

0:00:19.0 Karianne Gwinn: Hello, and welcome to our Burnout webinar. Whether it's a good morning or a good afternoon, we are so glad that you're here. My name is Karianne Gwinn, and I am the Verizon Skill Forward Project Coordinator for Alliance for Hope International. I have the distinct privilege of working closely with the amazing domesticshelters.org team, including Ashley Rumschlag, the national director of domesticshelters.org; Hannah Craig, the Director of Content; and Rachel Myers, the Senior Digital Services Specialist. This webinar is made possible by our partnership with Verizon through the Skill Forward program. Skill Forward is an upskilling initiative that is designed to equip you and your community with the professional skills that you need to remain relevant in this ever-changing job market. Skill Forward offers over 400 courses and over 100 professional certificate programs completely for free in topics ranging from leadership to AI, to coding, to Excel, to graphic design, to nutrition, and so much more. There really is something for everyone. In the chat, you'll find a link to our interest form that you can fill out to get started, and if you're interested in promoting this program in your community, please reach out to me. My email is skillforward@allianceforhope.com. A big thank you to Verizon for providing this amazing program. Also, fun little side note: you're also going to see an Airtable in the chat for our Burnout Book giveaway. There will be five winners. What you'll do is fill out the form that's been shared in the chat, and then we will announce five winners at the end, and you must be present to win. May the odds be ever in your favor. This webinar is hosted by domesticshelters.org as part of our free webinar series. Check out the webinar section of our website to view past webinars. And as we mentioned, domesticshelters.org is a program of Alliance for Hope International. Our goal is to create communities of safety, hope, and healing. To learn more about our various programs, visit allianceforhope.com. There are tons of resources for you to utilize in your work to support survivors. And a few reminders as we get going: we have live closed captions available through this presentation, so click "show captions" to engage this feature, and please be reminded that all attendees are in listen-only mode. And if you have questions, feel free to utilize the Q&A box.

0:02:50.7 Karianne Gwinn: We'll have time at the end of the webinar to ask Amelia some questions, and then the chat can be utilized for introducing yourself and connecting with other attendees. And friendly reminder: within one week, we will provide a certificate of attendance for you, a transcript of the entire presentation, a recording, and any other relevant resources that come up in the webinar. And now, the moment that you've all been waiting for. I could not be more excited to introduce our presenter today. Amelia Nagoski is the New York Times bestselling author. She co-wrote the book *Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle* with her twin sister, Emily. This book has nearly 9,000 reviews on Amazon with people all over the world singing its praises, and it is written in such an accessible, conversational way that I think you will love. And it is seriously no wonder that people, especially women all over the world, are totally raving about it. Amelia, we are super excited to have you with us because this is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and there's so much conversation around how domestic violence impacts our society. And the reality is that the impact on advocates and direct service providers is far and wide. So we are so grateful to have you with us and just learn from your expertise and spunk and passion on this topic. So thank you so much for being here. Take it away.

0:04:17.3 Amelia Nagoski: It is my pleasure. I'm going to share my screen now. Almost.

0:04:21.9 Karianne Gwinn: Yes, we're in the tunnel.

0:04:23.1 Amelia Nagoski: We're in the tunnel. Fantastic. We're starting in a tunnel because of reasons I'm going to explain. This is me doing the arm waving. This is me. This is the cover of the

book that I wrote about stress. And the question is, how did I get to be a musician who also wrote a book about stress and is an expert in burnout? It's because of this person. This is my identical twin sister, Emily Nagoski, PhD. And in 2015, she published her own book, *Come as You Are: The Surprising New Science That Will Transform Your Sex Life*. And while she was working on that book, I was getting my doctorate in musical arts. She published it, went all around the world talking to women about the science of women's sexuality. And they would come up to her after talks: "Emily, I loved all the science. That was great. Yeah, yeah. But you know the one thing, the one thing that really helped me was that like one part of one chapter where it was about like feelings and processing your emotions. That's the thing." And she came back; she was so surprised because she worked so hard on that sex science. And I was like, "Yeah, no, I was not surprised at all because I had to learn that same stuff in school." I had learned it as part of my musician training, my conservatory training, and they teach you to process and feel emotions for the purpose of performance on stage. What I had not learned is that I can use that skill all the time. And when I did, it saved my life twice. So Emily said we should write a book about that, and that is exactly what we did. And that's where *Burnout* comes from. It's the book I needed. We wrote it for me. So today we're going to talk about the things that are the things that saved my life.

0:06:18.9 Amelia Nagoski: At least seven concrete, specific, evidence-based things you can do... Like literally right now... To start to feel better. We're also going to talk about, you know, why some of those things will not surprise you. Like, here's a spoiler alert: sleep is really good for you, and it helps you manage your stress. And everybody here already knew that. We're going to talk about why we don't already do it. And then, of course, because today is all about solutions, we're going to talk about how you can get over that barrier. So first, we need to define our terms because that's good science. So what is burnout? And as a contrast, what is wellness? In the book, Emily and I define wellness as a state of motion, a state of action. Wellness is not a state of being, and it's not a state of mind. It is a process. Wellness is the freedom to oscillate through all of the cycles that are inherent in being human. And how you get burnt out is by getting stuck and not having the freedom to oscillate, which is to say feeling burnt out can feel like you're stuck in that cave when actually it's a tunnel. So, which is a metaphor, obviously, and it's a beautiful metaphor, you know. You have to move all the way through the tunnel to get to the end, which is great. But I am a very literal person. I want to know the science. So this is a cartoon of the science. Stress is a cycle that happens in your body. And if we imagine how it developed in the environment of evolutionary adaptiveness, you can imagine a little like proto-mammal person just existing and then going down to the water, to the river to get some water for the village. And then, oh no, here comes saber-toothed tiger. And what happens to this proto-mammal being attacked by something that could end its life? There is a hormonal response, a neurological, neurochemical, and also polyvagal response, which is to say your every system in your body gets the message that something dangerous has happened. We know we call this the fight-or-flight state, right? And you get glucocorticoids and adrenaline and cortisol. And you all have heard all about this, right? All of this stuff communicates to every system in your body: "Hey, here comes something to end our life right here, right now. We need to save our lives. What do we do? "

0:08:54.9 Amelia Nagoski: Well, you need to conserve energy for the fighting or the fleeing, right? So your heart gets the message it needs to pump harder and faster to deliver more oxygen to the muscles. You need your inspiratory system... Respiratory system gets the message it needs to breathe faster and deeper in order to get more oxygen to the muscles. And you probably notice this stuff consciously. You might even notice something happens to your digestive system. You'll get a feeling of butterflies in your stomach. That is part of that like polyvagal brain-gut connection. And there's definitely stuff happening that you are not consciously aware of. For example, when you need to save energy for the fighting or the flighting, you need not to be expending that energy on

your immune system. So your immune system gets the message that this stress response is happening, and therefore your immune system says, "Okay, I hear you. I'm going to shut down and not do my work right now because who cares about malaria when there's a saber-toothed tiger?" Your reproductive system also gets the message: "Oh, we don't need to worry about babies because if we don't survive this saber-toothed tiger, babies are not going to matter." So your reproductive system is like, "I'm not going to do my work correctly right now. I'm going to give you all my energy, fight-or-flight response." And these systems shut down until they know that you're safe. And how does that happen? You do the thing that you do when there's a saber-toothed tiger coming at you. You use the response that your body has prepared chemically and electrically, and that is to run, to leap, to jump, to climb, to hide in the cleft of the rock. And when you look out, you can see... You're panting, sweaty... And you can see the saber-toothed tiger is gone. It's walking away. You have left its territory, and it's content, and you have saved your own life by using up the cortisol and the adrenaline and the glucocorticoids. You no longer need your heart to pump faster. You no longer need your breath to come deeper and faster. You no longer need your reproductive system and your immune system to take a backseat. That's what I'm trying to say: take a backseat. They can all come back online, and you return to your baseline. And that is the complete stress response cycle.

0:11:26.4 Amelia Nagoski: So when we talk about this being a tunnel and you have to move all the way through to get to the end, the thing is that these days we are mostly not attacked by saber-toothed tigers. These days, mostly the things that cause us stress are phone alerts, traffic, relationships. I don't need to tell you what the stressors are, and you, as people who work with survivors of domestic violence and all kinds of difficult... I don't want to be specific because I don't want to like initiate stress in anybody... But like, you absolutely know what the things that cause your stress are. And those things cannot be fought physically and cannot be run from. They basically need to be conquered, defeated with patience and kindness and generosity and paperwork and making phone calls and being nice. And these things do not complete the stress response cycle, but you still have it. You still get the glucocorticoids and the cortisol and the adrenaline because your body doesn't know the difference between various types of threat. Your body perceives threat in your clients, the people you work with, in little things like stressors and bills that are due and conflict with your in-laws, or just having to like wait for 20 minutes while you try so patiently to get your kid to tie their shoes. Like, whatever the stressor is, mostly these days we don't fight or flight our way out of it. And that's because of the, you know, in general white supremacist, heteronormative, exploitative like capitalist patriarchy, which I call the "wooshnope" because it's a little less harrowing. So the wooshnope stands between us and the actual physical exertion that completes the stress response cycle. So we never get back to that baseline. So because our stress response cycle has been interrupted in the middle by the fact that we don't need to do the running and the fleeing or the punching in the nose, that means that we have to deal with the stress that happens in our bodies in a separate process than dealing with the stressor, the thing that initiates the stress response cycle. So we're going to separate the stress, which is the thing that happens in your body, from the stressor, which is the thing that initiated that response. And so that asks the question, how do we get unstuck? How do we complete the stress response cycle in a separate process? And the answer begins with: when you're being chased by a saber-toothed tiger, what do you do? You run! That's right: physical activity. This is the part where I tell you exercise is good for you.

0:14:32.2 Amelia Nagoski: You already knew that? Yeah, I know. I know you already knew that. But I'm here to tell you that the reason physical activity is so good for this purpose is that it tells your body that it is the capacity to move you from danger to safety. Does it have to be literally running? No, of course not. It could be your Zumba class. It could be dancing it out to Beyoncé in your kitchen. It could be the elliptical machine. It could be going for a nice walk. It could be anything that tells your body that it is the capacity to move you from danger to safety. And if you

get to the end of it and you have that feeling of, "Oh, I escaped the saber-toothed tiger. I feel like a cloud has lifted, like the weight of the world is off my shoulders, " if you know that when you get back from a bike ride or a run and you feel that way, you know that you are a natural exerciser. You are like my identical twin who would go for a bike ride in like the hills of... We grew up in Delaware, so like you could ride to Pennsylvania because there's more Pennsylvania than Delaware... And there'd be the hills and the cows and the smell of mushroom farms. And she'd like feel just at one with everything while she's on this ride. And I thought she was making that up because I am the opposite of that. We're identical twins. We have completely different experiences of how physical activity helps us complete the stress response cycle. I had never known this experience. And the truth is when we say physical activity helps you complete the stress response cycle, which is to say exercise is good for you, it's just not that simple. For some people, it's not the thing that's going to help. It's not the thing that's going to work. For some people, it might be, but like, say you're gonna go for your stress cycle-completing walk and you get catcalled on your way out, and now this thing that was supposed to help complete the stress response cycle, now it has initiated a stress response cycle, right? So "exercise is good for you" is so much more complicated than that, and for some people, it just isn't it.

0:16:41.6 Amelia Nagoski: You might also have barriers like physical ability that stand between you and your body's capacity to move you from danger to safety. So if you know you're a natural exerciser and this helps you, yeah, do that. At a population level, it is the most efficient way to complete those old leftover stress response cycles that you're carrying around with you from eighth grade, and now your body gets a chance to remember that it has the capacity to move you from danger to safety. But if that's not you, there are six more concrete, specific, evidence-based things you can do to complete the stress response cycle, and the next is sleep, a good night's sleep. There's that saying of like "sleep on it" or "you'll feel better in the morning, " and I never believed that because I thought, "When I wake up in the morning, nothing will be different. Why would I feel different? " And the answer is because your body has changed. So your response to the external thing, the stressor that has caused you to have a stress response cycle initiated, still exists, but you can start to feel better because your body during REM sleep has the opportunity to process all those leftover chemicals, to dream and retell the story of what happened in metaphor or in literal terms, or just to tell any old story that has you living through another experience of usually conflict. So both the dream itself and the physiological processes that happen during sleep mean that when you wake up in the morning, you feel better because you have dealt with the stress that happened in your body, and that leaves you in a better place to deal with the things that initiate those stress response cycles. I have so much to say about sleep. If people have questions about sleep, please ask questions about sleep. But in the meantime, there are five more concrete, specific, evidence-based things you can do to complete the stress response cycle. And the next one has a picture of Godzilla. And I think I'm probably like right in front of Godzilla. I don't know. But this is here because when you engage your imagination, your brain doesn't really know the difference between you physically doing a thing and you imagining doing a thing. So if I can imagine myself... As I have... Being Godzilla and just tromping and destroying all the infrastructure of the state land-grant institution where I got my doctorate, where I burned out so hard that I ended up in the hospital, and I learned that I could imagine this destruction and being like so powerful and able to overcome this incredibly stressful place, I would get to the end of that and feel like no workout had ever made me feel... Like I had conquered something.

0:19:53.5 Amelia Nagoski: So I was ready for whatever comes next so that I had returned to something like a baseline where I was no longer vigilant, and I felt like I could be sort of peaceful for a hot second. And that's because your imagination can complete stress response cycle. So if you get through either an imagining thing yourself or reading a book with like a really engaging story

where you're like gripped and you can't put it down, or watching a movie, especially in a big theater with like all kinds of fans all around you where you all want to get up and cheer together, or you play a game... You're literally not moving any part of your body except for your thumbs... And you go and you rescue the princess, and your heart is pounding and your breathing is deep, you're literally sweating not because your temperature is different but because your body is experiencing a stress response cycle and getting all the way to the end because your context is safe and you're not gonna die, and that means you can get all the way through to the end and rescue the princess. And literally, you were just sitting on your couch, but you feel like you could do anything now, like you're powerful and prepared and like somehow more connected to the universe. That is the power of imagination to create... To complete a stress response cycle. While I'm talking about video games and movies and books and stuff, I do want to take a little sidebar to coping strategies that include numbing out to TV or games. Those are very different kinds of games that allow you to just chill and kind of turn your brain off that don't make your heart pump, that don't make you want to cheer. Those numbing experiences are also valuable. If you imagine... If you like break your leg and you go to the hospital and somebody's gonna set your leg and they don't numb it, they just set your leg and it's so painful that actually that pain causes more stress and slows healing... That's bad medical care. But if you go to the hospital and all they do is numb it and never set it, that's also bad medical care. Numbing is an inherently valuable part of the medical care process. And if you think of burnout as an injury, which you absolutely should, then caring for it does require some numbing.

0:22:39.0 Amelia Nagoski: If you need to spend half an hour staring at your phone, swiping Fruit Ninja things, or poking at candy bubbles, or whatever your phone game is that lets you turn your mind off, if doing that for 25 minutes allows you to cope with these 25 minutes and the 25 minutes that come after, then definitely do that thing. Just don't only do that thing. Also do one of these... So far three concrete, specific, evidence-based things that allows you to complete the stress response cycle, or any of the more that are coming. So numbing, not a bad thing, part of the process, but not what I'm talking about when I talk about imagination completing the stress response cycle. Number four is creative self-expression. And just like the natural exercisers, the natural creators already know this. If you go to your knitting circle and come home feeling like, "Yes, I have made something, and I feel like the weight of the world has lifted off my shoulders, " or you come back from choir rehearsal and you feel like just at one with your ensemble and your conductor and your accompanist and the composers themselves, like you know that experience. If you were in marching band or theater as a kid and you know that kind of like uplifted, elevated, one-with-everything, being-your-true-self experience that is being a creator, then you know what it is to allow creative self-expression to complete old leftover stress response cycles to help you return to that feeling of like baseline safety. So if you know that's you, do that thing. If you're like, "I don't know, that sounds interesting, but I've never done it, " try it. It might be your thing. I'm very enthusiastic as a musician myself that like more people need to know about this secret loophole in the world because I mean, we live in a world that is emotion-dismissing, that doesn't want us to feel big feelings, but then there's the arts where it's like not just permissible, but encouraged to feel big feelings on stage or in choir or just like in the making of the music or the making of the most perfect meal you've ever had or the designing of a process that's gonna smooth your way toward a more efficient blah, blah, blah. And you made or designed this thing that's made of you and your energy.

0:25:25.2 Amelia Nagoski: You can tell that I know how good this feels and how right it is for those for whom it is the thing. If it's not the thing for you, then congratulations, you're probably a natural exerciser, or you're gonna benefit from one of the next three more concrete, specific, evidence-based things you can do to complete the stress response cycle. The next one is a big old cry. I used to believe that crying doesn't solve everything because I thought, "Well, okay, I cry about it, but then I'm done crying and the problem is still there. What do I do then? Why would I feel any

different if the situation isn't any different? " But that's because I didn't know the difference between the stress itself that's happening in my body and the stressor that is the thing that initiates the stress response cycle. And the fact is that crying purges, moves you all the way through the feeling of whatever the stress is. And I thought that if I cried, I'd just keep crying until the situation got better, but it's not true. Like wellness, crying is a cycle. You oscillate into and back out of it, and that is natural and normal. And all you gotta do... If you're a natural crier and you know you can get in your car for five minutes or go to your favorite bathroom stall or lock yourself in your office or wherever it is that you feel safe crying... You do that and you have a cry, and you get to the end and you feel like better and relieved and a little lighter. And if you have never done this, like my sister would come home from school and just like throw herself against the bedroom door and sob for like four minutes, and then be like, "Ah, " and she'd feel better. And I was like, "What are you doing? " And it wasn't until I was in my 30s and in my therapist's office... It took a woman with a PhD from Yale to teach me how to cry... And I will tell you what I learned so that if you're not a natural crier, you can learn how. It's a skill. Did you know? I didn't know.

0:27:41.2 Amelia Nagoski: Some of you were like, "Yeah, we know." I'm sorry, but for those who don't know, I'm gonna go through the thing. How you cry in order to complete the stress response cycle is you allow the crying to overtake you. But you don't think about the thing that made you cry. You don't keep ruminating on, "I can't believe he said that. I can't believe she did that." You don't keep fueling it with the thoughts. You set the thoughts aside to deal with later. They're the stressor. You're going to deal with them in a separate process. They're in a box for the minute. You're going to put them away, and you're just going to focus on the stress itself, on the experience of the crying itself, on the weight of your body, wherever it is, on the amount of fluids that are oozing out, on the tension. How much tension is in your shoulders? How hot do I feel? And you just pay attention to the crying itself, and eventually, five, seven minutes, it just ends because it's a cycle. And if it doesn't end, then you're going to go to one of the other concrete, specific, evidence-based things that you can do to complete the stress response cycle, especially the last one, which I will talk about in a minute. For now, this is the next concrete, specific, evidence-based thing, and that is... Like a big old cry... A big old laugh, not polite social laughter that we do to make things, you know, "Isn't that...? " No, that ridiculous, open-mouth, drooling, abdomen-crunching laughter... That is the kind of laughter I'm talking about that's going to change your physiological state. And in order to illustrate that, I have a song. Is it plugged in? Did I turn it on? Why won't it forking work? Are the cables old? Is the connection loose? Why won't it fishing work? Oh yeah, I'm so annoyed, so annoyed, why won't it flapping work? Is my sound source connected? Is my webcam on? Why won't it flicking work? Did I join with audio or click on mute? Why won't it flushing work? I'm so annoyed, so annoyed, why won't it fluting work? Every time I think I know what to do, it never fracking works. I reset when I expect, then something new goes wrong, it never flopping works. Still I try, still I try, someday I'll make it work. That song is based on a true story. I wrote it because I was having some feelings about some technology.

0:30:39.4 Amelia Nagoski: That's the song about the, "Oh my god, please drop-down menu, please go away so I can start the presentation." I sing when I get stressed because of all the things we just talked about. But in addition to me using creative self-expression in order to move through my own stress, sharing it so that we have a common bond of experience we've had together, that's going to be the next thing we talk about. And in the meantime, it's a little bit funny. It's not laugh-out-loud, gut-busting funny, but it's funny enough to remind your body that it's safe right here, right now, which is really what I wanted it to accomplish. But as I was hinting before, our seventh and final concrete, specific, evidence-based thing you can do to complete the stress response cycle is affection, connection. That's one of the things we experience when we know that we all have those computer issues. When you're crying so much that it doesn't stop, where you turn to next in the

unlikely event of that crash is connection. It's people's favorite thing that we talk about. Being with someone who you love and trust reminds your body that it's safe. And in the research that's been done on this, a 20-second hug can do it. And it's not about the 20 seconds. It's about the fact that you and somebody you really love and trust support your own center of gravity, put your arms around each other, leave your bodies in close proximity for longer than you ordinarily might. Twenty seconds is a long time. It might happen at 18 seconds. It might take 24 seconds. I don't know. But at some point, you're going to feel a shift, says the research, that your body says, "Oh, I am with this person and I am safe. I don't have to be vigilant. I can shift back into a state of safety and return to my baseline and, oh, good." Or if you've got a certain special sweetie someone, there's more research that shows that if you're going to do this not with a hug but with a kiss, it takes even less time. They say six seconds is typical. It might be four seconds. It might be eight seconds. The people who did this research are John and Julie Gottman, who... Yes, I'm checking the time. Thank you, past Amelia, PowerPoint-making Amelia. John and Julie Gottman do this research, and they describe the length of the kiss as long enough to be a special moment, not long enough to make the kids late for school.

0:33:15.8 Amelia Nagoski: So you don't have to count the seconds. You just kiss until your body recognizes, "Oh, I am safe here with this person." And all of these things leave you in a state where your body remembers that it doesn't have to be on guard or vigilant or preparing for danger, that you are safe. Remembering that wellness is not a state of mind, not a state of being. It's a state of action. It's a cycle. The ability to oscillate through all the things that make us human, all the feelings, all of the states. So why are we not doing all this already? Everybody here already knew that sleep and exercise and connection are good for you. So why aren't we doing them? And the clearest framework that Emily and I could find came from a moral philosopher named Kate Manne. And because she's a moral philosopher, she posits a world where there are two kinds of moral obligations. There are the human beings. I'm going to put the human beings over here. The human beings have a moral obligation, she's a moral philosopher, to be their humanity, to live it, to express it, to acquire whatever resources are necessary in order to be their humanity. And on the other side of the human givers who have a moral obligation to give their time, their lives, their bodies to the human beings. And this probably sounds familiar to a lot of you, I'm going to guess. And a lot of you are probably thinking, "Well, I love giving. I feel like giving is my natural state. I don't want to change that. I feel called to give to those around me." And in fact, yes, if everyone in the world was a giver, nobody would fall through the cracks. Nobody would feel entitled to someone else's time and life and body. But we do live in a world where there are also these human beings who feel like they have a moral obligation to acquire whatever resources are necessary in order to express their own humanity. And we've divided the population. And remembering this is from a book called *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*, like, which one do you think she's saying the women are? It's the givers. Nobody ever questions that. We all know that she's suggesting that the women are givers. But of course, this is not a gender dynamic. This is a power dynamic. So it doesn't just happen across the gender intersection. It happens across what the primary language of the location is. So in the United States, English speakers are the beings, and non-native English speakers are the givers. Depending on what religion you are, in the United States, it's Christianity, and anything other than Christianity is, you know, the beholden, according to society, to the rest. It happens across all intersections: race, gender, physical ability, language, religion, all the things.

0:35:52.9 Amelia Nagoski: And how do you know if giving has become a problem for you? We describe it as "human giver syndrome," which... You might have human giver syndrome if you believe you have a moral obligation to be at all times pretty, happy, calm, generous, and attentive to the needs of others. And who wouldn't want to be all those things all the time? It feels like an ideal self to be able to give to someone all of that. But when you feel that any failure to be at all times

pretty, happy, calm, generous, attentive to the needs of others, that you are a failure, that your failure means that you deserve punishment. And if there's nobody around to punish you, you go ahead and punish yourself. And that this is not a symptom of a problematic dynamic. This is just the way the world is. If any of this has ever occurred to you, you might have suffered from human giver syndrome. On the other side of that is "human winner syndrome," which is the believing that you have a moral obligation as a human being to be at all times strong, confident, infallible, independent, and entitled. And that any failure to be confident, infallible, independent, and entitled makes you a failure as a person, and that your failure means you deserve punishment, and that you will go ahead and punish yourself even if no one else does, and that these are not symptoms. This is just normal and true. This is the way the world is. This is the way that toxic masculinity is literally killing men. So if you're feeling like, "Oh my god, there is no winning, there is no escape," that is a very normal and natural feeling. But the next part is the cure for human giver syndrome, or human winner syndrome. Although I'm talking to people who care for survivors of domestic violence, so I'm thinking human giver syndrome is probably more of the natural feeling, as indeed it is for a lot of caretaking professions. So what are we going to do? Well, you can't be a human giver all the time. You can't be just what the world expects you to be. You got to be the thing that you are, and that does not make you a failure, and you do not deserve punishment for it. And this is the song that I have about that. Do I press? I forget if the animation is on click or if it just follows in time. I think it must be on click. It is on click. This gap between what the world expects of you and who you actually are is an abyss. Here's my song about the abyss. Who does the world say that I should be? And what do I do if I don't agree? Rational me says that I am enough. My primate brain says not fitting is rough. Solutions are clear, I should be myself, and deal with the world when it puts me through hell. Or easier still is to be what they say. It only requires I give my soul away to the abyss. Abyss. Two opposite goals here ask you to choose. Whichever you pick, there's something to lose. But you're not alone, you're all on this road, and going together is a journey of hope through the abyss. Abyss.

0:40:26.0 Amelia Nagoski: It doesn't end on the home chord; it ends suspended and waiting for the next thing, because it's a cycle. It keeps going back to the beginning and starting over. It's not a thing you just do once. It's the little things that you repeat all the time every day. In the cure for human giver syndrome, which is, you remember who the real enemy is? And because Karianne told you all, "May the odds be ever in your favor" at the thing, at the beginning, I'm pretty sure you all know about my hair, about Katniss Everdeen and The Hunger Games. If you remember, there's a part of one of the movies where Katniss is about to go in to the arena. She lives in this dystopian future where the prosperous Capitol has all the wealth, like 1% have all the wealth, and all the outlying districts serve to provide wealth to the Capitol, and as punishment for their earlier rebellion, they have these Hunger Games where they pit children from the districts against each other to fight to the death in this arena. So Katniss is about to go into the arena as tribute in the Hunger Games, and her mentor says to her, "Katniss, when you're in there, remember who the real enemy is." So she's in there, she's fighting for her life, she doesn't know who she can trust, and here comes this guy, and she's got... She's an archer, she has a bow and arrow... And she's holding the bow on him, the arrow, whatever it is, and he says to her, "Katniss, remember who the real enemy is." He reminds her that this artificial external construct of the arena has been artificially introduced by the 1%, by the powers that be, in order to create the illusion of scarcity, of the need for competition. So what Katniss does is she points her arrow up at the arena itself and destroys the arena itself, cracks it open, and that's how she gets rescued. So instead of taking it out on each other, all of us who are down here in the arena, it's fighting against the system itself, which you already know because that's what you do for a living, but I want you to know that this is the cure for burnout.

0:43:18.5 Amelia Nagoski: All the things that I talked about, about how to complete the stress response cycle, they feel like what people talk about when they talk about self-care. They will help you complete the stress response cycle and leave you in a better place and more able to deal with the things that initiate the stress, but the cure for burnout really is all of us caring for each other, because you only have permission to have a good night's sleep when everybody around you does not make you feel bad for doing that, when they don't expect you to sacrifice your well-being on the altar of someone else's convenience. When we stand in a deep flowing river, the tide tells us that we are not enough, that we can't, that avocado-cream-green kitchen, it's not good enough. You need a white kitchen because HGTV tells you so. All of Instagram says you ought to be different than who you are, and you standing there in that flood of inaccurate information stand no chance of surviving alone. But when you build a bubble around you of people who will remind each other we don't have to succumb to that, we have our own little herd, our own little bubble right here of people who love each other, and you stand together in the river, that's how you stay upright. You don't get swept away. Nobody gets drowned. It's because you're all caring for each other. And remembering that when you feel like you need more discipline, what you actually need is more kindness, right? When you feel like, "Oh, if only I had more grit, " that grit research is bullshit. Sorry for the language, but when you feel like you need more grit, what you actually need is help. And when you feel like somebody else, "Oh, if they would just work harder, if they just had more discipline." No, what they need is kindness. And when you think they just need more grit, nope, they need help. And I have a song for this too. It's the Bubble of Love song, and it's about, well, I'll just sing it because it's about, you know, what it is to be surrounded by the people who tell you you don't have to be all the things that the world says. I want to do and be everything that the world has demanded of me.

0:45:56.6 Amelia Nagoski: Sometimes I feel I won't deserve love, not until I'm productive enough. That's when I need supplementary help to reinforce my boundary. In my bubble of love, I am enough. In my bubble of love, there are people who care about my well-being as much as I care about theirs. We guard each other from outside messages, showing each other we care. Because I want to want and like all the goals that the world has set for my role. Sometimes I fear I don't deserve love, not until I'm successful enough. That's when I need supplementary help to mind what gives life meaning. In my bubble of love, I am enough. In my bubble of love. That song is supposed to feel the way it feels to be in the bubble, to have people around you who are your own little herd. So to conclude all the things, remember that wellness, not a state of mind, not a state of being. Wellness is a state of action. It's the freedom to oscillate through all the cycles of being human. Burnout is caused by the accumulating incomplete stress response cycles that build up in your body due to unceasing demands and unreachable goals, a.k.a. The white supremacist, cis-heteronormative, exploitatively capitalist patriarchy. And in order to cure burnout, you got to complete that cycle over and over with sleep and movement and love and creative self-expression and the support of your bubble in order to allow you the freedom to do that. And a near-universal barrier that's standing between you and those things is human giver syndrome. The feeling that you have a moral obligation to be at all times giving and that if you ever once ever fail, then you are a failure and deserve to be punished. And how you defeat that feeling is to remember who the real enemy is, not take it out on us down here in the arena fighting it out, but to remember that you're all in it together, that the sense of scarcity is created by the powerful forces and who we got to turn toward is those external forces. And the only way we do that is caring for each other. The bubble of love, having our own little herd so that we all are protected and safe. And that's the thing with the songs. I'm going to stop my sharing now because that's what they told me to do. And here we are.

0:49:27.3 Karianne Gwinn: So Amelia, wow, thank you so much. I was just like grinning ear to ear as the chat was just blowing up with so much resonance, so much celebrating you. And I know that I personally just like feel really inspired watching you just step into just being your full self.

And I think when it comes to that self-care vibe, like we truly can only be loved as much as we allow ourselves to be known. And that's such a challenge, right?

0:49:58.9 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, that's a lifetime's work.

0:50:02.5 Karianne Gwinn: It is. It absolutely is. So I'm actually really glad that we have plenty of time because people are asking questions.

0:50:10.2 Amelia Nagoski: Great, great.

0:50:11.3 Karianne Gwinn: The first one is where can we listen to your music, especially the Bubble of Love?

0:50:18.8 Amelia Nagoski: I have... **0:50:18.8 Karianne Gwinn:** They want this playing at their desk. We need this.

0:50:23.2 Amelia Nagoski: Because I get this question a lot, I have very recently started recording some of the songs on our podcast's YouTube channel, which is very small because all we put on it is a podcast basically, and people listen to their podcasts not on YouTube. Anyway, it's on the YouTube channel of the Feminist Survival Project. It's a podcast that Emily started in 2020 because we thought it would be a hard year and turned out much harder than we thought. And then so after last November, we started the Feminist Survival Project Zombie Apocalypse Edition. So Feminist Survival Project YouTube channel. I do have a playlist of a bunch of the songs.

0:51:05.2 Karianne Gwinn: Amazing. And everyone has shared in the chat. That's great.

0:51:08.6 Amelia Nagoski: Okay.

0:51:09.1 Karianne Gwinn: That's great. YouTube is going to get so many hits from people. The Bubble of Love. I was over here harmonizing as well. A lot of people are asking about sleep. So let's see. Yes, I know sleep is one of my favorite topics as well. So let's see. If I feel stressed after one of the practices like a solid night's sleep, what should I do?

0:51:33.7 Amelia Nagoski: Oh, so like what you're saying is you have a good night's sleep and you wake up and you still feel stressed. That means that the sleep didn't do the thing. The sleep didn't do it. Or you woke up and it like came back so hard. And like that probably means that you have such a backlog of stress that your body wakes up and instantly goes back to its sympathetic state, that fight-or-flight state. You got to find new ways to do the thing. There are so many. Look, one of the ones I didn't talk about because everyone talks about all the time is mindfulness meditation. I'm so sorry. We all know mindfulness meditation is so good for us. But it is one of the things. And if you are in a moment where you're like, "I just woke up from a nap and I should be feeling restored." And a lot of people do. But if you don't, then probably you're going to need to find another way. Mindfulness meditation is like a right-here-right-now. For me, when I was in my doctoral program, for me, I found out seven minutes is what it took. Seven minutes of noticing my breath could shift me into a state of safety instead of alert vigilance. It might be that that thing is just not the thing for you that's going to complete your stress response cycles and try one of the other things.

0:52:53.1 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah. I think something to remember too, I'm a functional nutritionist as well as doing a psychosomatic practitioner training and yoga teacher. And so I'm like a geek about nervous system stuff and sleep and all of that.

0:53:04.8 Amelia Nagoski: I mean, we can talk about polyvagal stuff if you want to. We don't have that in the book, but Emily and I have done some training on it since it came out. So that's a thing. We can also do that.

0:53:16.2 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah, sure. We also have a webinar that we'll share in the chat that's related to polyvagal theory and gives a lot of those tips because I just want to remind people that like if they don't experience that "I slept well" or "I did 20 minutes of mindfulness and I don't feel great." Remember that the compounding stress requires compounding investment of doing the things. So we're not solving our problems in one night or in 20 minutes of mindfulness. Like we have to do this. And I like to refer to it as microdosing.

0:53:48.7 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, wax on, wax off.

0:53:51.0 Karianne Gwinn: Absolutely. Just in these tiny bits. So one of the other questions that came in was someone saying, "Hey, thanks for talking to us about how to cry. I'm really bad at it. In a similar spirit, how do we ask for help and who do we ask? "

0:54:05.2 Amelia Nagoski: This is such a good question. This is also a question we got... It was one of the first questions we were ever asked on book tour, by a journalist. And we get it a lot of like, "What if I don't have anybody in my bubble? What if there's nobody I can rely on? " And this is such a good question. Because Emily and I didn't have anybody in our bubbles either. We're twins, and we grew up in the same house, but like, we did not have each other the way people assume twins have each other. We grew up in a household with mental illness and addiction, and it was a shut-down place where nobody had any feelings. But when we started doing research for the book, we thought we were going to write a self-help book, right? And no, it turns out we wrote an everybody-helps-each-other book. And the research just kept saying, "Love, connection, vulnerability, humanity." And we were like, "Oh, I guess we have to do this." So like, we in our late 30s, early 40s, finally started talking about horrible stories from our childhood that you don't talk about the horrible things when you're in the house with an addict, with somebody who's mentally ill, like your whole life revolves around keeping that person calm and happy so that nobody else, right? So we had never done this. We were not connected. So we started just awkwardly being like, "Okay, I guess we're going to do this work." And it was, Emily described it as each of us being frozen in a 20-foot-by-20-foot block of ice. And we just had to start melting it down. So what I recommend to people who are like, "But who's in my bubble? Who do I ask? Who can I trust with this? Who won't feel like it's a burden to help me? " I bet there's somebody in a 20-foot block of ice right next to you who also desperately wants help, desperately would benefit from the connection. And if the 20-foot block of ice image doesn't get through to you, then in the movie Frozen, everybody knows Frozen just like everybody knows The Hunger Games, there's Anna knocking. "Do you want to build a snowman? " Right? And then they grow up and their parents die and she's. "I know you're in there. People are asking where you've been. They say 'have courage' and I'm trying to, I'm right out here for you. Just let me in." Anna is so brave to stand on one side of the door and ask. It's so hard to be vulnerable and say, "Let me in. We only have each other." Right? So I bet there's somebody around you who wants as desperately as you do to be connected. And you just have to be Anna. You have to be the one to ask. "Do you want to build a snowman? Oh, it doesn't have to be a snowman."

0:57:20.4 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah, they're just saying anything, just connection. I think in our society, we're so siloed and isolated. And so even like we used to go to the grocery store with a friend or like, "Bring your kids over, bring your chaos and add it to my chaos and we'll just be

together." We can build a snowman or not.

0:57:37.9 Amelia Nagoski: Loneliness is an epidemic that's as bad for us as smoking. And one of the reasons it's so pervasive is because it's heroized. We're told that it's good for us to be independent, that the journey from childhood to adulthood is a journey from dependence to independence. And that's a bullshit lie intended to keep us weak and not fighting back against the wooshnope. The growth, the journey from a childhood to adulthood is the journey from dependence to interdependence. So we're able to give back as much as what we are given, not so we can stand alone. Don't fall for it.

0:58:19.1 Karianne Gwinn: Absolutely. I totally agree. Someone's asking, since you just said this, can you repeat what wooshnope stands for?

0:58:26.8 Amelia Nagoski: White supremacist cis-heteronormative exploitatively capitalistic patriarchy. We call it the wooshnope. White supremacist cis-heteronormative exploitatively capitalist patriarchy. The C is silent like in Polish.

0:58:45.2 Karianne Gwinn: Okay, I was like pronunciation wooshnope.

0:58:47.8 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah.

0:58:49.1 Karianne Gwinn: Okay, nailed it. Thank you. Someone said I'm immediately obsessed with this.

0:58:53.9 Amelia Nagoski: I set things to music when I don't really like them.

0:59:00.8 Karianne Gwinn: Totally. Okay, so we have, you know, a lot of advocates who are seeing some very intense things in their work. Someone has asked, how do I leave what I see and experience at work so that I can get a good night's sleep? What is your recommendation for basically offloading? I mean, you gave seven, right? You gave seven different recommendations.

0:59:22.4 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, yeah. Those are the things. The thing is that you can't leave them at work because they're in your body. So Emily has lots of stories, but she worked at Smith College as the wellness director. She was a person that people would come to with their horror stories. And it was her job to connect them to the resources they needed in order to progress. And it's also part of her job to be the receptacle of these stories, which I'm sure is relatable for everybody. So what do you do with that? So Emily talks about how when she would have like a really bad day, there was one particularly bad day, she tells a story of like three different women came to talk to her about some very bad stuff. And she leaves work like shaking and overwhelmed and like doesn't know what she's going to do with herself. And ordinarily, it'd be like a hot bath and a glass of wine and she'd be good. But this was not, this needed more. So like the thing that she did, and the thing you need to know about Emily is that by day, she's Emily Nagoski, PhD, like writer about women's well-being. But like at night, she has like a cape and an alter ego. And she's Emily Foster, romance novelist. It's real. You can look it up. And so this one particular day, she went home and wrote not like the next scene that's happening in the book. She just skipped ahead and wrote the happily-ever-after scene, the proposal scene with the hero on his knees begging to deserve the heroine. And she's typing while crying is just all it is. And so she's doing the crying, she's doing the creative self-expression, and she's doing imagination all in one. And that's how she gets through this one really hard day. So I can't tell you how you leave it at work. What I can tell you is you need to find the things that tells your body that you are safe and do those things and surround yourself with people

who will give you time and space and care for you while that happens.

1:01:32.7 Karianne Gwinn: Yes. I think sometimes we have to be that person for ourselves before we create the village, like have an out-loud talking sesh. And I love the conversation of imagination and even Emily writing the happy ending because I think especially in working in the field of domestic violence, a lot of times you don't necessarily see the happy ending partly because once someone comes in for the services that they need and then they're happy, they kind of graduate out and their happy ending happens somewhere else. We don't know it. So we're holding this intensity and vicarious trauma. And I think there is an invitation for our folks to use the imagination and to write that happy ending and imagine what if this client got exactly the care that they needed and exactly the restraining order and the safe living situation and all of that because like you're saying, the body is going to listen to what the brain is saying. So if we're imagining this happy ending, our body's like, "Okay, it's going to be okay." And sometimes that's what we have to do to survive, to get through, to keep going, to keep showing up.

1:02:41.0 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. For people who are instinctive givers who are, who's like, what's the word? Reflexive response to a bad situation is to dive in and care. Sometimes they literally are incapable of telling themselves, "I need care now too." So it might take an external person doing the "go take care of yourself" talk. But yeah, actually like if somebody's natural inclination is to like write a story or imagine the story, I bet it would help to think through "your client just left your office. Here's what's going to happen. Best case scenario." Yeah. I believe.

1:03:23.8 Karianne Gwinn: Yes. I love that. I love that so much. Back to a question about sleep. Do nightmares exasperate the stress cycle? Oh, great.

1:03:34.2 Amelia Nagoski: Nightmares are such a gift. The same psychologist who taught me to cry also taught me to dream, like to dream in a useful way. The thing about all dreams, including nightmares, is that everything in it is made of you, right? It's happening in your mind. Your mind is made of your neurons and your electricity. And so the only resources it has to pull from is your knowledge and experiences and self. So if you look at your nightmares, especially where everything is a part of you, and you find the thing that made it scary, and you can turn toward that thing with kindness and compassion, and not be scared of... I mean, go ahead and be scared of it, that's fine. But to not allow the fear to prevent you from offering compassion to that hard thing, that's a thing that's inside you that required your attention. That's why you dreamed about it. So if dreams are intense and explicit for you, and you can remember them, and you have a little time to invest in the morning to write them down or just reflect on them or whatever, there are lots of ways to do dream analysis. But in my experience, the one that helps the most is remembering that stuff is generally not symbolic of stuff outside of you. Everything that you dream of is something that's inside you, usually. And then address those things and give them kindness and compassion. It feels really different. And I have learned to be really grateful for hard dreams because difficult, painful, fearful dreams are so important and communicate so much stuff that I might never otherwise notice is going on inside me.

1:05:28.4 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah, that's so true. And I love how you were talking about REM sleep and the healing that happens in that. And I think when I learned about REM sleep and its correlation to EMDR therapy, that was super fascinating because the rapid eye movement stimulating both sides of the brain when we're sleeping is taking those short-term memories that get triggered easily. And we're like, "Oh my gosh, I'm back exactly in that moment" and are basically filing them backwards. And similar with EMDR, when we're like, buzz, buzz, click, click, all of that process is happening. So I think the way that we think about our dreams, we have these choices

always, right? Like we can be like, "Oh my gosh, I'm re-traumatized by this. I'm so freaked out." Or we can say, "Good job, brain. You're doing exactly the thing that you need to do to shove this baby into back, like long-term memory. And this is not going to come up so much." And it makes it less scary.

1:06:26.2 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. It also means that the scary thing happens and it feels scary, but you are actually safe. There's no emotion that is inherently dangerous to you. There's no dream that is inherently dangerous to you. So this is this opportunity to be safe, but like experience the danger so that you can kind of be in it, wallow in it, experience it when you're not actually unsafe.

1:06:52.4 Karianne Gwinn: Yes, absolutely. And if there are invitations for the body, like you're saying, I think a lot of us who are super in tune with our bodies, we know like, "I want to run. I want to scream. I want to whatever." And like that thing and also reorienting to the space, right? Because we get in dreamland and we wake up and we're like, "What the heck just happened?" But when we take a moment to literally look around and use our eyeballs to be like, "There's my lamp. There's my blinds. There's a plant. I'm okay. This is where I am." It helps us to separate ourselves from the intensity of that sleep experience.

1:07:30.4 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, yeah. If people are super into, I am autistic and like 50% of autistic people, I have alexithymia, which is a clinical inability to recognize my own internal state. And my identical twin, Emily, is the far opposite end of the bell curve. She is hyper-aware of her internal state. So her experience is really different from mine. And she has an open invitation if anybody else is like so hyper-aware of their internal state that they just can't notice every feeling, she would like to hear from you because she's never like read a book or found any story that's about that. So unrulywellness@gmail.com or just Google her or whatever.

1:08:13.0 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah. That's awesome. I love that so much. Thank you for having a convo about that. So let's see here. We've got a few more and I want to see. Oh, this is a good one. I feel like this is so pervasive in our society. Do you have any tips or advice for breaking the cycle of numbing out to things? I do numbing activities instead of what I wish I had the energy to do.

1:08:37.9 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. That probably means that what you have to deal with is really painful. And the idea of stepping into it, just the idea of the pain is scary. I recommend professional help in that situation.

1:08:54.8 Karianne Gwinn: We love professionals.

1:08:56.7 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. I recommend, if not like a really close friend and someone to be with you when you do some of the turning toward the difficult feelings or try some of the things that will complete the stress response cycle. If just acknowledging the difficult thing is hard, sometimes you need somebody to sit with you in the cave and be like, "Honey, it's a tunnel. I can sit here with you in this tunnel, or we can move towards the end." Or sometimes you just need somebody with training who knows exactly how to help you with that. But like, yeah. If the numbing is overwhelming and you can't with the rest of the healing, that's what the professionals are for.

1:09:36.2 Karianne Gwinn: Well, and that comes back to the, I don't need more discipline. I need more kindness. Right? And we need kindness often from other people to show us what it looks like and feels like. "Oh, yeah. I can offer kindness to myself and to others."

1:09:50.5 Amelia Nagoski: But just the fact that this person has recognized like, "Oh, yeah, I do the numbing, and I just can't even think about going past that stage, " that is an amazing level of self-awareness that's like, "So good for you." This is how people get addicted to things is they discover how much easier it is to be numb all the time. And the idea of facing, yeah. So excellent self-awareness.

1:10:18.7 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah.

1:10:20.1 Amelia Nagoski: Professional help.

1:10:20.7 Karianne Gwinn: Absolutely. I want to add to something a coach that I worked with shared with me when I was in a really hard season, and I was super addicted to Netflix. It started as like a coping skill that turned into a coping mechanism, you know, that really fine line. You're like, "Oh, this is unhealthy now." And I just, I can't stop doing this. And he was like, "Karianne, you are a human, and you're fighting against a machine. You can't fight against a machine. You have to use a machine to fight against a machine." So there are apps and things if your numbing-out stuff has to do with technology. There are all kinds of apps and screen time and have a friend, have the passcode so that you literally cannot access it. You're going to fight machines with machines. Our willpower will never be enough.

1:11:09.9 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. If the thing that you're using to numb out is, I mean, I guess like all of them, is specifically designed to keep you coming back for more, that is so difficult when the thing is designed to, it's like the hyper-processed foods, ultra-processed foods that are designed to make you eat more, because they did research to find out which flavors and textures make people eat more. They did weaponization research to make their unnutritious, not even barely food. You know what I'm saying? So yeah, you can't do it alone. You can't.

1:11:49.9 Karianne Gwinn: No, you cannot.

1:11:51.1 Amelia Nagoski: You're not supposed to. Humans are designed to do big things together. So Jonathan Haidt is a social psychologist who writes that humans are 90% chimp, 10% bee. We're a hive species. How we function at our best is in communities, in herds.

1:12:10.9 Karianne Gwinn: Okay, whoa. Say that again with the 10% bee chimp thing.

1:12:15.2 Amelia Nagoski: This is from Jonathan Haidt, H-A-I-D-T. He says humans are 90% chimp, 10% bee. We're a hive species. We're designed to flourish in community. We are not designed to operate efficiently alone. We're not like lions out on the prairie, lone hunter, whatever. That's not how our biology works. How our biology works is in connection with other people or connection with a loving divine presence or with our own inner child or with nature itself. But we need connection in order to thrive. We're not built to do big things alone. We're built to do them together. Emily and I had to write this book together.

1:12:57.4 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah, I love that. We're in such a lion society that being the hive people is so countercultural.

1:13:10.6 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah.

1:13:11.1 Karianne Gwinn: And so people are like, "Wait, that's weird." I'm like, "No, this is the design. This is what we're made for."

1:13:18.0 Amelia Nagoski: But the thing is that other cultures around the world haven't forgotten that the way the West has. It's really just us.

1:13:27.8 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah. We're really missing the mark on that.

1:13:29.8 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, we screwed up.

1:13:31.4 Karianne Gwinn: Ethically failing. Yeah. Ethically failing at community and togetherness.

1:13:34.9 Amelia Nagoski: But we get to fix it. I mean, we're not going to fix all of society in our lifetime, but we can build our own community that's good, our own little bubble that's where nobody falls through the cracks and everybody turns toward each other and nobody feels like they're not enough and nobody feels like they're a failure just because they aren't perfect all the time. We can build our own little, it's like a garden. You grow your thing and then your neighbor is better able to grow their thing.

1:14:05.8 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah. I love that. And just sharing, sharing life together.

1:14:11.6 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, that's what we're here for.

1:14:13.6 Karianne Gwinn: The goal, that's what we all want, right?

1:14:15.1 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah.

1:14:16.2 Karianne Gwinn: So next question is, what if you were a creator but experiencing creative block and feeling stressed from that? We're like pivoting fix totally, but talk to us about that. I'm sure you've had that.

1:14:27.8 Amelia Nagoski: Oh, yeah. So is this in the context of somebody who's a recreational creator or a professional creator? Because these two things are very different. If it's your job to create, I talk to musicians a lot because they're my people. And a lot of us bake or cook or work on our car or knit or do other kinds of crafting because when your creative thing goes from feeding your soul to putting food on your table, your relationship with it changes. And that's not a failure. That doesn't mean you're not a good enough artist or creator. It just means that your relationship to your creating has changed. So find something else because if you're a creator, you're going to create. Find something else to create that's not going to be associated with your job. And something you're bad at is what I recommend because then you won't try to turn it into a side hustle. And if you are a creator who creates for fun, then that's okay. Don't do the thing anymore. Take a break. Find something else. It's okay. It doesn't mean you're bad. It just means that sometimes we get stuck and you've got to find ways to get unstuck that involve oscillating through all the cycles of being human.

1:15:48.1 Karianne Gwinn: It's such a good time. I loved in the book how y'all talked about how having difficulty in something actually makes you learn it better. I loved that study. You guys mentioned there was a study on, I think, high schoolers where the content that they read, one group, it was just the regular text, and the other group, it was poorly written length-wise. And retainment and understanding and comprehension was so much better with the difficult, because they were working hard at it. And I think that's such a good reminder for us that we don't need to fear those

things that are hard, like starting a new hobby. It's normal to suck at something you've never done before. This is normal and human. It's okay.

1:16:36.0 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah, there's a lot of examples and a lot of research on that. When things are a little harder, we do better at it and we have more successful results. Lots of research to demonstrate that. So if it feels hard, it's another learning experience.

1:16:52.5 Karianne Gwinn: I love that so much. All right, let's look. I'm going to look through. There's so many sleep questions. Do you have resources? I'm just bunching all these together and thinking, do you have favorite resources for sleep, mindfulness, meditation, things like that that we can share with people?

1:17:10.5 Amelia Nagoski: There are so many resources about mindfulness meditation. And some of them are really famous. You'll find those. For sleep, Matt Walker's *Why We Sleep* is the resource that we used a lot of references to. So Matt Walker's *Why We Sleep* is the, as far as I know, the most science-y and practical book about sleep. That will answer all your questions about sleep, unless it's dream-related and stuff. But if it's about sleep itself, how many hours, how do I get it, what are the problems that stand between me and sleep, Matt Walker's *Why We Sleep*.

1:17:46.3 Karianne Gwinn: I love it. We will totally recommend that to the people. Okay, someone says, things are so stressful in the world right now with forces outside of our control impacting our lives in massive ways. What can we do when you can't complete the stress cycle because you are constantly in a distressing situation and so is your support system?

1:18:06.0 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. Right now, specifically because of the state of American democracy, I recommend taking a news fast. Stop watching the news. Stop paying attention to everything that Trump does. Don't listen. Don't read. Don't worry about it. For all of human histories, like, let's say it's 50,000 years of humanity has been humans who have been in human communities, right? Fifty thousand years. And here's 25,000 years. And here's like the time that it has been that humanity has been able to know what's happening in Ukraine or Hong Kong, right? Our nervous systems were not designed to know so much about so many things we can't control. Stop doing that. Yes, it's important to be connected. It's important to be informed. It's important to be participating in society. But like this much access to so much information about stuff we can't change, don't do it. Your body's not designed to do it.

1:19:31.4 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah, it's so unnatural and it's a hard balance, I think, especially in a lot of our folks' organizations because they have government funding that's being cut and it impacts the work and it's so complicated and the impacts of it are really far-reaching that I think there is a lot of, gosh, I wish that I could put my head in the sand about this, but it impacts the work. And I just want to remind everyone, there are going to be things in our lives that are totally out of our control and this question, "What is the next right thing?" Just one at a time. We can easily look down that whole tunnel and be like, "Holy, I'm never getting to the end of that." But what if we just take the next step, whatever that next step might be, and just chunk it down a lot?

1:20:22.4 Amelia Nagoski: Yeah. Another, like one of the pieces of advice we give that sounds like the dumbest thing is actually one of the best things is do a thing. If you're feeling overwhelmed and exhausted by the pressure of all these external forces and like you never get a break, do one thing that makes you feel like you accomplished something, right? Clean out your car, tidy your drawer. Like do one thing that makes you feel like you accomplished a thing and that'll show your body that it has the capacity to move you from where you are to somewhere that feels better and safer and

like, "Oh my God, I could control a thing. I control the thing. I made a thing better. I helped one person." It doesn't, your cognitive awareness of the world is going to tell you, "You didn't even make a dent. You didn't do anything compared to what needs to be done." But what you did was tell your nervous system, tell your body that it is capable of making change. And that is a thing that's true at the appropriate scale.

1:21:28.2 Karianne Gwinn: Yeah, definitely. In our work with the science of hope, some of our folks on the webinar know about this, but that is one of those things like make a tiny goal, achieve tiny goal, hope increases. We're like, it doesn't have to be the huge thing, just something small that reminds you, "Hey, I have agency, I have the ability to affect change in my life."

1:21:49.8 Amelia Nagoski: Exactly.

1:21:50.5 Karianne Gwinn: And small matters. It matters so much. I see that we are wrapping up our time. Amelia, we are giving away five Burnout books and we're so excited to give people the opportunity and the gift for free to read Burnout, The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle. I know it has already blessed me so much and we have been absolutely floored to have you with us on our webinar. Thank you so much for being here. It has been amazing. We will send you all of the rave reviews when they're coming in. We've already collected so many comments. People are even saying this is the best webinar I've ever been on. They are loving it. So thank you for bringing just you to this. We have so appreciated your presence. Let's tell our people who won. All right. Can we get a drum roll?

1:22:40.6 Amelia Nagoski: Hey, and thank you all for the work you do.

1:22:43.6 Karianne Gwinn: Yes, thank you. Thank you for saying that. Yeah, this is an amazing crew and we're unbelievably grateful to get to supply this type of content and encouragement. It's huge. Okay. Sherry Loftus, Dr. Deborah Scott, Ella Dumke, Julia Richmond, and Trina Sandoval. You all won a copy of Burnout. We are so excited for you. I will reach out to you via email so that we can get your address and get those shipped out to you. We are confident that you are going to be unbelievably blessed and encouraged by this book and also just like entertained as we all have been from this presentation. It is just written in such a fun way. I absolutely love it. Thank you all so much for being here. Amelia, thank you so much for joining us. It has been such a gift.

1:23:31.3 Amelia Nagoski: Thank you so much.

1:23:32.7 Karianne Gwinn: All right. We will talk to y'all soon. Have a great rest of the day.