

Episode 45 - When Conversations Get Messy: Learning, Repair, and Coming Back with Care Transcript

[00:00:00] Hi everybody. Welcome back. It's Coach Emily B and I'm gonna tell you right off the bat, today's episode is going to be probably a little messier. Might bring some emotion up for you to listen to. It might even bring emotion up for me, but I do think it's important, so I'm going to bring it up. Let's get into it.

So here we go. I want to talk about what do we do or what happens when uncomfortable topics come up and we don't get it right the first time. The reality here is we don't always have a container where we get to talk about these things. We certainly don't always have the words, and sometimes we speak

before we're really regulated, before we've let the thinking really land before we've taken a pause. And I, I think things that can cause that, that over delivery, that rush delivery of a response is fear. It can be nerves. It can be a sense of pressure, like say something right, break the silence and [00:02:00]

that doesn't make us wrong. It makes us human. There is a human need to show up for other humans to help alleviate other humans that we see in distress and I believe the more distress we see here that we're witnessing, the more we want to show up and we want to help, the more almost desperate we get feeling

about how do we offer help here? And I think that that almost feeling of desperation to come in and offer some type of help or support is where we can misspeak or we can show up in ways that are not needed or not asked for. And eventually that leads to conflict. And I think if we can slow down if we're in this type of situation,

I think there's a lot of these situations going on right now. If we can slow [00:03:00] down enough to notice that conflict has started, and it's not my job to fix the conflict. It's not my job to be right or be wrong or prove somebody else right or wrong. Maybe my work here is how do I get back to the human? The human who's learning the human who made a mistake, the human who is trying their best, the human who has a lot of unresolved anger or unresolved hurt.

How do I get back to the person underneath what's happening right now? Whatever this thing is happening, and I'm being vague, and I'm being general on purpose. Because I want you to let your mind go where it needs to go. You let it attach to whatever topic it needs to attach to, as I talk to you. Uncomfortable topics, they [00:04:00] can show up without warning.

In my line of work, I, someone, um, I don't know actually if she listens to the podcast or not, I'm not gonna use her name, but somebody actually messaged me privately and said. Wow. Those rooms that you manage are like New York City Subway real, New York City subway real. You do not know who's gonna walk in.

You don't know what they're going to need. You don't know if what you have to offer is what they need. It's so true. It's so true. We don't know all of us. We do not know what's going on underneath with whoever walks into a room. We are going to run into people who feel like it is really important to them, that they get their point across to you.

Not to make them right, but to help them feel heard, to help them feel like I [00:05:00] matter. There's going to be people who don't want to share their opinion with you or don't want to share their thoughts on an issue or a whatever's happening, and they get to do that too. When we notice that we're in a conversation that feels uncomfortable and we weren't expecting it, we get to decide how do we respond?

What's this look like? I'm gonna give you a personal example of this, and it was, it happened just recently, and I wouldn't have brought this to the podcast, except that this is not the first instance this week. This week it's been loud behind the scenes with Unsettledness, and that's

differences of opinion over big issues, uh, global things that a lot of times it can feel like one person can't make an [00:06:00] impact here. So when we are, when we're put in rooms like zoom rooms to have conversations,

It's not landing right with you or it's rubbing against your belief, it's going to feel loud inside. It's going to feel almost hot. Almost like I listen, I'm going to have to come off mute and say something or get this out or put this somewhere. Those are the type of topics that we need to be able to talk about, but how do we do it in a way that's not looking for rightness, looking for being the one who gets to decide?

How do we have these conversations with looking to hear? Not even listening to understand, just listening to hear, what are other people going through? What are other people making things mean? Where do they get that meaning [00:07:00] from? I wanna hear this.

What can happen so often, and what happened to me most recently is the nervous system reacts first. So a topic walked in. I wasn't expecting it. There was an emotion directly following it, and I wanted to hold that emotion in the container, a safe container. And in doing that, I inadvertently put down the container for other people in the room, right?

Because what was brought to light was

a topic that has more emotional turbulence behind it. So when I reflect back on what we were doing and what we were talking about, I'm not asking myself why didn't I do better? Why didn't I say better things? Why didn't I have better words? I'm asking myself, what did I learn about myself once my body settled in the personal example I have, I was

recalling a [00:08:00] recent event. It wasn't actually too recent, but a somewhat recent event where I was traveling and I had an encounter on the sidewalk with somebody that really terrified me. Uh, I ended up jumping over to the side. I thought I was going to get hit. It was very scary, and when I retold the story, I included details that actually were not relevant to the story, and I didn't notice it in the moment.

And everyone in the group that I was speaking with was very gracious and very kind. And yes, I went back to the replay to just see what was the reaction when I misspoke, and what I saw was adults who were being considerate, who were thinking, who are taking a moment with what came to their mind over what I said.

Allowing themselves to come to some type of conclusion about that and then seek clarity [00:09:00] on it. So I did receive a couple of emails from people wanting to know, did you

realize that this is what was said? And I wanna be clear too, that people that I'm in workshops with. They've gotten to know me as a person and not just a coach, but who I am behind the scenes is very similar to who you get on camera.

Maybe my clothes are a little messier or you know, I might have shoes that smell like the barn, but okay, be serious, Emily. So seriously, they wrapped their delivery with love. I really felt held in a safe space with their feedback, and what that did is offer me the opportunity to learn to get something wrong.

To notice that, wait a minute. Now that you've brought this into my awareness, I can tell [00:10:00] you for sure that what I said does not match my value. Right. So it might have suggested that I agree with something that I don't, and I, you know, and that's another reason I guess I'm talking about it because I think staying silent about doing something that I now would say was wrong of me, if I stay silent, then in my mind it's also saying it's wrong to say that I have things to learn.

And I absolutely have things to learn. So maybe if nothing else, this episode just allows you to learn as well. Learning does not always feel amazing. Growth does not always feel amazing, but I can tell you that workshop that I hosted and the conversations that have followed since, even though they have not been easy

I do believe they are conversations that have brought [00:11:00] people closer together because now we have approached a topic that is challenging, that gets people in their feelings right away, and we are putting words to the feelings when we have feelings and we've got nowhere to put them. What happens? What happens, we end up lashing out.

We end up directing things where they don't need to be directed. We end up blaming. We end up holding on to this negative energy. I would much rather any day of the week now, someone come up to me and say, when you said that, I made that mean this. Is that what you meant? Did you even know that that's a meaning someone could take from that?

When someone has the courage and the trust to do that, that leads other people to an opportunity to see other perspectives, to hear something different, to [00:12:00] consider their own behavior and to ask themselves, is this something that perhaps I do need to learn? Pure lack of exposure for me is the exact reason I needed to learn this, or the exact reason I hadn't yet learned this, and I know it's probably driving you nuts.

What is the thing? Why won't you say it, da da, da, because it doesn't matter. It really does not matter for this learning to happen. What matters is when you do something that you then realize does not match what you believe, you get to go back. You get to go back and say something different. You get to go back to the conversation and give it the honesty that you thought it had the first time.

Give it the delivery that you thought it had the first time. It's okay to say, I got that wrong. It's okay to say, you know what? I need to check my thinking on this. I need some [00:13:00] time with this. It's all right to let people know i'm somebody who can do a lot of things. I can make a lot of decisions. I can even lead people.

I can empower people, and still I make mistakes. Why? Because I put myself in rooms where learning's possible. I put myself in rooms where I do not know what's going to come

up, and I still want to be in there. Discomfort is not failure you all. It's not failure unless we get to this discomfort and then we say, oh my gosh, I did something wrong.

I better not do this anymore. I better just stop. That's failure when we can take that discomfort and hold onto it and let it be something that we are learning something new that's, this is uncomfortable. New is always uncomfortable. It's like we can recalibrate in a sense. Hold on, let [00:14:00] me update my inner manual.

Let me update my inner narrative. Thank you for helping me see, you know, and maybe that's a vulnerability that not a lot of us are willing to give. Thank you for pointing out to me something I did not know, and for doing it in a way that was graceful enough, that I didn't feel like I had to flee the conversation.

I could stay there. I could take in what was shared with me. And because of that, because there was mutual trust, I could learn. And so then the next part of this is allowing yourself to go back to whoever you were with, whoever you spoke with, whoever the situation involved. And update them.

Update what you said. Update your messaging. That's not showing weakness. It's showing maturity when we can say we were wrong about something or when [00:15:00] we can go back to, to someone. Even like if you're going to someone younger than you, your kids, and apologize for what you did. Yes, I'm supposed to be the person who led you and I don't like the way I showed up.

Or, and I'm really taking some time to consider this. Thank you for giving me the space to do that. I think we all know that reentering those conversations can be, can be challenging all on its own, right? We can almost have that feeling of like the tail between the legs, like, Ooh, I did that. I wanna encourage us all, empower us all, perhaps when we go back into conversations.

Name the learning that's happening for you, not the mistake. And even if this doesn't even involve anybody else. If you're, maybe you are trying to, [00:16:00] um, I don't know, maybe I'm gonna take it lighthearted. Maybe you're learning how to crochet. All right, and you mess up, and you mess up again, and you mess up again.

If you start describing those mess ups as the learning process of crocheting, that's going to be a lot more supportive of your learning than naming all of those as the mistakes and what's making crocheting so hard. Social conversations. Topics that are hot topics. When these come up in conversations, there's learning that's

that needs to happen here too. There's learning that needs to happen and there's not a lot of rooms that there's tolerance for that learning to happen because in order for that learning to happen, sometimes it means allowing. A mistake allowing a misspoken word or phrase or sentence or gesture or I can't think of whatever else, but allowing that [00:17:00] to happen so that learning with love, so that wrapping people up and understanding so that sharing other perspectives can happen.

So if you're walking back into a conversation or you're wanting to help somebody go back into a situation, it's hurtful being on the outside, especially when you didn't mean to be. I wanna give you a few options that maybe would be helpful. The first is, I've been thinking about what I said the other day, and I want to clarify.

The next is I realized that I spoke before I was fully grounded in the weight of this conversation. And the last, I have more awareness now that I've sat with the conversation. You're sharing that you've gained insight. Going back into a [00:18:00] conversation, continuing to criticize yourself for something that may be already delivered, hurt or delivered.

Discomfort is not going to help anybody. Go back and deliver what you're learning. Take ownership without leaving yourself behind. It is okay to be a person who's learning. That's balance. That is balance. I'm gonna take responsibility for what I said, and understand that there's still a lot of other things I do that are really helpful.

Balance what I said didn't fully reflect my values. What I do does, of course it would be wonderful if we walk back into conversations or rooms that are challenging and we have this vulnerable moment and we're embraced with understanding. That doesn't always happen, and I know that to be true as well.

We might hear things [00:19:00] like, mm, but you already said that other thing. Or, why didn't you just tell us that then? Or maybe you have people that are still in confusion with what happened. It's okay for all of that to exist. Remember, just as you go through your own discomfort of realizing maybe. What, meaning you assigned to something or maybe you overreacted to a situation.

It's okay to let people go through their phase of discomfort with hearing another side of the story from you, from hearing an evolved side of the story from you. There's nothing to defend. In fact, it a neutral response of I know and I'm learning. Let that be enough. You are allowed to go back on your word or change what you say as your understanding deepens. [00:20:00]

That's not being inconsistent. That's not being shifty. That's integration. That's merging past learning, whether it was learning that you sought after on your own, or learning that was just presented to you as you grew up with new experiences, new learning. I do wanna thank the members I have that gave me the space to enter this learning, and I'm passing it on to you all.

I hope this gives you permission to go out there. Try new things. Put yourself in situations where you are not sure what's gonna happen and you might mess up. The worst that happens is we feel discomfort and the best that happens, we have more connection on the other side because of it. Maybe not to other people, but to yourself.

Stay with yourself. Where have you spoken before you were ready? [00:21:00] What would it sound like to return, not to defend, but to clarify, you deserve to give yourself an appropriate voice. I hope you enjoyed today's episode. Thank you for staying with me, and I'll see you next time.