

TBT 12

Dana: [00:00:00] Hi, everybody. Welcome to the body trust podcast. I'm Dana and I'm here with Hilary. Hello. And Sirius. Hey, everyone. And today we're talking about common misconceptions about body trust. We had the inspiration to record this episode, part given some of the questions that were coming in. And we also remembered while we were writing our book, Reclaiming Body Trust, that we thought we might put a section about the misconceptions about body trust in the book.

We had made a list. We never ended up going that route. But we're here today to share some of the common misconceptions. about body trust work. So I'm curious with you two here what are some of the common misconceptions from your perspective? Or what's one [00:01:00] of the common misconceptions?

Hilary: I think one of them that we hear a lot, or that I think people who come to body trust here often is, well, that's never going to work.

Yeah. So this idea about it working, you know, which of course is. Uh, borrowed directly from diet culture and, you know, the idea that it's supposed to do something to you to improve you is the most anti body trust

idea ever.

Folks are confused about that because why else would you come to body trust if it wasn't going to help you lose

Dana: weight?

Speaker 4: Mm

Dana: hmm. Yeah, that's something when folks start to share about their exploration of body trust with other people in their life. That's commonly what the first thing that comes out of the other person's mouth is, well, that's never going to work. And what they mean is, you're not going to lose weight that way.

So [00:02:00] one of are One of the phases of this work is to redefine what healing looks and feels like. If we're no longer using the number on the scale or the size of our pants to tell us if this program is working how else do we know that it might be working? Like, you're having more freedom with food.

You're feeling less guilt and shame. Uh, sometimes people notice the frequency and severity of their binge eating shifts. They're feeding themselves more regularly. They have more energy. They're able to concentrate. Yeah, so thinking more about those factors. Can help us know how it's working.

We've said before that, you know, when you go on a diet, you know, within a couple of hours, if you're doing it right, and body trust work isn't like that. So we have to let go of all the ways we've historically [00:03:00] judged our success and thought about success. I think we would say stop judging. Success. What is, what is

success?

In quotes.

Sirius: I mean, if you get a similar way, how are we defining work?

Speaker 7: Yeah.

Sirius: Right? Like you, Dana just talked about some of the ways in which we might know that body trust is working, that aren't directly related to diet culture to weight on a scale, but you know, I think when someone might say something like well that's not going to work, or how does that work?

It's like, well how are we defining work? What is your expectation of what it's supposed to do? Versus what my expectation of what it's supposed to do, right? If my expectation is to heal my relationship with my body, then it could work. It does work, right? Versus, yeah, this is, it's not a diet plan, so it's not going to work to do that.

Dana: Mm hmm. [00:04:00] It's not, you know, body trust, not was not created to help people perform health.

Hilary: Yeah. And those also was created to help people heal who have had disordered eating and eating disorders. And it's funny, the erasure that is in this question too, that, you know, I suppose if thinner people said they were doing body trust work, people might assume that they've struggled with food, but.

If people in larger bodies do, the assumption is that they still need to lose weight, not heal from any pain disorder.

Dana: Mm hmm. Which kind of leads us to another misconception, which is this idea that body trust is the fuck it plan. That body trust is about giving up or letting yourself go. Mm hmm. Right. That's a really common misconception and sometimes [00:05:00] people swing from that rigidity and perfectionism that is weight loss and dieting and the pursuit of health or weight in this country over to the fuck it plan where there's this backlash where they let go of the rigidity and the.

perfectionism when they get sick and tired of it, or, you know, their life is happening and there's food around. And then they kind of go, okay, I'm going to do the fuck it plan. And it's not necessarily a conscious thing, but they just kind of loosen the reins. And then like, I'm going to start the diet on Monday, and then the reins come back in, and people swing.

And certainly that phase of fuck it is part of the reclamation. Yeah, you know, that rub rebellious. We're fans of the rebel,

Speaker 9: right?

Dana: Yeah. And so there's a phase we go through on the path to a body trust that is often like, fuck it and fuck you and [00:06:00] fuck everybody and fuck health and fuck beauty and fuck white supremacy.

Hilary: Fuck you, mom.

Speaker 5: Yes.

Hilary: Funny. Not funny. Yeah. But it's not the fuck it plan. I think it's so outside of the scope of awareness within this diet culture we live in that folks can not be thinking about fixing or doing something about food all the time. And that's not fuck it. That's. Resolved,

or

not a problem, or more at peace.

Sirius: Yes, it's interesting the fuck it plan, there are kind of two pieces to it. There's the person who is deepening their relationship with body trust, who for them the fuck it plan is a phase. Or part of the process, they may [00:07:00] engage with that, you know, right, fuck it, and then sort of as part of their healing journey, but to the people around them, it's that same thing, right?

It reminds me of questions that one might ask around intuitive eating. So you just eat whatever you want. Where, it's like, that's not exactly what we're talking about, but do you actually want to know what it is, or are you just, I mean, it's hard to judge, or hard to, like, respond to questions like that, because you don't always know that the person actually cares enough to dig deeper,

because what it is and what it looks like could be two very different things.

Hilary: Yeah. There's a whole wide range of ideas, if we. outside of the, you know, dualistic or binary thinking that seems to suck us in every time, [00:08:00] everywhere.

Dana: Yeah, that there's a right way and a wrong way to do this, that there's foods I should be eating and there's foods I shouldn't be eating. Like people are so used to these external bumpers, I think, you know, to give, you know, to give them some containment, because, you know, People get to a place of not trusting themselves, and the culture also talks about food as decadent and sinful and, right?

So there's this These companies, these people don't trust you with food either, to trust your own appetite, to trust your pleasure, to trust your own knowing, to trust when you've had enough.

And so, you know, if you're really new to this work, and you're talking to people about it, and they're saying things like, what, you mean you just can eat whatever you want? You know, when we don't have super deep roots in [00:09:00] this, when we're, our roots are kind of shallow in body trust and these seeds are just starting to be planted, it can be really hard to hold your ground.

And even know how to push back against that because it's so new. So this might be another reason we're recording this is to help people whose family members may be questioning what this is and have their own misconceptions about it.

Hilary: They're reminding me that the parent who thought that the, her kid was in a, her adult child, let's be clear, an adult was in a cult because they weren't. Yeah. That's funny. I

Sirius: mean, certainly that should be added to the list of misconceptions about body trust.

Hilary: Oh, it's not a cult. We should be kind of straightforward about that.

Sirius: Yeah. Not a cult. Not a cult.

Hilary: Yeah. Not a cult. Good. Glad we cleared that up.

Sirius: Of course, only people who are in [00:10:00] cults say they're not in cults.

Hilary: I know, it's complicated. It gets a little, everyone's now like, hmm, what is it?

Dana: Well, that mom did come, that mom did come around and met us, came into the office and met us, and she said something like, I'm the one who thought you were a cult.

Hilary: Yeah, she did. She had kind of released that a little bit. That was kind of cool that she came in and did that. It was surprising. And it's odd that you and I were both in the.

In the waiting room. We were. We did that at that time. That was really just a funny experience all around.

Speaker 5: You're like, we are your leaders.

Hilary: Yeah.

Sirius: However, that story does go to show why it's not a cult, right? One of the big markers of, uh, cult or high control groups is the insistence on Or the process of [00:11:00] cutting you off from your family, friends, and loved ones.

And that's not something we're interested in at all.

Hilary: No.

Sirius: Right. And so like that, I feel like is a, you know, if there are some big things to tick off, that's one of the ones that we definitely don't tick off among many others.

Hilary: Yeah, a good point. I wouldn't have thought of that, but I haven't been listening to all the cult stuff.

Sirius: I, I definitely have, so. Yes,

Hilary: yes. You're bringing that wisdom, that knowledge.

Speaker 5: So another misconception. We are not a cult. We are counter cultural. Yeah, right. This work is countercultural. It will

Dana: challenge everything. It will challenge everything we've been taught to believe about food, bodies, weight, and health. But yeah, and that kind of connects to this idea that we are anti health.

Right. That body trust is anti health and like, I can't pursue health. [00:12:00] If I'm doing body trust.

Hilary: Yeah.

Sirius: First of all. bodily autonomy over everything. You make your own choices. You do what you need to do for you, yourself, your community, your family, whatever it is. That's always first and foremost. And that's, I think that most people who are engaged in that liberation communities, like that, that is a really important tenant, right?

Bodily autonomy over anything. However, there are ways in which health and other things are weaponized against fat people. And we also know and have talked about on this podcast, the ways in which health is weaponized against all of us. And so I think this idea about being anti health it's less that and more, how are we questioning what we've been told about health?[00:13:00]

How are we truly understanding what health is? In a context where we're being told what health is, and those things aren't actually lining up.

So, I, yeah I think it's less about anti health and more about questioning the concept of health.

Dana: Yeah, really questioning, again, healthism is an ideology. It's not a solid science. And I think when we recorded an episode earlier, we said, you know, when people hear the word health, they hear science, you know, and yet, you know, you could see RFK Jr.

During his trials, you know, quoting research. Well, it's science. It's in the science. And I'm like, yeah, eugenics was a science. There's a ton of problematic shit that's been considered science. And just because You've seen something [00:14:00] in the written word that you think, you know, certainly

collude colludes with your personal views or hooks up with your personal views.

But like, it was hella problematic. This what he thought was solid science.

So what I often say when it comes to health, I was actually on a I had a guest on a podcast and she asked me some question about health and it was like, Oh God, like how much time do I don't even know how to answer that. Like, well, so I was like, well, what is health? But weight and health are so commonly conflated.

In this culture that we cannot talk about one without the other one being conjured up, right? And so there's a place in our healing where we say not now to health and body trust is not about performing health. It's not help about helping [00:15:00] people become healthy. It's about helping people develop healthier relationships with food in their bodies, which will likely improve health outcomes.

have a positive impact on health. So we kind of say not now to health because so many people believe they stopped dieting years ago and they've just been trying to watch what they eat or be healthy. And yet when we look at what's underneath it, it's a mentality that's dieting. And so what we've found is that we have to say not now to it and keep.

putting it to the side so we can focus on listening and healing and if there comes a point after we've divested from diet culture and worked through some reckoning to understand how ideologies have impacted our ideas of health and well being, then if we still want to pursue health vis a vis self care behaviors, we have something to root into that's much [00:16:00] more solid and sustainable.

Where it's more about you listening to your own guidance versus what some dietician says is the five step plan for longevity or whatever.

Hilary: Thinking about what I think is anti health and how it's just so different than this framework of, or this idea that body trust could be anti health because I just don't, you know, I'm hoping people aren't thinking about their health without thinking about it contextualized and in terms of like, you know, their access to healthcare and how they're treated as they walk about in the world day to day and how they're treated in healthcare and what they're exposed to and what they experience in terms of, Toxins and how safe it is where they live and, how much they're believed when they go in and

Try to, , receive care and how [00:17:00] much, , like with RFK, that's about dominance, that, that's about telling people what to do still, no matter how progressive some people seem to think he is, I don't get it myself, but that When we keep moving, when we construct this definition of health, that's for some people and not others.

And then we keep it as a moving target. We know that's not health either. Right? That's industry. That's capitalism. That's white supremacy. Hey.

Mm hmm.

Sirius: Mm hmm.

Hilary: Yeah. And so I'm really like concerned about people who think. That this was anti health because people become less hyper vigilant for a little while or a long while.

Yeah. Yeah. That doesn't take a lot of thought to get out to how that's a screwy idea.

Dana: Well, even the guy that coined the term orthorexia [00:18:00] is also quoted as saying something like, some of the most unhealthy people I've ever been around are those that are obsessively pursuing health. Through their, you know, lifestyle behaviors.

And it is, it's, it's, it's really a crisis in health care that we put so much onus on personal responsibility and individual lifestyle choices when we know that access to affordable Housing and affordable food and childcare and a whole host of other social determinants is going to have a far greater impact on people's health and their well being.

But, you know, we, companies get out of a lot when they say, you know, if you get sick, it's your fault. I mean, they're not literally saying that, but it's, it's kind of of the culture right now that's what we believe.

Hilary: That health is a [00:19:00] hustle.

Dana: Yeah, and when we think about body sovereignty, I think about too, like, keeping it in its rightful place in your life, right? Like, it's we can't have, like, when we have health as the be all and end all of our existence and all these things go by the wayside, we are impacting our health and our well being through this obsessive pursuit.

And now I got, I'm having a low estrogen moment and I've lost my train of thought.

Hilary: Sure. There's something you can eat for that or something.

Speaker 3: Do you tell us when,

Hilary: what you've eaten today

Dana: So I think body trust is about having kind of a liberatory analysis when it comes to thinking about health and really widening our lens out from [00:20:00] physical activity and diet and pulling it way back and having a much stronger analysis of what impacts a person's health and well being.

Speaker 7: Yeah, well,

Hilary: but I think when we're thinking when somebody is saying that we're anti health, then they're also thinking about this work through a very individual healing lens. And I would assume that when folks tell others about body trust who haven't heard about it, or don't know what it is that frame that, you know, it's easy to get sucked into that idea of it.

That this is like a individual healing project. And, you know, it's not that, but it's also based on much more than that. I

Sirius: mean, I think that's an interesting way to put it because, from my perspective, we are pro healing. Which is different than anti health, right?

Hilary: Yeah, in the ways

Sirius: that we've already discussed, but like we are pro healing on an individual [00:21:00] level, but also on the community level, right?

There's an aspect of body trust, which is about the wider community. And well, it's about the wider community. And so from that perspective, we're also trying to heal that.

Hilary: Yes,

we actually know that, you know, we do not want to focus on individual people living in larger bodies, just doing their healing work in a vacuum. What we want

is to provide safe spaces for folks to have access to healing work. But all, but what we want to do is change systems and institutions, right? So that our clients aren't walking outside.

The door of our work and having everything unraveled or being triggered or being hurt further.

It could easily get sucked into the good fatty phenomenon a little bit, huh?

Speaker 7: Well, as long as you're working on it. [00:22:00]

Hilary: Very individualized too.

Dana: Another misconception is that body trust will help me lose weight, that I can trust my body to become thin once I've healed.

Body trust is really, uh, about reckoning. With this idea that there's a third person living inside of you just waiting to be revealed.

It's really seductive and it makes a lot of sense. And certainly I think it's a phase in healing where people

Approach body trust as their new weight loss plan. This is the thing that's finally going to work coming back to that working thing. Yeah, that, and we tell providers that whether your clients are naming that or not in the room. Your clients are hoping to lose [00:23:00] weight by doing this, their healing work, I would say like 70 percent and if they're able to name that in the room, like that's a sign that you have rapport and relationship with someone where they're telling you the truth because, and sometimes I think just naming that can be helpful to somebody to be able to put it out there on the table and say, Oh my gosh, how did you know that's in here?

Yeah. And so, yeah, what do we want to say around that, that there's that body trust will, you know, that I can trust my body to be thin once I do this healing work.

Sirius: This is one of my, uh, trigger topics. I think we've discussed this on the podcast before the supposed connection between trauma and fatness.

Speaker 8: Yeah.

Sirius: As a given. Right, certainly for some [00:24:00] people their body size might be related to their trauma, but that is not the case for everybody. And that is not the case for all fat people.

And so the idea that if we heal and become thin, I think is like a direct address. It's from the, it's from the, it's rooted in that idea, right? If I can heal my trauma, I will become thin. Well, if I could heal, if I could do this healing work, I will become thin. And that's, yeah, just the source of that idea is just gets me a little bit riled up every time.

Don't love it. Yeah.

Dana: Yeah. And you know, some teachers have like literally said that then the weight will fall away.

Speaker 3: Okay.

Dana: And the truth is we don't know what will happen and that is not a focus of body trust work. It's [00:25:00] not, we're not anti weight loss. We're also not weight gain either, where we trust your body to figure it out.

And some people will stay the same. Some people will gain weight and some people may lose a little bit of weight, but we're not anti weight loss. And we're not, and because we know, you know, when you go on medications, Or you get sick or you change location, like bodies change over the course of their lifetime.

We get an injury and we break our leg and we're bed bound for a while. Like bodies change in all kinds of directions. And that is the reality. We're anti focusing on weight.

Hilary: Yeah. And I think the healing work is about having to figure out how to unhook from. An idea of being able to control an outcome [00:26:00] that's more of the body acceptance piece. And for a lot of people, that's the body grief piece is that the privileges I've associated with controlling and suppressing my weight have are, I have to let go of them to be well, and that's part of the reckoning.

And if you've been suppressing your weight and you need to eat, then that's what needs to happen also.

Dana: Yeah.

Like weight gain isn't a sign you're doing it wrong.

Sirius: Right.

Dana: Yeah.

I think the active pursuit of weight loss or perpetuating or advocating for weight loss perpetuates weight stigma and anti fat bias.

And if we are thinking about a person's health, we know that weight cycling up and down. It's harmful to a person's health,

so we trust your body to sort it out, regardless of where you [00:27:00] fall on the weight spectrum.

Another misconception is this I can't trust my body. I have an autoimmune condition. I can't trust my body. I have insert chronic illness.

Hilary: That is because you have to do things that you don't want to do to take care of it. Some people think that way, I think. And then there's also maybe the undercurrent of feeling like your body's not reliable or it has betrayed you in some

Dana: Yeah, it's very common for people to feel betrayed by the body.

And so body trust isn't a, is it a modality that says, like, if we trust our bodies, you'll never get sick, like, right? That is not, body trust is a framework to push back against the dominant weight [00:28:00] paradigm and offer people a way to heal. That's incredibly countercultural,

but it is not about like trusting the body to not get sick if we do the right things.

Speaker 3: Yeah.

Dana: Body trust can help improve your relationship with your body while dealing with chronic illnesses. I do think it can help us in that grief process. In fact, some of you don't know that Elizabeth Kubler Ross Stages of Grief was originally developed to talk about the stages one goes through while reckoning with a diagnosis, a major medical diagnosis, life threatening, terminal medical diagnosis, right?

Hilary: A chronic, yeah.

Dana: Yeah. And so chronic illness comes up a lot in the work we do and many people that come to us with, you know, complex relationship with their bodies [00:29:00] that for some, is impacted by chronic health conditions. And again we help people understand their body stories.

The, this is part of our body story or the things we deal with and have to navigate on a regular basis, understanding how the more, uh, that women and people assigned female at birth have a higher risk of having autoimmune conditions, like a four time higher risk really also helps us see it's not our fault with stuff like that, that there's genetic components, there's a whole host of things that impact.

the kinds of diseases and chronic conditions we will live with, and we will all deal with them. If we live long enough to do it, we will all, our bodies will get sick. Some may [00:30:00] get better.

And so I think body trust can help us with this concept of radical acceptance. That it's, we accept what's happening because it's, it's what's happening.

Speaker 8: Mm hmm.

Dana: Yeah. And regardless of if we accept it or not, does not change the fact that I have two autoimmune conditions. That I'm, you know, speaking from personal experience, right?

Like that body trust is about radical acceptance, about softening when life invites us to harden.

Hilary: That staying in relationship. Yeah. Telling the truth about what's happening and staying away from the to and what you do to and on your body instead of the for and with that we've talked about.

Sirius: I think that this misconception around not trusting Your body also relates to the idea that body trust is a [00:31:00] process and not a static thing. It's not about I trust my body or my or I don't. It's about deciding to embark on a journey of rebuilding trust with your body. And for some folks. who have experienced the rupture that might be caused by a chronic illness or an autoimmune disease, it may take them a different path, a longer path, whatever, to get to a place where they want to embark on that journey or not.

But it's still an option.

Dana: Yes. That body trust isn't a place that we arrive.

Speaker 7: Yeah.

Dana: That it's an ongoing process and an ongoing practice

as we navigate. It

Hilary: opens up more options. Say that again. It usually opens up more options. [00:32:00] You know, when we do, I think that's the paradox of radical acceptance, right? Is that when. When that is more available than there's more options and when it's not, we're just kind of working one over and over and over again.

Sirius: You have this spiritual business person who I inadvertently followed on Instagram, whatever. Uh, they were just talking about that idea that especially with hard things, especially with tough decisions or when there's something that doesn't seem to be going right. Once you say, yes, this isn't going right, that automatically puts you in the spot of, all right, well, how can I fix it?

Speaker 9: Yeah.

Sirius: And so that acceptance that, that moment of like, Oh, I can acknowledge that X is happening and not Y or anything else. Now I can actually deal with what's happening rather than fretting about what may or may [00:33:00] not happen because I haven't recognized that what is happening.

Speaker 9: Yeah.

Speaker 8: That.

Dana: It makes me think of a journaling prompt we give and. Workshops and retreats, which listeners may want to turn towards when they wrap up this episode is What's the difference between letting go and giving up?

What's the difference between letting go and giving up

that sometimes? invites a nice Awareness of the idea of acceptance

And how it feels. Notice how you feel when you define this process as giving up. And notice how you feel when you explore the idea of like, what is letting go? I

Sirius: mean, even at bringing it back to the fuck it plan, right? I give up, fuck it, who cares?

Hilary: Yeah. [00:34:00]

Sirius: Versus I'm letting go of the rigidity that has put me at a disadvantage when it comes to my eating, my, you know, Movement, like whatever it is, right, the letting go of something that has held you back is obviously very free.

Hilary: When we let go, we don't have to be done. I think either, you know, like this letting go has this, like, wipe your hands of it kind of vibe. And I think sometimes we're letting go and we might still grieve the thing or you might still reckon with something about it, but we're saying no, you know, it's like a boundary.

It says I'm not holding, you know, an open energy line between this and that thing and me anymore.

Dana: Well, it's. It's come to mind a couple of times as throughout this recording of the Ethic of C work. Yeah. [00:35:00] So that may be a good way to start to wrap this up is just to remember so many people who've done this work come up and tell us that the Ethic of C work has been one of the most transformational for them.

That we don't want you to get an A in the work, we don't even want you to get a B, go for a C see how much permission comes

when you go for a C.

I think the last misconception, unless you all have another one, is that our Body Trust Certification Program is only for providers.

Hilary: Yeah. It is definitely not. We have had the most eclectic, lovely group of people come through this training. It's actually funny that, it's not funny that people think that.

It's totally expected that [00:36:00] people would think that given, you know, how things work. But something we say a lot, especially to Uh, folks that have

been doing clinical work for a long time who come through the program is that they usually have much more to unlearn than folks who don't come in with a lot of degrees or counseling time or clinical time under their belts.

So funny little paradox.

Dana: You if you join our certification community, you'll be in community with. People who identify as trauma informed tennis coaches.

Speaker 3: Yeah.

Dana: We didn't even know there was a thing until somebody came to certification. They met Michelle. Michelle Martis. And we have a trauma informed

Speaker 5: tennis coach in the community.

Hilary: It's body trust trained. Amazing.

Sirius: There's all kinds of people [00:37:00] who, in particular. Go through the certification program, but who are connected to body trust and other ways. We have poets. We have folks who are involved in the spiritual realm. We have people who are in marketing. You know, I come from a background of D. I work and I have colleagues who are involved in body trust.

So, it really is an eclectic group of people, and not only that, I think the part of the reason why that works is because again, body trust works on multiple levels. There's your Your work that you do with other people, right, often many of the people involved in Body Trust are service providers, but there's a ways in which Body Trust becomes a tool in their arsenal in that work.

And then there's your [00:38:00] personal journey around Body Trust. And from what I have seen, and I have not seen as much as the two of you for sure. But for what I have seen, the people who come in thinking this is about my work very quickly becomes about their personal journeys, and they realize how closely those two things are linked.

Hilary: Yeah, very true. We are a place that welcomes, you know, the personal journey along with the learning that will so called be used so called professionally. But yeah, that's a rare space. And of course we do. Of course we do. Because who has had access to this kind of healing work? Not very many people

and community that can hold it.

Dana: So our 2025 cohort is starting March 13th, and there are still some [00:39:00] spots open if you would like to join us.

Hilary: We would love to have you. Wow, March 13th is around the corner. Mm hmm.

Dana: Yeah.

We've just booked Amani Barbarin, also known as Crutches and Spice on Instagram. I noticed they're offering some pretty amazing resources.

Dana: Via their Patreon, which I keep meaning to go over and purchase. And we have Shiloh George also coming to talk about her body sovereignty project and how she navigates healthcare like a boss. And we will have San Cheng joining us to talk about body trust and trans experience. So those are just a few of our guest speakers and teachers that are part of certification.

And I just want to say [00:40:00] thank you for listening. Yeah. Thank you everyone.

Sirius: Yeah. Talk to you next time.

Dana: If you have a misconception you're commonly bumping up against in your life, let us know. We may speak to it in a future episode. Take care.