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SPEAKERS

Lyschel, Bonny

L Lyschel 00:03

Hi, I'm Pam Blizzard from recovered peace. And I'm Michele Burkett with hope, redefine.

B Bonny 00:08

And I'm Bonnie burns of strong wives. We're so glad you're joining us. Welcome to another episode of hope for wives. Today, we are extending our discussion of full therapeutic disclosure. So this is part two, we'll be talking about some common myths. And then we're also going to talk about the necessity of prep, prep work preparation work for pre and post disclosure.

L Lyschel 00:36

Hey, we want to make sure that we mentioned that we're missing one of our partners in crime today, Miss Pam Blizzard wasn't able to connect with us. But we really wanted to make sure we got this episode pulled together and out for you all.

B Bonny 00:47

So here's Myth number one. He's the one with the problem. Why do I have to do any prep work?

L Lyschel 00:54

Yeah, I've heard this a couple of times from from partners who potentially haven't really started their own healing journey, yet, they don't recognize that they have a need to invest in themselves. So they're still hurting about the I guess they view it as an expectation that they have to give something in order to get and that feels really hard. But if we go back to our

previous episode, when we defined the purpose, the why behind full therapeutic disclosure, the why behind it really is for it's a it's a safe space, to potentially move towards a sense of restitution and healing as a couple. And so oftentimes, when I have a client who would say something like this, like, it's, he's the one who screwed up, why do I have to do anything? My response is, it's not about you doing it for him, you're doing it for you.

B Bonny 01:55

Yeah, I just sit in the injustice with her. Sometimes it isn't fair, you didn't cause this. But it's similar to if you were to get the flu, it's not fair, you got our COVID, let's go with COVID, it's not fair that you got COVID, it's not fair that you can't taste anymore. And that four hours of being awake feels like 24. It, I'm making light, but it's not fair. So but you do have to take care of yourself to get better, you do have to go to the doctor, you go pick up the medicine, you bring it home, you get the rest, you drink the fluids, you do what you have to do to recover. And it's very similar to the prep work, and helping yourself heal by taking care of yourself. So, um, we will talk more about exactly what prep work is in a minute, but we're gonna go on to another myth. So Myth number two is she is just gathering information for the divorce.

L Lyschel 03:05

Yeah, and I think this is a this is a statement that typically, I've heard come from another clinician, maybe his therapist, his person, or even from the husband himself. I don't typically hear the wife use this myth, but it's not accurate, really at all. Oftentimes, what I'll say to a woman who's in her prep process is the purpose of disclosure is for you to gather data. If you're going into this with a malicious intent to gather data for the purpose of divorce, then you're not actually going in for the full therapeutic disclosure for the reason it was intended for. So then I would, you know, kind of back her up and be like, how is if your hearts already set towards divorce? How is this going to change? Now, she may come back and say, well, then I'll have the full truth and know for sure that I'm out. And I can validate her for that. But on the other side of it, it's very difficult to ask two individuals to show up so raw and so vulnerable, because it's really raw and vulnerable for both of them. With this undercurrent of the rug is about to be ripped out from underneath us. So it's, it's an important thing to talk about, but I would not tell you that with the women I have worked with, that is not usually their go to that is not the motivation behind them doing a full therapeutic disclosure. The motivation is because they're desperate for accuracy and truth.

B Bonny 04:41

Yeah, I have had a couple of clients who have stated If my deal breaker shows up there could be a divorce, though but but that's not her. Like you said, it's not a malicious intent going through this to just to get him to come clean. do all the work. And then ride it off. Okay, let's move on to the next one, how about I will be expected to forgive everything at the end of the full therapeutic disclosure?

L Lyschel 05:12

Yeah that is tied back to pressure to heal fast. That's what that myth is connected to it she

Yeah, that is tied back to pressure to heal fast. That's what that myth is connected to it, she has a fear that she's not going to do it right or do not do it fast enough. And potentially even her partner is has some language around when this is all said and done, you're gonna forgive me. The other confusion that comes with this is that oftentimes, we don't allow ourselves to have emotions, and forgiveness in the same space. So here's what I mean by that, like, I can be sad about something. And also forgiving. Those two things can be very much in the same space. And I think a lot of times, that's what comes up in this. I'm expected to forgive everything at the end of a full therapeutic disclosure.

B

Bonny 05:59

Well, yeah, and for me, it's not sadness and forgiveness. How can anger and forgiveness live in the same space? Yeah,

L

Lyschel 06:08

yeah. I also, you know, in forgiveness, the expectation of someone forgiving, I've really struggled with that, especially because you have to understand is that in the beginning of this full therapeutic disclosure, which is the rite of truth, right, the sharing of truth. While there may be a belief, or a thought that she knows everything already, whether that's her saying that or him, it's still a new experience, when you sit and listen to the entire timeline and one sitting, it's connecting new dots that you were never able to do, it's connecting new points of information or events to your timeline. So there while she may not get new data, she could have new awareness or new understanding, so on and so forth. We kind of talked about that in the last podcast where even maybe she's been told everything. But the reality is, is that she disassociated when they were doing this couch disclosure of him just kind of vomiting, everything, and she didn't hear at all. And so to think that you're about to give her all this information, and that when you guys walk out, she's going to just leap into your arms and be so grateful in that moment, is really it's not realistic for the way that we we heal as humans. But we can't expect that there could be relief at the end of a full therapeutic disclosure. And forgiveness can quickly come after,

B

Bonny 07:46

agreed with the relief I I've often told my clients that full therapeutic disclosure is the first step towards forgiveness. I mean, as Christians, we know that is the goal. But I I never promote fast forgiveness at all. Because really, forgiveness is a methodical intentional process. If the forgiveness is towards reconciliation. Now you can forgive someone without them repenting. And that's called a pardon. But if you want to move into something newer and healthier for your marriage, it's an intentional forgiveness and intentional forgiveness starts with your head. So after the full disclosure, you you may like, like Michelle said, you may have known everything that he repeated. But again, you did hear it all in one setting, and you heard it in a different tone of voice. You heard it in complete ownership. So now in your brain, you know all the information in your brain, you can make steps towards healing your own heart, so that you can make steps towards I do want to forgive him. How do I do that I do want to doesn't mean you're there right away. It just means you've made a mental shift towards I want to work towards this than the second piece and it's only I believe, it's through the Holy Spirit. It becomes an internalized forgiveness, where it truly is a forgiveness that you do not want. You

don't want him to hurt because you're hurting. You've let go of all that. And it really is it's a heart change. And I believe it's from the Holy Spirit. But it's a process. Everyone's different. But typically, it takes more than one sitting just through the full disclosure to reach forgiveness. Are there any other myths that come up for you, Michelle?

L Lyschel 09:45

I think you kind of spoke to the one myth which was this will be done that this is that once this happens, it's it's a done deal. We're over this. We don't have to talk about this anymore. And I love how you offer the wisdom that it's Really, it's really a first step towards healing, mutual understanding, empathy, emotional maturity, there's just a lot of benefit that comes from this experience when it's done well. And so I think that's probably one of the bigger myths that I, that I walk through with with clients is just helping them understand that this is a first step. It's not the last step in the journey.

B Bonny 10:26

Right. And at the end of the full disclosure, you still may have questions. And you're still allowed to ask more questions. Yeah. But also, on the flip side of that recovery is a process as well. So he may not be rid of all his shame, yet, after full disclosure, he also has to work on that, becoming that new creation. So it's a process and both it's the sacred I love how it's called. And Michelle's just mentioned it the sacred rite of truth. It really is, it is holy, it is holy space. And every time I get to, you know, walk with a woman through it, I am just honored. But it's not. It's it's a, it's your stake in the ground that we want a new marriage. But it's also it doesn't mean that the old stuff is completely gone yet. There's sobriety, let's talk about that. I don't mean I don't mean any kind of slips or relapses. There's sobriety. But those constellation behaviors that Pam has talked about, those don't go away right away, even though they can.

L Lyschel 11:47

Maybe the myth is that this isn't going to change anything. Hmm, there you go. And I think that the reason that myth exists is because most people don't understand the purpose behind the full therapeutic disclosure. They oftentimes when given the language of full therapeutic disclosure, I think the initial assumption is a lot of what I hear guys, I've had male clients talk about or counter clients, whatever. It's just taking them to the whipping post more, it's taking them to the you know, putting them on the shooting range, that kind of thing. Because there's this perception that it's about beating him up, because he's done bad things. And that tells me that there's just a misunderstanding of what full therapeutic disclosure actually is. Because it's not what the intent is for. So then when I have someone say, This isn't me telling you all this isn't going to change anything, again, is rooted in that I don't really understand what a full therapeutic disclosure is, and the purpose behind it, I think purpose really helps add some insight.

B Bonny 13:07

So let's do one last myth. What about the myth of we can do this in an hour with our marriage counselor?

counselor.

L

Lyschel 13:16

Yeah, that's a tough one. Because sometimes that myth is actually handed off by the professional that says, We can do this in an hour in my office. But again, I think it goes back to really getting an understanding of what a full therapeutic disclosure is, and the definition purpose, all the things that come with it for your particular experience. But the reality is, is that a good full therapeutic disclosure is not done in an hour in a marriage in a in a with one support person. There's a lot of things that get missed when each of you don't have your own support person. So I would definitely say it's it's very much a challenge. And now that I know what I know, and my own experience with walking with others, I would say I would not advise it.

B

Bonny 14:10

No, even though when you both have your own support person, so he has his CSAT and you have your upsets clinician or coach. And even though they are your advocates, your separate advocates, they're still on the side of your marriage. And I'm not saying that the marriage counselor isn't either. I'm not saying that, but it's just a real, it's a rich. It's a rich mattress of support under you. It's like this big, thick mattress of support. I don't know if that makes sense. It's like you're so cushioned, going into this super hard thing by these people who are well trained and really, every professional I know that does this work. They care so deeply about their clients that it makes the process which can be super painful.



15:11

as healthy as possible.

B

Bonny 15:12

There you go. Yeah, it makes it as healthy as possible. So let's show riddle, answer me this. What's the definition of a successful disclosure? Does it mean she doesn't kill him?

L

Lyschel 15:37

We do frown upon murder, Barney. But I think that, you know, I guess I have this belief system across the board that success, the definition of success is in the eyes of the beholder. Right. Um, I think that as each of you are doing your prep work, this is a very valid question for you to ask yourself, How would this feel successful for me? How would this feel successful for us, and really understand what your definition of success is around this or even expectations that you have around the disclosure? So I don't think that there's a one size fits all definition for what a successful disclosure looks like. I've had, I've had couples where their definition of success was getting through the entire three step four step process, right, right of truth, impact restitution, and that was what was considered successful for them. Others it's been the truth has been laid out there, there's a hope for no more secrets. It's also permission to continue to live in truth,

and, and move forward together. So it's, it's just I think it's very unique to answer that question. It's I don't think that there's one definition that fits everyone. But I would encourage you to ask yourself that question, how would this feel successful for me? How would this feel successful for our relationship,

B

Bonny 17:06

I absolutely love that. I love the piece you've mentioned about expectations. We do try to manage those with you, but you, you what you need is what you need. But expectations that as in the forgiveness piece that you'll immediately forgive expectations that he'll immediately be in like the best recovery imaginable. All of those things after the right of truth. Those might be something to look at and evaluate expectations that He hears your pain afterwards, I think that is an expectation you can have expectations that you're never gonna feel grief or mad or angry or in the pits ever again, because you finally have the truth. That's also probably something you really need to evaluate expectations that you can build a new foundation for a new creation? Absolutely. Absolutely. Will it be painfree? No, but you will have the honesty, you will have the truth, so that you can move into that safety of the next level of the intimacy pyramid. And that's what you know, as Michelle keeps referring back to the purpose of a full disclosure is to lay the truthful foundation for your relationship, which eventually will be intimacy of all sorts. But, but it is a process. So you have to think about your expectations. So let's shall, what is the purpose of preparation for her for going into the full therapeutic disclosure?

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Lyschel 19:12

It's a good question. So preparation for a woman who's moving into the full therapy disclosure process looks like helping her identify some of the things we just talked about the success measures the why for what she's stepping into this, like what is she hoping to get out of it. Other parts of the disclosure, prep looks like helping her with regulation, giving her some tools that she can use in the middle of that disclosure session. That's going to help keep her present in the here and now. But it's also even equipping her with the words I need a break. I need a timeout. Hold on a second. I didn't get that. So it's helping her learn how to care for herself in the midst of something that's really hard. So that's that Preparation, we're going to do all of that work in the in the weeks ahead of time for her, and then the other things that come in is with our particular structure that we do we do a thing called the menu. And that allows women to dis identify, what are the questions? What is the information she wants to know? And what is the information she doesn't want to know. And usually, when I first sit with a client who, well, I, they usually go one of two ways, either she has a ginormous list of questions. And we got to weed through those and figure out what is actually fact base versus emotions, or motive. Or on the other side, she doesn't have any clue what she should be asking. And so part of her prep process is, is getting her questions formulated, having the support of a coach to be able to do that with her, really give her the opportunity to even maybe dig deeper for a deeper question that she has an or something that supports her in getting the truth that she's seeking. So there's a there's a, the preparation process is more than just saying, Okay, this is what we're about to do. But that is also one of the things. So let me step back and say that that the other part of our prep is helping to take out as much of the unknown in this process as possible. Which means I as your support person, or any support person can say, this is this, this is the this is the pattern that we're going to go through the day of the disclosure, hey, this is what I've

seen for other people, this is what you need for self care afterwards. So on and so forth, it takes out a lot of the unknown, which I think we talked about in the last podcast begins to decrease some of the anxiety that can potentially be present with this experience.

B Bonny 21:57

So another thing that came up for me when you were talking about the unknowns, you you mentioned earlier, too, about the partner wanting to do this the right way. And taking out these unknowns, as Michelle has talked about, you see the pattern of what's worked before. It helps you feel more equipped that you are moving on the right track. Of course, you have a lot of decisions you can make. And things can be tweaked. But But knowing that hundreds of other couples have probably 1000s. Who knows how many other couples have gone through full therapeutic disclosures now. But the professionals are seeing a way to do this, that is super healing. So that it takes the unknowns out for you.

L Lyschel 22:48

Yeah, I like what you're saying there, Bonnie, that's what I would add to that is when I have a client who's got she's anxious about am I doing this, right? I have the ability as a prep support person to validate and normalize her emotions, her fears, her unknowns, her uncertainties, the anxieties and saying, This is normal. And when we get to do that, for our client and our prep work, normalizing that does begin to make it feel like okay, I'm on the right path, she can then settle a little bit and go, Okay, well, shell is telling me that this is normal. And so I have to be doing it a little bit. Right. And I would probably argue with you and say, yeah, there's not with you, but just say, yeah, there's no right way to do this, but she's doing it right for her. And that's the validation that that support person brings to the table for her is to say, Okay, you being anxious about the polygraph is normal. Like it's okay that you're that way. Because there's this you know, that lie that comes in like I shouldn't be we should on ourselves in different ways. Like, I shouldn't be nervous about this, or I should be angry or, but I'm sad. And so we get to validate and normalize some of this.

B Bonny 24:09

So another part of prep work is helping her figure out how she can take some things off of her plate. We are busy women. Lots of young, young mamas out there dealing with this kind of thing. What can you take off your plate so that you can build some emotional and physical reserves through rest and less stress, so that you can go into this at your maximum potential. We do spend a lot of time talking about what's going on in your life. How are you caring for yourself? What's something you could consider putting a temporary hold on? It's not forever. But for a season of this where a lot of your reserves are going towards actually healing your brain your brain has had some physical changes that need to he'll. So thinking through those things is sometimes hard when you're, when your cognitive function is kind of come off line a little bit, we just walk with you to try to help you with some pragmatic thoughts.

L Lyschel 25:13

So if you're curious about what would prep work look like for a husband, there are some

So if you're curious about what would prep work look like for a husband, there are some intentional things that need to be covered for them as well. Obviously, each person who's supporting and prepping, they have different styles, different ways of doing the things that they're doing. But the hope is, is that they are also getting a sense of preparation around emotional regulation. They are being prepared for the day, the events, the polygraph, their aid, they have the safe support person to kind of help debunk, help debunk some of the myths that come with a, you know, polygraph or even the disclosure. But in addition to that, the other prep work for them is writing their full disclosure, and having somebody who can walk through that with them, ensuring that they're staying in a ownership posture, which means ownership posture would be I'm not blaming everybody around me, for the things that happened, I am just sharing what happened, and how I was a part of those events. And because that's really important to keep what we call blame shifting out of a disclosure. And so having that prepper support person in that position to really help him have the best document possible is important. And again, there's there's some other things, I've had some clinicians who will support with his self care plan, after the disclosure, like, hey, let's see what you're going to do the next couple days afterwards. But also just helping with that self regulation, I think in emotional regulation is really valuable for a guy who's trying to step into a disclosure.

B

Bonny 26:57

Yeah. Yeah, I think you'll get his support, personal help and work on empathy, as well. Yeah. Let's say we're still in our prep more, we're still in our prep stage, but we're getting closer and closer to the actual date. What does she need to be thinking now about after the disclosure? Like her aftercare plan?

L

Lyschel 27:24

Yeah, so the one thing I say to clients consistently is, you're never going to get the afternoon after your disclosure, or the day after your disclosure back. So take as much advantage of that time as you possibly can. This is like for us who've had children, it's like having that you're never going to get the first day in the hospital with your newborn baby back again, like and so you don't you want to like take as much advantage of that experience as possible. And I feel like that's true also for those days following the disclosure. Because if you are able to give yourself the space to do self care, which may be stepping away from your home for a night or two nights or a week, whatever that looks like for you to process and really sit in what has happened, you are giving yourself a gift that you can't put a price tag on, because it's processing. And app will remind my clients over and over again, hey, remember, this is the step you shortchange yourself in every time the relapse happened or the slip happened or new information came out. And rarely do we actually give ourselves full permission to feel and process all of it. And so I'm really encouraging her to try and do something that she's really never done for herself before. So with my clients, I'm really encouraging them to take advantage of that timeframe. I know that with our clients, we actually even have some journaling or writing prompts that support their processing efforts. Because we don't, the one thing I always have to support them in is you're not going to just you're not going to fall into a puddle. You may do it for a period of time, you may do it for an hour after the disclosure. But if you've had good prep, and you're you've learned some of the skills for self regulation, you're going to be able to step into the next thing. The desire and the purpose of this is not to create a new traumatic a moment traumatic event. Right? So you're going to have that ability to journal process think through but much like what you said before about taking things off your plate

being realistic with expectations of yourself. You are not going to leave your disclosure and go run a PTA meeting. That's not appropriate. God loves my client who thought She was going to do that one day. And I was like, hold the track, right, because she doesn't know what she doesn't know, though. And there's a part of it where she was trying to show up in that space for him. And didn't really give a lot of thought to how that event would impact her or even shape the rest of her day emotionally. So again, I say, you'll never get those days back that time. So take full advantage of that. And then keep doing the next thing, stay connected to your support community, ask for your prayer partners and warriors to be praying over you meet with your support person when you're supposed to, because I see that oftentimes when women stall out on their their support, they feel that across the board, they feel like they stalled out in a lot of ways. So being able to show up with your coach after the disclosure and process and talk and being able to say, I'm being honest and real with myself, I'm not ready to move to the next step, I need more time. And your great support person being like, that's awesome. Let's talk about that.

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Bonny 31:12

I just want to touch on something that you just mentioned. And we may have talked about it in the in the previous episode on full therapeutic disclosure. But the reason you have specially trained support people wrapped around you for this process is so that it will not be re traumatizing. Or it will limit the amount of little T trauma that might happen from it. And so in looking at it that way. It is very important that you think about what I need afterwards. And Michelle's just went all through that. So what will you need afterwards, I suggest I mean, of course, your support person can absolutely walk you through this. But just in a general way I suggest my ladies have two plans. One is if the information she receives is pretty much close to what she already knew. That's plan A, plan B is if there is some information that's more intense than she anticipated. Plan B involves a lot more self care, Plan B might involve that week at the Airbnb in Gatlinburg or the beach, wherever you need to, you know, to really restore. So that's that's just my addition to the post care.

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Lyschel 32:48

And so then to offer what does post disclosure support look like for him. It's very similar. It's very similar to hers in regards to not necessarily that he can unplug because a lot of times I see couples have to share the responsibilities of family. So he may not be able to necessarily go away, even though that's what she may need, but he's definitely going to need to have the support of someone to help him process the experience, process emotions, process, even the way his wife received or didn't receive information. There's so much that can happen. And again, I'm going to say he's not going to get this time back. And so if he waits three months before he has a follow up appointment with his therapist, it's going to be a very different appointment than it was if it was one week later. So don't let the time slip by for the sake of not protecting the time, like do what you can to be able to stay intentional in this space, and do what you need to do for post care.

B

Bonny 33:54

Yeah, I think that is a great point, try to get your appointments with your support people made before you even walk into the full therapeutic disclosure, because you're after coming out,

when you come out, you might not be thinking about these kinds of things. So it's good to have them in place.

L

Lyschel 34:11

Yeah. And then what does post disclosure support look like for the relationship? is a valuable question to ask as well, because we're we're definitely able to help advocate for each of you as individuals. But what has to happen after a full therapeutic disclosure, from a relationship perspective is this is when you begin to come back together. Maybe it is investing in a marriage counselor at this point, and starting to talk about what are our boundaries? What are we changing in our lives to preserve the sanctity of our relationship now, now that we've both identified that the things we were this that were happening before are not okay, what do we need to move forward? And that's a part where I do see some time as couples that falls off where they don't realize, Oh, now we can start talking about the relationship and what it looks like to rebuild safety in the relationship. And so those are the some of the steps, the post disclosure support that needs to happen.

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Bonny 35:15

Your support, people will have great recommendations for marriage counselors. So there, there are a lot of really great marriage counselors out there. And we realize that post care aftercare plans are different for what season of life you're in. If you're a young couple without children yet, those logistics are just going to be easier. If you're a couple bets in empty nest, those logistics are going to be easier. But we want to acknowledge for those who are in the midst of child rearing, we know logistics are a little more difficult. But we really want to encourage you to make the space for yourself. Because your children will benefit from the healthiest mom and dad that you can provide. They children do feel the stress. But you caring for yourself at this point, is a priority so that you can show up as the best mom and dad possible. So as always, let's end with how we can offer hope to our listeners who might be looking at a full therapeutic disclosure in the near future.

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Lyschel 36:39

Okay, so my hope statement is actually coming from some of my Bible study I was doing this morning. So I love God's timeliness. So we know that it's true, that Jesus came and died on the cross to give us life, and to give it to us in abundance. I have realized in my own walk that I don't always understand his definition of abundance. But here's what I have learned. Even as early as today, I wrote this in my Bible, it says you came to give us abundance, breaking off lies, cutting soul ties, refining our debt identity and digging up things that aren't supposed to be there. All of those are the things that work us Towards Abundance. Sometimes the process of moving into abundance can be painful. And I want our listeners to understand that while this experience of a therapeutic disclosure can sound scary, and painful, there can be a bigger purpose in this when we talk about living in life and abundance. And that this could be a part of the abundance. So I encourage you to sit with that pray about that ask the Lord, is this something that he's he's intended for you and your husband because he wants life and abundance for you?

B**Bonny 38:09**

That's my hope. Well, my hope after are my own full therapeutic disclosure, my bursts that I took into that that I wanted to walk out with, I'm still walking towards it. I think I'm there. But it's Malikai for two and this is the this is the life I want to have. And I believe that full therapeutic disclosure was part of this process. But for you who revere my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and Frohlich like a well fed calf. So, yeah. So when you the pain what Michelle has said, so appropriate. But on the other side, the sun does come back up, right there's, there's joy in the morning. And this might feel like a dark night of the soul, but the Sun of Righteousness will rise.

L**Lyschel 39:23**

Okay, thank you for joining us. We hope to be a bright spot on your recovery journey. If you'd like to leave us a question or comment, please go through the contact button on our website. Also help a friend by leaving a five star review on iTunes so others can find us by