feeling nervous. I'm feeling some butterflies in my stomach. Oh, I'm feeling maybe some heat in my face. And the meaning that I make of those sensations will either help. Or potentially paralyze me. Mm-hmm. So if I can be with those feelings and just think, oh, you know, these butterflies in my stomach, this is actually telling me that I'm excited.

[00:14:10] And you know, stress is what happens inside of us when something that we care about is at stake. Right. And so these butterflies that I'm feeling are telling me that I really care about this conversation with Carolyn. I really care about this opportunity to talk to the listeners about identifying. in the past, you



know, that butterflies in my stomach would've maybe created a reaction of, oh no, I'm not prepared.

[00:14:36] I haven't done enough. Oh my goodness, are my notes in place? That's what happened to me in the past, and what a tragedy, right? It would pull me out of my window of tolerance and right. And over time when we have continued like the stuck energy and it happens to many of us in leadership roles where we have like massive projects going on, and yeah, the reality is where whole humans and we have our lives going on at home as well, when we go through, you know, periods of really high performance, we need ReSTOR.

[00:15:16] Yes. You know, you and I had a conversation about surge capacity. Yep. And the research shows us we can push through, we can override our biological need for rest, for relaxation. We need those things to have a healthy, resilient, nervous system. Right. A healthy, resilient nervous system isn't always calm.

[00:15:38] It's about recognizing when we're being pulled out of our window of tolerance, when we're being maybe pulled into that fight flight energy, right? Right. Where we're lashing out or we're like stuck in the energy of doing,

[00:15:52] **Carolyn:** that's when we're like in that hyper aroused state, right? Yes. Okay. Yes. So what I'm really picking up here is this inner experience.

[00:16:02] Is a really important leader. A tool to understand it. And I think that was such a great example that you gave, you know, you were able to identify your inner experience before you came out of the podcast. And the attachment or the story essentially that was connected to it was one of calm and confidence versus busyness in doing and not being prepared.

[00:16:26] So we can see how sort of the inner critic or these like not as positive voices are attached to this inner experience. And if we don't acknowledge the inner experience, those voices, those inner critics can really take hold and create a lot of unhappiness and frustration in the workplace. Am I piecing that all together properly?



[00:16:49] **lisa:** You're =doing it beautifully. That's bang on. And the reality is when we're hijacked into these fight flight freeze states, we're. Able to be fully present when we're hijacked by those responses. There's an absence of self-compassion and the inner critic is running the show. Right. And we all know, like as leaders and as coaches, you can't coach the inner critic.

[00:17:14] Yeah. It's about bringing the nervous system and the higher level thinking back online, and we do that through the body stress and trauma. What we know now from the neuroscience is it's held in the body, right? Huge difficult experiences that happen to us, you know, at work, at home. When they happen, if there's an absence of support, if there is an absence of the safe enough other that we can connect with mm-hmm.

[00:17:41] you know, the power of co-regulation. So yeah, as a leader, you know, if something really difficult happens to one of our team members at work, if we can recognize what's happening for that person and you know, ask the right questions, we can be a grounding presence for. Right, right. But we can help bring them back into regulation.

[00:18:01] Right. But we can't do that if we don't know how to do it for ourselves.

[00:18:06] **Carolyn:** Yeah. So I mean, it all starts with us. Right. It does. It all starts with us. It does. I wanna circle back to one of the things you said there about asking the right question, and I get asked this a lot by leaders, is I don't wanna be a psychotherapist, I'm not a coach.

[00:18:23] How do I know what the right question to ask? And I think it's really important. I know you and I are on the same page on this, is to be a good leader, you do not need to be a psychotherapist. You do not need to ask about someone's personal life or trauma or any of that, but how you show up in your body and your ability to regulate or understand your own inner experience, it's like a hidden language, almost fair.

[00:18:53] Absolutely. And that hidden language. If you are really, really, I'll use my own words, like vibrating high and, and really kind of like running high.



I can be busy and get a lot done and it can look all positive, but it actually is an unhealthy stress reaction that can cause other people to not feel safe or comfortable.

[00:19:13] Hmm. I just wanna make sure that, that listeners understand when we talk about leadership at this level, it's not about the cognitive.

[00:19:22] **lisa:** That's exactly it and yeah. You know, Carolyn, you gave me such a beautiful compliment when we met. You talked about being calm sometimes just being a regulated presence Yeah.

[00:19:34] Is enough. Yeah. For the person to feel safe enough to share what's happening for them and what they need in terms of support. We don't have to be therapists, we don't have to be, you know, trained coaches. But when times are difficult, when we can sense that there is something going on with the other person, one of the greatest gifts that we can give to them is just coming back into a regulated state ourselves and just being aware of our own.

[00:20:02] Thoughts, right? So like the one to 10, you know, where are my thoughts right now? Am I struggling to get my thoughts together or are they racing? You know, with five being the optimal state, and then my energy, am I resourced to hold space for this person? Do I need to go and get a drink of water? Do I need to go for a walk and maybe discharge some of my own arousal?

[00:20:28] you know, say in the where, you know, a presentation goes badly or, yeah. You know, at the end of the day, things happen at work, right? Like we're constantly presented with opportunities to become aware of our own responses. Mm-hmm. Am I being pulled into a hopeless kind of shutdown state? Where my nervous system is being like pulled into what's called dorsal.

[00:20:52] Mm-hmm. Bagel Energy. Like that's the freeze response. Right. And you know, we can see that like in meetings for example, where we have ourselves or team members just, you know, in the presence of maybe a power over dynamic starting to shut down. Right. We know they've got great ideas or we have something really important to say.



[00:21:12] But again, the thinking brain has gone offline and our survival system is running our

[00:21:19] experience. Right. Show. Yeah.

[00:21:21] **Carolyn:** Yeah. It's transformed how I'm showing up in the world. I'm curious what brought you into this space, Lisa?

[00:21:28] **lisa:** Oh my goodness. Well, you know, Carolyn, I'm, I'm going to say I, I mentioned before, like suffering and for me, my burnout came to a point about six years ago, and what I can recognize is that I.

[00:21:43] Was experiencing elevated levels of burnout for about five years before my body. Wow. Literally just said no. And so for me, you know, there were just a series of really challenging circumstances, both at home and at work. Part of my core efficiency belief is like, I must be perfect. Mm-hmm. I must strive, like never good enough.

[00:22:07] Right. And when I look at that, you know, I was very drawn to consulting very high performance environments. I moved into HR because I also absolutely thrive on being in relationship and connection with others. And part of my pattern is overgiving. , and I do that by disconnecting to my own needs. Right? If I can figure out what you want and solve your problem, that would give me a big, you know, hit

[00:22:38] Yeah. And that would sort of keep me going. I loved it and I, I really thrived on that environment, you know, for a really long time. I did really, really well. And I would often, you know, get comments on, oh, Lisa's like a two for one. You know, you put Lisa on your project and you'll get the value to people.

[00:22:56] And I would feel really good about that, right? I'd be like, oh, helped my little inner perfectionist go, you know, nuts over time. You know, I had two beautiful little children. There were complex special needs and. My husband, you know, it's so fortunate I'm married to an amazing guy that, he's an allied pilot.



[00:23:17] He's gone a lot of the time. Oh wow. And you'll probably notice my accent. I'm Australian and living here in Canada came over with my firm. No real family support and for me, you know, I. Wasn't willing to look at the fact that my personal situation had changed and I wanted to continue sort of keeping up this mask that I could still do it all.

[00:23:40] I had a real problem asking for help and as a HR insider, you know, part of the story and the experience was, oh, people that can't perform, they don't get promoted. Right, right. And so, you know, over time this sort of led to me suppressing a lot of my own needs and literally like disconnecting. And so, you know, I, I remember in my consulting job, my leader at the time said, Lisa, like, I just feel like you've lost your sparkle.

[00:24:10] Hmm. And. I was so sad about, but also so angry because at that point in time, you know, my little girl was spending time in the hospital. I was literally sleeping at sick kids coming into the office, and it was just like, uh, I don't know what else to do. But it didn't feel safe to really bring that into the workplace.

[00:24:32] Right. And it didn't feel safe, just to be clear. Not because your boss was being a. It didn't feel safe because your nervous system was on hyper arousal. Yeah. Or

[00:24:45] hyperdrive. Absolutely, and And to a degree, all of the above. I have a great relationship with this person now, but at the time when this was going on, we had a global project going on.

[00:24:56] There were really big deadlines, and for her as well, her system was in survival energy. We've gotta get this done right And as much. You know, she cared about my humanity. It was like, we just don't have time for this crisis in your life. Right? I don't have capacity to meet you. And so, you know, part of my experience, I'm hypervigilant, I'm very attuned to the energy.

[00:25:20] Is it safe for me to share what's happening right with you? And again, there were parts that, that I had shared, but it was like, I can't, at the end



of the day, I'm gonna lose my job and I need these benefits. And so, you know, that kept me stuck in this. I don't have time to process what's happening to me.

[00:25:40] Yeah. I just have to stuff it down. Mm-hmm. And I actually got really good at that coping strategy and I stuffed it. And I stuffed it shortly after that. A really dear friend in Australia was killed in a hang gliding accident. Oh dear. And I couldn't take time off to go to the funeral. Stuff that, oh, there are a serious, yeah.

[00:26:02] Like just all of these things. And it was this sensation, Carolyn, and I know so many people that I've talked to and that I work with now take the feeling that I can't afford to feel. Yeah. Because there is such a well of grief inside of me. If I. Allow myself to go in and feel what's here. I might start crying and never stop.

[00:26:22] Yep.

[00:26:22] **Carolyn:** I think that's so common, Lisa. So common for people. So now clearly something shifted or something happened that stopped that cycle.

[00:26:34] **lisa:** It did. It did. And I'd love to be able to tell you that I had some type of like pro prolific awakening and, and the clouds open and the answers came. But for me, the impact of this suppression literally showed up in the form of chronic illness.

[00:26:50] Okay. And so, you know, one of the things that I'd done, I thought, well I'm, I'm gonna leave the consulting firm. I'm gonna change where I'm standing cuz it's all about, you know, the work. Not being, you know, haring enough about me, I'll just move somewhere else. And of course, wherever you go there you are Very shortly into that role.

[00:27:11] My personal circumstances changed again, and I didn't meet that change. I just kept going and going. And I remember sitting in my office on the 35th floor, and my husband and my children were about to go back to Australia for a holiday. And once again, like my work was in human resources transformation.



[00:27:33] Mm-hmm. and change management. So whatever I was doing, it was always really important. It wasn't life or a death. Right. But it was like there would be big trouble. You know, a lot of stakeholder impact if things weren't done, and I'd had to make this very difficult decision to stay back an extra week cuz the project wasn't going well and my kids and husband were about to go off and have this experience at Disneyland and I wasn't with them.

[00:27:58] and I had had just repeating bouts of strep throat and walking pneumonia and I kept going to work like his was like, I can't stop. There is nobody that can do this. Yeah. And I remember sitting there and I literally just like looked around me and it's like, I'm missing one of the most important experiences and this whole experience of like, oh my God, like I missed my friend's funeral.

[00:28:22] Mm. Look at all of the things. We're not saving lives here. Like I need to make a change. And so I recognized that. The suffering and the health issues were enough of an issue that I knew I couldn't allow myself at the time, enough space at work and with home responsibilities. And I made the decision to request a leave of absence.

[00:28:43] Mm. To just try and figure out what was going on and Right. What a blessing. Right. To be able to do that. And they were very gracious. We sort of worked something out. It was like four months notice and then I was gonna take the lead. Right. It's really interesting and Brene Brown sort of talks about this when our system has been pushing through search capacity for so long, when we finally take a break, there can often be a health crisis.

[00:29:13] Yep. And. You know, for the first like two months I felt fantastic. It was like, oh my goodness, you know, like I can go to yoga, I can try out this meditation business. Yep. And, you know, I could really, you know, work on some of these neglected areas at home. But after that, that whole. Anxious energy. I didn't know.

[00:29:36] It was like I was addicted to the stress. Mm. And so there was this part of me that just knew that I was at a point where the work that I was doing and the environments that I were working in was not conducive. to becoming the parent and the friend and the partner that I really wanted to be. Right. It was



showing up in my relationships as well as my health and you know, as the universe would have it, I went back to visit my sister in Australia and while I was there I was bitten by an insect and I contracted cat scratch disease and it manifests like, Oh, wow.

[00:30:13] It's, it's such an interesting thing. You know, one of the things that while I was off, I recognized that while I was so grateful for the career that I'd had, it didn't fit this deeper yearning that I had, and I was feeling really out of alignment with my values. You know, it was interesting you had so kindly gifted me an engram reading and being a heart type two made absolute sense.

[00:30:39] Yeah. But you know, in the workplace what works least well is impersonal environments when people and relationships aren't prioritized, where they feel taken for granted, where tasks are prioritized over people. and that had been my experience and this was a wonderful organization. Right. But the group that I was in where any type of transformation people are worried about their jobs.

[00:31:03] Yep. Right. Like it can become toxic. Yeah. Very quickly. And I was the new person and it was a really tough situation. I hadn't experienced that before, but I recognized there was part of me that was like, I don't know what it is I'm supposed to be doing, but I can't go back to that. And I got like pulled into like freeze energy where it was like, I'm so overwhelmed, I dunno what to do to do.

[00:31:29] And literally like I had this sort of thought, well, if I was just sick enough, That people wouldn't judge me. Right. If I quit this job that so many people want and that I've worked so hard to get, the story was like, well, who does that? People are gonna think I'm crazy. . Yeah. But it was like this, knowing that there was something else for me, but the gap between where I was.

[00:31:51] And who I felt called to become was so overwhelming. I found myself in freeze energy. And literally it was like I got my wish. I went to Australia. I got bitten by this insect, right? And this really challenging experience with carrying the Barella Hensley bacteria, and it's called cat Scratch



disease, but a year of literally being immobilized and like chronic pain, deep suffering.

[00:32:20] Couldn't have worked even if I'd wanted to go back.

[00:32:23] So it's almost like the universe had a way of saying, Lisa ,

[00:32:28] when I don't speak up for myself when I'm not connected to my needs. Yeah. My body has a way of speaking up for me. Yeah. And that was. A painful, painful lesson. Mm. And you know what really drove this work was a deep desire to heal, to be present, and you know, like there's nothing like suffering.

[00:32:48] We're pushed by pain until we're pulled by a vision. Right. That was what prompted me, you know, from my bed, right when I couldn't do very much. You know, I started to look at this, the science of nervous system regulation, and I started studying about what the impact of, um, metabolized stress and I had all the symptoms.

[00:33:09] Wow. But it gave me hope as well, because we can change our pathways, we can create new stories and we can reregulate the nervous system.

[00:33:20] **Carolyn:** That is a really important message, I think, because we're not saying like, yes, your story. Pulling you out of the corporate workspace and, and now you have your own business.

[00:33:31] There's lots of stories out there. I mean, I chose to leave, but I did have a burnout episode as well. And I think why I'm driven to do this work and why I'm gonna guess you're driven to do this work is that we don't want people to get to the point of burnout. And that we do believe that corporations and companies like those are great places to work.

[00:33:51] And most leaders and most people have great intentions. However, we're not, there's missing information there, right? It's this, this whole piece about understanding our window of tolerance, understanding our nervous



system so that we don't get to the point of burnout, so that we don't get to the point of hyperactivity or hyper arousal or hypervigilance.

[00:34:15] because there is so much good we can do. So I just wanna make it really clear. We're not saying go out and quit your job and start your own business. No, that's not the answer to all this. And so what do you do now in your business, and I'm guessing your clientele or you know, corporate folks like office workers who are learning how to manage their, their stress and recreate a different relationship.

[00:34:35] **lisa:** Absolutely. And, and Carolyn, it's a mix. And you know, the work that I'm doing now, I think in many ways it's like if I had connected to tools and ways of being and had the understanding and capacity to just within minutes a day bring myself back and to treat myself like, you know, I would, my very best friend.

[00:34:56] what would that language have been and what would those practices have been? Right. You know, when, when we're flat out. And so that's very much the work that I do now in helping leaders, caregivers, anyone who recognizes that they're not fully living in the present moment. They're noticing that they're reactive.

[00:35:16] Perhaps that's sort of lashing out or they're stuck in immobilization where they're sort of like feeling numb. Yeah. And disconnected from life or on autopilot they wanna return. To their wholeness. They want to be able to experience life more often in this ventral, vagal connected space where we are able to be in presence, where we can really make deep connections, where we have access to our higher mind, we have access to our intuition, our creativity, and why that makes sense for workplaces is that's where our best work happens.

[00:35:55] **Carolyn:** Right, right. And that's where we can create the new products or the new solutions that will really help change our world. You know, I think we can all agree that seems like we're on a downward trajectory, but we need that creative thinking. We need people to show up and, and be fully who they are. And you know, somebody recently said to me, When is it that you feel your best, your most comfortable self?



[00:36:18] And I hadn't really thought of that, but doing this work and understanding somatics and, and so this was a somatic coach that I'm working with, the somatic experiencing coach. And typically I was like, I don't have time for that. Like my best self is getting stuff done. And your work is a somatic coach and facilitator.

[00:36:35] If somebody in our audience wanted to reach out to you, what kind of work would you do with them? Like what would maybe be an example of some of the work that you could do with them that could help them find their window of tolerance and really find themselves and their true authenticity?

[00:36:50] **lisa:** Thanks, Carolyn.

[00:36:51] Yeah. When I'm working one-on-one, and again it's, it's a broad range and at this point in time, my one-on-one work is with women. Yeah. And non-binary people. My workshops are for everybody, but when I'm working with women, it's starting to just really paying attention to when am I noticing that I'm being pulled into a stress response.

[00:37:09] So we start by really just doing an audit on what are the stressors in my. Right. Like whether that's the job, the relationship, the parenting challenges, and we just start by really making an audit on what those stressors are and we start to pay attention to how much space they're taking up. And then, What's happening inside of us.

[00:37:35] So, you know, it's really sort of like coming into a deeper understanding. So there's always nervous system regulation, education, and my teacher Lynn Fraser, oh my goodness, right? We all have our people who have. Helped in just opening up the possibility and making this learning accessible. Because we also have our protector parts where it's like, I wanna get better, but I don't wanna actually change and I don't have time to do anything.

[00:38:03] Right. And so a lot of this is about just noticing when we're being pulled out of regulation. And noticing like what are we experiencing? Are we being pulled into this fight flight response? So when this happens with this



stressor, do we notice ourselves lashing out? What happens, right. Or do we notice ourselves freezing?

[00:38:26] And so we start to get really comfortable? and as a practitioner, you know, that might then mean like just really coming into the body. So we use a lot of like relaxation practices so that we can gently start helping people reconnect and feel safe to explore the sensations in the body. And I'll be honest with you, Carolyn, it took me about a year to actually be able to go in and to be able to tell you, oh, this is what anger feels.

[00:38:58] For you? With me? Yeah. Yeah, I'm

[00:39:00] with you. That's been really interesting. I'm like, whoa, there's a lot going on in this body. So a lot. Lisa, I would love to give the listeners an opportunity to connect with you. What's the best way they could get in touch with you if they're interested in some of the work

[00:39:13] that

[00:39:13] **lisa:** you do?

[00:39:14] So my LinkedIn is the best way to connect with me, and that's where I, uh, I typically post about my upcoming workshops. Okay. And, uh, my client intake, so it's Lisa tz on LinkedIn, and there there's some examples of my work and links to my trusted resources and ways of connecting with me and setting up, um, like a 20 minute conversation.

[00:39:37] Perfect. That's my go-to. All right. Well,

[00:39:39] **Carolyn:** we'll make sure that that is in the show notes too, because Bur Charts has a B U R C H A R T T Z T Z. Yes. That's a Canadian Z for you Americans there. So Lisa, I'm so grateful that our paths crossed several months ago when they did in you and instilled this sense of calm in me.

[00:39:58] Before we wrap up, I'd love to ask you three questions. Is that. Absolutely. All right, so these three questions are really based in the three



principles of the Evolved Leader framework that I talk about in my book. And so the first question for you is around self-awareness. Can you share with us a moment of self-awareness that.

[00:40:20] Really deepened your understanding about yourself. And often, these aren't the most shiny moments of our lives, shall we say?

[00:40:28] **lisa:** No, they're not. And I'll step into vulnerability, Carolyn, and share that it was. A moment actually with my son. Mm-hmm. And it was at the end of a really long day before I realized that I needed to take a leave of absence.

[00:40:43] And I had been holding space for everybody, you know, all day. There had been a lot of very difficult things happen and I'd been racing, you know, I was running to get home to relieve the nanny and, you know, I, like, I came through the door and like puffing and, you know, puffing and he needed some help with home.

[00:41:03] For me, and you know, something sort of happened and I literally just like exploded. Mm-hmm. , and I saw the look on his face and. You know, at that time I just recognized, oh my goodness, I've been suppressing all of this stuff and I've actually just unleashed it on the person that I love. Yeah. So dearly and it was a moment where recognized I was repeating patterns.

[00:41:28] Mm. And it was very painful because those were behaviors that I had promised myself that I would never do, that I would never take my stress out on my child. And it happened. Yeah. and it was a catalyst for change and it really, you know, started me on the path of there has to be a better way. I'm actually not okay.

[00:41:49] Yeah, I need a different way.

[00:41:50] **Carolyn:** Thank you for sharing that. I can think of a few moments, of my own sons looking at me with that same look. Second question, what is a practice that you have that keeps you in a regulated or calm? Um,



[00:42:05] **lisa:** so the most simple one, and I would say like 8:00 AM every morning, I'm part of a healing community and I practice somatic mindfulness with my teacher Lynn Fraser.

[00:42:15] I've really structured my life around that and it's become something that I just look forward to this 20 minutes of taking time for myself. My kids are at an age now. They don't need me as much in the morning, but I also recognize most of. Can't do that, that wouldn't have been accessible to me when I needed it.

[00:42:34] And so, right. For me, it's literally one of the most regulating things is feeling the support of holding my own hands. Oh, really? Wow. Yeah. And I can do this anywhere, right? Yeah. We, we can be going into a meeting and it's just like, oh, I'm feeling some anxious energy, you know, pulling me out of, uh, regulation, just taking my own hand and just.

[00:42:59] Sitting with that for a. Restores a sense of calm. If I'm by myself and I wanna activate my vagus nerve, because that again will bring us back into regulation. I'll put my hands on my cheeks and hump. Oh wow. Cause that stimulates the vagus nerve. Mm. Wow. But if we can do that, and then, you know, our breath right is the most accessible thing for us.

[00:43:27] And if we can have an, an extended exhale of six seconds. That's gonna activate the parasympathetic rest and digest connected state. So just, yeah, noticing like what's happening with my breath? Am I holding my breath? Because that. Signals to the nervous system that we're under threat. Right. And so our breath, you know, if we can just like holding my breath.

[00:43:51] Yeah.

[00:43:52] **Carolyn:** So yeah, between holding a breath, the humming and grabbing our hands, all things we can do in the moment. All things, if perhaps we have children running around, we can take that moment to ground and calm final. I love music, so I always have to find a way to bring something back to music or sports.



[00:44:10] So what is a song that makes you feel connected to others? So this is the whole sense of co-regulation. What's a song or type of music that bring you, you feel that connection to others?

[00:44:20] **lisa:** I love music as well. And the first song that comes to mind is Celestial by Ed Sharon. Okay. Looking at him, I just, he makes me smile and I love the whole, you know, I love his whole story, but it, it's just a gorgeous song for me and I blast it when I'm out walking the dog and it just sort of like brings me into that sense of, Connection with myself, with others, with something greater.

[00:44:47] That's great. The lyrics are like, you know, you make me feel like my troubled heart is a million miles away. You make me feel like I'm drunk on stars and we're dancing out in just face. And it's that playful energy. It's full of hopefulness, you know, the light shining through the rain. A thousand colors and a brightest space.

[00:45:05] **Carolyn:** I know what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna, uh, as soon as we finish this podcast, I'm gonna go listen to that song. Cuz I'll be honest, I haven't heard. I haven't heard. It's alright. Well, Lisa, once again, thank you so much for sharing your stories, for sharing your insight and wisdom, and we'll make sure that people have your contact information so they can reach out to you.

[00:45:26] And it's been a pleasure having you on the show.

[00:45:28] **lisa:** Thank you so much for the invitation, Carolyn. It's been a pleasure. There

[00:45:32] were a few things that Lisa shared in our discussion, A few comments she made that really have stuck with me, pushed by pain, and pulled by a vision. Wow. I really, really paused when I heard that, and I'm guessing that many of you out there listening to.

[00:45:54] I can relate to that. It's hard to lead in our workplaces right now, and I hope listening to Lisa today has given you some hope, uh, and a few ideas that can help you find a bit more. Com and a bit more centeredness in your day.

EVOLVE

A NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP



TRANSCRIPT

Thanks for joining me on this episode, and I'd love to have you join the Evolved community.

[00:46:26] You can check out my website@carolynsora.com. Thanks, and we'll see you soon.