

# Ep\_37.1 Work\_of\_Recovery\_Early Part

Fri, Dec 20, 2024 11:45AM 26:43

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

work of recovery, healing journey, cognitive overload, frequent breaks, safety assessment, community support, self-care, traumatic car accident, emotional triggers, self-compassion, detachment, capacity assessment, church volunteerism, Serenity Prayer, recovery benefits

## SPEAKERS

Lyschel, Pam B., Bonny

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**L** Lyschel 00:02

Hi. I'm Pam Blizzard from recovered peace, and I'm Michelle Burkett with hope redefined,

**B** Bonny 00:07

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 discussing the work of recovery. For ladies who have newly discovered their husband's sexually problematic behavior, the idea that they can somehow heal from this intolerable devastation seems impossible. As they contemplate this, the question, what is the work of recovery often comes up so ladies, let's just generally define the work of recovery concept. What would you say to our listeners around that

**L** Lyschel 00:47

oftentimes use it interchangeably with the journey of healing? Many women will talk about they're not sure what they're recovering. I've had that question come up before, like, Well, what was? What am I recovering? Because what I had before wasn't true, so I'm not really sure I'm recovering anything, but so we oftentimes will just use that interchangeably with the journey of healing.

**P** Pam B. 01:12

And I also want to acknowledge the feeling that, well, why do I have to do work? I'm not the one that caused this problem. Why am I being told that I have to do all these things, I have to learn new skills and new new concepts, and it just seems so unfair, and it is unfair, I just want to

validate that it Yes, it is unfair, but I also want to validate that we have wounds that we maybe don't even realize at the time that we have and those wounds deserve healing. They deserve attention. They deserve our effort, because we're worth it. And

**B** Bonny 01:53

my brain goes a little more literal, so I was thinking about the word work. So work has to in physics, work has to do with forward movement and energy. So for example, if you hold your arm out and you're holding a five pound weight, your arm gets tired, but no work is really being done until you lift up your arm. So and that takes a lot of energy. So when I think of the work of recovery, the you know this healing journey, there is challenges we ourselves have to look at and embrace, and it is uncomfortable. It is at times. There's risks that you take, especially farther along in the journey. But it's just that work is exhausting. The work of recovery is hard and it requires energy. Thank

**P** Pam B. 02:54

you for bringing physics into this discussion, getting my geek flag,

 03:01

that's where I go and

**P** Pam B. 03:02

and you see, you're so right. We're already exhausted the cognitive overload of this entire new reality and trying to figure out what reality is, and who am I, and where have I been, and where am I going, and are the people around me safe? What do I do? Where do I go? Just there's just so much to process. It is overwhelming and it is exhausting, which brings me to the point that during this recovery work or effort, we need to take frequent breaks, and so for anyone in that space feeling like I already have zero energy just to get myself out of bed, get a shower, I'm lucky if I get a shower. I'm lucky if I get to sleep at night. So I just want to encourage people going into this and listening that we're going to encourage you to take frequent breaks from the work to to do the healing work to do, to put the effort in, but then take a lot of rest from it,

**B** Bonny 04:12

which I think is a perfect segue into our next question, which is, what this work looks like in the days immediately following discovery.

**L** Lyschel 04:25

Traditionally, when I'm working with a client and it is a new discovery or even a relapse or a rediscovery, there's a lot of different ways that this surfaces, so let me, let me define those

really quick so discovery or D Day would have been, this is the first time I've ever heard anything about this. It's all new information. A rediscovery would be, he told me about this back when we started, when we were first married, told me he doesn't struggle with it anymore, and now I've rediscovered it. It, or we've been on this journey for a while. He's been doing the work to heal and recover from this, and he's had a relapse. So just want to create some distinction there, because I know that I have, I get to work with a lot of different women in those different stages or areas, but what it looks like, usually immediately following the discovery, the first questions that we have to start asking ourselves is, we have to do an assessment of safety for ourselves. We have to determine, do I feel safe in this space? And if I don't, what do I need in order to feel safe? Now that that that N word, can feel very overwhelming for a lot of women, when I say, what do you need? Traditionally, they don't know what they need. So the next thing I would tell you is, immediately following discovery, your next best thing is community. Is to find safe other people to walk with and to press into, because they will help you discover your needs. They may be one step ahead of you, but they at least have a word that describes a need that you have that you're not able to identify or be self aware about when it comes to your safety. So those are some of the first things I would say, in addition to self care, I'm consistently having conversations with women about, okay, you need to look at this through the lens of a traumatic car accident. And we don't like to look at this through the lens of a traumatic car accident, because if we had looked at this situation through the lens of a traumatic car accident, and you were ejected from the vehicle. No one would expect you to show up to the bake sale. No one would expect you to still be room mom. No one would still expect you Right? Like the list could go on and on for any season of life that we're in. No one would expect you to still be caring for your grandkids four days a week. Um, while you're trying to heal from being injected from a car. The unfortunate thing is, is that no one sees the the accident. No one sees the the blood, the you're not hospitalized, right? So it's something that we will quickly minimize for ourselves in an effort to keep showing up for the world around us, but the reality is, we're just prolonging our recovery process because we're not giving ourselves time or space to actually do the work that we can to care for ourselves in those days. So a lot of times, I have the opportunity to ask clients or group members, what can you eliminate right now, if you were looking at your life through the lens of being ejected from a vehicle, what could you say no to for a season? Because we do get stuck in that all or nothing mindset like I'm never going to be able to do fill in the blank again, and that's not accurate. You may say I need to take two weeks off of babysitting my grandkids, right? Or I need to make alternate whatever decisions around something else based on where I'm at right now. So I just am always trying to help them find some immediate relief through self care, of course, but, and that is part of the self care is kind of assessing what is, where are you being asked to pour out that you don't have to pour out right now? That would be the work in the days immediately following a discovery.

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Bonny 08:33

So true story, and this is a little bit of a rabbit trail, but this week, I took a bad fall at Costco gas station. I tripped over the hitch on the back of our car, and I fell, and I really nailed my calf muscle, and it hurt like the dickens for days. And you know, no one was there to witness it, huh? The Dickens, the Dickens, the dickens out of it.

B

Bonny 09:09

But no, none of my family was there to witness it, and I wanted a witness to be there in my pain. And then the a bruise didn't show up right away. And so it's like I didn't have that bruise. I

didn't have the validation that it actually happened. And so I was so excited when a bruise showed up yesterday, so I could prove that I'd been hurt. But after discovery, there's no proof to the outside world of our pain, and that is so it's it's so frustrating, and that's why I second what Lachelle saying about community. They get it. They totally get it.

P

Pam B. 09:50

Yeah, and so often when we go to people and say, look, look at this wound that I have from this betrayal, we don't use those words, but that's what we're saying. Saying we get so many bad responses, unhelpful, even further traumatizing responses of, oh, just leave him. Just pack your bags and leave right now, or, Oh, just, you know, everybody does that, you'll get over it. At least you have four children. At least you have a good house, you know, just really, really unhelpful information, and those wounds are not seen. And that's why community with betrayal, trauma, informed leadership or facilitation or other just other women who are walking the same journey, who have experienced the same thing can say, Yeah, I see it, yeah, I had that too. Yeah. I see how difficult that is, and that is so validating, and it moves it moves us to a different space,

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Bonny 10:57

that emotional roller coaster that is work just just just sitting in that and the unpredictable nature of when a you know, in those first days, when you're not quite sure what will trip a trigger, and those triggers happen, it's so confusing and frustrating, And and for me, that was a lot of the work was sitting in that, I'll say dysregulation, because that was not a space I lived in a lot to learning how to navigate those emotions and and to give myself grace. That was work for me to say, to be self compassionate, because I'm a list maker and a task achiever, I said to myself, you are not crazy, so I'm hearing

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Pam B. 11:47

acceptance. We have to do a lot of work around accepting what happened, but also accepting I feel these immense feelings that I don't want to feel, and maybe even some of my feelings scare me, like my anger, I might be really angry, and that scares me. And just doing work of accepting that anger is an appropriate emotion. It's an appropriate feeling for what happened because of the injustice of what happened or what is continuing to happen, this

L

Lyschel 12:23

is a place of grace. And again, I think that's the power of always being able to shift the perspective about the reality of what we're navigating. So I think that's why that ejection from the car picture always seems to land a different way for women, in the way that we would extend grace to ourselves or to another person, if that, if that were how this transpired, but it is exactly how it feels, even if it's a rediscovery or even if it's a relapse, there's still another ejection that that, if you feel like so, trying To find that stability and extend grace to yourself is part of the work and part of the one step, the one more step in front of the next step, and I

think also just being honest with ourselves. So not only So, let me step back and say grace for others, great but significant grace for self that I just can't do it, and that's okay again. Just keep saying this isn't forever. This is for today. This isn't forever, it's for today.

B

Bonny 13:32

Also work can be when you have pushback in your own home for what you need. Yeah, that work of finding your voice, of doing doing radical assessment with God is what I'm asking against what God wants, not worrying about what the other people in your house want. That was work for me to come to a place of rejecting some things and not letting it soak into my personhood, not letting it soak into my heart. It's called detachment, and that was work.

L

Lyschel 14:11

That's harder work than than we actually, I think even understand. We can say the word detachment so fast, but the work of detachment, it's really counter to so much that's within us, and being like this is a partnership, and I said yes to this, and so maybe we need to do an episode on detachment. Absolutely,

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Pam B. 14:37

you're right, because we feel it, not just emotionally or psychologically, you feel that distance in your body. You feel it physically at a cellular level. And all of this is so new. And when anything is new, it's scary, because we can't reasonably predict exactly what's going to happen, and we're already feeling some. Year, and so all this new work, and people were telling me set boundaries I didn't know how I had to learn how that took time and energy and effort and cognitive overload. Learn how to manage your triggers that took time and effort and learning new things and taking that time and applying it to me when I was used to focusing that time on my son and his school or or my web design business or other work that I was doing and or my husband or the laundry or the house or the shopping, and it was just so foreign to take all that time and energy and effort and apply it to me, and culture and society doesn't reward women for that. We don't get rewarded like we do when we're rewarded for, you know, baking the perfect cupcakes for our kids class party.

L

Lyschel 15:59

I do like that. We always bring cupcakes into this conversation. Record for our listeners. I think I've done that one time in my now nine year school career.

P

Pam B. 16:14

I think I have a scar somewhere because of the cupcake issue in preschool. I

L

Lyschel 16:20

L Lyschel 10:20

love that word. Now we're not even allowed to take cupcakes because there's so many allergies and blah blah, so you got to take everything pre packaged. But like that, that's our that's what we pick up every time

B Bonny 16:32

I was emotionally wounded from a PTA event involving an elephant Cake Walk drama. I was done with PTA after that.

P Pam B. 16:48

Ta, Hoa, it's all the same.

B Bonny 16:52

Yes, same drama. I've got one of those too. Same drama, just for big kids. Hoa is drama for big kids.

P Pam B. 17:02

Well, volunteering. We all, we all like to volunteer, and we're women of faith, and being of service is on our heart, and during these times, it's okay to, like Michelle was referring to, to cut back and not forever, for a season, because you're applying that work and effort in other places that are more urgent.

B Bonny 17:29

I like to look at my life as a plate, and there's only so much room on that plate, and so I assessed how much percentage, what percentage of that plate does my family get? What percentage of that plate does God get? Do I get? Does the church get? You know, work, play time, and if, if I'm not getting enough of what I prioritized on that plate, I need to scoot something else off the asparagus has got to go.

L Lyschel 18:07

Well, it's so funny that you bring up a plate analogy Bonnie, because that was something that I've navigated myself, for myself in capacity. And what I came to realize is that I was working with a platter. I thought that I was capable of having a platter, which meant I was going to hold a lot more than other people. And I distinctly remember this season of journaling with the Lord and feeling prompted that I need to downgrade to a dessert plate. Oh, very good. Yeah. So it was very significant, and that high expectation of myself to carry, to have high capacity, and that was something I took a lot of pride in, if I'm totally honest with you, that I could be high

capacity, high functioning, all the things. And so as these different seasons of betrayal have happened. I even have to assess the size of the plate before I even know what's on it. So yeah, little extra bonus there for you.

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Bonny 19:09

Extra bonus. But that's work. That's work because, yeah, your worthiness. So what I'm hearing is, as you were assessing that you were seeing that your worthiness equaled your capacity, absolutely,

L

Lyschel 19:26

which was something that I would consistently get accolades for. Right the world around me sees how much I get done. So we we have a natural bent to want to go that way, that people see us as high functioning, and that contributes to their world, and they like it and so. And I also have stories where, when my function, my capacity dropped, like especially around seasons of having children, and I'm, you know, postpartum, not able to do all the things. And. And watching how people moved on without me, and feeling left or abandoned, and being like, Well, that wasn't what I was hoping for, and I can see that even in my betrayal story of saying I can't do this right now, and people still moving on, and that fear of me being left behind or left out. So then I was trying to, I just, you know, consistent personal wrestle of saying I'm going to be okay, even if I don't get to do blah blah blah again. And that was where the whole concept of that was a season, I would say that to myself a lot like that was a really good season that I got to do that thing.

B

Bonny 20:42

I had a radical change in how I looked at church service, church volunteerism, because that had been a high priority for me and my husband. And I don't think I've told this story before, but if I have, tell me guys, but Dave, Dave's also saw his fell also had a feeling of validation and affirmation when his wife was working non stop at the church, whether it was as the church secretary or if it's volunteering. And I read a great book by Pete scazzaro, which is the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, which gave me permission, yeah, gave me permission to really assess what I needed, not the family, not Dave, because this was a between me and God, and God wasn't a performance God. So I decided I wasn't going to do this XYZ volunteering. I was going to retain some things, but not this XYZ stuff. And I got pushed back at the in the I got pushed back. This was pre recovery days, so I got pushed back. And I said to him, very gently and lovingly that if it's that important to you, then you do it. And so freeing, so freeing. But that was work, standing up to that, doing that self assessment, seeing what was right for me, me and see, and being able to piece apart what's right for me may not be validated by my husband. Was I doing anything wrong and against God? I self assess that and decided no, I wasn't doing anything against God. I was actually doing something to better my family, because I would have more energy because all that volunteering was wearing me out. All right, ladies, around this topic of the work of recovery in the early stages. What kind of hope would you like to leave our listeners?

L

Lyschel 22:51

I think I just recap some of the things we've said in an effort to give hope, which is, this won't be forever. There are other people who get it and can be safe and supportive for you. And the other hope that I want to give them is that the Lord sees this, and I do firmly believe that he is he is brokenhearted. He is brokenhearted with you. And I know that that doesn't always feel comforting for us, sometimes depending on our our story with the Lord, but as much as you can cling to He'll never leave you or forsake you. What does that mean for you right now in this season? Because where are you feeling forsaken or left? Cuz that's where he's at.

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Pam B. 23:43

And I just want to encourage you that this additional work, that you're doing, these new things, that you're learning, hopefully it's not additional, because you're taking things off your plate. We're all working anyway. We're all working and performing. We're just shifting it towards ourselves, and we're taking care of God's daughter. We're helping God take care of God's daughter. And the work is worth it, the gifts of recovery, we could probably do several episodes on the gifts of recovery, the authenticity that we find, learning what our needs are, learning how to take care of ourselves better, modeling that for our children and other people around us, that the results of the work you're going to do are going to benefit you for the rest of your life.

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Bonny 24:37

The hope I'd like to leave is actually I'm going to read the Serenity Prayer. So it says, God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, taking this world as is and not as we would have it, trusting you will make all things right if I surrender to your will so that I may be reasonable, reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you forever in the next. Amen.

P

Pam B. 25:16

Amen. Amen, that prayer got me through the early days. Several times a day, I would recall that prayer, and it would refocus me back to him and back to my responsibility. What was mine and what wasn't mine.

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Bonny 25:40

Thank you 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. Hope for wives, and that's hope F O, R, wives.com Also, if this podcast is held, to please leave a five star rating or review on iTunes to help other people find us when we reach 500 ratings, Apple podcasts promotes us in a different way, and I will say that at this recording, we have 67 reviews. So thank you for those who've taken the time to do that, we'll see you again. Bye. You. Yeah, you.



