

Candice Schutter: [00:00:00] Welcome back to The Deeper Pulse and the continuation of the 'cult'ure series.

The Deeper Pulse is a solo project. I have no production crew to speak of. This whole endeavor is a do it yourself operation. And so it's not at all lip service when I say that patrons of the pod are the ones who make this work possible.

To show ongoing gratitude for patron support, I drop bonus content over on Patreon weekly. There are now over three dozen bonus conversations and interviews, available in both video and audio formats. Each one created in collaboration with friends and former colleagues who've been showing up to join me in the deconstruction of wellness culture indoctrination.

This week and last, we've been deconstructing the law of attraction, sharing personal stories and [00:01:00] in my case, striving to make some hefty repairs as a former coach who back in the day bottled and sold this metaphysical snake oil. We've been reexamining the law of attractions roots, and the critical difference between mindset adjustment and magical thinking. If you're interested in listening in or if you'd just like to show your support of main feed content, head over to patreon.com/thedeeperpulse, become a patron of the pod for as little as \$5 a month, and gain immediate access to all the extras. Okay, let's dig into this week's episode.

The stories and opinions shared in this podcast are based on personal experience and are not intended to malign any individual, group, or organization.

It's becoming a bit difficult to describe the culture series to folks who have been only recently introduced to the pod. Those [00:02:00] who haven't tuned in to early episodes in the series that really feature its origin story.

Because at this point, 14 months into this series, it's understandable if it appears as though I launched this series with a set intention, that I had a far reaching endgame in mind at the onset.

I did not.

In fact, when I started this series a little over a year ago, the pod only had a few dozen loyal listeners. So it felt in many ways, very intimate.

And I'd been itchy on the inside for years around my personal experiences in new age wellness. As a storyteller, it was long past time for me to share that part of my story.

Now naively, I assumed that my experience was unique. I didn't really anticipate that that many people would care to listen. And honestly, I wasn't thinking very far in advance. I just had this desperate need to free my voice [00:03:00] somehow. To claw my way out of the dogmatic constraints of coaching and wellness culture indoctrination.

I had no real sense of the degree to which my stories would resonate with so many. Nor could I have anticipated just how many voices would step forward to share their own stories on this podcast feed.

And really what brings us to this point in the series is that I really could not have possibly predicted that my attempts to better understand what happened to me and to us, that they would unearth a tangled root system feeding the many challenges we face psychosocially as a species.

I mean, I had some sense of this. I named it the 'cult'ure series for a reason. But I had no idea just how interconnected it all is.

And so yeah, I guess it's no wonder that I sometimes struggle to find words to describe the work I'm now doing. It's sort of an interplay between micro storytelling and meta analysis. Zooming way [00:04:00] in and then back out again. An attempt to sort through intergenerational trauma, social systems of influence, capitalistic power paradigms, and relational abuse. All of these things intersecting and continually playing off of one another.

But as they say, the devil is in the details. So, intimate personal stories are a very effective way to get to the root of all this dis ease. And then, once again, we must pull back to examine what these narrative patterns are revealing to us. And in these later episodes in this series, we're examining how did all this culty business get there in the first place? What do we find when we examine wellness culture at its roots?

Well, so far what I'm discovering is that this isn't just a wellness culture problem, it's a problem of a larger culture that is unwell. And when I say unwell, I don't mean by wellness cult standards. [00:05:00] Because it is those very standards that we are here to critically examine and challenge. And fortunately, there's a growing list of resources available to help us as we sort through all this.

This past week, I've been devouring Naomi Klein's new book, *Doppelganger: A Trip into the Mirror World*.

Naomi Klein is a Canadian journalist, activist, and author of nine critically acclaimed books. And I'm gonna do her a solid and say right out of the gate that Klein is very often confused with 'Other Naomi' as she refers to her in the Doppelganger book, Naomi Wolf, a once respected journalist who has, in more recent years, been involved in the spread of conspiracy theories and misinformation.

Using this dichotomous relationship as a jumping off point, Klein crafts an insightful commentary on the dual realities and split personas that are now so pervasive in our modern world. I'm about two thirds of the way through it, and [00:06:00] this book feels to me like essential reading for our times. And what I love about Klein's writing is that she delivers an easy read on some pretty heavy topics. It's sort of in a hard to categorize genre, because in some ways it's a humanizing memoir, but it's also somewhat academic, delivering keen insights into human nature and well informed political commentary. By bravely baring parts of herself, Klein does a remarkable job, not only describing, but illustrating how and why we humans have become more and more a sort of polarized parody of ourselves.

I just wrapped up a chapter entitled The Far Right Meets The Far Out.

It speaks directly to this strange phenomenon where two unlikely worlds have seemingly collided.

She writes:

"In many ways, the most successful influencers in the wellness and fitness worlds - the people who make fortunes from selling idealized versions of [00:07:00] themselves and the idea that you too can attain nirvana through a project of perpetual self improvement - are a perfect fit with economic libertarians and anarchal capitalists who also fetishize the individual as the only relevant social actor. In neither world view is there any mention of collective solutions or structural changes that would make a healthy life possible for all."

Throughout this book, Klein makes a compelling case for why conspiracy theories have become a new norm. And she invites us all to reflect, cult conspiracist or not, on our many blind spots that are enabling this growing trend.

And I have to say, side note here, I really appreciate that she speaks to something that I've been puzzling on for a while now. The way that language developed by progressive activists has been twisted and co opted by far right players.

Recent examples include, LGBTQ+ advocacy in schools being reframed as [00:08:00] grooming. This misappropriation of a hot button term being used as a deflection from legislative violence that seeks to deny certain individuals their right to exist.

Or how about those, even in my own neighborhood, near Sedona, who describe the choice to vaccinate as indoctrination? Or worse yet, a more staggering example that Klein gives in the book, is that of her doppelganger, among others, comparing mask mandates to the yellow stars that Jewish people were forced to wear in Nazi occupied Europe.

There are many more troubling examples like this throughout Klein's book where the lines between the far right and the far out, as she calls it, have led to misinformation and distortions of reality.

Welcome to the mirror world, as Klein describes it, reluctantly quoting Philip Roth: " It's too ridiculous to take seriously, and too serious to be ridiculous."

Klein makes a really strong case [00:09:00] that these things continue to snowball because conspiracists, and I would argue cult leaders, are able to continue radicalizing folks because underneath the absurdity of their claims, they have a point. As she describes it, they get the facts wrong, but the feelings right.

"This is the trouble with the mirror world. There is always some truth mixed in with the lies, always some devastating collective failure it has identified and is opportunistically exploiting."

Yes.

Klein is giving more language to this sense that I've had throughout the series that our dismissal of people who buy into sensationalistic narratives or cult dynamics, our rejection of them is part of the problem. It not only misses the point entirely it adds fuel to an already raging inferno of vulnerability and self doubt. People are drawn [00:10:00] into cult dynamics in spite of their good intentions, because their vulnerabilities are being exploited. Feelings without factual analysis, we see it everywhere, and it's a breeding ground for culty culture. It's also a surefire formula for those who want to seize control and have power over others.

It is in times when we are overwhelmed by uncertainty, a global pandemic, climate catastrophes, systemic inequities, or even legitimate criticisms that result in a threat to our personal identity, in each of these moments, we reach for comfort, solace, simple solutions, and often someone else to blame.

And what could be more vulnerable than a species on the brink of an existential crisis? An understanding of cult dynamics feels to me, imperative to our survival as a species.

And that might sound hyperbolic, but I stand behind this statement because, look [00:11:00] around. Authoritarianism is on the rise worldwide. Our democracy here in America is hanging on by a thread. And this is the exact opposite direction we need to be going in if we have any hope of addressing a climate crisis that cannot and will not be course corrected unless we're able to orchestrate dramatic cooperation on a global level.

Yeah, it's a fuck lot, I know. It's a bit of a downer. And that's the point, really. It's time we get honest with ourselves and with one another, turning to face all the damage we've done in the name of our idealistic efforts to outrun our humanity.

And more and more I'm finding that one of the best ways to learn is to listen.

It's Hispanic Heritage Month, and I recently came across a quote from Cuban born American singer songwriter and eight time Grammy Award winner, Gloria Estefan.

"As an immigrant, I [00:12:00] appreciate far more than the average American the liberties we have in this country. Silence is a big enemy of morality. I don't want our blunders in history to get repeated."

Gloria Estefan was born in Cuba, in the midst of a coup d'etat revolution. And her family would soon flee to the US when she was still a toddler.

A decade and a half later, and 6,000 miles south, another country was facing a political crisis. On September 11th, 1973, a group of military officers, led by General Augusto Pinochet, seized control of the Chilean government, overthrowing Salvador Allende's democratically elected government. It was a successful military coup that was, we later learned, aided by the United States, specifically the Nixon administration.

A little over a week ago was the 50th anniversary of this event, and according to Heather Cox [00:13:00] Richardson "the U. S. State Department issued a statement calling the anniversary 'an opportunity to reflect on this break in Chile's democratic order and the suffering that it caused.'"

Something that this week's guest can speak directly to.

Magdalena Weinstein was born shortly after Pinochet seized power of the Chilean government, and she spent the first 17 years of her life living under authoritarian rule. She'll share with us how her formative years were shaped by this worldview, how her parents perspectives kept her grounded through it all, and why she chose to leave Chile as a young adult.

Magdalena immigrated to the United States in 2004, the same year that BKS Iyengar was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time Magazine. This is a relevant detail given that just prior to her relocation to the U. S., Magdalena began studying Iyengar yoga, first in Chile, [00:14:00] then in the United States, and eventually at the guru's ashram in Pune, India.

Disillusioned by Iyengar's body fascist training style, she eventually stepped away from the practice, entering into a coaching group, where she would spend ten years, once again navigating similar dynamics along with racial microaggressions, but this time under the guise of mindset training.

Magdalena's lived experience provides her a unique and intimate understanding of cultic abuse and how it can show up in a variety of different ways.

And now, tapping into the wisdom of her South American roots, combining it with training in a variety of somatic therapies, she works as a trauma specialist. Magdalena is an active member of the DEI committee at Somatic Experiencing International. She's committed to combining somatics and social justice, helping individuals and groups transition toward [00:15:00] personal, ancestral, and collective trauma healing.

I've invited her onto the pod to share about her unique experiences, and to get her take on a trauma informed approach to mitigating everyday damage caused by modern day cult dynamics. It's an honor to bring her unique perspective to this 'cult'ure series convo.

I hope you enjoy my time with Magdalena Weinstein.

Candice Schutter: Good morning.

Magdalena Weinstein: Good morning.

Candice Schutter: Thank you so much for being willing to do this with me. I'm so grateful.

Just to share with the listeners out there, we just met a few weeks ago when I reached out to you, I was following you on Facebook. I somehow was exposed to a few of your posts and it just really felt, I guess a sense of resonance with the work that you do. And started following you and just decided to reach out and ask if you'd be willing to have this [00:16:00] conversation. So we'll, we'll get into the work that you do in a moment. We'll share that more with the listeners.

But, when I'm speaking with people as a part of this series, and you know this better than anyone, our childhood and our background has a lot to do with the choices we make moving forward, how we get involved in the, the organizations we get involved in. So I would love if you, with that in mind, would share with us a little bit about your background. Because I think it's very unique and you're gonna offer a really unique perspective to us in regards to all this.

So tell us about your childhood and where you come from.

Magdalena Weinstein: So I was born in Santiago, Chile in 1974. And that's important because that's the year Pinochet took over the government as dictatorship. A little bit less than a year, because it was September when Allende died.

So big part of my childhood, which is until 17, I was in dictatorship. So my childhood and teenage years. And [00:17:00] also particular to me specifically, I lived later part of my childhood in a compound. It wasn't exactly the same, but the military government gave apartments to the military people. To the soldiers and their families in several neighborhoods in Santiago. And so we found an apartment that was right in the same compound.

So I would walk the street. I got used to it, to be along these people, these soldiers all the time. And so because it was dictatorship, they had to protect their neighborhoods. So they were like always standing with guns. It was pretty intense. There was always soldiers there. I mean, just guys dressed full on with big, big guns, you know? And, um, in a way I felt safer because of that. So, see, see how weird this is? I felt safer because I was protected with guns in, in this neighborhood, this [00:18:00] fantasy, right? Like, oh, I'm safer. But at the same time, I felt pretty, pretty weird about it. But I got used to it.

So, seven of those 17 years was like that. And like I would go buy and ice cream or go to the supermarket or bike ride. And that was happening always.

Like sometimes you go to the dentist in the central of Santiago and there was tear gas and tank. And because there were riots.

And other things, you know, like, we had a curfew and riots and all that stuff. So we knew like at 12:00 AM there was curfew. And then after that some people would be like, hitting pots and pans. That was one of the things. So nobody could go anywhere after 12.

Candice Schutter: Hmm. Wow.

Magdalena Weinstein: So curfew happened forever until, I think it might have been when I was 14 that the curfew released to later. But before that, people would party [00:19:00] inside their properties and there were no discotechs or bars and stuff like that. They weren't really available. I was younger, so I didn't care, but I remember like, oh, the first discotech in Santiago. I remember that. Like, like the first mall, the first disco, oh my God, let's go and see how it is to party. You know? And that I was lucky because by the time I was 18, 19, 20, when we weren't in dictatorship anymore, so I could go. Oh my goodness. I just went, uh, every night everywhere. We were all going to raves and parties and whatever to try to, you know, compensate.

And then you would know about people disappearing. I had family that that left the country to France. A lot of them, a lot of Chileans went to France, to Europe to get asylum. So my father's sister went there with her husband for years. I can't remember when they came back. They came back after, basically, after [00:20:00] dictatorship finished. A lot of people.

And my family was divided. So my father was very to left and my mom was very conservative in, not like conservative US, but more Chilean Catholic conservative. It's a different kind of conserv, no guns or they're not looking for freedom. They're looking more for, I don't know, bonding with the church or something. More security in a different way than conservatives in the US are more like, more like looking for wild freedom.

Right.

Candice Schutter: Can I ask a question speaking of your family. So there's sort of the macrocosm of the culture and this dictatorship and this authoritarian rule. What was it like within your family system itself? Was that reflective? Was there a sense of allegiance with that or how was that?

Magdalena Weinstein: No. So both my mom and my dad studied in a very liberal university in Chile. And my dad was a lawyer, and my mom was a social worker. So she was extremely liberal for a long [00:21:00] time. Then she remarried, and then her new partner was more conservative, so she went in that direction later. But that was later when I was 10, 11. Around that time she started transitioning to listening to, a lot of people in Chile were listening to the church more, you know, 'cause the church and the government were, were very intertwined during that time. You can read about it. It's fascinating.

So I didn't really notice in my family so much of the tension, 'cause we wouldn't talk about politics. My mom didn't. My father was more into it, more interested. But really I noticed it actually more in my friends, because I had friends that were like pro Pinochet and I had friends that were anti Pinochet. And this is a very divided time where people are, some people are really pro the dictatorship and some people are really anti dictatorship.

But I've always been kind of, um, I wouldn't say I'm, I'm in the center. I'm just always look for [00:22:00] neutrality. So I never, I was never encouraged to, to be in any line.

Candice Schutter: Mm.

Magdalena Weinstein: Also, my father's side is Jewish. My mom's side is Catholic. So as, as well, I was never forced to be neither. My mom said, please go to church with me, but she wouldn't force me. So I, I always appreciate the both sides.

I never liked dictatorship, of course, I didn't, we didn't like Pinochet. We had like four channels until I was 17. So obviously they, there were censorship in every way you can imagine. So the news were censored. Everything, everything was only what dictatorship allowed. So.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's different, right?

A lot of brands weren't allowed, I mean, you didn't have brands in Chile for a long time. Because, you know, it's like Cuba.

It had like a.

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: A total crash of the economy. We didn't have access to Vans or Nike [00:23:00] or I don't know, Esprit, Benetton. I was like 13 the first time I saw, oh my God, you have like Nike Wow. Or Adidas, you know.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: So my family, we were austere. More on the neutrality side. Although my mom had ideas and my dad had ideas. We didn't really talk much about them. I'm appreciate, I I appreciate that. I don't really talk about politics or religion.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: Because I know everybody's got a different idea about it.

Candice Schutter: Well, it's fascinating. I didn't know until you were just sharing this today, that your, was it your mom was a social worker and your dad was a lawyer? And I look at what drew me to your work? And it is sort of, like, the collision of those two in a way. Um, the way that you.

You, you don't post about politics like you just said. You're not speaking about politics, but you do speak about systems and trauma. And we're gonna talk about somatic therapy and, and how trauma is informed by these [00:24:00] systems, these social structures. And so it's just really fascinating to learn that, that that's where your parents came from, 'cause it's sort of makes sense. Those world's colliding in you.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah. And my mom worked as a social worker, so she worked for it's kind of like a county. Let's say. She worked for the county. Okay.

But it's not a poor country, but it's, it's still a developing country, right? So at that time, I mean, still, like the poverty is beyond belief poverty. So houses are made out of almost like paper and plastic, right? It's made of a little bit of metal and whatever residual of trash, you cannot bind the house that way. These are the people that my mom was working with

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: And I sometimes went with her. And we will park the car and like, where are we? Like whoa. And we were very low middle class. 'cause I tell you, I lived in these places that the government. It was tiny apartments with a bunch of apartment complexes. The military people, obviously, if the government donates, it's [00:25:00] not a very fancy place. It's just low middle class.

But these people were in extreme poverty and she was working with them. A lot of the things were about money, you know, like, getting a little bit of food, accessing rights of any kind. So I saw, that was my mom's job every single day and she'll come telling me like, oh, these people I went to see la da da da. So it wasn't, it wasn't about like mental health issues, it was about systems issues, health issues, poverty, inequality. That's what social work is in Latin America, I think. So I grew up with a lot of consciousness of what she was doing and what was happening.

My dad was a lawyer, but he also was an economist, and then he was also an alcoholic. And a very, very sick alcoholic. So, I also had to live with his mental illness at the same time. So while my mom was doing social work and dealing with [00:26:00] people in extreme poverty and, you know, the leftovers of inequalities in South America. My dad was dealing with a lot of mental illness and severe alcohol. So he died at six, in his sixties when he was 60 actually. So I grew up with that, seeing him doing up and down, trying to stabilize and then really crashing, going to emergency.

Yeah. So probably that was a very big impulse to understand mental illness.

Candice Schutter: Absolutely.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah.

And talking to you. It makes me sad. I haven't been sad about it for a while.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah.

Candice Schutter: Always interesting circling back and like there's always another layer of grief there. Somewhere to touch. Yeah.

Well, thanks for sharing that with, with me and with us, and.

So at what point did you, what prompted you leaving Chile. And what, at what point did you decide to [00:27:00] move and why?

Magdalena Weinstein: Oh, I wanted to leave Chile very early in life to explore. One thing about Chile is that it is like Europe. You can go to so many countries in very little time, right?

Candice Schutter: Uhhuh.

Magdalena Weinstein: Because here you, you travel five, 10 hours and you're in the same place.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: But there, you travel 10 hours and you're in a different country. You can be in Brazil, in Peru, in Bolivia, in Ecuador, in Columbia. I mean, there's all kinds of countries. Argentina is an hour and a half flight, right? So, all that exposure to different places, it, it really interested me. I already had traveled a lot with my father, had taken me to different countries in South America, but then took me to Europe when I was 18. It was like his gift from his messy life. But here's a gift.

Candice Schutter: Right, right.

Magdalena Weinstein: Here's a little gift for you. And it opened me like phew. I went to, I don't know, [00:28:00] France, England, the Netherlands and went to United States as well. So that opened my, my eyes to more than already I have seen in South America. And then I kept traveling after that. I kept traveling to Peru, Bolivia, Brasil, Equador.

So I was very curious about other cultures and other experiences. I, I've lived in dictatorship, so I, my, my window was so narrow, right? The culture was so narrow. I was just curious to get somewhere else because it was so restricted all those years, the culture, the mentality, the news, the everything just really started kind of sprouting. I think all of us, all my generation was curious about, wow, what's going on outside? What else is there?

And yeah, so I wanted to live in Brazil and then I wanted to, eventually wanted to venture to Europe. And so I, stayed in, in France for a while just exploring if Europe was a place for me. [00:29:00] Breaking the barriers of thinking that I'm only South America. South American being a seldom, I don't know how to explain it when you're not from a country that is not the center of the world. But it's like, you have an idea that somewhere else is definitely economically better, more opportunities. And so that idea happens a lot. You know, in Mexico it happens a lot in Central America, people think United States or Europe is gonna give us choices that we don't have, right? The fear of having more dictatorship or the economic really crashing, like it was crashing in other countries around. Bolivia was crashing. Argentina was crashing. It was scary. Colombia was crashing.

So I wanted to, I was looking for stability in a way as well. So, economical opportunities, stability maybe, safety, without really thinking about it deeper. Like, uh, what happens when you're an immigrant? I didn't even [00:30:00] think about that. I was too young to think about that.

So yeah, in 2000, I, I lived in France and in Spain a little bit. I'm 26 then. I was thinking about going somewhere else and seeing what happened. But I wasn't really thinking about it clearly, obviously. Because it's incredible challenging to be an immigrant. It, it is just not something that you should do unless you need to, my thought is about it now that I am an immigrant.

But yeah, I started with that, and then I thought about moving to India for a while. And then I met my partner, my husband now. So in 2004 I met him when I was gathering energy to go to India, I met him. So I came to visit him here in Mendocino, Northern California. And then we went to live in Chile. We lived in India together. We tried those two places half a year in each. Then we settled back in Mendocino because his job was here.

I didn't think [00:31:00] about relocating to Chile then. Still a little worried because Argentina was crashing further. Some countries were just really crashing. So I was a little worried. Being from a country that is so unstable, like a, a zone, an area of the world that is so unstable economically. And Chile being the only country that is a little bit more stable makes it, you know, a little threatening.

Candice Schutter: Sure.

Magdalena Weinstein: So.

Candice Schutter: That makes sense.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah, I think it would've been different if I was from a more economically stable, sane country.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: But, not my story.

Candice Schutter: So at what point did you begin to get involved in the wellness world, if that's even how you would frame it? What was kind of your entry point?

Magdalena Weinstein: I started doing yoga first. I think a lot of people did that [00:32:00] in the early 2000. 2001, 2002, I started exploring Buddhism and yoga, right at the same time. Just found a place where I could go for retreats, zen retreats, and I could do yoga there. So we were doing qigong, little bit of yoga. And I got interested in both. But then I got more interested in yoga eventually. And still in Buddhism. And that changed my life, actually. So I was very grateful.

These silent retreats where, I don't know, I would go for five days in a row many times a year. And it was just all day meditation, sitting there in silence and then doing a little bit of stretches, little bit of yoga. It changed my life. I, I woke up to the nature of reality is not what I think, you know, that, that kind of opening.

And I tried a couple of peyotes, you know, in Ecuador, in, [00:33:00] in Peru. We, we were close to peyote in South America, so. Not ayahwasca, but seeing cultures I mean, I did the Inca Trail in that time a little bit earlier than that. So that started kinda shifting my, my, uh, my understanding of capitalism and, and cities and schooling and all that stuff. It started shifting when I started looking at, oh wait, what about this civilization? And what were they looking at and what was going on then? And then, taking and thinking, oh my God, what's the nature of reality? And then having zazen sessions, these sitting long sittings, 10 hours or longer, sittings for days on in silence. I'm like, whoa, who am I? And who is anybody? And so I got into that rabbit hole.

And then I found Iyengar yoga.

I got into Iyengar yoga and I got into kind of like a professional side of of that. Like, oh, I can actually do this and make money. [00:34:00] And I love it. And it allows me to tap into this flow of energy, of life force and make money. That's great.

Of course, the politics of Iyengar yoga, it's a whole different story. Right? And I moved to United States, so I was able to see more, more strongly here than there.

Candice Schutter: Can you speak more to when you came to the US and you began, you were involved in the wellness world in the States. And what did you discover? 'cause when we talked before you had said some things about how it seemed to go a little sideways. Can you speak a little bit about that?

Magdalena Weinstein: So the difference is that when I was in Chile, my main teacher of Iyengar was an Indian. Some people moved to Chile from India and this was a yoga teacher. So they actually relocated him 'cause he was a great yogi. And they, somebody offered him like, Hey, you wanna move to a different country and create an institute and do all these things.

So this guy created that, was wonderful, [00:35:00] and he invited his teacher. He had a teacher, and the teacher was one of the Indian Iyengar teachers. It's a very different, like, there's a whole different thing when teachers are Indian versus teachers that are from Europe and United States and other countries. It's like Iyengar didn't care about Indian teachers as much. They could do whatever, almost whatever they want. They, they didn't have to go through all the steps with the guru that. They were just Indian people doing the, the thing that Indian people do, the yoga.

So we got a lot of mixture in Chile with this teacher. He was an Iyengar teacher, but he would express himself and bring everything, uh, Ayurveda and the vedas and the tantra and everything involved, a lot of chanting and stuff. And that's not very Iyengar.

But when I came to United States, they recommended me a couple teachers. And I went, and I noticed a different vibe. Like the teacher was kind of like, um, there was a lot of followers. There was a lot of like a weird [00:36:00] vibe that you are in the club or you're not. Things that were not like, we weren't doing that. We were very excited about the material the teacher was bringing in Chile, it was like a Oh, Indian culture material. Wow. But in the United States it was more about like, uh, the rules of Iyengar.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: It wasn't about Indian culture. It was the rules of Iyengar. And if you're in the club, you follow the rules. If you're not in the club, you don't, you're not in the club.

So, the teacher was in San Francisco. Is, it was one of the head teachers in that time. He got in a lot of trouble during that time, before that time, and later that time.

Candice Schutter: Abuse of power?

Magdalena Weinstein: Power, sexual, sexual abuse too.

Yeah. So, yeah, I mean, it's very public that he got in a lot of problems.

But, so I was seeing that and I was like getting out of the class, and my husband would be like, how was the class? I mean, I would drive to San Francisco to get there, right? Three and a half hours. That's how far I am [00:37:00] from that. And I would get out of the class kind of stressed. But weird. Like it's different than in Chile. It's not like I used to feel centered and aligned and good and excited about learning about this culture.

Now I, this is kind of a weird direction. I would just notice that people were wearing the thing that the teacher was wearing, the little shorts and following a vibe. And there was a lot of scolding. And the scolding was interesting. The scolding was very interesting. It was new. I never had the scolding in Chile.

Then I went to India. Like the year after I came to United States. So I had this experience in San Francisco, and then I went to India. It was my plan. I wanted to live in India. So I said to my husband, I'm, I'm going to India. And he followed me eventually. And when we were in India, somebody said, why don't you go to the Iyengar Institute? I never thought about it. I was thinking about this traveling India. And I thought, oh, actually I could.

So I asked permission, they allow us, [00:38:00] and we ended up there. And we stayed there for a month and a half in the Iyengar Institute, around the area of Pune, where the Iyengar Institute was. So we went every day for a month and a half to classes every single day. Maybe Sundays we didn't go, but every other day we went there. And we go to two classes a day at least. And then lectures. We were sitting at lectures. So we started learning about the vibe and the scoldings.

The whole main, like the whole thing going on with Iyengar and his daughter and the teachers coming from United States, the whole thing. It was like, um, I can't explain it in, I don't know what the right word for this. It was like a display of egos. A mixture of harassment and like I said, um, a lot of yellings. Um, I don't remember he had a stick, but he would hit people with something, you know, like some whatever, he like a little. [00:39:00] And the hittings were supposed to be correcting posture.

I really didn't like Iyengar. I realized this is a guru? This is the main guy? I was coming from Zen where people are quiet and peaceful and like Thich Nhat Hanh is kind of like the head of that. So I was coming from Thich Nhat Hahn to Iyengar. And it was like, this is not okay.

You know, Like, I wanted to be an Iyengar teacher, but I, I didn't want Iyengar to be my teacher. So I was very convoluted. And they were, they were, he had children and, and Geeta was horrendous too. And the other son was very mellow and very different. And he had like his whole other thing going on.

So I thought, okay, well if I focus on him, and I don't focus on Geeta and on BKS Iyengar, then I can do Iyengar, kind focusing on him. But it was ridiculous because Iyengar wasn't represented by anybody other than BKS Iyengar and Geeta Iyengar. The other son was not part of the Iyengar ideas in the world. [00:40:00]

And then I came back, and I just had over and over experiences with teachers that were scolding or yelling or harassing. I was harassed in classes. After that, I was just totally disappointed and slowly waning down my desires to be in Iyengar.

So my Indian teacher from Chile connected with United States through me. I invited him to here and then he kind of opened doors everywhere and started traveling. But he never got really like famous or anything 'cause he's like more in Indian culture style and not so much Iyengar yoga. He kept coming for about 10 years. So I was hosting him sometimes and all that, but I was like less and less and less and less and less interested even in yoga. I just lost the interest in yoga over time. I started feeling a little bit more pain, was confused about that, and stress about going to classes where people could try to fix my posture. And I was nervous about being, I started [00:41:00] developing like a little PTSD around being fixed. I, I took a teacher training in Iyengar Yoga Institute in San Francisco a little bit earlier than that after India, encouraged by a teacher. But then I got really nervous about teaching, presenting, being scolded, not sure if I was gonna be corrected all the whole time.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: So that was my entering in the wellness.

[00:41:26] TRANSITION?

Magdalena Weinstein: Okay, so the next leg is 2009. I was teaching still yoga, but whatever style it was like anything. And, um, I found in the same studio where I was teaching, there was this coaching. It wasn't called coaching, but it was like these two people were coming to teach some NLP principles and hypnosis. They didn't call it that neither, but they, it was more

about like, the typical way that NLP or coaches try to sell, kind of like, more [00:42:00] freedom, more of who you are, uh, more life force, whatever.

And so I got excited to find something different because I was so over the Iyengar yoga scoldings and drama. And I wanted freedom. I wanted something different, right? I came from dictatorship. I where like, where's freedom? Oh, this, this might might be my thing, right? I am, I I'm gonna get freedom. Access that thing that collectively my nation didn't not have access to for all my developmental years.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: And I got sold out. I stayed with them for 10 years.

So, Without knowing that from Iyengar I went to another cult.

Candice Schutter: Yeah. A little cult hopping.

Magdalena Weinstein: That I moving from.

Candice Schutter: You're in good company.

Magdalena Weinstein: Cult hopping.

Candice Schutter: Yes.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's crazy. How, how I went from dictatorship to Iyengar yoga and to process coaching. Now I understand more these [00:43:00] inertial fulcrums is a concept in biodynamic craniosacral where the life force goes to rescue this vortex of trauma, this place in the body. All of this is physical, right? So I love the idea that the life force goes to repair, but it gets sucked in. So I came from this dictatorship vortex and it keeps happening. So that I could heal from this, right? Like it is from birth.

So I, I should fix this. I should heal it. And so I keep, not consciously, but I keep getting interested in, in things that are similar. Like Iyengar yoga, it looks exactly like Pincochet and then process coaching. The guy was like the same face, the same head, the same structure, and the same direction.

So all these bald, older people that are super bossy and scolders and controllers.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: So it took me 10 years to unwind from that. And it had good ideas. I [00:44:00] mean, none of them are really what I use now much, but they're good. They're not bad. But they, they can be used for cult control so.

Candice Schutter: Exactly right. Yeah. All of these tools can be abused.

Magdalena Weinstein: They can be abused. Yeah.

And yeah, it's sad because I had kids during that time, so I pay the price of raising kids during that time. That was extremely stressful for me of being in a cult dynamic and being controlled a lot, a lot of time.

Candice Schutter: Can you say a little bit more about that? Like how it impacted you in that way?

Magdalena Weinstein: Well, I was already impacted by being an immigrant. It's incredibly stressful, especially if you're coming from a, if you're coming like a BIPOC to another country that is white, you know, not a white country, but a white county and a white state mostly.

Candice Schutter: And a white system.

Magdalena Weinstein: A white supremacy state, in a way, even though people don't wanna talk about that here in California. It's not a diverse state. Yes, there is Mexicans. But [00:45:00] there, that's only because they're immigrants. It's not like, 'cause they own the land or diversity is, is only accidental.

And the Mexicans and the Latinos, you know, they do the lower jobs. They have been doing the lower jobs for eons. So, so I came here as the nanny, as the cleaner, as the, you know, restaurant worker. I didn't come here to do anything above that. And I felt always harassed and, um, scared and overwhelm. I had like, uh, PTSD around white, blonde, sorry. I had PTSD around white blonde people.

Candice Schutter: Of course.

Magdalena Weinstein: It was overwhelming.

And so when I had children, I was already pretty paranoid and overwhelmed about my condition as an immigrant. And I was very vulnerable to be in a cult, 'cause I wanted to feel more free and more empowered. Of course, I'm coming with no power here, you know.

Candice Schutter: Uhhuh.

Magdalena Weinstein: Cause it's a different culture. I'm lower in the culture. And I [00:46:00] wanted to get powerful. But the stress of all my situation wasn't addressed. Instead, it was kind of like building this fake idea of who I can become.

Just very much like the wellness I concepts of, build this structure on top of yourself and make others believe that's true. Make yourself believe that's true. Shell yourself, and just don't come back to your body ever again. Just nevermind, nevermind, how you really feel. Just aim towards some idealistic perspective.

They were even trying to control the way I was speaking. Like, uh, they sometimes in the group coaching, the control was like about, "okay, Magdalena, I think you can actually have less of an accent."

So well, let's work, let's work, on this concept that you actually could just develop less accent. So the stress of. Am I? How am I gonna do that? Like, I have an accent. I don't know how to work my [00:47:00] accent around.

And they were like, well, we'll coach you. And here's this guy, this Adam is gonna help you learn how to not have an accent and.

Candice Schutter: Wow.

Magdalena Weinstein: Right.

Like how to belong more like, because yeah, who you are is not good and you will become something. So parenting, parenting with that amount of stress.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: Both my kids are neuro divergent, and they had extreme stress of growing up in my house, cause I was in extreme stress all the time from all the things that happened before, but that continue happening.

So I was traumatized by the cult. I was traumatized by this culture. I was traumatized in social situations with people. I was traumatized by immigration and police and whatever happened around me. So I had nowhere to go to settle. You know, society wasn't gonna settle me. I knew I, I knew that about being an immigrant. [00:48:00] This is not a place where that is gonna settle me. So I need to find it myself.

And that's what happens to immigrants. They're, they're not gonna find settling in the culture that they're moving. They gotta figure another way.

And this is not a settling culture to begin with. It's a cold culture. It's a judging culture. It withdraws from feelings. It's not collective. So it's individualistic. It's always aiming to something else. Everybody's selfish, you know, capitalistic to the extremes. Kids are supposedly, they gotta like rule the world and be the best. And that's not what I grew up with. Those are not the values that I have growing up.

So, yeah. Maybe if people immigrate to Chile, they will find a settling culture there. Sometimes collective cultures can be helpful, but a lot of the collective cultures are also patriarchal. So, we need to move outta this topic.

We're just stressing people [00:49:00] talking about it.

Candice Schutter: I know, right. Sorry everybody, but it's important.

Magdalena Weinstein: We're getting to the better places here.

[00:49:08] transition??

Candice Schutter: I do really wanna underscore though, I really appreciate that you brought attention to, and even gave us a really specific example, which I'm sure there's countless examples you could give of the way that. You know, this series we've been talking about these cult dynamics and the way they're experienced in wellness specifically, and the moral injuries that occur in that when we're being told this is what you're doing, but then all these other things are happening that are actually oppressing us and re-traumatizing us.

And I just love that you're underscoring the exponential level that that happens for a person of color in these environments. Because there's like, there's the experience that I had as a white woman. And like it was hard enough needing to be according to this [00:50:00] idealistic thing that is, in fact, due to my privilege more attainable to me, this ridiculous idea that has been created by the culture. But to come into it and to be told that the way that you are naturally in all these other ways. Like it's just exponential, I guess, is what I'm saying. For, for you and for a lot of people. Especially because most of these environments, the platforms are white women in wellness, right?

So we're all talking about our experience, and we're missing voices like yours. So I really appreciate you speaking to that, because I think there's a lot of people out there who are gonna be like, thank you. It is harder for us.

Magdalena Weinstein: It is really hard. I, I, I thought like, yeah. So there, there were this ideal concepts that everybody was working around, and then mine were like extra because I had to, I had to try to become part of this culture as well. So how can I become part of this culture [00:51:00] and also do this, build out these other skills?

It was an impossible, unattainable. I, I could never. They were like, you're too loud. Why are you talking about that? That doesn't make any sense. Or, oh, yes, because you're not from this culture. It must be because you're from Chile all the time. It was like the whole time they were always reminding me, that's because you're from Chile. That's because you're from this other culture. It must be because that culture is different.

Candice Schutter: Microaggressions.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah.

Because I will have questions like, why are you guys doing that? Why are you thinking this way? Why is that? Yeah.

Oh yeah, no. You are, you could tell, you are from a different culture. So they were trying to make me assimilate, but it's impossible. You can't assimilate.

Not first generation, at least. First generation does not assimilate. Second generation does, but not first.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: I can see my kids already assimilated fully to this culture, so. I can't.

So yeah. Cult dynamics is so complex. [00:52:00] Because the mind of the person that develops the system and gathers everybody around him or her to do this, the investment they have to put to do this, right?

And to disregulate the whole, the whole system. With so much emphasis in disregulation. I started noticing that. I mean, I, I could track it. Luckily, the thing about that I said that my mom and my dad were not extremists, neither of them. My family culture wasn't an extremes about religion or politics or anything, allow me a lot of space to access different, neutral places in myself. And this neutrality make me wanna look for more of that in life. Made me wanna look for more neutral states, neutral places. Like nature. Nature is neutral, right? That's when I'm talking about neutral. I'm thinking about nature. Ocean, trees, forests, are [00:53:00] very neutral. Babies, dogs, cats, blah, blah, blah. Right? Neutral, neutral energy. Stable, settled. Sometimes a little hyper but neutral in that way. Like it can be like a cat running around or a little puppy, but it doesn't have this or that extreme.

So I started noticing that in everything back in Iyengar. I noticed, hey, this dude is not allowing us to have this neutrality. There's no space for that in these rooms, 'cause he's yelling and scolding. So his idea, which is the idea of yoga, right, to, to find the center, to align back to a center and find this neutrality. But it wasn't happening. He was like forcing it, scolding it, slapping it, and that's not how you do it.

And I, I was unsettled. So if I'm unsettled, other people must be unsettled. So my clients are gonna be unsettled. I'm unsettled, this is not working. So I let it go. It really took me a longer time with the coaching, because it [00:54:00] was more like self exploratory in a way. It wasn't so much like Iyengar yoga. There's a lot of direct mold in your body, but in this one there's like no molding the body more like the molding the mind. So it took me longer to understand that molding of the mind was not gonna do it either.

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: It took me longer years, unfortunately, 'cause I still thought, eh, maybe he's right about what he's doing. Maybe he's right that we should mold the mind this way or that way. Like he was trying. I just didn't know he was, he was a cult leader. I had no idea.

But then I started noticing, wait, he actually is molding us the way that Iyengar yoga was doing that. So,

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: It takes time with with the mind. I think there's so many like tricks in cult dynamics. In cult dynamics that are not like physical cult dynamics.

But even there, like people said, it took 30 years to wake up to Iyengar yoga or to Pattabhi Jois or whatever, to Ashtanga yoga. It took 30 years some people [00:55:00] wake up. So I think, it takes as long as it takes to wake up to, I guess I'm being controlled and I shouldn't be controlled in any way whatsoever.

And why would this person know better than me? Like they don't necessarily know anything better.

Candice Schutter: Right. Well, I think that I mean, this is kind of the perfect segue into talking about where you ended up going with your work with trauma and somatic therapy, I feel like. Because I think part of it for me, I'll just speak for myself. Part of why it was hard to let go is one, you know, it's like programming. We have to like deprogram the indoctrination around like the, I really resonate with what you're saying about the mind, the mind control. Like, it's harder to track and see that.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's harder.

Candice Schutter: What's happening.

Magdalena Weinstein: to track.

Candice Schutter: It's like, no, I'm just becoming more mindful. I'm just, you know, reframing and all the, all the language.

Magdalena Weinstein: Reframing.

Candice Schutter: Yeah, it's like we have all these words that we use that make it sound different, but it's actually I'm just self oppressing. I'm being taught to oppress myself [00:56:00] in order to fall in line with these ideals. And I'm doing it physically. I'm doing it mentally, spiritually, you might argue.

So, for me, part of the reason it took so long to get away from it. And I'm still get, I'm still separating from much of that conditioning that's still operating. I mean, there's beneficial things happening too in terms of regulation. So for me it was like. Well, yeah, my mentor shouts at me and everybody else and we feel completely tense whenever we're in a training. But when I go do a class, I experience a connection to, sort of, this wounded part of me that I've never experienced before.

And, and there's this sense of this good thing happening right next to this really awful thing happening. And then this good thing's happening and then this really awful thing's happening. This good thing, awful thing, good thing, awful thing. And it's so disorienting. It's that disorganized attachment thing that can happen with the leader.

But even within myself, the same tool [00:57:00] can be just this weapon that I use against myself. And then in other instances, it's liberating me. And so it's very, very confusing. And I think it does help to move into this conversation around somatic therapy and how embodiment and understanding trauma better can help us with that specific challenge.

Is that making sense?

Magdalena Weinstein: Oh yes, a lot. And I wanna read to you something because it's related exactly to that.

So as trauma practitioners and therapists it's crucial to acknowledge that assuming we know exactly what the other person in front of us needs, can inadvertently create unhealthy power dynamics. By disregarding curiosity and embracing a sense of not knowing we risk hindering the progress of trauma recovery and in unintentionally perpetuating harm through power and control imbalances. And especially personalities like rigid types, fixated impairment, allowing not knowing and curiosity to guide the session can feel disorienting and stressful.

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: Because it requires a stepping outta [00:58:00] control, frankly. I mean, this is what it is. It's like these people are obsessed about control.

Candice Schutter: Yes.

Magdalena Weinstein: Right? The cult leaders, obsessed about control, and this we're talking about it requires stepping out of control. But nonetheless, this is exactly the most important skill for trauma recovery. It is the most important skill for trauma recovery support that needs the most refinement and that requires the most practice and in years to learn.

It's the most challenging part of the work.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's not about healing. It's about stepping out of control, and really being really, really in this neutral state, as much as long as possible so that the other person can settle again in the same way. But without controlling the, the situation. Like as soon as I go there, and I try to control, it's over.. It's over. Trauma work is over, in that way.

So all these [00:59:00] ideas about like even Iyengar yoga does not work for trauma work, because it's absolutely controlling the body. And this is the main issue with, with trauma, it's lack of control.

Candice Schutter: Can you speak a little bit about, because for like a long time I felt like what I thought was neutrality was actually dissociation. So I thought I was shifting into this space of neutrality, but I was actually in a trauma response. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Magdalena Weinstein: So of course, this is so difficult because I don't wanna sound spiritual or metaphysical or anything. But, dissociation is not embodied process, right? We know that. But we also can dissociate inside the body as well. There are places in the body where we can dissociate. Because anything can dissociate us. So external dissociation, right? Like I feel like

I'm floating [01:00:00] away from my body. Internal dissociation, where I'm really hiding deep inside my bones. It could feel like embodiment because I'm inside myself. But I don't have a way out. So I'm not able to control getting out of that. Like I, I go there and I don't know that I'm doing that. I'm not doing that because I know how to and how to come out of that. I'm just in and out experience of this state.

So having a lot more capacity to, like, the word control is, is not a great word. But maybe feeling more empowered to, oh, I wanna go in my bones. No, I'm gonna get outta my bones. I'm gonna go outside. So having that agency or that empowerment or that sense of I can actually control a little more this disposition I have. And neutrality is a place that we choose. It's not like, you know, maybe yeah, dogs, cats, animals have it. Trees have it. We don't really have [01:01:00] it.

It's because it's not culturally interesting. Because we wouldn't get anything done if we were doing that. Nothing will get done in that state. So, it's not promoted, like a state of centerness. Grounding, centering, neutrality are not promoted. But dissociation, if I'm dissociating inside my spine, it will look like neutrality and centering. But I am not feeling anything a lot of times when that happens, right?

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: I don't have access to knowing that I'm doing that or where I am. That feels really outta control.

I have, um, a really wonderful experience tracking with a beautiful therapist. I was laying down, and she was working with me. Like basically holding, because a lot of trauma work is touch work. And I'm getting into different states and we were tracking them. So that's very, that's a way of controlling, in a positive way, controlling the [01:02:00] states. Because, oh, now I'm here. And she will say, okay, so just track with me. Let's track together and then you'll be fine. 'cause I was, I was scared of being overwhelming higher states or too deep states.

And I would say, okay, I'm, I feel like I'm shifting into a deeper state.

She would say like, good. Alright. Yeah. Nice.

And then I would say the next one. Okay, now I'm in a different one.

Great. Yeah, we're together. Notice my hands, we're together here.

And now I'm in a deeper one.

Okay. Good, good. You feel the hands, feel the back. You're here with me.

You know, really guided and feeling stable and having sense of control. Like I can get out of this state if I want to. Because I, I know where I am. And now I can get out of that. So that's

very beautiful trauma work. I know that I can name it. I know that I don't have to stay here if I don't want to.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: I know that I'm not alone doing this, you know? And I feel, I feel in control. I feel very in control.[01:03:00]

Candice Schutter: It's interesting. I love that you've used the word control in these two different explanations in terms of like what the cult leader's doing, like needing to control, like the compulsion to control. And then this taking back that inner authority and the ability to control and choose from within.

And you know, really this, oversimplifying things a bit, but just for the sake of illustration, like the cult leader is unable to do that internal regulation, is unable to have that relationship with themselves, so they're controlling the environment. And just the cult

Magdalena Weinstein: You got this.

Candice Schutter: but the culture. The culture. We do that as a culture, right? We are like projecting this inability to control our own and regulate ourselves outward onto everything. And so everything becomes culty in that way.

This is part of why I wanted to have you on, because it's like when I say what puts the cult in culture and people are like, oh, that's a cult over there.

I'm like, no, it's everywhere.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's everywhere because of exactly this. This inherent terror around not [01:04:00] having any control. Because these deeper states, including neutrality, are freaking scary. They can be really really scary.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Death is scary. Being born is scary, right? Being alone is scary. Being with too many people is scary, 'cause I don't know if I can control any of that. I can't control being born. I can't control dying. I can't control being around people. What they're gonna think. I can't control.

But what I can control is all my choices. As an adult, obviously like kids don't have that much, but we wanna give them. I mean this is back to teenagers and kids. We wanna give them a lot of space so that they can feel in control.

When I was saying that about the therapist with me, touch, this is also work for toddlers. We want the toddler to tell us, I am here. I need you to hold my hand and I wanna feel in control. I wanna be able to, don't touch my hand. I wanted to say, I wanna turn around and go there. I

wanna pee my pants. I wanna throw the rock there. They wanna feel [01:05:00] controlled, but they are. But at the same time, they wanna feel somebody's here helping them feel control.

Mm-hmm. Right? And the same with teenagers. Teenagers want the same. They want to know that somebody's right there tracking with them. Like, I'm tracking with you. You are doing that. I'm tracking. I'm tracking and we're naming it. You're feeling angry. You're, you wanna quit this. Or you wanna do that instead. Or wanna dye your hair.

I'm tracking with you. I'm not gonna control it for you, 'cause I can't, it's uncontrollable from my side. So you get to do it. But I'm tracking with you.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: So that you know somebody's here and if you want any support, I'm here to support you. And if you want to turn around, I'll be with you there, right?

Like I was with my therapist. If I wanted, if I said let's stop it. But I didn't have to. I felt safe to keep going. But she wasn't controlling.

If I had any sense that she was controlling the session, it's another retraumatization, right? Like No, [01:06:00] no, no. We're gonna go there and we're gonna have very expanded states. And I'm gonna control the sessions so that I'm not gonna let you wake up or get out of the table until I finish doing what I need to do with you.

I would be dead.

Candice Schutter: Magdalena, I want you to say that again. That's so important, the piece about if she was controlling you, it would be re-traumatizing. Say more about that.

Magdalena Weinstein: It would be re-traumatizing. Absolutely.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Because a lot of my trauma is around control. And I'm not alone. Like I have like suffocation trauma. Like I can't control the breathing in some way or another. I have neglect stuff and I couldn't control the behavior of adults. Systemic trauma. I could not control any of that, right? The environment was doing what it's doing. Immigration trauma. I can't control any of the factors of immigration, right? Like none of that. I, I can't control none of that. So it's all about being disempowered. All of that. All of my traumas are about disempowerment.[01:07:00]

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: I don't need to take over the power neither. I just need to take my agency back. My empowerment. Not every, not the whole world. I don't need the whole world empowerment.

I can't see, this is the thing, these, these people think that they should take control of everything. They're just like misaligned toddlers basically, right?

They just didn't get enough agency when they were little, probably, and when they were teen and then they're like they're stuck in power. This is a toddler stage. Toddlers are stuck in power. They need to feel empowered.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm. That's beautifully put.

Magdalena Weinstein: I remember my kids, like okay, you are gonna sit here. And you're gonna sit. We're gonna have tea time. And they're controlling the. It is like, okay, where do you want me to sit? Here. No, no, no. I'm gonna switch you to here. Oh no, I'm gonna bring the table. I'm gonna, oh my God.

I'm like, okay, I gotta be really patient. This is gonna last forever. They're just trying to control everything, right? No, let's put the carpet under. Oh, no, no, no. I want you out. [01:08:00] Why are you doing? No, stay there. Don't look at me right now. You know? Okay, I'm gonna walk away now. You stay there. Typical toddler. You stay there. I'm gonna walk away, and you don't move. I'm like.

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: So cute.

Candice Schutter: Right. So if you're encouraging and instilling that sense of agency, then it develops in a healthy way, and it continues along the developmental trajectory. It doesn't just get stuck there in this need to control, if it's actually given space.

Magdalena Weinstein: In the toddler years, in the teenage years, Yeah. There's a very very important places where it can get stuck, unfortunately. Dangerously as well for some people.

Candice Schutter: So we see this in, you know, these individual relationships in these smaller cult dynamics. And then we see this in terms of these larger systemic [01:09:00] forces. And I think it was the first meme I saw of yours. It was this beautiful visual that you made. And it was about systemic and transgenerational trauma.

Magdalena Weinstein: And developmental inside. Right.

Candice Schutter: Yes. And developmental inside. So like, the life experiences that you've had and the fact that you are an immigrant, and the fact that you have had these experiences in different cultures. You've, you're able to see this, I think, a little bit more clearly.

So I would love for you to speak to why you created that visual. And like what you were trying to get at there, and how it relates to this conversation.

Magdalena Weinstein: Right. So a lot of the, maybe we're in a different place right now, I think in some of the trauma trainings. But, you know, I started, somatic experience in 2019, I believe. And the material in the training was not including systemic trauma.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: It was including a teensy bit of transgenerational trauma, like maybe like a little whisper. But not really any systems.

So by the time we had big changes in [01:10:00] 2020, right? In all ways of changes. One year after even of that, they had to change the training lingo, right? They had to adjust to people not appreciating that systemic trauma wasn't included, or it was included in a wishy-washy way, or that BIPOCs didn't feel comfortable with white people in the training. There were gender issues. They, they started like learning everything really, really fast. It kinda woke up. It woke people up, everything, right? One thing after the next.

So I, I just kind of wanted to contribute to that as well. Like.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah, we've been talking about developmental trauma forever. But what about these other things going on? Yes, there is transgenerational trauma, but that's because there's systems trauma. It's not just because there's transgenerational trauma random. It's because the systems are there.

But the systems is because of developmental and because those transgenerational. The systems are these [01:11:00] people. Nobody becomes a cult leader or a dictator unless there's all these factors going on. There has to be developmental and transgenerational systems that shift the perspective.

And humans really are, and I love this. This is nothing to do with my training. This is Yuval Noah Harari, I love when he talks about that humans have ideas. And this is a very particular thing about humans that have ideas, ideas about things. And the ideas is a dangerous thing. It's not the human itself. The ideas that humans have.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Are very dangerous. Ideas are dangerous. I know that about ideas. Because back to neutrality. Neutrality is not into ideas. Nobody cares about ideas when you access this subtle, neutral state. They go away. They vanish. And it, it is hard to actually access states that without ideas. Because we are full of ideas.

And [01:12:00] what is trauma? Trauma is a lot about the stuckness in the body, places in the body, right. Stagnant area that the brain interprets like an idea of something that happened before and thing that will happen in the future. It, it just makes this stagnancy into an idea about it. So it just looks for the thing that makes us human. Ideas. So I'm gonna make an idea about this.

So when you look at the graphic, you can see all these things that are the ideas on the outside.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: That shift the generations, that shift the development.

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's basically that. It is basically looking outside all these things that we created based on ideals of something that shift over generations the development of the person.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Very simple.

We have ideas about country, ideas about money, ideas about all these things, right? Everything is an idea. Ideas about social media, ideas about [01:13:00] trauma work.

Candice Schutter: Yep.

Magdalena Weinstein: And not much access to these subtle states. Because that's not an idea. It's a state. And states are not ideas. They're just states.

Candice Schutter: Well, and this sort of brings me into this final piece I wanted to ask you about. What I'm hearing you say, and you can tell me if I'm on the right track, is like, you know, you have this wellness world and we're trying to fix people based on ideas, really.

Magdalena Weinstein: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Candice Schutter: And that's, we're missing the whole point. Because ideas are not going to settle us.

Magdalena Weinstein: They're destroying us. This is what makes us human and what dis, what destroys us. It will. Because we are the only ones that have ideas. No other life form has ideas. It's very dangerous.

Candice Schutter: And again, I think, I think this is why it's so important to center BIPOC folks, because the understanding of systemic trauma. The ability to actually say, Hey, you're stuck in ideas. Ideas have caused a lot of [01:14:00] harm, specifically to us. And so, I'm not

trying to speak for anyone, I'm just sort of framing this in a way of saying like, I feel like you maybe can access that neutrality in a way that maybe even I myself haven't fully touched, because you really understand what you're turning away from. The systems that have been oppressive. The systems that have impacted you directly.

And so I guess my question for you, and you can speak to that however you want to, and my question for you is, when it comes to these wellness spaces and us dismantling and reconstructing what is actual genuine wellness?

What are we missing in your mind? Can you give us some insight?

Magdalena Weinstein: There's something interesting that I was reading the other day about working with the body and the, this tight vortexes of trauma that are actually physical tightnesses. We all know there's stagnance. We all feel it. We feel it every freaking [01:15:00] day. We feel this restrictions.

But when we liberate it, we're not only liberating life force, the goodness. We're also liberating whatever else is here.

Candice Schutter: Yep.

Magdalena Weinstein: We're not just bringing sparkling, shining bright rainbows. We're also bringing whatever else was repressed.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: Based on these ideas. So we liberate the tissue and we get the good and the bad out of that. And now we have to deal with that.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: And you liberate more of that good and bad, and then you gotta come back to center. And then move good and bad and then back to center. And then keep going so that things are not like black and white anymore. Whatever they are, we don't know. Because we don't really know what anything is actually, actually, we just have ideas about everything, right?

So when we liberate this life force, the good and the bad of it, we wanna also allow whatever is that to [01:16:00] be here. Like whatever soldiers' ideas and all that has done to me, I wanna also allow that to exist in me because it shaped me, right? And not pretend that I'm gonna get rid of it, 'cause I'm not gonna get rid of it. Like, I, I, I can't forget, I'm not gonna forget.

So, yes, I always say to clients, it's better to remember than to forget, because when you forget, it's just more charged. And it's more repressed, and it becomes more shadowy. And then you don't know what you're doing. And back to the, I don't know. Back to losing control.

Then you don't know that you're walking in the shadows. Then you don't know your behavior. Then you don't, you can't handle anything changing, because everything is overwhelming.

But when you become more neutral around the good and the bad, then you have more capacity to withstand each way, and now we're gonna need to have a lot more capacity. Because things are not necessarily gonna get better. So we wanna be able to withstand heat or [01:17:00] earthquake. Or, I know, I know it sounds terrible, but.

Candice Schutter: It's the reality.

Magdalena Weinstein: We need to remember instead of forget.

We don't get rid of it by dissociating from it. And when we liberate it..

Candice Schutter: That's For sure. I've done the legwork on that.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah, you're gonna have more pain sometimes, right? Like after some times you feel, oh my goodness, I didn't even know I had that pain. Because you were dissociated from it.

But when you liberate it, you're not just liberating the pain you are bringing back whatever else was like in the bath water with the baby. It's ridiculous to think for wellness practitioner, it's absolutely ridiculous to think that you are only bringing back some things and the others are not coming back.

We, sometimes people are like, oh my God, now I've been way more angry than I ever was in my life. Yeah, it's coming back.

Candice Schutter: Right, here it is.

Magdalena Weinstein: You gotta let it be here.

Candice Schutter: Which is what's happening in the world right now. You know, more light's being [01:18:00] shined on a lot of different places.

Magdalena Weinstein: Exactly.

Candice Schutter: And so, yeah, the dark is getting louder, too. And I don't mean it in a dichotomous way. I mean it in terms of the light and the shadow like you were talking about.

And the more, more consciousness we're bringing to it, the more we're gonna see all of it. I guess is what I'm hearing you say.

Magdalena Weinstein: We can become realistic instead of idealistic, full of ideas about.

I mean, the wellness is full of idealism. And we need to become realistic.

Candice Schutter: Yes.

Magdalena Weinstein: It's a waste of time to be idealistic. I teach that to my kids, like, don't be idealistic. Be realistic. In life, you wanna deal with reality. Reality of pain or whatever is going on. Don't be idealistic. Like, oh, things are gonna get better in the future. My future is better. Be realistic.

And if you don't have capacity, then look for support to build it. See, that's the thing about when you become realistic, you realize I have no capacity. [01:19:00] Because you're realistic. You realize, whoa, what's going on? I have no capacity here. Then you wanna build capacity, and you wanna be supported in that journey. Now it's really worth to build capacity to withstand.

Candice Schutter: Right. Which circles back to this collective culture that you grew up in. That notion is not something that's encouraged here. Of like, notice when you don't have capacity and reach out for support. That's not built into the American credo.

Magdalena Weinstein: No, deal with your, deal with it. Right? Here it's like, deal with it.

But no, it's the opposite. It's like you notice you don't have capacity, go find some resources so that you can build it up. Because you're gonna need it. Realistically, we're gonna need more capacity. We don't need to idealize that we're gonna become something else.

No. We need to realize what we are and the challenges that has. Especially the challenges about mind [01:20:00] being so freaking full of ideas that are idealistic in a good and bad way as well.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah, so I hope this reaches more people in wellness to understand how do you bring more reality in your space and less idealism.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Magdalena Weinstein: Thinking that you drink your pee or you stop vaccinate? What all the, whatever it is. All these things. Whatever that is, like a, just more meat or less that, or cold water exposure is all that you need.

Well, if there's global warming, it's not gonna be that much cold water. So what else can you do?

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: So what else is here? What are the tools that are actually realistically gonna be useful in the next 20, 10 years, even 10 years? Because things are changing fast. Realistically, the shifts are happening fast. So what are the realistic steps to help groups of people? To [01:21:00] help this system evolve?

Like how to operate in social media, all this, you know, business wise. How diversity, equity, and inclusion, what is realistic with all the shifts and with everything that is here? What is realistic?

People need back their agency even to deal with realistically more negative things when they come up, like pain. So what can support that?

The other day, client said, you're like, you're a pillar. I feel like I'm supported with this pillar in front of me.

Candice Schutter: That's that co-regulation though, right? Like you're regulated and you, she can co-regulate with you.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yes. A pillar that was here present with her and with her story and whatever she was sharing. And so she was feeling like she was regulating in the way. And she's like, I tend to feel more dysregulated with people. This is a struggle for people that have [01:22:00] dysregulation issues. I feel more dysregulated with people, but with you, I'm feeling more regulated. So it gives it a positive experience with another person that they probably have never had. Some people have never had or very little positive experience with other people.

I, myself, feel the same. Like I didn't have that many positive experiences of regulation growing up. When I walk in these streets with soldiers, you know, it was very, very dysregulating. After that, I was left to immigration and a lot of trauma.

So returning to that co-regulation is precious, right? So instead of promising other crap, like, can you learn how to be there for people?

Candice Schutter: Yes.

Magdalena Weinstein: Because that's all it, that's all it takes. They have their answer. Their body knows the way. The body has, has intelligence. It's gonna find its way to integration. Maybe not like betterness, but integration. It will [01:23:00] find integration in between all these things.

But it needs a ground, a ground place to settle.

Candice Schutter: And we all need support.

Magdalena Weinstein: And we all need support. And we all need grounded, neutral, no agenda access.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: Getting out of the realm of these ideas. Like, what, what should I do now? What should I do now? Say something? Interrupt? Do this, that?

Settle back. And that takes time to learn in the wellness, takes a lot of time to learn and practice.

Candice Schutter: So how can people find out about you and your work?

Magdalena Weinstein: They can find me in Instagram, Magdalena Weinstein. I have a website, magdalenaweinstein.com. I'm on Facebook, Magdalena Weinstein. I'm not very active in social media, frankly. You'll find me there if I'm looking at videos of cats or animals. I love my animals. So.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Magdalena Weinstein: And then sometimes I post when I feel [01:24:00] that something that I'm working with is important to share.

Candice Schutter: Yeah. Well, I'm glad that you did and that you do, because that's how I found you. And this has been really a treat to sit down and talk with you.

Magdalena Weinstein: Likewise.

Candice Schutter: I really appreciated your perspective.

Magdalena Weinstein: And yeah. Thank you so much. Yeah, I definitely wanna be a little bit of a, you know, some contributor in the world to, to accessing this very deep places of stillness and settling. Because we're gonna need them. And we're gonna need more, more support there.

Candice Schutter: I think you're right. I think it's gonna be really at the crux of what we're gonna need moving forward is the kind of work that you're doing. And I am deeply grateful.

You know, somatic therapy changed my life, you know, and I'm, I'm hesitate. I'm like stumbling over those words, because I used to say them about so many culty things. But, that's genuinely true, that somatic trauma informed therapy really did transform my life. And it really made me the kind of person who can have these conversations, [01:25:00] you know? We were talking about like being able to really understand and know ourselves and regulate ourselves so that we're not trying to control the environment around us so much.

And I still slip into that. I mean, ask my partner.

Magdalena Weinstein: Me too.

Candice Schutter: he could tell you some stories. But, um, not to say that I'm anywhere near finished and nor will we ever be, which is really the spell we're trying to wake up from, is that idealistic notion that we're gonna get to this place.

Magdalena Weinstein: We're gonna get to this perfect place. Yeah. That's another one of the ideas.

Candice Schutter: Right.

Magdalena Weinstein: Yeah. Um, I appreciate really talking to you and your questions. Wonderful.

Candice Schutter: Oh, thank you.

Magdalena Weinstein: We went really intimate. I hope that helps people get a sense of anything.

Candice Schutter: Yeah, that's absolutely where it, it tends to go. I mean, it's called The Deeper Pulse for a reason. We just kinda get right on in there. And I think that's, again, I'm hoping at least, and I'm finding in terms of feedback, that this is also something that people need more of, is intimate, long form conversations about things that help [01:26:00] us to all see ourselves better.

You know, having as many voices as possible and diverse perspectives and yours is super valuable to me. So thank you for your time.

Magdalena Weinstein: My pleasure. Thank you for inviting me.

Candice Schutter: Of course. Yeah.

I'd like to offer my heartfelt thanks to Magdalena for her willingness to share her personal story and her expertise so intimately with us. Please see the show notes for links to learn more about Magdalena and her work.

One of my greatest takeaways from this conversation, and I have a few, is when she says, and I'm paraphrasing here, as soon as control enters into the healing space, it's game over.

Candice Schutter: Which is why it's so imperative that we continue doing this work, unraveling these hardwired cult dynamics so that together we [01:27:00] can create actual wellness spaces, where we're free to show up in spaces that offer safety, without dogmatic oversight.

And if I'm being honest, it all sounds a bit utopian, even to my ears. But I'm thinking that, nevertheless, we can at the very least do better.

Yeah, it's a mess out there. And arguably, also in here. But that's no excuse to give up. So we're gonna keep at it.

I'll see you back here next week with another 'cult'ure series story, and if you enjoy the podcast and you haven't done so yet, I'd appreciate it so much if you'd take a moment to rate or review on your favorite streaming app.

Either way, thank you so much for listening, and I'll see you next time. Bye for now.