Introduction to Nervous System Healing

Hi, everybody. It's Dr. Remka, and I'm super excited about my guest today. I don't know Danielle Rubio super well, but she worded something so eloquently that it instantly stopped the scroll, spiked my cortisol, grabbed my attention, drew me in with more dopamine, with so much curiosity with the way she explained how she helps people regulate their nervous systems and try to teach them the connection.

out think your way from stress and trauma, something that's held unconsciously in the body. This is the language I speak with my patients all the time.

And anytime I can bring somebody else in that I could learn from, and you can learn and eavesdrop on two clinicians, maybe having a conversation back and forth, I want to do that.

So I'd like to introduce you to Danielle Rubio out of California. I would love you tell them who you are, How you got into doing this type of work? Cause those of us who do this is always a story, either your own stress and trauma or somebody you deeply love or all of it together.

And then we'll go back and forth into like philosophy and we may agree on everything, disagree here and there, but how you use your unique understanding of the nervous system to help your clients overcome anxiety and PTSD and depression and things of that nature.

Sure. Yeah. But thank you for having me in this conversation. And I am a nervous system educator. So I work primarily with helping people to regulate the nervous and I'll go into a little bit of what that means.

I'm a somatic trauma coach. Essentially I help people overcome their trauma and ditch anxious, chronically stressed and depleted for good. And why it's for good is because we're actually going to the root, which is your nervous system.

That's the software system of who you are and how I got into this. So I had already been a healer. I was a Reiki master. It was yoga teacher. As a meditation teacher for many years at this point, it was probably 14 years and I experienced my own traumatic event about seven years ago.

And nothing under my belt was touching it. I had severe PTSD. ended up with severe insomnia because of my extreme anxiety. And I was really at this breaking point of I'm a healer.

And I can't heal myself like what what's going on you name it I've done it from a very early age and it was like nothing was touching this anxiety and this PTSD and I had one day by the grace of God where I just you know I remember I was sitting on my kitchen floor just.

a wreck. And I was like, you know what, this is not how I go down.

Danielle Rubiou2019s Trauma Recovery Story

I got up and I just started researching online and happened to come across trauma work, I came across the work of Gabor Mate, Peter Levine, these pioneers in somatic therapy, so body-based therapies to work with trauma and to heal trauma.

It was A light bulb went off and I was already pretty privy to this stuff. I as a yoga teacher, so I had also studied dance therapy. So I knew the body helped this wisdom, but I didn't know really anything about the nervous system and how the best ways to work with your nervous.

Is through body oriented modalities. so, I'm going to start you for a second because for the listener, that all sounds, understand everything you just said.

And. For the average person may be watching out there who's anxious or has PTSD is dealt with exactly what you just said. That's a million people like easily in America.

And what she's saying that is so different outside of the scope of traditional talk therapy, all of those modalities are cognitive in nature. I knew it, like I had a thinking of what to do here, but her body really didn't know what do exactly until, and it's a love that you actually took a cognitive approach because exactly what I do, I research and I know how to that.

Let me make my left brain find what it need to find. And through studying these other people who are really avant garde in their thinking. To say because the neuroscience is backing this up now, but it isn't the mainstream way of thinking that the body.

The soma the somatic physical body is what's actually containing the solution. It's the problem and the solution, cause it's storing it. And so you can't solve a body problem with the mind, with cognition.

So what you're saying, so that's, the thing where it was like, Oh, these things, everything I tried, that because it is the wrong approach and all of therapy has done it so for people, if you've tried therapy or whatever, and I'm not saying therapy is bad, it has its place.

But you can't actually go to the cognitive part of it until we get the underlying autonomic nervous system regulated. And that is only through the body, because it's unconscious and involuntary.

So there's the distinction. There's these two big pathways when it comes to mental health and recovery. You have the talk cognitive behavioral theory thinking kind of CBT and other things like that.

And then you have the body-oriented group of people. I think they all have a time and place, but if I have to always choose, I'm going to go with the Body, the Soma, because these are unconscious.

This is not stinking thinking. this is a physical reality that your body is overwhelmed and it has a Physical depletion in it. A physical change. So I wanted them to hear that just said like very simply.

All right, so keep going. Yeah, yeah, exactly. And something that I tell my clients is, you know, stress is physical. It starts from the nervous system sensing some sort of threat.

So, and historically, your nervous has evolved over hundreds and thousands and hundreds of thousands of years. it's the same nervous system we've always had.

And historically, the stresses of the nervous systems were like catching a prey or fighting a predator or territorial fights. So our stresses are very different and just a very sliver of human evolution, but the system is the Same.

Your nervous System, which is of The body is going to sense a particular threat or stress or danger, and then that's going the signals throughout the rest of the body, chemical responses, sending the signal to the brain and how to respond to that stress.

Why Body-Based Therapy Works

So essentially I deep dove into all of this. I ended up healing my PTSD, I healed the insomnia and that's when I had already been A teacher and a guide and the healer and I knew okay, I need to train in this because this is the missing piece for me.

It really felt this. Is the Missing piece to truly help people heal from trauma and to be able to create absolute emotional regulation. So they're not at the whims.

of these triggers anymore. And you said it so beautifully. There's a place for talk therapy. there's. For these more mental and cognitive therapies, but they're not going to get to the root.

and this is why people are spending like decades in talk, therapy, and they are not getting anywhere because they aren't addressing the nervous system.

Yeah, they don't even there to me. They're often furthering the dissociation and further the disconnection from the body. You have, we have to back into the.

Trauma is a dissociation out of the senses, out the feeling. And all the somatic work is bringing that back in. Uh, and so you have to, like, I do a whole talk on the autonomic nervous system, body map of it, right?

And it's, yeah, you're going to have, to feel things. When you are numbed out, that helps the, so some people, if you were vacillating and like high stress to like state three trauma, You'd go back and forth hot and cold.

and that can be really uncomfortable. But like real big dissociation is total numbness, right? Like, I don't know. It's just flat, numb, no pain. So sometimes you reverse the healing.

You got to heal it to feel it, that whole cliche, but it's so true. And that's, these somatic therapies, and there's some many modalities and people always ask, what's the best one?

I'm like the one that is the, one is divinely inspired right in front of you. Easy, convenient, you're compliant. I have the ones that I like that i'm certified in and do, but there's so many.

And in, so I don't like to say this one's better than this or whatever. There's more out there than I know I'm aware of. So technique you might be certified it and not the technique I've certified and doesn't matter.

We attract who you're attracted to her. You work with her, you attracted me. Work with me, him, and you work him. Right. Some people need to be, gender of the therapist is very important.

Often I had many people that are like, I am not working with a man. There's no way that's where the trauma came from. I have many people that I need the man, I needed the father.

They need that safety. So it's trusted. And when I, you said, which I thought was so beautiful, it was like, Oh, my nervous system loved it. You told people it wasn't their stinking thinking.

It's like your nervous and just senses it like their inner knowing knows. And so your body has a response. It's not stupid. So I find the statement I say the most eventually to somebody that is the powerful thing I'll ever say to a patient, it happens at some point.

You're not crazy. And they're like, and it just becomes this whole moment. Like you're crazy and you are not broken. The nervous system isn't making a mistake.

Its sensing something that's that not good. Even if your conscious mind isn't, I don't understand why I'm feeling like this. It just comes out of nowhere.

No, that's not actually what's happening. Your body is not deranged. So you said that without saying it that way. And I'll say that because I have to spend so much time.

I sure you do too. You're not broken. you're unhelpable. This isn' hopeless. Because I think the traditional models tell them that in so many different ways.

Yeah, this is a condition. You have this label for life. you need this thing for Life. This is how you are. It's just your chemistry or whatever, right?

And you said exactly the opposite. He said the genius of your nervous system knows it's Just you might not understand the language it speaking because it is not a lion chasing you right now.

And that's something that I tell my clients a lot is first we need to accept. We need accept the messages that your body's sending you, the signals your nervous system is sending.

And then we actually, we also need honor it because like you said, The nervous is not making a mistake. The Nervous System is simply sensing you're in danger.

Anxiety, for example, is the symptoms of being in a flight response of the Nerve system. Your, it's your body's trying to keep you alive. Your body is sensing I'm in danger.

And so it. Okay. Like I I get into a lot of trouble when we start to try to numb, we to avoid what we feel. We want to like Netflix our way out of it or drink our away out it, or do these other things to avoid feeling rather than simply listening to the cues.

Now, yes, of course, the nervous system is dysregulated. So it's sounding the alarms. It's stuck in sounding alarms, so you're experiencing this anxiety all the time.

But the first step is like that acceptance and okay, I'm listening now to your body. Like we're in this together. I am not going to continue to try to just push you down and push down, and think my way out of this.

Yeah. So what's the most common process you see your clients going through? And about how long does it take? Like how do you take them through the journey with you?

That depends, you mean the process of the healing process. Somebody comes to you and says, okay, I'm anxious. I don't know, but I saw you on this thing.

Can you help me?

Understanding Nervous System Regulation

Yeah. Yeah, so it depends what specifically they're going through. So I specifically work with women and I have women who are coming to me with, some women are very frozen.

They're very stuck that way. Some women, are more depressed. The first step is always, we have to reestablish that connection to the body. And so I use a method I created, which is the embodied life method.

It's a weaving of nervous system regulation, movement therapies, somatic inquiry, and mindfulness. The reason mindfulness is there is exactly what you said at the beginning, is I want women to, I their anchor To be that they are not broken and the basis of who they, are their truest.

Identity is perfect and pure and it is not tainted by everything they've been through by their traumas and not even taint it by a dysregulated nervous system.

We simply have to. Rewire and we know even science is catching up to this with neuroplasticity. We can rewire the nervous system. we can create these new pathways and it all starts with establishing safety.

So I'm working with women to first establish this sense of safety and really giving them this visceral experience that they are safe. And so we're doing that through various different movement practices or different somatic practices.

And it varies with each woman because everybody is so different in where they're at. So by nervous system regulation practices, can you give me, and I know what I do and, um, I'm a huge fan.

I use a lot of electromagnetics. Um, board certified neurofeedback and biofeed back. and so I'd do very quick direct

changes to a nervous Well beyond, I find the majority of clients that come to me, box breathing ain't cutting it, never was cutting.

We got, we don't have the time for that. And it just doesn't do it. Some people, there's a lot of these amazing techniques that work for this chronic mild state one stress, but different states, it doesn' do as much.

So I'm curious as to what are some of the things you are teaching women for nervous system regulation. Cause that's just a term. Some people hear it all the time and they don't like, what does that mean?

What do you do? what are you doing? And what do having them do because everybody's some people love whatever you. Yeah. And so it might even be helpful for your listeners.

I define nervous, system. Regulation is because we're dealing with the autonomic nervous systems. It's automatic. So everything's happening automatically and in a healthy nervous.

Your nervous system will go into fight or flight or freeze, but then it's going to automatically get back to rest and digest back. To a thriving state, a dysregulated nervous.

System is a nervous, system that's faulty. It's getting stuck in a fight, or fight. Or freeze it stuck. because of trauma. And I define trauma as anything that's overwhelmed the nervous system.

So it's not necessarily the event. A lot of people say, I don't have trauma because they're thinking it like this big T trauma, trauma is simply something that overwhelmed in the system and so when you're a little one, it could be something as a lot little cuts, like a of neglect or having parents that weren't there, your nervous is going to sense that as this is unsafe and thus it going become dysregulated if this continuing to happen over time.

So again, in regulation, it's establishing the safety. So one practice that I give pretty much everybody that no matter where they're at is a practice of orienting, which is if you think about a deer in the wild, when any observer, any animal, they are exploratory orientings.

They're grazing, looking around, orientating with their five senses. As soon as they sense a danger, They're going to look very different, right? They are tunnel visioned, they're still, in one direction.

People have become stuck in this defensive orienting. By doing the exploratory orienting was just, it's essentially, I'm leading people through a practice of being with their five senses, which can only ever be right here in this moment.

It's sending the signal that they're safe. So it sending this signal to the nervous system, like you're saved. You're just exploring orientating with the surroundings.

Do you have to see three things or touch that kind of thing or what? I'm telling you the listeners, I don't know what she just said. Talk to me like I am a five-year-old.

Yeah, so to almost semi-lead listeners through it, it's like, okay, let's start with your sense of touch. Can you drop into the sense and feel your body connected to the chair that you're on, feel the clothes touching your skin, sense everything that your sensing with the touch, Don't let yourself analyze it.

There's no need to analyze. You're just feeling, just feel in your sense of touch. And then we move into hearing. Okay. So you verbally talk them through a full orientation.

Yeah, so I'll talk them through and then get them doing this every day. It's one of many exercises. This is probably the only exercise that I'm giving to everybody, whether they're like frozen or they are in a fight mode or in flight mode.

Do you give them a recording of that or do you do it once and they know how to do? Okay, that's usually not a thing

they can just learn how do. Yeah. Yeah, so in my program, like I'm doing everything in sessions with them, but then I am often recording a lot of these practices because people are so busy.

Oh no, you need it. And they need this to be that process.

Somatic Practices and Orienting Exercises

I do that too. It's, I think it's a form of self-hypnosis. Because I, think you can drop people into that beautiful alpha state with that. Cause presence is alpha.

Right? Your alpha presence, you cannot, if you're have alpha, your present, that's it. Power of now is that. And it's not deep meditation like theta, but it is.

That state. So I've experienced that myself. I do self hypnosis and I was 19 years, 18, 19, years old. It reminds me of that when I'm like, Sometimes I'm like, I don't even know what just happened.

Like, where was I? Like I knew, but I was there, not, and has it's so present. It's timeless. Yeah. So that's an interesting, it does have that self-hypnosis feeling.

Some of you who are into that, that what that is. But it was funny because I find a lot of clinicians don t do that. And it s a simple process. Not just because it is time consuming kind of ish.

I think it' s over, undervalued. Honestly, like I think breath work is your value too, just in general. Like I know I've undervalued it. Oh man, you really got to bring our breath working back into it because I get so fancy.

Yeah. Just that. Okay. That's good. Cause I wanted them to know, cause people just don't, they hear nervous system. What is she talking about? And sometimes it sounds really complicated.

that did not sound complicated, but they just know what it means. I don' want them be intimidated. by words that they just don't understand. Yeah. And another point I can make that can help them understand is it's also, so it is about allowing the nervous system to complete processes that it couldn't complete.

So if you think about when you were a little one, And you were scared in some way and your nervous system naturally went into fight or flight. So it's not bad to be in fight-or-flight or freeze.

We have to in these states. But say that kid was in fighter flight and something stopped that either a parent that was abusive that told that child to shut up.

or something even more mild where that child got the message of, I can't be in this fight or flight. I, can speak up and fight for something I want, or I cant flee the situation because I'm not going to survive without my parents.

So then they go into a shutdown and that response that the nervous system wanted to have was numbed out. It was shut down. And so something that I might do with somebody is We're doing inner child work, which is part of what we're, doing and say, we are in a somatic process and things start coming up in their body.

And it eventually leads to going into a memory they have of when I say something like, when is the first time that you felt repressed? And we go into it and they're feeling in the body, I might have them.

Like get up and start doing motions like they're running and giving that nervous system, that chance to get that stuck survival stress out that was never able to be completed.

Yeah. I love that. So, yeah, I used to teach these personal development courses for an international organization. And I was in my twenties. And we did, so it's tons of, it was like very Adlerian, Jungian Gestalt, which is a very strange combination, but that was, It was an Adlierian course that this guy created.

And then my mentor and teacher was very Jungan. and so we changed it a little bit. But having everybody embody everything was the whole point. We're like, I need your nervous system.

we're going to do it. Okay. Whatever it, was so sometimes it reenacting something that happened. Like we're gonna physically do it. Pick mom, pick dad.

Who's that? Who is this? And who are you attracted to? You know how you're, we pick them. So we would always do the gestalt or the motion. And until then, and it was like insane, the changes.

and I was in my twenties when I being taught this by this therapist on how to do this. It was all the difference between, you can sit there and talk about this to your blue in the face, but until we, taught women in a room, how to stand up and push a man back with their eyes.

Now they never were in fear of that rapist again, because they learned to do something very different. And the men weren't lying about it. They were coming until they were like, Okay.

Whatever she's got. And when a woman changed that whole nervous system, so she went from this to, and it was a very different state and changed her physiology for life.

So I love that you do, you'll stop and do the embodiment. Think about it. If you're listening to this, when's the last time your talk therapist did that with you?

When did you stop the whole session, get up and do an embodiment? So some do. They will have you bang a pillow or punch. There is a little bit that's traditionally happened, but it's critical.

So we do the reenactment of maybe what happened and we change it because you can change the story. And, oh, no, that we're going to change. They're gonna change what happened at five.

We're to make a whole new story. Let's do it. Yeah. That is exactly what it is. The nervous system didn't get to complete something. And it doesn't have to be abuse though, too.

I want to clear it sometimes. Shit just happens. There's a fire in your house. Your mom and dad are grabbing you. You're trying to get you out and fire police and things are there.

It's just, and your little body was like, I can't cry or shake right now. Nobody yelled at you, nobody did anything. You just didn't want to have any people see you cry at seven because you were scared shitless and your mom and dad could have been loving on you.

But you contained it because, you didn' want that. you don't wanna be weak or seem weird or whatever. It doesn't take bad parenting to do a lot of these things.

I tell them something like, No, nobody told me that about myself. I did these things to myself, I made up my own little stories.

Completion, Integration, and Working With Danielle

Looked at things and made decisions. Always want people to remember that. Cause it doesn't mean you had to have a bad childhood or any kind of crazy thing.

And that's why you can have four kids have the same exact thing happen. Three or it was a thing that happened, but their nervous system processed it, dealt with it.

Moved on. There's no trauma. One boy. Was it tough on that little kid's nervous system? It overwhelmed it. It's a, trauma is a biological problem. it's like breaking a leg.

That's all it is. Is the bone, how strong is that bone? The bigger kid leg didn't break. The little kids leg broke. that makes perfect sense. Everybody understands a 15 year old is stronger than the five-year-old.

Like they're not going to get damaged the same way. Nervous system is the way, so a fifteen- year- old usually can handle more than a five-year-old, emotional, because you have more capacity.

That's hope. The mom and dad have capacity than the children. You hope, but mom might be being treated for breast cancer, getting chemo and radiation.

So she really doesn't have the more of capacity in the 15- year- old kid at that moment. Yeah, it can happen, right? She's not a bad person. She is sick.

Because it's a real energy problem. It's physical, biological problem, it is not your mind. Yeah. Not a thinking issue. No different than breaking a lake to me.

That's how I look at it. So no, It just wasn't set right. And so it didn't heal quite right, so we're just going to remodel the way it healed. that's How I try to explain to people so they can get rid of the stigma of thinking This is something they did wrong, or something somebody did to them because that often gets them stuck in the victim martyr thing that whole story doesn't help any of us.

Yeah, exactly. And something I say a lot is no one's to blame. And everyone's to blame because it's also a societal problem. It's all so even just the way that from birth, most children are taught not to feel even some, even in a very gentle example of a little kid falls off their bike.

And they're wailing and crying. And one of the first things a parent will say is you're okay. You're automatically like quieting that child's natural response.

So you are automatically saying you okay, the kid's not okay the kids hurt. The kid is crying like instead allowing that just allow it to happen you don't you have to the adults have take care of their own.

nervous system response and not get all whacked out because their child's screaming and crying because they just fell. It's no your child doesn't need to shh and shush down it.

Let them express they're hurt like it's all right. Are they hurt or are they scared? Because you don't actually know and your job is to assess what is actually happening.

Okay like let's go now If you're like, okay, this is bad. I got to actually get in the thing. Yeah. This is a surgery surgical moment. What is it? So there is.

And you are right. The way the parents respond. It's a huge thing and then no one's meaning to be doing anything, meaning, to. Hurtful or whatever, and a parent's, Oh, nothing's wrong with you physically.

So I think you. Stop. You're you okay. But it's actually the fear response because the kid has no idea if they're fine yet. Cause they are so not feeling it.

Let's check it out. I am fine. And they realized they don't even hurt. You know what I'm saying? Sometimes. Yeah. Are you in pain? No. Oh, okay. So why are you crying?

I don' know. I was just, you scared? Not anymore. Okay. That's a lot. What's, and then he just realized I crying over nothing. Like, oh, are sure you want to cry some more?

It's no. Do you hurt? Nope. He's still scared. No, but it was a reflexive, explosion, because he figured I'm going to be hurt. Yeah, but yeah, you're right.

That is that so that was a perfect example. And no one's being malicious. We do it a lot. we do It to ourselves all

the time. and I shouldn't be upset over this.

I am angry at my boss or angry him for my husband. But then they just try to whatever stuff. It Yeah. it's in the non expression that you said that You might make these other choices that aren't actually really healthy like numbing out with the netflix or the alcohol the oreos and ice cream or something like that because it catches up with you that's what i want people to understand so i try to teach them that the body is always talking to them i personify everything really well and we just have to learn the language so they don't think something's wrong with me all the time so it sounds like obviously you're doing a lot of the same thing and so why don''t you tell them because i know it's really interesting you do you've similar to me ish that you do virtual, you take clients remotely, and you also do in-person retreats at times.

So if people wanna know how to work with you, so it's women, if they're like, this is who I like. This is what I'm really good at. this how you would get in touch with me.

I know you'd do like a six week program. And I'd like that, I want people to understand that this a process. If I do the same thing, then I need commitment.

That this never a one, two time magical. and I think we were talking off camera about it. Some of the big bang explosive things like the psychedelic community people are getting the idea like they can just go have some explosive experience and not do any integration or understand that like you're missing this is really all you've been describing to me is that we're helping people integrate back into their bodies and their nervous system.

completion. I like that phrase. It's just completion of a process. That's a beautiful way to say it. Tell them what working with you looks like. Yeah.

So the main way I work with women is through my six week, one-to-one program, reclaim your power, turn your chaos into radiance. And it's a one to one immersive.

It's not just like we're meeting once a week. You're working on something every single day for the six weeks. I'm tailoring specific somatic and nervous system exercises specific to you, what you've been through, your story, where your nervous is at.

So that's the main way. I also have in-person international retreats and workshops. So the easiest way is you can find my Instagram, which is simply I am Danielle Rubio.

And there in the link in bio is all the links to all of the different ways that you could work with me. Awesome. We'll make sure we drop everything down because not everybody is on Instagram.

Pretty big percentage of my following and students in my courses, they're 70 and up. Interesting thing that I've attracted the 65 and Up crowd in the last few years.

And they'll like, I'm out on Instagram and it gets hard because I do so much there. I make sure we get it and download it, and put it some other way so they can handle Facebook groups.

in YouTube. Yeah, I'm also on Facebook, so I'll give you that link. We'll have everything. If you're watching on YouTube, it'll be there. if you watching Instagram reels or whatever you are watching this, we'll had all of it there so they can get a hold of you.

Cause it's really important. I think just constantly getting the message that there's no mistake. Your body is talking to you, It's not disordered and dysregulated.

And I really do. Never explained it that way, even though I know it. that you're just finishing a process that was interrupted. I think you just gave me a whole new way to explain this that will make it less intimidating for people.

That's all. Oh, yeah. Like you were in the middle of something and they knocked you off your bike, you got

distracted, and you had to go the other way.

But I just want to take you back on that road and we're going to all the way at the end of the corner. We just didn't get there. think people can understand that.

So I appreciate that learning for me. And yeah, I am Danielle Rubio. We'll make sure everything is in description. Thank you so much for what you do. It's not easy to do this work, but I know it's incredibly rewarding.

Yes. Absolutely.