

## 9\_24\_25 Talk\*

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**Diana Hill** [00:00:01] So as I mentioned last week, we talked about some of the things that can lead us off track in our relationships and wise effort being one of the steps on the eightfold path of Buddhism. These eight things that are, it's a path but it's circular, right? We engage in them over and over and over again. We engage wise concentration and wise mindfulness and wise speech and. We get off track and then we can notice that we're off track and then come back on track. And wise effort is how we are using our energy. The very traditional story of wise effort is about Sonia and the lute. And if it's too tight, you can't play it. And if it's too loose, you can't play it and you gotta, sometimes you gotta tighten it up and sometimes you got to loosen it up. And isn't that the case for our relationships, right? Sometimes we need to just loosen it up. Loosen up, drop it, let it go. And then sometimes we need to tighten it up.

[00:01:08] I was talking with somebody today about boundaries and how setting some limits sometimes in our relationship is what allows us to stay in the relationship. That's how we can tighten it out. So I was exercising the other week on my porch and let me see if I can get my share going here. Slides, oh wow, this is a hot mess of everything. I was exercising on my porch and doing pushups and I was looking out over the patio at this big oak tree that's outside and there was the most magnificent spider web. This is the time of year when, at least where I live, the spiders are out and there's enough fog in the morning that the water is catching the webs. And if you're not careful, you'll walk right off your front porch and you'll be covered in a nice spider web. But there was this magnificent spider web that was from the top of this very high oak tree and it went all the way down to this little ornamental, like a Japanese ornamental tree in our garden. It's probably like a span of eight feet. And I was thinking, wow, this is such a good example of taking a leap in relationships and how sometimes we just need to like. Go for it, take a leap, right? Put ourselves out there or forgive someone that's hard to forgive.

[00:02:34] And so I did what we all do these days is I looked it up in chat because it had this sort of like third grade prediction of what spiders do to make a spider web like that. I was predicting it had like a spider pack on it, like a backpack and that it jumped off the tree and that the web. Traveled with them until it got to the other side. This is what I was envisioning in my third grade spider brain. And I looked it up and this is biomimicry, using nature to help us understand our humanity because spiders do not do that. They do not have a backpack. What they do to get from tree A to tree B eight feet away is they release a little. String, a little thread of silk called the bridge line. And the silk is so light that it catches the breeze and it catches, the breeze until it sticks to something a little lower. And then when it sticks, it'll send down to other bridge lines down to another point or to the ground. So it creates a stable bridge. And then the spider will test it out and see if it's strong enough. And then it'll walk across the bridge and get to the middle and build a little home. We think that relationships have to be sort of that, like a jump, a big scary thing. You need to forgive your father, right? Or you need to accept somebody from a different political view than you, right. Or you to go apologize to your partner.

[00:04:31] But sometimes really what wise effort in relationships that. Tightening up or loosening up is just creating a bridge line, sending a little thread out. And sometimes it's as simple as the thread is as simple as dropping it in your body language. You know, changing your tone, asking a question and getting curious. So tonight we're gonna talk a little bit how we can create these beautiful bridge lines and how can I not talk about

spiders without talking about some of those beautiful relationships that we. Many of us grew up on, which is the story of Charlotte's Web and E.B. White. And I love this quote from E. B. White, you have been my friend. That in itself is a tremendous thing. I wove my webs for you because I liked you. After all, what's a life anyway? We're born, we live a little while, we die. A spider's life can't help but being something of a mess. I relate to that with all this trapping. And eating flies. By helping you, perhaps I was trying to lift up my life a trifle. Heaven knows anyone's life can stand a little of that. This is the strength of our relationships that sometimes the effort that we put into our relationships to creating that bridge line feeds back to us a source of strength.

[00:06:03] And that is for me, as I've been exploring wise effort through this book over the past number of years of what is wise effort? What is wise in our relationships? What is why is effort in community? What is a wise effort in creativity or at work? I believe that wise effort is effort that you put out into the world that is rejuvenating so that you benefit and others benefit. And when we think about wise effort in the relationship, why would we create a bridge line? It's because of that. We all benefit when we build bridges.

[00:06:42] Last week, we talked about the three things that can lead to unwise effort in relationship. We talked about our tendency to run from discomfort and how the very nature of relating to another human is that it's going to be uncomfortable. Vulnerability is uncomfortable. Loving someone is uncomfortable, right? Cause you, as Francis Weller says in his books about grief, everything you love, you will lose, right. There's risk. And the more you are willing to open your heart and your being to that risk of love, the deeper the relationships you will have and the more energy you will get back. But we run from discomfort. We get stuck in a story. We add all sorts of stories.

[00:07:31] As a therapist, I just see this right and left. People will bring in their phones. They'll read me some like one line text. I can't make it tonight. But they'll read it with the tone as if, can you believe what they said? I can make it night. Can you believe it? I'm like, I didn't, I don't know. I don't know where that tone came from, but it's somehow in your mind that tone out of there, right? So we add the mind as an adding machine. As Stephen Hayes often says, it does not subtract very well, but it's great at adding. So it just adds on the story and that is unwise of our relationships. And then we hold on too tight. We don't want things to change. We hold onto our egos. We hold on to being right. We are grippers. We're clingers. And in Buddhism, this is aversion, delusion, attachment. In ACT, this is experiential avoidance. This is fusion. And this is experiential attachment. So whatever angle you come at it, whether it's psychological science or Buddhist psychology, unhelpful practices that will lead to suffering in relationships.

[00:08:45] So tonight we'll talk about how to, how to do something different. Rather than holding on too tight, rather than being stuck in a story, we're gonna open up to feeling, open our mind and open our wise self. I developed this method, the wise effort method that I talk about in this new book that's out that Rick Hansen is the forward writer to, and he's also the forward reader to. So if you get it on Audible, you get to hear Rick. I was listening to him because it just came out yesterday and I was sitting in the parking lot of this little grocery store down in Santa Barbara, listening to Rick Hanson's voice read the forward. And I was sobbing because he's such a comforting, he's a such a Kalyanamita, he's at your comforting source of wisdom in such a home, has been such a hom to me. In this book, when we talk about this method of wise effort, the first part of it is getting curious, getting curious about what am I doing that's unwise in my relationships? How am I stuck? How am in a story here?

[00:09:50] But then the second part is how do we open up? And there's a new trend happening. You may be hearing it all over the place. 10 years ago, or maybe 20 years ago now, everything was mindfulness, right? Mindfulness, mindfulness, mindfulness. But now. Openness is the new mindfulness. This is like the new trend. There's gonna be an openness magazine, trust me. There, Jonathan Schooler, who I interviewed this week, he's a professor at UCSB. He's changing the name, either of his center or his lab, one or the other, from the Center for Mindfulness to the Center For Openness. And it's a little different. Openness a little bit different than mindfulness. We can use mindfulness to bring ourselves back to the present, as we did in our meditation.

[00:10:37] When we are in a relationship, we need to practice mindfulness. We need to know how to be here without judgment. Here now, not in the story, not running away, not holding, but here and present. And we also need to bring in another quality, which is this quality of openness. There's an increasing amount of research on this concept and this quality of openness and it's linking to things like creativity, better relationships, curiosity, intellectual humility. We can use that, which is closely linked to wisdom. Concern for nature. The more open you are, the more concerned you are about our planet, our relationship with nature. Concerned for the future of humanity is associated with openness. Political tolerance for perspectives other than your own. Well, that makes sense because you have a more open mind. And openness is actually one of the personality traits on what's called the big five personality traits, which has to do with openness. How open you are, how conscientious you are. How extroverted or introverted you are how agreeable you are and neuroticism.

[00:11:51] This big five openness personality test is probably the most commonly used and most scientifically accepted personality test in the science of psychology. There's a good amount of science behind it, but this one feature of openness seems to be really important. And some of Jonathan Schooler's work has also looked at openness as linked to longevity. If you're open, you live longer. But tonight we'll talk about openness in terms of relationships. And what's interesting is that you can have this personality style of openness. I am not a naturally open person. There's sort of a little assessment that sometimes I have. People take with openness to see how open are you? And it has things, has questions like how adventurous are you, how willing are you to take risks? How interested are you in art? There's a link between openness and really liking things like abstract art. Would you rather go to a new restaurant tonight, or would you rather try something that you have gone to over and over again? Do you wanna travel to a place or do you like to go to the same place, right? So openness is related to things like ability to take a little bit of risks. But you can increase your openness, which is trait openness. You can actually increase how open you are to others with practice.

[00:13:27] And one of the practices that Jonathan Schooler talks about is the practice of mind wandering, which is different than mind wandering. We've all heard the line that a wandering mind is an unhappy mind. And there was some really sort of groundbreaking research by Killingsworth that showed that our minds are wandering 60% of the time when your mind is wandering to something else. And they ask you how happy you are. People tend to say they're less happy. Well, Jonathan Schoolers did some follow-up research. Which found that that's not, it's more nuanced than that. If your mind is wondering, if your mind curious, if your is not going to the negative and ruminating, but rather just questioning, you tend to be a little bit happier.

[00:14:13] So we wanna engage in more mind wandering in our relationships and definitely a little less of the mind wandering in our relationship, right? Mind wandering will lead to

distance with people. Mind wandering will lead to more intimacy and closeness because who doesn't wanna feel like someone is curious about them? Another E.B. White quote, the world is full of people who have never since childhood met an open doorway with an open mind. So I make the argument that wise effort in relationships is this practice of opening up. And there's three forms of opening up that I think are necessary for us to engage in wise relationships. The first is opening up to feeling. So we catch ourselves. We catch ourselves in relationships when we are running away. And we remember that that which is most painful to us is also the thing that points to our values and what we most care about. So if we can open up to the pain in our relationships, then we can also open up. To what we value. Take family estrangements, for example.

[00:15:37] One of the things that's fascinating about families is that about a quarter of people are estranged from a close family member. Quarter of people, one in four people are estranger. And that means that they haven't spoken to them. Maybe they've cut them out altogether. They've cut him out of people. They haven't spoken to family members for 10 years. I had a good friend of mine who was a therapist who was estranged from her mom for 10 year. And she wrote this book called It's Your Mother's Fault. Great title, right? It's your fault I'm out, right. And after 10 years, after 10 year, she, and usually estrangement happens from some kind of explosive volcanic act. That was like building, and building, and building and building. And then all of a sudden one person does something that tips it, and then it breaks.

[00:16:38] And oftentimes with these estrangements, people don't even remember exactly why or what. They remember there was this thing that happened, but they couldn't even explain what the resentment is really about anymore. It's just they've been holding on too tight and running from the discomfort of the relationship. So that my friend Julia, who was estranged from her mom for 10 years. Finally decided, I'm going to open up to feeling the pain and first feeling the paint for herself of what it feels like to not be in relationship with her mom. Yet she was in relationship with her Mom all the time because when you are estranged from somebody you love or you're in a fight with somebody or you even are angry at someone, guess what's on your mind? Them. Every day. You think about them in the shower. You think of them on Mother's Day. You think them on the birthday, right? So she had to first open up to feeling within her own self, within her being and to be with her feeling of sadness and loss. And then in doing that, it opened her up to the possibility of actually a repair.

[00:17:41] Sometimes we never repair the estrangement because it's not healthy. The person was abusive or they're gone. But we start with the relationship with our own self and the feeling that's inside, remembering that that which we and is linked to our values. Elizabeth Gilbert's having a moment. She has this big book out right now. And she had this line in Big Magic which is one of her older books, which is your home is whatever in the world you love more than yourself. Which I kind of like, like sometimes opening up in relationships is loving something more than we are in this like small self place. Like I am willing to, the other day my son, he was getting ready for a backpacking trip, my 15 year old son. And I walk into his room and there's a drawer open and it's the sports drawer with all the sports clothes in it. And in the drawer. It was a bowl that still had milk in it. It's like, whoa. And it was at the end of the day, there was like camping equipment everywhere. My son has the drawer with the bowl of milk. I'm stressed out. And in that moment, I want to just explode. But I, but, and wise effort here. Love him more than myself. More than my small self, my need for clemeness and know that he's about to leave on a trip. Right? Let it go.

[00:19:19] Bill Stixrad, if you're a parent, Bill Sticks has this great book. He's a neuropsychologist has written a lot on the self-driven child. And he has this line, which is, I love you, I love too much to fight about your homework. Think about this with your partner. I love to much. To fight about taxes. You can think about this with your. I love you too much to fight about what we're gonna do for Thanksgiving. Right? So your home is whatever in the world you love more than yourself. And, and that is how we can practice opening up in our relationships. In wise effort, I talk about opening up to feeling with the practice of getting out of our heads and into our heart mind. This is the symbol for heart mind in Chinese, it's one word, the heart and the mind are one. And heart mind in this symbol, when you look at the description of the different elements of this symbol. There's three small brushstrokes at the top. And those are described as sort of the agitation of the mind, the agitations of the heart. Right? So maybe those are in your relationship or an example with my son. It's the, oh, I hate this mess. I want it all cleaned up. It agitated me. Or in the example of my friend and her mom, it's all of the story that had built up over time. Right? The resentments.

[00:20:56] But then there's this nice long brushstroke that looks sort of like a, almost like a boat or a bowl. And that's the consciousness that's holding the agitation. Right? So that's heart mind. Can we, in Zen, we talk about, you know, can you take a step back or a half step back? And Netanop, who is a teacher, he speaks about, a meditation teacher, speaks about sitting at the back of your heart. Can you hold the agitation at the front of your hear, but then open the back of your for whatever is here? That's opening up to feeling. In ACT, Acceptance Commitment Therapy, which is the type of therapy I practice, we talk about the goal isn't to feel better. You may never feel better about your dad. You may ever feel better about your divorce. It's to get better at feeling. How can you honor that feeling? That that feeling points to something that you care about, points to how much you care. The size of your feeling is the size of your care, your heart. And then we can sit at the back of our heart and open up. To that feeling so that then we can act in ways that are aligned with our values.

[00:22:24] So with wise effort, I have a whole chapter in the book about opening up to feeling, the steps to opening up, to feeling. And if we're opening up in our relationships, the first thing we need to do is like, ground ourselves, right? And then we open to the feelings within ourselves. And then maybe we can open our heart to include another. And we can sit at the back of our heart. And if you need to sit way at the bat, that's okay too, you know? Like sometimes with my clients, I'm like, where do you wanna put them in your mind here? Do you wanna them like right in front of you? Or do you need them like all the way across the street? But you can put them wherever you want, but we're gonna practice opening up to this thing. That's hard to open up to because I want you to have more flexibility in your life. When you're running from discomfort, you don't have flexibility. It's hard engage wisely.

[00:23:13] The second step of opening up is we open up our minds and we get better. We just get so much better at catching ourselves when we're in a story, when we are adding on, when we were those calculators with add buttons. And we just gotta catch ourselves. We just gotta to catch ourselves and we gotta drop it. Drop the story like a hot coal. Or we can look at the story. You can do whatever you want. You know, it's like a piece of paper. You know you could write a story on a piece a paper. You could look at it. You could know that you're reading it. You could drop it. You could crumple it up. You could throw it away. You could post it as a post-it note that maybe you wanna look at it from time to time because maybe there's something helpful within that story. But what you don't wanna do

with your story is have it cover up. Cloud your vision. That is not wise effort. Then the story pushes you around.

[00:24:05] So we practice opening up our mind in relationships. And I want you to think about, maybe think about a relationship right now in your life that you would like to have a little more ease in. You'd like to have little more wise effort in. You get entangled in. You tend to walk into that sticky web of your mind. Your mind is spinning webs and webs and web. What is the story? Or what are the stories that you believe that get you off track? And often those stories are things like I am, I am not, they are, they are not. They're stories of feeling excluded. They're are stories of blame. They're a stories of being right. They're judgmental. Sometimes they're stories about unworthiness. Sometimes these are very old stories that developed during your childhood or that society put on you that you've just like transported, projected. Onto this relationship. And when you believe that story to be true, you kind of make it true, right? The self-fulfilling prophecy.

[00:25:17] So a very simple thing to do with this is notice that your mind is making a story up and you can ask yourself, are you sure? A little opening. And if you say, yeah, I'm sure, then you ask yourself, are you sure that you're sure? Is this helpful? Is this kind? Is it a good time to be thinking about this story? And is it true? Those are the four practices around wise speech. We can do wise speech with our own story-making mind. But the most important thing is that you get a little bit of flexibility with your story and you notice that you're making a story. This is your part. Rick had a newsletter that went out today talking about what's your part in this. This is you're part, the story that you are adding. And it's not to shame us because we all make stories. This is what the mind does. It's a story-making machine. It's beautiful thing. It tells all sorts of stories like E.B. White's Charlotte's Web, you know? But then it can also tell unhelpful stories. And then the third practice of wise effort is in relationships is to, oh, instead of holding on too tight to some thing that you don't want it to change or holding on to tight to a belief or holding onto tight to your story, we can open up to a bigger self, the big you with a capital B. Capital Y-O-U, your wise self.

[00:26:59] And there's a lot of small selfing that we can tend to do, especially when we feel threatened in relationships. We go into our small, small self in evolutionary. This is what we do, like, grip and hold on. But can we find a wiser self? So I did learn about spiders a little bit more. They do this, you know, this bridge-making, but they also do something else, which is super cool. It's called. Ballooning. And what they do when they balloon is they release a lot of little threads, like all sorts of little threats, and then they let the wind just carry those threads and carry them. It's sort of like a hot air balloon or something, you know? And that's how they can travel really long distances. Balloon-ing. I think a ballooning for us is opening up to the self that's beyond the self. And you know this in a relationship where all of a sudden, you start to see another person differently. Your wise self isn't just in your head. Your wise is in your body. Maybe you open up to your wise self by dropping your shoulders, changing your tone of voice, breathing from your lower belly, being a home to somebody. That is a wise self to be in. You can co-regulate. Somebody else just through your body. You can change the nervous system of another human. You can do it in Starbucks. You can in the airport. You can it when you walk in the door. So we open up to our wise self. We also open up our wise-self by remembering our many bodies that is not just up to us. In DBT or dialectical behavior therapy, which was one of the very first therapies that I learned to sort of...

[00:29:01] Actually what I did a lot of my dissertation work in that area, they had this whole section of interpersonal effectiveness. And when you are practicing interpersonal effectiveness in this module of dialectical behavior therapy, you do things like turn the

tables. So you'll be in some sort of conflict with someone and you'll say, what do you think? What ideas do you have? You get curious. What do you wanna add here? What am I missing? What is being left out? Help me understand. You turn the tables. You let somebody else step in and help you solve, collaborate on this problem. We lean on second bodies. Your wise self is also in your ancestors to remember the strength of your ancestors, the relationships of your ancestor, that your ancestors live within you and every single cell of your body. We humans have been through a lot. We know how to fight and we know how get along. We know how to repair. We know to get over ourselves. We know get over it. We know drop it.

[00:30:08] And we can lean on our ancestors when we sometimes don't feel like we have the wisest self within ourselves. We can lean on our spiritual teachers. Just the tone and the voice of some of these teachers can help us step into a wiser self. And go and listen to a podcast, go for a walk and we come back and we can be a little bit better. A little bit wiser, a little bit of wiser efforts as parents and friends and family members and community members. We can lean on nature for our wisest self. I said go for a walk, go find a tree. Go look at a spider web and get curious. You know, all the things that nature teaches us about being wise and about interrelatedness, about interdependence, about breaking down and building up again. You know that little web across my patio is gone. You know it's not there. It was there a week ago, it's now there anymore. And there's other webs that have been formed that we can continue to build bridges. And they will continue to be broken down such as what relationships happen. And then we can open up to the great mystery.

[00:31:19] So when we open up to our wisest self in relationship, we tap into something much bigger than the small self that's all about me and ego and being right. And we start to see that when you do well, I do well. When I do, well, you do, well when we do well we all do well and we can't help but want to be in collaboration and connection. And, you know, compassion for each other. Questions that we could ask ourselves is like, how do we wanna show up for that? How do we want to show up for this relationship? In our wisest moments, what would we do here? If someone you loved were going through the same thing, what would you tell them? What do you know in your heart to be true? If you could boil it down to the most important thing, what would it be? These are good questions to ask. These are wise, giant questions to us ourselves when we feel stuck in our relationship.

[00:32:25] I wanna leave some room for questions. My slides went to nowhere. But I wanna come back to say. That if you want to learn more about wise effort, you can go sign up for my newsletter. You can go to my website, [wiseeffort.com](http://wiseeffort.com). I'm gonna be actually starting a wise effort for relationships group that's gonna be for couples and walking through the wise effort method for couples. But ultimately wise effort is about getting curious. What's getting you stuck? Releasing that bridge line, putting that line out, opening up to discomfort, opening up to our feelings, opening our minds, opening up our sense of self so that we can connect with each other and do so in ways that not only benefit us, but benefit each other and hopefully benefit the greater good. So I will stop there and I already see some hands, but I will. Pass the mic to you, George, to help me out on.

**Speaker 2** [00:33:55] Yeah, hi. Would you like to have me on mute, Rick, then? Sure. Okay, Rick.

**Speaker 3** [00:34:06] Hi, Diana. Thank you so much for your talk tonight. Incredibly powerful, very insightful for me. Unfortunately, I wasn't here last week, but I think I was able to glean a lot of what you perhaps talked about last week. But I guess my big

question is, how do you know, how do identify these A story or stories that you've been perhaps telling yourself? For years or maybe even decades, how do you know it's a story and maybe as opposed to who you really are? Do you know what I mean?

**Diana Hill** [00:34:46] Yeah.

**Speaker 3** [00:34:47] It's like, how do you do that? How do you gain that kind of insight?

**Diana Hill** [00:34:50] Yeah, well, I guess that the first thing I would say is, is it helpful or not? So even before we step out. You're saying.

**Speaker 3** [00:35:00] So you're saying, if the story is helpful, then it's not a story?

**Diana Hill** [00:35:04] No, I mean, I would say I set aside whether we define it as a story as truth with a capital T or not truth. I mean it's sort of that is a debate. And what I would go into more is, is this story, when I believe this story does it block me from showing up in the world the way I wanna show up in world? Even if it has a half truth to it. I mean every story is half true, right? Or a quarter true or an ounce true or three quarters true. We don't know. I mean, I don't if you could ever say that something is a true 100% of the time because everything is changing, right? But I would put money on, is it helpful or not helpful for how I wanna be in this world? So for example, I have a story that's been around for a long time about I am sort of, I'm too much. I just I'm like, I'm gonna be too much in a friendship. I'm going to like need too much. I'm to be too emotional, right? Is that true or not true? Well, sometimes it is. Sometimes I am very emotional and sometimes it's not. That's not actually what's most important there. What's most is that story impeding me from connecting right here and right now. And that that's the case, then maybe I need to set the story aside and act on my values. Is there a specific story story that you struggle with, Rick, that you're.

**Speaker 3** [00:36:34] Really?

**Diana Hill** [00:36:35] I just shared mine that I'm too much and too emotional. I mean, come on.

**Speaker 3** [00:36:39] Not tonight. Not tonight, you don't have to. I'll self disclose for all of us. Yeah, there's a story. I mean, I think it's probably not terribly different from a lot of people's stories that you're just not good enough. Yeah. Or at least that's my story. Just not absolutely. I have perhaps not just worked hard enough in my earlier life and that the latter part of my life, I know if I had worked harder in my earlier life. Then things would have been, I mean, things turned out actually pretty good. Things are turning out pretty well. But I think things would've turned out perhaps even better if I had worked a lot harder when I was younger. Does that make sense?

**Diana Hill** [00:37:23] Yeah, so that story is somewhat true, but I could also see that story as sometimes not true. And I could see that that story could get in the way of maybe you feeling satisfied in your life if you get really stuck in it and you get stuck in the regret. I could that story motivating you from time to time to do things. It's again, it's the flexibility with the story that matters and not necessarily whether the story is true or not. That you get to be the chooser of the story.

**Speaker 3** [00:37:55] Okay, thank you so much. I appreciate it.

**Diana Hill** [00:37:58] That's a good question, complicated question.



**Speaker 2** [00:38:05] Check in the chat if people would rather do the chat. We can watch for questions there. Mary Lynn, would you like to unmute yourself for a question?

**Speaker 4** [00:38:18] Yeah, thank you. Thanks, Diana. You just triggered a question for me because I feel like a rub between authenticity and wise effort. And you just gave an example on behalf of yourself. You know, it's a big world. There's a whole lot of people in it. People are complex. So maybe you are too much for some people. But maybe for other people, you are not. So what is more important, committing to your authentic self and finding relationships that are right for you or constantly trying to adjust yourself so that you can deal with all these different types of people who read things in tone into your email. And you know what I'm saying? I'm just curious to get your opinion on that. Thanks.

**Diana Hill** [00:39:12] Oh gosh, I'm such a both and answer. Both and, you know, both being authentic to who you are. This is what last week I was talking about sort of this genius energy of who you're being. You know, for me, emotionality and being very emotionally sensitive I would say is that's my genius. It's made me a great therapist, right? And there are certain situations where I also need to either protect myself fully showing that, right? Or I also need to, you know, I need to adapt. I'm in a board meeting or something and I need adapt to the context, right. So it's both and it's, as Rick says, no one to hold them and one to fold them. And that we can again be in that place of wisdom where it's not actually inauthentic for me. Not always show my emotional sensitivity, right? Or, but it actually is wise for me to, you know, to protect. So I'm curious if there's a specific example of that Marilyn that was coming up for you personally. No, okay, you're just asking about it. Yeah, authenticity. Yeah, it's a good question.

**Speaker 4** [00:40:31] I just wanted to say, I wasn't gonna bring up anything in particular because I didn't wanna get into a long diatribe. But when you completed your response, and I liked it, I think you're saying there is a rub. There is a robe. Of course. Because if you are totally 100% committed to being you, then you're also saying, but in certain situations, you may have to tone this down or change this about yourself or, you know. And so that to do both wise effort and authenticity operating at the same time, there is a rub there. So I appreciate your input. Thank you.

**Diana Hill** [00:41:15] Cecilia, did you have a question?

**Speaker 2** [00:41:17] Yeah, I'd like to point to Bernie's had a question for four minutes, says Diana, can you give some examples of parts that we may leave out?

**Diana Hill** [00:41:29] Oh, you're going IFS on us, parts work. The parts of us that Richard Swartz talks about sort of the exiles, right? That the parts of that we may leave out, parts of this that we feel shame around, maybe even moral regrets, things that we've done that we don't feel bad about, parts of US that we love. So I can think about in my clinical work, um, uh, people will experience extreme shame around maybe feelings that they have or experiences they have. And the way in which we respond to shame is by not looking at it, closing it up, putting it in the, you know, sort of the basement of our bodies and minds and we leave it out. And what shame really needs is to be opened up and aired out and, you now, help. So that could be, you know, trauma. It can be, actually even write about in the book about a medic who had a cancer and he had to have it cut out of his neck and he wouldn't touch his neck. He wouldn't it like in the shower or, you now, here's somebody who could like operate on bodies but he couldn't touch own neck because he... He hated it so much and he was so scared of it and so scared the fear associated with cancer. That's

a part that he left out. And you kind of know that about yourself. Like maybe you leave out your messy parts or the part of you that told a lie or the of you wants to be liked. You know, all those parts need to be brought back in.

**Speaker 2** [00:43:23] All right, thanks Diana. Did you wanna go to Cecilia? All right, Cecilia.

**Speaker 5** [00:43:31] Hi, Diana. Diana, I just bought your book and Rosemary's book as well. I like her. I love her. Why not get the book? Yes. So I'm excited and then I was excited that you talked a lot about relationships because that's kind of on my mind lately. I had been married for 15, no, 16 years and I liked what you said about all these stories that we have about why things are happening and are not happening. And so there's something that has been going on in my marriage for quite a while where we don't have like physical intimacy for years and years and I mean, it's been a long time. And I just, how do like, and I just wanna know like, how to I get that back and how do I, I think I can, I think at the part where I'm just like ready to let go of any story about it and just be like, okay, this is just what it is. It doesn't really even matter the story. It's more about wanting that back and really like yearning for that, that sense of intimacy. And ironically, I think that's why I've gravitated towards mindfulness meditation so much because I feel like when I'm, and I do a lot of like mindful self-compassion, focusing on the heart a lot. And so I feel that's how I create intimacy with myself. And then I also teach, you know, I volunteer teach. A group and I feel like my heart is so open to the group and you were talking about making a home for the group and that's what I feel I'm doing. Like I'm opening my heart. So I'm getting intimacy like in other ways. Those are like the adaptive ways, not the maladaptive ways. I don't know. Those are the good ways.

[00:45:17] The other ways maybe not so good. Like I was bingeing on this like teenage, it's like, it's for teenagers, but really it's not. It was like the show called the summer I turned pretty and it's about like romance and love and it just like, it just fulfilled me so much. It's a little unnerving that I'm like so into it because you know, I'm almost 50 and like this is a show about like, you know early twenties, teenagers, early twenties. But like, I think that's more of like a maladaptive way I'm trying to meet my needs. And so ultimately I would like to have more to see with my husband and I've been trying just to like go really slow, like, okay, hold his hand maybe in the car. What does that, you now feel like give him a hug and stuff like that. So I don't know. He's not into going to counseling, self-improvement work mindfulness, nothing like that, you know so it's basically, I'm on my own here.

**Diana Hill** [00:46:11] Okay, so I first want to just say, I think you have it's just a lot of courage to share that here and I appreciate that it shows your vulnerability and your openness and your open heart and your, as you were describing your capacity for intimacy and openness in lots of places. And then this is like the hurt spot. Like why not here? And you're on the right track of your creating the bridge line of opening up, you know you're throwing out the thread and then you got to let it stick. And then sometimes it's ballooning. Sometimes it's making the leap, you know like a lot of times in, I think in therapy and clinical work, we think about small steps and I think it's very important to do small steps but sometimes it is a leap where we step into this is something that I really want. I want to tell you, this is something that's really important to me because I love you and I'm gonna be super vulnerable and open up like big, big time with you in this and describing the why behind it. And with physical intimacy, it's an interesting thing in that we need to both make the advances and show that we are open and that we're safe. And so we can show that we're open and safe with our bodies. And you're right about dropping the story because the stories are just, they're just clutter. Especially in a relationship, we collect a lot of clutter

of old stories and we're both changing over time but we still are stuck in thinking that they're the same but both of you have changed. So I guess I would encourage that very traditional like couples therapy would be making sort of a hierarchy of things that you're gonna try. That you work up to in terms of intimacy. Without going into more detail in a public setting, I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

**Speaker 5** [00:48:13] Thank you. It gives me something to think about and encouragement. I think it gives me encouragement, if anything. So that's a positive thing.

**Diana Hill** [00:48:23] And that you're not alone. A lot of long-term relationships don't have sexual relationships. And it doesn't mean that you can't. I mean, sometimes again, it's like, there's this line in Dochen about like, it's so close you can see it. It's so simple, you can comprehend it. That sometimes it's just one little step away. So that's my wish for you.

**Speaker 5** [00:48:48] Thank you.

**Speaker 6** [00:48:49] I suppose we squeeze in one more. Ashola Peterson has had his hand up for quite a while.

**Speaker 2** [00:48:56] Yeah, if you wanna do that, we can. Or we can call it a night. I apologize to not have time for everything in the chat also. Let's squeeze in. You're called Diana.

**Diana Hill** [00:49:09] We'll do one more and I'll do like a ninja move of like one sentence answer. See what I can do. How simple can I make it? Okay, see what we got.

**Speaker 2** [00:49:18] Ashola Peterson.

**Speaker 6** [00:49:20] I'm here. Sorry, I can't have my video on. You know, I'm going into this family party of the country with, I'm gonna feel my family members, my siblings, and nephews for the first time we're gonna be together. And my parents will be there. All I see, I wanna try to enjoy the party, right? And all the celebrations. But all I see right now is like, so much untreated trauma. And I'm trying to relax my body and enjoy the relationships with. My dear ones. I've done a lot of work on myself throughout the years to notice that this is what's happening in my family. So I just wanna be open to them more so than closed up. And be like, oh, you guys have so much work to do, you know? Including myself, it's ongoing, but I'm trying to figure out there's something you can help me with. It's open to the relationships wherever they are, right? With my five siblings. One of them I dearly love and the other two I have made good amends with. One, I still feel scared to be around with, but it's okay. He's like a Hulk sometimes. And then so forth, we're five siblings, five children. I'm the middle, the love child.

**Diana Hill** [00:50:44] So here's my, I'm just gonna be more than a sentence, but here's a recommendation. Is, you know, basketball players at night, they imagine themselves in a tricky situation and being able to maneuver through it and make the shot. And they practice that in their minds. So what I would love for you to do is before bed for the next few nights, before you go, imagine yourself walking into your home. Imagine your siblings being there. Imagine your family there. And imagine you showing up the way that you wanna show up. Just imagine it. And when you do that, you're practicing it and practice it and practice and practice. So that when you go, you can remember, I've already done this. And you can go in with a little bit more, you know, a little more strength because it's your

values and your heart that I'm hearing wants to lead. And it's really scary and it's hard. So that would be my little like action tip, a little bit of wise effort with the mind.