

So as I'm sitting here this morning with my espresso coffee and looking out on the lake, I recognize I've spent some time this week thinking about the concept of safety. And honestly, I'm really grateful that the therapy and the coaching fields have evolved toward a deeper understanding of how important safety is in human healing and growth.

But something I've been sitting with lately is this idea that safety may actually be what's called an emergent quality. If that's not a concept you've come across before, what it means very simply is, an emergent quality is something that naturally appears when the conditions support it. So it's not forced directly into existence. It emerges as a natural outcome of the supportive condition.

So, for example, a flower emerges from the conditions that support its growth. And if those conditions aren't there, then the flower won't emerge. Laughter is an emergent quality when you're in a room with people who feel relaxed together.

And so, I'm wondering, if safety may work much the same way in the nervous system, as an emergent quality. And honestly, if we begin holding safety this way, then I think it changes how we help people. Because in trying, instead of trying to somehow get the body to feel safe, and all the different techniques and strategies we're using now to help people get the body to safety. Perhaps we become much more interested in the conditions and the signals, the organism, the body is responding to. Like, what signals is the body receiving right now? What is the environment, external and internal communicating to this body? Is there pressure? Is there urgency? Is there demand, a fear of judgement, fear of getting it wrong? Or, are there signals of enoughness, enough space, enough coherence, enough gentleness, enough known danger? And so all of these thoughts are going through my mind this week. And then this morning, I woke up thinking of a quote from Dr. Eric Gentry, that I came across probably 20 years ago, and I have used in my Discover conscious EFT training, uh, every single one of the 40 odd times I've taught that course. So here's what he said. All healing and personal growth is about facilitating the client, having a soft muscle body in the face of the perceived threat. All healing and personal growth is about facilitating the client having a soft muscle body. In the face of the perceived threat. And honestly, I feel like I'm just beginning to understand the depth of that statement. Because when the body tightens and braces and holds, that's not dysfunction. That's intelligent. That's an intelligent biological response to perceived danger. Of course, the body hardens if the nervous system believes something threatening is happening. It ought to. Yay, we're built that way. And so I've been sitting with this idea that the nervous system will soften when it can. Not when we force it to. Not when we pressure or technique ourselves into calming down. But the body wants to soften and will soften when the signals it's responding to begin to feel less dangerous. And so perhaps this is part of what we in the helping fields are being invited to consider more deeply. If safety is an emergent quality, then healing is less about forcing change, And more about helping the organism, the body update, is perception of the present moment environment. So helping it notice, right here, right now, at this moment, nobody's chasing me, nothing dangerous is happening. And perhaps, then, when the dominant signals being received by the body change, the body naturally softens, and this emergent quality of safety happens naturally. Anyway, those are some of the thoughts I've been sitting with this morning. Hope you have a great day.