

Episode_36_Sexual_Identity_Rupture

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SPEAKERS

Lyschel, Pam B., Bonny

- B** Bonny 00:03
Before we get started, we want you to know that this is possibly triggering content, so please take good care of yourselves. Also, the material discussed could be unsafe for little ears, so please wear your air pods.
- P** Pam B. 00:21
Hi, I'm Pam Blizzard from Recovered Peace.
- L** Lyschel 00:23
And I'm Lyschel Burket with Hope Redefined,
- B** Bonny 00:26
and I'm Bonnie Burns of Strong Wives. We're so glad you're joining us..
- L** Lyschel 00:35
Welcome back to another episode of hope for wives. Today we're discussing a very important topic, the impact of sexual betrayal on a wife's sexuality. Join us today as Pam and I are probably going to be sitting more in a student's seat and really gaining lots of information and wisdom from Miss Bonnie, we're really looking forward to this conversation. So Bonnie, can we start off with some definitions? Can you give us some clarity around what is our sexual identity?
- B** Bonny 01:14

Sure, I can try. I know that it seems like it's elusive. I think it's a little more practical than most, most understand, you know, our overarching identity has things to do with our life experiences, the sum of our personal history, the perception of your abilities, how good you are your perception of your purpose in life, it also has to do with your core values mean, our overall identity corresponds to our sexual identity. When we look at our sexual experiences, you know, the sum, the sum of our personal history when it has to do with sexual things, and how capable do we feel of being sexual? Or how capable? Do we feel that we understand sexuality, and values? What are your core values because they do play into your sexuality and your sexual perception. So I think when we look at our big, the big picture of our identity

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Lyschel 02:20

raised, how my extended family was raising family members, etc, and how that plays into the identity that I carry. Okay, so what are some ways that wives are impacted in the area of their sexual identity after infidelity or sexual betrayal?

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Bonny 02:37

sexual betrayal, as a whole creates a rupture in our overall identity. It creates a rupture, of course, in that attachment to because he is important when we think about our sexual identity because we've been married to him, and he has influenced us, and how we thought about ourselves sexually. When the truth comes to her, and she's finally figured out what's been going on, she can assess where her identity was. So there's a spectrum here, if on one end is a wife who's been dealing with a sexual anorexic or a sexual avoidant, so her experience being influenced by her husband with her sexual identity is that one, if she's a higher drive wife, I've been too much or too, what's wrong with me? What's wrong with my sexuality that he's not desiring me. So on the other side of the spectrum is the hypersexual man with problematic behaviors, who has his constant pursuit and of her sexually, and his lack of satiation he's never satisfied. That also creates what's wrong with me? Why can't I keep up with him, or it totally shuts down her drive altogether. And she, she's not seen for who she is she just seen for her body, and that shuts her down totally. So the sexual identity, the personal sexual identity, as well, that I see in a vast majority of my clients is that she's experienced childhood sexual trauma as well. So his betrayal and even before she knows there's betrayal typically there are patterns of behavior that remind her of the past. And so she has dealt all of her life with a broken sexuality, and maybe a better word, aside from or an additional word. Two sexual brokenness would be sexual wounding, not only in childhood, but in the marriage because a wound is typically inflicted, where brokenness can come from from some of our, some of the lies we're believing from the enemy or our faulty thinking, wounding is typically outside of ourselves. And so the sexual wounding keeps us in a place of thinking about sex and sexuality as a place that is painful. That what's the use? I've heard so many women cry out to God of why did you even create sex, it's been nothing but pain for me. So that's how sexual betrayal and and that's, that's sexual betrayal, even from her childhood to that's ruptured her identity, a clear, concise identity is what God desires us to have. And of course, when we base our identity in him, first and foremost, we can put this all back together, but I'm jumping ahead of myself. So what do you guys think of all that? I'd love to hear some input. First of all, can

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Pam B. 05:58

I just acknowledge the feelings that come up? For me, and I've seen come up for other women, when this subject comes up is fear, feeling feeling vulnerable, feeling anxious, feeling some shock, feeling shame? Feeling, maybe even guilty, just all the emotions because it is such a tender, tender sub project. And there's likely been a lot of pain before begun, just because of our culture, and all of the conflicting, confusing messages. culture says we are to be always sexual on the outside to dress in a way that is sexually attractive, and that it's one of our primary qualities. And, and, but yet, you know, our moms, and the church is telling us be pure, don't dress too, provocatively don't show too much. Your body parts are to be hidden, they cause men to stumble. So it's confusing as to whether our sexuality is a good thing or a bad thing. And it's not something we openly discuss and can get clear on very often. And so I'm grateful for this discussion. And because it can be so overwhelming, emotionally, and I just want to, I just want to stop and acknowledge that for anybody who's listening who might feel some anxiousness and anxiety about the whole topic. You're not alone, I still feel it in this moment. I think that's natural. And we're sorting it out, we'll get there.

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Lyschel 08:04

I'll just add, like, I didn't necessarily grow up with a narrative of sexual purity. Before I got married, I didn't grow up in a faith based home, there was a lot of confusing definitions when it came to sexuality and your identity with it. So when I when I first read about as talking about this topic, immediately, I thought I didn't even know that I had a sexual identity, you know, within myself, but as you've been talking Barney, and kind of giving some definition, I definitely see how my historical experiences, whether it be by choice, or as a victim of sexual abuse, plays into my identity. And the way that that was impacted in my story, really created a lot of confusion for me, when I realized that he was viewing porn on a regular basis, even to the fact of like viewing it, as soon as we would finish having sex, he would eventually just disappear in the middle of the night and continue to go do that. And I could not figure out I thought I did what I was supposed to be, you know, or like we were here I was here, I was present and yet still choosing to go view things online. So that was definitely confusing. And I'll just add this as a component of my story. So my story came out when I was in my 20s right and I don't know how old you all were, but I feel like I have a different respect and expectation of sex at different seasons in my life like so. I my story, this infidelity came out before children, and I definitely have a different sexual life post children, right and now even going into what is the perimenopause or whatever, like everything looks very different throughout our lives. So I just want to add that as a, an entity to our conversation, but when I read In this question, one particular story came back to mind. And I just thought I would share this for our listeners, I actually had a wife say to me, she was so angry that pornography had stolen her sexual identity. And she said, Because I am a sexual person, I enjoy that. That's just who I am, as an individual is enjoying those types of things. And now I can never feel like I can be who I am. And not assume. Either he thinks I'm reenacting pornography, or he's already seen it from somebody else. And that sounded like that really hit home when I listened to her understanding that impact that something that she felt so natural at and was a part of who she was, and all of a sudden, that was taken because of this betrayal. So I would I would also say that I went into when I discovered in the original days, when I discovered that there was pornography use my immediate thought was, well, I gotta step it up. I joke with women in our groups, but I said, as I became a sexual kitten, I was like, I will set you out of pornography. I had no idea what even that meant. But I was fully convinced that I would lower you away, like Delilah, you know, get you to not desire that, like, I'll just step it up, I'll step up my game and be more for you. And so that when the information that I was starting to gather about pornography, addiction, Fidelity

has really has nothing to do with sex. That was a really hard truth for me to sort out. It took me a long time to be like, okay, but that seems like the solution because I was having, you know, even not necessarily that I even had people in my small group, I had women that I was trying to confide in saying, Hey, this is what's going on. And their first question was, what are you guys having sex? Right? Because that is a basic understanding or knowledge is that there's a need that's not being met, so they're gonna go somewhere else to fulfill it. And again, we just have to go back in and stress that that this isn't, this isn't about sex. And I think that's also why it impacts so much of our identity is being like, well, if it wasn't about that, it was about something else. But I'm definitely impacted in this area. Hmm.

B Bonny 12:25

So yeah, absolutely. Because I think So did that feel authentic to you when you became a Sex Kitten?

L Lyschel 12:32

No, no, I would quite honestly, I would cry pretty consistently, after engaging because I started to feel like I was just selling myself. I was not living within my values. I was trying to be something I wasn't. It was difficult. I mean, it was super hard. And I'm so thankful that my husband was attentive enough and kind enough to not perpetuate that. Like he was like, No, absolutely not. We were both lost, right? Neither one of us knew how to fix this. But he could see that that was not the solution. He was not gonna let me stay in that place of pain, emotionally. And so he was like, yeah, no, we're not doing this. Yeah, it was totally against my, my value system of trying to show up and be somebody I wasn't.

P Pam B. 13:13

Can I just say that my experience mirrors yours. And in addition to me thinking, that's the solution, I had therapists telling me creatures, right, that that was the solution. And so all of a sudden, I'm the one with the problem. I'm the problem here. I'm the one that needs to fix this. And I also did things that were I didn't want to do and I kept and I kept gaslighting myself telling me, but I should like this. I should enjoy this. What's wrong with me? I'm broken. I was but not for that reason. And I have had terrible shame afterwards. For the things that I did, and I give myself Grace now that I know that this is a normal common thing that that wives will do, thinking it's their responsibility or their ability to fix the situation, not understanding that we're applying the wrong solution to the wrong problem is the shall you say it's not a sexual desire problem or sexual fulfillment problem, or a sex drive problem? It's a it's a trauma based dealing with the inability to deal with emotions, and thoughts problem.

L Lyschel 14:42

And I'll add that there's probably a listener going but my husband says it is a sex problem. My husband says that I'm not available enough. And we hear that consistently like and what that is telling you is he doesn't understand his problem. Right, he's still carrying around the definition that is a very high level understanding of what's going on. And so for her just to be able to

affirm her and be like, we know that that's oftentimes the thing that's been said, I could go into so many heartbreaking stories of how someone has blamed another person for not being available. And so it justifies their choice to go do something unfaithful. But that is not that it's it just as an indication that there's not enough, there's not enough education at that point to really understand what's going on with you that you need to go to do this.

B Bonny 15:39

Right? Absolutely not. I think what the sexual identity rupture from betrayal, the ultimate, and I'm going to use one of Pam's words here, and don't hate me, the ultimate gift of this is that you can rebuild, you can have redemption, which is not even rebuilding, you're not even reclaiming. You're creating a whole new thing. And this is, when we see the unhealthy patterns that we've lived with. While he was an active addiction, we can choose how we want our sexual intimate life to look like once we get into recovery. Yeah,

P Pam B. 16:25

we get we get to decide who we're going to be what our sexual identity is going to be, what we like, what we don't like, what our boundaries around our sexual interaction with our partners are going to be we get to recreate that. And that's kind of exciting.

L Lyschel 16:43

So let's talk a bit more about that. What are some ways a wife can heal? First her as an individual? Because I think you're already starting to talk about the couple's ship, but what are some ways that she can heal from the rupture to her sexual identity? And then maybe we can tap into what are some ways that couples ship can heal from the rupture to their sexual identity, which is probably a whole episode in and of itself?

B Bonny 17:09

Yeah, let's let's, let's focus on her right now. So in my own story, the shift came for me when I started to learn what the Bible really says about sex. Now we get a lot of we've had a lot of we've been hit on the head with the hammer around First Corinthians seven five, which talks about Do not deprive. I'm not going there. We need to go way back to Genesis. Oh, yeah. No, we need to go way back to Genesis because God created sex before sin even entered the world. So sex was not Yeah, sex was not created as lust management. Now we and as we've just said, sex addiction really isn't about sex. It's about unmet needs that are getting met illegitimately. So God created sex, as a, as a as an intimate knowing. In Genesis two when it says that Adam knew Eve, and she conceived that k n e w, that word in Hebrew is your da. And that word, your DA is used several times through the Old Testament, for God knowing us intimately. Like Psalm 139. God knows us. We he knew us before we were knitted in the womb, that new is your DAW. And another, I can't think of one off the top of my head, but there are other verses where he wants us to your DAW him. He wants us to know Him on a deep, intimate level. So sex, sexual intimacy was created as as a reflection of that deep knowing and that oneness God wants us to have with him. And it's Satan, who has ruptured our sexual

identities. It has Satan who has created this brokenness, around sexuality, because what is most sacred is what Satan will defy all. And sex was created as that sacred space between you and your husband. And so when sex addiction happens, that's an end the betrayal happens. That's why it feels so personal. Because it is, and it's different than an alcohol addiction. It's different than a narcotics addiction because it affects our personhood and our body. And that is not why God made sex. God made sex as an overflow and abundance to physically express that emotional connection. So I know Oh, that many and most all of you listening have not had that emotionally connected sexual experience. And that is the goal. And that's why God created sex.

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Pam B. 20:13

And that reminded that I'll preach. That reminds me of this thing that we say that is so true. We all only want to be seen and heard and known. We want to, we want to fully know every thought, emotion, desire will of God. And then we want to, we want that with our partner. And we want to be seen and heard and known by God. So thank you for giving us the translation of the word known. And to know, that's beautiful.

B

Bonny 20:52

Yeah. And so her first step towards healing is to understand that God made sex for good. I think once we see sex, not as dirty, not as gross, not ashamed, filled, but but that God made sex for good. And it's Satan, who has defiled it, I think that's the first step toward even wanting a sexual identity. Because sometimes you don't even want it back because it's hurt so badly.

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Pam B. 21:26

And there's some religious structures that will also teach that sex is only purely for the reason of creating children.

B

Bonny 21:34

Well, let me let me say God made our bodies. God created our bodies, God created something called Okay, trigger warning, he created something called a clitoris. Only purpose for the clitoris is pleasure. It has nothing to do with procreation. So God, I this is Bonnie's personal opinion, I don't think God would create a clitoris and make it pleasurable, if the only reason was for procreation. Now, I do understand those faith communities. And I'm not, I'm not disrespecting that. That's for my my study. Plus, also we see in the body. That No,

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Lyschel 22:19

I was just thinking, you know that there's some listener that's like, Thank You, Lord, that I put you on my ear pod this morning, instead of on the car radio. So I don't have to answer the question from my children in the backseat.

B

Bonny 22:34

Yeah, but also, this sec, the act of sexual intimacy releases a lot of bonding held on together, and it's called oxytocin. And I think that God put that in there too. For sex to be bonding and not just for procreation.

P

Pam B. 22:57

Yeah, God does to make mistakes.

L

Lyschel 23:01

The thing I would just go back to is the basics. Part of our healing is just telling the truth to ourselves, and potentially to people who can help us. I think that's one of the first steps in all healing journeys is self awareness, and then being able to say, Hey, this is what's going on giving it a name. So I just, that would be my, my additive there to just saying, there, that's where you start. And then being able to unpack all the beautiful things that you've just given us, Barney, sitting with the Lord asking him those questions. What does this mean? Why did you do this? How does this How does this what does this mean for me? That that type of questions so.

B

Bonny 23:49

And I think, when we start to see the goodness of sex, sexual intimacy, we start to see the goodness of our sexuality and who we are as women. We start to shed those burdens of objectification. We can see ourselves more holistically and we don't compartmentalize our sexuality as much. So holistically your sexual identity is I do see the world through the lens of a female. I mean, we females typically have certain characteristics, and that's how we see the world and that's okay. That's our sexuality coming through.

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Lyschel 24:35

And I think it's important. Can I just add this? No, Pam was offering some validation about being anxious about being anxious to talk about this. This valley, around your sexual identity and the brokenness in your relationship can be a long journey. Particularly if you are discovering so actual identity and you are discovering broken pieces and parts to your guys's your relationships dynamic. But he's still not there yet. Right? Like he's still trying to do the internal work or the family of origin work or the whatever, like this can be a very long journey to get to that part of glory, that Bonnie's talking about the appreciation for what God's done the understanding of his purpose, etc. So I just want to offer that validation or just a little bit of encouragement to our listeners as well, like, this isn't a sauna fast thing, which I think we say on every other podcast with us, this isn't best. Just want to add that.

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Bonny 25:46

Yeah, and and I'm going to add something that might be controversial. So as you get to know

Yeah, and I'm going to add something that might be controversial. So as you get to know yourself, your values, you're starting to appreciate your sexuality. And he's not, he's not there yet. He's not safe. So I've heard from several, several friends and clients, they're wrestle with self pleasure. Because we do have, especially in and Michelle had mentioned the seasons of sexuality, our younger seasons of sexuality, we have stronger hormones and drives. So there comes this topic of, I'm not safe with him sexually, yet, I have this need. And where I'm gonna land with that is it's very similar to what God says about drinking. You know, take a little wine for your stomach, and Jesus did make wine at the wedding, but don't get drunk. So there's a lot of self assessment. With self pleasuring, I will say there is nothing in the Bible that mandates against it. There is a there is a story about Onan. You can look that up, I won't go into it right now. But that really isn't about self pleasuring. That's about taking something from someone that they deserved. So, but I hear from ladies who wrestle with this, because he's not there. They're not in a sexual relationship, yet. They have this need and for a release. So while I don't think it's a sin, I think that each of you have to weigh the risks and have to weigh what does this mean to me? Is this purely? Am I staying in my body when I do this? Or do I allow my brain to go elsewhere, because we also as women of God, are called to a personal responsibility of righteousness. And I'm not going to call it sexual purity, I will call it sexual integrity. So I know it's a wrestle out there, it's a real wrestle, I want to acknowledge it, I also want you to be able to release some shame around it. Because self pleasuring for husbands with problematic sexual behavior, that's a whole nother issue. He's really just manipulating his brain chemistry. But if you're not using it to cope, it's something that you personally get to make a decision around.

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Pam B. 28:29

Very well said, and I'm glad you said it, because it is a personal decision. And, you know, if you're not using it for, to zone out, to escape, to just to release generalized anxiety. You're approaching it from a mature, emotionally mature, spiritually mature way of getting to know your own body, getting to know your sexuality, having a relationship with yourself in that way and to know yourself to know your body we talked about knowing we have to know our own bodies so that when we are re Integrating, we can express to our husbands what we need, what we want, what feels good, what doesn't feel good. And how do we know that unless we have experienced that for ourselves? And as long as you know if we're not addicted, we we are acting in a mature responsible way.

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Lyschel 29:36

Okay, ladies, so what hope can we leave our listeners today?

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Bonny 29:42

The hope is that we are all sexually broken. We all have issues. I think we all go into marriage with wrong. This funk disordered thinking around sex because because of the cold culture we live in, as Pam alluded to earlier, I think we just have to give ourselves grace. And then do a reality check. And the hope is, God can absolutely redeem your sexuality. He absolutely can. Jesus.

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Pam B. 30:21

F Pam B. 30:21
Jesus was


B Bonny 30:23
a man and I believe he had all all the, you know, physical desires yearnings, he understands you, he understands, and his redemption and Resurrection can deliver, you can actually pluck you out of this mess for you personally, I'm not talking about the marriage right now, just your confusion, he can pluck you out of that, and deliver you and put you on a shore of clarity. But it takes a walk with Him, it takes a really vulnerable walk with Him, because talking to him around your sexuality, and what you want sexually feels weird. I have a lot of friends who say I cannot pray about my sexuality. Well, it says to bring all things in Philippians, it's bring everything to him with thanksgiving. So he, you know, God created it, he knows it's there. So you can talk to him about it.

P Pam B. 31:31
Hope I want to leave our listeners is that sexual betrayal is sexual wounding. Our consent has been taken from us, we've been disempowered by it. And as with all wounds, God created us so that we can heal, he gave us the ability to heal. And I just want you to know that you're not alone. It's if even if it's not talked about in your circles, your recovery circles very often you are not alone, sexual betrayal of sexual wounding, and you shouldn't have to just figure it out by yourself. Nobody can, and that you can take this to the Lord. And he does listen, as Bonnie said, he does listen, he does understand there is no shame in taking this conversation to JSs. And finding reaching out and finding other experts. There are experts out there, maybe we can put some in the show notes and other resources to listen to. You get to figure out what you what your Yes. And your no is. That's up to you and you alone.


L Lyschel 32:51
And I go back into this pretty consistently for myself, it's the Lord knows. So he knows the brokenness that you've experienced in all the different places after betrayal. He knows the questions that you have. He knows your comfort level right now around this topic. And he's enough to sit with you in every one of those places. So my hope for you or encouragement would be just to seek His face first and have those conversations with him before you begin to put any pressure on yourself to be something other than what you are. You have permission to be right where you are right now. Absolutely.

B Bonny 33:34
Yeah. One other thing I'd love to mention is that I've developed a course for betrayed wives called Sexual clarity for Christian women. And that is how to discover who you are sexually. What does God say about sexuality? And we unpack all of those verses that were used against your sexuality, we unpack those we really look at them. So yeah, it's not your it's not your

typical go have sex class. It is not that it's helping you discover what you want, what you need. What's what what are your values around it? So anyways, it's called Sexual clarity for Christian wide. We'll have the link in the show notes.

 Lyschel 34:20

Well, thank you for joining us today. We hope to be a bright spot in your recovery journey. If you'd like to leave us a question or comment, please use the contact button on our website for wives.com and that spelled FLR. Also, if this podcast has helped you please leave a five star rating or review on iTunes to help other people find us when we reach 500 ratings. Apple podcast promotes us in a different way and we can't wait. Bye

 Pam B. 34:49
bye