

Molly Knight 0:00

Good evening, everyone. Welcome to Health Australia Party Thursday night talks. I'm Molly.

times with these regulations. And Nita is currently running an online program for women impacted by trauma, abuse or isolation during this COVID-19 time, and she's got a lot of techniques and knowledge that she can share and provide significant help which will allow for people those feelings of overwhelm and confusion and emotional pain and help you to keep these feelings and particularly around like, the overwhelm and helplessness that we often feel as we're so restricted in what we can do these days, and even rage that you know, could be filling up and you don't perhaps recognize it. So it gives me great pleasure to introduce you to a native Ventana. Welcome, Anita.

Anita Bentata 1:51

Thanks, Molly. It's great to have this opportunity to to engage about an everyday experience that we're all having about overwhelming and help hopelessness, it's so important.

Molly Knight 2:03

And I think, for me, I know it's something that's crept up on me because I've sort of cope mostly pretty well with things. But sometimes I suddenly feel myself going, Oh my gosh, this is all too hard. And I must say, I've really not felt that much in my whole life. But I know for you, you you have a very interesting background. And I wonder if you could tell us how you went from being in accounting to being a psychotherapist? Can we start with that, Anita?

Anita Bentata 2:31

Absolutely. I grew up in a family before even the accounting where there was a lot of helplessness and overwhelm. And so I learned a lot of ways of how do I need to be in the world to be okay and to keep the peace and not cause anything that might feel more overwhelming. And that led me into like, I was working in accounts. When I ended up leaving because I ended up leaving domestic violence with my two young children. And so then as soon as I escaped from the domestic violence, I went into therapy to make sure that would never happen again. For me, for some reason, that was really clear that that's what I needed to do. And through that journey over a couple of years of therapy, individual and group therapy, I thought, I don't want to go back to accounts. I loved it, but I knew I had wanted to do something more. And I wanted to do something more with people, but I hadn't been sure wash and after going through my own personal journey, I changed careers. And so I went back to I went to uni, and I'd actually left school at 16. So it was a big deal going into uni and after three years of my bachelor qualification, and I started working in the field and because I knew what I needed as a client from a practitioner, I hadn't gone for psychology. I searched for a different qualification and, but no qualification of the standard ones gives you what you need to work with trauma or abuse. So then I went into the field of the four years qualifying on what

had helped me recover from domestic violence and childhood trauma. So that was what led me to being in my own private practice and I can't believe it's been 25 years now

Molly Knight 4:31

25 years later, you surface. Let's start tonight with if you don't mind with the discussion on this overwhelm, because like I said, I have felt overwhelmed with everything that's been happening. And it's it's, it's a bit of an alien feeling to me really, because I sort of float through life a bit but and I think a lot of people do we have our own little coping mechanisms, don't we? So can you describe like what happens to our body, and thoughts, our emotions when we do find ourselves in this state of overwhelm. When we feel, I guess, feel that life is on top of us and we become overwhelmed. And well just feel as though we're not really coping,

Anita Bentata 5:16

hmm. overwhelm is the experience where our system doesn't feel the skills, the safety or the support to be able to integrate what's coming at us. And so when overwhelm equals trauma, it's not just the big things that you hear about in the news. It's any experience where our system can't integrate what's going on. And what our system does with the overwhelm is automatically when our system registers overwhelm, our system has to disconnect from the input when our system doesn't know how to be with it. And that sets up the stress response in our system where it mobilizes blood to go to different parts of the brain and different parts of the body and whole mines get activated. You know, different hormones are activated and our system is more laser focused on the detail of something rather than being with the whole of what's going on. We've lose contact with our frontal cortex where we're process and we can think about our feelings and feel about our thinking. We're in more urgent, faster mode, more emergency mode. And you can see that in social media posts because people have far more the dials up far higher on their reactivity. And they're wanting everybody to kind of be quiet in a sense, so it doesn't trigger their own stuff. So what everyone's wanting to shut everybody else down, because of that state of overwhelm when they don't have the mind body skills to be able to process what is happening. So the

Molly Knight 6:52

that's fascinating the changes in the body, isn't it just when you feel overwhelmed because for me, I wouldn't have linked it to a trauma as such. would have just thought, Oh, yeah, well, I feel a bit overwhelmed. And, you know, what do I do to to feel different, but interesting that it is linked to Well, it's a traumatic experience. Yeah, yes. Yes.

Anita Bentata 7:12

So when that overwhelm happens and the nerve fibers between the left and the right hemisphere, the corpus callosum, the less of them are connecting and talking to each other. And so we might get muddled. We might get forgetful, we might have foggy thinking, we might get things mixed up, energy can feel really hard. We can feel really

lethargic, the things that might energize us, make us feel tired. Everything has more effort. And I think of it as it's a wonderful thing that our brain is doing. Our brain is never broken. It's always doing the perfect thing. It's just that we live in a society that is so misunderstands trauma so much, that we go into an accumulation And what is normal is we're managing a lot of stress. And so we might have some overwhelm. And then we, we keep accumulating and taking, minimizing. We met, we minimize how much we're affected a lot of the time, and we maximize how much we think we're coping. And often, then when we're out of something, we can realize more about the reality about how significant it was. But the beautiful thing about the disconnect is, it's only meant to be a temporary thing. It's meant to be till we can get to a place of resources, support, safety skills, to be able to then go back to what overwhelmed us and integrate it. But we're in a society that values the thinking function so much that we just think I'll keep on going. It's over now or we'll do some rational thing about it. And we don't realize that the body carries What the mind can't integrate, and it accumulates in the body carries the unconscious and all of what our mind can't be with. And so we get triggered, then something else comes up for us. Because we haven't been we just need to come back to that overwhelm with skills and support and then we can process it. And then and the traumatic experience doesn't have to create trauma. Former is only because it's not it's not addressed in our system.

Molly Knight 9:31

Mm hmm. So it manifests manifests physically in our body. And we do we hold it in our body somewhere says

Anita Bentata 9:40

cells carry self carrying memory. Yeah. And so, absolutely, you know, the mind is focused on what we are comfortable to be with and anything that our mind has a conflict with, goes into the unconscious and if you think of the body carries memory in the in the thought of if you have ridden a bicycle for years? You could probably no you don't have to think about being how to ride a bike your body will remember. Yeah the body carries so much memory. And yes, depending on our life story, we'll carry it differently in our mind body system.

Molly Knight 10:20

Okay, it's interesting is that the mind and the body? Well the mind I guess we haven't explored a great deal of it really in our in our world, but it's quite um Well, it's staggering what the human being is capable of in our mind in our emotions and our I think humans have a lot of power. I call it power for one of the different words but our intention is quite a powerful thing. And we can, like you say, and I think I would be guilty of this in saying, Well, you know, I've got this and what can I do to get out of it. So I go ahead and try and do something, to get myself out of feeling this overwhelm instead of perhaps sitting back and managing the feelings as they come up.

Anita Bentata 11:11

Yes, I use the metaphor that when we're walking along, if we've got a stone in our shoe, we tend to bend down and take the stone out yet, and we do that on, we're more likely to do that on the physical level in our life. But when we have a stone in our mind or our heart, you know, internally or emotionally, we tend to just endure it and be quite passive. Rather than engaging with it and transforming it. It just means that our neural pathways when we go into overwhelm, the neural pathways got interrupted. And we need to be able to come back to that interruption and then experience, as I said, with skill safety and support so that those neural pathways can go to their natural conclusion where we're left with a competent belief and action and flow and feeling that that has a capability with it and healthy conclusion when we don't we get left with limiting beliefs and limiting behaviors. And what happens when we don't know how to be with the uncomfortable or internal conflict is we tend to keep repeating patterns. And we end up reacting rather than growing and transforming and expanding our capabilities and how we are in the world.

Molly Knight 12:37

Huh, yes, yes. So we just keep repeating the patterns, don't we?

Anita Bentata 12:42

Yeah, absolutely. And the brain goes to what is done most recently and most frequently and what's worked because it's got us through to this point. And so we keep those those well worn neural pathways and I liken it to, if you go out in the bush, you're naturally going to stay on the path, the path you're not going to rummage through all of the scrub. And everything in the brain always wants to find the easiest way. And so if we don't have clarity about another option, we just keep on staying in that comfort zone. Mm hmm. Yeah, that would be I guess it's like come. Yeah, what you know, is safer than the unknown, stepping into the unknown. But I guess is it fair to say that we don't step out of this comfort zone because we don't know where to step without guidance and help from someone like yourself is where we don't even know that there's somewhere else to go? Absolutely. And it's constantly reinforced in our society and because there's an over functional focus in our society of the left brain and the conscious and the rational. And this is why we've got this real issue around the world and significantly In Australia, right now, where this is over thinking about the rational, and it's not connected to the right brain and the body and be able to be able to be with the whole experience. So then we're making interpretations that are not about the whole and we're reaching inaccurate conclusions because we can't be with other layers that the rational mind can't perceive or interpret correctly. And the really important thing for me that goes with that is to recognize that it's not logic or insight that changes neural pathways. It's feelings that change neural pathways. If you think about, I should go to bed earlier or eat this or exercise more. Our logic about what is good for us, doesn't inspire us to motivate us to take the action. It's either pleasure or pain, feelings, creates neural pathways and feelings creates change, but when we're in high states

of overwhelmed feelings, we go into those involuntary responses in our stress pattern if we don't have access to how to relate and engage with them and take them to that productive place that they need to go to.

I'm not sure if it's frozen a little bit.

So I'm not sure if you can hear me if I keep speaking. But the other thing I guess I'd want to add is that when we have that connection in the brain and the connection to our feelings in our body, then we can feel that flow into our instinct and be able to take action from our instinct. Oh, I think I think Molly's dropped out for some reason. So I'll just keep talking till she jumps back in. So yes, that when we're in that state of overwhelm, and we don't know how to be with our instinct, because we've been overly focused on valuing our left brain, then we get stuck. And we can tend to have limiting thoughts that just keep us in a small in a small place. And so if you think about that overwhelm, and when we don't know how to be with it, and our system goes in, into that disconnect mode. I think of it like those neural pathways or like live wires where they couldn't go to their natural completion and they're ending. And so then when you're in an experience now, and there's a similar experience that resonates with the current one where they've both got a level of discomfort, or lack of support on how to be with it or that overwhelm, then our system. It's like a domino with all of those associated responses and experiences because they're not processed, getting flooded by them. And because the brain is Association, and so when those things aren't in the when those things is floating around in short term memory, then we then get flooded by that. Hello, Molly. I just kept talking so that I can't hear you. You're

Molly Knight 17:39

There we go. That's the beauty of going live, isn't it?

Anita Bentata 17:43

Yeah, yeah.

Molly Knight 17:45

Sorry. That's right. Where we were up to when we went off.

Anita Bentata 17:50

Yes. I, I was talking about the brain and I just ended up I paused a little bit and then I just talked a bit about the instinct and what happens in that brain with that overwhelm with that, the brains associational. And we then when we've got overwhelming experiences now, it lights up the other unresolved overwhelming experiences. So we're not just getting impacted by what's happening right now. We're getting like a domino of being flooded from all of those other experiences, because they're all still floating around in their system if they haven't gone to that resolution, which then takes them to long term memory where we know about them, but we don't live relive them.

Molly Knight 18:30

Okay. Okay. So in the situation that everyone's in now that triggers these feelings of overwhelm all the stuff in our, you know, bag that we carry on our shoulders, that starts to come up, does it so it sort of exacerbates the whole feeling that you have? Yes. So very interesting,

Anita Bentata 18:52

If you've had experiences of being unsupported feeling alone or fear of abandonment, and that can hit on childhood things that you might not even realize you that you would consider trauma. Because as a child, if something's happened to you, and it happened to you develop before you were developmentally able to integrate the overwhelm of it, then you've got a bodily experience of it. And because the brain hasn't finished developing, you might not have the words and the pictures and the meaning all linked up, but you've got the feeling and the body cellular memory of it. And so there's that those experiences with the when something happens too soon, or for too long, it creates a trauma developmentally in us, or adult experiences. When we felt unsupported or felt bullied, we felt helpless. We felt, you know, like so many of us have had experiences at different points, whether it's in school or bosses or colleagues or partners that so that experience of helplessness and overwhelm can be tapped into in Yeah.

Molly Knight 20:03

Hmm. It's incredibly complex the mind, isn't it? So would where I wanted to go was talking about the the feelings of overwhelm and that we're stuck with them, obviously, and all our past stuff and certainly, I guess a lot of people would be struggling with it. So what? The overwhelm or the stress response to this lead into things like anxiety, maybe panic attacks, even depression, weight, is it sort of run its course to if it's not dealt with?

Anita Bentata 20:41

Yeah, yeah. We're meant to be activated by our feelings and that mobilizes us into our instinctual behaviors that match the feelings that resonate with it, but when we're in overwhelm that it gets interrupted and so And I'm happy to later after here I can put a picture in what I'm going to describe right now in the post, I can share a photo of a diagram of the defense triangle because our system when it's in overwhelm goes into a defense mode. And in that defense mode, if you think of it like an upside down triangle, down the bottom is that natural activating instinctual responses and when there's an anxiety in our system, because we don't feel the support skills or safety to respond to it, the anxiety signaling, we're separate from our instinctual response that there's a block to it, whether and so what happens with the anxiety is, it's an inhibitor, it's there to inhibit our instinctual response because we've received verbally or non verbally some communication that it's not okay to feel or think what's going on for us so we don't know how to be with the intensity of It. So then that anxiety is an inhibitor. And when we're left with anxiety unaddressed for a long period of time, it leads to it very often leads to depression. The thing with

anxiety being an inhibitor, is there's other inhibitors to emotional pain, guilt, shame, adversity fear. And so that's fear that shuts us down. Disgust, you know, all of all, they're all inhibitors, they're not activating instinctual responses, the instinctual responses down the bottom of the triangle that that what we are needing to tap into, you know, in this situation with what we're in, there's eight human feeling activating responses yet they're in the family, and you might have a one or a combination of them. But the two that I think are really relevant to right now, so that there's a few more actually anger assertion that we need a way to be without our anger so that it can feel effective. Because right now, our anger is meant to be there to assert our our power and look after ourselves and protect us. But because of the directives were often that leaves us feeling helpless. What do I do with this anger? Because I don't want to get fined or, or or something else. Yeah. And so then the next one I go to in that instinctual responses is positive sense of self where we've got self soothing skills, self compassion, self esteem, self confidence, but particularly in this instance, the self soothing skills. So if we don't know how to be with that, then we feel more angry, or we feel more we go into the anxiety and the emotional pain of the helplessness and the overwhelm and the adversity of fear. So the end the other things that like grief and loss would be another one because a lot of people are not able to connect to loved ones and, and the connection to we're social creatures and wanting to connect to each other. So when we feel that grief and loss, but then we go into the anxiety because we've got that helplessness and not overwhelm. And so then we feel like we're just swimming around in this grief or this anger or this. Because we don't know how to be with those self soothing skills to be able to get to a more generative place in ourselves. The other instinctual responses are like enjoyment, joy, which naturally gets affected right now, close endedness, which gets affected right now, the desire and fear terror. Now this fear on the instinctual responses is fear. that activates us to do something to make us feel secure, as opposed to the aversive fear on the anxiety poll, which shuts us down. And so it's like if people have fear right now, I think it's very often it's flipping into the adversity of fear. Because there's so many limits on what you can do with the fear. There's so many restrictions. Now what happens when we've got that anxiety and that emotional pain, overwhelm and versiv fear is it's unbearable to be there, because it's associated with unthinkable thoughts and unbearable feelings. So our system because it can't access the instinct, it goes across to the third point of the triangle, the defenses and there we have defensive beliefs and defensive behaviors. And one of them would be denial. Yes, yes. You know, for some people it would be drinking or other substances and you know,

Molly Knight 25:55  
eating

Anita Bentata 25:55  
Absolutely. All of those kind of things. overworking, taking care of others can even be a defense getting so preoccupied about everyone else, that you're not thinking about yourself. Or you might go into

defense might be a self attack, being really judgmental on yourself and, or getting very angry at the world or, but some other things that can come up in the defensive pole is defensive anger. Now that's different to the anger in the instinctual, on the instinctual ground. If when we're on our instinctual ground, we feel a helplessness and a vulnerability. And we don't have access to those healthy self soothing skills down there, as system will go into anxiety, it will jump out of that very fast because that's unbearable. And it could very well go into defensive anger, which we're seeing a lot right now in people's communications with each other. And so it's not the real anger. It's, it's the anger of I want you to stop talking about things because I don't feel in control. And I feel more in control by getting angry than staying with my helplessness.

Molly Knight 27:08

Hmm, yeah. Fascinating, isn't it?

Anita Bentata 27:11

Yeah, yeah. So even though it might seem like our brain and our stress and defense system are calm, complicated, they're actually very clear and very simple. And it's when you know how to be with the map, and how to bring in those resources, then things can shift very, very fast when you know how to support the brain and the body. Because I don't know if you've heard this that people you know, there was a lot of therapists that, you know, started questioning, why don't animals have PTSD, they get chased all the time. They're in states of trauma all the time. So why humans have or not animals, and if you have a look at documentaries, you might see when an animal's being chased by another predator, and it's still alive, but it's life signals go really low. And so then the predator might think, okay, I've got you, I'm going to just go get a drink or something, and I'll come back and feast on you. And when there's a bit of distance, the animal that's being chased gets up, it shows this discharge of everything, and then it races off. And so the difference that we've understood is that the animal doesn't have the conscious brain that says, Don't be silly, don't make that sound. Don't do that movement don't yet it we are, we hold on to everything we try and stay in control. And that keeps us locked in the overwhelm and in the stress responses. And so part of it is been able to become comfortable about allowing ourselves to be with the unthinkable thoughts and the unbearable feelings and supporting our brain and body to be with it. But what I came to realize is that a lot of the reason why people lose into trauma for so long, and spend way too long suffering or seeing a therapist, you know, going from therapist to therapist, is because they don't understand how to be with their left brain, about how to interpret things and how to support the brain to move in beyond the habit of what our system knows. And so there's specific steps that are clear and, and not complicated, but it's just, it's just unfamiliar for most people. And, and it works. It's, it's, it's there's a clear map, the brain isn't broken. It's just, we don't know how to be with the overwhelm and it fits off this repetition. That's quite Association. But when you know how to be with it, then you can set off that repetition

Association only in regenerative generative ways. And you can feel amazing really quickly because the body doesn't relate to the, the trauma, the way our mind interprets it, our mind will go, there's so much history or intensity or whatever, it's going to be really hard and long and difficult, but either the body feels something or doesn't. And if you think about little children, when they're in a secure environment, they will let rip with whatever is going on. And because they don't censor or hold back, you'll see them, let it out, and then they'll be happy than in it. Because they can discharge it fully, and then move on. And so when the body can shift states quickly, it doesn't have to do it in that left brain sequential, difficult, every detail kind of way when we connect the left and the right brain to the body.

Molly Knight 30:54

Mm hmm. Yeah, so well, it wouldn't be appropriate for adults would it to let it all out like a child does, it wouldn't be good in the workplace?

Anita Bentata 31:03

No. But if we can do it at home, we can be much more regulated out in the world when we know and when we can do it internally out in the workplace when we can be uncensored internally, and gather the information from that, and then be able to make different choices. And nine things correctly because I practice I see a lot of people miss label things and don't even realize that they miss labeling things which creates more helplessness more frustration, because of the miss-labeling. And a common one that people do is they say, I'm lazy. And that, to me, is a huge mislabeling. And when they recognize their defense triangle, you know, the pattern that's happening in their system and what's happening in voluntarily because their systems got evoked into overwhelm. Then it's like, okay, when I know how to support my brain and my body, I can understand that actually, my defense is actually serving a beautiful positive purpose for me, because it's wanting to look after me. And it's doing it in the best way it knows how from those earlier learned experiences. And so we can take that and go, it's okay, we can make sure what you need to have happen still happens. But we can do it in a way that works better for all of who you are rather than this old habit that that is from a younger state.

Molly Knight 32:27

Would would most of these feelings or coping mechanisms have very you're under seven you can under seven is you're like a sponge. So everything you see your experience you just absorb. And you obviously have no mechanisms to make a value judgment on anything that you've seen, or heard or experienced. So is it fair to say that a lot of this stuff actually comes from those very formative years, where we have absolutely no control or ability to deal with anything. I mean, it could be quite innocent. But it's how we perceive it, isn't it? Can we take it on board?

Anita Bentata 33:16

Yeah, absolutely. Those first roughly seven years, we're in a

different brain state or hypnogogic state. So the words that are said to us are so powerful, and they get right in and we don't have that differentiation between what's ours and what's not ours. And we're picking up things in the unconscious as well as the conscious and because we live in a society that's so conscious focused and doesn't know how to engage with our non physical aspects, which is our unconscious but also our energy, our without energy where we're not here. But energy became over the years like a woowoo thing, but it's like without energy. We don't exist And, and so attuning and listening and trusting our energy as well as how to connect between our conscious and our unconscious when we don't have a society and modeling. I don't think it's just the seven year the first seven years I think absolutely a very significant, but I think when we have a society that continues to overvalue the left brain and not be with the right brain and the unconscious and the energy system and the body, then it gets reinforced and we have structures within the society that I think are breaking down right now because they're not functional. They had to break down and the way that's true, yeah, the way school is run, the way the power dynamic. That's how our society run. For me in working with domestic violence. I was, you know, we've done so much awareness raising in the community, especially since Luke Batty was murdered. And for me I was looking at why is this so much awareness raising, but we're actually not talking about different things. People are still after decades, are still talking about the same things and still don't have the emotional muscle to recognize what's happening in their own life or someone they know or in their community. They think it's not there ifit and they can't talk about it with family members or friends or, and and so it was like, for me, it's not about the awareness raising. It's about having those Mind Body skills to be with that and comfortable. But what I was also seeing is that we've got a society that walks on eggshells, and we're seeing this right now with all the directives. There is so many people walking on eggshells, and I believe feeling self righteousness of I'm doing the right thing, which is very parental thing. You know, I, I'm doing the right thing. You do the right thing. I'm going to tell you off because you should be doing the right thing to. And it's it's that really young developmental experience as opposed to tuning into our body our unconscious, our reality of being able to be with the bigger picture. And it's Yeah, it's an active,

Molly Knight 36:17

it's just frozen. But intuition feeling to all of this being a right brained feeling or experience, our intuition is so picture.

Anita Bentata 36:33

Sorry, because the audio is a bit jumpy. I just want to make sure I'm understanding you. So, because I'm suggesting that we live in a world that's very left brain and how do we get the right brain into the picture? Is that what you were saying? You're frozen again? So I'm not sure I can't hear you. Maybe I'll just say a bit of what I think because we live in a world that's very left brained and very disconnected from the body in the right brain. We make inaccurate conclusions. And so I think, as I was saying, society is a

reflection of what happens behind closed doors in domestic violence, I think we have the same pattern happening outside of domestic violence, as as we do in domestic violence. And so we've got this difficulty about being with our own power, and this bestowing of power on other people and this denial and accommodating one of the things about being the human species is we've survived because we're so good at adapting. And so we keep adapting and adapting and don't realize that we've actually moved so far away from being integrated with our whole self. And so then there's an allowing and allowing of structures within society that are really unhealthy. So it had to break down from my perspective. And so what I understand Molly was asking me was how do we be with the the right brain in the world and incorporate both. So then for me if I use a specific example, if I think because I went through court for about seven years, and he ended up just getting the typical rights of any father, even though he was highly abusive to not only myself but to the children, and so they had a lot of trauma, but because the judge was saying, it was like my word against his word against my ex partners word. And because everything happened behind closed doors, when you focus just on the left brain, then you can't trust something else. But when you be with the right brain as well, then you can know that there's more going on. You can sense this more going on, you can tap into more than the the physical things about what you see or what you hear. But you can tap into more about because we all have an unconscious and there's a personal unconscious and there's a collective unconscious. And we can tap into more when we're connected to ourself and the whole of who we are. So then you'd be able to pick up certain things of information to do with other people. I pick things up when I first meet someone for a session, you know, sometimes it's before they come into the room, or sometimes it's as I opened the door to them, then I'm picking things up because I'm engaged and listening to my right and left brain because I'm engaged in listening to my conscious and my unconscious. So I'm getting information beyond what my left brain says. And so I can know more things. And so if we had a society where we were comfortable to we'd need to be more connected to resolving our trauma so that we don't have those filters that block us from being with our body and our unconscious. And so then you can know more like I can pick up things when I'm working with someone. And that is a typical quality that we can all have the same as when my daughter was pregnant. And she called me one day because she was overdue to have a first child and said, Mum, can you help me work out what this unconscious block is because I really want to get this baby out. And so, you know, I drove over to her house, we did some work, we shifted the unconscious block. And then I said to her, do you want to maybe go back home or will I wait? And she said, No, go back home, I'll call you and I was in you know, that means I've got to drive an hour. So I started driving an hour back home, and then about halfway home. I felt as if I was going into labor. Now I was not pregnant, it was my daughter. But because I'm connected to my left my right brain and my body, and I, I can pick up certain things. And so then when we're in a society, society that can be with our trauma, so it doesn't filter things, then we can be with the left the right brain, the unconscious and pick up more layers about what's going on. So then I

rang my daughter, and I said, is your labor pains have started every night? And she said, Yes. And so it's like, so when you were asking before we got cut off again, about how do we bring in the right brain? Yeah, in this society, I was talking I gave the example regard with regards to domestic violence and going through the court system, where when the court system only focuses on the left brain, it's only the facts of the right now, or if we look at the what's happening right now in the world. There's a lot of opinions and research that are manipulated to suit the people that are funding that research or whatever. And so if we just read the words on via the left brain, and we don't feel, you know, a questioning to explore more, we're not incorporating the right brained got the feelings can allow us to explore more, question more, go deeper and be okay with being with the uncomfortable feeling so that we can step into the unknown, because accessing the right brain allows us to access the unknown. The conscious of that is the left brain, the right brain is the body, the unconscious feelings, those things so then we can tap into knowing more through the unconscious because one of the other things I was saying, which I don't know if you heard when you dropped out, was that we're conscious beings, but we've also got an unconscious and there's a collective unconscious, and we see aspects of that where sometimes there's an invention on one side of the world, and at the same time, there is a very similar invention. On the other side of the world, there is this collective unconscious. And even this Institute's like the heart math institute that looks at how we connect on that level beyond the left brain, we've got this brain in our heart and a brain in our stomach. And when we tap into those levels of knowing the information in our whole mind body system, then we can know more than what the left brain interprets as. And so then, if I was going in court in that kind of situation in my situation, then I wouldn't get the outcome I got back then where it was like my word against his because it was all behind closed doors, and there'd be a bigger picture of going on because I was thinking about it. The other day when I was explaining something to someone where, you know, I had so many people, counselors, school teachers, family members, so many people did affidavits all about children's distressing behavior and me writing as a mother about the things that my children said, and the behaviors and when contact was stopped temporarily how the behaviors changed. But none of that was valued because that the court system is but left brain focused and just wants some black and white proof. And that's why we've got this dynamic, I think that people are stuck in in society right now. Because unless people see it, they don't believe it. But one of the one of the ways out of being in overwhelm is to see what you want to see now, before before the believing of it, to support your system to move through what your left brain can't conceive beyond, because when your left brain gets stuck, then we can get in this loop. And so it's like being able to tap into the right brain and to be able to go beyond is really powerful. And I don't know if you've read the book by Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning. And he was a Jewish psychiatrist who was in a concentration camp in World War Two and he was separated from his wife. And you know, being a psychiatrist, he was looking at everybody and noticing as some people maintained their humanity and

some people became like animals. And he was just studying it. And you know, it was excruciating. You know what he was going through, and he talks about, you know, walking through the snow, and if you fell down, there was a chance you'd be beaten to death. So you didn't want to fall down, but you were starving, and you were in the snow and actually raising and not dressed warm enough. And so you know, you were very, very weak. And he remembers nearly falling one time and he knew that if he stayed down, or he did fall, if he stayed down, he would die. And so he started thinking about his wife and his love for her and feeling the warmth of the love and respect And feeling so warm and stronger by connecting to her that he could get up and he got through the war and he survived. She didn't survive the war. But the other thing that he did to survive through through the war is he kept imagining the end of the war. And imagining writing a book about his experience and understanding the humans experience of Man's Search for Meaning, and about the psyche. And so what he did, in a sense was, like a hypnosis seeing a future progression, to see himself beyond the terrible and by being able to connect beyond the terrible and be involved with that with feelings and with, you know, involving as much as you can, then your system can, can not get stuck in that overwhelm. So that's one way of you know, of course, there's, there's other things that you can do, but on this platform, I just think that's a really valuable thing. The more people can imagine what you what you will be like after this, and what this has offered you and what this you know, to see that it can really support you to stay uplifted. And when you think about something, what happens in the brain is it lights up the same areas of the brain is if that's happening. And so if you keep thinking about the helplessness or whatever, you keep re traumatizing and reliving it. And if you can say to yourself, right now, I know what this feels like. So you're not denying it. You're not minimizing it by saying I know what this feels like. I don't want to feel this right now because my life in this present moment is important to me. And I want to feel better and one of the things I guess I came to from my journey is I didn't want my ex to control my happiness because he was doing the revenge of the court stuff. So it was like it became really strong for me is, I'm going to feel free in myself no matter what you do. And so this is a wonderful opportunity for us right now to how do we can stay in contact with our freedom. And how do we stay in contact with? Well, this might be happening right now and I might feel some helplessness. What can I focus on right now that can tap me into feelings of flow and well being connection love, because when you think about that, it lights up those areas of the brain, and so that you don't have to wait to have it to feel it. But you valued yourself so much that you say, my life is important, right in this minute. I don't want to have to wait six months or whatever, to be able to feel it. I want to feel it now and the more you keep practicing that, the more you can feel to me, what is the greatest freedom. And I think to on a conscious of consciousness level, that when we connect into what we can do, then we create more uplifting and it you know this research around the world about you tap tapped in a little bit to it before about the untapped power of our intention. And there was an investigative journalist two years ago, was really skeptical about the power of intention and she's

done. Lynne McTaggart has done numerous research about testing the power of intention. And when we can tap into that, there's an amazing proof about the changes that we can make for the world, for our community and for ourselves. And so, you know, this is a real opportunity for people to to not deny it. What is going on and, and not minimize it? Like even because we know when we think about something, it lights up the same areas of the brain as if we're doing it. So it's like go for imagining, murdering whoever you want. No one's in jail for imagining. Yeah, but we're not talking about putting any steps in place. Yeah. But but it's like it's like what the child does when they play out that you know that thing that that with their dolls and they kill someone or something. It's like, if we can let that anger have a discharge in a constructive way, without harm to SL for anyone else. And then we can go, Okay, I don't want that the government controls my level of well being in this moment. I want to take charge of that. And it might be more difficult in this first moment, but I know that if I keep thinking about it, it can only get better and better because the more you focus on something We know it in the negative, the more we focus on helplessness and rage, the more we feel it. And so the more we go, Well, okay, if it's that simple yet, if I can keep focusing on the things that feel good and do like Viktor Frankl that, you know, go future progression and go imagine what you know, what am I? How am I leaving when I've been unable to grow through this experience, been able to inhabit more of myself because we've got an opportunity when we're not distracted by work and our two things to be able to tap into having our energy motivated from being who we are, because I think a lot of people are feeling quite down because their structure has been taken away from them and they don't know how to be structured by their own life, energy and their own feeling of being We're used to being shaped by school by work by relationships, and we feel lost because we don't know how to be shaped by our own energy. And so when we've got helplessness and overwhelm, we then fall in a bit of a loop. Because we don't know how to be shaped by that desire to want good things for ourselves, because we're used to going along in that way that society says, This is what you do. You get a job, you have a relationship, you have kids or whatever. And and it's an opportunity to be able to tap into who, who am i when i don't have to be doing something? Who am I in my being and how do I look after my being so it stays uplifted no matter what's going on around me?

Molly Knight 52:47

Mm hmm. Yeah, that's really lovely. That's lovely. So think positive thoughts in the sense of projecting yourself into your future that you want to create? Because we are powerful creators, aren't we?

Anita Bentata 53:03

Yes, the thing is with positive thoughts. As I said, it's not about denying the other. So it's like you can say, I feel helpless and, and angry. And I know that feeling helpless and angry is just going to make me feel worse, and feel more frustrated and helpless. And I know I want to feel better. So I'm going to think of a better

feeling thought, that doesn't deny that but takes me so what I'm doing with each sentence that i'm saying is I'm starting with where I am. I'm moving one statement towards a better feeling rather than looping to the other. And then it's like, what's the next statement, I can feel what's the next and it's not about I am happy and all as well because that system can't digest that because it's not true, but it's about going. The way I find that useful is about going into And it's a new way of, of connecting to the positive of I love feeling free and full in my sense of purpose. And it's not about I've got to feel that right now. But just connect to the times in your life when you felt that. Yep. And then automatically when you start thinking about that, it lights up those areas of brain but you haven't had to use willpower to get yourself there yet, so you just go to then. Well, I don't want to keep feeling that helplessness and frustration because it makes my day feel awful and I don't want to feel awful. So what can I think about right now that uplifts me, it might be about a tree or someone you love or or your spiritual beliefs or, or an activity that you like doing that you feel a sense of capability in when you do it. And so you focus on what do I love about that? You're not trying to convince yourself to be in it. But you're just going to what do I love about that person, that activity, whatever. And as soon as you do that, and you connect into the experience of it, you're there without trying to get there through willpower, or, or denying and convincing yourself and then you can feel this feels better. I like feeling like this. But for me, I think part of what helps to feeling better is to consider what are your spiritual beliefs? Because if we just believe in as the self, but our self has been denied a lot of power, or we believe in our government, and then government is misusing power, then what are we left with? I think a lot of people are in overwhelm because they're disconnected from what is what spiritual belief, whatever it is, that can allow them to believe in something greater than the powers of the government greater than the power of what they can do in that this present moment, and to be able to tap into that, to be able to get that support to be able to have more comfort and more faith that everything will work out.

Molly Knight 56:16

`Okay. Okay, so you're not specifically saying religions, it's no, no spiritual connection to the universe to the whole.

Anita Bentata 56:27

Yes, I'm not talking about religion because I think there's a lot of manmade power things within all of the religions that are a lot of procreate a lot of mixed messages. And it's not that I'm saying anybody should not be religious, if that's what uplifts them, that absolutely that's their journey. But what I'm talking about now, religion is to me separate from spirituality. You can be religious and not necessarily be spiritual. You can be spiritual and not necessarily religious so when I'm talking about spiritual is your personal connection to that which is greater than whatever you would call. Some people might call it God some might call The Universe nature, whatever it is that you could creative life energy. `Yeah, so yeah, I'm not talking I'm not religious.

Molly Knight 57:21

But this is a great opportunity, isn't it if we look at that the opportunity of the times that we're in so that we can come back to ourself and, and really look at who we are and what we love with life, because life is definitely a gift. And we're here for a short time. It goes quick, but you come to come home to come home to ourselves.

Anita Bentata 57:45

Absolutely. And it's like, you know, I'm not an expert in history, but it's like if I think of this in the evolution of mankind, there's times when there's been like the Dark Ages, and you know, that's the opportunity to tap into something deep within us that we haven't found. And that brings something amazing. Same as when I escaped domestic violence, I felt like I was in the darkest place. And I'd reach this rock bottom. But it was like this rock bottom allowed me to actually wake up to reality and be able to tap into my power. And so we've got this incredible power. So don't let the government or what's happening in the world define and restrict your connection to the untapped potential that you each have right now to connect to a power that's greater than Dan Andrews that's greater than Scott Morrison and all the politicians. It is amazing what can unfold when you explore your connection to that which is greater than and tap into that power. And what I suggest when people are skeptical is experiment. Don't force yourself to believe something. But then also don't. Don't deny yourself the opportunity to discover something more than what you might already know. And so you know, I always say to people invite you to experiment, find out what happened, so that it's not your left brain telling you or it's not me telling you, what's most meaningful is you to do some experiments so that you can get that feedback yourself for that's the most powerful thing.

Molly Knight 59:28

Yeah, yeah. Because Yeah, when you discover things for yourself, they resonate, I think more deeply than someone just telling you something.

Anita Bentata 59:37

Absolutely.

Molly Knight 59:38

Yeah. Well, that's really great information. Thank you. Yeah, and I guess, acknowledging how you feel the truth of how you feel. Yeah, even if you just say I feel really crappy today. I don't feel good. You may not be able to pinpoint what it is exactly. But just to acknowledge and honour those feelings because they're real, and they're part of you and then go, Well, how else can I feel? What else can I do? or not do but yeah, but how else can I feel? Think of something happy, something that you loved, that brings you out of those despairing feelings.

Anita Bentata 1:00:20

Yes. If I give a if I give a metaphor before we know time's going on, if this flask represents the overwhelm, and initially when we're with the overwhelm, our system says, I've got a disconnect from there. I'm going to act like it's not there because it's too uncomfortable and unbearable to be with. And if my flask is there, and I'm acting like it's not there, I'm gonna trip over it and spill it. And that's what happens with the uncomfortable feeling. Yeah, yeah, it's connected because we didn't know how to be with it. Now if I want to connect with it, so that I can process it. I've got to identify in my room this specifically, if I miss label it and say, Well, this is a container of some sort. I'm not going to be able to shift what was overwhelming, I've got the wrong thing.

Molly Knight 1:01:12  
Okay,

Anita Bentata 1:01:12  
As soon as I can name it naming is so powerful. As soon as I can name it out of everything in my space or everything in my being, then I can connect to it. And once we connect to it, it can move. Things can't get processed if we can't connect to it. And so it's not about needing to fix it or change it, but it's about being able to be okay to connect to it. And yeah, but then if we get overwhelmed with being with that, then there's the opportunity to, okay, I connect to this and then what that what's the other thing that I can connect to, so that we're not leaving that stone in the shoe? That we were taking it out and going okay, it's overwhelming. I don't like it. It's helpless. What can I do right now, what can I focus on? It enables me to feel some sense of capability and some sense of soothing even if I don't know how to be with that right now. So it's a way of being able to engage with it, but feel a movement.

Molly Knight 1:02:20  
Okay, so the triangle that you work with, does that show the different feelings? Because I think sometimes if you can't, with your left brain connect to the feeling when you can see it, and it would often I think resonate, go, Ah, that's it. That's what I'm feeling. Hmm. So does your triangle sort of have that sort of info?

Anita Bentata 1:02:45  
Yes, yes. A triangle is, um, it's got the eight families of feelings at the bottom. Yeah. So every everything that a human experiences will be amongst those eight and unless unless it's one of those anxiety ones because they're not, they're not part of the family feelings, their stress responses, their trauma responses that are in there inhibitors are feelings out activators are they active, have feelings activate a behavior. And so when we don't know how to be without feeling, we get stuck about how to take action. And so that Yeah, but it's all in that triangle. Yeah. Huh.

Molly Knight 1:03:29  
Okay. All right. So you you've written a book

Anita Bentata 1:03:34  
I have

Molly Knight 1:03:35  
and you've got online courses. Can anybody connect with you online and do some work either as a consultation or part of any courses that you're running online. Because I'm, I must say, I've really enjoyed what you've said, despite the fact that we've been disconnected a couple of times, but I'm really connected with what you say. And it makes sense to me to to recognize and own that feeling. And then you have some some skills or some you can learn through consultation how you can move beyond that. Yes. I think one of the things that I've learned over the years I've done a lot of a lot of work with personal growth and you, I don't think you can get enough out of reading a book, I think, when you want to shift at a deeper level. For my experience, you need support to do that.

Anita Bentata 1:04:41  
I agree. I agree. Because we can get a lot of insight but we're often not aware of our defense pattern. And we often and I know for myself when I was doing the training that I did about trauma I so was into development and growth, you know, that's why I was doing it. And I so wanted to transform my traumas. But when I was when you're inside the trauma, you're inside those coping mechanisms. And so even though myself at that time knew that I was safe, and that I'd be okay, when that was lit up, I didn't feel safe, and I would shut down. And so I didn't know myself, how do I be with that? Because when I'm inside that, that's all there is. Though, being in relationship with someone is really, really helpful. And so yes, people can find me via my website or social media, and contact me I do do one on one consults. I have a one on one program. That's five sessions where that's all you need to learn for personal growth to be in charge of your own brain and your own body. And I do have a group programs. As I think you mentioned in the introduction, my Empower Program is a program for women. And with you know, it's not necessarily for trauma or for abuse, you know from any range of stress or trauma in your life. These are the life skills I think everybody should be or benefit. I think we should have been taught this growing up organically and it's just like learning to do up to shoe laces and drive a car. We need to know how to be in charge of our own brain and body and energy system. And so yes, I've got that the government funded program from the Victorian multicultural commission. We're in the seventh week now so we don't finish now till November but I'm really aware that there's a lot of people struggling and so I am open to talking to women do jump in on the seventh week now if they want to rather than wait for the next round of the program. I've got a way of because I work from the feminine principle, say the left brain, which is very masculine principle, which is nothing wrong with the masculine principle. But when it's not connected to the feminine principle, it makes inaccurate conclusions. And so the marriage between the two, and we've all got masculine and feminine principles within each of us. And so what I say to the women in my program is that the masculine principle would say, you've got to do the course sequentially, you've got to fit

into doing it and kept cramming and catching up. If you've had a lot of trauma or stress, and you know, you that's the only way you can do it. And when I say to the women is not you, I work from the feminine principle which is flexible, which is inclusive, which is responsive to you, so it can revolve around what you need, rather than you trying to fit into something else. I think society would work life better. For me, my understanding is the left brain the masculine principle is there to serve the right brain, the feminine principle, and so our feelings are meant to get taken out and the ideas and the tapping into creation and the unknown is meant to be supported by the masculine principle and take it into concrete action, the left Yeah, and they're meant to work together and be aligned with each other. So, I've found a way with my program where it's easy for women to jump in, even on week seven, and they'll, they'll be fine with learning the skills and women are experiencing that all the time. But if people want to stay in the loop for the next program, they can contact me for that as well. Unfortunately, I haven't got a program, a group program for men, but if they wanted to contact me if they'd be interested in that, I'm happy to you know, create that a platform for that down the track or one on one work now.

Molly Knight 1:08:45

Yes, okay. So we'll um if someone wants to join this course now, they just connect with you and you'll work it all out with them. So we'll have your links on our website. So people can conceive everybody looks under news, the link, you, you get Anita's details so you can connect with her. And what was your book called?

Anita Bentata 1:09:13

The Wolf in a Suit I should have bought I'm terrible I can I can quickly run a grab it because it's just

Molly Knight 1:09:23

Its an interesting title.

Anita Bentata 1:09:26

Yeah, it was because my partner was in a suit all the time. So it's like

Molly Knight 1:09:32

the wolf in a suit. Yeah, very good.

Anita Bentata 1:09:34

So I use fairy tales in my book. The first part is my story. The second part I use, I think it's 11 fairy tales, where I unpack the dynamics of relationships that are toxic, and I use a different fairy tale that I reinterpret to explain what's missing in our understanding in the in the community. And so that's the wolf in a suit. If people on my website I've also got an E book crazy making verbal emotional abuse explained. And so that's where I go through 30 non physical tactics to do with emotional psychological abuse, and why people often think that they're doing it, as well as they patented doing it. Well, they doing it and causing the problem this,

I wrote that to help people to be able to sort the difference between the two. And that would be very interesting. Yeah. And I've also got another eight books, the ultimate formula for moving forward. And that's the steps that I wrote out after I recovered. And I put in all of the steps and there's some, there's some important information in there and the editor that helped me with that said from his work with psychology said this is good for anyone, not just to me, domestic violence for anyone that's feeling stressed, but if people do want to reach me, if they can email me from my website rather than Facebook message me because sometimes the other folder doesn't show I found when people have contacted me for my online program. Sometimes that other folder didn't show their messages if they weren't friends with me. So email me at [anita@anitabentata.com](mailto:anita@anitabentata.com) and I will reply very promptly.

Molly Knight 1:11:25

Is there a limit to how many people you can take on board? I think you'll be inundated.

Anita Bentata 1:11:32

Well, I work from the feminine principle and I just stay receptive. And I think it will all work out and we'll find a way and I, I just, I don't like to presuppose what's possible, I like to let things open and we'll work it out. Oh, and we'll see what we can do and I'm sure we can come up with something. So absolutely. I I just get really upset when I hear people suffering, when for me life is not about healing. Life is about living and being functional and creative. And the less you know, I just hear people spending so much time on managing stress, minimizing it or coping or it goes into the body and they, you know, get health problems because, you know, that's where it goes when we keep managing it. Our mind can only do so much as we get older and accumulate more stress if we know

Molly Knight 1:12:38

more and more Yes, we get older.

Anita Bentata 1:12:40

Yeah, yeah.

Molly Knight 1:12:42

So all right, look, despite all the little hiccups tonight, it's been an amazing talk, Anita and I'm very grateful that you came on and shared that with with everyone through the Health Australia Party. I thank you very much for coming and It as we said, we'll have your links on our website under News so people can connect with you. And yeah, thank you. Thank you so much.

Anita Bentata 1:13:13

Thank you, Molly. I really appreciate your receptivity to be able to share a bit about the way I work and how it can support people. And if I just add just in closing, when the unit my program is all about doing things in an easy, gentle, fast way. And so even though this online program is 16 weeks, it's more that the the women started sending me testimonials in week two about their health problems and

the way they were responding to themselves and their children was significantly different. And that was just, they were organically sending me testimonials from week two, the shifts happen so it's like, I just really wanna say that so people can know no matter what all of what I've said, change can happen easily, gently and fast. It really can when you know how to be with it in its complete form. So absolutely. So thank you so much, Molly.

Molly Knight 1:14:14

My pleasure. Thank you for coming on. It's been a delight. Thank you, Anita.

Anita Bentata 1:14:19

Thanks, Molly.

Molly Knight 1:14:20

Good night. Good night, everybody. Thank you for joining us. I hope you've gotten as much out of tonight's talk as I most certainly have. Good nice, stay healthy everyone stay well. Good night.