

Therapy Chat Episode 327



Disclaimer: This is a verbatim transcript which may contain spelling errors.

[00:00:00] **Laura Reagan:** Therapy Chat podcast, episode 327.

[00:00:04] **Announcer:** This is the Therapy Chat podcast with Laura Reagan LCSW-C. The information shared in this podcast is not a substitute for seeking help from a licensed mental health professional. And now here's your host, Laura Reagan LCSW-C.

[00:00:37] **Laura Reagan:** Today's episode is sponsored by Trauma Therapists Network. Trauma Therapist Network is a platform for finding a trauma therapist, learning about trauma and understanding about how trauma shows up

in our lives and what the healing process can look like. Go to traumatherapistnetwork.com to learn more.

[00:00:59] **Laura Reagan:** This week's episode is sponsored by Therapy Notes.

[00:01:02] **Laura Reagan:** The number one rated electronic health record system available today with live telephone support seven days a week. It's clear why Therapy Notes is rated 4.9 out of five stars on Trustpilot and has a five-star rating on Google. Therapy Notes makes billing, scheduling, note taking, and tele-health incredibly.

[00:01:18] **Laura Reagan:** And now for all you prescribers out there, Therapy notes is proudly introducing e-prescribe. Use coupon code chat, or click the link in the show notes to get two free months at therapynotes.com.

[00:01:31] **Laura Reagan:** Hi, welcome back to Therapy Chat. I'm your host, Laura Reagan. And today I'm excited to bring you conversation that I've found to be totally fascinating.

[00:01:43] **Laura Reagan:** And I hope you will too. My guest today is Laurie Ure. Laurie Ure LICSW has practice as a certified bioenergetic therapist in Gloucester, Massachusetts for over 25 years. She trains bioenergetic therapists in the U S and internationally. In addition, she leads workshops, speaks, plans conferences, and writes about topics related to bioenergetic analysis.

[00:02:06] **Laura Reagan:** Laurie's involvement with this approach began in 1986 as a client of a bioenergetic therapist. Laurie has studied with Alexander Lowen MD, founder of bioenergetic analysis, and has directed the Massachusetts Society for Bioenergetic Analysis. She's also taught at Salem State College School of Social Work, and she publishes articles on the blog of Psychotherapy Networker in the NASW Focus Magazine on Medium Elephant Journal.

[00:02:32] **Laura Reagan:** Women Be Well Magazine. And on the blog of her website at laurieure.com. Currently, she's writing a book about the bioenergetic approach to treating depression, and you can find her on Instagram at Laura Ure Twitter, Facebook, Medium, and LinkedIn, which I will put links to all of those in the show notes.

[00:02:51] **Laura Reagan:** In addition to her work, is there anything besides work, but yes, for Laurie, she has some other interests, including traveling, swimming, walking her dog and kayaking. We had a very interesting

conversation about energetic boundaries and bioenergetics in general. And she did a little kind of a demo or led us through a practice, led me through a practice, but that you will be able to enjoy as well.

[00:03:20] **Laura Reagan:** So I hope you find this conversation as thought provoking as I did. Let's dive right in.

[00:03:29] **Laura Reagan:** Hi, welcome back to Therapy Chat. I'm your host, Laura Reagan. And today I'm so happy and excited to be talking with Laurie Ure LICSW, who is a certified bioenergetic therapist. Laurie, thank you so much for being my guests on Therapy Chat today.

[00:03:45] **Laurie Ure:** I'm delighted to be here with you, Laura. Thank you so much for welcoming me.

[00:03:49] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah, I'm so glad that you were willing to come. I saw an article you had written that was in Psychotherapy Networker Magazine recently. And I, at first I thought it was going to be about setting boundaries using somatic methods.

[00:04:06] **Laura Reagan:** And I was really interested in that. And then when I started reading it, it was much different from that, it was about bioenergetics and boundaries. And I was like, oh, I wonder if she would talk to me. So I'm really eager to hear about your work, but let's just start off please, by you telling our audience a little bit more about who you are and what you do.

[00:04:25] **Laurie Ure:** So I have been in bioenergetics actually since about 1984, when I began as a client of bioenergetic therapy and. I had the good fortune when I was in college of living right near Kathlyn Hendricks, who is a body-based dance movement and transpersonal therapist, and got into therapy with her. And I loved that work and really found that there were things happening in my body that I couldn't express or what wasn't even clear to me.

[00:04:58] **Laurie Ure:** And from my family background and some difficult things that I had experienced as a child. My family always had the kind of view that everything was fine and we're, we're a happy family. That's what they wanted to show to the public. But in the meantime, there was a lot of despair and depression. And my brother had tried to commit suicide when I was in sixth grade.

[00:05:24] **Laurie Ure:** That was really difficult for the family. So when I got into therapy dealing with my own depression and started to realize that there,

that my body held a story that was different from what my family presented to the world. I became quite intrigued with that. And then when I moved to Boston, after I graduated from college, I was looking for a body oriented psychotherapist.

[00:05:50] **Laurie Ure:** And I went to a workshop, just happened into a workshop at a local personal growth center on bioenergetics. And the first thing we did was a grounding exercise where you stand up and bend and straighten your legs. And then you can also hang your upper body over. And I immediately said, this is the work for me.

[00:06:11] **Laurie Ure:** People had been telling me that I needed to feel more confident in my life. And I got that that exercise would help me with that. So I found a bioenergetic therapist and was in therapy with her for many years. And then I got my master's in social work and did the wonderful bioenergetic training, which I can't recommend highly enough and have practiced as a bioenergetic therapist since then.

[00:06:39] **Laurie Ure:** And now I, I am also a trainer of bioenergetic trainer and I give workshops. And, and talks and write articles. And I, I love bioenergetics, so I'm passionate about putting it out into the world.

[00:06:53] **Laura Reagan:** Oh yeah.

[00:06:55] **Laura Reagan:** That comes through as you're talking about it. And, you know, I really appreciate what you shared about that was a beautiful description of the way that your experience in your family and with the painful things that you'd been through, wasn't it didn't match the, the image that your family projected out. I think that's so familiar to so many people, but it's like that feeling of. Something's not right here and I know it's not, but everybody else says it is.

[00:07:26] **Laura Reagan:** So why do I feel so, you know, off and different.

[00:07:30] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly.

[00:07:31] **Laurie Ure:** And I think that culturally, so many of us have learned to shut down our body responses. And that doesn't serve us. And our bodies are tremendous sources of information for our brains to process. And our body is whole vitality and our capacity for joy and for pleasure.

[00:07:57] **Laurie Ure:** And when we shut down our bodies, in fact, we shut down our, our joy, our pleasure our aliveness. And the energy and the vibration that we can feel in ourselves. And so that's also why this work is so dear, to me, it's so important to get out more to therapists and into the world so that more people can have more vitality, more aliveness.

[00:08:25] **Laurie Ure:** And experienced that, that joy and the passion of being alive.

[00:08:30] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah. I just can feel that as you're talking about it, the life force energy, you know, the vitality that is, you know, it's like a candle light that gets snuffed out when we're, you know, disconnected from our bodies and from our inner world.

[00:08:48] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly.

[00:08:49] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah.

[00:08:50] **Laurie Ure:** Yes.

[00:08:51] **Laura Reagan:** So can you, can you explain for our listeners and me, what, um, a little bit more about really what bioenergetics is?

[00:08:59] **Laurie Ure:** Sure. So to give you a little background, bioenergetics was started in the 1950s. By a man named Alexander Lowen, who is a wonderful, very alive. He embodied this work himself.

[00:09:13] **Laurie Ure:** Man. I had the opportunity to meet him a couple of times in his, in his later years. And he had been a client and student of Wilhelm Reich, and Reich was a student of Freud. And Reich felt that what Freud missed was the work with the body and Reich noticed in his clients that in people with neuroses, their breath was not as deep as in healthier people.

[00:09:39] **Laurie Ure:** So Reich worked similarly to other psycho analysts in that day, where they had people laying on a couch and free associating and that kind of thing, and Lowen alongside a man named John Pierrakos um, believed that people needed more active exercises to, to work through the tensions in their bodies that inhibited their breathing and inhibited them from being fully alive and feeling the joy of life.

[00:10:08] **Laurie Ure:** So, Reich and Pierrakos. Sorry, not Reich. Sorry, Lowen and Pierrakos work together to develop these exercises and, uh, that are

more active. Uh, Lowen is coined with getting people up off the mattress, off the couch and onto their feet and doing what he, what we call a grounding exercise that I referred to that I had originally originally been so taken with.

[00:10:35] **Laurie Ure:** And I use that exercise. Pretty much every day for myself and with my clients. And, um, just to go back to the history a little bit so Lowen and Pierrakos then went two separate ways and Pierrakos developed something called core energetics and Lowen developed bioenergy. But the, the exercises that we use are pretty similar in both of those practices and the underlying theory, or notion is that in our early childhood experiences, things have happened to us that cause us to shut down our breath and to have what we call chronic muscle tensions. And so, for example, if I say to a child repeatedly, you know, if I get angry at them just once it's not going to damage them forever. But, repeatedly. If I get angry at them, or I say to them, big boys, don't cry. Stop that. Or girls shouldn't be angry.

[00:11:34] **Laurie Ure:** That's not okay. So what a child does is they actually constrict and they, their muscles and it holds back their breathing. And that keeps the emotion that, or the energy that was not acceptable in the childhood environment from going through them. So then as they progress throughout their lives, they have this tension and it especially gets activated when that emotion starts to arise in the body or that energy, you know, maybe it's about their sexuality.

[00:12:07] **Laurie Ure:** So they start to feel sexual feeling. And instead of letting that move through, they actually hold clamped down on it. And so those tensions live in the body. And people come into therapy, they don't say I'm coming here because they have chronic muscle tension. Right. Nobody says that. They come in saying, I feel depressed or I'm anxious, or my relationships aren't working very well, or I'm not doing well financially, or I just lost my job or I had somebody died or something else difficult happened in my life and I need help processing that.

[00:12:49] **Laurie Ure:** So what we are aware of as bioenergetic therapists is that these tensions in the body what's happening in the body is the underlying dynamic to what the person is presenting with. So in order to really address what they're upset about, or what's not working well in their life, we want to address those tensions and what's happening in the body that's out of their awareness most of the time in addition to talking about it.

[00:13:19] **Laurie Ure:** So for example, when a client comes in, I get a full do full history. It's psychotherapy like any other kind of talk psychotherapy, so

want to know what's happening in their life and their mood, their symptoms, their history.

[00:13:34] **Laurie Ure:** I always ask something about their childhood experience. All of what a regular psychotherapist would ask. And then depending on kind of my assessment of their level of ego strength, sometimes that relates to how much talk therapy they've done in the past. Um, how well they're functioning in their life.

[00:13:55] **Laurie Ure:** Um, I will often invite them, maybe not in the first session, but, um, the second session too. How about if you stand up and I instruct them in a basic grounding exercise, which again has to do with putting their feet, hip width apart and slowly with their toes going forward, slowly bending their knees and slowly straightening.

[00:14:19] **Laurie Ure:** And the other thing I've worked with a lot is asking them to notice what are you aware of in your body? And this is based on some wonderful work by the neuroscientists, Lisa Feldman Barrett. She's written a book called How Emotions Are Made and what she talks about is that the brain's primary purpose is to monitor the energy systems of the body. So the more we can use our mind to notice what's happening in our bodies, the better we're going to be doing all around, better are we're going to be functioning. So I want to keep inviting people to use their mind, to notice what's happening in their body.

[00:15:01] **Laurie Ure:** And, their body gives us the tremendous amount of information that leads us in a direction off often of the psychotherapy. So for example, you know, I could do this right now and our listeners who provide our listeners to do this. Take a moment and notice what are you aware of in your body at this moment? And may give you a little bit of instruction because for some people that might be a strange question.

[00:15:26] **Laurie Ure:** And with my clients, I say this to them as well. So it might include, what do you notice about your breathing? You don't need to change anything about it, but what do you notice? What do you observe? And it might include, is, are there any areas that call your attention or that feel T in particularly tense or where there's a constriction?

[00:15:47] **Laurie Ure:** And again, just notice it, you don't have to do anything about it, but just notice. And what's your level of hunger or thirst this moment for some people they're very used to paying attention to that, but a lot of people are not so used to paying attention to that. And then I'll see. So ask them those

questions and I'll ask you if there's anything you would like to tell us about anything you notice and invite our listeners.

[00:16:10] **Laurie Ure:** What are you aware of in this moment in your body?

[00:16:12] **Laura Reagan:** I'll answer what I noticed. I, well, there's a lot of energy that feels like it's moving sort of just through my torso. And when I noticed my breath, it's moving kind of slow, but I. I guess I'm kind of sitting slumped. I am, cause I just straightened up and I could see the difference.

[00:16:32] **Laura Reagan:** Cause I'm on video. I was slumped and I was noticing when I was in that position that my diaphragm wasn't moving very fluidly while I was breathing. So it was kind of like a slow breath. And not very complete. So I guess you could say shallow, but not in my upper chest. I don't know if my description is quite right, but that's what I noticed.

[00:16:59] **Laurie Ure:** No, it's excellent. And it's not about a right or wrong. It's just about what you notice. And again, a big part of it is teaching people. I use the question. What are you aware of in your body? More than any other question? I wish I had five bucks for every time I said that.

[00:17:19] **Laura Reagan:** Multimillionaire.

[00:17:20] **Laurie Ure:** Right?

[00:17:22] **Laurie Ure:** Because it's starting to train peoples to train ourselves, all of us to use our minds.

[00:17:28] **Laurie Ure:** To notice what's happening in our body and to let our body be that incredible source of information and wisdom and guidance that it can be for us. And then, so when I invite you and our listeners, also anybody who's up for it and thank you for being willing to participate, to see if there's anything that helps.

[00:17:52] **Laurie Ure:** So you might, if you notice some tense shoulders, maybe stretch your shoulders a little bit. Okay. Um, maybe consciously take a deeper breath. Yeah.

[00:18:03] **Laura Reagan:** My, my shoulders are screaming for some release.

[00:18:06] **Laurie Ure:** Yeah. So, yeah. So see what, what helps them to release?

[00:18:11] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah, for me, it's like pulling my shoulder blades together in the back and then kind of pulling my shoulders forward in the front, like a sitting cat cow from yoga.

[00:18:22] **Laurie Ure:** Yes. Yes.

[00:18:25] **Laura Reagan:** But it makes my breath move more freely. And I've noticed for myself, I've been doing some pelvic floor physical therapy recently, and I've noticed how I can now feel from the inside. Of my abdomen. Like, you know, I can feel like the bottom of my abdominal cavity, I guess, or, you know, like places in my, kind of below between my diaphragm and my crotch, like, um, movement.

[00:18:57] **Laura Reagan:** That I had not, I don't know if it was moving before, but I couldn't feel the movement when I would breathe. Now I can feel like it's like, titititititit, you know, breathes. I can feel it, move that way. And you know, I don't know how long, I mean, it's my children, my youngest is 23. So I don't know how long it's been since I've really felt that internally before doing this pelvic floor physical therapy.

[00:19:22] **Laura Reagan:** So it's amazing. And then I, if that feels also with. Like emotionally, when I feel that act activation, I don't mean activation like anxiety or something, but activation of that movement it's brings more of a sense of groundedness. And I can move from a space of feeling like I'm. I'm feeling so sluggish. I don't feel, not just not confident, but like I can't do this, whatever the thing is that I'm supposed to do that day and then do that pelvic floor physical therapy, which involves kind of some squats and lunges as you were talking about.

[00:19:59] **Laura Reagan:** And that's not exactly what you're saying with the bending knees, but, you know, and then I walk out of there and I'm like, I can do anything. I can conquer the world, but it's in my body. It's not, it's like comes from my body to my mind. You know what I mean?

[00:20:13] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly. I know exactly what you mean. Yes, yes, yes, yes.

[00:20:17] **Laurie Ure:** And I use the metaphor of a dandelion for this work. So if we were to imagine that our depression or anxiety or whatever it is that people are coming in with that is causing them unhappiness. So if anybody who's a gardener, if you put a clip off the top of the dandelion, what's going to

happen. Right. So if we only deal with our mind, it's going to come back and getting to the root, getting to our body takes more time.

[00:20:47] **Laurie Ure:** Right? It's sometimes with a dandelion those roots, those they have deep roots.

[00:20:55] **Laura Reagan:** Deep and tangled.

[00:20:56] **Laurie Ure:** Deep and tangled. Yeah. So similarly, with our clients this is not the quick, easy 10 step approach to fix depression, anxiety, trauma, and addictions. This work takes time. It takes patience and it takes some digging.

[00:21:14] **Laurie Ure:** Sometimes some, some good, good, significant work. Well mentally, cause it's very important to know also a person's experience and their story and their memories. All of that's part of the process, but if the body is holding all that tension still a person is not going to feel better. So working with the body helps to uncover the deeper issues and helps them to feel better in their life.

[00:21:43] **Laurie Ure:** So how about I talk about some of the other tools that I use,

[00:21:47] **Laura Reagan:** Sure, would love to hear it.

[00:21:49] **Laurie Ure:** Because one of the things I love about bioenergetic. Is, it's not a specific technique. It's not just you do this for treating trauma. And first you do this, then you do this. Then you do that. What we offer is a set of tools. So we have a hammer and a screwdriver and a wrench, and part of the process, part of the learning and part of what I love about it is the creativity of knowing when do I use the hammer?

[00:22:21] **Laurie Ure:** When do I use the wrench, maybe I need to invent a different tool to really address what's happening with this person and this moment and what they need help with to become more alive and vital and feel better. So some of the tools that we use, so first is spotty awareness. And then the grounding exercise, which I use second to the body awareness is grounding.

[00:22:47] **Laurie Ure:** And I do the grounding exercise for myself pretty much every day, five minutes of grounding. And what that does. When I do it bending over. If we were all on video, I would show you and invite everybody to do it,

but it's, that would be a little hard to do, but you know what? Even sitting in the chair, you can put your feet flat on the floor.

[00:23:08] **Laurie Ure:** If anybody's listening and they're driving, you stay grounded. Chair driving, but, uh, you could put one of your feet flat and as you breathe in, press into your butt a little bit, press down in the chair a little bit, press in to your foot a little bit through your feet. And as you breathe out really. So do that a couple of times.

[00:23:29] **Laurie Ure:** So as you breathe in, press down and your feet press your butt down in the chair and as you breathe out, think about relaxing. And notice, do you feel anything different in your body from doing that? And do you notice anything different in your thoughts? Just from that little exercise.

[00:23:46] **Laura Reagan:** That was really different for me.

[00:23:47] **Laura Reagan:** As I was breathing in pushing down with my butt and my feet. It's like trying to the. First, my brain was like, Hmm. And then, um, you know, then when I did it, then like the second in breath, I was able to do it. And then when I relaxed it on the out-breath, that was like, I don't know. It did feel like more, I don't know. I want to say like a four pronged groundedness I don't know what that means.

[00:24:14] **Laura Reagan:** That's what came up.

[00:24:15] **Laurie Ure:** That's that's what we're going for. More groundedness, more connected to your feet, to your legs, to the Earth. Beneath you, it's kind of like a tree that sends its roots down and those roots drop nourishment from the, from the earth, from the ground and enable it to be strong so that when the storms of life, and we all know about storms of life, right.

[00:24:41] **Laurie Ure:** So when the storms of life go through the tree can bend with the storms, but not be blown over by them. And same with our clients and ourselves, the more grounded we are and part of it, this exercise, especially when we do it standing up and bending over on my website, I have a brief article about. The grounding exercise with a picture.

[00:25:05] **Laurie Ure:** So you could see that there. And part of what's important in that is letting our head go because, so again, we're connected with our body and not just up in our mind. Um, what we're focused on is releasing the tensions in our legs. And it's amazing to me how much tension we can hold just in the muscles of our feet and our legs.

[00:25:28] **Laurie Ure:** And even from a day, sometimes I can pick up a lot of tension and so doing it regularly. That's the other thing, these exercises are similar to yoga. You have to do it regularly to get the benefits, but once those tensions start to release, what can happen when you do the exercise, it's a stress position and you can feel this vibration go through you.

[00:25:50] **Laurie Ure:** So you can actually start to feel the energy in your move and your body. Electrical impulses, currents, move in your body and they're pleasurable in and of themselves. So you have an access to pleasure right? In your own body at any moment.

[00:26:07] **Laura Reagan:** Running a group private practice has been a challenging and rewarding experience.

[00:26:12] **Laura Reagan:** And one thing that has made it so much easier is Therapy Notes. Therapy Notes makes billing, scheduling, note taking and telehealth incredibly easy. If you're coming from another EHR, like I did Therapy Notes makes the transition incredibly easy, importing your demographic data free of charge so you can get going right away.

[00:26:30] **Laura Reagan:** My team has found Therapy Notes, very easy to learn. It's intuitive. The customer support is second to none. And that's one of the things that has kept me a Therapy Notes customer for several years now, anytime I've needed to contact therapy notes for help with an issue, I couldn't figure out on my own.

[00:26:49] **Laura Reagan:** I've been able to get through to someone and resolve the issue within 15 minutes, 99% of the time. Find out what more than a hundred thousand mental health professionals already know, try Therapy Notes for two months, absolutely free. Just click on the link in the show notes or enter the promo code chat at therapynotes.com.

[00:27:10] **Laura Reagan:** That's beautiful. And I just love the emphasis on accessing the positive experiences of being human too, because you know, of course our framework of psychotherapy is kind of pathology based. The person has a problem that brings them to therapy. And then, you know, that's why they're there. And of course we don't get to the root without finding out well, what are the things that are standing in the way of feeling good, but, um, the it's beautiful, the way you're talking about accessing joy and pleasure and movement and vitality in the body.

[00:27:51] **Laurie Ure:** Yes, that's really key. And for me, um, some of my work with very, very traumatized clients, having tools to body-based tools, body experiences about finding some joy, finding some pleasure. I have one of my clients. I encouraged her actually, went with her out to make snow angels in the winter. And she's experience has a terrible, terrible history of trauma ever.

[00:28:19] **Laurie Ure:** The worst abuse imaginable. And she would say to me, tell me something, tell me something. And I started to learn over time that she was asking me, give me something outside of this horrible memories. That keep going through her mind.

[00:28:34] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah, because it's like being locked in.

[00:28:36] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly, exactly. And like we needed to jump the under old records. People, remember when we played a record, there was a needle that went in a groove. It's like the, the needle got locked into that groove of the record and needed to be jumped. So, so we, I, I show her, let's go look at the blossoms coming up in the spring, or let's look at the different colors of the leaves in the fall.

[00:29:04] **Laurie Ure:** And it would be one thing to tell her to do that, but a different thing to say, come on, let's go make snow angels together and lay down in the snow. Feel the wetness of the snow and the cold and look up at the sky in the winter. And so that she can have in her body start to have a different kind of experience of life.

[00:29:24] **Laurie Ure:** That's, uh, one of the makeup a tool. Ha Ha.

[00:29:27] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah.

[00:29:29] **Laurie Ure:** So other tools that I, that we use typically in bioenergetic, Is we have, I use an exercise ball to have people go backwards over it, to open up their breathing. And what we're working on here is again, the unconscious muscle tension that constricts breathing. So it's not just consciously thinking about breathing deeper, but to open up those unconscious.

[00:29:55] **Laurie Ure:** So the tension that's held there that constructs their breathing. And for example, one time I was working with a client recently who had terrible panic attacks and anxiety. And so in about the second session, I said, come, let's go. I asked her, do you have any issues with your back? And she didn't. So I guided her to be going backwards over the exercise ball. And I noticed immediately she was holding a breath and she was not aware of it. So

when I pointed out to her, oh, are you aware you're holding your breath? And she's then she started breathing more fully. And I said, no wonder, you're feeling anxious. Your body is not getting enough oxygen on a regular basis and your body will send up messages to your brain.

[00:30:38] **Laurie Ure:** Something's wrong here. I'm in danger cause I'm not getting enough oxygen. So as soon as we worked with that exercise and had her learn to breathe more fully, and again, the exercise ball and opening up breathing is, is something I work with regularly for myself. And I guide my clients to work with regularly and sometimes an emotion will arise in that or a memory or some different sensations.

[00:31:06] **Laurie Ure:** And I just pay attention to what happens. Um, and some of the other techniques that I use regularly are for making personal boundaries and that relates to the article that you read in Psychotherapy Networker. And this is a great exercise because. So much of our communication about boundaries with other people, and I'm talking all kinds of boundaries, you know, you're on the subway with somebody we've all become more aware of this during COVID, you know, with the six feet apart business. Some of our communication is non-verbal a lot of it is non verbal and some of it is verbal.

[00:31:42] **Laurie Ure:** So when I have somebody stand up or encourage them to stand up and ground, I would start with grounding and for personal boundaries this comes up when somebody tells me a client tells me that maybe their husband is yelling at them a lot, or their daughters are taking a lot of advantage of them in, you know, by asking too much of them. Asking.

[00:32:06] **Laurie Ure:** Their adult daughters asking them to pay for their groceries all the time, or to do an errand that's beyond what my client wanted to do, that kind of thing. So I help them stand up and ground. And then I encouraged them to put their hands out with their palms going out. There's also an article about this, my website that shows some of these diagrams.

[00:32:27] **Laurie Ure:** So these exercises with their hands palms facing out and to say something, the words encourage the words to come from them, but something like no or stop, or I don't want to do that. Um, and then I noticed what happens in their body. And a lot of times what will happen for people is they'll put their hands out and their body will move backwards, which gives a mixed message. So if my words are saying stop, but my body gets going moving backwards. That's not a clear message to the other person or whoever it is, but they're not aware of that. And the second thing about that is their voice

may not be very strong. Like they might say, stop, could you please stop? There's no conviction in it.

[00:33:12] **Laurie Ure:** So by working with them with our body can point that out to them and then encourage them. So what if you, as you put your hands, palms going forward. What if you bring your body forward also? And instead of saying, stop, you say stop. And like, you really mean it. And then people oftentimes what, will happen is when we do that, is a memory will come up about when they were a child and their boundaries were invaded and they weren't able to express themselves. So they got in trouble, got in worse trouble. If they protested or, you know, said, no, I don't want you to do that. So they learned to shut that down in themselves and they need support. So if they're, you know, maybe they cry about that or they feel sad. So they need support to work through that.

[00:33:57] **Laurie Ure:** And then we'll come back to the exercise. And again, just doing it once doesn't doesn't change the whole dynamic. We might have to repeat that several times and work through the memories and the fear of setting boundaries in their adult life. Uh, the other thing that we've worked with in terms of boundaries in bioenergetics is that boundaries include also reaching out for, with vulnerability or need from another person and every one of us wants or needs something from somebody at some point, and many, many, many of us from our early childhood traumatic relational experiences have learned, I'm not going to do that, or I'm going to try to avoid that because that's going to be painful, right?

[00:34:41] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah, that's right. It's like, um, I can only count on myself.

[00:34:45] **Laura Reagan:** You know, this is what happens if you trust other people, you're always going to be let down, you know, I know that script.

[00:34:51] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly.

[00:34:52] **Laura Reagan:** From the inside.

[00:34:53] **Laurie Ure:** From the inside. Yes. So it's one thing to sit and talk about that, but to invite you to, from a vulnerable place, practice reaching out with your hands. And let that reach come through your eyes.

[00:35:08] **Laurie Ure:** And at first we did, we were doing this. You might go, oh, no, no, no, I'm not going to do that. Or you start, you might get scared. You

might cry. You might any of those things because it activates the memory. Of course. So we would just slow down and pay attention. Lists, I would listen to what comes up for you about it and give you lots of compassion and talk about how awful that was as child for that to happen to you.

[00:35:38] **Laurie Ure:** And then I'd invite you to come back and try it again so that your body can have a different experience, and your mind, both can have a different experience and can understand, okay, even though it did this when I was a child and it hurt, something not great happened. There's a different possibility now.

[00:35:57] **Laurie Ure:** And you know what, even now, if somebody rejects me, I'm not going to like it, but I can bear it. I can tolerate it. I can go to my, whoever, my friends, my support, my dog, and get some comfort and say, I don't like that. That was lousy. And then I can check it off and move on. And try it again, which as children, we couldn't do. Oftentimes there wasn't somebody else to go to. And there wasn't a different of way to have a different experience with that. And you know what, sometimes when we reach out, we get what we want and that's like a bonus. And if we hadn't reached out, we wouldn't even know that. So true. So that's a technique I use a lot, a lot with people pretty much everybody has difficulties with personal boundaries in one way or another. And it affects so much about their life and can be the underlying issues of depression, anxiety post-traumatic stress.

[00:36:53] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah. So true. I mean, boundaries, you know, for some people it's really hard saying no, and for some people.

[00:37:01] **Laura Reagan:** Sometimes it's the same people, but some people it's really hard to say no. And it's like, oh, sure. Yeah, no problem. Okay. You know, the people pleaser and the just wanting approval, but then there's which I can totally relate to. But then there's the, um, you know, walls up. I don't need anything. And I think for me, it's like the two extremes, not now, but in my history it would be, you know, oh, I'll do anything for you.

[00:37:27] **Laura Reagan:** And I'll, I don't need anything, you know, but of course we all need support. We all need connection and we all need help sometimes. And we can't do everything ourselves.

[00:37:37] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly. Yep. And we all have limits too, all of, all of the above.

[00:37:41] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah. That's what the beautiful thing about what, I'm, what I've read and what I'm hearing, you know, with boundaries, there's a lot of talk about boundaries and a lot of it's very, very cognitive and then people feel a lot of shame because they don't understand why it's so hard to do it.

[00:37:57] **Laurie Ure:** Right.

[00:37:59] **Laurie Ure:** Yes. And so when I work with somebody with their body and I can actually see what the unconscious physical and the nonverbal message that they are giving, that they may be completely unaware of and give them feedback about that and have them practice a different behavior with me and get maybe the different behaviors often very uncomfortable at first, because they're so unused to it.

[00:38:23] **Laurie Ure:** But as they practice it, they try it and they can have a new set of tools to use in their life to communicate more clearly in their relationships and to have more satisfaction. And so one other thing that we work with is expressing anger in healthy ways, because that's another big issue for, especially as women in this culture.

[00:38:47] **Laurie Ure:** And there's a lot of focus on management of anger, but I don't think we have anywhere enough focus on accessing our anger so that we can advocate for ourselves. And the people and beings and planet that we love in strong and clear ways that is so important also. So when we're afraid of our anger and we use a lot of energy to keep that down and not allow it to move through our body in safe and healthy, and appropriate ways. It comes out either in inappropriate ways like road rage, or we use, we're wasting a lot of energy and it can be an underlying cause of depression is just kind of keeping that down. So I have in my office, uh, bats and rackets and big pillows, and I invite people starting with grounding because I want them to be grounded in themselves.

[00:39:43] **Laurie Ure:** And then the focus really is on learning to let that anger go through their body so they don't have to be afraid of it. And so it doesn't have to come out in not healthy ways. So that's another very important tool that I use frequently and that I think is pretty unique to bioenergetics.

[00:40:02] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah. And what you're saying especially about, well, I think, I think our whole culture has a real shadow side of not expressing emotion in general, but you know, there's, there's the inappropriate use of anger that is so prevalent, you know, the, the violence that's, you know, the separation, us and them mentality. And then there's the, yeah. And then there's all the

people who are suppressing anger and not speaking, not expressing what they feel angry about at all, and how depressed and exhausted they feel. And maybe anxious too, for just the muscle tension.

[00:40:46] **Laura Reagan:** As you said, that's pushing this very powerful energy that wants to be expressed, keeping it down. That takes a lot.

[00:40:54] **Laurie Ure:** Exactly. That's right. And people are rightly they they're afraid of it. You know, maybe again, when they were a child, I got angry and was out of control or some, somebody got angry with them, told them they're not allowed to be angry.

[00:41:08] **Laurie Ure:** So having a safe contained environment. Like, and I do this, these exercises. I want to do it on the first session with people I do when I have a relationship with them. And I know that they're grounded in themselves and they're not going to hurt themselves or me or anything else. And then it's really freeing to be able to just get really angry and let it all out and let it come through their eyes and move in their body. And then what happens is they generally feel more relaxed and they have that available when they need, we, all of us have that available when we need it, but it's not simmering on the back burner or just waiting to boil over.

[00:41:50] **Laurie Ure:** So those techniques are very valuable also.

[00:41:54] **Laura Reagan:** Yeah. I can hear that.

[00:41:56] **Laura Reagan:** Gosh, I could talk to you all day. So one of the things that I'm really wondering about as we get to the end of our time is that is how available is training in this. To therapists and because your article was the first I heard of it and I haven't looked into it since then I could have, and I didn't, but you know, is it something that is easy to get into or is it seldom offered or ?

[00:42:26] **Laurie Ure:** There are training programs in various places around the United States. In the Boston area we have a training group in California, in Texas, in New York and in Florida, I believe right now and also around the world through the international Institute, acquire energetic analysis in South America, Brazil, Argentina, Sheila Ru, and in Europe, Italy, Germany. Spain France. And we also have 20 programs going right now in Russia.

[00:42:56] **Laurie Ure:** China. Just really exciting. Yeah. So the training program in bioenergetic analysis is pretty extensive. It's a four year training

program over extended weeks. Generally people, different organizations do the structure of it a little bit differently, but it's not four years full time. And there's a lot of emphasis on personal work on doing your own personal work, because the more you know yourself and you know, your own history and where you get activated and the more you have worked with deepening your own body experience.

[00:43:34] **Laurie Ure:** And your own tolerating, your own emotions, learning to set your own boundaries, all of that work, the more you can be present to another person. So we focus a lot on that. That's part of the reason the training is pretty extensive, and we also teach a lot about learning to read people's bodies. So reading what happened in their early childhood and that's quite a process as, as it manifests in their body.

[00:44:04] **Laurie Ure:** So we do offer a introduction. I know in a couple of different places in California and here in, oh, and there's also a training groups in Canada and in Michigan and Canada, they're looking to get one started and we are offering a, an introduction to bioenergetics called bioenergetic base basics. And those are online now, which we never would have thought we could do before, but that's a good thing.

[00:44:31] **Laurie Ure:** People can find out about those through the it's called the north American New Zealand institutes for bioenergetic analysis. Www dot NANZIBA, N, A, N, Z, I, B, A.com. And I have links to all of these websites on my website, which is Laura, Ure.com and the International institute for Bioenergetic Analysis and the Massachusetts Society for Bioenergetic Analysis.

[00:45:00] **Laurie Ure:** Each one of these organizations has a website, which has information about the training groups. We do workshops. Sometimes we're planning a, an online course that will be coming out next year. Something we're really excited about.

[00:45:16] **Laura Reagan:** So exciting! I know so many people who are going to want to do this. I'm thinking of somebody I was just talking with today, a friend and colleague, I know she's going to want to do this.

[00:45:25] **Laura Reagan:** And I'm super curious. Can people join those? Associations, even if they haven't had the training to learn?

[00:45:32] **Laurie Ure:** Well, the memberships are, it's pretty much for membership-based for people who have done the training, are bioenergetic

therapists that kind of got it, but you certainly can go and get on the email lists for sure.

[00:45:46] **Laurie Ure:** And know about, we also have conferences, the Southern California Society for Bioenergetic Analysis does conferences in, usually in February, every year in Southern California. And here in Massachusetts, we do a conference at the beautiful Essex Woods Conference and Retreat Center. We were doing them in the Fall this year, we're doing it in the Spring.

[00:46:08] **Laurie Ure:** So kind of got, you can find out about those on the websites and sign up for the email list to get notified.

[00:46:14] **Laura Reagan:** Wonderful. Well, I will definitely put links to all of those in the show notes for this. And Lori, thank you so much for being my guest and explaining a little bit that got me very, very, more curious about bioenergetics today.

[00:46:30] **Laurie Ure:** You're welcome. Thank you so much for being such a wonderful host and participant and yeah, just lovely to have a conversation with you really appreciated it and all that you do for all of us.

[00:46:44] **Laura Reagan:** Thank you. Thank you.

[00:46:48] **Laura Reagan:** Thank you to Therapy Notes for sponsoring this week's episode. I do love Therapy Notes.

[00:46:52] **Laura Reagan:** It's such an asset to my business and makes my job as a practice owner and a therapist, much easier. Try today with no strings attached to see why everyone is switching to Therapy Notes. Now featuring e-prescribe use coupon code chat, or click the link in the show notes to get two free months at therapynotes.com.

[00:47:09] **Announcer:** Thank you for listening to Therapy Chat with your host, Laura Reagan LCSW-C.. For more information, please visit therapychatpodcast.com.