

# EP\_69 2\_insensitive\_friends

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

internal boundaries, external boundaries, relapse safety plan, support team, communication needs, cognitive distortions, emotional triggers, practical tools, fact sheets, boundaries education, grace upon grace, peace of God, mind shift, practical tips, listener engagement

## SPEAKERS

Pam B., Bonny, Lyschel

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**P** Pam B. 00:03  
Music. Hi. I'm Pam Blizzard from recovered peace,

**L** Lyschel 00:06  
and I'm Michelle Burke, it 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 recording part two of how to navigate insensitive friends and family in our last episode, experiences that we have had and experiences that may reflect what you've been through as well. And now in this episode, we're going to talk through it. How do you navigate it. How do you come through the hurt to the other side, towards compassion for yourself and that other person? So our first question, Pam and Michelle is, what can a betrayed wife put in place or think about before she interacts with friends and family to proactively care for herself. If this kind of thing comes up two

**L** Lyschel 01:05  
words, throat, punch,

**L** Lyschel 01:14  
we do not advocate for physical violence. Yeah, no, no,

B

Bonny 01:19

but we all know that feeling. We all know, that feeling we do know, and because of the fruit of the Spirit, we do have self control. That's right.

L

Lyschel 01:28

That's true. Okay, fair, alright, so maybe the other word should be HOLY SPIRIT, or Jesus take the wheel. Um, you know, this is something that I have run into consistently and not just in my betrayal story, but just in my life and pain and trials in general, because I had to start understanding what boundaries looked like in situations like this. And you know, we talk about the there's an internal boundary, a boundary that I set within myself, versus external boundaries and things I'm communicating to other people, these were most definitely internal boundaries, and occasionally they had to morph into external boundaries. But ultimately, what I mean by an internal boundary is I had to slow down after feeling so rejected from so many different people in various ways, I had to slow down and ask myself, what is it that I need?



02:31

What do I need?

L

Lyschel 02:35

Fix me and not tell me that I'm wrong or not? Whatever. Blah, blah. I needed to understand what I needed, and that's on me, right? Other people can't tell me what I need. I had to do that work myself and then determine, am I about to step into an interaction with someone who can help meet that need? And God, love my mother. I know I've talked about her before on here. I'm really glad that she doesn't know how to make podcasts work, because she'd probably die with all the things I've mentioned. But that has definitely been a place where I kept coming back into interactions with my mom with a specific need that my mom did not have. She could not meet that need, right? And so, in her loving mother way, she would attempt to, quote, fix it. However, she did that, and then it would leave me feeling very missed. And so one of the things I had to start doing in my phone we had, I had her name, and you know how it gives you like the company, where you can put, like the company inside your little contact. I wrote, do not call in distress, because that was a habit like this. I don't know, like this,

B

Bonny 03:55

automatic, yes,

L

Lyschel 03:56

and what's the Waltons like? I wanted the Walton story, right? I wanted to be able to call my mother, and she was going to show up just right, and say all the right things, etcetera, etcetera. But truly, what happens for my mom is that when I'm in distress, it puts her in

distress, right? She it's, it's very difficult for her to disconnect from that, because that's just the kind of mom she is, and so her being in distress, then would make me mad, and I'd be like, you can't be in distress. I'm in distress, right? So now we're not allowed to be in the same space. Blah, blah, so in order for me to stay mindful dress, I had to put a note on my phone, because I would out of default or habit or longing, I would try to call her and go, Hey, this is what I need. You know, I would try to show I would want her to show up for me. And I had to start also recognizing that that is not the dynamic of that relationship. And that came with grief, I'm not going to lie, they came with a lot of grief and a lot of. Of living in reality and saying that's not the place I go when I'm in distress. I go here, or I go here, right? And trying to understand and identify the other people I needed when I was in a place of distress. So that is how I was proactively caring for myself when these kind of situations would come up, is one of the things we do in hope redefine is we actually have a workshop called it's a relapse safety plan. We're helping women create a relapse plan for themselves. So if he should relapse, what do I do? Right? What do I do? And that's the whole intent of this workshop. The one of the sections that we do is we actually have them write out who is their support team, and how are they your support team? So labeling them, right? So my mother is on that list, but she has a very different job role than what you might expect, right? Because I needed to do that work myself proactively to go figure out who are my people and how do I utilize them in this place. Another, just quick example, and I'm kind of going on, but another example is I had in my relapse safety plan, I have a list of women that go to my kids, that are connected to kids school, but they are certainly people that I can call on in an in a in a place of distress to go get my kids right and pick them up from school. And I don't have to give a lot of explanation to them, but they're not going to people I come in and then begin to, you know, pour my guts out and hope that they're going to hold my heart well, but they can still be a safety, they can still be a support network for me, they just have certain roles. So those would be things that I would encourage a woman to consider, is thinking about, who are these people, who and how can they show up for me, where I got myself tangled up was wanting somebody to be someone they weren't right. I wanted her to show up a certain way and hold me a certain way, my heart a certain way, etc. And that just wasn't. The truth of the matter. Was that wasn't who she was.

P

Pam B. 07:17

What you just said reminds me of the great Brene Brown, and a quote from her is, yes, you share with people who have earned the right to hear your story. And she has this wonderful acronym called braving, and braving stands for boundaries. Will they hear your story with appropriate boundaries and not try to fix and not try to make the story about them or making themselves feel better? Are they reliable? Will they have accountability with your story? Will they keep it in the V vault? Will they not share your story with people that you haven't authorized to hear your story? Will they not go out and then start telling their partner or their their neighbors or other people integrity and non judgment and generosity? Will they be generous when they hear your story? You talk about, what are some of the things that a woman can think about. And you know, if I could rewind and go back to the days before I started sharing with people, I would say, acknowledge that other people don't have the depth of knowledge about betrayal, about sex addiction, about porn addiction, who don't understand the trauma involved with it, acknowledge that, acknowledge that people, other people, will come to your story and again, insert themselves, see themselves in their story. What would they do that they're going to come to it with, you know, cultural taboos about even talking about these things, their own fear of betrayal, their own fear of abandonment and rejection that comes with this, this experience, they're going to have cognitive distortions and forgive them.

Forgive them for not knowing we don't know either. When we first come to this, I think you know, all of us have a large level, a large amount of ignorance about what sex addiction is, what porn addiction is, and what betrayal trauma is, and what does it mean, and how do we solve this problem? So forgive them for not knowing. And like Michelle says, be discerning. In who has the right to hear your story? Yeah, be very, very careful. And I think Michelle, you absolutely hit on know what your needs are. Take some time to figure out, what do I need from this person? And I think in, and I didn't learn this until much later, somebody suggested to me that it was okay to go to someone and say, hey, something's something big has happened, and I'm not ready to talk about all the details yet, but can I spend the night on your couch? Can I come over for coffee? Would you mind taking the kids? Could I count on you to come over and help me with some household stuff to know exactly what it is? Or even, can I just tell you some things that I do feel comfortable sharing? And could you just listen? I don't need you to solve I just need you to listen. I wish I had known these things before I started telling my story and my I needed to tell my story to get out of isolation. I was the only one carrying all the details and the memories and the hurt and the pain and the needs, and I just needed somebody. I needed somebody else's input, or just to even just see me. And so knowing what I need from this person and being real specific. And so those phrases were really helpful to me after I learned them. Hey, I want to tell you something, but I don't need I don't need you to solve it for me, I'm not looking for solutions. I'm just looking for you to just listen.

B

Bonny 11:42

Yeah, that what really struck me from this, what you guys have both said is you mentioned internal boundaries, Lachelle, and for me personally, that was something I had to put into place rather quickly around my mouth. I like to share my story. I like to talk. I like to connect. And I had never really experienced a true trigger until the last D Day, and right after discovery, I had a woman who thought I was upset with her because of how I presented at a party very close AFTER D DAY, and I totally realized my behavior probably could have said it said anger. It wasn't anger at her, but it was anger anyways, I, you know, she called me to ask what was going on, and that one question opened the entire Pandora's box. And in retrospect, while she was a safe person, in retrospect, if I could have had those internal boundaries to say, Wait, I don't need to dump all of this on her, but she just happened to ask the right question at the right time, of course, then There was some silence in the months afterwards, she didn't check in again. You know, she she has once since then, but that was the silence, but internal boundaries around my triggers. I had to learn that pretty quickly, and in learning that, I also had to accept. And this is the same thing that both of you are saying, but I'm going to say it in different way. I had to accept that people just don't have the capacity. It's being in reality like Michelle was talking about with her mother. I had to be in reality that these people, their inability has nothing to do with me or my story. Their inability is something from inside of them. I also know of a situation where a friend could not, could not tolerate the betrayed wife story, and come to find out, it was because this friend had also had her own affair. Yeah, in her past doesn't mean that she wasn't still doing that, but it was just something from her past. And so that story triggered her, and she could not hold space because she was thinking about her own trespass. So I had to come to a place of accepting when people don't have education, when people act poorly, 99% of the time is from their own story inside of them. So that was my acceptance of who. Uh, navigating and sensitive friends. Yeah, you

P

Pam B. 15:03

reminded me of an experience of my own about the silence from friends of people not responding when I had cancer and I told my friends and my family I was, yeah, I got, I got the whole range of, oh, let me give you all these books, or let me turn you on to these natural solutions. And I was happy for that, I mean, but again, it was not acknowledging the feelings. But I also got dead silence. I was surprised at the dead silence, and I got to talk to one of my cancer doctors about it, and she said, Oh yeah, that's real. Common people don't want to make it worse. If they don't know what to say, they're afraid to say anything. And can I tell you, the best thing that somebody ever said to me through that whole experience of cancer was really, that sucks. It wasn't fixing it wasn't trying to help with giving me resources, but it was just acknowledging that it was a really awful place to be. I should it was acknowledgement of that moment.

**B** Bonny 16:15

So what are some other practical tips and tools that we could share with our listeners, maybe something that's worked for you or for clients in navigating insensitivity. I

**L** Lyschel 16:27

actually had a client. She was a writer, and she wrote a letter to her family slash friends who when she would share about the pain that she was in, they wanted, some of them would respond with, well, let me know if there's anything I can do for you, which was such a broad but also like, do you really mean that kind of statement? And so in her, in her particular situation, it just felt really hard to be able to say, this is what I need. And so she ended up writing something that became a blog on our website. So I'll definitely share the link of, how do you love a friend facing betrayal, and how do you care for them, right? And so maybe it is taking them a casserole, offering to pick the kids up. Maybe it is just checking in and saying, Hey, is there anything I can do? Do you have laundry? I can put away that kind of thing? But to go back to it being a tip or a tool, I think she really needed to have a way to communicate her needs. She really needed to be able to communicate her needs and be able to say she didn't. She couldn't necessarily communicate everything that was happening, because part of it, she was still under trying to understand for herself. But I think that that was a practical tool for her, was to be able to communicate in writing, versus having to keep reliving certain things or and for one of the other things, she said was sending the email allowed her to not have to sit with their immediate reactions. And she very open handedly, sent the email and knew that if someone didn't respond, then that was the Lord letting them not be a part of the season, and if they did respond, then those were the people that she was going to move towards. So I remember her telling me that she was going to do this. Oh, gosh, what if no one answers, but the Lord answered, and he answered through people that she didn't expect. Um, so that's just another practical thing that was kind of out of the box that we haven't already shared.

**B** Bonny 18:57

And I have, I have a practical PDF, actually, I have two that I'll put in the show notes. And these PDFs are to inform your uneducated friends excuse me around problematic sexual behavior and betrayal trauma. So it's two fact sheets, and they're very, they're very what I want to say, it's just factual. They're very factual. So it's not like you are condemning them for not

understanding what's going on. They're just here's here's the facts. Because if, if they do have a few more tidbits of information around your experience from a psychological and scientific level, it may help them approach you and respond to you in a more compassionate way.

P

Pam B. 19:46

I can't praise those tools enough. I think they are high level, like you say, factual, chunked out in easy to consume chunks and you can. On lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink, but you can at least provide that information for your friends, and if they take it and learn from it, great, if not, maybe someday in the future. Michelle talked about boundaries, internal boundaries, and I referred to Brene Brown, of you know, being able to choose other people who have good boundaries, and I would offer that I provide a boundaries educational group that is specific to women who have experienced sexual betrayal, and it helps women get refocused back on them and their feelings and their needs and their thoughts and some of those internal boundaries for self care. And once you start learning about boundaries, you can start having them with other people a little bit more easily, with more confidence and you start recognizing other people who have good boundaries and those who still have room to grow. So I would throw that out there as as an as a tool, and we can put

B

Bonny 21:16

a link to that in the show and a practical tool that I utilize personally was something that I had learned in psychology, because it made so much sense to me when I was in high school, you know, if I had a hair out of place, I felt like that. Everyone was staring at me and making a judgment, and my mom always said they're not thinking of you. Well, it when I took a psychology course, I learned about the imaginary audience, and it's very common in teenagers that they are the star of the show and that everyone is paying attention to you. And that's a cognitive distortion. It's something with the pubescent mind and growth and development, but I brought that forward into this experience too, because I think trauma, because we do have to protect ourselves and make us safe, we do become the focus of everything. And I'm not saying that's wrong, but that's kind of a reality, so I had to remember people are dealing with their own stuff, and it was good for me to remember that maybe I didn't know what their stuff was, either. Maybe I needed to be someone who was curious about their experience. But I will say, in the midst of, you know, fresh, raw betrayal, trauma, I just didn't have that capacity. But in the weeks that that unfolded, I did start to grow that muscle that their reaction to me is not really about me personally. So that was my very practical cognitive gymnastics when stuff came up. All right, ladies, well, we're going to wrap up from the practical tips and tools. Please check out the show notes for the what we've mentioned, and the link to the letter, the link to Pam's boundaries, course and of course, the PDFs will be there. But before we leave. We do want to offer you some hope. So what? What hope can you leave? Pam and Michelle,

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Pam B. 23:29

I've said this before. It is just so true when other human beings can't hear your story and can't see you, the Lord wants your story. The Lord knows your story. The Lord will listen. See, you know you take time to sit in worship and tell him your story. Tell him everything that's going on

in your head and heart, and he always has time to listen, and he knows parts of your story that you haven't even uncovered yet in your own heart, human beings might let us down, but the Lord will never let you down.

L

Lyschel 24:17

The phrase that came up for me was grace upon grace, grace upon grace upon grace. And so I was, I was like, Wait, I don't know that that's officially scripture, but it is. It's actually John verse 16, and it says, And from his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace. Now, in my mind, it wasn't necessarily just thinking about the Lord's grace upon grace for us, right? Because it's infinite and ongoing. But that phrase of grace upon grace came when I thought about grace for myself and grace for other people. So Bonnie, as you were kind of bringing all this back in. So just a quick. Funny side story, I just recently did a crazy boat trip with my dad, and he's in his 70s now, and I wanted to do this. I wanted to be able to be there just that, when the first few days there was a lot of communication issues. In other words, he's not communicating, but he wants me to read his mind. And I was like, Oh, this is going to cause a problem, because we're trying to make a boat go down a body of water, and he's not communicating. And so at one point, I finally paused, and I turned and said to him, hey, I need you to understand that. It's not that I don't want to understand what you're doing. But my brain is not there. I have other things in my brain, like I'm thinking about my kids, I'm thinking about my home. I'm thinking about my chickens, whatever like I am, my brain is preoccupied with things that are in my brain. And so when I see you sitting there doing whatever you're doing, I'm not trying to predict you. I'm not trying to overstep and think about the thoughts that you're thinking. So I need you to be able to communicate with me what you need, right? And vice versa. I need to do the same thing. Kind of feels like it circles back into what you were saying. Bonnie is being able to understand that sometimes when we do experience what feels like insensitivity from another person could truly be another person's preoccupied with their own pain and trauma, and we just don't know it, right? We hear this all the time about different phrases of wondering what it would look like if you could truly know every person story that you're sitting at a stoplight with right. One person's leaving a job because they just got fired. Another one just got a cancer diagnosis. I'm dealing with betrayal, trauma. This person right, like it would just blow our minds to see the load that everyone's carrying. And so that's my circle back into its grace upon grace, I can have grace for myself, especially when I seek out someone and I go that did not go the way I wanted it to, right? That is not how I should have done that. Or, man, I put an expectation there that I knew I did know better, but I didn't do better. So I'm going to, you know, so I have grace to do a redo, or go find the need that I have, that needs to be met on the other side of it, extending grace to these other to other individuals, and being like, Okay, this is where this is at. And I find that being able to grab on to that the grace upon grace brings a lot of peace for me, because now I'm letting everybody off the hook, and we're all allowed to be our own persons. And it's, it's really an A disentangling of relationships and trying to let people carry their own stuff, but also show up for them. So that would be my hope, that I would leave for our listeners. Is grace upon grace.

B

Bonny 28:01

Yeah, and so what you've just said, Michelle brought me to my hope for you all is that the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Jesus Christ. So whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure,

whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think on these things, because it helps us make a mind shift from the insensitivity to grace and maybe even gratitude. Somehow, well, thank you, listeners for joining us, for our our conclusion of how to navigate insensitive friends and family. If you have found us helpful in any way, shape or form, there is a way you can help us on Apple, you can leave either A rating with stars five is actually the best case you didn't know that. And also you could write a positive review for us too. So that would really help other women find us. If you have found us helpful. Help other betrayed women, find us so. Thank you for listening and sharing us, and we will see you again next week. Bye,