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AA#1-Attachment Agreements

00:01

Ken

Good morning. Welcome back. How's the week been for you?

00:05

Julie

The week was good. It was really good actually. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I, I felt like I had a lot more energy, you know, I was able to get outside a little bit more, my hip is still sore, my hip is still sore. But at least I felt like I could move it a little bit and do a few more things. And, and I actually phoned up a couple of my girlfriends and we met when for coffee and had some good, good conversations and stuff. And, and then I guess it got even better when I decided that you know what, I think I'm going to do some online dating. So I went to the website, and I filled out my profile, so that I could get ready to go back into that world and have some dates. And I even had my girlfriends take some pictures of me. So, I had some nice pictures to add for my profile pictures, we wanted to make sure they were more realistic. You know, we didn't want to lie to the guys on the online dating. But it was it was good, it was it was fun. And then I was thinking then, through the week, there were some times, like I mean, it was a, it was a good week, sure. There were times when, when I felt a little bit anxious or unsettled. And so, I thought back to the session and said, Okay, let's practice this. So, we did some practicing, we did some practicing, going to that attachment circle going inside, just calming down and finding that secure self. And it took some time private practice, it took some time of learning how to do this. And so, then we would go there and sit with our sick, sick yourself, still have a hard time with the words on time. And we would just sit there and what I and in time I did learn in time, I did learn that I just sat there long enough, took some big breaths. And I also learned that in order for me to do this, I really do need to close my eyes when I do it. Because if my eyes are open for me, I get too distracted, I'm already distracted. I'm looking over there. And I could go do this. And I could do that. So, I have to close my eyes. Oh, just take some big breaths and imagine myself, put myself back in that circle where I feel safe and see that secure self and allow myself to sit there. And it did work, and even right now it's like I can see my secure self, I can see her looking at me and reassuring me that I'm okay. And so, so when I get reassured that I'm okay, and once I get reassured that I'm okay, I'm ready to go again. You know, I don't sit there for long, I feel better. And I'm going to head off and off I go when I go and do some things. And, and sure enough, doesn't take long when something else comes up. And okay. Okay. And, you know, there was times when I started to get frustrated, like, oh my gosh, I shouldn't have this all figured out. But that's okay, I was practicing and, and that I thought about. And I thought about what we talked about last time about the agreements and stuff and, and so I decided I would do some journaling, you had mentioned that it would be good to do some journaling.

03:16

Ken

That's great. Because sometimes that helps, right? In that session, you were discovering a lot of agreements, and belief systems, a lot of meanings and losses that you experienced as a child, right? The way that mom and dad should do things differently or show up and agreements especially in relation to your family, right? We have some agreements in relation to your dad, some agreements in relation to your sister, some agreements in relation to your mom and they were very significant ones. Yeah, and I remember kind of you saying that while we started discovering how they're impacting you, and even mentioned that that's why you understand that you couldn't even play and not being able to play as an adult was connected to those environments. So, you have done some journaling around that.

04:14

Julie

Yeah, I guess I brought it with me, I brought it with me because, because it's easier just to read from my journal than it is to try to remember everything because some of it was it was challenging, but it was good. It was good because I, I do. I mean, I've done some writing. So, I do like to write so you have to find the page. And again, you can see that sometimes I had to take the time. It took me time. So, it...

04:37

Ken

And it takes time, right? It just takes time to be able to go through, when we have done so much work takes a lot of time to just settle in and reflect and good thing that you like journaling, so you like writing right? So, journaling by writing and reflecting and seeing what's coming up and I'm really curious what came up as you reflecting on, on the agreements and, and the meanings and the losses, what did you discover?

05:07

Julie

Well, I guess, I guess, I had to go back to even thinking about what this meant. You know, what was my attachment agreement about my mother. And I realized it was about the promises I made to myself, to keep myself sane, in relationship to my mother. It wasn't about my mother, it was about my mother, but it wasn't about her it was about my relationship with me. So, it took me I had to, I had to put my head around that it took me a few minutes, a little bit of time to figure out how that works. So, what I realized was that, when I, when I looked at that whole situation, what I saw my mother do and how I saw their behavior, what she did or didn't do, is that I promised myself, well, I would never be like her. I promised myself, I would never be weak. I would never be submissive. And I would never be silent.

06:11

Ken

Wow, those are really huge agreements, eh, and when we do them, as a child, in relation to one of the one of what attachment figures, kind of what we know where we have them. Right? So, then, in a way that attachment agreement also works as an attachment anchor, we kind of know where the danger is.

06:33

Julie

And I realized that I promised that to myself. Because, because what I wrote down was, I promised that to myself, so that I could keep myself sane, it was all about keeping my self-sane. And, and then I realized that in order... then then the I got to move this pillow here. Then the, next part was, is that I would never get married. I would never have children.

07:02

Ken

Yes, so those are still idioms in relation to monitoring?

07:07

Julie

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. But then, but then I wrote down the other day. Oh, my gosh, I got married three times. And I have four children. I became the submissive way. I was loyal to all of my three husbands. When I look at my life, I didn't stand up for my children. And it was really hard to see that, that somehow, I did, all those things that I swore I would never do. I was never going to be like my mother. And yet, I became just like her.

08:00

Ken

That's really huge to realize, right. And you have the agreement. But somehow, you are looking back and saying, as a 16-year-old person. I have done exactly just like she did. Yeah, it's kind of like, so don't say your mistake go really, really deep. Unfortunately, sometimes we don't even know that. You're on autopilot and just keeping making. Those are really huge. So how was it for you to notice that part? What's happening inside right now?

08:37

Julie

Well, it just feels like, it feels like whoa, it's like is. I can't even, it just there's just this, this, this feeling, this feeling of, of overwhelm. I guess I would almost call it a feeling overwhelmed that I did exactly what I said I wouldn't do. And then and then. And then I start thinking well, then I get mad at myself, because I should. I should, have known better. So, I can see myself starting to beat myself up. Because I should have known better. How could I have left them? I swore all these things. And I still did. How could I have let that happen?

09:25 – 09:39

Ken

Those meanings start playing not only with just the agreements but also your attachment meanings start to kick in. How could I have done this twice? Something must be wrong with me. Right? One of the meanings was I must be a really a bad person.

09:34

Julie

Yes. Yes

09:40

Julie

Yeah. Well, that goes back to, well what you just said, what you just said now. Takes me back to my father, it takes me to my father. Because I realized when I look at the whole situation, he terrorized us, he terrorized me. He, when I look at that whole situation, I wrote down with the, the agreement that I made with myself was that all men are not safe. No man is safe, I will be alone. And I, I swore to myself that I would, as I wrote it... It's interesting, this writing is really interesting, because it's like, I write one thing, and then it triggers something else, then I write, so I started, I will never need a man. And then I will never allow myself to get close to a man. And then what I watch what happened to my mother, I would never be intimate with the man. And then it's like, Oh, my God. I have four children. So it's the same thing again, I swore I wouldn't do these things. And yet I did them all. And then, and then, when I looked at my relationships with my husbands, I became the submissive wife, like my mother, I was loyal. I didn't stand up for my children. I did exactly like my mother. But then the other layer, would you just said, was this feeling bad? Dad said we were thieves. He said, I was bad. And, and in that, in that, in that, it was the promise was, well, I promised myself, I promised myself that I would prove to the men that I was better than them. And then I would never need them. And better...

11:41

Ken

Better than them, and I will never need them.

11:44

Julie

Better than them, and I will never need them. And then I realized, I was like, Oh, my God. Then I realized, I gave my dad what he wanted. He's a Jewish man. He wanted a firstborn son, my twin brother went and died. So, what was left? I became the firstborn son. And what does a good Jewish firstborn son do? I became a doctor. I became a doctor, so that I could maintain the pride of my family. So, I became everybody's my son's the doctor, my granddaughters a doctor. I became the pride of the family.

12:41

Ken

And then you became better than everyone else.

12:42

Julie

I did. I did. I did. I did. I did. So was just so in some ways, so when I look at that, it's like, okay, so, so, so part of that agreement, about not needing a man and all that stuff. I still went and got married three times and had children and it was like that part ended up I don't know what, I don't know what you call that. But on the other side, though, but look what happened. Because I promised I would prove better than them, I became a doctor. It was, the training and all of that journey is another story in itself. That was hell in itself. But, but in some ways, that propelled me to prove myself for my entire life.

13:27

Ken

So that, that agreement, in a way, served you, in a way kind of kept you stuck, right?

13:36

Julie

Well, it gave me a purpose. It gave me a purpose. It gave me a purpose. It gave me a purpose. The purpose in my life was, the purpose in my life. If I was bad, the purpose in my life was now I'm going to prove to them that I'm better than them. So, in a roundabout crazy way, it gave me a sense of purpose. And I was driven. I was driven.

13:57

Ken

And how was that for you to notice as your share with me that the agreement has always been an active part of your life.

14:03

Julie

Oh, wow, that's very interesting. You should say that because because, somewhere along the week, as I, as after I was doing the journaling, and I was looking at all of this and thinking about it. I realized that that those agreements I can lay it out, I want to joke about it. I want to laugh about it, because it's too hard. It's even too hard to be serious because it's so hard. It's so hard like it's just like, okay, I can swear but my whole life, my whole life. I lived, I live my whole life based on these agreements that I made as an eight-year-old and, and I realized that even then I never, I never really, I never, I never, I don't, I never got to do what I wanted to do. I was always doing what I promised to do as an eight-year-old. And it was all about being safe. It was all about keeping safe.

15:19

Ken

Your whole life was all about safety.

15:20

Julie

My whole life was about safety, my whole life was all about safety.

15:23

Ken

Either you become safe by being better than men? Or you become safe by submitting like mom did?

15:32

Yes. Oh, had to? Oh, my gosh, thank you. I just realized, well, that's why as much as I swore, I wouldn't be like my mother, in order to be safe. I did what she did to be safe with men, because I didn't think

men were safe. So, in order to be safe, I had to submit. Like, like I saw my mom do with my dad. Whoa, oh, no. Oh, my goodness. So now, I mean, I don't want to do this again. I've done it three times, and married three times. And each time I watched and when I looked at those marriages, it was like, I thought I each time I thought I knew better, I thought I could do it better, I wouldn't get caught. But each time before you knew what I was caught, I got caught in those old beliefs.

16:33

Ken

And how's that for you to see that I think is very safe oriented, wherever you try to be better than men so that you're safe or submit to men so that you're safe. And its either, kind of like navigating through life. By if you think about your dad, Greg as an attachment figure, either you do the way that Greg did. Or you do like mom did. And there's they're kind of impacting all the choices. How was that for you to see?

17:05

Julie

Oh, I was never, I guess I think I understand now why, why, I don't know who I really am either. Because I was always, I was always doing what I thought I had to do. To do what whatever you just said to be safe, try to prove myself. There was, it was always, it was, it was, there was no, I wasn't, I wasn't, I wasn't free to be anything but what I thought my eight-year-old wanted me to be. I was stuck in the belief system. That's what it was. I was stuck in a belief system of that eight-year-old. And, and, and, and the hard part was to see that that pattern repeated itself, but even repeated itself in medicine. With the male doctors, it was the same thing. It was the same thing. And, and, and now, now, now it's like, oh, you know, now here, just thinking right now. It's like, Oh, dear. I thought I was ready to do that online dating, and I did all those profiles. But like, whoa, oh, this here, It's like, just a minute. I don't think, I don't know. I don't think I'm ready. I can't be ready. I have done it three times already. How am I not going to do it again? Unless I learned something different. And I guess that's what, that's what I guess that's what I need, now. How do you help me with this? How do you help me? Can you help me with this, so that I don't repeat those histories that I don't just keep doing those things that the eight-year-old said she promised because she was scared and felt bad.

19:00

Ken

So, it's very important to be able to notice that eight-year-old need to do that from a safety perspective, right. And you want to live your life by feeling safe, but also thriving. The eight-year-old needed to do that, right? So that's why those attachment agreements, they can really work like an anchor. It's kind of like if we know how dangerous that person is, then we can relate to them. And by avoidance or by anxiety or by fearfulness, those attachment styles. We can just say okay with this person, I can remind them to stay safe and in and that eight-year-old, needed to be very smart to say how do I keep myself alive.

19:47

Julie

But what you're saying though, then is that what I've done and what you're saying I've done is that that, that I've used those beliefs of the eight-year-old to keep safe in every relationship that I've had.

20:08

Ken

Yes, it looks like you did that all your life, right? Cause that's what we do as human beings, we just repeat whatever relationship we have with our caregivers or attachments figures.

20:21

Julie

I realized that I had, I guess I have to be grateful. I have to be really grateful to that eight-year-old me who made those agreements so that we would stay safe in that situation. So I have to be very grateful to her.

20:40

Ken

She's very smart. And she's looking at adults and say, okay, and they're kind of like doing social stuff. And what do I how do I survive? So, the agreements are coming from a survival point of just the way that you need to survive, right? You need to survive to be the firstborn. Yes. So as an eight-year-old, she's kind of thinking that if I make this my dad proud, that I'm making the community proud.

21:08

Julie

Yes. Wow. Yes. Wow.

21:12

Ken

Then I'm making my family proud, as you mentioned, so somebody's gonna say Greg's child is a doctor, so and so's grandchild is a doctor, so and so's neighbor is a doctor.

21:31

Julie

Ohhh.... So, so, not only was I, not only did I help my family image, my family looked better. It also, my extended family, and the neighborhood. So, so then, so then some ways, I'm just thinking this, in some ways, then it was like that, well, then it was self-perpetuating. And even if I didn't want to be a doctor anymore, there was no way in hell, I could not be a doctor. Because if I decided this wasn't for me, I would let all those people down.

22:18

Ken

Absolutely. And that's part of the agreement. I won't do anything so that I'm not a bad child. So that the agreement is still valid. So understand, you're really worried about maybe dating relationships, right? Because if the agreement is valid, you may be willing to agree to the next person you're dating. To be okay with things that you're really not okay with. Because you don't want to be a bad person.

22:49

Julie

I don't want to be a bad person. But then, but then. But then. But then, I guess, then the next layer, is I promised that I would never need a man, I'd never be in a relationship. So So yeah, I did it. And I became like my mother. But if I bet if I don't look at it, then if I, if I, if I, if I keep the agreements, then I'm destined to be all alone. So, I'm, I'm either I'm either becoming like my mother and submissive, or I'm destined to be alone. And, and, and I, I don't want to be, I don't want to be when I look at when I looked at those attachment things that you sent me and when I looked at it, avoidant one yes, the attachment styles, and I looked at that, avoiding one that one that I became, it's like, I'm independent. I don't need anybody. That's how I live my whole life. It's very lonely there. You don't have any fun. You're not in the you don't know how to have a relationship. So. So I have I don't want to live there anymore. I don't want to I don't want to. I don't want to live there anymore. I don't want to keep repeating those patterns.

24:04

Ken

Absolutely, and that's part of the agreement, right? Because she was saying the meaning he was making was, I have to do that on my own.

24:08

Julie

Yes

24:09

Ken

I am all alone. I need to do that on my own. So, in relation to the incident, yes. And when we're mapping, so that's kind of what's happened. So as long as they are not resolved, and cleaned up, so we get to do the same thing.

24:29

Julie

So, somehow, somehow, somehow, my eight-year-old carries something that I need to look at. I don't know what the word is. But she set the agreement, and then I was eight. And I've been following the agreement. So, I mean, I've done I've done lots of therapy over my lifetime, and yet here I am still stuck there.

24:56

And today, we're going to look at that together in a different way.

25:00

Julie

Okay

25:01

Ken

So, we are going to look at the attachment blueprint.

25:04

Julie

Okay

25:06

Ken

So, we tend to have some blueprint incidents, it could be one, it could be multiple, one of them will cause those fundamentally agreements we are making to survive. And let me just hold on to all the agreements like anchors.

25:23

Julie

So, just, can I ask you something there then. So, the anchors, what you're saying when you say the word anchors, is their anchors, because those are the anchors that helped me feel safe.

25:35

Ken

Absolutely. So just like when a boat comes to the shore, if you see the anchors, and all of that, and you kind of can feel safe with those agreements and meanings and everything becomes like an also an attachment anchor, you say, if I can hold on to it, then I'm going to feel safe. And surely, that doesn't mean that is helping.

25:56

Julie

So, so, oh now just that, I'm putting some pieces together here. So now, now, so now all my life, when I would feel scared or anxious, I didn't know what to do, I would go to those attachment agreements and say, okay, this how am going to live and I anchor to them. And I live from there. And what you helped me, what your show, what you what you showed me with this attachment circles. And this secure self is minute is I now have an option.

26:33

Ken

Yes, you have options. They can be the anchors.

26:37

Julie

I don't have to go to those attachment agreements that I made as an eight-year-old. I can now go to my secure self, my attachment circle and be it get my attachment there.

26:50

Ken

Absolutely, absolutely. Just notice that, just notice that, take a deep breath and let it go. That's it.

26:58

Julie

Whoa, so I'm not. So, I'm not I'm not stuck there anymore. I have an option. I have an option.

27:09

Ken

Yes, you do have options to be able to move forward and today we are going to use some, some other ways to look at it. And then we are going to almost prune some of those memories that are causing. Okay. It's kind of like neural pruning. So, we are going to go deeper and take care of some memories together so that it's much more easy for you