

[00:00:00] Welcome to the Closeness podcast, your new sexual education. My name is Tari. I'm your host. And today's podcast is a bit unusual compared to the racy and intimate nature of what we usually talk about on here. Rather than speaking about closeness and intimacy, we're talking about all of the ways that sex and intimacy get hijacked due to everything from a silly argument to fights, emotional warfare, and the myriad ways that manipulation tactics are deployed in our own relationships, sometimes without us even knowing about it. So why do we fight? Isn't it almost always over something small or trite? Or are we really triggering each other's deepest emotional wounds? Someone feels misunderstood, someone didn't hear correctly, someone assumed the worst or always just seemed to think that you meant something completely different than what you said. Sometimes our partners don't play by the rules, and sometimes we break them as well.

[00:00:55] Now, these episodes are not my favorite to make. They're not the most fun, and they're a little heavy. You may get triggered not so much by what I say, but because you recognize what I say in your partner or even yourself. But the good news is, whatever the case, there's usually a solution of some sort, even if it means taking drastic action. So if you find yourself in crisis, or you're continuously arguing with your partner, or you're just frustrated after yet another battle, you're probably in the right place.

[00:01:22] Now, if you came here looking for something sexy, hot, racy, or passionate, you're in the right place. You're just not on the right episode. And I encourage you to check out any number of other episodes on the Closeness podcast. 2. Unlock your greatest sexual potential. You can also book a session with me online @cravecloseness.com but if you're experiencing conflict in your relationship, you're having unwanted fights, you're in pain, you're frustrated, agitated, pissed off about constantly fighting with your partner. Hopefully you'll find some relief in this episode and we can solve some of those pain in the butt problems that continue to fester.

[00:02:00] So the first concept I'd like to look at with you today deals with everything pertaining to questions. What does that mean? Being questioned, Questioning a partner, how you ask a question to your partner. The tone and way in which you respond to a question. And to begin, many of us need to decide before we ask our partner a question if that question needs to be asked, brought up, or even spoken in the first place. Another simple way to say this is pick your battles wisely.

[00:02:34] How else do questions cause unwanted battles at home? Asking questions you don't want an answer to. Asking questions where you know damn well that you're probably going to get an answer that you don't like, but you're just going to go ahead and ask it anyway. Asking questions where you know there's no favorable answer, so either answer is going to get you upset. Asking questions where you know if you hear the truth, you're not going to be able to handle it. Asking when you know that you're setting up a trap. And asking questions where you know the person is damned if they do and damned if they don't. And to that end, here are a handful of questions that you might relate to. Do you think she's beautiful?

[00:03:14] Do you think that he's more handsome than I am? Is she prettier than me? Are you more attracted to him than me? Have you had sex with them before? Is this one of your previous partners? Tell me now so I can feel terrible and act even worse for the rest of the night. When was the last time you two saw each other? How do you two know each other again? Who else have you introduced your parents to? Have you taken anybody else to this restaurant? How long has it been since you've spoken to your ex? Why is this bag sitting out instead of being put away? Why are you wearing this outfit? Hold on, hold on. You've been to this restaurant with someone else before? I might need to stop consuming food altogether because you've been here with someone else before you met me? How many people did you say you've slept with again? Did you enjoy having sex with your ex? Were they good? Were they able to make you

come? Did she used to wear the same jacket? What did your ex do to you sexually that you loved so much? So I can make sure to never do it again?

[00:04:16] If you answer any of these questions sincerely, it's likely not going to make the person asking them feel very good. And many of these questions don't have a great answer. They also don't need to be answered.

[00:04:29] Now, I'm not suggesting that you should be dishonest or lie in your relationships, and I'm certainly a big advocate of giving your partner reassurance when appropriate. It's not smart to withhold or hold back information on purpose from your partner, but it is important for the person who asks these types of questions to consider. When you think you're asking a question because you're just curious, that's almost never the answer. In fact, it's almost always the case that you have ulterior motives Whether you want to make yourself feel bad, make your partner feel bad, make both of you feel bad, or you just have a hard time staying positive in the relationship and you need drama to fuel something deep inside of you.

[00:05:08] Now, you may not relate to any of the previous questions that I asked, but there are millions on top of millions of questions that don't need to be answered, and they don't need to be answered right now in your current relationship. So a question I want to encourage you to ask yourself before you ask your partner a question is, does this question serve? Is it going to better our night together? Am I going to behave in a way that's more attractive if I hear the answer? Am I going to bring this relationship closer or this person closer to me by having this discussion right now?

[00:05:44] These are all questions that no one takes the time to think about. We just fire off a question because we feel uncomfortable or we feel like we need to know something.

[00:05:53] There is a time and a place to ask important questions, and you're not meant to hold it all in till you explode. But regularly questioning your partner with things that don't serve the relationship can get you in trouble. It's important to think through if you actually want and can handle the answer and what the consequences of hearing that answer will be. Meaning, can you handle the truth? Can you handle it and continue to be positive or loving or sweet? Can you hear an answer and continue to be respectful and kind? Can you continue to have a nice night? Is it going to send you off the rails? Are you going to shut down or give your partner a bad experience or night or day? Or just be generally difficult if you dislike the answer, even if it's truth.

[00:06:39] And this gets very complicated very quickly because most of us want the truth and expect the truth, and we think, well, if we thought of this question, it needs to be answered. But that is not always the case.

[00:06:53] On face value, the truth is very important, but you always have to consider the nature of your relationship and the cause and effect or downward spiral that may ensue as a result of you asking.

[00:07:06] Another great reason why it's wonderful to think before you speak or think before you ask is because you really run the risk of eroding trust in the relationship. That's right. Now, I am in no way referring to situations where something really terrible happened, like your partner really did cheat on you or you need to get to the bottom of something fast and they're just being evasive in answering your questions. That's not attractive or okay either. But if you're the kind of person who says things like, it's fine, I'm just curious, just tell me. Be honest with me, babe, I just want to know. Nothing's going to happen. I'm not going to get mad.

[00:07:43] Famous last words. And then when your partner is honest with you and you absolutely have a meltdown, I mean, number one, you've lost control, you've eroded trust, because now you've basically lied to your partner. You told them it would be fine, and now you're freaking out. You may wind up icing your partner out or even holding back sex or becoming super resentful, all because in your mind, you had to ask one simple question. Maybe you even thought to yourself, it's just a question. I've got to be allowed to ask questions in this relationship. And while that is true, again, I will say you got to pick your battles.

[00:08:18] Now, I said earlier, it gets tricky because I'm not talking about someone who's trying to manipulate you or pull the wool over your eyes or trying to harm you in some way. I'm talking about asking for information that you feel uncomfortable about having, but you just gotta know. And you convince yourself that knowing even if it hurts you, is somehow better. Now, I know most of you are thinking immediately and exclusively about lying and cheating situations, and that's not at all what I'm referring to. We're not talking about a partner cheating on you. And then you ask them about it, and then they just decide to stay silent because you can't handle the truth. That's not what we're talking about.

[00:09:00] So what is it that makes you feel like you've got to know? Do you just have a curiosity that gets the best of you? Do you constantly ask questions because you need to be in control? Do you need to constantly gather intel or data on your partner instead of just loving them and enjoying them? Questions, in some regard, can destroy a relationship in the same way that the absence of questions can. I think it's on the person asking the question to be able to maintain their composure and be able to manage how they handle it, to do some damage control. But the one asking is almost always the one who thinks that they're entitled to know and they'll justify it in their head by using the word just. It's just a question. It's just a little tiny question. Just a little question. Hey, I mean, I'm your boyfriend or girlfriend, husband or wife. You should be able to answer these questions. And by golly, I should be able to ask them I gotta be allowed to ask questions here. All people in relationship ask questions. It's no big deal. You're making a mountain out of a molehill. You're making this much more complicated than it needs to be. Don't be vague. Just answer my question.

[00:10:07] Friends, almost no question that is asked of you in relationship is just a question. And what you'll find is the person asking will almost always think that they are allowed or entitled or it's a very normal thing for them to do and that anything other the answer suggests that you're hiding something or suggests that you're being dishonest. And this enforces this other idea that they are allowed to question you or interrogate you whenever they see fit. This unfortunately changes the power dynamic of your relationship.

[00:10:42] This type of behavior where the person being asked the question can't really ask any questions back, or else the person asking thinks they're being evasive or vague or distant, or answering their question with a question or when the person asking just wants them to spit it out. And someone may not want to answer a question or want to remain silent not because they're hiding something, but because the answer doesn't serve the relationship. Or it could also just be an abysmal waste of time.

[00:11:10] Being questioned or being asked too many questions also runs the risk of the person feeling or being made to feel like a little boy or little girl.

[00:11:20] At first glance, the I'm just curious or I'm just asking sounds innocuous. But as probably almost all of you have experienced the absolute hellfire that has rained down simply by answering whatever the question might be. Well, it's very easy to see why conflict like this arises.

[00:11:38] Nobody likes to be questioned, but no one wants to suffer through deceit or dishonesty either. So it's a really fine balance that you have to strike up in your relationship between recognizing Is this just part of getting to know someone? Are you just enjoying each other's company? Or are you noticing this trend of being asked the same types of questions repeatedly, over and over again, sometimes on a daily or hourly basis?

[00:12:03] If you feel like you're always being questioned by your partner, I have a tool for you. You want to be able to very quickly identify what kind of questions are you being asked? What do they revolve around? Are they predominantly about where you've been, who you're with, what you're doing, why you're doing it, when you'll be home? Or does your partner treat you with love, care and respect and genuinely ask you how Was your day? What'd you get into? How'd that make you feel? What do you like? Do they ask about your hobbies? Your friends? Do they ask how things are going with you and check in with you emotionally? If you notice that all of these questions revolve around your whereabouts, your physical location, or why you do certain things, you're likely involved with someone who's questioning a little too much. Unless, of course, you're shady and dishonest and you've got something to hide, in which case, stop that. And it probably makes sense why they're asking.

[00:12:56] There are only a few outcomes here. You either do not trust your partner, so you're constantly questioning them, but then why be in a relationship with them? Or if you're in, you've got to be in now, it's very natural to make requests. And similarly, if you're the one being asked the questions, you don't want to play with your partner's heart, play games with them, or purposely withhold information. But a little reassurance goes a long way in most cases. Is it okay to give your partner a little reassurance, saying things like, baby, it's okay, I'm not hiding anything from you, I promise you that. Everything's fine, no, this isn't true, no, that didn't happen, no, I've never been there, etc. Of course, many people, possibly even including you, need reassurance to feel that security in the relationship. But things become a little darker if you find yourself in a situation where this is a constant, never ending, overwhelming type of relationship, where the person is asking you basically the same question in a slightly different way or about the same subject, or asking if you're sure or you'd like to be honest, or is that really what you meant?

[00:14:03] Nobody wants to feel, especially an adult, like they're constantly answering to someone, or like they're wasting their breath, or like their words fall on deaf ears, or like defending yourself over and over again just doesn't land because your partner's made up their mind about what they feel about you.

[00:14:20] With situations like this, the meaning behind the questions is always the I don't trust you, I don't believe you, and whatever you say, I often don't believe I don't trust you. So I'm going to nitpick you and question you from every angle to try to make myself feel better, but I never will. And that's because answering someone's questions is almost never enough for them. It's often never enough for them to drop it put it to bed, let it go, and feel genuinely comfortable with your answer.

[00:14:53] If your partner doesn't trust you and they question you and then you answer them honestly, it's very likely that they may not believe you anyway and that your relationship needs to be evaluated for sustainability.

[00:15:07] Another way that conflict arises deals with how you respond versus how you react towards your partner. What is your tone? Do you have a short fuse? Do you have a temper? Your tone matters a lot, but so does. What's a good word for this? Your energy. The way that you show up as a man or woman in the world. Are you accountable? Are you honest? Do you have integrity? Do you have some shady things going on in your life that may not have anything to do with your partner, but they create a bit of a ripple effect. You can sense it or feel the lack of

integrity, and it creates a bit of a blockage in your relationship, a kink. Not that kind of kink, but if you want to clean that up, if you want to make your relationship work better, getting rid of all these other areas where you're not accountable, or maybe you're not honest in some of your other dealings, or maybe you have to have a talk with someone or there's someone you know you've been mean to reach out to. Cleaning things up in other areas of your life can really make a difference.

[00:16:12] Now, if you're defensive, angry or reactionary after the first or second time your partner asks you a question that's a little unfair towards them, it's worth giving your partner patience, honesty, sincerity, the benefit of the doubt. However, on the flip side, if your partner is questioning you where it's the same type of questions multiple times a day, multiple times a week, even dozens of times per month, it's very understandable that you might be reactionary, negative, angry, frustrated, shut down, silent in all number of ways that we react to poor behavior on our partner's part. So if you then get angry and they have the audacity to accuse you of this being a textbook reaction for your guilt? Something like, why are you getting so defensive, honey, if you were really honest with me or this was really not a problem, you wouldn't be having this kind of a reaction.

[00:17:06] I mean, this is emotional warfare at its finest. But to spell it out for the person who might be doing the questioning, what's happening is you're making the person feels small, you're putting them in a lower position of power, you're demeaning them, you're making them feel like a child by constantly doubting and never taking yes or no for an answer.

[00:17:28] And that, my friends, is powerful stuff. I would strongly recommend rewinding a minute or two and possibly listening to that again. So it's very likely that the more frustration that you show, the more reaction that you have, the more your partner is going to be dubious. And you may be with someone where you can answer calmly, cleanly and succinctly, no, I've never been here. No, I haven't done that. No, that wasn't me. And they still don't believe you.

[00:17:53] So another lesson here might be don't dump your trash or your drama or your insecurity into the lap of your unsuspecting partner repeatedly and over and over again if you don't want to jeopardize your entire relationship.

[00:18:09] So another tool that you can add to your toolbox is when you have a question for your partner, you think about the way you phrase it, how you're going to say it, and you make sure that the place that you come from is actually from a place of your hurt or your fear, not projecting it onto them. You let it come from your place of confusion, insecurity, or even neediness. And you help your partner understand that this is why you're asking. Because you have the concern, the fear, the insecurity, not them. They aren't the problem. You want them to help you understand what made you do this, or did you say that, or did you go here or there, that sort of thing. In all likelihood, if you're the one who's questioning your partner, it might very well be because you need more love or care or consideration. And letting your partner know that because nobody is going to be able to pick up on that except for you. Starting your sentences off with I feel, I am, this makes me feel this or that way is going to be a godsend to your unsuspecting partner.

[00:19:16] So imagine this response. Hey babe, I'm feeling really insecure right now again for the 4th or 5th or 10th time today. And I've decided that for me to feel better, I have to ask you these location based questions that you've already answered before in a rapid fire series and I need to ask you these questions multiple times. So I'll be using phrases like are you sure? Are you being honest? Are you telling me the truth? I'm going to be doing this because I'm insecure and sometimes your honesty isn't enough for me.

[00:19:52] I need constant validation, constant attention, and constant reassurance. I'm feeling

super vulnerable Right now, would you play along with me and help me feel better?

[00:20:06] Oh, my God. If someone talked to me that way, what I wouldn't do for them and the lengths I wouldn't go to make sure they felt soothed, that kind of vulnerability and honesty speaks right to my heart.

[00:20:21] As wild as that question or statement may sound to you, it really puts things into perspective and makes things true. It takes the blame off of your partner and puts it on the person who has the concern.

[00:20:33] You know, if anyone said to me, hey, Tari, I'm hurting, I'm feeling insecure, I know I've got this bad pattern of accusing or attacking or putting you down or whatever, but I really would like your help to make me feel better. I know it's me. I know I keep doing this over and over to you again, but I'm feeling sad, scared, hurt, lonely. That's the most beautiful thing I've ever heard. And I'd want them to feel validated, heard, loved and cared for. But when that person, which many people do, flips it on you and they question you and attack you and doubt you at every turn, it's very difficult to give them the very love, understanding, empathy and care that they need. Now, there's a caveat here. If you're the one who's being questioned, you kind of have to be a good person. You can't be sleeping with all these people, getting wasted every night, doing tons of drugs or whatever nefarious behavior that your partner is upset about, and then expect them to come to you with their problem and their insecurity that's bothering them. There are some things that would naturally make someone have questions. So if you know you're in integrity, you know you're a good person, you know you're being honest with your partner, but your partner is still struggling, then this aforementioned tool is for you, or them. Rather.

[00:21:57] Sometimes your partner will, on top of questioning you, also want to punish you or penalize you with a lot of nonverbals or by using language that's very dismissive or completely invalidates or negates what you just said that might look like, I don't believe you. My intuition says you're wrong. This feels off. I don't trust you. This doesn't sound right to me. Or maybe they shut down, get very quiet, let their eyes dart all over the room, stare in one direction while they psychoanalyze you, flicking through their phone, playing with their hair, staring down at the ground, or otherwise making sure that the entire rest of the room or world knows that they're uncomfortable. The person behaving this way has to realize that if they are acting out like that, it doesn't exactly inspire the other person to open up, be vulnerable, share and answer a question. Especially if they're damned if they do, damned if they don't.

[00:22:53] They may ask themselves, do I really want to get into this? Is this a battle that I want to have right now? Do I really want to address this right now? Do I want to talk about this? Is this going to cause an argument or a fight? It doesn't mean that they're being dishonest with you. It doesn't mean that they're trying to hide things from you. It can often be an acknowledgement of, well, here we go again. Oh no, here we go again. We're in public. Do I really want to get into this?

[00:23:18] And most of the time, people who are non confrontational or who don't like fighting, or who don't want to have yet another argument about something are going to prefer to either remain quiet, not answer, change a subject, or something like this. But it's not about hiding and deceit. It's just you're putting them in a compromising situation that unless you're just you really are with a cheater or a liar or someone who is just being dishonest all the time. Not that you suspect it, but they actually are, that's a different story. But constantly questioning your partner or making them feel like you don't trust them or keeping them on an extremely tight leash is never going to be a wise play in relationship.

[00:23:58] So in sum, it's a funny thing to say, but thinking about the question that you want to ask is a wise choice. It's like, do I want to destroy this relationship? Do I want to create another battle? Is this really going to go anywhere? And I really do believe that when you get to know someone, or even if you've been in a relationship for a long time, it's extremely important to ask questions. It's very natural part of a relationship. But if you can identify the difference between questions and questioning, being interrogated, being asked the same types of questions over and over again, that's the difference.

[00:24:39] Another tool you can use to resolve conflict is to understand that you don't have to answer every single question that's asked of you. And I don't mean that in a manipulative way, like you just get silent because you don't want to answer a question because you know you're guilty. It's all based on the idea that you are in fact, being honest.

[00:24:57] Sometimes when we're not ready to answer a question, maybe we need to think through it a little bit. Maybe we know our partner well enough to know that this is going to start a fight or conflict. But if you're dating someone or married to someone who's a little bit more on the drill sergeant side and they're demanding instant replies, it can create a lot of conflict. So it's really on the person asking the questions to understand that the way they ask the question, what they ask and how they ask it is really going to set the tone of the time that you're spending together and how the day or night's going to go. And not everybody can just drop things. Some people dwell, obsess, wonder. Even you who ask the question. If you don't like the way your partner answers it, you're also going to be dwelling and obsessing on how they did it.

[00:25:43] Sometimes you'll wind up with a partner who doesn't give you the benefit of the doubt. They might always think the worst or always think the worst of you. And this is a terrible habit. The person who's questioning you might be suffering or feeling insecure, but the person who's being questioned might be suffering even more because they're always under attack. If you are someone who's like this or asks these types of questions, what does it mean when I say you should be prepared for the type of question that you're asking? What does it mean to not tank the entire conversation or to not blow the relationship out of the water, or to not ruin the day or evening. Well, that means you're not going to be mean, cruel, condescending, insulting, derogatory. Most importantly, it means you're not going to be disrespectful or have a poor reaction for the rest of the day or week that makes your partner regret ever saying anything?

[00:26:33] Now, the third way conflict may start in your relationship is when you or your partner invent, fabricate, or make up lies, stories, worst case scenarios, hallucinations, situations that don't exist, things that were never said, things that were never done. But because you fear it, or you're insecure about it, or you suspect it, and because you keep thinking about it over and over again and dwelling on it, obsessing on it, speaking it, accusing someone of it, writing it down, texting it, you actually start to convince yourself that your story and your fear and your feelings is actually true. And even worse, you start acting as though it is. And worse than that, you start treating your partner as though that's something they did. Just in the same way that having a nightmare about your partner where they do something awful to you and then you wake up and you punish them for it, so too can you do things with your own irrational fears, insecurities, projections, and catastrophizing.

[00:27:37] Now, how crazy does it sound to you, listening to this, that a partner might invent something that never happened in their head, decide that it's true, feel hurt about it, cry about it, rage about it, get angry about it, vindictive, vengeful, whatever, accuse you of doing the thing that never happened was never said, never existed, and then start treating you going forward as though you are the kind of person who would do something so terrible.

[00:28:08] Pretty wild when you hear it like that. So obviously it's not wise to invent stories in

your head based on your feelings and then speak them as though it's what your partner is probably doing or certainly doing, or you know that they're doing. And I know this is going to bump up against a lot of people out there who like to rely on their intuition or think that their intuition is telling them something. This isn't always true. I remember once a girlfriend told me, oh, I told my doctor about you. I told him that I was going to meet your parents. To which I very calmly replied, awesome. But then came the next question. Wait, if your doctor was hot, would you tell her that you were going to meet my parents?

[00:28:52] And I said, well, that's a very strange hypothetical question, but sure. To which she then got angry about this imagined situation and then actually growled at me, oh, this pisses me off so much. I know you wouldn't tell her, and that makes me so angry. I know that you wouldn't tell your doctor you were going to see my family. And that's really a perfect example about, well, number one, of course, asking a question she don't want the answer to. But also, I suddenly was involved in a projection and a fear and a story that had nothing to do with me. But she was reacting to me and giving me the kind of attitude as though I just off the top of my head said something like, you know, if I had a hot doctor, I definitely wouldn't tell her that I was going to meet your parents, which is just so silly.

[00:29:42] Have any of you ever had the experience where you can sort of watch your partner fall apart all on their own without you saying a word or contributing anything, without causing anything specific to provoke them? It can be a little frightening. But where I think we need to learn to put our feet down or a foot down is when your partner decides to vilify you for something that you've never done, never said, doesn't exist in the world, and didn't happen.

[00:30:09] And there are a couple different ways to handle this kind of conflict. If you're casually dating someone, you might reassess if this person is a right choice for you, if their attachment style works for you, if their love language works for you. I think the way two people resolve conflict suggests a lot about how well you'll get along long term.

[00:30:31] But if you are more involved with someone and you're the person doing these things, I mean, I understand that you maybe are not able to stop thinking this way, but maybe therapy, maybe a journal, maybe getting some coaching or professional help, maybe writing the ideas down or having the conversation mediated or bringing to your partner's attention that you're feeling insecure about something and you know it's probably not true and you're just making it up. But again, can you have the reassurance making up stories based on your feelings or your fears in the same way that when you didn't get a call from your boyfriend or girlfriend when they got home and you imagine that some terrible accident happened, Making up a story in your head and acting like it's true, probably one of the most deleterious things you can do for your relationship.

[00:31:21] So instead of accusing, get curious. Ask a positive question. Instead of implying passive aggressively and suggesting that this is what probably happened, ask sincerely. Now, you'll hear me talk about this as well. But you also have to be careful that if you do ask a question that you're not questioning your partner, There's a very big difference, and I can illustrate that for you. Where were you? What were you doing? Who's that person? What were you saying to them? I don't believe you. Why did you do that? And that sort of general freaking out, that's questioning someone.

[00:31:54] Hey, I got to tell you, I just have this really weird feeling that you didn't actually go home last night. You went somewhere else. Would you mind helping me out? Is that true? That's a very different kind of question. And it invites someone to answer you sincerely rather than feel like they're being attacked.

[00:32:12] Thinking before you speak. A very simple philosophy to live by is why create a problem if there wasn't one before?

[00:32:20] Or why create a situation that needs responding to when there is nothing wrong to begin with? Why not instead focus on what you want to build together, create together, look at the wonderful photos and videos that you have. Put your attention on something positive and that works. Instead of always feeling insecure that something is wrong.

[00:32:41] And I realize if you have a really unique attachment style, that's not going to work for everybody. But at some point it cannot be always your partner's responsibility to fill your cup, reassure you, and give you validation if it's multiple times a day.

[00:32:59] Another way problems arise in relationship is quite simply when you and your partner aren't playing fair, you're playing dirty, you're manipulating, you're arguing both sides, you're playing all angles against your partner and there's no way for them to I'm going to say the word win, but I don't mean win like they're right or they won the game or the battle, but there's no chance for them to be heard or give you the truth.

[00:33:25] Playing unfair can look like telling your partner, be honest, be honest, be honest. Just tell me the truth, what happened, I promise I won't get mad. And then they tell you the truth about what happened and then you absolutely lose your mind. Another way playing unfair happens is your partner asks you a question and you tell them point blank what the answer is. And then they say, I don't believe you, I don't trust you and you're being as honest as you can be. And then they question you again and again and you're honest again and again. Eventually it leads to not necessarily not wanting to be honest, but knowing where this is going. Why even waste your breath if you're only going to get countered with a response like that? It can also look like getting angry about something that didn't happen, like we were talking about earlier, but then shutting down or being very difficult or purposely being fussy or rude or disrespectful because of this thing that you thought about, imagined or dreamed about that never happened. It might be that you're bummed out that your partner isn't having sex with you, so you make fun of them and put them down and insult them or question if they're cheating on you, or wonder who else they're spending time with, etc. Etc. But then when they do turn around and have great sex with you, now you're wondering why they did this new move or something is suspicious or it didn't feel as connected as it normally does, or even worse, you accuse them of being sex crazed or a sex crazed maniac or some silliness like this because now they want to do it with you more frequently. That's kind of arguing both sides. They're damned if they do and damned if they don't. Playing unfair also looks like no matter what your partner says, you've got something to say about it. They like the weather, you disagree, they dislike the weather. You say, look on the bright side, you say, this bothers me. They say, oh, you don't understand this perspective. Maybe you need to look at it differently. Maybe they never have your back. Playing unfair is treating your partner poorly, but then absolutely throwing a fit. If they do the exact same thing to you, it's being completely unconscious.

[00:35:25] Playing unfair is no matter what comes out of your partner's mouth, you've got something to say about it, you negate it, you poo poo it, you point out flaws in it. Playing unfair looks like your partner pointing out that every time they talk to you, you have something negative to say and then completely ignoring it, glossing over it, gaslighting it, or just completely disregarding that they ever said anything at all. Playing unfair is telling your partner just to be mean, that you don't think they have any friends and no one likes them, which maybe then causes them to offer their rebuttal, which might be, well, that's actually not true. I know this person and this person and this person and this one and this one and this one. To which the toxic partner might say, I don't want to talk about this anymore. Why are you always proving this? We don't need to talk about other people. This doesn't matter. That person's only an

acquaintance. They don't really know you. And besides, why are you talking so much about other people? Let's bring the conversation back to us. You're getting off topic.

[00:36:25] Playing unfair is not giving your partner space to respond to that.

[00:36:30] Playing unfair is bringing up a particular subject and then when your partner responds to it, you have all of these choice phrases pre selected like, I don't care. I don't want to be talking about this right now. Why are we talking about this? This doesn't matter. Is that all you care about is this subject that I just brought up but now I'm blaming on you? I'm annoyed. I don't want to argue. Stay on subject.

[00:36:53] Playing unfair is bringing a problem to your partner's attention and then when they try to solve it, explain themselves, hear you out, listen to you, you then quickly shut them down or tell them you don't want to talk about it, or you're tired or you're not interested or you're bored?

[00:37:09] Oh, yes. And they might also use some choice phrases like, let's move on. You're repeating yourself. Are you done? Are you finished? You're talking in circles. Can I speak now? While completely glossing over anything that you might have just said? We already went over this. I'm fine. I'm done with this conversation. I don't care anymore. Playing unfair is asking 10 to 20 questions about something, and then when your partner gets frustrated, you blame them for their exasperation or for them being frustrated at you. Playing unfair is questioning your partner in any way you possibly can. And then when they say, why? Why did you ask me that? Or they get curious as to why you're employing these manipulation tactics, you get very quiet and don't want to talk anymore. Not playing fair looks like never resolving a conflict. Not playing fair looks like arguing about something different every five minutes and never hearing your partner out or giving them the benefit of the doubt or acknowledging that you heard them. I'm a big fan of the phrase let's agree to disagree, but also sometimes dropping it out of the blue after you've been hammering and hammering with questions, accusations, retaliations, building a case. And then you say, I'm done. I don't want to talk about this anymore. Dropping it like that can be a little unnerving, because the way that you're leaving it is, well, I don't believe anything you say anyway, so we're dropping it.

[00:38:30] Another form of unfairness is when people brood. What is brooding? Brooding is that unique quality where someone shuts down and makes sure that every single person in the room knows that something's wrong. It's how people embarrass you in restaurants. It's how they make the waiter feel uncomfortable and like their partner has done something wrong, or they're being unusually friendly and apologetic to the waiter. But then as soon as they go away, they shut down with you. That's not playing fair, Sucking all of the attention towards yourself so that you are making everyone look at you by darting your eyes around or staring down, but looking coy, like excessive quiet sassiness and emanating really negative energy. That's not playing fair. One key way to know if you're not playing fair or not is if you don't want to put it to bed. You'd rather let something fester. You'd rather sit in it. You'd rather have other people suffer along with you than finding an amiable solution or letting it go.

[00:39:30] All right, number five, everyone in Today's day and age seems to think that they are a clinical psychologist or psychotherapist, that they can fling around words easily like narcissist, psychopath, sociopath. Hearing someone say that their ex is or was a narcissist is about as common these days as hearing someone say, what's up? And this leads us to everyone's favorite word of the hour. Gaslighting. Gaslighting is the subjective experience of having one's reality repeatedly questioned by another, and, I would add, with malicious intent. Simply put, there's an enormous distinction between trying to convince someone to believe your lie versus knowing that the story that someone else is trying to push on you is point blank, wrong, inaccurate, or didn't happen.

[00:40:17] Now, someone might express to you their feelings. They might say, I feel like you're being distant. I feel like you're not being honest. I feel like you're not present or connected during the sex that we're having. That's fine. We can talk about that. That's a conversation that can be had and a little back and forth could ensue. Are feelings valid? And are people allowed to feel what they feel and do their feelings matter? Absolutely. However, if a partner says to you, I think you were out drinking at a bar tonight and you know that you were at home asleep, if a partner says to you, I feel like you were flirting with that waiter or waitress and you didn't even know that that waiter or waitress existed or even see them, if your partner asks you a question and you answer it sincerely, and they say, I don't believe you, and you say, that's great, I'm being honest, and they say, stop gaslighting me. We've got a bit of a different problem on our hands. In other words, if what someone is feeling could not be farther from the objective truth or the lived experience of the person being accused of doing something that they didn't do, I would not call that gaslighting. And I wouldn't call that questioning someone's reality. And I wouldn't call that, let's agree to disagree. And I also wouldn't call that, well, you feel this way, I feel that way, and the truth is somewhere in the middle. It's not a different narrative. It's not telling a person that they're crazy. I think people latch on to trends and they like the way things sound. And so everything just becomes narcissism and gaslighting. But is it gaslighting or is it just being honest? Honesty that perhaps your partner isn't ready to accept or willing to accept.

[00:42:01] Now, just for fun, there's something that I like to call reverse gaslighting. It's not a clinical term, but just for fun. And it especially applies for people who feel like they need to heavily rely on their intuition or believe that their intuition is informing them or letting them know what's best. This is for the kind of person who might say, well, I feel this way, therefore it's true, or I feel this way, therefore it's true for me, or true globally.

[00:42:26] Let's say, for example, someone feels or has an intuition that their partner is being dishonest or lying, and they get it in their head that no matter what their partner says, this person is going to believe that they're being dishonest. Now, if the person being accused is very sincere, very honest, and says, look, I've got nothing to hide from you, it's all here on the table. And let's just say that all of us listening to this podcast, we all know that the person saying that is right, they are being honest or being as honest as they possibly can. Easy to follow examples of this are somebody accuses you of being somewhere that you weren't, of texting someone who you didn't, of looking at someone who you didn't know existed, of being in communication with someone who you haven't spoken to in years, spending time with someone when you were in bed, sleeping with someone who you've never had sex with. Things that are really concrete and you know that the accuser is wrong for even accusing you. This, to me, is reverse gaslighting, because they have convinced themselves of a reality that is false, that is actually not true. And then they want to go so far as to force you to be a part of that narrative where no matter what you say and no matter how you defend yourself, and no matter what evidence you bring to said partner, nothing helps convince them. They might drop it, they might let it go, but always in the back of their head, oh, I remember that person. I remember what you said. This didn't line up, or that didn't line up. And sometimes there's no convincing someone of the actual truth.

[00:43:58] So call it what you will. Is it fear getting the best of someone? Is it hallucinations? Is it some form of mental deficit? Does your partner have multiple personalities? Who knows? But when things are that black and white and you've got a partner who continues to hammer you with accusations, implications, insinuations, over and over and over again, they can talk themselves into a tizzy and become convinced that it happened. And once they do that, they now start creating the building blocks for living their own lie. Even though they've told their partner that they are being dishonest, they've told themselves a lie so often, they've told themselves a false narrative or a story or a belief or a feeling or an intuition so frequently in their head and they've spoken it, that it starts to feel and become real. And this, my friends, is

something that I would call a mind virus. You have thought yourself into disempowerment, thought yourself into an argument, or to disconnecting. And there's nothing that your poor innocent partner could do. And this is a really hard one to get over, because people who are like this will start looking and infiltrating your life, looking for ways to prove you wrong. They'll come up with vast, elaborate stories. I knew there was something off about that guy or girl. I knew I had to break up with them because of this or that reason. I always felt, now don't get me wrong, people do shady things, people are dishonest, people do lie. And who knows what type of situation you and your partner might be in. However, if you are a very authentic person, and let's say you live a life where you have integrity and authenticity and you're as honest as you can be, and you have a partner who's doing these kinds of things to you, it really, really is deleterious, dangerous, awful for your relationship. What makes this kind of person especially dangerous is if they find out a partial truth to something they feel or some new event happens that makes them feel even more entitled to have proven you wrong or proven your dishonesty in their head, they will double down and triple down on it and say to themselves, aha, I always knew you were this way. And because you said this or did this, it proves that all these things I believe from the past were true. Oh, my goodness. I mean, you just go down an endless hole. And friends, I really don't advise trying to dig yourself out constantly of endless holes and having new holes dug and climbing into additional holes. You don't want to be in holes to begin with in this sense. You don't want to be in any holes to begin with. And I think one of the hardest things for people to admit in this situation is that they might be wrong, globally wrong, completely wrong, categorically wrong, and totally off base. And for some people in the world, being wrong feels like death, Being wrong feels like the end of the world. Or that they are an awful, terrible Person. Listen, there's absolutely nothing wrong with being wrong. Just acknowledge it. Hey, I was wrong there. Oh, my gosh, I totally misread that situation. Wow. You're right. I take responsibility. I own that. I'm so sorry for putting you through this. But more often than not, the people who have these wild levels of accusations very, very rarely will have the strength, fortitude, intelligence, respect, courtesy of coming back to you and saying, I am so sorry for accusing you of these awful, terrible things. I was wrong.

[00:47:35] Now, here's something very fun and interesting to consider if your partner accuses you of doing something that you never did. Again, a black and white example, not I feel like you're ignoring me, but something that really never happened, and they tell you, I feel like you did this and my feelings matter and you need to listen to me and validate my feelings.

[00:47:59] Here's a fun question to philosophize about.

[00:48:03] Do their inaccurate, wrong hurt feelings matter if what they're hurting about and what they're upset about never happen to begin with?

[00:48:16] Hmm.

[00:48:19] Most of us feel like our feelings matter, but do your feelings need to be validated, listened to, or explored if the thing that you're feeling didn't occur, never happened, was never spoken, never even existed in what anyone else can call reality?

[00:48:36] Now, some feelings, of course, are very subjective. I don't like this guy. You do. I don't like this food. You do. I feel very strongly about this political stance. You feel very differently. This is an entirely different situation.

[00:48:49] What I'm talking about is when a partner accuses you of doing something that never happened, I feel like you're being dishonest or there's something you haven't told me, or I feel hurt by your action of not coming over. I feel hurt. You should have known to come see me. I don't think you came home last night. I have a feeling I had a dream. This dream. You did terrible

things, and now I'm angry at you. In real life, do these types of feelings matter? Do they need validation and do we need to constantly talk about them or bring them up for the partner to feel heard and understood?

[00:49:22] Now, this is not telling someone their feelings don't matter, which I don't recommend you do, or refusing to give a partner a little bit of reassurance, which I do recommend that you do. It's fine for your feelings to matter, but how long and how often and how frequently do you need to discuss them if these subjects are coming up over and over again? To pick a strong example, if you're married to someone who is constantly accusing you of lying or being a liar or being dishonest, and you are dumbfounded by it. At what point do you actually question, should I stay in this relationship? Has this become something toxic? Has this really become unhealthy? But most of the time, most of us don't want to go inside and ask what's making us feel this level of insecurity. We want to blame it on the other person.

[00:50:08] Now, I'm the first one to say empathy is an extremely important part of being in a relationship. Oh my gosh, that sounds awful. Oh, that sounds terrible. I'm so sorry you feel that way. Phrases like this are necessary to keep a relationship strong. But how many texts, voice texts, video messages, arguments and conversations does one need to have to continue to enforce someone's illusion, hallucination, or lie that they continue to perpetuate by beating the same drum of something that didn't happen? It should come as no surprise to you that in my opinion, much of these fears and imagined feelings come from a deep place of insecurity or fear or childhood trauma or someone taking advantage of you in a previous relationship. And do people do messed up things to people all the time? Yes. Are you allowed to feel hurt or angry or upset about them? Absolutely. But when you drag your current partner in to the nightmare of your past where the other person had no idea you were feeling something like this, didn't even mean it that way, wasn't intending it that way, or as always, it flat out didn't happen. If you are a good person, sometimes it's just your partner's insecurity getting in the way, and it comes out as the message or their feelings that require lots of attention and validation.

[00:51:25] Through all of this, the most important thing to remember is feelings are not facts. And while in many cases there's no way to know exactly what happened or exactly what is factual and what isn't, often we have to go by trust and what our partner tells us, which means you have to decide, do I trust this person or not? And if you don't, then you might have to evaluate if you should be in that relationship or if that relationship is healthy for you. Now, this person might be the most honest, upfront, accountable person in the universe, but you have a funny feeling, and this is really important. You have a funny feeling about this guy or this girl and you can't quite put your finger on it. This does not make it a red flag and it does not make them a dangerous person. Globally, it might be important for you not to deal with that person, for you not to sleep with them, date them, talk to them, go into business with them. It doesn't make them a bad person. It doesn't make them untrustworthy, it doesn't even make them dangerous. Doesn't even mean that you're right about your feeling. It just may mean that that's something right for you. For you to choose not to interact with them, or for you to not interact with them in this moment in time.

[00:52:46] Moving on. Sometimes when someone is actually attacking you, it's very subtle and very passive aggressive. And it may not even seem like an attack. But you're not sure why you're feeling upset, irritable, or angry. And that is because the way they're going about it is an insinuation.

[00:53:08] It's an inference. It's something that is implied without a direct accusation, and it allows the accuser to manipulate you and to manipulatively communicate with you. Attacks like this sound like, well, seems like you don't care, so I'm going to hang up now. Seems like you're not into this, so I'm going to go. Seems like you didn't really enjoy sex earlier, so we'll never do it

again. Oh, you're probably off doing something with one of your whores. Sorry you don't like me. Sorry I'm such a terrible person. Well, you're clearly running around and doing whatever you want, so I'm gonna go. I called and you didn't answer the phone at the exact moment when I thought I should call you. So you must be doing something wrong. You get the idea. And some of these behaviors aren't so subtle, but the feeling is kind of like someone letting you know how you're feeling before you even tell them how you're feeling. Making up a story for you, making broad assumptions and inferences based on what they feel on the inside and then speaking it to you as though it were true. And this works really well for the partner doing this because it allows them to leave, run, vanish, escape, get out and get away, eject before you could do it to them in their fearful hallucination.

[00:54:21] But you'll always know what it is, because underneath there's a feeling. There's like a subtle, catty, biting, just really sticky negative energy. So watch out for commentary. Like it seems like you, it looks like you, I guess you. Or maybe they've reached out to you and you haven't had a chance to get back to them right away. And so say They've said something like would you like to see me later tonight? And then three to five minutes later you get guess not, or I'll take that as a no, or you must be busy with one of your other hoes or bows or some sort of implication where they've made a decision for you before you get a chance to reply. The human mind is a very interesting and beautiful thing, but in relationship we really want to avoid jumping to conclusions unless it's on a jumping to conclusions mat, if you haven't noticed it yet. It's really important for all of society to communicate directly, clearly, cleanly, concisely, without jumping to conclusions, without making accusations, without making negative inferences.

[00:55:26] People often think about something they want to say, or they have an intention or desire, but their knee jerk response, the first thing that comes out of their mouth is actually something negative, an insult or a put down. And here again, this is another extremely important way in which conflict arises.

[00:55:43] I often see someone who will have so many positive feelings of joy for their partner. They're in love, they're thinking about them, they're missing them, maybe they're even turned on or sexually excited by them. In their head they are thinking about what a wonderful time they had, or getting excited about something that they're going to do. But when they actually speak to their partner, some really, really weird stuff happens. They get super insecure or really quiet, or they blurt out something obnoxious like that's a really ugly sweater. What's that funny smell in here? You know, I don't like you, or I don't like this about you, or I don't like this family member, or I don't like that you go do these things. So we're talking about someone who might feel really close or loving towards you, but speaks this way right out the gate. Notice when your partner does really bizarre things to tank the communication, or they throw a wrench or cause a fight or start an argument. And do you know what your partner will often have the audacity to say to you in their defense?

[00:56:44] Hey, I was having a great day. I was having some really positive thoughts. In fact, I was thinking positively about you. And then you had to go and ruin it with how you reacted to my poor treatment of you when I insulted you instead of telling you how I was really feeling. Amazing stuff, guys.

[00:57:01] Someone might even have just masturbated to thinking about you, or been really aroused or want to come see you. But when they get you on the phone, they're talking to you. In this very accusatory way, or like, you must not like them or care about them, almost provoking you to try to prove yourself to them.

[00:57:20] Now, if you're a shady dude and you're in a committed monogamous relationship or a marriage and you go to questionable places like, oh, I don't know, dingy bars or late night parties

or orgies or sex parties or drug deals or dark alleys, or you disappear for days on end, well, it might be understandable why your partner is suspect and treats you poorly in your presence. I mean, come on. But the fact of the matter is, no one is a mind reader. Some of us can get really good at feeling into what our partner wants and needs. Most of us can tell when our partner is feeling something negative or they're upset about something, but we really don't know the why. What's causing you to behave this way? And you know what? Sometimes someone's honest answer isn't even the real truth of what's bothering them. It's really, really tricky. Oh, you thought I was doing this to hurt you? Oh, that's not actually the case. Oh, you thought that I was doing this because I don't love you anymore? Well, that's not the case. Oh, you thought that this happened because I don't care about something? Well, that's not the case. Okay, maybe it's about, oh, I'm just feeling insecure. Now we're getting somewhere.

[00:58:29] All right, let's move on from that subject and into yet another way that conflict arises. And I think all of us can relate to it. And most of us can admit that we're not always right, that we are not always as happy and normal and fine as we say we are.

[00:58:49] And especially that we're not nearly as accurate as we may think that we are. In fact, the more emotional we get, the more frustrated and irritated we are, the less likely we will remember things as they actually transpired. Our own brains will insert alternative language. Different words, words that you might feel are synonyms but are actually significantly different. For example, someone says, oh my gosh, dinner tonight was amazing. The service was outstanding. That waiter was super nice, very good looking guy as well, period can sometimes turn into, oh, you thought the waiter was hot, you wanted to have sex with the waiter. You wanted to sleep with the waiter. You were eyeing the waiter all night long. And that's a very different story than the truth of what actually happened. Embellishment, exaggeration and blowing things out of proportion. Making a mountain out of a molehill does not make you more accurate or more correct.

[00:59:54] Another aspect of this is familial. Simply because your dad raised you this way, this is what your mom always did, this is how your family always did it. Well, it certainly doesn't make it the globally correct, right way of doing things right. There's more than one way to get something done.

[01:00:15] And all of this ties into our last way in which conflict can arise. And that is understanding the difference between intuition, like we spoke about before, and fear, and being able to distinguish between am I feeling something on the inside that really isn't right, or is it just a fearful response? Here's how that comes out in reality. I just had a feeling. I knew this wasn't right for me. I just felt it. I had a feeling going into this. I knew I shouldn't have done it. I'm so glad I listened to my gut or my intuition. It never steers me wrong. And oftentimes you may find that you're right. You felt something, you felt a feeling, you listened to it, and it worked out in your favor. For me personally, I believe that intuition is a form of personal guidance that we all have within us that helps us to do things in our best interest, sometimes in the moment and sometimes in the future. However, if your intuition is telling you not to engage with someone, talk to them, sleep with them, go near them, whatever, it doesn't make them a bad person globally. It doesn't mean that they are a danger to you necessarily. It doesn't mean that there's a problem. It's just that you're having a feeling in the moment. And that feeling can be one of a few different things. It really could be your inner guidance warning you and saying, hey, this is not a good idea for you. Or the person in question might activate or trigger something for you that makes you feel fearful or gives you a weird feeling. And so maybe they're not for you. If you're feeling fear around that person or that thing, by all means don't engage. But you don't have to condemn them for life, and you don't have to condemn them to all your friends, and you don't have to condemn them as a globally bad person because you had a bad feeling. In fact, I can even speak for myself and say that there have been times where I've had a bad feeling about

someone and then later on they've had something to teach me, or I've had something to offer them, and it's been a very positive experience.

[01:02:13] But there are times when based on our fears, insecurities, traumas, how we were raised, our dislike for ourselves or our dislike for people. All of this stuff colors and shapes, these so called feelings of intuition, this sense that our intuition is absolutely talking to us. But really we might just be feeling insecure or nervous or uneasy or vulnerable or exposed, and we don't want to deal with it, we don't want to confront it face to face. Am I really afraid? Am I insecure? Is this one of my vulnerabilities? Or is this actually internal guidance trying to guide me in the right direction? And I think even having that awareness on the subject or really tuning in is helpful to figuring those things out.

[01:02:58] All right, so you're engaging with someone. Could be someone you know you don't know, someone you love or don't love. And something in your intuition kicks in and says, I got to get out of here, I got to leave, I got to eject. This isn't safe.

[01:03:10] Now, first things first. Of course, if you're having that level of fear or anxiety, do what you need to do to get yourself to a place where you feel safe. But then, when you really have time to think about it, it's worth asking yourself some questions. Am I in danger? Is there something really wrong here? Could I have overreacted a little bit? Everyone will say, better safe than sorry.

[01:03:31] But there are some more interesting, probing questions that you can ask yourself. Why do I think that everyone is creepy everywhere I go? Why do I not give anyone the benefit of the doubt? Why do I continue to go through this world feeling petrified of anything and everything that moves or looks at me? Why am I so frightened so often? Why in the middle of the day at a yoga class, a farmer's market, a beautiful restaurant, or or even just walking with my partner, do I often look and feel frightened?

[01:04:00] Hmm? Am I placing my own fears and insecurities and worries onto someone else? Or is my intuition actually telling me something? Am I really getting a feeling from deep within or am I just judging someone? How's my anxiety today? Am I always feeling this anxious? Do I always do this when I go to this or that place or when I engage with this or that kind of person? Person. It's always worth having some self awareness. Because sometimes those who we have deemed frustrating or annoying or judged the hardest, or you've told yourself that this is someone you definitely don't want to talk to sometimes you'll later find out that you judged them and viewed them in such a way that didn't allow any communication to happen. Or your attitude colored how they interacted with you. And sometimes you'll realize that this was actually someone who you needed to meet, you wanted to meet. They had something to offer you, you had something to offer them. Most interactions, I find, can be so much more uplifting, positive and mutually beneficial than we initially allow to happen.

[01:05:06] All right, here's a simple little exercise to help you determine if I'm right.

[01:05:13] Take a moment and remember a time where you thought something was wrong with a loved one because they didn't get back to you on time. Or they didn't pick up their ph, or they didn't call when they said they would. Or maybe they just weren't available and you got a sick feeling in your stomach. And what happened? Your supposed intuition was flying off the handle. You were paranoid, freaked out, concerned. You thought the worst had happened. Someone was in an accident, someone passed away, someone's cheating. Something awful happened. And while there may have been a time in your life where this worked once for you, please consider how many dozens and dozens of times you were worried about something and there was no cause for concern. Nothing was wrong. Some silly thing happened. Someone's battery died, they

ran out of gas, the cell phone tower went down, whatever it is. And I want you to consider just how many times you were wrong. When you had a feeling, when you had a bad feeling, when you got a red flag, when you got the ick, when you thought something bad was about to transpire and it never did. Somehow we seem to minimize these and forget about these moments. And for many people, they were wrong. Most if not every single time they were concerned. Some of us can recognize this habit even when we just text the word good night to someone we care about or love and nothing comes back for the rest of the night, or God forbid, even the next morning. Some people's personalities are such where they just don't respond to text or they don't get back to you for days on end, which is awful. However, in your own mind, you thought that something terrible had happened simply because they didn't say goodnight.

[01:06:58] And so what's so interesting about this is now we can say and admit to ourselves we were wrong. I was wrong, you were wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong. But we were so certain that our intuition was speaking to us. The feeling we had of paranoia overtook us. And so when you're in conflict with someone and you think that you're having a worst case scenario intuition or that your body is telling you something, it very well may be the case that it is. And I applaud all of you who are capable of having that level of intuition where you knew something was happening and it was awesome. It's there. I believe it exists. However many a time it's worth asking, is this my intuition or am I being paranoid? Is this my intuition or am I just feeling afraid and fearful? Is this my intuition or am I just judging the way this person looks? If I'm with my partner, is this my intuition or can I just calm down, take a breath, go get some air, and come back and reconvene without tanking the conversation or the relationship?

[01:08:07] Now, the tricky part about all of this is I think once someone is fearful enough and triggered enough on a regular basis, that fear, that angst, that readiness to snap or freak out or break down kind of lives inside them and might be ready to burst out in a moment's notice. And sometimes it doesn't go away. So even though the person got home safe or they were just sleeping in their bed and couldn't take your call, often people internalize this as a slight or a dig on them or, well, I got so worried and upset. Yes, they're fine. But hey, I got so worried and upset. And so now you're frustrated with your partner. And that energy creates mistrust in a partner who we otherwise thought was very safe for us. And so sometimes I think all of us, including myself, we all need to take a step back and ask, is it intuition or were we just being scared? If we were wrong countless times in the past, isn't it possible that I could be wrong here? And maybe there's a different perspective.

[01:09:12] All right. What an awesome place to wind down this podcast by telling everyone their favorite thing to hear that they're wrong. Just kidding. Just kidding. But it is really worth thinking about. I always find the times that I can take a step back and say, you know what, I could actually be wrong here. Maybe I'm the one who's having a bad reaction. Is it possible I'm not seeing the whole picture? Maybe if I chill out and take a step back, I can realize this is actually my fault or I have some contribution to it. There's never any harm in that. You don't want to be a doormat, you don't want to be taken advantage of. But self reflection is indeed helpful. Now we're going to continue this series in part two. We're going to get it out in these hour long chunks. Please note again that if you are finding this material to be a little heavy in this particular episode. Most episodes are not like this. We dive into all the sexy stuff, all the fun stuff, with seduction and love and lust and desire and relationships and marriage and all of that. But yeah, I mean, this is the nitty gritty of regular battles that do happen between couples. And there's still more to come. Finally, I am a sex and intimacy and relationship counselor and coach. So if you'd like to get in and work on some of these things with your partner, or if you're fine in this department and want to work on the sexy stuff, please don't hesitate to visit cravecloseness.com and fill out an intake form or schedule an appointment online. Thanks for listening and I will see you in part two.