

Ep_35_A_Recovery_Conversation_with_Dr._Jake_Porter

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recovery definition, couple centered recovery, personal discovery, relational recovery, addiction treatment, trauma impact, shared vision, relationship safety, trust rebuilding, individual therapy, couple therapy, faith role, behavior transformation, boundary setting, support strategies

SPEAKERS

Lyschel, Dr Jake, Bonny, Pam B.

L Lyschel 00:00
Music. Hi. I'm Pam Blizzard from recovered peace, and I'm Lachelle Burkett with hope redefined. And I'm

B Bonny 00:08
Bonnie burns of strong wives. We're so glad you're joining us. Welcome to another episode of hope for wives. We are so excited. If you can't tell from my voice that today, Doctor Jake Porter is joining our candid conversation, and thank you so much for joining us, Jake.

D Dr Jake 00:28
Oh, I'm thrilled. Thank you for having me. Ladies, been looking forward to it.

B Bonny 00:32
Awesome. So for those who may not know, can you give our listeners a brief overview of who you are and what you do?

D Dr Jake 00:40
Yeah, so I'm Jake Porter. I am husband to Kristen. I am Father to MJ and Lottie Jo two and a half and three months old. I am a former pastor, and now I am an LPC, a CSAT, a CCPs, some other things. In 2017 I started daring ventures, which is a practice specializing in treating addiction and trauma issues. I particularly work with couples. I developed a model called the couple centered recovery model for helping couples overcome betrayal and its effects, and I love what I get to do

B Bonny 01:24
good. Thank you. We're glad you're here. Yeah. So our discussion today revolves around what recovery looks like. We all know that recovery is the goal for a marriage trying to heal from problematic sexual behavior. However, recovery is an elusive entity, and I get asked all the time, because I'm sure we all do

behavior. However, recovery is an elusive entity, and I get asked all the time, because I'm sure we all do, what does recovery look like, and how will I know he's in recovery? I mean, I was asked those same questions, and the answers I got were kind of unsatisfying, because typically it's, you'll know it when you see it. So, yeah, yeah. So, yeah. Well, Pam and Michelle and I have definite ideas around recovery. We decided, Jake, that You would help enrich this conversation. So we're going to jump into our first question. What do you define as recovery? And this can include her recovery, his recovery. He may be doing internal stuff, but not necessarily relationally. And the third type of recovery is the relationship recovery, right?

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Dr Jake 02:28

Yeah, so thank you for the question, and thank you for how you set it up, because I do see three distinct efforts. Distinct does not mean separate, right? So they are, they are essentially or I think, Okay, I have a bias here. As creator of a model called couple centered recovery, I have a bias that they are essentially united, but they are also conceptually distinct. If that makes sense. Like, in other words, you can't do one without it touching the others, but we have to be able to talk about them in a distinct way. And so the first thing that I'll let you know is that I actually don't like the word recovery, even though I use it, like, even in the name of my model, I don't like the word recovery, so what I didn't say in my intro when you asked me to introduce myself is that I am in recovery. Okay? I'm a recovering sex and love addict. That's how I identify. I've also been betrayed. So I have that experience in my story as well. And so my personal experience when I was probably 18 months into my own recovery, I remember saying, In I was in a men's group for therapists, facilitated men's group, and I remember saying, This is not recovery for me. This is discovery for me, because the idea of recovery is we are getting back to something, right, we are recovering something and and so the idea is, there's a true self, right, that has been lost in the addiction, in the trauma, in the trauma and addiction, which is for many people, right and through this process, I'm supposed to somehow get back to myself, but I can at least speak for a lot of addicts, not just myself personally, but I've had this conversation many times over with addicts that they actually experience a process of discovery, because for them, some of the early traumas be the childhood events, the coping mechanisms and defense mechanisms that they adopted early on kept them for. Ever even developing a sense of self to know of to get back to

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Lyschel 05:05

All right now, great distinction,

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Dr Jake 05:08

yeah, I and I think that's, I think it's really important because partners, I'm not saying that's not the case for partners, but I've heard that a whole lot less partners will say things like, I'm not myself anymore. I'm not who I once was. I want to find myself again the new partner program that we were offering now. We named it, returning to you. I would never name a I would never consider that name for an addict, an addicts treatment program, but for partners, there's a real sense of returning to something, recovering something. Now, it will rise stronger. There will be growth. There's that post traumatic growth that we all hope partners get to experience. But there's still a more felt, conscious experience of returning to something than what a lot of addicts often experience. And I think that's an important conceptual distinction between those two journeys. Okay, I know I still haven't answered your question, though.

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Lyschel 06:15

Okay. Pam, Lachelle, true therapist, true therapist, right. No. I can totally validate that that experience of all the phrases you're saying, as someone who's experienced betrayal, and I think even in my own personal journey, my self discovery was happening as a result of childhood trauma and things like that

that I was already working on independently as I was maturing, um, I wasn't necessarily, I didn't necessarily know that I was trying to I knew I was trying to discover myself as a young adult. And so when the betrayal came out and it was impacting me, and I was able to say, Okay, I did find me, and I'm not there anymore. Something else is operating and driving this bus, and I don't like it,

D Dr Jake 07:08

right? And so for partners, often, you know, they have this, this traumatic experience of discovery, of the betrayal, and as a as a trauma reaction, then a survival mechanism. They start thinking, feeling, acting in ways that are outside the norm for themselves, against their own sense of character, against their own values, and that's what they're trying to return to for a lot of addicts, though, and I had this happen yesterday with a guy sitting right here, I'm I'm explaining some of these concepts about the relational recovery piece, which hopefully will, will, you know, we'll get to in a minute. And with tears in his eyes and absolute sincerity, he said, I don't know how to do that. Okay, this isn't a guy returning to himself. This is a guy discovering himself, okay, and, and, and so for addicts to try to get to an actual answer to your question, for for those who struggle with addiction, I think recovery is first. The first step is I have to eliminate those things that are getting in the way of my true self, my my real development. There are a lot of ways to phrase this, okay, but acting out sexually in a compulsive, addictive way is a continual re injury of my brain, my nervous system, my psychosocial development, my ethical development, and it impairs me growing into the person that I can become. And so the first thing that has to happen in recovery is you have to stop acting out. Okay, it's like I hurt my shoulder. I was just telling y'all before we started recording, like I was with the new personal trainer today, because I tried this exercise program and realized I know nothing about this, right? So I've got a lot to learn, and I hurt my shoulder, and if I just kept doing what I was doing before, I would keep re injuring my shoulder, and it would stunt my development in this realm of my life. So I have to learn. What did I do that hurt this muscle? How do I not do that anymore to because then I have to create space for healing and and our I know you're all believers, so you know I'm going to go there like God. God creates. Created us to heal. I'm not saying perfectly in this life, I'm not saying that, but generally speaking, we are created to heal. I cut my thumb, I stitch it up. I don't reinjure it. It heals. I break a bone. I said it. I don't reinjure it, it heals. Your brain is just another part of your body. Stop reinjuring it, and it will heal. And acting out is a continual re injury of the brain. So that is the baseline. That is the baseline for recovery. Okay,

B Bonny 10:33

if you could see us, we're all nodding our heads.

D Dr Jake 10:39

So then after that, you know, after that, now I have to develop as a person, right? And this is where it gets really exciting, I think, because I actually I get what's meant by true self, and there's the real you in there. Or from a faith perspective, a lot of people may call it the god image. And I believe in that I do, and yet, I think it's also often misleading, because there's this idea, okay, now I have to go discover the real me, like it's buried somewhere and and here I am. I'm Indiana Jones, right? And I'm gonna, I'm gonna have to face all these obstacles and and fight my way to this treasure of the real me. Well, that's not how it works. Actually, you get to decide who you want to be, and then you get to become that person, choice by choice. And so as I as I become sober and the fog clears and it will the longer you're sober, you're gonna have withdrawals at first, and you're gonna have panic, and you're gonna feel your anxiety more acutely and all that kind of stuff, because you're taking away a long held defense mechanism. But as you get more clarity, you will have a sense of agency restored, and then you get to decide, what kind of human do I want to be here? I so back that same group where I was like, Oh, this should be called discovery, not recovery. In that same group, there was this one guy, he didn't last long, who was in there, and we would do our check ins, you know, at the beginning of each week. And every week he was

moaning and groaning about his wife, belly aching, and she's riding my case, and I'm doing all this stuff. I'm I'm doing all the meetings. I'm reading out, listening to everything she's sending me, check, check, yeah, I see you, Pam, doing the check marks. That's right. Check, check, check, check, check. And he's like, When is she gonna, you know, when is she gonna do her thing? When am I gonna get anything out of this? And finally, after about four or five weeks, my therapist turned and looked at him, and she said, You know what you get out of this? You get to be a better person. It's like mic drop, right? And this was before mic drop was a thing. It was, but it was a mic drop moment. Mic drop moment. It just was like, oh, yeah, that is what I get out of this. Okay, you get to be a better person. That's the reward. Now, decide who, who, who that is for you. Okay, so, so there's really two phases, right? There's like, it's like a detox phase. Get sober, quit reinjuring yourself, make space for healing. Okay, now Next, decide who you want to be and start making choices to be that person. One of my gripes with traditional recovery is there's a whole lot of air time given to what not to do. Don't do this, don't do that. Don't look at that. Don't think that. Don't do Don't, don't, don't, don't, don't, don't. And what I find working with guys is that that give them something positive to aim at, not just don't do this. So a guy can sit behind I'm pointing at my office behind me, right? So can sit there cross his arms, and I'm like, What are you doing? He's sitting there in silence while his wife is in pain, and he says, Well, I can't get defensive, okay, but what can you do? All right, okay, so you're not being defensive right now. Great. You're sitting there like a bump on a log, arms crossed, fuming. I don't know that. I don't know how helpful that is. But who do you want to be here? Okay, you can't get defensive. Actually, you can if you want to. But what do you what? What can you do? What do you want to do? Do that. And every time we do that, we become that. So that's a really convoluted answer. Sorry, no, but that's deep.

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Pam B. 14:47

Every time you do that, you become that

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Dr Jake 14:49

absolutely because neurons that fire together wire together, which is both the problem and the solution here to both trauma and addiction. So right? Every time I act out, I'm more likely to act. Done in the future. Okay, because neurons have fire together, wire together. So what's the solution? Well, the solution is that neurons have fire together, the water together. So do something different, and then do it again and again and again and again and again. I heard you talking

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Lyschel 15:13

about the discovery, and that feels so fresh in my own story, my own personal story, where my husband would have told you he's been in recovery for 10 years. But the reality is, is, I think what happened is he learned how to not do those bad those bad things, but the step to discover himself was never taken to really unpack that history that what, what contributed to the injury? What? How did the injury happen? Right, the shoulder injury, using your example, how did it happen? And then, how do I not, you know, perpetuate that? So I'd love to have you talk about that, like the the value of that, of him doing that discovery work? What does that look like?

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Dr Jake 16:03

Sure. So the 12 steps done right? Does that now add the qualifier done right? Because there can be, we know this, there can be less than helpful. I'll be diplomatic less than helpful dynamics in some 12 step recovery programs or recovery groups, and it can even vary meeting by meeting. Here in the Houston area, we have a vibrant 12 step community around s programs, but I can tell you, don't go to that meeting. Go to this one or this one, right? There's good recovery in that meeting. There's recovery that's

not going to harm your goals at home, in this meeting, that kind of thing, but the 12 steps done, right? I mean, just think about it. It starts out steps one through three, it's you and God, right? It's about you and God and getting real. It's about honesty with yourself and the one who already knows everything. Okay, okay, then steps four through like seven, you turn inward, and you're looking at character defects and and when you work a fourth step, it is in a it is essentially a form of family of origin work. Where did I first feel this? What's my part in this? What are the beliefs, right, that in that informed, that choice I made there, or my interpretation of that event? What's my part? Where are the resentments that I held and why? And I'm gonna, and I'm gonna share these with other people. And so it's a, it's this inward gaze at, you know, what's all my baggage, really. What's my baggage here? Let me get honest with myself. So, so, so I'm doing that, and then steps eight through 10. Now I'm actually taking that knowledge, and I'm going to write my relationships with other people. It's, it's the exact process we see in Isaiah, where, where, you know, Isaiah has this vision before the Lord and the and he says, I'm unclean, right? And there's this first between, it's look up at God, and then he looks inward at himself, and then he looks out to other people. It's that same process. We look up because there's, there's an ultimate truth there, by which we can find our own experience in reality, right? The get getting real. Look in now with that sense of reality, and now carry that out to other people. And then steps 11 or 12 are maintenance. Interestingly, addictions only mentioned one time in the 12 steps. Isn't that something? It's in the first step after that. It's not about addiction, huh? Now, I'm not saying that's the only way to do it, but if you find a healthy 12 step program, it's a great way to do it, okay, but even if you don't use the 12 steps, that is going to be the progression you're gonna connect with reality beyond yourself. Okay? Because if you're if your reality begins and ends with you, and you get to be the measure of what's true, that is not going to get you very far. So you connect with the reality beyond yourself. Then in light of that, you look at yourself again honestly, and now you take that and you start writing relationships, which is where you're walking out the internal reality of your heart. I love

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Lyschel 19:34

that. I love when we have the opportunity to really integrate what we're trying to do today in 2023 and how there is nothing new under the sun. That's right, like the Lord is leading us consistently. I mean, that's the whole thing. The wondering and the Israelites is not anything different than what we're navigating today. So I love seeing that, that interweaving of those two things. Thanks.

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Bonny 19:57

So, so, just to ping. Back to the original question, could we cover what relationship recovery looks like?

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Dr Jake 20:05

Sure. Again, I think you have to have the end point in mind first. And I again, I think that for a lot of couples, there's a there's a dual reality here. There is something being recovered, but also something being discovered. And doesn't that make sense? If you've got an addict who is in a discovery process and a partner who's in a recovery process, there's going to be elements of both of those in their shared recovery. It starts out with, what are we aiming for like, where are we headed with this thing? I always have that conversation first, in fact, just before we got on this, this call here to record this, I was doing a consultation with a another therapist from out of state. She had a tough case and and I said, You know what I would do with that couple? I would just interrupt right there, and I would say, Let's pause this, and let's see if we're all on the same page about what we want. Let's see if we're aiming at the same thing. Do we have a shared vision for this relationship? So you have to start there. And so in my mind, and again, I'm biased. I own it. We want both people in a healthy two person psychology. I'll say it another way. We want a true dyad, one, two person system, not two, one person systems. We want the two become one, which doesn't mean enmeshment and loss of self. The one is a new thing, a third thing, not the loss of the first two. That's what we want, and to get that, you're going to have to begin to live as if

this marriage, this relationship, is the basic survival unit, not you individually, and it's only logical that the one who did the betraying is going to have to demonstrate first that you're a safe enough person to live that way with, right? So you go first one who betrayed, show her. I hate prove because I believe 100% trust is only one person is deserving of 100% trust, and it's nobody's spouse. Okay? So you know, but you're going to have to demonstrate with consistency over time that you are becoming someone with whom she can enter into that, that type of relationship, where she's putting the relationship first, and to get role specific on that, that means you're gonna withhold nothing. We tell each other everything, and you're gonna, you are going to make choices putting the relationship first, even over what seems like yourself in the moment. So I know, I know. I know this, that if I choose something that is not good for my marriage, it is not good for me, even if, in the moment, it's really scary or feels really costly or risky or denial, like self denial or whatever, in the end, if it harms my marriage, that will harm me to if you have two people who are living by those rules, to me, that is optimal relational functioning. Okay, so you have to be clear that that's what you're aiming at, and then it's just a process of getting there. And I know I'm I'm saying it like it's so nonchalant, right? Like it's so easy, but it's not. It's simple, but not easy. It is simple. Like there is a way to get there. Stop acting out, establish safety and security. Rebuild trust by and the primary way you're going to rebuild trust, yes, you need to respect boundaries and requests and help continue building safety in the present, but an absolute essential way of rebuilding trust that that a lot of people miss in this couples recovery piece is we have to look back and recreate a shared story, and that's that grieving together process, right? If we can't regain the story of us that we share, we will, we will have limited trust, and we will have a very hard time having a shared trajectory for the future. You cannot have a shared trajectory of the future without a shared understanding of the past. So going back and revisiting what happened, hearing each other's experience and then and then from that, that that shared understanding of what happened, move into that shared, desired future.

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Lyschel 24:55

Jake, do you have resources to really unpack that on a greater, deeper level? For our listeners to consider. Yeah,

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Dr Jake 25:01

I've got a couple things come to mind. I've got one webinar that's free on my website. If you go to I think it's ventures.com/couple, centered recovery. I'll make sure you guys have the links. You can put it in the show notes. There's a free webinar on my whole couple center recovery model, and you can it shows a few different times a day. It's on a schedule. You can register for that and watch that. And that is a really big picture thing specific to what I was just saying about grief. I do have a webinar on couples grief work. I'll send you. We'll make sure that Link gets in the in the show notes as well, and I'll create a coupon code as well. So if any of your listeners want access to that, I'll give you 50% off or something. Yeah, thank you. Perfect. Yeah, absolutely. Something

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Bonny 25:59

I do hear a lot is, How do you shift from the checking of the boxes to heart change? I mean, yeah, it's to be a better person and but is there a key component other than faith?



26:15

Faith, I think it's faith,

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Lyschel 26:20

Jesus. Yeah, Jesus,

B

Bonny 26:22

it's always the right answer, right?

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Dr Jake 26:24

And, you know? And I mean, and I do work with people who aren't Christians, and I've seen them change as well, but it's still faith, which is weird. I mean, I think it helps a whole lot to have the Holy Spirit on board checking the boxes. So I don't like fake it till you make it as an expression, because it can sound it can come across as checking the boxes, right? So if I am saying, Okay, I'm going to do this, but in my head, there's this reservation. In my head, there's this I'm not saying, any presence of doubt, but a doubt that I'm actually feeding, nurturing, coddling, because I I'm hedging my own. You know how betrayed partners fear hope so often, right? Like, like, they start to hope, oh, maybe, maybe he's really healing. Maybe we're really going to make it. Maybe he's actually going to see me, feel me, hear me, whatever. But the hope comes up and then they shut it down. It's the same thing happening with the dude, right? It's like it's too vulnerable to hope that this might work, and so I'm going to do it, but I'm going to internally protect myself. I'm going to guard myself against the hope, because what if it doesn't or what if I do it, and she still rejects me? What if I do it and we're still not okay? And so there's, there's this coddling and nurturing and feeding of doubt that as this defense mechanism, this protection. And so, yeah, I'll go through the motions, but my I'm not all in, all in doesn't mean no doubt, no fear, okay? It means, despite the doubts and fear, I'm going to give it my all when I do that, behaviors become transformative. Okay? If I don't do that, behaviors remain merely surface level. So I used to be super confused by Romans 12 one. Okay, I could preach a mean sermon about it, but I had no idea what it meant in real life. Therefore, brothers, in view of the mercies of God, offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Oh, and I could stand up there in the pulpit and say, oh, you know the problem with the living sacrifice, they can climb off that altar, you know, get on the altar. Okay, what does that mean? Like, offer your body as a living sacrifice. What? Okay, God, here's my body. Like, what does that mean? Okay. So that confused me for a long time, and then I realized I am equally confused by the very next verse. The very next verse says, Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Okay, so, and a very literal translation of the Greek there is be being transformed, be continually being transformed. So it is clearly an imperative verb. It's a command be transformed, but it's also one in which we're passive. It does not say, transform yourself. It's very clear in the Greek you are not transforming yourself. Well, how do you obey a command in which you're passive? Well, then I'm like, Oh, well, okay, duh, maybe God put these two verses right next to each other for a reason. When I offer my body as a living sacrifice, when I do this thing with my body, literally with my body, the facial looks. Expression, the tone of voice, the posture, the distance between me and you, the words I choose when I offer my body as a living sacrifice, meaning I am doing this by faith, then my mind is renewed and transformed, and neuroscience actually backs that up. In fact, it was neuroscience that helped me understand those Scriptures where I was like, oh, that's what Paul's talking about there. Your mind isn't renewed without the behavior done in faith in your body.

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Pam B. 30:44

Amen. Love

L

Lyschel 30:45

it. Amen.

B

Bonny 30:47

So let's end with thoughts around, do I help my husband with recovery, and how is that related to managing his recovery?

P

Pam B. 31:01

Or how and how can I support? Or even if I'm not managing, how can I support not get in the way of,

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Dr Jake 31:09

yeah, yeah, totally. I love how y'all frame that question. Because a lot of betrayed partners, because of the trauma, you know, they find themselves in black and white, thinking all or nothing, thinking, right? And so it's either like this fixed mind of, he's got to do this, and he's got to do this, and it's got to be this way, and it's going to be on this schedule, and right, or they're in this fatalistic mind of, he's either going to do it or not, and it doesn't matter what I do, and right? And so they either over function or under function in in the reality of what is possible for them, okay, as a as the partner of the addict. So I so I really appreciate your distinction between helping slash, supporting versus managing, managing. Is where you forget that he has choices. Okay, you have to do this. You have to do that, and because mental health is a commitment to reality at all costs. Thank you, Scott Peck for that quote. What I'm going to say to betrayed partners is the sooner you embrace the reality that he doesn't have to do anything, the sooner you increase your own empowerment and find a place that is that is more helpful, both to you and to him, okay? Because the reality is, everybody has choices. We say that in my house a lot, my wife and I say it all the time to each other, to our daughters, everybody has choices. Everybody has choices, okay? And so, you know, communicating it will help me. If you do this, I'm asking you to do this, and I understand you have a choice, and I will make my next choice based on the choice you make. That is the position of empowerment. And so I think, I think owning everybody has choices. And as much as it may not be just or fair, which I want to validate 1,000% the reality is he still has choices to make or not right? And so do you you have choices to make or not right? So the sooner you can get there, the sooner you're going to begin to back away from the management part. The other piece that I'll speak to, and this is a little more practical, less philosophical, is what a lot of betrayed partners do, and I understand why, like, it's coming from the right place, but they do a lot of comparing. So they're in a group with other wives, maybe other betrayed partners, and they're hearing what other husbands are doing, and they think, well, then my husband needs to do that, well, then my husband needs to do that, well, then my husband needs to do that. And maybe he doesn't we. So just the nature of our clinic here at daring ventures, we get a lot of really hard cases. And believe it or not, there are certain sex addicts where a lot of the traditional elements of a treatment program will make it worse. We have to say to wives sometimes, if he does, if he does what you're asking him to do, we want to help you understand why we think that's going to work against your goals. Okay? You want him to go do this. CB. It based group and work this workbook, and we're telling you he's actually got obsessive compulsive personality disorder, and that treatment is going to make him even more rigid, and it's not going to help the underlying thing that's driving so much of the compulsive behavior, right? So I request that betrayed partners may formulate their request as that you I'm going to ask. I'm not going to tell you what your treatment and your recovery needs to look like in a detailed form, but I'm going to ask you to choose a support person who I trust and and follow their and that you follow their recommendation. So find a qualified, you know CSAT, who is trauma informed, and I'm going to then leave it to them to be telling you what your treatment, your recovery needs to look like. Now, a good like our therapists here, we're going to get a consult from the partner. We want them to speak into the process. We want the the the the collateral information, you're right. We want that, but we don't want them to feel like they have to develop the treatment program, right? So, so that's managing, as far as supporting goes, one of the most important things you can do is know your own boundaries, like you are helping him. When you have good boundaries, based in reality, you are helping him. And I'm not just talking about protective boundaries. You protecting yourself from him. I'm talking about containment. Boundaries. What what do you contain? What do you put out there? And what do you not and like, that's a

huge way to support and a lot of partners. There are some partners who do this and love to do it. There are some partners who are and I know they're going to hear me say this, and they're going to create going to cringe all over but I'm telling you that if you will acknowledge when he does something right, it will be to your benefit. Generally speaking, you are going to reinforce good behaviors by a simple I noticed. I noticed that you did that, and it's different. I noticed Thank you. Maybe you can't put the thank you on. That's okay. But even just I noticed letting him know that you see the potential changes, it doesn't. That's not you saying you believe it 100% that's not you saying, Okay, we're back, you know. But you're going to get more of what you point out. And so if all you point out are where there's still gaps, you're actually probably going to get more gaps.

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Pam B. 38:03

That's just reality.

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Dr Jake 38:07

So I'm not saying don't point out the gaps. I'm just saying be an equal opportunity pointer outer ask. It's a way of asking for what you need when you know if a betrayed partner says to her husband, thank you for how you handled that situation with the kids. That was different, and I noticed that is essentially the same as her saying, and it's actually a more effective way of her saying, I need you to be patient with the kids. That's one of my requests. It's a way more powerful way of getting that need met. Okay,

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Lyschel 38:41

so the scripture that comes to mind is Proverbs 18:21 that Death and life are in the power of the tongue. Tongue can be used as a weapon to harm and destroy or a tool to build and heal. And so I know that that was a lesson learned from myself that is not to preach or sure give any level of platitude to our listeners. But I very much, well, I come from an environment of criticism and critiquing and never going to get it, you know, right, that kind of thing. So that was a real natural tool for me to pick up, even in my marriage, and how what a gift it was to be able to start speaking life over the situation, and that way of being like I acknowledge change. I see that I needed to hear myself say that, by the way, yeah, I didn't need to just for him. I needed to hear it, because I was always keeping I could, I could give you a list of all the failures, but I was struggling to see the wins, and so me making that conscious choice to articulate or say out loud, the win, it logged it in my brain somehow, some way, yes. So the other thing I was going to ask, or maybe just even comment, is, the other thing I see that is so powerful is, you know, when we first start this. Process. We were just talking about this in a group this morning that I was facilitating, and we were talking about what happens when we get to shift from managing the process to actually seeing our person, our the addict, manage the process, because part of the narrative that I know, that I wrestle with is okay, clearly, the discovery happens, and you've put us in danger and you were oblivious, or you knew you were putting us in danger and you still chose it. And now that we're in, quote, a space of recovery, when I get to see my husband vocalize a choice, whether it's around his own behaviors, whether it's awareness for himself, whatever that looks like, I am suddenly recognizing, oh, he sees the danger. Now he's gaining tools of awareness to know how to keep us safe. And so the thing that we were just kind of talking about is like that increase in letting them share that they see it, they've got awareness. They're trying to choose something different is going to decrease our, you know, hyper vigilance and our need and our fear. And the other thing is, is that there is something about when somebody makes a choice. So if I say to my husband, you have to be in counseling three times a week, and I've given him that as a task, and he does it or doesn't do it, there is an altogether different currency when he comes in and says, for the better of my mental health, I need to be in counseling three times this week, and I'm going to be like, What the what? Like, that is going to be a different, right? There's going to be a different like win or deposit in our bucket of trust and rebuilding and all these things, because I'm starting to see him own his stuff. You own your recovery. You do the steps,

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Dr Jake 41:55

yes, yeah. And what comes up for me, Michelle, is I hear you say that is, it just reinforces the need to have the right help. Okay, because those all of this that we're saying, it's only going to work and it's it's only going to lead to increased trust, if, if you're, if each person is working with someone who understands sex addiction, understands betrayal, trauma, understands the relational piece of this and the couple's goals around the relationship, and is in support of all three of those tasks, like the idea and I've had, you know, when I've tried to cooperate, collaborate with other professionals as the and I'm the couples guy and and this person says, Well, I'm leaving that to you, the relationship stuff to you, I'm just focused on his individual work. That is a red flag for me, because research actually shows that individual therapy is a greater predictor of divorce than having no therapy at all. If someone's had in relationship trouble and they go to individual therapy, they are more likely to end up divorced than if they're in relationship trouble and they get no help at all. Yeah, wow. And the reason for that is because individual therapy looks at the paradigm of, here is my client, and my job is to relieve their suffering. Couples therapy says My job is to help them function better, despite the suffering and the truth, the hard truth, is that people who work with individuals on either side, the addiction side, the betrayal, trauma side, their paradigm can be my job is to relieve my client's suffering. If the client's goal is to keep the relationship, then the relief of suffering cannot be the chief objective, because every relationship will involve suffering. Now it needs to be a tolerable level. It needs to be a level that's not unsustainable and breaking someone down. But even the best, healthiest marriages are hard, right? Every partner is is a pain in the rear, that that is just that is reality, okay, and so meaning

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Lyschel 44:17

husband and wife, right? Not because we refer to us as part yes, yes,

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Dr Jake 44:21

yes, yes. Thank you for the opportunity to clarify every partner, whether husband or wife, betrayed or betrayer or no betrayals in the picture at all, just a husband is a pain in the rear. That's how it is. And so what's more important, elimination of suffering or the the, the the flourishing of the relationship. Now I'm not saying, oh, therefore you ignore suffering. Hear me, clearly, there's an unacceptable threshold of suffering that needs to stop, but is that individual support person? Son only focused on that. That's a very important piece, if the relationship is going to make it

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Bonny 45:07

what else would you like our listeners to know about what's going on at daring ventures?

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Dr Jake 45:13

Yeah. So thank you for the opportunity. First of all, ladies, I just have so much appreciation and respect for each of you. And you know, at daring ventures, we've we got lots of different intensives. You know, for couples, we do family of origin intensives with groups of men or groups of women. And we opened up recently a retreat center. It's a beautiful house on a river where we're beginning to hold a lot of these intensives and and we're really excited. I mentioned it earlier in our time together, our returning to you program for partners, for betrayed partners. It's a week long. There's, to my knowledge, there's not another program like it, and it is. It is a balance of therapy, like really intense, hard therapy with rest, relaxation, restoration, and we've had a few groups go through it. So far, we do a pretty extensive evaluation. And so far, every single person has given it five out of five in terms of return on investment,

and they would send others to it. And I just want to say this about it. I know it's expensive, and if you look and you're like, I can't afford that, keep checking, because I am actively pursuing ways of making it more affordable, like, I mean, all kinds of stuff, providers and, you know, vendors and restructuring financing and loans and all of that to try to lower the cost, so we want to make it more and more accessible.

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Bonny 46:47

Well, thanks for being here, and thank you listeners for joining us today. We hope to be a bright spot on your recovery journey. If you'd like to leave us a question or comment, please use the contact button on our website, which is hope for wives.com and that's hope F, O, R, wives.com Also, if this podcast has helped you, please leave us five star rating or review on iTunes to help other people find us. When we reach 500 ratings, Apple podcasts will promote us in a different way. Thank you, and we'll see you in a week. Bye.