

Speaker 1 ([00:00:07](#)):

Journey on Magic Lies with trails we arrived.

([00:00:12](#)):

You're listening to The Journey on podcast with Warwicks. Scher War is a horseman trainer, international clinician and author who helps empower horse people from all over the world with the skills, knowledge, and mindsets needed to create trusting partnerships with their horses. Work offers a free seven day trial to his comprehensive online video library that includes hundreds of full length training videos and several home study courses at videos.warwickchiller.com

([00:00:12](#)):

Warwick Schiller ([00:00:48](#)):

Good day everyone. Welcome back to the Journey On podcast. I'm your host Wars Chiller and I have an amazing guest this week. Her name's Dr. Rebecca Bailey, and I have to read you her bio. She's got several bios on several different places, but I gotta read you this. She's one of those ladies that has done so much stuff that you're kind of unsure how she has the time to do any of it. But anyway, I'll read you her bio here. Rebecca Bailey PhD is a leading family psychologist and equestrian who has become a world renowned professional teacher, speaker, author, and entrepreneur. Rebecca is the former director of the Sonoma Police Department's Youth and Family Services program, was a therapist educator for programs such as Marin County's DUI program and is a founder of Transitioning Families, a group of independently licensed mental health practitioners dedicated to Bailey's innovative ideas for helping families through crisis and difficult change.

([00:01:45](#)):

She continues to work with a variety of state and national organizations, such as the National Center for Missing Exploited Children and is an advisory council member of the onsite Foundation and Brain Train America. Dr. Bailey is actively involved in applying Dr. Steven Port's research on the autonomic nervous system to her long standing work with a variety of patients recovering from life altering, stressful and traumatic experiences. There's actually a very famous, um, patient of hers that she now works with that is mentioned in the podcast anyway, She believes that understanding the interaction between the nervous system and our thoughts and actions is the key to con to compassionately guiding families and individuals to healing and self understanding. Along with her two colleagues, Margie McDonald and JC Dugard, she founded the Polyvagal Institute. Polyvagal Equine Institute offers in person and virtual workshops, training and interventions that help us get unstuck from all patterns, think flexibly and have effective communications and with compassion and kindness.

([00:02:45](#)):

A graduate of the right institute in Berkeley, California, Dr. Bailey was raised in the Boston area, but located, relocated to California 35 years ago. She now lives in Northern California with her loving husband and countless animals. So that is one of her bios. But the bio on the Polyvagal Equine Institute page says, Dr. Bailey is a leading trauma therapist who specializes in complex case scenarios. She has over 30 years experience in the field and continues to be dedicated to the notion that authenticity, common sense, and kindness are the most important elements of effective treatment. She's a lifelong question. An animal lover who continues to believe animals in particular horses have much to teach humans about curiosity and compassion. She's the author of two books, Safe Kids, Smart Parents, and

Equine Connections, Polyvagal Principles, as well as articles on polyvagal principles in the courtroom, an application of equine interventions to a variety of populations.

[\(00:03:42\)](#):

She has also, this is not in the bio here, but she's also appeared on 2020 with Diane Sawyer and has actually been interviewed by Anderson Cooper, who, a few people who are around other parts of the world. He's a a big time, um, TV host here in America. And, uh, you know what's not in her bio, there's some, this lady has got such amazing stories and she's totally not. If you guys listen to the podcast with, uh, Chantel Pratt, who you know, is a neuroscientist and you're kind of thinking that you are gonna get this nerdy sciencey type and Chantel was anything but that, she's like a standup comedian. Talk to Rebecca Bailey is very, very similar, such an amazing human. Um, but you know, you'll have to listen to the story, but I'm just gonna let the kid out of the bag here real quick. Couple the little anecdotes she told me, you know, spend a number of years on the tour bus with the Grateful Dead and her great-great great great grandmother or something like that was the last witch hung in the Salem Witch trial. So this lady is absolutely fascinating and I can't wait for you guys to listen to this. I hope you guys enjoyed as much as I did.

[\(00:04:57\)](#):

Dr. Rebecca Bailey, welcome to the Journey On Podcast.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(00:05:00\)](#):

Thank you. I delighted to be here. Delighted

Warwick Schiller [\(00:05:03\)](#):

To be here. Uh, I'm excited to have you on here. You know, you are a leading family psychologist, but you're also the creative of polyvagal at the Equine Institute and you know, you're gracious enough to come on here without knowing really anything about me and who the hell I am. But, um, something happened to me a few years ago to, I started looking at, uh, you know, primarily a horse train. I started looking at how I do things differently, how to do things differently with horses. And I worked on this thing for a number of years and it was like working astoundingly well, and it was totally different than anything I'd really seen before. And it turns out it's basically polyvagal theory. It's, it's the polyvagal theory is what explained the science of why what I was doing with the horses worked. And it was, and it was so much beyond training.

[\(00:05:57\)](#):

It wasn't, you know, input, output, outcome, expectation. It was a communication and it was, it was a lot of listening. And, and, uh, I know somewhere I've read a little bit about you. You've, you've done a lot of work. I dunno if you've done work with Daniel Siegel, but you're inspired by Daniel Siegel and he's, you know, he says attunement is the sense of being seen and being heard. And I had a podcast guest from Canada last year who's a trauma therapist, Sarah Alti, and she says she expands on it. She says that Atunement is the sense of being sir, being seen, being heard, feeling felt and getting gotten. And I've been doing that stuff so much for the horses that here in the last year or so, actually changed my business to named to War Attuned Horsemanship. Cuz for me, I think it's kind of the holy grail of, at least for me, uh, getting along with horses. But I'm really excited to delve into what you do and how you got there.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(00:06:52\)](#):

So Steven Ps is the person that I've worked with more and Stephen pos is the re head researcher discoverer

Warwick Schiller ([00:07:02](#)):

At

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:07:02](#)):

Yes. Of Polyvagal. So, um, just like you, it's amazing. I the fact that Polyvagal explains the science of true, respectful communication, human to human, horse to human, it, it suddenly all made sense. I've been on horses like many of us since I could walk in my family. I wasn't the gifted rider, but I was the rider that would go out and ride the trails and absorb the world around me. Um, like many of us grew up in a very tumultuous house and I had a beautiful horse, a little mayor named Lockett, and she was a 15 two quarter horse Roached, Maine. Back in the days you could do hunter classes on a Roached, Maine little quarter horse. And she was my, I find out years later, my co regulator, I would come home from school. My parents were quite self-absorbed and were either arguing or doing their thing.

([00:08:01](#)):

And I'd go down to the barn and I kid you not, I I write about this in my book. Um, she would, I'd go down there and she would pull her head to me. And when I feel and think about a sense of safety and security in the world, I think about that horse's head around me. Um, so that to me is the essence of true Connection is a safe place between two people. It's the space between horse and human, which is what, or human and human, which is what Polyvagal theory has helped me really understand and embody I think.

Warwick Schiller ([00:08:40](#)):

So you just mentioned in your book you're the author of two books, Safe Kids, Safe Parents, and Equine Connections, Polyvagal Principles. Which one of those books is that in,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:08:50](#)):

That's in the, um, Equine Connections, Polyvagal Principles. And we just got it translated in France and Holland and blah, blah, blah. All sorts of places. I don't even know, but it was, uh, really a product of an o to lock it. And my little mayor's horse name was like it. I've had many other horses since, but Lockett is my girl. And during Covid I felt so disconnected from the world. I really did. I was still doing my practice on Zoom and taking care of people, you know, and, and trying to pretend I knew what the hell I was doing, you know, with Covid and all of the disconnection we had. And I decided that the grounding spot was to remember lock it. And then to think back to all the stories I've been doing equine therapy since equine assisted interventions since about 1993. My beginning of animal assisted therapy was in 1989, went into, uh, hospital estate, hospital with a group that brought farm animals in.

([00:09:56](#)):

And it was really early, it was back at the time where we were told don't tell anybody cuz they'll think you're crazy as a psychologist, you don't want anyone to know you're working with animals. So we went into this state hospital and there was this man that hadn't talked in 20 years, come to find out later, had a little pot belly pig back when everybody thought pop belly pigs. Pigs wouldn't grow up and put this little pop belly pig on his lap, and the pop belly pig peed on him. And the the head researcher and myself looked at each other like, Oh crap, right. Here we go. Well, the guy goes pig and like big smile on his face. And the nurses were like, and this true story, 20 years, they hadn't heard this man talk. And it

turned out after that moment, he was able to share verbally about growing up on a farm. And so that was sort of the beginning of like, yes, horses are the magic, or not the magic, but horses are my deep, deep love. But my office is filled with cats and dogs and you know, I believe that there are other ways to connect that eventual vagal heart part, that piece it. Um, animals are so tuned into <laugh> that we are so far away from.

Warwick Schiller ([00:11:14](#)):

Wow. So that's a long time ago, like 1992, you were doing, uh, that sort of stuff that Yeah, I don't think equine assisted therapy was really on anybody's horizon back then. Was it?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:11:25](#)):

It wasn't. Um, what some people don't know though, there's a, a type of, um, therapy called Sand Tray, and I believe her name is Magna Gerber, who, who looked at that, um, who started the sand tray. She's known as the, the mother of the work. I don't do sand tray, but she talked about bringing her clients down to the horses. And so if we go back in literature, we'll see it, but it was like a dirty little secret. I, it's really interesting. I think you'll love this one. Um, when I was doing, uh, what's called a qualifying project towards my PhD, I looked at, I did a, um, a survey of 80 horse women that owned horses, obviously versus people that didn't own animals, women that didn't. And I was looking at like, what's this common variable? And what came up was this thing called military leadership, which sounds awful in our world, like, ah, military, however, it was a skill set that they see, they saw at the time in West Point Cadets, which is about the ability to lead through connection and not through dominance.

([00:12:33](#)):

And that's what these women scored really high on, which was so interesting. Now, the sad thing of it, four years ago, my house burned down in the big fires in 2017 and my type written document that I had written my master's thing on, burned up with it. But, um, that are people that saw it. But really I just, and at the time when I did that study, I was working as an assistant horse trainer and you know, I, I am one of these people not like you. I go on the barn and the horses spit tobacco and say, Prove it. You walk in a barn and they go reporting for duty. I don't know about you, but a lot of the true horse, um, listeners that I've worked with, it's just a different vibe. They look at the horse and the horse responds differently. But what I learned with that military leadership is this like really true connection with these horses.

([00:13:24](#)):

So I'd get at, at five in the morning and lunch or ride about 10 or 15 horses just thinking, how can I relate to this horse in a way that makes this horse the best horse they can be <laugh>. And I remember thinking that, and I would go down and I would work with the horses, like I was painting a picture and it just, I don't know, it really taught me then a lot about being a therapist. So then I would go into the office as an intern and say, How can I help this person be the best person they are in front of me? Sorry, I'm rambling. I don't mean to, but I get going.

Warwick Schiller ([00:14:00](#)):

No, that's, that's perfectly, that's perfectly fine. So this was, when was this?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:14:05](#)):

This would be in the early, in 18 89, 90 early years.

Warwick Schiller ([00:14:11](#)):

Okay. And you were, so you had, did you have your PhD at the time? No,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:14:16](#)):

I got my PhD in 93.

Warwick Schiller ([00:14:18](#)):

PhD in 93. Okay. And so you were an intern. What had you done up to that point in time?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:14:24](#)):

As, as far as a psychologist or with writing or Just in my life. Okay.

Warwick Schiller ([00:14:28](#)):

Now the psychologist part. The psychologist part,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:14:31](#)):

I had worked for many years. Um, just volunteering. I also, this is really embarrassing, but my eighties were spent with the Grateful Dead. Three of my friends, I don't know if you know the Grateful Dead, the Rock and Roll band, but three of my friends were married to, um, band members in the Grateful Dead. And so my eighties were really spent going out on the road with them and helping <laugh> deal with conflict and listening to music. And the first, the early eighties, maybe I don't remember as well, but the mid eighties <laugh>, I began more of my, um, I like to say it was my life skills training and dealing with complex scenarios because there was a lot of, a lot of craziness around that band for sure. And I don't really talk about it often, but

Warwick Schiller ([00:15:19](#)):

So what I want <laugh> what I wanna know is what came first, the psychology degree, and you used that on, uh, the band members and their wives or girlfriends of the Grateful Dead, or you did that for so long, you thought, hell, I might as well have a psychology degree if I can keep these people.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:15:38](#)):

Well, it's actually be true in combination with also growing up in the family I did in Boston and, and really like, again, the horses save my life, as many of us will say. And when you're hanging around the Grateful Dead, there's a lot of curiosity <laugh>, you know, and it did play, it paid forward after the, uh, it's kind of cool. I di disconnected my life, went through a divorce, blah, blah, blah. After the fires. The one person that reached out and, and gave, well many people did, but Jerry Garcia's daughter called me after 20 years and gave us a place to stay in a nearby town, town called SaaS pool for three weeks. Just said, Hey, I've got this place. Do you wanna go? And, and I was kind of surprised cause I hadn't talked to any of them in 20 years really, except for a couple friends. But, um, kind of neat. So was that, that belief that the herds, the herd expands, but you're still part of the herd herds herd expands

Warwick Schiller ([00:16:43](#)):

<laugh>. That's an amazing story. Uh, so you are one of those people that, you know, I had your, I have your bio written here and it's like, you've done all these a million amazing things, but that wasn't listed

on your bio. And so that's just another one of those things. But like, you're one of those people that's like, how, how have you, how have you had time to, to do all this stuff? Um, and that's not really my question and that's just like a redundant sort of a question. What I wanna actually, because I've had a few people in the mental health game on the podcast in what it seems like is, and then I'm just gonna ask if it's true for you, what it seems like is they've had some sort of a trauma tumultuous childhood whatever, had some therapy that worked through that, and it was like, wow, I feel like it completely different human being. I think other people, I would love to share this with other people. Is that, was that your journey to, to like being a psych psychologist? No,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:17:42](#)):

<laugh>. I mean, I, my journey

Warwick Schiller ([00:17:46](#)):

<laugh>, Okay,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:17:46](#)):

Good. My journey was, I don't know if I can swear, but I'm going to, there's a lot of bullshit in the field and there's a lot of over intellectualization and there's a lot of wonderful people. I don't wanna like, you know, put knives in the back of my colleagues, but there's so much in your head and so much processing of old narratives and blah, blah, blah. Why I got into it was, I really understood, and it kind of is like what you said with horse training, I understood that there was this big element of the need to feel safe in your body. And there are other people that have written about it in a very intellectual level. But for me, horses saved my life. Horses helped me to be curious and really listen and be with the horse I was with, which is part of why I went into it.

([00:18:39](#)):

Plus, I don't know what else I would do. I mean, if I was, if I was a good enough horse rider, I would've had like all of us dreams to go to the Olympics. But, um, <laugh>, but I, I don't, I don't think, I don't think that therapy <laugh>, I don't think that therapy saved my life. I certainly had a share of it in high school. I think horses and dancing and music and friendship and creating a herd around me that I loved dearly. So I went into it because I definitely had an innate ability period. And frankly I thought a lot of the therapists I met were full of it and I thought I could do a better job and that's awful. But it's the truth sounds a little arrogant.

Warwick Schiller ([00:19:29](#)):

No, actually I've had some therapists that I thought, interesting. You know what, I'm gonna, you know what I'm gonna do with you because I, you know, I know so little about, I know so little about you. Um, what I'm gonna do here is, as my listeners would know, I usually send out 20 questions and have the, um, the guests choose four to seven of those and we chat through 'em and usually I bring 'em up later in the podcast. But you chose a lot each 1, 2, 3, like chose like 10 or 12 of them and said, you know, just however many we get time for. But there's such good questions. I might just ask you the questions cuz a lot of times what'll happen is we will chat for an hour and a half and then I get to the questions and they're mostly being answered already. Right? But we might do this in reverse order. I'm gonna, I'm gonna ask you

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:20:18](#)):

Question as long as you ask me about my favorite book.

Warwick Schiller ([00:20:21](#)):

I don't even think you chose that one, but we can do that. We can do that somewhere in there. Uh, but you were just talking about how, you know, you, you thought a lot of therapists were, you know, you could do a better job. And then first question that you chose was, what is a common myth in your field of expertise that you'd like to debunk?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:20:39](#)):

Absolutely debunk the myth that you can't really care for your clients and that you can't really love your clients. I think that that's a myth that comes from therapists that don't have any sense of boundaries. From my perspective, I have to love my clients. I really do. And it doesn't mean that over the years I used to do a whole lot more back to back clients in my office. Over the years I've sort of morphed into doing a little this, a little of that. But I really have to love my clients or find something to really love about them. And it's safe, you know, it's not <laugh> love isn't mean sex, right? Love means just really, really caring. So that's something I really would love to debunk. And the other one is authenticity. Just like horses, humans that have been through trauma and humans in general, if they're tuned into their nervous system, they can feel bs. And for someone, particularly in complex trauma, it's really scary if somebody's inauthentic. So I am such a believer we need evidence based data and all of that to drive insurance and to, and to give us a context, but man, we have got to be willing to be authentic and present with our clients and really care for them.

Warwick Schiller ([00:22:04](#)):

Sounds like the way I look at horse training these days. Um, there is, it's funny how you said that, you know, we we're told not to have this and there is a psychiatrist who wrote a book and he's a relationship psychiatrist and I can't remember who it is cuz I listened to a lot of, listen, a lot of audio books. But he was talking about the fact that, you know, uh, marriage therapists are always te told to never take sides. And this goes like, I think that's bs I think sometimes I'll go, I'll, I'll take sides and I forget what mm-hmm. <affirmative>, I forget what his name is and what the therapy is that he does. Um, but yeah, it was an interesting read in his book and he says, We're told never to do that. And he says, I think that's part of the missing piece. So anyway, um, the next question that you chose in order, and I I don't think I've ever had a podcast guest not choose this one. So that kind of gives you an idea of the kind of people I have on here. But what is your relationship like with fear?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:23:03](#)):

I think, uh, I think fear for me has always been something that I embrace. I mean, it sounds, it sounds easy when you're not in the middle of being scared to death, <laugh> when you're scared to death, it's like, ugh. But I think fear is somewhat of a challenge for me and it's something that I've wanted, i, I want to master now. There's certain things I don't skydive, I don't jump six feet, five, six, you know, things like that. Three feet, three six at my tops. Not now two, six, maybe two feet. But I, I feel like fear is an opportunity for growth and polyvagal theory. And part of what we really try to teach with the polyvagal, equine, um, uh, institute's workshop is that ability to tolerate fear, to process it and then move through it because it's such a big part of life.

([00:23:59](#)):

The other thing, and I always say this, when I used to show horses, if I went into the arena saying, I'm scared to death, you would walk away and pretend you didn't know me if you were my trainer, right? Because I'd be on the wrong lead, I'd crash, you know. But if I said I'm really excited and I got this, I would go in and shine. So I was the one that would get top three, or excuse me, with number seven, please leave the arena. So I, I really learned that fear. Fear is something I really, I, a lot of it is how you interpret it to yourself in your body. It's an, it's a feeling in your body. It's the, then you translate it up to your head and your head says, Oh yeah, I remember this. This is the time I fell off the horse. Or I remember this, you know, this is this wonderful time. And so if we can learn to regulate our bodies, we can learn to interpret, interpret our head in the narratives in a healthier manner.

Warwick Schiller ([00:25:02](#)):

What is the same fear is the same as excitement without the brain. Yeah.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:25:05](#)):

Wow. I love that one. That one's really good.

Warwick Schiller ([00:25:07](#)):

Those sorts of things. That's

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:25:08](#)):

Really good.

Warwick Schiller ([00:25:09](#)):

I think was fear is the same as excitement. Well, he's the same in sensation as excitement without the breed.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:25:15](#)):

Well, it's all in the sympathetic nervous system system. And if you're in the sympathetic nervous system, part of the vent, the, the vagus nerve, not the vent, the vagus nerve, what happens is then if you go deeper, deeper terror, you go into dorsal shutdown. And if you go into dorsal shutdown, you can't access upper level thinking. So through the breathing, we can regulate enough so that then we can go up into that curiosity, compassion part of us and deal with it in a different situ in a different way. So when we have families with fear, whether it's, you know, from a familial induction, divorce, high conflict, divorce, whatever it is, what we really try to do is work on them feeling comfortable with the fear, Wait a minute so that they can go back to grazing or get to a place where they can go back to grazing.

Warwick Schiller ([00:26:07](#)):

Yeah, that whole um, that whole shutdown thing. So, long story short, cuz you don't know anything about me, but I don't wanna say too much because everybody on the podcast asserted to me in times. But I, uh, about seven years ago, my wife bought a, a high level raining horse that had some issues that I thought I could train out of him or work through and I couldn't. And it turns out this horse operated in very high dorsal tone. Like he, everything he did, he was in shutdown mode, even if he was doing like, and so training didn't work. I couldn't train the behaviors out of him because, you know, he was, he was just a little robot is what he was. And, and quite a few of the raining horses are a little that way. Um, you know, it's like being in the Marines or something or other.

[\(00:26:56\)](#):

But he, you know, I think, and underneath it all, he's very, very, very sensitive and working through all this stuff. It's like, oh yeah, the reason they shut down is because it's overwhelming and they can't deal with it. And he actually is the horse that made me understand that that's been my whole life. Like I've, I've spent my life in shut down and, you know, and I had the perfect child, perfect childhood, you know, so I've always thought there's no reason for anything like that with me. But then as I've looked into it and looked into a lot more things, you know, reading, *Waking the Tiger* by Peter Levine, and then I found out from mom that I was, you know, had pneumonia when I was three months old and spent, or four months old or something rather, and spent a week in the hospital with no, you know, And at that when you've three or four months old, you don't have access to photo flight and you're left alone and you're scared. So the only thing you've got is free. So I've had this, I've had this lifelong freeze response that I, you know, I didn't know where it came from. I didn't even know I had it, you know, I, but yeah, it's, yeah, it's been really interesting. Learn a lot about this stuff and where things come from.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(00:28:04\)](#):

You know, that's really interesting. And this is true story. I had the same experience as a baby of having pneumonia and being in the hospital and, um, being isolated. And then I, I got pneumonia quite a lot as a child. And what I did was I went into fight flight and I tried to fight it and then I'd get asthma. And right now I've always had English horses. A friend of mine's daughter found me, this really traumatized bucking horse who I've turned worked with slowly to become, um, just my great buddy horse trail, just incredible therapy horse. But same thing because if I go to sympathetic, he stops and will jump up and up, you know, like, and you don't really wanna be in sympathetic on a horse, right? But he has been my true embodiment. My friend, uh, Margie, who's known me for 43 years, she's was my original trainer, so to speak.

[\(00:29:07\)](#):

She said, This is a horse I've waited my whole life for you to have, because I have to be in event, vaal compassion and play. And like, you know, even he'll, he'll counter along and pin his ears and you just have to be like, Hey, you know, And then you see his ear and he starts relaxing and it's just, it's, it's nothing about training, it's about my nervous system. So I got you on that. And it's really interesting cuz I had never really experienced dorsal, you know, I was more like beat my way out of the paper bag. Right? And it's, it's, what that's really explained to me is the importance of really understanding where you are in your VA pathways. He's also, as I said, this amazing horse, he's never learned join up, but boy will he follow right? With a person who's sad in the arena, hopes us go right over ground and groundwork and go anywhere with them. And then, but if they disconnect, he disconnects. Right? It's kind of cool. So we have our teachers right now, our master teachers.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:30:13\)](#):

Yeah. It's, it's our teachers right now. Yeah, we certainly do. Uh, next question. What if, if you could spread a message to the world, what would it be? Or your favorite quote or both?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(00:30:35\)](#):

My favorite quotes are all ridiculously silly, so I'm not gonna go there. But, but, um, this, I always sounds so pretentious, but sometimes when I try to say like, what's my view for the world? If we could all work on being more regulated, if we could work on regulating our nervous system, we could maybe hear each other. And that's where I'm gonna slip this in, but goes to the whole story. My favorite book, my favorite

book is The Crucible and the Reason, it's a book about the Salem witch trials, my great great, great great grandmother was the last so-called witch hung in Salem. And when we look, and I've been intrigued with this for many reasons, One, because of my personal history and the other, because it's such a powerful story of a dysregulated community where these young girls in the community turned on these really incredible people because of this high level of dysregulation.

(00:31:37):

So the message for the world, as I sit on the mountain and proclaim what I need is, please, let's work on regulation. Let's work on getting comfortable and safe inside our bodies. If we can get there, we can really hear each other. If we can't get there, we're gonna continue this thing. Particularly in the US right now, we're like a bunch of chickens with our heads cut off fighting over a scrap, you know, and it's all about regulation, just regulation. It's, it's funny for me, polyvagal and what we teach at our workshops is so simple that sometimes it seems ridiculous. It's just so simple about regulation and learning how to be cod and learning how to regulate. First you have to learn how to be alone, to be able to be a mobile in the presence of somebody else without fear. That's the core of anxiety is this intensity that we all feel when we interact with each other. And that's what horses teach us. How not to do that, how not to be that way.

Warwick Schiller (00:32:38):

Right. Um, that was a fascinating little snippet about your great, great great grandmother. You know, the other, I I, I'd take screenshots of memes that I see all the time. And one I took a screenshot of the other day and said, who knows why we were taught to fear the witches and not those who burned them alive. Yeah.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey (00:32:56):

Yep. Yeah, I, uh, I love that. I saw that as well. And um, it's amazing because if you really look into the history of the Salem Witch trials, what you'll find is opinionated strong woman or also property rights at the core of it. But what you also see is the dysregulation of fear and people getting caught up in, I mean, there's so many variables that went into it, but the fact of the matter is calmness regulation is how they came out of it. Of, of, you know, a voice that comes in and says, everybody, let's, let's, in the words of my friend Linda Kahan, who you may or may not know, Dow of Equis and books like that, rock back and sigh,

Warwick Schiller (00:33:42):

Rock back and sigh. That's pretty cool. Um, yeah, the whole, the whole witch thing, um, not just the sell witch trolls, but the whole witch thing was, it's like, I think most people I have on the podcast these days, if they lived in the Middle Ages, would be burned at the stake as a witch because, because they have a connection to animals and, you know, they're connected to, and, and, and that that was all about, it was almost all about disconnection. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Like if, if you connected to nature and you know, you have some of that Earth wisdom is obviously your witch, you know, you've got some superstitious, you know, some crazy power. So yeah, it was, I'm glad we're not in that, we're not in that place anymore. So tell us more about The Crucible, seeing it's your

Dr. Rebecca Bailey (00:34:28):

Favorite. So The Crucible is Arthur Miller's play about what happened in this community. And, um, it's the story, it's, it's beautifully written, but it's the story of the young girls and this woman Chuba who was

exactly what you just said. She was from I believe The Bahamas and was into herbals and things like that. But in The Crucible, what you see is the ridiculousness of these young girls accusations. And he really, in his writing, really brings it to life. Um, it's a very powerful book and definitely I believe he was written during, I believe it was during the Red Scare in the fifties in this country. And there were so many accusations and things being thrown around very much like how it is now, you know, the black and white thinking good guys versus bad guys. And, um, to me, this book in this play embodied all of all of the lessons that we need to remember, which is how important it is to be flexible in our thinking and how horrible black and white thinking can be in general.

[\(00:35:42\)](#):

So I encourage people to read the book, watch the play. I think it's probably even been a movie. Mike Gregory, Gregory Gregory grandmother was apparently a very, you know, kind of opinionated old ha <laugh>, I guess the apple doesn't fall far, but, um, but part of the, the townspeople really had issues with her because her father, I believe, had given her land. And so that was another thing. The neighbor wanted the land. And so started this story and got the message to the girls who then carried it forward after they hung her. Um, I guess she said the, uh, Lord's Prayer with the noose around her neck, which you weren't supposed to be able to do. And her hanging kind of made the community go, Whoa, whoa, this has gone too far. So she was the first, her family was the first family to get reparations from the community.

[\(00:36:42\)](#):

Now we just, last month I noticed another person, the last person to give reparations just happened. Their family was given some sort of financial compensation for what had occurred. But I think it's a really important lesson that we listened to and think about, you know, the assumptions we make, the pieces that we put when our system is dysregulated. And I really, you know, I feel that with horses when I'm on that little horse of mine. And if I get mad or I want him to listen, I lose my ability to connect and really embrace who he is underneath me or with me, you know, and have compassion for maybe what he's dealing with from, I know for sure when he goes in arena, he's a better trail horse. He goes in arenas. First thing is like, Ooh, I remember this, you know? And so when we lose our ability and we get so deeply into our self and our, you know, like our needs, our assumptions, we lose our ability to regulate and stay calm and stay connected.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:37:42\)](#):

Yeah. And you know, talking, just talking about the divide in probably the world in general at the moment, but here in America especially too, um, it's, you know, I I think it's a lot about judgments. Like as soon as you, you know, judgment is really excluding others and not including others. And as soon as you start judging them, you are projecting your lens onto what they're doing. And it kind of, you know what I mean, Whether it's with horses or humans or whatever, you know, so the thing a lot of times these days I'm trying to get people to do with their horses is take every bit of information. It doesn't matter what they're doing, whether you think it's good or bad or whatever, but like, take it under advisement. Like don't apply your judgment to it because then your response to it is not the proper response for what's going on, but it's, it's your response to what's going on that has your prejudice laid over the top of it.

[\(00:38:45\)](#):

And I had a horseman in the first year of the, uh, podcast. I had a horseman named Mark Rashid on here who is also into a martial art called Aikido. And he talks about, um, a mind like still water. And he says, you know, if you go out to a pond first thing in the morning in that pond, there's no breeze. When you

look into that pond, you get a direct reflection of what's on the other side of the pond. But if you project yourself into that pond anyway, you step into the pond, you throw a rock in the pond, you put your hand in there and sw the water, whatever, it distorts that reflection. And you have actually changed what is you, you what you've just done. Your actions have just changed the interpretation you're getting of what's on the other side of the pond.

[\(00:39:28\)](#):

It hasn't changed. But now you are, you know, you, so if you can have a mind like still water to where you, uh, non-judgmental and you're a therapist. So I'll tell you, I did a couple about four years ago now, I did a year of, uh, D B T, um, both individual and group therapy. Uh, didn't do anything for me cuz apparently you actually have to have some emotions for that particular <laugh> thing to work. Uh, uh, but one of the homeworks we had was count your judgemental thoughts. And for me that was a turning point for like, you know, my, my life has not been the same since. Because once I started counting judgemental thoughts and only became aware of how many I had, but there was how many I had about myself and, you know, you just don't realize that you've got all these judgements going all day long about other people and about yourself and yada yada, yada yada.

[\(00:40:28\)](#):

And the same thing with horses, you know. And it was funny, after that year, I, um, I didn't do any clinics that year. I, I, that was 2018 and when I went back out doing clinics, or maybe I did a horse expo in New Zealand at the end of that year, but there was a, one of the demo horses was this big warm blood dressage horse that the lady leads in and he's running around circles and snorting and running over her and looking at everything. And I said, I, you know, I let her walk around for all and I said, bring him over here and I'll show you what I would do with him. And normally I would take a hold of the Holtz and do something with the horse to get him in a better state. And this particular horse, when she hinted the horse to me, he just, just completely relaxed because I wasn't looking at him like, this is a warm blood, who does this, who do?

[\(00:41:12\)](#):

It was just like, Hey dude, how's it going? Having a hard time? Are you, you know, and it was interesting because at this horse expert, I was just about to do some stuff and the stuff that I was going to do is, is pretty much polyvagal theory type stuff. Um, more about the, the thing I find these days with training or your interactions with my interactions with horses is if I can communicate my awareness of their awareness, right, That's nice. I communicate my awareness of where their thoughts are and when their thoughts change from one thing to another. If I can communicate, I saw your thoughts change doesn't have to be to me, it could be away from me or whatever. And they get that you can basically read their thoughts. They're completely different horses just like, Hey, you, you are pretty cool. But the thing with this one was, I didn't do anything with this horse.

[\(00:42:04\)](#):

And so I had to say to the crowd, you know, there was quite a large crowd they had to turn and say, so we need to talk about what just happened and what just happened didn't happen just then. I didn't just project some aura of calmness and I didn't just woo this horse or whatever. I said, That really doesn't normally happen, but let me tell you what I've been doing for the last 10 months. And it, so I, I basically spent the, the rest of that session talking about the things I'd learned in therapy and, you know, meditation practice and just different things I was doing. But it wasn't about horse training. But this, yeah. And it, since then it's happened quite a bit. But that, I think that was the first one where this horse was completely different when the lady handed me the lead rope, um, when I got the lead rope versus when she had it. And for me, the big thing was I had got to a point of, of having no judgment. You know,

I I, I had no judgment about the horses previous actions before she handed the horse to me it was just like, Hey, how's it going? It's just, that's just that, you know, vental vague community, you know, sense of, you know, sense of community, Hello sh I don't know. But

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:43:17](#)):

No, it's perfect. And what, what you're, you would've, you would've loved to have done therapy with us over here because we could have told you, we could have helped you early on with maybe seeing that whole notion of be with the horse you're with, right? So it's, see I love what you said because to me that's such a beautiful example of being with, with the, the person you're with. And I say this working with therapists and judges, police office, whatever the populations we work with is be present with the person in front of you or the horse in front of you because that allows you to have an authentic relationship. We go back to authenticity. The other piece is I truly, truly believe and the space between human and horse is where the connection is, right? It's not the mirror of the horse or you are the this or that.

([00:44:08](#)):

It's the space between how do you meet in a safe, connected way between you and the horse. So what, that's what I was trying to say early on when I was working as a assistant to my friend Margie, my job was to come down and celebrate the horse in front of me and not make them all try to be like the horse before. And that allowed me to go into grad school. And I remember using that when I was interviewed. I have terrible dyslexia and so I was not necessarily the number one candidate for being a PhD, but I remember, and I think that's how I got into the graduate school I got into cuz that's what I said. I remember saying, I've learned from horse working with horses to be with a horse I'm with. So I go back to some of these things I learned all those years ago and I'm like, oh, that really was something <laugh>. So I love that. I love it. It sounds like we're so much on the same page of what it is to be authentic and that's what you're talking about is authentic horses need congruence, they need authenticity. I don't know if they need it, but they want it because they're all about neuroception. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([00:45:21](#)):

Uh, no. Yeah, I think they need it, you know, and for quite a long time doing, Cause I do clinics all around the world and for quite a long time there was a number most people I could help, but every once in a while there was someone and I just, I just couldn't help 'em because, you know, they probably should get rid of horses and get a cat. Right. You know, preferably an outside cat sort of thing. That's the thing I used to think because they're not good with animals. But what I, what I came to realize with, with those people is they're not good with themselves

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:45:53](#)):

Comfortable.

Warwick Schiller ([00:45:54](#)):

And so a lot of what I do with the, like at clinics and stuff these days is getting people more into their own bodies first rather than trying to do something to the horse. Because I, I think that any technique you may do is only as good as the energy and intention with which you present it and what's going on. And you talked about incongruency a minute ago, you know, a lot of times I see people asking a horse to do something, but their body language is really incongruent. Like half their body language says, I would like you to move over there. And the other half their body language is going, Oh my god, you're a big

scary horse and I think I would love, I'd rather get outta your way sort of thing. And um, just trying to get people to be congruent with themselves.

(00:46:43):

I'd tell people, Hey, if you are scared, you're better off act and scared and telling you are scared than you are pretending you, you know, I don't think the whole fity make it worked with a, with a prey animal who is, is uh, you know, evolved to let's say be very wary of incongruent action. Like I always talk about, you know, if you watch the National Geographic Channel and there's the zebras eating the grass and the walk, the, the line walks by go to the watering hole in the background, they don't even lift their head up because that lion is walking to the watering hole on a spiritual, like everything's going to the watering hole. But if he's like starts thinking, Oh, I'm gonna pretend I'm going to the watering hole, but I'm actually gonna sneak up on these Everest, the whole, the air in the room changes, the whole energy changes. And I think, and that would be incongruent behavior. And I think they've evolved to pick up on incongruent behavior as a dangerous signal. And so people when they're trying to get their horse to do things and they're very incongruent, these poor horses are in like sympathetic, like, this is not right. Like I don't trust what's going on

Dr. Rebecca Bailey (00:47:52):

Here. I think that same thing happens with therapist on the whole thing. You know? Um, I think that, and I, I have to roll back in the what ge what, what do I wish I hadn't said? I really do believe that therapy has a place. I think that for many people sitting in an office, it's torture. And I think you can get to some of the same places very quickly when you do interactive experiential therapeutic workshops with horses and humans. We, we have a thing we call connection focused therapy or connection focused training, which is really like, how do you get up and move and connect with, with a person and connect with your own body as opposed to sitting in an office and trying to like go deep into your body and be comfortable because you can't really be comfortable if you're sitting there evoking old memories.

(00:48:45):

I, I'm sort of lo a little lost with where I'm going right now, <laugh>, but I know everything that you're saying is, is so spot on of how you teach people to better understand their nervous system. Steven Poor just calls it neuroception and neuroception is the sense of am I safe? Am I not safe? And it's an unconscious process going on in our body all the time. Horses are masters in that, but the thing that they embody that we're so, so far afield as human beings is how to then let go of that fear state, how to let go of that shutdown. And you know, I know horses come in all shapes and sizes and temperaments as well and have their own experiences that they bring in with people, but they seem, in my perception, most of them have that ability to be able to sort of go up and down and be flexible in their state reaction. And I, and I, I think it's cuz that's what their survival, I think they're both predator and prey on some level because they have to know when they have to bring out that other part of themselves as well. They're just such phenomenal teachers for humans <laugh>. And that's the long and short of it, isn't it?

Warwick Schiller (00:50:03):

That is the short of it. Okay, next question for you is, what's the most worthwhile thing you've put your time into? And when I read your your bio, it's like wow, you've put your time into a lot of things. So it'll be interesting to know which one of those you think is the the most worthwhile thing you put your time into the thing that changed the course of your life

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:50:22](#)):

Without question. Ugh. It's, this is the deep without question. Question. Working with some severe helping people who, in particular, one person who was abducted as a young child in helping this person find their legs and walk forward and realize their incredible resiliency and strength without question. And what's been really fun? Like you, I talk all over the world or sounds so funny when you say that it makes you feel so like no, but, and my message is really of the resiliency of the human spirit and watching these people who've maybe been in her case and every, you know, people know I worked with her and she's been open about it but kidnapped for 18 years by a sex offender.

Warwick Schiller ([00:51:17](#)):

Is she the one that's on your

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:51:18](#)):

JC Yeah, JC Dugard.

Warwick Schiller ([00:51:20](#)):

Is this she the one that's on your staff now? Yeah, yeah.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:51:22](#)):

She's worked. We we worked.

Warwick Schiller ([00:51:23](#)):

Yeah, I was just reading about it before I got on you. I'm like, what, what a story. So

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:51:28](#)):

We worked together for about a year and a half, amazing story. And then she said, I don't want my story to be the poor little kidnapped person cuz she never was that person. And so we went through, ugh, three months of informed consent work and working through how do we transition out of this perspective of me being the therapist to us working together and being more in a mentorship. Um, she knew more about survival than I did. Right? She'd had 18 years to process through so much and that was what was so fabulous with the horse work that the horses, there were so much that the horses just kind of showed her that she'd already known. And I became a collaborator with her, with my horses and actually my two particular horses got very attached to her. It was pretty touching. Um, what's one of the blessings that I've had is being able to do extended treatment with different populations and watching the horses on some level take over.

([00:52:34](#)):

I have a young, a woman I'm working with now and she's open with her story who her children were murdered by her husband and then he killed himself, her ex-husband and did a bunch of really good therapy with a really good therapist, therapists and grief. And then came to, um, the foundation and the Polyvagal Equine Institute to work with us about the next step. And so we did a lot of horse work with her and then I, it's hard to describe this, but I guess I wanna share this with you. So then she said, I wanna, you know, can I come and help you take care of the horses couple days a week? So she came and brushed the horses and cleaned stalls and then would go into the arena on the ground, never riding.

And one day I look out and the both the horses are laying in there with her <laugh>, like both of them, which a little unusual, right?

[\(00:53:30\)](#):

Little, usually one, not both. And I go down, I check in with her and she's crying and, um, I said, Okay, what's happening? And she said, I I think that, you know, they're my children who are dead and this is a little startling story to bring out of the air, but I just felt like sharing it. And um, we talked and we kind of processed it through and then the next day she came to me and she said, No, I figured it out. Those horses are showing me that my kids are at peace <laugh>.

[\(00:54:05\)](#):

It's like, oh my gosh. And it's like, what a story. Like I know I've pulled that one out of the air, but I have so many stories like, like this that I I, um, you try to explain it and unless you're one of us who don't really get it, but even I didn't get their ability to take her to a different place that all the yak yac in the world wasn't gonna do it. Do you know what I mean? It just said, I, um, we have pictures of, of it. I I sometimes will come out on my, I'm on a very small California ranchette and I'll come out in the morning when she'll be down there. She comes three days a week <laugh>. And I'm always thinking my black and white mayor is dead cuz there's silence. And then I'll, I'll say, I'll do this, you know, like, let me know.

[\(00:54:55\)](#):

And Val, Dr. Velcro's tale will go up in the air to show, you know, and, and this woman will do this or something. But without exception, when I look out and see it, I'm always like, okay cuz Velcro, Dr. Alco is 36 years old. But, so I'm always like, is it, you know, you know how you do that with the older ones, like, oh, um, I don't know if you do, but that's my fear that I'm gonna walk out one day that will have happened. But I think I, I share that story cuz it's just such an example of like, they took, they took the reins and took the therapy and figured it out. And it's not that she didn't need the work ahead, it's not that she didn't need the human work. It's not that she didn't need the human, um, multiple hypothesis that we offer when we work with families and groups, but the horses just knew what needed to get done.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:55:49\)](#):

Yeah, they're pretty amazing that way, aren't they?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(00:55:51\)](#):

Really amazing. So I took away from jcs. I didn't wanna take away from JC cuz she is the one, but I I also wanna acknowledge these other individuals I've worked with that have blown my, blown my mind. And, and that's the biggest gift I've had is to hold testimony to their healing.

Warwick Schiller [\(00:56:09\)](#):

Um, so JC was kidnapped for like 18 years and had two children with this guy, didn't she? Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(00:56:15\)](#):

Yeah. And they're awesome too. And, you know, thank you very much. Wow. She's gone forward in her life and she despises being called the kidnapped survivor because that's not who she is. She's actually in equestrian and um, facilitator in her own right. And often she'll work with groups and families under and

nobody will know who she is. And that's, you know, preferable or not depending, she's not embarrassed,

Warwick Schiller ([00:56:46](#)):

Right. But sometimes it's better if they just take of who she's, and not the story that they have

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:56:54](#)):

About, We found judges and police officers and others often get a lot out of it because she doesn't blame the system. You know, She certainly didn't like how the system treated her, and I don't like to speak for her ever. But, um, sometimes she's a, she's a little bit of a beacon of moving forward and getting unstuck and being flexible in your response to the event that happened in your life. And not everybody can do that. We understand that. Again, you know, it doesn't mean that people that can't, that they get stuck should be judged. Never, ever, ever. Um, but she's pretty amazing.

Warwick Schiller ([00:57:38](#)):

She sounds like it. So something, so I, I haven't told everybody this, but I was told about you by Christine Dixon. Mm-hmm. <affirmative>, who's

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:57:46](#)):

Wonderful,

Warwick Schiller ([00:57:47](#)):

Who I had on the podcast here recently. Christine is wonderful. And she said, she said to ask you about this because she knows about me having a, you know, a freeze response all my life. And that's been my go to. And she said to ask you about doing training for judges and police on, on polyvagal stuff, because you can have, she said, you'll have a kid in front of a judge. And the judge asked him a question or something or other, and the kid will freeze and the judge will take it as the kids being, uh, you know, like choosing not to answer or ignoring him or whatever. And they don't understand that, that that kid has gone to dorsal Right. Shut down and is incapable of, Is is that a

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([00:58:36](#)):

Common thing? Yeah, I mean, I think I'm gonna be protective of judges in that they have the most horrendous job that we could ever imagine. Oh my gosh. Can you imagine so many of 'em? Oh yeah. What we, we published a paper, I published two papers, one with Deb Dana, who's an amazing polyvagal person. One was on polyvagal and high conflict divorces to understand how attorneys and judges and families get all caught up. And the other one was helping judges understand polyvagal responses and how to handle their own polyvagal response, How to handle their own shutdown or judgemental piece. When I think what Kristen was talking about, um, Christine was talking about was particularly with the cross examination maybe of a rape victim or someone else where they're saying, Where were you at that time? And the person can't answer. And the prosecutor might look at it as like, look, this is an example.

([00:59:34](#)):

They're not telling the truth or, um, they're, you know, and it's, it's, when I started becoming aware of that about 10 years ago, I was like, Oh my gosh. I mean, this is like essential in our judicial system is this ability to be able to articulate things that have happened. When I work with, um, victims, survivors,

warriors, <laugh>, whatever we're gonna call, I will really work with them on understanding how to get back in their body through breathing. Having, um, I had a young man and young lady who'd had horrendous, horrendous abuse that were just testifying. And I brought them both, um, ice water in a container and so that they could have a sip if they lost it lo or losing focus of that ice water to bring them back in. It's also at the root of therapy dogs in there, or weighted weighted blanket or weighted stuffed animals that kids will able to have on their lap.

[\(01:00:34\)](#):

But remembering that when you're in that terror, you lose your ability to access upper level thinking. So that's another kind of funny thing. Those of us that love horses, we are just saying, Oh, horses are, But there are people that are terrified of horses. So the experience of coming in, working with us on the ground with horses allows them toay. It's that fear, certainly not the dorsal fear. I've had a few that have been very, very scared, but nobody in terror, pure terror. But allowing them to experience that here and then learning how to manage it on the stand or in therapy or doing questioning or in their real life is really a useful tool. So I, I think one of the things she may be talking about is we were doing a group of, I think 60 judges. It was 30 group of 30 each in, um, Colorado about six years ago.

[\(01:01:30\)](#):

And there was one judge that really did not wanna go in the arena. She was so afraid and didn't want anyone to know, right? Cuz you can't really show people you're scared if you're a judge, supposedly. And, um, kind of talked with her and got her to go in and then we went in and she was telling me that she was very angry at us because there was a quote unquote abused horse. These were a friend of mine's horses who trust me, abused no horse. I knew that this horse was 41 years old, <laugh>. So when I was able to say to her, Does it change your mind if I tell you this horse is 41 <laugh>? She went, Oh my God, everything changed. And then she was able to connect a, the assumptions that she can do on the bench, and b, when she has fear that sometimes it's about an assumption that she might make.

[\(01:02:21\)](#):

She just had this whole unraveling of her narratives that she gave towards whatever was happening in her body. So that's really true, true with police officers. Um, it's just we, the therapists, I love doing professional groups for coaches and therapists, particularly coaches because I like them to get out of their head into their body and out of the preconceived notions that they have about things. Particularly what it's like to be afraid, what it's like to be almost in a dorsal, like we have a couple horses that we don't, they, when they get turned out, they're rearing and running around and having a blast. Right. Well that's really scary and we certainly don't send the people in with that, but pay, have them pay attention to what does it feel in your body when you feel like that? So, I'm sorry, I do get tangential. I get going and I can't stop. Sorry.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:03:19\)](#):

Hey, that's, that's great for this podcast. Hey, do, do you know, like first responders and things like that, they have um, uh, like say mental health counseling, do judges have mental health counseling? Cuz that's gotta be a lot of stuff to weigh on your psyche.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:03:38\)](#):

You know, we, I work with a organization called the National Council of Judicial and Family Court Judges. And they're, in my mind, one of the first groups that have really been acknowledging that piece. Um, I have, because of the, you know, international connections, I'm connecting to the Polyvagal Institute with a barrister in Ireland. And we're beginning to talk about how do you, how do you address that? The

problem is they can't talk to anybody about what's going on for them. They really can't. Cuz they're, the judges I know are really, they're, they're tight. They don't, you know, talk over dinner about a case. They just don't do it. Um, and then there's also, in the US you are elected and so there's this perception of, you know, wait, what do you mean you're going to counseling? Or what do you mean you're doing a workshop with horses?

[\(01:04:31\)](#):

So we always have to be very careful to call it not a retreat, but to call it trainings and things like that. Because perception can be, we, I mean, talk about projecting on horses. We project on judges that they're supposed to be this, this certain way and they're not many of whom are really dedicated. They don't, at least in the US they don't make a hell of a lot of money unless you're the guy overseeing the pg and e lawsuit and then you made 125,000 a month. But he's the exception <laugh>, you know, I had to get that dig in having lost my house to pg and e I had to do it, but, um, but no, they, they don't. Um, right. I'm very honored when a judge reaches out and will talk to me, me about something. And for a while I was doing consult for an organization where you could call anonymously, but they're just beginning to understand how important that is.

[\(01:05:27\)](#):

And, um, to me the first step is understanding how to make a home in your body and be comfortable in your body how to, And that's where I say I think the field of therapy has gotten it really, really wrong. I think that we've gotten too deep into the brain and the thinking of the brain and those pattern instead of really making comfort. It's like if I sit there and I analyze the horse over and over and over and try to go into his past history of trauma, it's a context, but then I'm not seeing him for who he really is. Right. And it's the same thing with, with understanding therapy.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:06:05\)](#):

Yeah. The top down thing didn't work for me, um, because I am stuck in my head, you know, I haven't been in my body. And so yeah, the top the the top down thing didn't really,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:06:17\)](#):

For most people, I don't think it does for most people. I think intellectualization is a high, is a defense. You know, they say humor is one of the healthiest defenses, but intellectualization is not necessarily the healthiest defense because it gets you stuck in fight flight or dorsal. Right? Cuz it can't be open if you're up here all the time processing and putting the data points in. So it really, and that again is where workshops with horses or trainings or, you know, I even believe we even at polyvagal equine we're developing some videos for people to watch just of the horses so that to get a different experience of what these like major fight flight, dorsal and eventual might feel like in your body, what it might look like in your body.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:07:07\)](#):

Um, okay. I'm gonna ask another question. We're gonna digress back to our questions here and this one's a good one. What's an unusual habit you have?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:07:14\)](#):

Oh God, how revealing do I wanna be? Um, really bad, crappy tea.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:07:20\)](#):

Well, you chose this question. So reveal

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:07:23](#)):

Reality tv, although I got really tired of one that I love for years, I love The Bachelor for years, even though it's the most misogynistic, disgusting television show. My husband couldn't stand when it was on. I finally burnt out on that, but, um, really bad. And I loved, oh my gosh, say yes to the dress. I was obsessed with that thing. I didn't have TV for 15 years. And so when I finally got it, I found this whole world of in name crap. And you say Yes to the dress. That was like a really, really in name. It was so fun to like, imagine what your whole life would be like if you just had to worry about your wedding dress.

([01:08:06](#)):

<laugh>.

([01:08:07](#)):

So sorry, you didn't see that one coming <laugh>.

([01:08:12](#)):

You're looking at me like, what lady?

Warwick Schiller ([01:08:14](#)):

Not only did I not see that coming, not only did it not see it coming, I didn't see it. So say yes to the dress. Is that some sort of rare, it

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:08:24](#)):

Was an American show for many. And then I ran into the guy in the airport that was so funny. Um, the, the host, it was this American show that went on forever and it was like 20 minutes and the brides would go, this was like a waste of time to talk about it. But anyways, they would go into a, um, into a like shop, right? Like a shop I've never been in, in my life. And they would try on the dress and their friends would be there and they'd find the perfect wedding dress. And like then they would choose three dresses and they had to pick the best dress, but they never chose the dress I would've chosen ever. Um, but it was like really became the obsession for a while. And then I was doing a training for a bunch of actually D B T therapists from Washington State and we were doing a horse related three day training here on like, professional whatever. And it turned out that they all watched the same show. It was because I had a dinner and we said, because we, my husband's a chef, we cook dinners with, you know, groups that come in often. And I said, What's your dirty little secret? And they like, I think it was eight out of the 12 said they like to watch she yes to the dress. So that's why I feel comfortable coming out with it on this broadcast.

Speaker 6 ([01:09:43](#)):

<laugh>.

Warwick Schiller ([01:09:46](#)):

You know, I, I don't want a therapist, the therapist on the, on the podcast, but is is that like something don't even have to, like you've got so much on your plate all the time. Is that one of those things you can just numb out and it doesn't matter. Like it's, you don't really have pay attention to it. It's, there's not a plot to follow. You can just kind of, you

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:10:10](#)):

Can watch it. And the thing is part of, for me that one of the biggest gifts I believe that somehow I understood from very young was the need to do multiple hypothesis to human behavior. So when you have one hypothesis on behavior, you get into assumptions and judgements. If you're able to pull to multiple hypothesis, then you allow yourself to be in this mental state of like, curiosity, right? Like, gosh, I wonder well could be this, or if it's that. So for me, I'm trying to rationalize my, like of this show. I could like choose which one was the right and why was it be that. And often I was wrong and I'd be like, Oh, it's really wrong. She looks like a lady that would like lace. So whatever. Um, but I, I share that also as one of the tricks of the trade is multiple hypothesis

([01:11:01](#)):

<laugh>.

([01:11:03](#)):

Listen, I I never, I never said I was

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:07](#)):

Multiple hypothesis. There's three dresses. Okay, <laugh>.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:11:13](#)):

I've lost him. He's <laugh>.

Warwick Schiller ([01:11:15](#)):

Okay, let's go with next question. Uh, your next question is, what accomplishment are you most proud of?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:11:28](#)):

You know, I, I would love, I wish I could say having my children. I always wanna be the type of mom that would say that. But I love my children dearly. I will honestly really say getting through grad school with dyslexia. Um, if I really had to say dyslexia and I feel guilty saying that, what is it that like makes you as a, at least as woman you feel like you're supposed, at least I do feel like that should be the friend and center. But getting through grad school was huge. It was huge for me. Um, I like swimming upstream with one arm when you're really dyslexic and we all, you know, we all have our challenges, but that really was my challenge. So that was a huge accomplishment to me. It really was. Um, I did it because I knew I had a gift. I always knew I had a gift of, of understanding and connecting with people, but I never thought I could get through the grad school. It was a very rigorous grad school and what's really cute is most people did it in five years. It took me four years cuz I miscalculated the classes and took one extra class the whole time, which meant I got out sooner than everybody else. <laugh> I got my dissertation done in six months or something like that. So, but that was a huge accomplishment and I'm really proud of it.

Warwick Schiller ([01:12:51](#)):

What would you say the, what would you say the biggest, um, or the hardest things to do with your dyslexia with going at grad school? What, what, what, what was the hard, you know, how did your dyslexia make it more difficult?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:13:12](#)):

You know, there's all the obvious of, you know, writing papers and stuff, but maintaining my confidence with some very arrogant human beings who I, I'll tell you the hardest story and I'm being really forthcoming with you. I remember going into the library at UC, Berkeley, and at the time, the Dewey Decimal system, you had to find books by like index cards, <laugh>, like you had to look and find the area. And they were telling us where all the articles were. Well, I had spent my life in the library going alphabetically to find books. I, and so I couldn't understand what the person was saying, who was trying to explain it. And I raised my hand and said, Look, I'm so sorry I'm very dyslexic. I don't understand what you're talking about. And after that experience, one of my classmates came up to me and said, You've embarrassed us.

([01:14:05](#)):

You've shown everybody you know, you're, it was just like, and she just berated me and I burst out in tears and thought, How am I ever gonna get my PhD? I'm too stupid or whatever. Um, and so in all honesty, math was very, very difficult. That was very hard statistics. But the truth was holding onto my authenticity and my confidence <laugh> it was, it was hard. And if it wasn't for some of the professors who really would pull me inside and say, You've got it, you've got it. You know, understand that you have something that other people don't and it makes them frustrated, which was this ability to connect. I think it must be like being a really good horse trainer and you know, you might not look like everybody else, right? You might have your own way, but people get, and I almost feel bad saying this cuz it, you know, I just, people would get frustrated and jealous because I bring it down to such a simple level. So, um, that was really the hardest thing was holding onto that confidence piece. And the work was hard, but, but the horses helped me. That's what I mean. I'd get up at five and I'd go out and I'd work with the horses before.

Warwick Schiller ([01:15:16](#)):

So what you're saying is the dyslexia wasn't the hardest part. It was the judgements, dealing with the judgements and stuff because of the

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:15:23](#)):

Dyslexia. Yes. And, and I mean certainly it was very hard work. I mean, definitely, definitely. And

Warwick Schiller ([01:15:28](#)):

Like, keeping your confidence, Keeping

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:15:30](#)):

Your confidence and knowing, you know, one of my favorite stories, which I actually share with other dyslexia dyslexics, is I had a woman type all my papers for me. I figured out early on she, I would tape record my vert my words and she would type it out. And my last year there, she was leaving ahead of me and I said, Oh my God, what am I gonna do? You know? And she said, What do you mean you can hire somebody else? I said, No, no, no, you changed my papers. And she looked at me and she said, I never changed one word. I just put the punctuation in where, where it meant to be. You know? And so I, what I say is that I think I, I found my way to get through. I think if I'd had to sit there and type the papers, if you remember the old typewriters, I think I would, I, I got my, um, doctorate right when, um, the first apples came out and I actually ended up with a computer my last year there.

([01:16:25](#)):

But before that it was all on type typewriter. So, um, I think what I learned to do is use my resources in front of me and, you know, figure out a way to get through it. Because I do think the dyslexia itself was not easy. Definitely not easy. But now it's funny, I've really, I don't do, don't do math. Can't stand math. If I have to do statistics, if I have to understand statistics, I'll ask Siri to help me understand it, you know? Um, but I read Voraciously, absolutely. Which has also taught me that you really can push through something I love to read.

Warwick Schiller ([01:17:05](#)):

What's, what's the upsides of being dyslexic?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:17:09](#)):

Intuition. It's intuition. You learn to count on something different. Like, I think it's probably you. That's a great question cuz I think it's why I I'm so anti over intellectualization <laugh>. You know, I gotta tell you, this is another funny story and I'm, I'm sort of one of those European people that everybody hates. My family was an old, old boss and family, old, old boss and family. And in 1920, you'll love this. I think my great-grandfather was dean of, um, Harvard Medical School, which I say embarrassingly because again, it's such a euro, you know, you know what I'm saying? So his, he was dean of Harvard Medical School and in his obituary, his um, mantra or his platform was that woman of Boston should wear comfortable shoes and wear moccasins. And that was his single biggest contribution to the world was he also did a thing called the Bradford Brace.

([01:18:09](#)):

But he really believed that women should wear moccasins, that that would cure all sorts of hip problems. And I look at this guy in 1920 saying this publicly, right? And talk about boiling it down to the most obvious simplistic thing. Um, I I, I hold onto that because my whole thing is like curiosity, compassion, connection, play, laughter, all this stuff. And it seems so simple in a world full of like, you know, protocols of this way and do this and, you know, brain and your neuro cortex and all that. And it's like, it's really boil it right down to bring joy, you know, to be able to bring compassion, curiosity, get your body regulated is really how we have, like Steven P just says health growth and restoration resides in that part.

Speaker 6 ([01:19:04](#)):

Restoration resides in

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:19:06](#)):

That. Now, hopefully you won't hate me because I'm one of those European people. Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([01:19:14](#)):

<laugh>. No, no, not at all. Not at all. No, it's, it's interesting like, you know, I'm, you know, when I talk about, say polyvagal theory with the horses, I actually did a video on YouTube I think a few years ago about polyvagal theory in horses. And I, at the start of the video, I say, I always come to the science from the back end. I kind of figure it out empirically and it works. I dunno why it works, but it works really good and it works better than what I used to do and it works better than anything I've seen. So I'm using it and then I will stumble upon the science that says why it works. And it, it sounds, you know, it sounds a little bit that way, whereas you are less concerned about all the intellectual stuff and the, you know, more concerned about the practical application things.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:20:02](#)):

I'm just so happy that you're bringing the message cuz I, I, I do know a little bit about you and I know people respect you immensely and you're bringing the kindness, you're bringing the kindness into. And, and I'm very excited in the field of horse training and horse that, that there is this shift. There's, there's beginning to be a different understanding of what it takes. And I've been around, I've had the, it's not my life, but my father had a horse that did go to the Olympics in dressage and he had a percent propensity for horse woman who the last horse woman took all his money with her and was pretty particularly reprehensible human, but talk about no judgment, right? I'm pure at heart. But his, this dressage horse used to three days a week get to go on the beach and just gallop through the waves.

([01:20:59](#)):

And the, his rider that did go to the Olympics on this horse was not particularly the kindest human being. Um, and I won't share his name because he's still out there, but the fact that he would take that horse out three days a week and Gallup on the beach was so cool to me. And you know, when I first, when I was first riding out in California, there was this thought about like, oh, you never take a show horse on the trail. I was like, what do are you talking about? You know, this is like a \$500,000 horse, you know, who goes galloping on the beach because it's good for the horse's brain and so, and body. So I love your message, you know, I just love it. It's so synchronistic and what I so much believe, which is the thing, ride the horse you're on, be with the horse you're on, find joy in the horse you're on, find joy in the people you're with. You know, all of that stuff is not always easy.

Warwick Schiller ([01:21:55](#)):

You know, what I've found with the horses is, you know, a big fan of Wayne Dyers quote, When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change and the last five or six years helping people with their horses, you know, I've looked at things differently and having people look at behavioral issues more empathetically and instead of trying to figure out how to stop them showing that behavior, try to figure out why that behavior exists and meet that need. You know, like it's, it's all an unmet need sort of thing. And you know, I grew up with the whole in, and it wasn't just my parents, it was the whole culture I grew up in was the whole, you know, stop crying. I'll give you something to cry about mentality. And a lot of horse training. And I don't mean abusive horse training, I don't mean old school hard horse training, I'm talking about horsemanship.

([01:22:51](#)):

A lot of that, that stuff involves, you know, if a horse say, just wanna stand still and wants to move his feet or movies feet here and movies feet there, and like if they wanna move their feet, direct their feet here and there and eventually they'll come to stop. But that is a bit more of the stop crying and give you something to cry about, uh, parenting style versus why does he wanna move his feet? What, what, what concern, what concerns does he have? Why does he feel unsafe, yada yada, yada, all that. But what I've found with helping people look at horses that way, you, you cannot just do that. Cuz once you do that, then you start to see it somewhere else and somewhere else. And, and I, I keep saying over and over that so many people, you know, will message me and say, Oh, since I started doing following your stuff, you know, I'm so much better with my husband and my kids and my coworker or whatever. And if you get into a conversation with them, they've had the same problems with their husband or their kids or their coworkers for years and never done anything about it. Right?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:23:47](#)):

Right.

Warwick Schiller ([01:23:48](#)):

Never taken the time to put the effort into it. But people want to get along with their horses and will do the work, put in the effort. And when they put in the effort to, you know, being a little bit more connected to their horses, a little bit more empathetic with their horses, I find it tends to, uh, you know, carry over into other areas of their life. And I actually, I can tell you a story. I got an email this morning, You'll, this will interest you because of the whole thing with the judges and whatever. Um, I got an email this morning from someone from Australia who, and your house got burned out by a fire here a few years ago. Um, there was some big fires in the area, these people's area a few years ago, a couple years ago and maybe a year or so ago. But then a year after that there were more fires in the same place and they were deliberately lit.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:24:37](#)):

Who, whoever I heard that

Warwick Schiller ([01:24:38](#)):

The second lot of fires were deliberately lit and they found out that this 19 year old kid had deliberately lit them. And so, you know, everybody's up in arms and he's a terrible person. They wanna throw the book at him. And the lady that sent me the email, her husband is a volunteer firefighter, as was this kid. Now the husband didn't know the kid, but the kid actually got sent to the big fire the year before, totally unprepared for a fire of that magnitude and ended up having PTSD from that. And that was the reason he lit the fire the next year. Anyway, this lady that emailed me this morning was saying her husband as a volunteer firefighter went to court, um, not so much in the kids' defense, but when testified in court about how being put in that situation would be overwhelming and there is no mental health, uh, support for that. Anyway, so the end of the whole thing, the kid didn't go to jail, the kid actually got help. Wow.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:25:46](#)):

It's so inter

Warwick Schiller ([01:25:47](#)):

And it was just so interesting to, to look at things that

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:25:50](#)):

Wasn't Yeah. And it's in, in the old, I mean, I'm definitely not a fian, definitely not. But in the old psychodynamic work, you talk about repetition, compulsion where you do things to make sense of things that have happened. And that's a great example of him doing something to make sense or, you know, there was, I had a um, a horse person the other day email me too about the situation where her son got in trouble right after the shooting in Texas that happened last spring in America where these little kids were shot. And um, her son had drawn pictures of a guy with a gun shooting people and the school was suspending him for it, <laugh>. And it was like two weeks after the shooting and she was reaching out to me of like, what can I explain to them? And I said, this is what, this is how kids, this is how humans try to make sense of, of traumatic things that have happened.

([01:26:46](#)):

Um, so I absolutely agree with that. What, what's also interesting, when you were talking about your work, that's where we're so much, and I wish you lived closer. You could come work with Polyvagal

equine Institute or we could work with you on this thing of like, what we do is we get humans that come and work with the horses, right? Who they don't know these horses. And one of the first, first one is respectful walking together. Okay? So you, you know, they've had time to get to know blah blah blah. And then just that act of how do you know when that horse is ready to walk forward two feet or one foot? And most people either drag the horse or they'll wait forever. Right. You know, and it's like, well how do you have the unconscious unspoken agreement that we're gonna walk forward two feet?

[\(01:27:34\)](#):

And when you watch people like your average person, I'm not talking to people that are horse people and even horse people as you know, get blown away by this. But when I first started doing this work in the early nineties, I was like, Hurry up, let's do more, let's do more. You know, this is boring. And now I just see that wisdom of just the walking forward two steps. Oh well how did that feel? As opposed to you are asking, it's exactly what you're talking about. And you know, you already know this cuz you're training humans more than as much, you're training the humans and the horses are kind enough to help you <laugh>. Right. You know, when they, these people come. But, but it's really, um, I just, it's just, it's so neat to me when you get horse virgins around the horses and they really have this opportunity to understand what a connection is or you know, what is it if, you know, there's one in the arena. I also will set, tell you this is tumbling lots of stuff. I don't think every horse likes to do this. There are some horses that really don't wanna work with humans. They just don't. And you know, on the ground I'm talking about, you know, you could just tell you could they just, it's not their, it's not their jam. Um, but but that piece of looking for mutual agreement, acceptance and connection again, the space between the horse and the human is where you gotta pay attention to the agreement.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:29:08\)](#):

Yeah. It's all fascinating stuff. And that's the, you know, that's the thing I'm finding with like, I just, you know, like the example I gave Indigo about the fire thing, I had another lady email him here another while ago. She's been, you know, following my training stuff and you know, it's changed the way she looks at horse's behaviors rather than looking at like, she wants to fix the behavior or punish the behavior. She wants to figure out why the behavior's there. And her daughter was bullied at school, uh, by this boy. And I think, you know, the young probably 6, 7, 5, somewhere in there sort of thing. And um, she came, the daughter came home and told her mother. And so the next day I think the mother went to the bus stop or something or other, and she said, Now in the past I'd have done one thing, she actually found that little boy and walked up to him and he saw her coming and he kind of knew what was, she could tell by the look on his face. She knew what, he knew what was coming. And she sat down and she said, I just talked to him and just asked him, Hey, what's going on? You know, you feeling okay? You did this to my daughter and obviously if you did that you're not feeling good about, about some things in your life. And they chatted through whatever the whole thing was and he was very sorry in the end. And, and the whole point of this lab emailing me was that would not have been my go to

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:30:28\)](#):

Nice

Warwick Schiller [\(01:30:28\)](#):

Since a couple of years ago. But learning I you know, learning to do it with the horses and seeing the outcome kind of makes you aware that a, that a different approach and a different outcome is possible.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:30:42\)](#):

It's a regulated, what you're talking about is regulation. Now the bigger challenge is when that little boy goes home or little girl to mom and dad who say, Why the heck did you talk to that lady? You know, like that's the problem is that we're living in this dysregulated world, but still nevertheless not to negate what this incredible message that your person brought to you is the importance of being fully, fully regulated. Fully regulated. And what we've found with even the, the toughest cops, even the, you know, toughest characters is being able to get out of a defensiveness, out of a like, you are wrong cuz you did this. And get them to understand what it's like to be comfortable in their body when they're in a conflict. That's often the biggest challenge, but somehow the horses help with it. I mean I do, you know, I have my theories why polyvagal Equine Institute, we have certain ideas, but again we also have multiple hypothesis of why it's also interesting there are certain people, certain energy and I hate to say that cause it makes me found too Californian.

[\(01:31:52\)](#):

And as a Bostonian I'm always afraid of sounding too Californian. But there are certain individuals that horses will definitely back off from. I, the theory is that it's in congruent, inauthentic. I don't know. I don't know. You know, I, I think the important piece is when you have somebody that you're working with in a workshop or, um, you know, individually or whatever it is in a training, those are the ones that you wanna get your, your calmest, you know, coolest horse and hope that there was some grooming they can connect and find another place and then see how they are in the same place. But I'm always surprised that there's often one that the horses are like, ah, don't think so. <laugh>.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:32:36\)](#):

You know, we had a funny thing happen here at our place. Oh this has gotta be three years ago maybe. Um, it was just after the world of question games in 2018. So my wife and I were won the Australian, uh, raining team and my wife's horse was the oldest raining horse there. I think Oscar was 14. But we had a, a good friend Jane Pike from New Zealand. She's an equestrian mindset coach. And she came over and helped us, you know, she worked with us all the way leading up to the world of ion games and came with us as our, as our mental coach. But her and my wife Robin did a workshop here the week after the world of question games. And it was just a little thing, but they had some little obstacles set up in the arena with the horses and like, you know, let's say you have three cones in a row with two poles on either side and you put two lead ropes on the horse and there's one person on either side and they've gotta guide the horse through the little thing. Things like that. Oscar was doing good with all this stuff until they, what they did was they blindfolded the person leading him and she had to lead him through this little obstacle course thing. And the people were telling the person verbally telling the person where to go little, he left little to your right. That sort of thing. Oscar got all weirded out when the person leading him didn't know where they were going. Yeah, good.

[\(01:33:56\)](#):

Like he was like, and Oscar's the coolest commerce horse ever, you know, but he was, I forget if he was grinding his teeth or like something he never does.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:34:06\)](#):

Yeah. Yep. See that's that old

Warwick Schiller [\(01:34:08\)](#):

E and just because this person was blindfolded and the energy changed.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:34:11](#)):

Yeah. And that's that old al egal, the organization, I'm sure you're familiar, did a lot of really, really cutting edge early on equine assisted intervention training. That's such a good example though of one of the issues that wasn't fair with that model. No offense. And I have some respect for some of the things they did and not for some, but that's such a good example of like, why put that poor horse through that? Not that you guys did anything wrong, but I mean relationships are built on trust in connection. Right. And I, I will say I've done stuff myself with blindfolding and things like that, recovering eyes. Um, but the idea that you have the horse have to trust these incredible beings that trust us so much to have them trust somebody who doesn't know crap of where they're going. You can see why that would provoke that.

([01:35:06](#)):

And I don't think you d you know, obviously I'm not telling you this that make you feel better cuz I don't think you feel bad about it, but it's not like you damaged Oscar. Right. Oscar was like, went back to grazing after the exercise. But I really like that example because we've seen that too. And again, I've made my own share of mistakes. <laugh>, my god, I've even had my favorite, one of my favorites. We have, this is nothing to do with this, but I think you'll think it's cute. We had, um, we have this one horse, Dr. Velcro, who is given to me by one of the ex-wives of the Grateful Dead. Um, and this horse, Dr. Velcro has helped more people than I can count. She's the black and white. I know the, the people can't see this on a podcast, but you can probably see her behind me.

([01:35:49](#)):

And that's Dr. Velcro. So we are doing a, a filming, she's really cool, amazing. She could have been a high level, but she came into my life. So we were doing a filming and we had some major network down at the barn filming and interview. And she let all the horses out in the middle of the interview open the lock <laugh> and I, you know, it wasn't many. I think there were four, but they all went galloping by and like, you know, chaos. And I had to talk about polyvagal ground myself and act like, oh, this is no problem. And we switched into gear and had the host of the show have to go walk up carefully with the one of the horse handlers and get the horse <laugh>. But inside my whole being is like, Oh crap, this is not doing any good for safety and mutual respect.

([01:36:36](#)):

You know? So I, I guess the reason I said that is so, um, I think sometimes equine professionals and therapists, we pretend that we never make any stupid things or you know, like we, you know, we uh, we don't make mistakes and it should all be this way and it's black and white and blah, blah, blah. And again, that's why I love bad horses. They bring the damn humor so much if we let them. Right. If we just let them like reveal some of them. Some of them aren't clowns, but some of them are. And if we just stop being so uptight, I mean, safety always comes first. And that was a very unsafe situation. Um, but I, I guess I also share that to the importance of authenticity, realness, you know, um, and to cover up the fact that I felt like I was criticizing you and I didn't mean to sound that way about old Alaska.

Warwick Schiller ([01:37:32](#)):

Oh no, not, I didn't take it that way at all. And you know, that exercise could have been done without, without anybody leading your horse. But the, you were talking about energy and you said, Oh, well I'm a Bostonian, I don't really wanna sound too Californian. I'm all about energy. But if you think about this person had been doing stuff with Oscar Yes. And her energy was just fine. Yep, yep. Until she put the blindfold on. And obviously then she's not confident anymore. Yeah. And Oscar, and I think he was

grinding his teeth and Oscar's never ground his teeth in his, you know what I mean? It's like, it was just such an, a great example of how when a person is unsure it around the horse, how much affects

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:38:13](#)):

It's neuroception. That that's probably point, it was my really feel safe. Right. So from a polyvagal perspective, is neuro what I call this is my term neuro radar. P just calls it a TSA agent. Is it safe, is it not? I think there's a radar that comes out. I'll also tell you, I'm I, I'm big on self deprecation. I had this beautiful 17 two thoroughbred who is a big event or incredible mover, <laugh>, wrong horse for me. Cuz he scared me half to death half the time. So, um, I ended up selling him to somebody in Florida, hadn't seen him in three years. I went to see him and I walked into the barn and he immediately started weaving

Warwick Schiller ([01:38:56](#)):

<laugh>

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:38:57](#)):

And grinding his teeth. And the new owner went, I've never seen him do that.

Warwick Schiller ([01:39:02](#)):

<laugh>,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:39:03](#)):

I think he thought, Uhoh, here comes this lady because I was terrified riding this horse. He just was, he was too much horse for me. Right. Um, but I just, I always think of that, of that neuroception of like, are you safe? Are you not safe? Right. And that's even true in therapeutic interventions of is this therapist safe? I cannot tell you how many people say to me and this surprises the heck outta me. And actually I've heard this from other survivors where they've been told this, they say, you know, I'm coming to talk to you and I'm trying not to do all the therapy. Any I not trying to do as much direct service cuz I'm doing all these workshops, but people will call me and say, you know, I'm, would you see me? And um, I've had one or two therapists tell me that my story is too much that they can't handle my story.

([01:39:53](#)):

And I'm so shocked to hear that therapists would say that. Right. Like, you know, I understand you have to be in your scope and your confidence, but what a message to a person. Right. Your, your story is too much. And I think sometimes that's the message that people give to a horse. Like, you might be too much like with my horse that I drove over the edge of anxiety somehow I think, um, we're constantly looking, am I safe? Will you judge me? Will you accept me? Will you let me be who I am? And that's like the core of all of this. Whether it's with horse train or horse gentle or therapy or whatever it is. I haven't found the right word for training. Have you? I haven't found Do you use training?

Speaker 6 ([01:40:41](#)):

Do you use training?

Warwick Schiller ([01:40:42](#)):

Well I do use the term training because if I am actually teaching a horse to give a response, I'm training it. But there's, so the connection though is not about training, it's about attunement. It's about communicating my awareness, you know, and there's a, I dunno, have you ever heard of Ray

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:41:03](#)):

Hunt? Oh yeah, absolutely. In fact, um, one of Ray Hunt's disciples lives down the street. She and her husband were the one that started, uh, the Pelli horses early on. Um, Julie Atwood, she's, I don't know her very well, but she lives down the street, so yes. Oh, okay. Ray Hunt is amazing. Amazing.

Warwick Schiller ([01:41:26](#)):

Okay. So there's an old Ray Hunt saying that says, they know when you know, they know when you know and they know when you don't. And I used to think that meant they know when you know what you're talking about and they know when you don't. They dunno if you, they know if you know what you're doing and they know if you dunno what you're doing. Which is true. But then a number of years ago, and I was about the same time, I was really getting into this whole, well what turned into polyvagal theory, um, I read an article by someone who was around Ray Hunter lot and he said, So when you are around your horse, you need to be aware of what his ears are doing. Yep. You need to know what his eyes are doing. You need to know what his nostrils are doing.

([01:42:03](#)):

You need to know what his muzzles is doing. You need to know what his back's doing. Is it tight? Is it loose? You need to know what his tails doing. Is it up? Is it clamped? Is it loose? You need to know what his feet doing. Are they standing square? Are they standing slightly braced. And you need to know all those things because they know when you know and they know when you don't. So they basically then know when you are present. And I think for me, that's what gives him a feeling of safety. If you think about a herd of horses and you take a horse away from the herd of horses and he's all upset, he wants to get back to the herd cuz that's where he feels safe. But it's not the physicality of the herd. It's not that, oh, if the Saber two tiger shows up, two of these guys are gonna go over and kick him in the head.

([01:42:42](#)):

It's a sense of shared awareness. You know what I, I call it the awareness burden. And if you are not present, if you, if a horse knows you're not present around him, they feel like they need to have the whole awareness burden. And those tend to be the horses like that one at the horse expo New Zealand that walks around and looks everywhere and is Winnie and is frantic and stuff because they can tell the human is not, is not present. And I, I really think that's a big part of the, with horses a big part of the, the safety part. That's not necessarily the connection. I don't think that's necessarily the connection part, but that's a big part of them feeling safe around you. And then I feel like when you, all the other attunement stuff that gives them the real sense of connection and really gets them into that ventral vaal tone and then they, you know, and then they're just as happy to hang out with you as they are with another horse.

([01:43:37](#)):

Like earlier on in this podcast, you said something about this horse like, Oh yeah, I'd never done any join up or anything with him. Any of those tech you're talking about. You asked me about training a minute ago. You know, I used to train horses to stay with me because there was en there was energy they had to use when they're away from me. If they were away from me, I'd put pressure and move 'em around. If they came over or they looked at me or came over here, they could stand still. It's like, okay, so I'm the, I'm the resting place, but they're only doing it. It's like you are the least bad place. Mm-hmm.

<affirmative>. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. Whereas when you are connected with them, you can, you have that attunement with them and they, they sense, you know, you're in that ventral vaal sort of thing, they wanna hang around you just like you're another horse. Right. Standing around, moving together, hanging around together. And so this, so that part, I don't feel like there's any training involved in that. You were just communicating to them. You are awareness. Yeah. But then there, but on top of that there is training, but these days the, for me, the connection comes first and then how I go about training goes on top of that connection and reinforces that connection. So it's still about connection. It's not just training, but I do use the term training

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:44:46](#)):

And it's, it's interesting cuz I think as I said earlier, um, I've ridden my whole, whole life and you know, for the average person I'm probably a pretty decent rider. I really believe horses have way more to teach me than I have to teach them. Whereas, I mean as assume people like you, people like my friend Margie's, people like some of these really accomplished riders. They have a lot to teach the horses too. So, you know, the other thing I was thinking when you were talking about connection, I've had the experience of my life of having a couple horses that were really beautifully bonded. And in my book and I'll say, you know, the equine connections, polyvagal principles, I talk about Lock It and Jack and early, early on there's this incredible story that actually makes people cry. And I didn't mean to, it was just early on I was in a horse show.

([01:45:37](#)):

I was very young and Jock and Locket and Jack were best, best, best friends. And I was going around one of those horrible little walk tri classes or walk tri Can and a little pony went under lockets, cut under her head and she flipped over and fell on my leg and, you know, made this really loud noise. And Jack, from all the way across the show gowns broke his halter and came galloping over next to the arena. And it was just like, ah, and these two best, best friends, they didn't even live together. So it wasn't bonded, you know. Um, and then I had another example of in the, in the fire, um, Dr. Velcro in Frisia, everybody had to leave traumatic, you know all that cuz Australia, I know you guys have your fires. So Velcro, Dr. Velcro goes in a trailer in a heartbeat, just you throw the rope over her neck, she goes in.

([01:46:32](#)):

So she went in and her buddy Frisia, who is her true, true, best buddy, would not go in and was flipping out and she broke out of that trailer and wouldn't leave. They had to leave her that night in the arena because the flames were coming down and they couldn't, they had, you know, another like 18 horses that had to get out or something like that. But talk about companionship and connection and like sense of safety. And I do think Lockett and Jack and Frisia and Velcro, Dr. Velcro have really, really remind me of what it's like to be truly in relationship and truly feel safe. Those are the same two, Dr. Velcro and Frier are the same two that laid down with, with that client, you know, who had lost her kids. And I just, I, I continue to be floored with what those two particular horses have to teach about connection, which may not look like two other horses.

([01:47:29](#)):

You know, there's just, it's really interesting. I think in the field of equine assisted interventions, there has been a tendency to, to broad brush all horses, you know? Um, whereas when you're riding horses and working, there's an understanding of the different styles and temperaments. I'm glad to see in equine assisted interventions we're beginning to say different horses, different population, different day, different horse. You know, like you might go to the barn on Tuesday and you have this highly anxious woman and you're like, eh, I don't think I'm gonna bring this horse out. And that's where I really

value my horse professional. Even though, again, I know my horses and with my own horses, I'm pretty comfortable being a horse professional, but I just really, really like having another set of eyes who has another, who speaks a whole nother language fluently that I've learned. But I don't necessarily have fluent, if that makes sense. I Don't necessarily,

(01:48:30):

And that's all the connection, the power of connection and awareness Connection.

Warwick Schiller (01:48:38):

Yeah. That's all the one about these days. So tell me about the, let's go over these books. So the, or through two books, Safe Kids, Smart Parents. What, when did you write that one? What was that one about?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey (01:48:47):

Safe Kids, Smart Parents. I wrote in 2016 and it was basically about dealing with scary situations with kids. And when I wrote it, Simon and Schuster said, Nobody's gonna really buy it cuz it's scary. And um, so I wrote it with my sister who was actually quite accomplished horse writer and a, a nurse and an I MF team. So we wrote this book and it got really good recognition from library clubs. I got on, you know, Good Morning American, all these major TV shows, but it really didn't sell very many because people are terrified to talk about the subject. And the thing about the book is it isn't like gory details, it's kind of like simple things like how to play I spy with Your Kid to make them more aware of their surrounding, you know, so things like that. So it was a disappointment in that it didn't, um, show I, I went back to New York and I was on Anderson Cooper and all these shows and I came back to do a local book signing and three people showed up.

(01:49:50):

Um, the third grade teacher, I kid you not a man from the Man Association, Man boy Love association and my husband. And after I'd been like in chauffeur around New York and on the networks, I come back to this thing. I think there might have been two more people. I think my kids came. But um, so that was a bit of a disappointment in that I really, it's, it's a great book. You can still get it probably for 50 cents on Amazon called Save Kids Smart Parents. Um, again, it's just that like really simple thing of um, things of like how to help your kids be safe without scaring him to death. And, you know, I had never really thought about it until I started researching it that I spy is an awareness game. And so, so that's that one. The other book, The Equine Connections, Polyvagal Principles was a heart book. And that's, I started, I've been asked all these years like, please write what you're doing, write the stories, help us understand the polyvagal principles. So that's what that one's about. Um, I think it's a good read. The Europeans love it. Americans love it when they read it. It just has hadn't, I just got it on Amazon, which is good because before you would get it through the Jace Foundation and then the proceeds would go to the Jays foundation for scholarships, et cetera. Um, it's gonna reach a wider audience on, uh, Amazon for sure.

Warwick Schiller (01:51:15):

Oh, I was gonna say that first book. Do you think, do you think it didn't resonate with people because they don't actually want to think about what could happen? Yes,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey (01:51:23):

Yes. I think people don't wanna think, and that's what's so tragic about also what, what the head of, he now owns Simon and Schu Schuster, but what the editor at the time said is that people could just go on

the internet and download how to protect your kid. And so there's a fast food generation we live in, right? We wanna eat quickly, we wanna, you know, get, not we, I don't, but <laugh> many people do, um, same things with horse training. That whole notion of send your horse to a horse trainer and then you're gonna get your horse back and then the horse comes back and the horse is like, what, who are you? You know? Um, so there really is this, this, you know, fast track ability. And so I think he was spot on when he said that, that, um, and I really, I'm not trying to be arrogant.

[\(01:52:09\)](#):

I think it's a really, really accessible, well written book, but people are afraid of it. People think they can, you know, read, read the internet. I can get the answer quickly. Um, you know, and again, sometimes if we wrap things in over intellectualization, it seems more, it seems smarter, right? So, you know, somebody might go buy one that's like this, you know, hard cover this thick and that might be more one that you'd write than the, the paperback that's this much. And is, you know, sounds like in some ways I've always been told that I often sound like you're sitting in my living room talking to me when I, you know, communicate sometimes with people. And I pride in that because that to me makes it more accessible. So I think there's a number of reasons, but yes, the real reason is people don't wanna think about it.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:53:00\)](#):

You know, you just said that you are, um, you know, people, people sound like you're sitting in your living room and more accessible. I wrote down a quote the other day, Forget who it was by, and I gotta look it up, but I know it's got something to do with this. Here we go. It's not the listener's responsibility to understand what you are saying. It's your responsibility to help them understand mm-hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:53:21\)](#):

And make it attainable and accessible.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:53:23\)](#):

Yeah. It's your job to put it, put it in such a way that they can understand it. It's not their job to understand all the big words. You know, like people will send me a scientific paper on something and I'm not scientific at all, but people will send me a scientific paper on, on some idea that I've been sprouting off about anyway. And you know, so I'll have a look at it. And the first, what's the first thing? Abstract? Is

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:53:43\)](#):

That what says

Warwick Schiller [\(01:53:44\)](#):

At this time at the top abstract? I don't even know what that means. Sounds abstract to me. But anyway, I'll read the first sentence and I'll have to stop and get the dictionary out three times. I'm like, I'm forget. Make, see,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:53:55\)](#):

I agree. I, I just wrote a paper that we're rewriting to get published with JC and Steven PS on the notion of app easement. An appeasement has to do with this like, super ability for someone in a captive situation or to be able to expand this is gonna take, here goes another hour. And I know we don't have

that time, but the ability to be in deep here and then go into ventral vagal and be able to calm the aggressor. It's a hu it's, it's a, it's innate in some people. So people like Elizabeth Smart, JC Dugard, other people, many other people have this ability to calm the beast without knowing it, without getting stuck in the fear. And when we explain it, it's so simple. But what we found is the word appeasement is starting to take off, but they're also turning it into fawning, which it is not.

[\(01:54:49\)](#):

Fawning is not fawning has nothing to do with this innate ability. And where, when I first got in the field, I had a supervisor that said, Rebecca, you need to act like you know the answers. People paid the big bucks cuz they want you to know everything. And I was like, but I don't know everything and I never will. And so my piece has really been, I don't know everything. Teach me about you. Let the horses help teach about you and me to understand better what this is. Some people want it, some people want the over intellectualization it, it's the, uh, you know, intellectual masturbation is what sometimes I think people really want.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:55:31\)](#):

<laugh>.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:55:32\)](#):

It's

Warwick Schiller [\(01:55:33\)](#):

A great Tim for <laugh>.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey [\(01:55:35\)](#):

I pulled these out. Oh yeah, I have one other one I had to share with you. Polyvagal equine. I love this. This is, I was running on the treadmill, which is another one of my dirty little secrets cuz I don't look like a runner. But I was running on the treadmill watching Good Morning America. And Tyler Perry, who's an American, I guess director actor came on and he talked about something and I said, That's it. So when I look at what is polyvagal equine, um, institute, to me, it's my back pocket project. It's the project you have when you first start out in the field and you're like, Oh my God, this is such a good idea. And you put it in your back pocket and you go out into the world and you do all these other things, right? And you write papers and blah, blah blah and do this and get on tv.

[\(01:56:22\)](#):

And then you go, God, what was that back pocket I really wanted to do? And so that's what Polyvagal Equine Institute is. It's my back pocket, my back pocket project. It's the thing I want more than anything in the whole world with my herd of around me, is to help the world be more regulated and kinder. And I need the horses to help me teach regulation and kindness. And if I can, you know, on my tombstone of which I won't have, cause I wanna be cremated, if that can be written that she helped the world be more regulated and kind, I will feel like I've done a good thing. <laugh>, hallelujah. <laugh>.

Warwick Schiller [\(01:57:00\)](#):

Well, if, if you, if you help the world be more regulated and kind, you've, you have, you have helped more people than you've helped mm-hmm. <affirmative> mm-hmm <affirmative> meaning, you know,

like if you can help someone be more regulated and kind, that they are now more regulated and kind to other people who can then be more regulated and kind. And

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:57:23](#)):

Which then goes back to my early Grateful dead years of everybody just had a flower and was nice to each other. The world would be a better place. Which is what trips me out, <laugh>. That it all goes back to the beginning. You know what I mean? <laugh> like, it's just so, I mean really that's really the truth, which is ridiculous, but good thing I stopped, you know, the, the,

Warwick Schiller ([01:57:45](#)):

I think <laugh>,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:57:49](#)):

I like to make you

Warwick Schiller ([01:57:50](#)):

Smile. I think that's a great place to to end. Oh, you've been having been smiling the whole time. I think that's a great place to finish up there. So how do people, where, where are all the places that, um, people can find out more about Dr. Rebecca Bailey and the e uh, Polyvagal Equine Institute and Connection Focus Therapy Therapy?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:58:12](#)):

You can go to ww polyvagal equine institute.com, sign up for our newsletter and we are building the herd and we definitely wanna hear from people. So you can also, if you're interested in more about me, which you can go to ww rebecca bailey.com I believe. But go to go to Polyvagal Equine Institute. That's really the most interesting.

Warwick Schiller ([01:58:38](#)):

It's actually dr rebecca bailey.com. <laugh>.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:58:41](#)):

See that dyslexia? I

Warwick Schiller ([01:58:43](#)):

Just looked it up.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:58:44](#)):

You asked Another problem with dyslexia. You could never tell what you are <laugh>. Okay, thanks.

Warwick Schiller ([01:58:53](#)):

And what about connection Focus therapy is, do you have

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:58:57](#)):

Connection, focus therapy and trainings is, you can find out more about that on the website. Um, again, this is the, the technique or the approach that Lin Kahan enough and I developed and trademarked back in 2013 and we were actually quite smart or proud of ourselves because it was before we even knew why we were doing it. So you can learn more about that on our website. You can also go to opponent Quests worldwide and learn a little bit more there. But we are, we will be doing a training in Northern

Warwick Schiller ([01:59:30](#)):

Nestle

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:59:31](#)):

And we will be doing a training in Northern California and also in Europe in the fall. We have two or three planned, so, and probably another one. Oh. And there's one in Arizona. As a matter of fact, in November we still have two seats open.

Warwick Schiller ([01:59:48](#)):

And when, when you doing one in Northern California?

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([01:59:51](#)):

We are doing it, I believe in March we have to sit down in firm. You know how it is with cats, you have to herd them to get the specific date on the calendar. And sometimes it's trickier than others, but I believe in March.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:08](#)):

Yeah, I'd love to, uh, I'd love to come to something like that and see what it's all about. What,

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:00:12](#)):

I would love that. When are you coming to the States? When are

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:16](#)):

You coming to the States? Well, I live in the States. That's my surprise for you.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:00:21](#)):

That is a big surprise. Where do you live? Surprise. Well,

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:25](#)):

I live exactly 129 miles south of you. Get Boston.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:00:30](#)):

Get outta here. I didn't know that.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:33](#)):

Get outta here. Get

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:00:35](#)):

Out, get outta here. You hear the Boston come through with me.

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:38](#)):

I did hear that. Boston. The Boston come through there

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:00:42](#)):

Just like you. I can't lose my accent altogether. <laugh>. That's great. Well let's,

Warwick Schiller ([02:00:47](#)):

Let's get Oh my goodness. It just came back. Yeah, I'd to come up and, and, uh, see what it's all about.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:00:54](#)):

I would love it. I think we should do a training together. I think that would be even more excited, um, in Northern California. Train the horse.

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:03](#)):

I think I'd love to come up and just to

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:01:06](#)):

Meet

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:06](#)):

Us. Yeah, I'd just love to come up and observe what you guys do. I think I could pick up a lot from it.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:01:10](#)):

I think we could pick up a lot from you too.

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:12](#)):

Awesome. Well that it's, it's a plan. Thank you so much for joining me on the podcast. It's been an absolute pleasure chatting with you. Thank

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:01:19](#)):

You so much. I I'm really happy to meet you. And I for some reason knew the herds would, would meet at some point. So thank you so much for having me

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:28](#)):

At some point. It was wonderful.

Dr. Rebecca Bailey ([02:01:30](#)):

Yeah.

Warwick Schiller ([02:01:31](#)):

This transcript was exported on Oct 02, 2023 - view latest version [here](#).

Oh, you're welcome. And for you guys at home, thank you for joining us on another episode of The Journey on Podcast. We'll catch you next time.

Speaker 2 ([02:01:37](#)):

Thanks for being a part of the Journey on podcast with Warrick s Scher. Warrick has over 850 full length training videos on his online video library@videos.warsscher.com. Be sure to follow Warrick on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram to see his latest training advice and insights.