

N.Y.B.L. Podcast Ep 130 (Christian Gottlieb)

[00:00:00] Welcome to another episode of negotiate your best life. I'm Rebecca Zung, and I am so thrilled and excited to bring Christian Gottlieb this week to you. He is an amazing, an incredible soul. So strong, so powerful at high school teacher lives in Canada, but more importantly, he has. Overcome and gotten past 25 years of living with a narcissist and gotten on the other side of that.

[00:00:41] And his soul is so strong now and so free. He has gotten to where. So many of you want to be, and it is my pleasure and my honor, and he's also a slay graduate by the way. And [00:01:00] he's going to be talking all about how he got to this place of breaking free and. Uh, living the negotiating his best life. So welcome Christian.

[00:01:12] Thank you so much for being here today. Thank you very much for having me. It's a real honor, uh, to be here. And, you know, one of the things that really got me through my, my journey was really my favorite book, man, search for meaning by Victor . Frankel. He, , I, in no way want to minimize what would Holocaust survivors or survivors of genocide go through.

[00:01:41] But one of the things that Victor Frankel said was that everyone has their own Auschwitz. And I think it's really, really important for people going through narcissistic relationships to realize that in fact, you know, as, as a high school teacher, one of the things I do is I teach genocide [00:02:00] studies and it's incredible the parallels between the mindset of an narcissist.

[00:02:07] And the mindset of, of a genocidal dictator. It, it sounds awful, but they, they kind of, you know, everything is manipulation. Like even if, if you read like reading eel's book night, right. And you see the manipulation that the Nazis used. I, I don't think it's exaggerating to, to talk about that in, in the mindset of an narcissist, everything, you know, like they're, they're great actors and, but there's a, a high price that you're going to pay for the acting that they've done.

[00:02:44] Right. Everything has a price in the mind of a narcissist. Everything is, is manipulation and, and you don't realize that. And. So one of the things that Victor Frankel, one of the things that got him through the, the [00:03:00] concentration camp was to imagine himself teaching about what he went through in a, you know, in a lecture hall in Austria, when, when he, you know,

when, when he was back, right, cuz he was a doctor of psychology and I kept that visual in my mind.

[00:03:19] And this is in a way, this is my. Lecture that I'm giving like Victor Frankel, did, you know, keeping that vision in mind that I'm gonna be able to teach other people about this. I'm gonna be able to empower other people going through this. And, and that is so, so, so important. And it's especially important to, to, to.

[00:03:44] To have a grasp on that because you're gonna meet enablers along the way. You're gonna beated by the narcissist. You know, honestly the worst, some of the worst gas leaders I went through in the 25 years that we were together was [00:04:00] marriage counselors. It was awful. In fact, it was even a, a form of secondary abuse.

[00:04:05] I would say, you know, that they really didn't listen and, you know, Another thing that I'm really, really grateful that you do. And because I've listened to, to a lot of your, your, your stuff and, and in the program as well, you don't refer to the Narcis as, as he, right. Because for so long, people were saying, oh, narcissists are men, right?

[00:04:27] Abusers are men. Well, No, actually, that's not always the case. Right. And, and it's so invalidating really not . Yeah. And it, but I, I don't know if people realize how invalidating that is for men going through this, you know, it's, it's like, you're never gonna believe be believed because you're a guy, right? No, one's gonna believe this.

[00:04:49] And I think that was part of the, the problem and, and that's really required me to. You know, find inner strength and, and dealing with that. Right. And [00:05:00] to, you know, to really work on myself, to, you know, I did a lot of journaling. I did a lot of meditating and, and that made a big difference as well. And I was really able to find myself through that.

[00:05:11] Right. There's

[00:05:16] this form of meditation called Holosync H O L O S Y N C. And it made, it made such a difference. It's you, you put on these headphones and it brings you into a very deep state of meditation and company that puts out Holling, CenterPoint research. They have really good coaches who, you know, help you make sense of what what's going on.

[00:05:40] And, and I really was dealing with some real inner conflict, you know, because I was losing who I was. I was believing the gas lady. Right. And it helped me to come back. To who I am and, and, and to really make sense of, of things. So, you know, So, [00:06:00] uh, there there's so much in what you just said there. I mean, I, I, I don't even know where to go back to because there's so many different things.

[00:06:08] There's so many pearls of wisdom in what you just said there that I just, I wanna go back to, I mean, the, the secondary abuse and the, the idea of, of the parallels with. You know, the manipulation and I, I mean, there's so many different things that you just said there that I, I thought were just so brilliant that I I'm I'm so blown away by what you just said.

[00:06:39] Uh I'm. First of all, thank you for your sharing. This is so helpful. And, and, and, and, and the fact that it's not just men and, you know, because I mean, the covert narcissist that I dealt with was a female. And that's part of the reason why, I mean, because I thought [00:07:00] narcissists were all men and, and, you know, as an attorney and, you know, the covert narcissist I dealt with was.

[00:07:07] Business partner. And it was only a few years ago and I had been an attorney for more than, you know, almost two decades and a high net worth divorce attorney. I had been recognized by us news and had all of these accolades. And so, you know, that's why I think it's so, so important for people to understand that you can have a really, really good lawyer and most, really good lawyers do not understand narcissism.

[00:07:35] You know, I mean, they just don't and you know, that's and I tell, and even now, when I go, when I do all these interviews, many times the interviewers will say, oh, what you're doing for women is so great. And I'll correct them. I know that. Yeah. And I'll say, oh no, my channel, because I have the metrics on my YouTube [00:08:00] channel is 35 to 40% men.

[00:08:06] Consistently. Yeah. Consistently. And, and honestly, I believe that my slay program purchasers are probably at least 50% men. Uh, you know, maybe if not more. Yeah. So I know that. For sure it is definitely. I mean that, I'm so glad that you pointed that out too. Yeah. And the fact that everything they do is a manipulation.

[00:08:37] Everything they do. Yes. Is a manipulation. Yeah. There's so, so much that you said there, that was so, so brilliant. Yeah. Well really, you know, what you're doing is, is, is so important actually. And I'm, I'm so grateful to, to

you like the people that you have on, you know, having gone bill Eddie, You know, I would [00:09:00] recommend his book dating radar for anybody, right.

[00:09:03] Uh, another person, actually, I got to know who you are from, uh, Dr. Romney, your, your, your interview with her. Anything that she does is absolutely incredible. And, uh, and the other one is Dr. Les Carter. Right. Now here's the actually, uh, he just interviewed me for his new podcast this morning. Oh, no way about an hour ago.

[00:09:25] oh, wonderful. I'm looking forward to hearing that actually, because he's just, I, I listen to his podcast as well and, and all of his, uh, videos, cuz it's just so brilliant. Cuz here's the thing. When I got married 25 years ago, nobody was talking about this, right. Like, and, and I'll admit I was the ultimate enabler, right.

[00:09:48] I really was like, you know, everybody has good in them. You know, all they, all you need is love, you know? I'll be the night and shining armor and, you know, that [00:10:00] was. That that's what I believed. Right. And, and we're, we're, we're taught to believe that as well. Right? Take us back. Tell us as much as you can, about your particular situation, what happened the types, give us, give us some examples of the types of things that were happening in your, in your marriage so that people can identify with you and also the types of things that you were feeling.

[00:10:26] Right. Right. Well, You know, Was, I, I I'm a teacher, but I, I worked overseas for, for a number of years like doing I, I went to Africa and worked in, in, and, uh, and volunteered there for, for a couple years and, and worked with street kids and, and so on. And I, I got to a point in my life and my thirties that, you know, I, I.

[00:10:49] Love being the big brother, but I really love to be a dad. Right. And so, I, I came back to Canada and I, I met this, this woman who had two little [00:11:00] boys and, and I thought it was wonderful. Right. But really. What, what I went through was totally what, what bill Eddie talked about in his, in his book? Dating radar, like I'd highly recommend that, but I had no idea.

[00:11:15] I have no idea, but what I did notice was that with each level of commitment, as the level of commitment, Got stronger, the behavior, her behavior got worse. Right. And, uh, especially when we had our, our own daughter she got really, really bad, right. Because I think she knew that for me being, you know, and, and, and what I hope is an honorable gentleman you know, commitment to my family is everything right.

[00:11:46] Commitment to my children is everything. And. You know, do everything to, to, to make that work and describe worse. What, what did that mean? How, how it got worse? Yes. Describe, oh well the yelling, [00:12:00] yelling, the put downs, the manipulation, the you know, the anger, the unbridled anger, really the unbridled anger more than, than anything else.

[00:12:07] Right. And everything was my fault. And you know, you don't see that in the love bombing face. Right. So. So that, that sort of thing. And and so we went to marriage counselors and like I said, marriage counselors said, well, you need to do this. You need to do that. And I, I would do all those things and nothing was getting any better.

[00:12:26] Right. And So, let's see, you know, for, in, in, in many ways there was things were, uh, a bit of a, a blur in, in those early years. Right. You know, there's just a lot of yelling and I, I, you know, sometimes you don't realize how bad things are until they're, they're gone. Right? Like, I said to my sister, when I moved into my own place in, in may, I said, you know, for the first time in years, I look forward to coming.

[00:12:59] [00:13:00] Right. You know, you don't realize how bad things are sometimes, but here is one story that I found really, really interesting was, you know, in the early two thousands, we're starting to use the internet more. And I went to Canadian mental health association website, and it described abuse. Right. And it said, if you're experiencing these things, this is abuse.

[00:13:25] Right. And I really. Didn't know anything. Uh, so I, I looked at my relationship and I, and I, like I said, I've always journaled a lot. Right. That was the one course I learned. I took in university. I think that's been the most useful course. It was, it was a course in journaling IRA ProGo, uh, journaling method, but it was really, really good.

[00:13:45] I always journaled. So I journaled about what I had read about. And then for our next session, at the, with a marriage counselor, I said, well, I'm experiencing abuse. And I said, here's what abuse is. Here's what [00:14:00] I'm experiencing. Right. And, and really went through a list which was, you know, kind of stupid to do in front of an narcissist.

[00:14:06] But I didn't know that right. But what, what really blew me away. And this was really the, the worst thing that happened was the marriage counselor said, oh, that's not abuse. You just think it. Oh, my gosh. I know. I know. And so it's like, where do I go from here? But I knew in my gut that it was abuse. Right. I knew it was abuse.

[00:14:27] I'm not gonna, you know, but anyhow, so I'm like, well, if, if a counselor's not gonna believe me, there's no point in, in going through trial and putting my kids through, you know, through. You know, separation and you know what, looking back now, now that we're separated. And the only thing going back and forth is the two dogs.

[00:14:50] Not kids but dogs. I'm. Wow. This is much easier just with dogs. I wouldn't, if it's this bad with dogs, I wouldn't wanna do this with kids. Right.

[00:15:00] So, you know, I made the conscious choice to stay in that and you know, it, it was a what Victor Frankel calls a provisional existence with no limit, like, you know, it's bad.

[00:15:14] You don't know when it's gonna end. Right. And, and that was what the state I was in, but that's where man search for meaning is so, so helpful because read what he says to do to survive in a concentration camp. And that's what you need to do to survive in an narcissistic relationship. It, it really is. It it's it's it sounds awful.

[00:15:37] Describe how you felt, describe the exact feelings. In, in well, confusion, a absolute confusion, right? Like, you're like, what's going on here? This, none of this is making sense. Right. So that's what gas lighting does though. It's, it's, it's that confusion. And, and totally disempowered for sure.

[00:15:59] [00:16:00] Disempowered and, and, and the overwhelming theme is that no one is going to believe. Yeah, right. That's you know, especially for, for a guy, no one is gonna believe this. And also narcissist are very clever. You're isolated. Right, right. You're isolated from your friends. And even the few times that I did, you know, talk to friends, why did I ever pay for that?

[00:16:24] Right. How dare you say that to that person, right.[00:17:00]

[00:18:00] [00:19:00] [00:20:00] [00:21:00] [00:22:00] [00:23:00] [00:24:00]
[00:25:00] [00:26:00]

[00:26:26] You know, and, and, and so, you know, it was, it was, yeah. And, and the one time I did let it slip out. That you know, that if this was like a concentration camp or, you know, that I identify with Victor Frankel or something, boy does she hit the roof on that one too? Right. You know? Right. You know, so you really have to be careful what you say.

[00:26:49] Right, right. Yeah. And, and, and one, another thing I realized is that my emotions were not safe with this person. And, you know, it's really interesting. The the, [00:27:00] the counselors really didn't pick up on things

because it was abso and I described the absolute chaos of trying to have a conversation with my ex-wife like that.

[00:27:13] Every word I put out, every phrase that I tried to put out, it was like, it got thrown into a blender and became completely unrecognizable. Right. And counselors weren't picking up. On that sort of thing. It was, it was, it was. So if I hope there's counselors listening to this, or maybe, you know, it should become part of, especially marriage counselors training to recognize that this is between five and 10% of the population you're gonna come across this look for these events.

[00:27:45] More, I mean, yeah, not more. Yeah. Yeah. The DSM five is now saying up to 15%, uh, as far as you know, overall per personality disorders, that lack of conscience. Yeah. Or [00:28:00] lack empathy. Yeah. You know, which that's all part of it. Yeah. Well, you know, one of the things that I've realized too is. And, and learning to cope with it and learning to deal with it.

[00:28:12] It's it's not a lot. Different from, well, it's completely different, but I mean, as a teacher, when, when a child has a, a learning disability, right. I can never remember the names of all the learn, different learning disabilities, right. Or, or what the, the characteristics of them are and stuff. Right. I'm that, that just goes in one ear and out the other.

[00:28:36] I don't understand that. What I do understand, however, though, is that. I need to adjust my teaching style to meet the needs of different students. Right. And especially with high school kids with, with older kids, oftentimes you can talk to them and say, okay, what works for you in, in your learning? Right.

[00:28:57] Right. And how can we make those, those adjustments? Right.

[00:29:00] Right. It's, it's really the same way when you're dealing with. Personality disorders like it, it could be that my ex-wife, I listened to, to Dr. Carter's podcast the other day, where he talked about sociopathy, right. And I said, oh, maybe she's a sociopath, but it really doesn't matter.

[00:29:17] It's a high conflict personality. Without a person who manipulates it really, it's not about diagnosing, right. It's without understanding the patterns of behavior. Yeah. And, and, you know, the best thing that happened. And I don't wanna be political. It, it all here, but 2016 happened. And suddenly everybody was talking about narcissism.

[00:29:42] Well, and that's what happened, you know? I mean, but even, you know, for me, when I was dealing with a narcissistic business partner who was a covert, you know, and I would tell even some of my best friends, some of the things that was happening and, you know, people would [00:30:00] say, Well, that seems like it must have been inadvertent, you know?

[00:30:05] Yeah. I mean, cuz she seems so nice. Yes. You know, I mean, or, and, and then that doesn't help because it makes you feel like, well, I, I might as well not bother telling people what's happening because nobody's gonna really believe me anyway. Or. And you feel more paranoid. Yeah. Yeah. And, and I'll, I'll I'll own it.

[00:30:25] I was one of those people who was the ultimate, oh, look on the bright side kind of people, they couldn't admit it. Right. And that's what got me into my situation really was, was, you know, I kind of became the victim of my own. You know, unrealistic view, but you, you know, you're right. A lot of people had no were talking about narcissism who had no clue what they were talking about.

[00:30:48] Right. Right. Exactly. And at the same time it was being talked about. And then just years ago, what? Only as a few years ago, though.

[00:31:00] Exactly, exactly. Because now once I heard things though, and I heard like, you know, Dr. Carter and Dr. Romney and, and a few others, it's like, oh my God, that's, that's it. And suddenly everything made sense because the thing is I had been searching, searching all the time, right.

[00:31:24] Especially from 2000 on, right. When the, when the glitter wore off, it took a couple years for me to clue in. And, and I owned that, but you know, especially when I realized that this was abuse You know, I, I kept looking for resources and there was nothing, there was nothing. And, and if there was anything, like I said, it always talked about, he, he, he, you know, as the narcissist, right.

[00:31:50] Which was awful to hear as well being, you know, can't I be the, you know, and, and also a lot of the stuff in the early two thousands was saying that,

[00:32:00] you know, if you're in a narcissistic relationship or an abusive relationship, it's because you have. Some issues in the past that you're not dealing with and which, which again, victimizes, re victimizes a, a person who's, who's going through this.

[00:32:16] Right. And I think it's really like, I really like what you say that narcissists go after you because you're so good. Right. Oh yeah. They attach

themselves to you because you have so much value. Right, right. They're trying to suck that supply out of you as much as possible. Absolutely. And, and I can imagine what I would like to this woman when she saw me, you know, you know, two, you know, single mom with, with two kids and here's this really nice guy.

[00:32:41] He's got a good profession. He's well respected. Everybody likes him. And, and it gives them a much more sense of value to control somebody who has so much value. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, so that, that even gives them more of a high too. Absolutely. [00:33:00] Absolutely. I must have been like a gold mind. yeah. So, so talk about, you know, you, you find my slay program, you're dealing with the course.

[00:33:10] So talk about that. Yeah. Well, what happened was once, you know, I, I knew that going through separation when the kids were younger was, was gonna be a, a, a disaster. So I, I made the. I chose a provisional existence with no limit. I own that. I, I made that choice. Right. It's not for everybody. Right. And, and I, I wouldn't recommend it on anybody.

[00:33:35] That's the thing, you know, even that though in a way is empowering because you know, you're making that decision. Yeah. Yeah. That's true. That's true. So once the kids got older and our, our youngest was, was, you know, getting ready to graduate from university You know, I'm like, and, and, you know, the thing is there was the financial abuse too.

[00:33:56] Our money was always so tight. Right. And, and I [00:34:00] actually got a new job, uh, that fell into my lap. I'm I'm bilingual. So I got a part-time job teaching French at the university. And so suddenly my income goes up and I'm like, okay. I am not sharing this this time. Right. This is going into my account. Right. And, and suddenly I, you know, so that, that was really, really helpful.

[00:34:19] And suddenly I had, yeah, we were hugely in debt still. And you know, I, I, that was part of the sleigh program. I, I, I accepted that because I don't, I don't care. I want, I got my freedom. Right. You know what you want. Right. But anyhow, uh, our kids were grown up and then. You know, Dr. Ramney talks about gray rocking and also soul distancing.

[00:34:41] And I was soul distancing, right? That is you don't get emotionally involved with this person anymore. And really how, how long can a marriage last, when you're doing that? Right. Really? You know? And so it got to the

point where, where there's a situation where like, this is pretty clear manipulation. I [00:35:00] am not doing this anymore.

[00:35:01] Right. And I moved out of the bedroom and you know, that was, it was a fairly long process, but I'm like, okay. I, I know that divorce is coming up. I better learn how to do. Right. And I had already been following your podcasts and you know, listening, listening to them regularly. And I said, okay, well, let's take a look at the slate program and, and it, and it totally made sense.

[00:35:24] It absolutely 100% totally made sense. And you know, my separation, I think was a little bit simpler because, well, it was because I knew exactly what I wanted, but I kept my cards close to the chest. Right. I didn't, I didn't show that. Right. But you talk about, you know, knowing yourself really, you know, your, your application of the art of war was B.

[00:35:47] I, I have to say, you know, I have a couple quotes here from, from the art of war. The the Supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting. Right. And because. [00:36:00] I knew what I wanted. And she didn't you know, we were able to avoid courts. We each went to our own lawyer. We did the legal separation and, and I think she was honestly, because I had been sold distancing for so long.

[00:36:13] She was kind of fed up as well. Like I'm not gonna get any reaction to this guy. There's no fun in this anymore. Right. He's you know no more supply, no more supply. Right. And it's. That was, that was, you know, so, but it took time to get there. So that was, that was really important. Right. But to subdue, without fighting, it was really what happened because, you know, I bought your program and followed it.

[00:36:41] I went to a lawyer, a good lawyer you know, in, in the province I live in, they have a, a. The worst thing that you can kind of fill out and guide you through it. And this is what you have to do. And I was able to do that, print it out, go to my lawyer and say, okay, what do you think? You know, she took it to her lawyer said, [00:37:00] okay, what, what do you think?

[00:37:01] And then, you know, then the legal separation was, was signed. And and, and, and, you know, some people might look at at what, what it said and say, oh man, You got, you got raped over the coals, but I don't, I don't feel that way cuz I knew what I wanted. I wanted my freedom. Right. And you know, I just turned 60 years old and I'm looking ahead, you know, for the next 40 years, I, you know, if I'm I'm really, really healthy, I don't feel any different than I did 30 years ago to be perfectly honest.

[00:37:37] Right. So I'm like I, I still feel good. I love what I do. I don't wanna be doing this. I don't wanna be coming home to this for the next 40 years. Right. And especially if, if, if my health went bad, I wouldn't want this person responsible for, for me. Right. That's gonna be awful. So, you know, cuz you don't ask for anything from an narcissist.

[00:37:58] That was one of the rules I, I learned [00:38:00] to follow don't ask for anything. And if at all possible don't say no to anything that they're asking. Right. And that. Like I say it sounds awful, but that's part of the. Existing, you know, the provisional existence. And, uh, so, so that's what I was where was I going with that?

[00:38:20] Okay. So I, I knew what I, uh, what I wanted. So I said, you know, do you have the house? That's great. You can, you know, I'll take whatever unsecured debt we have, which is a fair bit, but. I have my profession. I have my future, you know, one of the things I did because I had no voice in the marriage is I started to develop my own voice.

[00:38:44] And I started writing for my local newspaper, a weekly column, you know, and, and for a publisher that, so it gets published across Canada. I don't get paid for it, but it's my community service. And it's my way. Giving. And, and oftentimes I do write about, you know, things I learned [00:39:00] from Victor Frankel and, you know, genocide studies.

[00:39:02] And I suppose if somebody really knew me and read between the lines, they would kind of be able to tell what I was saying some of the times. But, but, but that was a really important part for me to find my voice. So, so as far as the agreement goes, it doesn't look good on the surface, but. But you got exactly what you wanted.

[00:39:23] I got exactly what I wanted. And another thing, honestly, that I wanted too is, you know, inheritance my, you know, from, from my family. I don't want her to be able to touch that at all. You know, here's an interesting story. This says something about a, a narcissist one of my aunts passed away. She had no kids.

[00:39:42] So she left her nieces and nephews and it was this, you know, \$15,000. Right. And my ex-wife used to always complain about not being able to finish her degree. right. You know, not being able to go back to school and she'd, you know, use that to, to Gaslight me. Well, [00:40:00] you're so lucky you had a family that paid for your education and so on.

[00:40:03] Yeah. You know, and would kind of, and my attitude with my education was my education allows me to give, allowed me to develop my gifts so I can give to others. Right. And make the world a better place. Right. That's. What motivates me. So for her to say that was, was, you know, really kind of nasty, but it was interesting that when we got that money from my aunt, I said to her, I said, wow, now we can pay for you to, to finish your degree and go back to school.

[00:40:30] And she was like, I want gas stove. Yeah. So she didn't actually wanted no, just wanted to be able to complain about it. Yeah, it was, it was unbelievable. I was like, But you said you wanted to go to school, right? Yeah. You know, I want a gas stove, right? We have a stove. Oh, you don't know what it's like to have to cook with that stove?

[00:40:52] Actually, I used the stove just as much as she did, but anyhow, , you know, it was so it was, it was really, really interesting and, and that really caused a light [00:41:00] to go on for me. And, and I think it was, you know, understanding. It doesn't matter how much money this person. It's never gonna be enough. Right.

[00:41:10] And everything's an excuse, right? Like it, it was really, really, really interesting, you know, and that's the thing to learn, to sit back and watch the other person. Right. You know, like eel, I remember I saw him in an interview once and he said, and somebody said, what do you wanna be called a survivor? A victim of, of, of the Holocaust.

[00:41:31] And he says, I'm a witness. Right. I'm a witness. And, and that's really in many ways, the, the view that I took, you know, and you, you watch, you learn to sit back and watch what this other person is doing. And, and, and like I said, the stuff from Dr. Romney and Dr. Carter. Really allows you to say, oh, okay, those patterns of behavior make sense.

[00:41:58] I have no idea. I'm not [00:42:00] diagnosing her. You know, that's the other thing, you know, you get demonized for saying certain things, but you're not diagnosing anybody. You're observing those patterns of behavior. And suddenly those patterns of behavior make sense. That was such, such a relief. Right. Which leads me to the next point with your, with your slay program was, you know, I had been doing a lot of work to know myself right now.

[00:42:28] I understood her and that made all the difference, right. Because in, in the art of war, it says, I'm just reading here. If you know the enemy and know

yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles if you know yourself, but not the enemy for every victory gained, you will also suffer a defeat.

[00:42:50] If you know, neither the enemy, nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle. Like that says so much there. Right? [00:43:00] Like that's, that's it right? Like, yeah. I, I knew myself, I done a lot of work, a lot of journaling. Now I knew the behavior patterns and I could predict the behavior patterns of, uh, you know, of, of my expo.

[00:43:21] And then it became easy. Right. It really was a relatively painless process. And. You know, getting the, getting the. Legal separation signed. It was, it was relatively painless. You know, now, you know, there were no kids and I knew that, right. I knew that was gonna make the whole thing simpler. You know, my heart goes out to people who, who were dealing with young kids and come to this realization, but.

[00:43:49] You know, so that's my journey of, of, of, of 25 years, but I I'm really, really grateful to, to, you know, what, you've, what you've put together. I really, [00:44:00] and connecting, you know, with really amazing people who, who can support people. You know, these are conversations. I wish we were having 25 years ago or 30 years ago.

[00:44:12] Right. You know, the whole thing of being a Knight and shining armor. And so on those, those fairy tales, you have to recognize that. Yeah, that's true for probably, you know, what did you say? 85% of the people are, are, are relatively okay. But 15% are not, you know, be, keep that in mind. Right. And And then, I don't know if you can avoid these kinds of situations.

[00:44:40] Right. You know, because they're really, really good at manipulated. Right. They're really good. But if we're having these kinds of conversations, I hope it makes it better for, for everybody. Right. You know, like Victor Frankel says suffering ceases to be suffering when you give meaning to it. This is a way for [00:45:00] me to give meaning to what I've gone through, to be able to pass on the wisdom.

[00:45:05] Of what I've learned and, and just one more thing. Or how are we doing for time? I'm not even looking at, oh, go ahead. Keep going. Okay. Okay. One of the things I realized since I I've, I've moved out to. Is, you know, the accusations of having an affair and, you know, or, you know, you must be having an affair who are you hanging out with?

[00:45:25] You know, et cetera, cetera, et cetera. Well, that says a lot about the narcissist because they're not comfortable being alone. And you know, I, I am an extrovert. I know that. I love talking to people. I love teaching. I get, you know, I get. Such a joy being, being with young people every day. That's, that's true.

[00:45:48] But I also like coming to my apartment and hanging out with my dogs and it's just been really, really wonderful. So I realize that she doesn't understand that [00:46:00] one can be alone and be happy. And that's really sad, uh, in the end, what does an individual have other than their own integrity and peace of mind?

[00:46:11] Really, you know, what do we have other than that. Right. And so yeah, that's I, I guess, so are, are you happier now? Or you tell, tell, tell us how you feel now. Oh, I'm, I'm just super happy. Yeah. I'm super happy. And it's really interesting that, you know, whenever anything happens with her, it's kind of, you know, whenever anything happens with her, when I get a text message or a phone call and, you know, Complain complain, complain.

[00:46:38] It's like, you know, I can put my phone down when it's over. I'm not stuck in the house. I'm not stuck in the car, you know, but I, I do notice that it does shift my energy still. Right. Cuz they're still a part of your life. Your kids are still. Your kids, right. You, I don't know if you can ever get away a hundred percent from, from an narcissist, especially [00:47:00] when, when you have kids with them.

[00:47:01] Right. And, and so that's, I guess the next phase learning to learning, to deal effectively with that. But, you know, Dr. Romney, one of the things she says is, you know, once you're out, give yourself at least a year to. You know, just be at peace with yourself and, and, and I'm really enjoying that, that journey of, of self discovery.

[00:47:21] You know? One of the things I gave up was my. You know, my higher education I gave up, you know, when going out with, or when being with her, that was actually, that was one of the first red flags. I think having to give up things that I enjoyed doing, like, you know, giving up graduate school. I used to play a lot of softball.

[00:47:39] I gave up doing that. Right. And I'm not playing softball again, but I am working on, you know, I'm doing graduate school again, and I'm really, really, really enjoying that. Right. You know, it's kind of a way of coming back

to myself. Right. And you know, so it is been wonderful actually. So [00:48:00] wonderful. I'm so, so, glad for you.

[00:48:02] I'm so happy for you and really fills my heart and my soul to see you and, and, and you know, the people on the podcast won't be able to see you, but, you know, I can just tell by seeing you here that, you know, there's a lightness about you, a lightness about your being. So, thank you so much for sharing your story and being willing to come forward and help people.

[00:48:26] Well, you know, what thank you for giving me the platform. It, it, I, I, I really cuz it gives meaning to what I've gone through as well that I can teach it to other people. So, so, so really thank you very much for, for listening and being so supportive and thank you so much for, for what you do. You really are making a, a very positive difference in the, in the lives of people and what, what greater joy can there be in life than that.

[00:48:49] Right. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you.