

Ep #12 Attachment Theory & Its Hidden Impacts on Your Marriage



Full Episode Transcript

Hi, y'all. I'm back. So, the last month and a half, I have been so deeply in my personal journey and you know, I'd really say I've been going through what I would call an awakening for the last probably two and a half years now. Part of that awakening has been just these really deep dives, trying to figure out how the world works for me. Why I'm here and there is this whole other journey. That I've been on that I've really only shared with a few other of my very, very closest friends, because it's just such an intimate, vulnerable journey for me to be on. But I just have to say, what's so beautiful about this journey is knowing a part of me knows deeply eventually I will get to share it with all of you. And the premise of this journey that I've been on is, how to live a very soul led life. The life that is rather than being led by your mind, it's led by your deepest soul calls. And I will tell you, it is intense and you have to be really brave. Which is why I think right now, because it's so raw and I'm in the middle of the process of so much of it, it doesn't feel necessarily like the right timing to just bring it out and share it with everybody.

But I wanted to explain a little bit. Where I am when I'm gone because being a business owner, especially, I don't know if it's different than other cultures, but here in America, there is this pressure and this feeling of like needing to always be producing, creating, giving and the reality for me is that I have these ebbs and flows. And actually, for those of you that have this deck, if you don't all link it, because I cannot recommend it enough. This is one of my favorite Oracle decks of all time, so gorgeous. It's called the wild unknown archetypes deck by Kim Kranz. And I have started this practice probably over the last year where I listen on the pattern, that's an app that I've also talked about that I just adore. They have these new moon and full moon audios and I'll listen to them each new moon and full moon. I'll set intentions, you know, just kind of leaning into that space for the next two weeks. And then I pull a spread from the wild archetype deck. And this recent new moon the archetype that was representing me is called the mystic. And y'all. I just can't with this card. It's so beautiful. And it was just so touching after, you know, the month and a half I've been through, which has been very mystical. Very deep. To have this card just reassure me and to feel so deeply connected to it, you know, in the card, it talks about how the mystic is always leaning into those unanswerable questions and being willing to sit with the dark. And it's beautiful. Like the analogy of Shiva. Swallowing, poison and holding it in his mouth to transmute it into light.

And that is so probably for my, the majority of my life, a big piece of what my journey has been. Understanding deep pain, deep trauma. And through holding and staying with it, being able to transmute it into light.

So, I wanted to share a little bit of that with y'all just so you know, what's kind of going on behind the scenes because sometime in the future it will feel right for me to really get to just. Take you all into this deep dive of that. Beautiful. other work that I'm doing. But for right now it's really been me embracing and loving and giving myself permission to let my energy and my creation flow naturally, instead of forcing it. And the mystic that I am just needs periods of time, where I'm not outwardly creating or sharing. Of course, you know, Even in those moments, the beautiful thing is I'm still working with my clients.

I'm still engaged with the people in my life, but just know, when I disappear for periods of time, that's where I am. And thank you all for understanding. And hopefully. I thought about it yesterday I was like, actually I think this is such a beautiful way to kind of break out of the mold of what I feel like what is expected of you of like, yeah, you've got to launch an episode every week that is like, oh, just, you know, go guys. That is a fuck ton of content and I really like producing content when I'm excited and there's energy and I want to talk about something rather than just putting it out so that I can check a box. And actually I feel I'm kind of proud to be adding a voice to this space that I think as each one of us honors our own cycles and chooses to live lives that are at the speed that each of us needs, which for me is typically a lot slower. I find the world is way too fast. I like to slow things down a lot, I think it gives others permission to do that as well. So, I'm hoping that taking this and sharing that this is going to be my approach with the podcast that it'll also give you all permission to check in with where you're filling your ebbs and flows. And when you're in your abs being gentle and not continuing to just push, push, push. So, with that beautifully shared, it feels so good to just like update y'all and

say hello. And I'm so happy to be back for a little bit for this next flow that's coming through me.

I had an incredible coaching session on Monday. It was really, really fucking hard. I had a lot of intense emotions that had just like, kind of culminated on Monday. But in feeling and acknowledging those and really like bravely showing up for myself. I had this like big somatic opening in my body. Just kind of felt like walking across a threshold, like. I've been walking towards the threshold for a month and a half now and it finally kind of just released. And we moved through it. And since then there has been this gorgeous flow, just, you know, the universe just coming through me and lots of new ideas and things that I want to be talking about.

So, to start off, where I felt the most drawn was this book that I read probably. Two, maybe three years ago. It's called attached, by Dr. Amir Levine and Rachel SF Heller. And. Y'all, I think this book should be required reading in middle school. That is how important understanding attachment theory is to all of your relationships. We're going to focus mainly on, of course the romantic relationship. The relationship with your spouse in this episode but, oh, it's just, it's huge. So, um, I'm going to give you a lot. I'm actually gonna give you quite a bit of content in this episode explaining stuff, but there is loads in the book, so I'm going to link it in the show notes. Definitely give it a read. It's amazing!

So, one of the things that the book was so groundbreaking for when I read it the first time was because at the time I was dating. And goodness, this was probably yeah two or three years ago. I just had kind of started dating after being divorced and I was like, what is going on? I am this smart, confident, gorgeous, I would have it together for the most part when I was single. And then depending on the partner, I would start dating. I would move into these like crazy spaces and, you know, even looking back on my marriage, ultimately like ended up losing my sense of self completely. And this book explains a lot, especially for anxious attachment styles, which I would say the majority of my clients are, and I definitely am. Why that happens to you? And I think they even say later on something about like, you're only as stable as the relationship you're in.

And for those of you like me, that feel at least when I was in my marriage, I felt super crazy. I felt like my partner was the stable and I was the crazy one. When you start understanding it through the lens of attachment. It relieves so much of the shame and guilt that you might have around. Why am I acting this way? Why am I reacting this way? Why do I feel completely out of control? It probably comes down to attachment and possibly mismatched attachment styles. In your marriage.

So, I want to start off by talking about the three different types of attachment styles. So, there is anxious. Avoidant. And secure. And while I go through each of these, I really want you to be introspective and to notice which one you think you might be. And which one you think your spouse might be. So with each of those different types they have these great little phrases that kind of encapsulate each one of them in the book. For anxious attachment, the phrase is living

with a sixth sense of danger. Yeah, so accurate. From personal experience, anxious attachment is my factory setting from childhood.

So, the other thing to understand is your attachment style comes out of your relationships with your parents in childhood. And how you felt loved or not loved seen or not seen by them. Growing up for me with a narcissistic mom, it was super important to always be subconsciously taking the emotional temperature of the home and her, especially because I just, I never knew when I was going to be in trouble, it could come just out of the blue. I remember actually one evening where I'd had a bunch of friends over, like guys, girls were all hanging out. And I had my girlfriends were kind of just like in a bit of a mood and kind of, and I was like, okay, cool.

I went off and hung out with my guy friends and just flirted and had fun. So, the evening ends all of them leave and I am so excited to go like share how much fun I've had with my mom. And of course, my mom was there. It was at our home. She was around watching everything. And so imagine this feeling of like, you're going to go talk to your best friend and you are so excited to just be like, oh my God, this was so much fun. And as I come into her room, just straight out the gate, she looks at me and she's like, It was something, I can't remember the exact words, but it was basically like, you are a slut.

And I remember. Feeling just I mean utter, like you go from happy, safe to utter, Oh My God, how did I get this so wrong? Kind of feeling. And obviously instant, like terror, fear, I've obviously done something wrong. I didn't know what I did, now I've got to manage this person who's really, really upset with me and although in that instance, my mom did not hit me physically, she was absolutely backhanding me to the face emotionally. And what it taught me, like, experiences like this, where, where she seemed to have some kind of interior intel on me and who I really was, it began to really teach me that I couldn't trust my interpretations of the world or myself and that I always needed to be trying to read deeper into what hidden meanings might be, or the external perspective of the people around me. Actually, while I was researching and writing this episode, I was so happy to realize, previous to this, for most of my life, I have lived it through an external perspective. Like always seeing myself from the outside and always thinking, you know what somebody else is thinking about me. And it's really only been in the last two to three years that that has like gone away. I really don't have this out of body watching myself and kind of critiquing myself anymore. And the biggest thing I just have to share it because it was such a huge win.

The biggest example I had of this recently was when I went to burning man last year and I'm getting to wear these like, very like sexy and fun, just very out there for me outfits. I really stretched my, and the beautiful thing was it wasn't a stretch for me at the time. That's what was so wild, but, got to wear these just gorgeous, sexy outfits that. I didn't once while I was wearing them, have any kind of like, oh, do I look good? What is somebody thinking? It wasn't even noticing the people looking at me because I was just so present and into my experience. And enjoying what I was doing. So, just so you all know and we'll talk about this a little bit later, these things can change, right? Even if it's that way for you right now, through learning about ourselves, through understanding our trauma, our history, our past and you know, especially if

we have CPTSD right now, learning how to manage those things. We can live very different lives than we have been currently.

Okay, So, I want you in in talking about that and why I shared that example for my mom, it's because I want you to notice as well. If you had a narcissistic parent growing up then you may tend towards a more anxious attachment style. So, some of the things those anxious attachments can do more than others, is they're able to read facial cues much faster and they jump to conclusions more quickly. So, for me, this has looked like when I've been dating, I can pick up on habits and patterns really early in the relationship and it's, once again, it's not happening on a conscious level. It's just what I'm doing. So, this looks like knowing how often do they text me? How often are we talking, seeing each other? How much are they initiating, wanting to see me versus me initiating.

And I'll kind of get this like baseline level. And then if any of that changes. We're talking like you know, he's been texting me every morning and then there's a morning where it takes him like three or four hours to text me. Immediately my anxious attachment picks up on it and my brain will start to analyze, like okay, what's going on? Where is he? Has something changed? Did I do something wrong? It doesn't do that as much anymore but definitely when I first started dating holy crap, y'all anxious attachment was so, so aggressive. And actually, I take that back. It, does do it. The differences, I don't date as many avoidant partners anymore that trigger it. But this can also look like knowing when you're calling them and knowing when someone sends your call to voicemail, based on the number of rings you hear, like, this is the amazingness of how sixth sense we are as anxious attachment and also, you know, for those of you, I want you to realize too, as I'm describing a lot of this, some of you may not because you've been in a marriage for maybe, you know, 5, 10, 15 years notice that these may not be hitting as strongly because it's sometimes easier to see it when you're dating someone in the very beginning.

So, I'm going to explain this a little bit more in just a second but I want you to realize that one of the things that happens when you have this anxious attachment and you go into this really quick reading a facial cue, jumping to conclusions is you then struggle with effective communication because you're kind of like flooding all the time and by flooding, I mean, you're getting dysregulated, you're emotionally activated pretty quickly.

The way anxious attachments handle that is instead of effectively communicating about it, they use things called protest behaviors instead. So, let me explain what protest behaviors are. The book, it says protest behaviors are any action that tries to reestablish contact with your partner and get their attention. So, this can look like calling, emailing, texting excessively, driving past their home or workplace hoping to run into them, keeping score, acting hostile, like when you get up and you leave while they're talking and this is the piece where I want you to realize, So when you're dating somebody, these protests behaviors might be a little more obvious, right?

The whole like driving past their work, I have totally done that. Y'all when I was dating in high school. For sure. But once you get married, that may not be happening as much. Why I want you to realize is, in some cases when your protest behavior is no longer working and not that it

really worked even probably from the beginning especially if you're dating an avoidant. You can get to a point where you just stop protesting at all.

I definitely saw this in my marriage. I would use protests behaviors, and then eventually I just became so discouraged by how little it was helping. And I've watched this in a lot of my clients too. They will protest, they will protest, they will protest and then eventually you just get to a point where you're like, we'll fuck this, this Isn't working and it makes me think of, you know, research that I've heard around, you know, children. Who babies when they're crying if they are left long enough without being soothed, without someone coming, when they cry eventually they can get to a point where they just stopped crying. And that does not mean they are not still distressed and like hurting and wanting connection but they are so discouraged by the lack of any kind of empathic response to their cries, that they will just stop crying.

So notice, some of you may definitely be at that point. Perhaps you know, you were fighting in your marriage for a lot, trying to speak up, trying to have an in. It was not fixing anything. Your partner's not changing. There's no movement forward and you may just get to a point where it's like, okay, we're just going to survive this. Some of the other protests behaviors can be rolling your eyes, threatening to leave while hoping that they'll actually stop you, you know, you're threatening it, but you're not actually planning on acting on it, acting busy or unapproachable, making plans to try and create jealousy or telling your partner about someone who hit on you that day. These are all little ways that as an anxious attachment you're seeking intimacy.

Unfortunately. Did you know, depending on the type of partner that you have, especially if you have an avoidant partner, this will create the opposite effect and I'm going to talk later about, you know, Okay so if you're going, oh shit, I'm an anxious attachment don't worry. I gotcha. We're going to talk about it later on what we do to heal this.

So, next type though. We are going to talk about avoidance. And the catchphrase for them is keeping love at arm's length. With avoidance, they tend to idealize self-sufficiency and really look down on dependency. So, they will have a very kind of free spirit type. I actually spoke with someone yesterday who was talking about how, you know, her husband, when she met him was a, what did she say? Like a confirmed bachelor or something like just very set in like his bachelor ways. And as soon as she said that I was like, oh, I bet he's probably an avoidant attachment. They tend to repress rather than express their emotions.

So avoidant attachments, you know, they're going to pull back repress what they're feeling, they tend to think really negatively about their partners and can see them as like needy or overly dependent but deep down, they're doing that to ignore their own needs and fears in the relationship. So, where anxious attachments have more of a protesting behavior that they use, avoidants use what are called deactivating strategies, and this is where they're creating distance in the relationship. So some of these would be staying with someone, even though you're not ready to commit to them, focusing on really small imperfections that you're noticing like, oh, I hate the way he eats or, that's really annoying the way he laughs like that, avoidance

will fantasize about past partners, They will pull away when things are going well. This is where, you know, if you were dating someone like you'd have this really amazing, connected fun date, and then they wouldn't call for several days after.

Avoidance tend to want to form relationships with improbable futures, which would be, you know, dating someone who's already married. I know a friend of mine who probably at that time had a very avoidant attachment style and like specifically wanted to date women who were married because it meant that wasn't going anywhere, and that felt really safe for him. So, I'm going to talk about this more coming up, but I just want to input here. I definitely have also been an avoidant. What? Yeah so you can also be mixes of both of these styles and I have absolutely, especially coming out of my divorce, I moved into much more of an avoidant attachment style. Coming off the trauma of being in my marriage for 12 years feeling super disconnected. Like I said that, that trauma of having all these protests behaviors and not having them be met, I way moved into a like self-sufficient I don't need anybody, I'm going to do it on my own, I only want a partner to like, You know, be some fun in my life, I'm a free spirit. And definitely repressing emotions, of, you know, loneliness or desiring connection or desiring to be held and pushing kind of more into a I've got this, I'm fine kind of feeling. So just keeping that in mind that you can experience both.

Now, the final type, which there's part of me. That's like, man, I wish I could hear from all of you right now I'd love to know how many of you, resonate as each of these different types. But the final piece is, secure attachment. And the little catchphrase for it is getting comfortably close. So secure partners are, and I love this. I'm going to read it right from the book, "They are attuned to their partner's emotional and physical cues and they know how to respond to them. Their emotional system doesn't get too riled up in the face of a threat as with the anxious. But it doesn't get shut down either as with an avoidant." So secure is, this is gonna blow your mind y'all. If you are an anxious or an avoidant I am like, whoa, who are these people? Because this is definitely not how I was raised or what I saw, you know, modeled in my parents, my grandparents. Secures are programmed to expect their partners to be loving and responsive and they don't worry very much about losing their partner's love. So, they are not. You know, where us as an anxious, we're expecting our partners to be critical or judgmental and we're worried that they're going to leave us at any time, this is not the case for secures. They're like, yeah, of course my partner loves me. Of course my partner's going to respond when I need them and I'm not worried about them leaving. They are extremely comfortable with intimacy and closeness and have an uncanny ability to communicate their needs and respond to their partner's needs and you'll find the section in the book.

If you're wanting to look back over these highly recommend pulling this section up in the book, they aren't as sensitive to negative cues in the world. Do you remember how our anxious or like we pick up on facial cues really fast? They actually talk about research in the book that secures, they just aren't, their brains are just not as quick to pick up negative cues. During fights, they don't feel the need to act defensively or to injure or punish their partner, which helps prevent escalating. So also, while I'm listing these, you know, maybe check in with your partner and. Noticing if your partner has any of these qualities or not? "They are not threatened by criticism,

they're mentally flexible, they don't play games and they want closeness and believe others do as well, they're quick to forgive because they assume their partner's intentions are good, they're inclined to view sex and emotional intimacy is one they treat their partners with love and respect, they expect others to be responsive and loving towards them and so they are responsive and loving with their partners. And they can sensitively empathically and coherently discuss their emotions with you.”

Right, Y'all I'm like, oh my God, this sounds amazing and as you might guess, the ideal partner to be paired with is a secure. And In the book it actually talks about how it's like the most painful pairing for an anxious attachment is to end up dating in avoidant. And you'll even if you get the book on page 93, there's this beautiful list that talks about like, why it's such a bad fit for you as an anxious, to be paired with an avoidant, because basically everything you want is the very thing that triggers and pushes them away.

You want emotional intimacy; they want emotional distance. Versus an anxious with a secure where you have a partner who wants all these things like doesn't feel the need to act defensively, doesn't want to play games, wants closeness.

With those three types now kind of in your brain. I want to tell you about one of the most fascinating things I learned in the book like this was what stood out to me the most and it was that your attachment can change. So, for 70 to 75% of the population their original attachment style from childhood will remain consistent throughout their entire life but the remaining 30 to 25% of the population can change.

Y'all that means you can go from being an anxious attachment to a secure. And they say that that change is attributed to romantic relationships in adulthood. That are so powerful. They actually revise our most basic beliefs and attitudes toward connectedness.

Y'all say what? I mean, come on. As someone who came from a pretty messed up family dynamic and as you know, as the last has finally in the last couple months learned about CPTSD acknowledged and admitted that I have it. Knowing that this is possible is Huge. They are saying I can change my attachment style through secure partnerships. Like sign me up. I am in. I want it. And I mean, really, I do think, although I didn't have, you know, the research and the books to back it up. That was a huge piece of why I got divorced, was this feeling of, I just think there's someone else out there that I could heal in the ways I need to with. And some part of me knew it was not my spouse.

To illustrate how this all works, how these different dynamics of being anxiously attached, dating an avoidant, or being anxiously attached and dating another anxious attachment. How they all work I'm going to share some of my personal journey and my stories over the past four years of dating, because If you guys are like me, I love stories. I love getting to hear about other people's experiences. And obviously this is just going to be like a very tiny snapshot of these dynamics in my own life but I do think it's going to help you be able to take what I've just been saying and actually see the applications and how it can help you in looking at your relationship

with your spouse. Understanding how those dynamics affect your ability to heal and of course, understanding all of this, gaining this knowledge helps you while you're considering divorce, because you have to know this is so important to understand these pieces, to be able to make a really solid well-informed decision.

So, to start with, as I've said previously, I have overwhelmingly, like, if you look at all the people I've dated statistically over my lifetime I have been an anxious attachment in the majority of my previous relationships and I definitely think there is some element I haven't fully worked it out just yet, but it does seem to be an element where those who seem to have anxious attachment do tend to be more codependent. And those who have avoidant attachment contend to have a greater pool of people who would be on the narcissistic personality disorder, spectrum. So, keep that in mind.

I haven't seen research that actually like completely correlates those but that's what I have seen and kind of put together for myself. So, you know, going back I was thinking while I was doing this episode, really have I ever really dated someone's secure and I could only think, you know, out of the like four relationships I had in high school. There was one boyfriend that I dated, who I dated for the longest I'd ever dated anybody at the time. It was like nine months, and I was surprised. I was like, oh my God. Looking back over those months, those were seriously like the best months of my teenage life. I was so much more confident, so much happier, just in love with myself and life. I felt safe. And that was in my junior year and then my senior year was a shit show after he left.

Oh my God. It was tough. It was really tough for me. Felt very, very lonely. Once I got into college, once again, it also was just a lot of dating avoidance looking back, I'm like, yep, that was lots of triggering of my anxious attachment and actually the one guy that was probably the most secure I remember dating him and just feeling really good.

And then I sent a picture to my mom. And she did not think he was attractive enough for me and was basically like, you need to dump him. And then y'all I got married the summer after my freshman year, so I did not have a ton of dating experience, actually really hardly any dating experience. With secures and especially no dating experience, understanding what I was looking for and that I was looking for a secure. And actually with my ex-husband and I, I think we kind of traded off being anxious or avoidantly attached in the marriage. Probably in the beginning of that marriage, I would say he was probably more securely attached and I was more of an anxious but then we would vacillate. We were just all over the place as far as once we really got further into the marriage, I would say we just would trade off being anxious and avoidant until finally, by the end of the relationship, I would say I had become more of the avoidant and he was more of the anxious. Which is why I'm sharing that because I want you guys to realize it can vacillate quite a bit in your marriage.

You can find that in the beginning, you might've been the one with all the protest behaviors, seeking intimacy, asking for connection, wanting more time with him wanting to, you know, come on, come on, come on, I need more. And over the years may have shifted into more of

the avoidant. Like I'm just done, I don't want to be near you, I'm just going to get through this kind of more of like a parallel marriage situation and now that I know about my PTSD and my childhood abuse and even his own family's trauma as well. I really don't fault either of us it's like we were trying to build a skyscraper together, which is what a marriage is like, you're trying to build something pretty technical and beautiful and all these different pieces. It's like, we were trying to build that with explosive landmines on the property, every two to three feet.

Looking back, The amount of emotional flashbacks, I'm having, the amount of triggers, the lack of resources and tools he had to, it all helped me through those that's you know, it's really hard to build something when there are triggers everywhere and you're spending the majority of the relationship dysregulated. So yeah, looking back, I'm like, that was always kind of gonna be a steep uphill climb for both of us.

So, fast forwarding into coming off my divorce in 2020, I was so beautifully just wide open and eager to learn more about myself and to just play and explore in dating and little did I know what I was going to get out of that was so much coaching around my anxious attachment because that's, that's really what that first like year to year and a half of dating was.

So, the scenario for me was like dating would go well for the first two months and then something would happen and looking back, I would get activated and I would use protests behaviors. I would seek to reestablish connection, or I'd want more, or maybe, you know, something wouldn't happen, but I would just be looking for more intimacy and connection. Because I was predominantly dating avoidance without knowing it, which if you go read the book, it's so fascinating, they'll talk about why avoidance are actually like, they are the highest percentage of people you're going to end up meeting in the dating pool because they tend to break things off, they go back into the dating pool more easily, whereas secure tend to be in relationships and very rarely leave them. Or if they do, they usually get back into another relationship. So, here I am not realizing I am dating a lot of avoidants and when this whole little scenario would play out, they would either leave or they wouldn't respond. It was a lot. I remember at that time, having to do so much coaching and I'm so proud of myself for doing it around owning who I was, because the tendency, when someone keeps leaving you is to think there's something wrong with you and to want to get smaller and to want to change for them.

I know a lot of you are going to be resonating with this right now in your marriages, but I really didn't want that. I wanted to be with somebody who loved me for me. So, the work in dating all of these avoidants, when they would leave was to not abandon myself, was to not shame or judge myself like, oh, I shouldn't have said that because it made them leave. It was to keep coming back to, if me being vulnerable and asking for more intimacy or looking for more open communication means they leave, that's okay. They're not for me and just keeps showing up as me. What I noticed as I was stating is with each person that I dated and fell in love with, each next person was better than the last. Really looking back over I'm like I was, you know, moving from each partner was getting less and less avoidant.

Until in, 2022 I had a relationship where the partner that I had, I would say had a more, when we first started dating, we came into the relationship very secure because I've noticed for myself that when I'm single and really leaning in to taking care of loving myself, I get more securely attached just in general. And then, usually at that point, I'll meet someone, right? Because when you're totally in love with yourself, that's when somebody shows up. And through that relationship is where I'll watch my attachment style kind of change.

So, in this dynamic, I think we're both pretty secure at the beginning. Then through the relationship, he moved into a more anxious attachment style than me. And this is the first time I dated someone that was more anxiously attached than I was. And what I saw, was that over the span of that relationship, I ended up heavily in avoidant attachment by the end. Wild. Right?

So, I want to kind of break that down. The other crazy thing is like that the relationship started out so good. I mean, I was I can't tell you how lovely it is to date someone who is more of an anxious when you've been an anxious dating avoidance for so long, and then you get to date someone who's more of an anxious, like you. And you both want intimacy and you both want closeness and you both want to be together all the time. Oh, it is the best and I was really all in on this and experiencing these levels of love and trust. And just like, fill your heart up, I'm so crazy in love, I can't think straight kind of vibes. That I really thought. Okay, if you love someone this much, it's all gonna work out. Like it's got to and we made it past the three month mark and we did actually end up dating for an entire year.

But looking back now, I can see really clearly how, what ultimately sunk us was our attachment styles and having undiagnosed CPTSD. So, to expound because you all may be having these patterns happening in your marriages as well. In CPTSD, as I've explained, I have emotional flashbacks happening. When I say an emotional flashback, this is not like I'm being flashed back into a specific memory of my childhood, that's not what's happening. What it means is I'm experiencing a trigger that flashes me back into feeling the way I felt as a child which is feeling overwhelmed, completely flooded, catastrophizing and super terrified, unable to really function. Imagine, you know, I'm having these emotional flashbacks happening when you have CPTSD you have this happening and they're dysregulating your nervous system.

So pretty regularly you are almost always in fight flight freeze or fawn mode. Now, if you don't know what's happening and how to manage and reregulate your nervous system through those emotional flashbacks? You can get so flashbacked that you end up in a state of regression. Which for me feels like being completely out of my body. I feel really fuzzy. Most of the time I'm dissociated. I'm overwhelmed. This is when I'll have the suicidal ideations that we talked about in the CPTSD episode, come in. I'll need to buffer a lot. So, I'll see myself scrolling a lot on Instagram or wanting to sleep all the time because it just feels so uncomfortable being in your body and I will tell you guys, regression is really pretty miserable and very terrifying because if you get deep enough into it, you can forget what you were like previously and it's really hard because I can't show up like I want to with my kids or like my business suffers, I tend to isolate. I get really in my head.

So, with that in mind, now imagine you're experiencing all of that without knowing actually what's going on while, trying to be in a relationship with someone. Y'all it is so overwhelming! I'm looking back now, what I saw happening in this previous relationship is that because we didn't know, to be honest, I think we each probably have CPTSD because he has his own trauma and loss. What we didn't know is that we were just ending up triggering the fuck out of each other, over and over and over, and that's creating trauma. That is real time trauma. That's happening which heads up, is probably happening for a lot of you in your marriages. If you have the same patterns. So, what would happen is when he'd go into his anxious attachment, protesting behaviors of like excessively calling or texting me or getting really angry and kind of hostile. I would react by using avoidant deactivating strategies to keep him at arm's length by pulling away and distancing or you know, just it was too much, didn't want to deal with it, need my space. And at the time I knew I was not showing up in the ways I most wanted, and he could feel my pulling away which of course only activates him more, which I get, because I know what it's like to be an anxious attachment but without understanding these dynamics, we just did not have the tools to be able to work through it together.

Actually, you know, in admitting to myself that I have CPTSD in the last couple of months it actually, I've realized I've made kind of a decision for myself that moving forward where previously I was kind of like I'll date anybody, everybody like Universe, send it in. I want all the experiences. I have decided to be more intentional moving forward and only date partners that are secure because I've gotten more clear about like, what is my goal in relationship? And my goal in relationship is to heal, I want to know and learn how to have secure, healthy, really connected, attached relationships and to do that, I need a partner who is already from the beginning of the relationship, more securely attached than I am. And, you know, they'll talk, I think, in the CPTSD book, he talks about that these are partners who, you know, either through being raised in more securely attached households or through doing their own work have gotten to a place of secure attachment.

So, one of the other really interesting dynamics I'm going to talk about, oh, newness. Wait, So first, I want to tell you guys, so in thinking back over this, I was like, oh my God. Okay, so now we know. I'm one of the 30% that changes my attachment style depending on who I'm dating, because here I dated all these avoidants where I was very anxious. I go and date somebody who's more anxiously attached and I go avoidant. And this was reconfirmed this last year in 2023. So, I had broken up with the partner I dated for a year and in the fall of last year, I met a couple other partners both of who I would say have a more avoidant attachment style than me. With one of those partners, I dated him for a few months. And y'all, I was shocked. I mean, I hadn't been an anxious attachment for a couple of years by that point. Cause you know, I dated this partner where I was more avoidant and then I'd had a good six months of not really dating anybody. I was floored to see how quickly my anxious attachment came back. I mean the first like month and a half were awesome and then by the second month, it was starting to like aggressively overwhelm me and I was turning from this resilient, confident, like, babe, that had totally crushed it at burning man because remember at burning man, I had not been dating anybody. I went to burning man single. So, I had this like, remember this reservoir I told you

when I'm single, I tend to be able to become more securely attached. I was going from that, into this over-analyzing highly emotional and second-guessing everything person.

In rereading the book for this episode, I was so relieved to have them mention this. They said in the book over and over that that happens. That goes back to that statement I said earlier, this whole like you're only as troubled as the relationship you're in. And it was wild, I was losing my shit over a week. Like at the very end, there was this week where his communication just dropped off drastically and my mind was all over the place, it was really hard to function, I was really stressed and dysregulated, lots of big flashbacks to how I'd felt with guys that I dated early on after my divorce. And one of the things I'm most proud of is that, where in the past, I would have tried to work through it previously with an avoidant partner and even like, as much as I loved and still adore this human so much, cause that's the crazy thing, right? Even if somebody's got more of an avoidant attachment style, it doesn't mean you don't still have deep feelings for this person. Like I was talking to a client yesterday who's definitely in the same dynamic, she's more anxious, he's more avoidant and she's like, I deeply love him. And I was like, yeah. I get it. I do. I still deeply love the partner that I dated for a year. It doesn't mean you don't love this person but loving someone and whether they're actually healthy for your nervous system are two different things.

I'm just so grateful because thank God at that point, you know, I'd watched myself for a week, just become really dysregulated and a part of me knew like, no, no, no. I made this very sound call to end it and to let both of us find just matches that were better. You know, just naturally organically better for us. Neither one of us was wrong. I just realized at that point that what was happening with me was me shifting back into anxious attachment and instead of, oh, we can work through this, I knew, no, I just need to call it.

So, with this in mind, right? Like what is an anxious attachment gal to do then? We've got all these avoidants in the dating pool. And in the book, it says, and then I'm going to quote it.

“Being anxious means that she thrives on intimate, supportive relationships that are stable and long lasting and that uncertainty and emotional unavailability get her activated and preoccupied. Or in a word miserable. She would also have known that certain people, namely avoidants intensify her worries and feelings of inadequacy while others secures pacify them.”

I've got you all the way up to this beautiful cliffhanger and I'm going to leave you guys until next week because I'm going to use a whole other episode, this next episode, I'm going to record I'm going to go into depth, talking about this idea that I've had for a long time, that through learning about CPTSD and learning about attachment theory, I've had confirmed that there are certain people that you can heal more easily with, Hint, hint, secures and sometimes your spouse, isn't one of them. So next week I'll be diving into that, and I'm definitely sharing. I'm really excited to talk more about my recent experience with a new partner that I'm dating and getting to date someone who I feel like for the first time is more securely attached to me. It is mind blowing y'all. So, that's all I got for you this week.

Also, super exciting, I'm so delighted to announce this. For those of you that have been considering coaching with me previously, the only offer I had, which is still my favorite offer and as many of my clients who've gone through, it can tell you it's phenomenal, my coaching package of coaching with me for three months. I have now added though 90-minute coaching intensives. I'm so excited to be offering this because for a while, I've wanted to find a way to have those of you that maybe can't commit to a three-month program still being able to get help. So, these 90-minute intensives are so awesome. I no longer offer free mini sessions. Some of you may have experienced those with me back when I first started coaching but they are an expanded form of that where over that 90-minutes, we really talk about, where you're at in your marriage right now, what's not working. We talk about where you want to be instead, what's that future you most desire and then we identify what are the obstacles that are blocking you from moving from where you're at now in to what you most want and I, no joke have watched this format just get incredible in one session kind of breakthroughs for women.

I actually did somebody, it was so much fun yesterday. She must've found a link to my mini session, I believe probably through Instagram. In fact, I need to reach back out to her and find out where she found it. Because I've shut down those mini-session links. I thought I had shut them down pretty thoroughly, but she came through on my calendar and we did this exact format, of course it was shorter because we were only doing it in the 30 to 45 minutes. But at the end of that session, she was like, oh my God, I feel so much better and it was really amazing because she had shared stuff. She ended up telling me she'd shared stuff with me that she's never told anybody else in her life. I was like, oh my fuck, this is complete and utter magic.

So, I'm really happy that I've finally realized I can also be offering this, that I don't just have to work with somebody. You know, ideally, takes at least three plus months to be able to get someone to a really confident place of being able to say yes or no and make that decision but in these sessions, They give you just a lot of clarity and a lot of overview for where you're at at this exact moment. So, um, I will link those in the show notes as well. I'm really excited to get, to start meeting more of you that are listening through those.

I just highly recommend them. I think they're just a great opportunity to come to a safe open space for those 90 minutes, with someone who has no skin in the game. I mean, you guys know me if you've listened to my podcast long enough, like I am so here for you owning your truth. That's all I really want for you and a place where you can just download it all, speak it all out, hear it all out.

And then the gift is, with my incredible, I'm so proud of my coach brain and the work I've done to be able to just see and identify patterns. And what's blocking you, by the end of it, we know pretty clearly like where your work is going forward. So, take a look at those and I will see you all next week. Till then.