

# Episode\_15\_Full\_Therapeutic\_Disclosure

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

disclosure, therapeutic, hear, trauma, addiction, truth, restitution, couple, important, letter, recovery, professionals, validated, process, benefit, full, relationship, therapist, people, polygraph

## SPEAKERS

Pam B., Lyschel, Bonny

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Hi, I'm Pam Blizzard from RecoveredPeace3.com.

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And I'm Lyschel Burketwith HopeRedefined.com

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And I'm Bonnie Burns of StongWives.com. We're so glad you're joining us. Welcome to another episode of hope for wives. Today we are discussing full therapeutic disclosure. In the pyramid of intimacy, the foundational piece of any relationship is honesty and truth. The full therapeutic disclosure includes many parts, not just the sharing of truth. Overall, it is a guided process usually led by trained professionals, who will help couples get to a level playing field of truth. The intent is to replace lies with honesty, so that a new foundation of truth can be reestablished and the relationship can begin to rebuild. So ladies, let's just dive in and define what is a full therapeutic disclosure.

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I think maybe the easier way for us to start this is to define what it's not. So full therapeutic disclosure is not intended to be let me let me pull some of the descriptions that I've had from men who are having to navigate a full therapeutic disclosure, I had one call it a being put up in the shooting range, he was going to be post whipped, I believe was the phrase that he used. I've heard others talk about it being more slander or aggression or trying to catch you, right? That is not the intent of a full therapeutic disclosure. And if I'm honest with you, when I hear an individual describe it that way, it lets me know that they have not been coached really well and understanding the power and the benefit of a disclosure for him. For her. And for the couple ship. A full therapeutic disclosure is designed exactly what you said in our opening definition, Bonnie is to reestablish a level playing field of truth in the couple's ship, we were talking just before we hit record that this is a tool that can be

used to help a couple learn how to repair. And it goes beyond the skills that you're going to learn through a therapeutic disclosure truly can go beyond the actual days and events and process, there is going to be tools that you're going to take into the rest of your relationship. Because what you're beginning to do, and a full therapeutic disclosure for both parties, for him and for her is to be able to say, I can tell the truth, and my partner is not going to die. Right. And that's a big deal. And I know my cup, my clients typically laugh at me when I say look at that you didn't die. And they're like, and they just kind of chuckle at it. And then later, they're like, you're right, like that was the fear. Like if I am honest, or I tell the full truth, I'm going to injure this other person so greatly. And it's not going to be it's going to be beyond repair. Right. But that's the intent is to be able to offer this really safe, controlled space with trained professionals, that allows a couple a couple ship to gain the tools they need to learn how to start repairing the relationship.

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And I just like to emphasize that this is professionally led, this isn't something you go home. And I've got to know the truth. Well, yes, you do deserve the truth. But to sit on the couch, and to get information and a non supported way, is more traumatic than helpful. There's a reason therapists are involved and coaches are involved in this. It's to minimize the trauma. And it's so that truth will be presented in an ownership fashion.

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Yeah. And I think what you said Barney about, yeah, this is what this is not, this is not a couch disclosure, this is not sitting him down and saying, Okay, it's five o'clock, and you're going to tell me everything. It's also not, when we talk about a full therapeutic disclosure, we're talking about a four even five step process that can be done either in an intensive setting, or it can be done over what I would call a multi step process. And we're gonna I know that we're going to reference this in our show notes, but I do have a PowerPoint webinar presentation, that's going to give a little bit of a deeper dive in some visuals to help a couple understand what is full therapeutic disclosure. And they are welcome to get on our website and check that out. We won't spend a ton of time here in this podcast giving you all the nuts and bolts of that because we know that we've got other resources to help with that. But we certainly want to introduce what it's not. Yeah, and what it can be.

04:50

Right. And I would like to add in addition to her, saying, let's sit on the couch. It's five o'clock. I want to know everything. I've also had experience With friends who he has been convicted, because of his therapy, or maybe an intensive he went to, he has come home and shared information outside of the therapeutic full disclosure. And that also was very damaging.

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It also robs the betraying Person of the therapeutic aspect of, of disclosing to their kind, compassionate, caring, professional, the therapeutic aspect of the professional asking them questions, and doing a deep dive. So it's not just about telling your wife everything you did. It's also about the ability to sit with an unbiased person, and sort of get it all out on the table and kind of get

out of denial. But hey, you know, this is the, hey, this is just a small problem. No, once you have to look at it all the depth and breadth, and helps you see that yeah, maybe this was a problem for more than just me. And maybe this is really has hurt other people and myself included. So just by asking your husband to give you a disclosure of everything he did, you're kind of shortcutting his therapeutic process as well.

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Yeah. And here's another thing I'll mention this is this seems to connect with a lot of clients that I that I start coaching within the disclosure process. So one of the difficult parts about being a couch disclosure of any sort, whether he initiated that or she initiates it is that when you're given information like that comes out in this confession, let's just call it a confession, right. And this confession, typically what will happen is you as the recipient will become triggered, and overwhelmed. And when you move into a triggered state, guess what happens, your ears shut off, you typically disassociate in some form or fashion. And so in your best effort to try and get it all, your body won't even allow you to get it all, because it cannot possibly handle in process. And so oftentimes, you'll hear couples, the husband will say, I've told you everything. And she's going well, this sounds feels like it's totally new. And they're going and there could be a form of deception or minimization. But there also could be playing into this is that she became triggered in the moment of confession. And she didn't hear it. And it's just it's a reality. It's not a, you're not good enough. You can't handle the truth. It's a your body is doing an automatic response that you don't get to decide. Yeah, so I think it's important to understand that distinction of danger of like, we did it this way. And I know everything maybe I don't think I do, and we find ourselves questioning our reality still. And that's a great possibility of and it's also a place of danger, right? Like we don't want to intentionally create space, to consistently be triggering ourselves over and over again, that's just not healthy.

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Mm hmm. A betrayed wife absolutely deserves all the truth. But she also deserves to be supported well, and cared for well, because in reality, she hasn't been cared for, as well as she could be. And that's, that's what the train professionals are there for. So would there be any reason not to have a full therapeutic disclosure?

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The experts tell us that if there's going to be a divorce, if you're absolutely sure there's going to be a divorce, then doing a full therapeutic disclosure isn't isn't good. If the betrayed spouse has other unhealed trauma, deep trauma, or doesn't have a sense of safety, a solid ground, then you may want to hold off until she can get to a sense of safety and more emotional regulation. Because disclosures can can be, they can be difficult, they can be very hard and they can even be traumatizing. And the professionals goal is to reduce the trauma as much as possible. But if she doesn't have a good solid ground, have a way to support herself emotionally. She may not be ready for a full therapeutic disclosure.

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I totally agree with you Pam there's there are certain situations that and I think that's important for

I totally agree with you, Pam, there's there are certain situations that and I think that's important for our listeners to know is that I have yet to do two identical disclosures because I'm consistently working with unique individual people who have unique individual stories. So I think every person listening to this if they're considering it, they've got to take into consideration for themselves. selves what's needed and what's not. I have had clients who have had a couple of clients who have had extensive childhood trauma, and even trauma as adults in different ways. And then as we started to move into preparing for disclosure, because she had not received the healing she needed, she didn't, she didn't receive the healing that she needed from the previous traumas, as we're working toward getting her truth, what we began to see come up in her was a need for him to almost own impact from other traumas that were not his. And so she really was getting very stuck in some of her questioning and the way that she was wanting to engage in the, in the disclosure itself. And what we quickly learned was that was old trauma speaking, if that makes sense, she was not in a place of what we would even call like sober mindedness, because there was such a cloud of hurt and pain that was coming in from these other places. Now, is that true for everyone? No, I have worked with plenty of women who have experienced some sense of trauma, some sort of abuse of any sort, any kind of trauma in their childhood, but they have a sense of stabilization in their story. And now they're ready to move into this disclosure. So it's not nearly as obvious. That's not a hard and fast rule. Like if you've had previous trauma, and you're not done with it, you can't do a disclosure, that is not a hard and fast rule,

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but also to if she were to go and get healing, and take a few months, or maybe a year to work on her own trauma, and get to a point where she is well regulated, she could absolutely come back and have the full therapeutic disclosure, correct?

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Absolutely. When you begin to recognize, hey, I am not in a mental health position to be able to receive or do the entire process of a full therapeutic disclosure, you can certainly advocate and ask for an emergency disclosure. So emergency disclosure is not necessarily about rebuilding that foundation of truth, and starting the repair process and the couple's ship and emergency disclosure is what it sounds like, I need to know she is a partner, I need to know the truth right now and understand if I'm in danger or not. And so there's different protocols for an emergency disclosure, trained professionals will know that there are certain areas like so maybe the question is, is there any kind of pedophilia behaviors? Are my kids in danger? Do you have have you been with prostitutes? Is there an STD? Like, do I need to have some sort of information? Is my safety in jeopardy is bottom line or is my children's safety in jeopardy? And if that's the questions that you're going in with, and that's the place of focus, that's considered an emergency disclosure, we've got to help her understand that she has some sense of safety in place after that, then the encouragement will be to come back and do the full therapeutic disclosure process, once she finds some sense of healing and stabilization, that allows them to start rebuilding that foundation together, I

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think the differentiation there is important that it's not a full therapeutic disclosure, it's an emergency disclosure, so that she can validate certain aspects of her safety and move move forward. Or if there's any deal breakers for her, she can feel safe, and get to emotional stabilization, that the full

therapeutic disclosure is the full history of the behaviors.

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So let's get really practical and pragmatic because a lot of our listeners are fresh into the recovery world, they're probably not even in the recovery world. They're fresh to the sobriety world, and they're trying to move into recovery. So let's just paint a very pragmatic picture of what this process looks like.

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So a full therapeutic disclosure, we've kind of stressed this already, it is a professionally led experience. Once again, we've said don't do this on your own, it's not designed for that. And if you do it on your own, I'm I'm just telling you as a friend, you're gonna miss out on a lot of the benefits that we're going to talk about in a little bit. But you're going to miss it if you try and navigate this on your own. The fourth therapeutic disclosure usually has five components to it. And I would say one of them isn't optional, because I've had some couples choose it and some not or some women choose it and some not. So the full therapeutic disclosure involves the first session or the first part is what it is, is the full disclosure. This is him giving an account for his entire sexual history or his sexual history to a point in time that she identifies. So sometimes I have couples or a woman who says I don't want to know about his childhood. I just want to know from the time we got together to present and that's totally her choice or have others that say I want the whole picture. I can give you pros and cons to both of those, but we'll save that for another time. Then the next step, which can happen before sharing that truth, or after is a PA polygraph. And this is called a disclosure or an infidelity polygraph. This is not just a standard poly. And we can actually tag one of our colleagues through abstracts. I think they just did an interview with a polygrapher. who explained what is an infidelity polygraph, you can put that in the show notes too, just as another resource. But this isn't. It's so interesting. Like when I first started this work, it was like the only concept I had of a polygraph was like from the movies where they're sitting in a dark room with one light, and all these things. And so that's not really what it is. But it's good that you would have trained professionals to be able to assure you like no, that's not what it is, this is what it is. But a polygraph is exactly what it sounds like it is a lie detector is intended to offer another another level of assurance. It is not a foolproof piece of the disclosure process. It's just another component. And so I have some women who would like to have a lie detector or a polygraph conducted, I have other women who do not. And I still stand in the position that it is client's choice as to what she wants, but assured that it's her choice and not necessarily what her husband wants or what he's comfortable with.

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Another thing I'd like to just throw in there about the polygraph, it's, it's meant to be a cause of celebration. It's not intended to catch him lying. It's a way to prove his truthfulness. So I know that a lot of men see it as oh, what shall never believe me, even if I pass it, she'll never know, it's a place of celebration, it's not to punish. It's just an added element of truthfulness that she needs because of the deception she's lived with. So then

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the third step of the polygraph or the sorry, the full therapeutic disclosure, the third step is the emotional impact letter. And this is her opportunity to share full truth. So if you'll recognize we start with him choosing to offer full truth, we then move into the next step, which is her opportunity to share full truth. Many women will say, I've never told him the impact, or I've never felt like he's really understood the impact. Some of it is because she doesn't even know the full impact until she knows the full truth. She doesn't know that he missed out on things in their life because he was lost in addiction. So the emotional impact letter or the impact letter is really, really vital to the healing process of the of the couple ship as well. But it also gives her the chance to say I can tell the truth about what I'm feeling or what I've experienced or the impact of this, and he's not going to die. He's he's going to be able to navigate it.

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Can I add it sometimes we call this a losses letter. Because we get to list out our losses from many different facets of our life, spiritual, financial, psychological, emotional, and more. So it's part of our grieving process.

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Yeah, and I would even tell you that some colleagues of mine would say that this is the first step and couple grieving a couple ship grieving together is really being able to say, this is the impact and him saying I hear you, I recognize this. And the final step is the letter of restitution, which is generally the addicts response to the partner's letter of impact. And so this is his opportunity to take responsibility or ownership for the way that his choices have impacted the couple's ship have impacted her as a person have impacted their family, their children, whatever the dynamic of their relationship looks like. And so a letter of restitution is designed to teach him about empathy, teach him how to share that teach him how to take ownership and have accountability. Those are all unfamiliar facets of someone who's moving from addictive behaviors to sobriety to recovery. And so that's the benefit of them being able to do this, and also have such an advocate in their corner coaching them through this being like, No, this is why we're doing this. They focus on the goal. And then of course, the letter of restitution also allows her to hear his heart and hear that he's committed to this. I think that's one of the biggest questions I have from women is, you know, just still rolling around in their mind. Is he all in? Is he really all in? And that letter of restitution typically seems to answer that question for her, which then really solidifies her willingness to just keep doing the hard things.

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What a beautiful reconciliation process. Yeah,

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can I add to add to what Michelle's just very wonderfully described? I would just on a pragmatic and practical thing i You Use the Dan Drake and Janice Caudill workbooks, to move through this full disclosure, because it's there's a workbook for the partner. And there's a workbook for the truth teller. And they have they work in tandem, which means they both have, they both share the same information to both parties. Now it might be tailored to him, because he's the betrayer trainer. And it

might be tailored to her because she's the betrayed, but they get the same philosophies going forward, they hear the same thing. So they understand it in the same manner. The same kinds of information. If you're hearing something, and he's hearing another, it might conflict, not necessarily, but I just I just liked the idea of working in tandem.

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Oh, it definitely conflicts. Sorry, no, as a woman who has been doing this for three years, yeah. Well, I speak in different language. It's difficult to Yeah,

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yeah, I've heard of CSAT. To know nothing of the full process. And all they're concerned about is the disclosure itself, it seems that they're not trained in the response letter, the amends letter. So having two professionals on the same page, treating them as a system, not just as individuals, but treating the entire family system.

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Yeah. So when we talk about it, a therapeutic disclosure or full therapeutic disclosure being professionally led, I need to speak to that for just a second, because as we've said, in other podcasts, unfortunately, not all professionals are created equally. And that just means that some of them may have never experienced this, they've never walked or processed through a full therapeutic disclosure. And so it's important for you to be able to ask those direct questions of your support people, we don't want to assume anything. There are some I will just say there's some CSAT certified sex addiction therapists who do not advocate and don't actually facilitate disclosures. I've ran into that a few times over the course of three years of doing this work. But then also like Barney, when you mentioned the books of support, when you've got individuals who do not have a clear definition or a clearer understanding of the process, it can feel really challenging for the entire couple ship as they're trying to move toward a common goal. And the two professionals the support people are are speaking different languages. So I'd really encourage you to seek out somebody there. Unfortunately, there's not a directory of full therapeutic disclosure clinicians. But I will say that you could lean into App sets, it's a big space that we like to invest in, in the clinicians as an organization. So you could get on App sets website and check in with some of those people, you're also welcome to message any of us directly, and we can help you try and find somebody to work with as well. Part of what we've done within hope redefined is we've been equipping our coaches to be able to support the partners. And then we've developed relationships with male professionals that a guy can work with. And we feel really confident in that person and their ability to prepare him well. Because there's just nothing harder than watching a guy who wants to do the best. And he just didn't get the support, he needed to do his best. And there's this assumption that somehow or another, we're supposed to know how to do this. And that's probably the grace, I will consistently throw all over this experiences. You've never done anything like this before. So don't assume perfection, bring in people who've done it before, that can really help you navigate some of the pitfalls, some of the hurdles, and also prepare you emotionally for what's about to come to the best of your ability, you know, so it's the best example I've ever used with wives is, it's like when you're pregnant with your first baby. And the people who've gone before you attempt to tell you like what it's going to be like to have the first baby. But you're so thankful to have those really good friends around you who are like, Oh my gosh, this is the best

swing. And this is the best Moby Wrap. And this is that whatever, right? Like they have the chart, and Drew's and I feel like that's a lot of what this support system can feel like you really can't be emotionally, you can be somewhat emotionally prepared. And so being able to have other trained professionals who have watched that part of the process, the emotional part, be able to step into that with you and talk about things that you would never have thought about having to consider in the process. That's why the trained professional is so important.

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And I'll also add that it's really cool for us trained professionals to collaborate with each other because I have met some wonderful sea SATs through doing the full disclosures and all of this the SATs I've worked with whether you know Oh, no matter their level of training in full therapeutic disclosure, all of them that I've met your side, they're on the couple chips side, it's not that he's his guy, and we're your person, it's that we're all a team, we all want this relationship, to find stability and to recreate. So that's what, on a professional side, what I found to be just really satisfying. So before we wrap up, we are going to share why we feel that the full therapeutic disclosure is of benefit. From a personal standpoint, we did have a professionally led full therapeutic disclosure. And it was the first time I've had other discoveries. But this was the first time where we sat down. And he took full ownership. There was no blame, there was no justification, there was no minimization. And that was the first time I'd heard, of course, the complete story, but in a way that was honoring of both of us. And I felt very loved. Even though my husband described it before we walked in, Dave was like, I don't want to do this. And I'm like, I do. Like, he said, No, it's It's not that I don't want to tell you my truth. It's that I feel like we just walked into the gladiator ring. And I am tying you to that post in the middle. And I'm the one throwing all the swords into your body. And I was like, yeah, it probably will be a lot like that. But once we got through the process and having the support, and just, you know, I thought it would be weird to have two other people in the room with me hearing things out of the secret part of our life that no one else knows, and no one else ever will know. Because we aren't going to share that with anyone outside of that room. I thought it would be weird, and it kind of was at first. But it was so comforting to have other people in there to share it with us. They were there to help us regulate in case we did get to a point of a panic attack or something like that. And just having them there to care for us was an experience like I'd had no other.

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I've had to full therapeutic disclosures because my husband had a relapse, one went not so well. And one went very, very well. And I will echo what Bonnie says about having other people in the room after being told by culture and my husband, and really bad therapists on trained therapists, that it really wasn't such a big deal and that my feelings didn't matter so much. I was finally in a venue full in a room full of people who were basically saying, Pam, your feelings matter. This is important. I will say that it was a significant milestone in his recovery, in my personal recovery. And in our couples ship recovery, that I I wouldn't be where I am today. Without the full therapeutic disclosure. I was scared going into it. But as it started unfolding, I was seeing my husband, the real person, authentic and vulnerable for the first time. In our many multiple year relationship. I was finally seeing my real husband, it unlocked something inside of me and it unlocked a level of compassion. I was hurting for myself, but I was also hurting for him. And for him to be truthful and honest with me for the first time in our marriage was an incredible gift. And having my reality validated. There were things that came out that he probably thought were minor details. But for me, they were like, Yes, I knew it. Oh my gosh, I knew it that completely validates. I thought I was going crazy, but it validated my reality. So it

was incredibly powerful for me. So I get I got to validate my reality. I got to see who my husband really was. In my situation. I also got to hear his recovery plan. And that was part of his disclosure, he got to see two yes, that afterwards, it didn't kill either of us. And he got to see that I still loved him and cared for him. It was a turning point in our relationship. For me personally, it had been up to that point me against his addiction. But from that point on, we locked arms. And it was he and I together against the addiction and the dysfunction. So it was very powerful. I don't think we'd be together today, if we didn't have it.

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Oh, no, we wouldn't be. We wouldn't be I hear you. The other thing I wanted to add in and just to mirror what Pam was saying about having compassion, I added another element to this process. And I created my own empathy letter. I knew where my husband's addiction had come from. I had known for years, I just didn't know the addiction was there, still. So I wrote him an empathy letter, just to say, I hear your pain, I understand where you came from, I know what you're doing is not accepted. And I have boundaries around that the childhood, I told Dave, I've always loved him. And that we have a picture where I am at Six Flags. And I'm about nine years old, driving a car on one of those tracks, you know, and my mom's in the car with me, and we're all having fun. And there's a little boy on the sidelines. And it's his back. But it looks like Dave. And so we know that we were at Six Flags the same summer. And so that actually could be him. But it through that empathy letter, I wanted to show him that my nine year old sees his 10 year old, you know, I understand I love you. But as adults, you can't do this. And we've got to move forward. So for me that that empathy letter was my acknowledgement, almost as important to me as my impact letter, which I will say my impact letter was like 14 pages long. And it took me 45 minutes to read. But it felt really good.

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So the benefit, the benefit, you referred to this earlier, let's show the benefit. For us to of doing the full therapeutic disclosures, we get to see what we're forgiving what we've lost what we're grieving. We need to know that so that we can do our own personal recovery work.

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What the full disk therapeutic disclosure did for Dave was it had, he had to sit down and look at that timeline. And he came to me in the middle of writing it one night, and said, very somber. I did not realize the scope of this writing out the timeline really forces because a person in addiction doesn't want to turn around and face their their actions that have hurt the ones they've loved. That's hard so that the FTD forces them to sit down and really take stock of their behaviors over most of their lifetime. And I think that's sobering. And I think it helps the fog of addiction evaporate pretty quickly.

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Yeah, denial is huge with any addiction, to having to look at it all in one space kind of grenades, that denial that you're in.

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Well, because denial is the opposite of accountability. Mm hmm. Right. And so that's how addiction perpetuates is that we have amnesia about what we just did 24 hours ago. And so we stay in a state of denial, like it's not that big a deal, which allows that cycle to re start again, and move us through another cycle of pain and

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destruction. Before he ever stepped foot in the full therapeutic disclosure session with me he had to do that full disclosure with his with his therapist. And there's a level of intimacy that has to happen between him and his therapist, and he got to experience intimacy of acts of acceptance from his therapist. He had, of course, a lot of shame being with an unbiased but yet compassionate therapist. His therapist was able to work through that shaman and start converting it to healthy remorse. And then he was able to step into a room with me having had that experience of intimacy with another human being and acceptance, and then step into that room with me and be vulnerable about all his worst ugliest bruise his scars and weeping wounds and, and show me the darkest parts of himself and see that I still accepted him,

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I'd say that the benefits I see that come up for him is exactly what you all have already alluded to, which is, one is moving from denial to awareness. And that doing that timeline and having to do that work. While it feels like he has to later I think he really does come to a place of understanding the value of it. And he's really thankful for it usually on the back end. The other benefit is, is that he gets to learn the skills that we talked about a little bit earlier starting to be introduced to skills, like if you ask any individual who's in sobriety or recovery, and it's early on, and he would say, how do you repair something with your wife? Their honest answer is going to be I have no idea. I have no idea how to repair with her. And so a full therapeutic disclosure starts to offer them some of those tools. How do I hold her Hartwell? How do I listen without interrupting or feeling like I have to be defensive. And that's a lot of what happens for him in the impact letter. And then the restitution allows him to have that sense of ownership taking responsibility for things like I said, and realizing he won't die. The other thing, though, I think that comes up for a lot of guys that I hear in the aftermath of processing is they finally get that it's a big deal. And they just finally get it that it's a big deal. I hear a lot of wives say that in the beginning, when we're starting the disclosure process is, am I making too big of a deal of this? Because she's recognizing that they're investing money, they're investing a lot of time and energy and emotional energy. And so she's concerned that she's making a bigger deal about this. But the reality is, is that the most precious relationship that you have, aside from relationships with your children is on the line. And so if it's not functioning well, then yeah, it's a big deal. And so that's some of the benefits, I hear from him as being able to really understand the depth and breadth of this behavior and how much it's taking from his the things that he would also label is very important. And then the benefits for her, which I think each of you have done such a great job of articulating in your own stories, which was I was validated, Pam, I heard a lot of my intuition was right. And that's a big deal to be able to restore that for a woman, there's not a lot of ways you can do that until you get truth. And so that that gives that restoration of intuition, I hear a lot of women come out with a different sense of empathy for their husband. And it was empathy that was being asked of them early on, and they weren't ready to give it because they didn't understand the full extent of it. But eventually, when they get through full therapeutic disclosure, and they see that the man sitting before them, has been battling and navigating this since he was nine. And they go, Wow, I can totally

empathize or understand how he got to where he is, regardless of the fact that it hurts me. So I see a lot of empathy developed for her. I see also, this other thing that really seems to fall off, which is so exciting is she finally comes to terms that it's not about her. Because the behavior started long before she was in the picture. And it continued. And while she would love to think that she was going to be the thing to break the cycle, when they get to that full therapeutic disclosure, and they see the length of time they recognize it. And they're like, that's really true. It's not about me, this was happening long before I got here. And I think those are wins. And then the thing that I hear consistently from women, we get to let her have impact and restitution. Impact is I've never had him Listen to me like that before I feel really seen. And I feel really heard. And I needed that so badly. And they don't even realize how bad they need it until they get it. And then they're like, Oh my God, and then that restitution. If I'm honest, I don't know if any of us ever actually experience reconciliation like that in regular type relationships. And so being able to listen to a person take ownership and really model that, well, even if he is running from a script. It is so healing for a woman to hear somebody take full ownership for the way that they've hurt her. I see a lot of safety restored through that work of the letter of restitution. And that's one of the biggest components like after truth has been laid out their safety is the next level, that pyramid of intimacy that you've got to work on. And so that restitution letter is so valuable for that particular component of rebuilding.

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I'll just add about the emotional impact letter. I had said most of that to Dave was really validating for me was to have two two more witnesses in there to hear it too. Which of course I said they it felt weird to have them in there in the beginning, but by the end, they were also validating my pain with me.

39:57

Yeah, it makes it real, doesn't it? Like this isn't just my imagination. We're all here. Because this is important. And I'm important. I think also it's it's that pin in the map, where from this point forward, this was something we did together, he's been off working on his recovery with his therapist working on his disclosure, going to his groups, we've been off working with our therapist and in our groups and doing our stuff. But this is the first point in the recovery where the two people come together. And they're doing recovery together. It's just it's like, it's just a milestone from this point forward. We're in this together, we're going to do this together, we're going to work recovery together. It's just it's a nice, it's a nice starting point.

40:48

And I want to throw this in there, Bonnie, when you talked about having other people witnessing it with you, that's direct from scripture, it's first John five, seven through 12. And it begins to talk about bearing witness in heaven. But then it begins to talk about if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater for this as the witness of God, which he has testified of his son, he who believes in the Son of God is the witness in himself. He who does not believe in God has made him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given him as a son. And so ultimately, what it's saying, we're giving them the opportunity from a spiritual side. For those who are Christians walking through this process, the opportunity to have others bear witness to the confession. And the Word of God is really clear that that is an important part of what we do. This is why He calls us to live

in community. This is why He calls us to have one another's accountability. This is why the chapters in Matthew are so important, because it's allowing us to bring things in darkness and into the light. And not just in our privacy of our living room. But legitimately into the light and letting other people hear what has been really going on. And it doesn't mean that those people who heard it are going to do anything with it just means that it's a part of your spiritual battle for freedom. That's beautiful.

42:13

Yeah. And that reminds me of James 5:16, which says, Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other. So you may be healed. And that's all what we all want, right, the healing. So I thought before we offer some hope to our listeners around full therapeutic disclosure, I just wanted to read a quote from the disclosure workbook. It's by Barb Stephens, and Marsha means from their 2009 book, your sexually addicted spouse, says, in fact, if the pain that results from betrayal is dismissed, and the damage ignored, without the betrayer taking action to help restore a sense of safety and the relationship, the partner will feel a sense of perpetual threat. So that is the big why of doing a full therapeutic disclosure. So what do we have to offer our listeners in a way of hope,

43:20

trust the process that others have gone on before, to perfect this process. It works when you work it, it can feel scary, uneasy, you don't know what's going to happen. But if you work with trained professionals who have done this before, they know how to prepare you. They know how to keep you safe. They know how to make it a truly therapeutic process. And it's healthcare. It's healthcare, for your soul, for your spirit, for your trauma, and for your relationship.

43:58

So when I think about hope, I typically traditionally go back to the Word of God because that's in my own story. I know that's where hope comes from. I can give you all kinds of hope. But if I'm honest with you, it's going to really fall flat. We've got to go back to the source. And so what I the scripture that has come up for me, that God gave me a lot of clarity around was scripture from Revelations 12, verse 11, that says they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life so much as this shrink from death. Why I feel like this aligns so well with therapeutic disclosure, is because what we're trying to triumph over is the enemy, given the opportunity to do a full therapeutic disclosure, is doing the second part of this scripture. We already know that we've overcome the enemy by the blood of the Lamb. It's the word of our testimony that has the next level of power. And so that's what I love. Being able to see through full therapeutic disclosure is the restoration of power and spiritual authority and A couple of shifts, but especially in an individual who's doing this work, so for him and for her, and letting the world know that they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death, because living in deception, living in addiction, living in lies, that is death. That is death. And so this is saying you can do these things, you can overcome the enemy by the word of your testimony, and not shrink from it. Because you don't love your life so much that you would shrink from death.

45:31

Yeah because it can feel like death walking into a full disclosure for the man who's telling his truth as

feared, because it can feel like death walking into a full disclosure for the man who's telling his truth as well. But like Michelle says, No one dies.

45:44

One, our battle is not against flesh and blood. And that's a bit of a misconception when a guy walks into a disclosure thinking that he is battling his wife. In reality, he is battling an enemy who would love to hold him hostage and keep him stuck. And so when we get to offer that perspective shift, the hope is, is that they're going to be like, Oh, that's a different, that's different. I'm not battling my wife. I'm sharing this with her so that she becomes a fellow warrior, kind of like Pam was sharing. In her own testimony, it was like we suddenly became us against the the enemy versus it being against each other. What's your hope, honey?

46:24

My hope is that along the lines of what you're saying, of living in the addiction is like living and death. But living in a marriage with an act of addiction is like living in darkness. And so that the full therapeutic disclosure is a light in the darkness. It's a light, it's it's Jesus's light of truth. One Candle in a dark room, eradicates most of the darkness. Right? So this is it is a spiritual battle. And with the name of Jesus, that light dispels all the darkness. And moving out of that space, I mean, even the next day, I remember, even though I was in pain, I still felt a shift in me spiritually, emotionally. And in our couple ship, there was an immediate shift. And I do I just give, you know, Jesus, credit for all of that. So there is something even though we are really awesome coach. I think I've mentioned before that last show was my apps X coach. So while we've talked a lot of psycho education today, I think there is also a very spiritual element that we've alluded to. And I'm sure that in future episodes, we will talk more about the spiritual warfare behind sex addiction and what it means to recover and what a what a victory, it is over darkness to recover. But in the meantime, we're going to wrap this up. And I will ask as I always do that if you find us of any benefit, please go to iTunes and leave us either a review or a five star rating. And we just hope that we've been a bright spot in your recovery journey and that if you need any of us, you can find us in our show notes. There's links to our respective ministries there. If full therapeutic disclosure is in your future, know that you're taking a really good first step. All right, ladies. Fine