

92 Cody Butler

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SPEAKERS

Cody Butler, David Sandstrom

- C** Cody Butler 00:00

People are all happy to keep those vows when you're in the better part of the better or worse. But they as soon as it gets into the worst part, it's like, well, my wife's having an affair. Well, that that's covered under the worst part of the contract my friend read your contract. Yeah, but it's like, yeah, but you promised to love her regardless of her behavior. Yeah, but she's not meeting my needs. Well, where is there anything about your needs getting met in this contract my friend. It's like if you expect your wife to you, if you want that mutual admiration and respect. Stand up and own your vows stand up and own your contract that you may give us something to respect and see what happens.

- D** David Sandstrom 00:38

Welcome to the Natural Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential, so that you can look and feel your best at any age. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, Naturopathic Doctor, and Biblical Health Coach. And this is episode number 93.

- D** David Sandstrom 00:58

Today, we have in the show, Cody Butler, Cody is coming to us from Sydney, Australia. He's the founder of the better marriage and the creator of the marriage recovery program that teaches couples how to repair, restore, and rebuild intimacy, communication and love in their marriage. His best selling book is called cut the BS, a no nonsense guide to happiness. Cody, welcome to Natural Health Matters.

- C** Cody Butler 01:22

Thank you so much for inviting me on and having me it's a it's my pleasure, no doubt.

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David Sandstrom 01:26

Thank you for being here. And I think it's gonna be a great conversation. I've been looking forward to this for a while. So I just wanted to emphasize the importance of what we're going to be talking about today, we're talking about marriage, which is our closest human human relationship. And I believe that we maximize our health potential, when we align our lives more fully with God's natural design for spirit, mind and body. And the spiritual component of health is all about loving relationships, our love relationship with God, and the love relationship we have with one another, and the love relationship we have with ourselves. So if we're married, the most important one, another relationship we have is our spouse. So we really if we care about our health, we should look at getting that right. And even if you don't care about your health, I mean, life is just easier if you're getting along with your spouse, right? He could, I don't have to talk anybody into that. In the Bible has a lot of wisdom here. And in Genesis right at the very beginning here at Genesis chapter two, verse 18. It says this, it is not good for the man to be alone, I will make a helper suitable for him. And I'm always encouraged when I see modern science catching up with biblical truth that was written 1000s of years ago. And just this morning, I just, it was so easy to find this lots of these articles. But I found a journal in published in a study published in the journal public health. And it was a meta analysis published in 2017. And here's what they had to say, eight databases were searched from 1950 to 2016, which is no small study 40 systematic reviews were identified, largely from the developed world, researchers found a significant association between social isolation and loneliness, with increased all cause mortality, with cardiovascular disease, especially being tied to social isolation. So this idea of one another relationships and getting our spousal relationship, right has huge implications to our health and wellness. And, you know, almost going to get sidetracked here, but I think we have to mention it with, with what's gone on with the shutdowns and the school closings and the mask wearing the ice. The social isolation that we've experienced over the last couple of years worldwide, is unprecedented, probably in human history. And I'm wondering, I'm sure we saved some lives with all those measures from COVID. But how many deaths in suff? How much suffering did we create? By causing loneliness and social isolation to be spiking? You know, we may never know but there's obviously a lot of people studying that these days. So as way of introduction, so Cody, you're you're an expert on marriage. So tell us a little tell the Natural Nation a little bit about what you do and how you came to be doing that.

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Cody Butler 04:27

Yeah, so So my my mission and my ministry really has come out of my mess, my message has come out of my mess. So I've always, always longed for that soulmate relationship, as many of us have and a number of times I've found myself in a relationship and then it just breaking down and ended up getting heartbroken and that leading to depression, anxiety causing other problems that obviously my ability to function socially goes down as you're in that state of depression and anxiety. It got to a point where I really I really couldn't get out of bed I really couldn't. I was heavily drug dependent became very alcohol dependent, which just created more problems. And I really wanted that relationship because every time I found it, I couldn't hang on to it, I lost it. And so it really became the lowest common denominator through all of that Dave route was me I was I was, I was the lowest common denominator I was the only commonality and each one of those relationships I really became quite obsessed with. What relationships are what makes relationships work? Why are my relationships failing? And why are relationships in general finding when it's a God ordained institution, it's a God given. God

God has called us to be together, to be in. So when when God has called us to be together, and to leave your mother and father and cleave to your wife, and God has created a suitable helper for you. It's like, we're designed to be together. Why is it that we can't be together there's there's a mismatch here. And that really became my obsession was like, what what is going on here and through, stuck my own study my own situation. Take going down every route I could possibly find to figure out what makes relationships work. And equally as important, what makes relationships fail. And it's actually very simple. What makes relationships work is actually very simple. But I found myself in my dream woman, she's she's in the room next door right now, it's quite late when she's in bed, but I finally met my dream spouse. And to be honest with you, Dave, the only thing that kept us married, was her commitment was her godliness and her her commitment to Christ, and her integrity to our own vows and her own marriage as the only thing that kept us married. That was the only thing.

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David Sandstrom 06:48

God bless her and he best bless you by having

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Cody Butler 06:50

Absolutely. But he also turned that marriage around in a heartbeat in like, we can even go through that at some point during this conversation. I mean, that that marriage turned on a dime, I can tell you the very words that were spoken, I can tell you the actions that were enacted, I can tell you that the transformation that took place, I mean, it's crystal clear in my mind. And

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David Sandstrom 07:11

I have to ask you what what was the big turning point? What was the the rock that you moved, so to speak, that caused that transformation? There's probably a lot of them. But what was the big one?

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Cody Butler 07:21

Yeah, so what I shone light into the darkness, I confess my sins and I shine light into the darkness. I finally confided in my wife and I confess my sins to I was have I had serious drug and alcohol problems at the time, serious drug and alcohol problems. And I'm very functional, and very functional. When I'm in that state. It's like you wouldn't know you wouldn't know. I mean, if I was drinking, which I'm not, I haven't drank for a long time. But if I was, you wouldn't know right now I could be drunk right now. And you wouldn't know it right? And every night, I'd be up and I'd be up in my roof, drinking. And one night, I just came down and just said, my wife was in the shower, and I just opened the door, I said, I need to tell you something right now, I said, I'm high and I'm drunk right now. And I've been high and drunk for a number of years. Now every time I'm up in the roof, that's what's going on is why and I'm drunk. And basically, to cut a long story short, we can go and we can go into more detail this as we go. There are three elements that need to be present in a successful marriage that needs to be there needs to be emotional safety and security. There needs to be mutual admiration and respect. And there

needs to be shared vision and goal. And my wife's response to me when I when I confessed my sins to her, I confessed what I was doing, she goes, I love you, and we're gonna get through this. And in retrospect, looking at us looking looking back at what happened. I mean, she provided emotional safety and security to continue to shine light into the darkness, which is confessing what's going on. There was obviously a mutual admiration and respect, I respected the way that she handled that situation. And she obviously respected the fact that I came clean and then we instantaneously created a mutual a mutual vision and golfer the relationship was to, which was at that point to get through this particular juncture. So in an instant, when, before that moment, there was no emotional safety. She she if she said something to me as lab or to beat her verbally, that there could be no emotion, there could be no mutual admiration and respect because of the way I was behaving. And there was no shared vision. God, my vision was to get drunk her vision was to heal the relationship, there was no shared vision. But in that, in that one moment, those three elements came into alignment and the heat of the relationship healed instantaneously. And it was literally spontaneous recovery. Literally spontaneous. It's awesome.

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David Sandstrom 09:40

That is so cool. I have chills. That is so cool. Couple of observations. So if you go on the roof to drink and get high, do you think you have a problem? They maybe maybe that's a clue that there's a problem there. And the other was, you know, we all say something like this. We take our marriage vows to have and to hold to love and to cherish till death do we part? But do we really recognize the significance of those words? When we take those vows and it sounds like your wife did. Bless her heart, her saying, You know what? It's okay, you got a problem. I'm here for you. And we'll get through this together. That's that was key to making things work. That's

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Cody Butler 10:22

That's exactly right. That's exactly right. And when I first when I start talking to man, so you've got to like, the vows that you've just said, you understand that is a one way unconditional covenant where you give and get nothing back. I promise to love You and to cherish you as, Christ's love, loves the church, I promise to have and to hold, for better or for worse, until death do us part is like that is a one way unconditional promise, an unconditional covenant that you are making with your wife that requires nothing in return for her from her. So I start working with men and I say, well, but my wife's doing this. And I'm like, there's no, there's no but you made an unconditional, you entered into an unconditional one way covenant in the same way that Christ has entered into that. One way unconditional covenant with you. You accept Christ as your Savior. It's a one way covenant where he covenants to save you, regardless of what you do at that point. It's a one way unconditional covenant. And that's the same covenant and the beginning of recovery is to own it, that people are all happy to keep those vows when you're in the better part of the better or worse. But they as soon as it gets into the worst part. It's like, well, my wife's having an affair. Well, that that's covered under the worst part of the contract. My friend read your contract. Yeah, but it's like, yeah, but you promised to love her, regardless of her behavior. Yeah, but she's not meeting my needs. Well, where is there anything about your needs getting met in this contract my friend, it's like if you expect your wife, you, if you want that mutual admiration and respect, stand up and own your vows stand up and own the contract that you made, give us something to respect and see what happens.

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David Sandstrom 12:05

That is such good stuff. You know, my wife, and I believe in marriage groups for the last 10 years where our next group is starting in a couple of weeks. And on the first session, we do 16 sessions. And it takes us about nine months to get through this book called intimate encounters. And I know that most of the people sitting in front of me come in and start a group like this with the expectation, I'm going to get my spouse fixed. This is this is going to be the thing that's going to get my spouse fixed. And I've got to tell them look at stop looking at that person next year. Right now, it's about changing yourself, because you can't change them. You only have control over what you do and say thank you. And when you start working on yourself, that's when the magic happens. And if you have two spouses doing that, you'll see some amazing things take place, as far as your relational connectedness

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Cody Butler 12:57

Absolutely spot on. And when I'm talking to people, they say, Oh, my wife, they're so Oh, my husband, dad, or oh my, it's like, let me let me tell you truth, the mirror never lies. The person, the mirror, the person you are in front of right now is the mirror, the mirror never lies. And whatever it has, as it says, You're accused, because you are guilty, be very careful. Be very careful of what you're accusing somebody off because the Bible is very clear, you are accused because you are guilty. And the number the number of people that have gone off, but my wife's a narcissist, and I'm like, huh, the mirror never lies, my friend, the mirror never lies. You are seeing you're seeing your behavior mirrored back to you through your wife, you're seeing your your behavior mirrored back to you. And again, ultimately, it just simply doesn't matter. It doesn't matter what your husband or wife is doing. The problem is with you your vow, you made a one way unconditional covenant. And if you're struggling with that, then we need to work on you. Because there's integrity issues in you. There's leadership issues in you, there's ownership issues in you, there's responsibility issues in you that these are all issues that before we start working on the splinter in your wife's eye, we need to get this beam out of your arm my brother because these are all issues that have to be addressed. And even if what you're saying about your wife is true then then what right do you have to address those issues in her when when we can just we can just rattle these off one after the other. You're not leading your wife, you're not loving your wife. You're not doing this you're not doing it's like let's fix you and then when your perfect will turn there will shine the light on her.

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David Sandstrom 14:36

That's good. I love it. So a moment ago you mentioned there was four I think it was four ingredients to a successful relationship. One of them was mutual respect, right

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Cody Butler 14:45

Three ingredients. Three ingredients. So

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David Sandstrom 14:48

David Sandstrom 14:10

we had mutual respect. What were the other two?

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Cody Butler 14:50

So in order it's emotional safety and security. Okay, can you be 100% of yourself 100% of the time with your partner without fear of repercussions. Okay, there has to be emotional safety and security then there has the second element is mutual admiration and respect. And the third element is a shared vision and goal to common purpose. Okay, the relationship very good.

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David Sandstrom 15:16

So can we break those down into a little deeper? How can someone nurture those qualities in their relationship?

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Cody Butler 15:23

Well, awareness is the first step. So when we look at the learning quadrant, we've got we've got the four areas of learning, right? We've, most people are in a state of unconscious incompetence. So right now, most people have no idea that they've destroyed the emotional safety and security within the emotional security within a marriage. I talk to men all the time, and they say, My wife just doesn't like talking. And I'm like, No, my brother, she doesn't like talking to you. She's a woman. That's like a man saying, you know, a woman coming to me saying My husband doesn't like sex. Now, he doesn't like sex with you. He's a man. Let's say it's saying that my wife doesn't like talking or my wife doesn't want to talk. It's because she's scared to talk or it's too painful to talk. Or you've destroyed the emotional safety to where she's she's willing to sacrifice the most essential part of what she needs as a woman in order just to keep the peace. So most people, most men are unconsciously incompetent at that point. And the first stage is to become is to move to conscious incompetence. It's like, okay, well, I know, I'm unconscious. I know I'm incompetent in the area of creating the emotional safety and security my wife needs, which is deepest need, by the way, she needs secure, a woman will forsake expansion for safety and security. A man will sacrifice safety and security for expansion, a woman will sacrifice expansion for safety. And she needs that more than anything. And the first stage is saying, I have now conscious that I'm incompetent in that area. And then then it's moving to conscious competence. This is where you start to learn the skills and you apply them competently. So learning to drive a car is a great example, right? Like, I've got a six year old, and he's like, Dad, can I drive the car? I'm like, No, you don't know how. So he's like, Well, why can't I? It's like he's unconsciously incompetent, right? He doesn't realize that he doesn't have skills. He doesn't know how much he does and doesn't know how much he doesn't know. And then, at some point, he'll become consciously incompetent and go, Oh, okay. That's why you don't let me drive the car. And then when we start driving, we can do it, we can, we can consciously drive the car, but it does require our full consciousness we like we're like, shut up, turn the radio off, don't talk there's, there's quiet, right? It's like, we can do it. But we have to have full consciousness for the competence. And then the final stages move into unconscious competence. And that's where you know, we're sending text messages on the phone, we've got a knee on the wheel with changing the radio with our elbow, when we get in a drink with the other hand, it's like, we're almost 90% of the car has been driven on autopilot, because we've become unconsciously competent at the task. So it's really moving through

those four quadrants, realizing that you're unconsciously incompetent right now and then become unconsciously incompetent, and then move into becoming consciously competent. And then finally moving to unconscious competence. And that's when successes, that's when you can't go wrong. That's when you can't screw up.

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David Sandstrom 18:18

That's really cool. I like that a lot. You know, another concept I'd like to share with people is, the Bible is full of if then statements, you know, we love to, you know, you stand in the grocery store line is a book on the promises of God. And there's lots of them, sure. But oftentimes, those promises have a condition attached. They have an if then statement, and one of the more famous ones is John 8:32. And you will know the truth and the truth will make you free. So yes, we can claim that. But we've got to read John 8: 31, to really understand that. John 8:31 says, if you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of mine. And you will know the truth, the truth will make you free. So in other words, knowledge alone is not enough. We have to act on that knowledge. So the truth never said anybody free until it was acted upon because ignorance and failure to act have the same result. Nothing.

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Cody Butler 19:20

Well, exactly, right. I mean, I tell people all the time, like people will watch this, this this podcast, this interview, and they might think, Well, that's good information. I can see where my marriage is going wrong. But here's the thing rather new information does not change your life. What changes your life is radically seeking out and aggressively implementing new behavior. It's radically seeking out and aggressively implementing new behavior. And step number step number one to save in your marriage. Like I'm talking about men because I work with men predominantly for me, it's inappropriate for me to talk about a marriage situation with a woman. It like the men speak with the men and the women speak with the women. That That's my belief. It's just completely inappropriate. Wait for me to be having those conversations with women. When you totally agree topics of sex are coming up topics of intimacy are coming up. No, no, you talk to my wife, and I'll deal with our deal with the husband as I speak with men. So I say, when I'm talking with men, that that's the reason it's like, really, you know, couples counseling is not really a thing for me, because it's just, it's just a it's just a refereed argument is all it is. But no, you have to, you have to radically seek out and implement new behavior. And the point that you pointed out, there was the number one thing that you really need to seek out. And then one thing that's really going to radically change your life is discipleship. If you want to save your marriage, the thing that you need to be looking for is discipleship. It's not a book, it's not a piece of information. It's not a strategy. It's like, I need to submit to discipleship. And that could be you, that could be me, that could be the pastor of your church, that could be anybody. I'm not suggesting that it's you or me or anything like that. What, uh, what I am emphatically stating, though, is that if you don't submit yourself to discipleship, you will not get better. You can't do this by yourself. And the Bible is very clear about this discipleship is absolutely required.

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David Sandstrom 21:10

Yes, no doubt about it. So in your book, you talk about needing to unlearn some lies in order to succeed. Is that what you're talking about there? Or is that something else?

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Cody Butler 21:22

The biggest lie that you've been told the biggest lie, or the biggest crime that has taken place is you've had your identity stolen from you, you don't know who and what you are. You don't know who your child are. Like, if you're a Christian, if you're watching this, your child of the King. And the reason you're not acting like that right now, it's because you've forgotten that or you don't know that, or it's been dumbed down, like, you know, my beef with the modern Christian churches is powerless. It's completely powerless, because it's, it's lost sight. It's been robbed of its identity, identity. It's like we are we are children of The risen King. Do you understand? You understand what that means? And yeah, I don't think I understand it. And I don't think you understand it, because it's due our our, our lives, demonstrating that we are children of The risen King, and we are exercising the power and the authority that's been given is given to us as our birthright as heirs and CO heirs to the throne. It's like I don't, I don't think so it blows your mind. And it's like, step number one. It's like, all if I'm working with you, David, all I need to do to take your life to the next level is help you remember who you are, and help you understand who you are. And to unlearn the lie of the identity that you're small, you're powerless, you're weak, you're toxic, you're the cause of problem. It's like you're white, you're male, you're middle class, it's like you're the you're the cause of every bang. You're the bane of every problem in society. It's like, that's the identity that we give, and it's complete. Nonsense. You are the child of the risen king.

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David Sandstrom 22:52

That's right. Yeah. And there's so much to say on that, you know, God is the Creator of the Universe. He's the one that spoke the galaxies into existence. And we are fashioned and made in that great image. And we are, as you said, co heirs with him on the throne. It's mind boggling. If you're not, if that doesn't take your breath away, I would suggest that you got to spend some time pondering that. It's, you know, it is so right in front of us that sometimes we don't see the forest for the trees. But when you think about that for a minute, there are profound implications there. And you know, it has profound implications on the way we live our lives and the way we behave. And especially with this conversation, how we treat our spouses. Right? I mean, it's staggering the implications there.

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Cody Butler 23:42

And one of the things that really irritates me to be honest with you, my my fight against the modern church, and don't get me wrong, I love I love the church, you know, obviously, but it's like, I'm like we want to empower not disempower. And people say, Oh, if it's God's will, if it's God's will, if it's God's will, I'm like, That's just an excuse for your failure. It's like, I mean, I've got a SMS message here, I've got a client. I mean, I can show it to you. But basically, like, the guy, the guy was diagnosed with a very serious, incurable illness. And he was he was down, I was talking to him in a coaching session, and he was down. And I said, Well, I'm trying as well. I'm not just dealing with this. I'm dealing with the loss of my health. Now, I've been diagnosed with this, I'm like, rubbish. I'm like, get those words out. Never speak those words. Again. That's rubbish. I'm like, you will be healed of that. I'm like, what? When the doctor told you he was incurable, what he actually meant to say was in my very limited experience of medical practice.

I've never successfully treated this. And he's empowered in your his limiting belief of what he is capable on to you. I'm like you, I promise you, I promise you. I promise you you will be healed. How do I know because Jesus raised the dead and he told me that I will do these things and greater. I'm like, Oh, you need all we need here. Brothers. You need to be healed of an incurable sickness. I've been told that I'm going to do great thing. doesn't raise the dead. This is nothing like that. I mean, this is easy compared to that. I'm like this about three months ago, I got a text message set up Saturday saying or last Friday said, just got out of the procedure very groggy from the anesthetic, but 100% Clear. Wow, 100% clear.

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David Sandstrom 25:16

That's awesome. I get that's awesome. I got to share a similar story, I get a good friend of mine. We've been friends for friends for 40 years. And a couple years ago, he was diagnosed with stage four colon cancer, and it metastasized to his lungs and his liver. And last fall, the doctors told him, Look, we've done everything we can do. Go home, get your affairs in order. It's not going to be long. And he said, Well, how long doc? He said, The doctors have told him days, maybe weeks. Well, that was November of last year. And he just went in for a few tests last week. And he's completely clean, cancer free. Amen. So it's not in that glorious. So you know, those doctors, they're, they're not God, you know, that they should say it in different different terms, you know, and say, you know, in my experience, this is what I've observed. But that doesn't mean you have to fit that way. Right? Exactly. There should be room for God to move in and room for the doctor to be wrong. Because you know, God is in the transformation business, and we are His disciples and we get this right things can happen. But you know, we're trying to focus here on marriage I'm gonna reel it back in a little bit. But anyway, I know that just as you've identified three very, very beneficial things to relationship. You've also identified for toxic behaviors in marriage. And if could you speak to those I have in front of me, but I think you probably know him pretty well. So what are the what are the toxic things that we engage in that damage our relationships?

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Cody Butler 27:01

Yeah, so the first the first one is escalation. It's the habit of escalation. And a lot of these things we don't even know that we're doing it's like, well, what it seems like we can take a molehill and turn it into a mountain. Yeah, well, what about if we could take a mountain and turn it into a molehill? Why not, it's no, it's no less of a miracle to turn a mountain into a molehill than it is to turn a molehill into a mountain. Yeah, it's as equally as much a miracle going the other way. So the first habit is escalation. And that again, that's, you know, the easiest way to look at that. It's like it's taken, it's taken a molehill and turn it, turn it into a mountain, we can take nothing and turn it into something. That that's the first habit. And of course, again, we've got to relate all of these back to how does it affect the three core core elements of a marriage, emotional safety, insecurity, mutual admiration, and shared vision. So if every time your wife tries to talk to you, you escalate it into an argument, just just destroy the emotional safety that is just killed it is and the other aspects to the second one is going to be really insidious. It's insidious. It's negative interpretation. It's negative interpretation, and that's thinking the worst of your spouse. And only God can see into the heart of a man if you want to utterly destroy a relationship beyond repair. Question somebody's intentions. Yeah, you can, you can question the outcome. You can say, hey, Cody, like you acted, you acted in a way on my podcast that made me a little bit uncomfortable. It's like, okay, well, that might be true. But if you say you

came on my car cut podcast simply to discredit me and make me look so silly. It's like that, that you don't, nobody has any right to determine that motivation. It's like, Well, okay, if that's what you think about me, then? Yeah, I'm out of here.

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David Sandstrom 28:47

Right, right. It's negative. One of the things I want to add to that is when we work with couples in our groups, and that is, if somebody says something like, no, no, no, that's not what I meant by that. You need to take them at their word. You can't sit there and dig your heels in and say, no, no, no, I know what you meant by that. No, if you want to rebuild the connection, you've got you've got to take them at their word, you know, because they, they, if you ask them separately, you know, do you want what's best for your spouse? Do you want the best possible outcome in your marital connectedness? The spouse was in a heartbeat. Yes, yes. I that's what I want. So why would they lie about something that critical? So yeah, you gotta you gotta take your word and say, Okay, I guess I interpreted that wrong.

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Cody Butler 29:37

But the easiest way, the easiest way to see that is like, I always ask a couple when I when I first talked to them. You know, Dave, Dave, have you ever woken up in the morning and thought, I'm going to be a real a-hole today and really upset my wife. Have you ever woken up and thought that ever one time never done that? Never asked your wife the same thing if you've ever woken up or gone? Just going to be a real a-hole today and I'm going to go out of my way to upset my husband. I'm guessing that her answer will be the same. Now, I've never woken up with the intention of upsetting my husband. So then, coming from that place of understanding that neither one of us have ever worked, we're not malicious, vicious, nasty people that have ever woken up with the intention of having a fight or causing pain. When that paying conflict and tension comes during the day. Can we agree that it's a miscommunication? Can we just agree that we come from different backgrounds, different families, different different cultures? Different whatever it is, right? What? Yeah, I don't know what the difference is. But can we just agree that we've we've misunderstood each other over miscommunicated? And can we, instead of negatively interpret in this situation and go, you intentionally tried to hurt me and then escalating the situation? To something big? Can we take it down a notch? Can we go okay, well, I know you wouldn't intentionally hurt me, Dave, I know you wouldn't intentionally hurt me, Cody. So can we take it down a notch and lower the emotional levels? And then talk about this when we're in a better condition?

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David Sandstrom 31:01

Yeah, absolutely. That's a really good way to de-escalate any conversation, spousal or not, and that is, let's find some common ground, let's find something that neither one of us would dispute, and that we can both agree upon. And let's settle on that for a moment. And then we'll we'll progress from there. And that can really diffuse, you know, a high intensity conversation.

C

Cody Butler 31:27

Absolutely. It's just something very simple like like with the kids right? I mean my wife's my

absolutely. It's just something very simple like, like, with the kids, right? I mean, my wife's my wife's over protective with the kids. And I'm probably like, a little bit more. I'm like, Where are the kids? I'm like, are they're just playing with the guns in the backyard? Don't worry, they're not loaded. Yeah, I'm just joking. That never happened. That never happened. Okay. But it's like, you know, we, there's no doubt I don't, I don't doubt that she's doing her best to protect the kids. And she doesn't doubt that I would ever do anything to harm the kids in any way, shape, or form. So it's like, when we have that conflict, it's like, you know, she thinks I'm being a little bit too relaxed, or I think she's being a little bit too protective. It's like, okay, well, we both know that we love the kids immensely. And we both know that either one of us would never do anything to harm the kid. So we've got the same goal here, which is to keep the kids safe. Obviously, we're just seeing things a little bit different. Here. Maybe you could explain your point of view to me about what you think's going on here. And we can we can come to a compromise. So yeah, it's just it's just having some strategies and haven't had. And that's difficult, right? Because that's your, that's your conscious competence. And it's like the getting that to the point, you've got to practice that. And it's awkward. Before, before it transitions into that unconscious competence.

D

David Sandstrom 32:43

That's exactly right. You know, it just oh, this is such good stuff. So when you're, when you're having a conversation, I say, I tell couples, one of the best things you can say is, thank you for sharing. Yep. Because most of the time, we're so busy thinking about what we want to say that we stopped listening, right? So if you just forget about that, that's just shelved for the moment. And I'm just going to listen. And my response, I know ahead of time that my response is going to be thank you for sharing. It really, it just does something about increasing that intimacy and that relational connectedness. Another thing is, you can you could say, alright, let me let me summarize what I believe you're saying. And then you paraphrase. And they might say, Yeah, that's exactly right. Or they might say, No, that's not quite what I met. Let me let me fill in the blanks here. And that is that will lead to a productive conversation. We call them staff meetings, in our groups, you'll have a good staff meeting if you if you follow those guidelines.

C

Cody Butler 33:49

Well, yeah, that's a great name for I mean, I call it set plays, set plays, wins games. Okay, you've got it, you've got to have a set play, like when you're talking to a couple that's in crisis is like, can we just agree that we don't know how to have a conversation? Can we just agree that we don't know how to have effective communication? So can we just throw out everything that you think you know? And can we put a set play in place which, which would be your staff meeting? So when we when we want to have a conversation, or when we need to have a conversation? I call it a set play; You call it a staff meeting? It's exactly the same thing. It's like, yes, we're gonna go into a structured conversation. This is not a free for all. This is not a yell at you. You yell louder, and then I yell back some more. It's like, this conversation has structure. This conversation has rules.

D

David Sandstrom 34:35

That's a good, that's a good rule. I liked that structure. Excellent. Really good stuff. So the next one would be invalidation

C

Cody Butler 34:44

Invalidation. Correct. And if this is this is more about that a little. Yeah, this is this is more insidious from for men and for women, because we instinctively want to help the woman. We're problem solvers. We find we find our own validity. to helping people but unfortunately, quite often in trying to help the woman she doesn't we invalidate her right? So when we might come home from work and say, So and so was a real butthead at work, and they're just so rude to me, it just upsets me. And as a man, I go into my problem solving mode, and I go, Oh, I wouldn't even worry about that. The guy's just just a butthead. Don't worry, he can't fire you. He doesn't mean anything. And we're trying to pull validation from solving the problem. But at the same time, it's just completely validating her emotion. She, it's basically saying your emotion is not valid, that the fact that you're upset is not valid, that the wife comes home and paraphrase. If I'm upset about something that happened and we're at work and a man goes, Well, don't worry about it, there's nothing to be upset about.

D

David Sandstrom 35:45

Right. So what he's done is, is your invalidation is a great word. But in essence, what that what that spouse has done, and believe me, I've been there, okay, I've done will have to say, Hey, look at you don't need to worry about that. That guy's just, you know, a moron; brush it off. What you're saying is, he's not the problem, the real problem here is you, it's your reaction to what he said or did. And that is insulting to I don't know what degree I mean, how could somebody respond positively to that? We call this emotional responding. If if someone is venting an emotion, like frustration, or disappointment, or whatever it is, we don't invalidate that emotion, we get on their level, and say, Wow, that must have really been hurtful. Tell me more, you know, and then that person feels validated and that that fosters more intimacy and connection,

C

Cody Butler 36:40

That that's exactly right. And again, if you think about it, like bringing this back to the three pillars of building a marriage, it's like, well, when you basically invalidate, that, when the woman brings an emotion to you, and you're validated straightaway, you're again, you're crushing emotional safety and security like that, she's not going to come to you again, and share her emotions because she's just going to be invalidated. And that invalidation becomes more painful than actually not even talking about it. Yes, oh, they just go elsewhere, they just stopped talking to you, and they go elsewhere. So again, it's not just understanding what the problem is, we have to relate everything back to the three pillars is this building or destroying one of those three pillars? All of those pillars?

D

David Sandstrom 37:20

Excellent, really good information. So let's talk about withdrawal. What does that look like?



C**Cody Butler 37:26**

So that could be physical or that could be emotional withdrawal. So again, another word for it will be abandonment. It will be abandonment, emotional abandonment. So I have a thing with my wife, like, I'm a little bit hot headed, I know my weaknesses. So again, set plays wins games day. That's what I say set plays wins games. So when I when I feel the blood rushing up the flesh coming onto my face, I feel the that rage coming over me. And I know that it's going to be bad. I've told my wife ahead of time, when when when things are getting bad, when things are escalating, and our set plays have not worked to deescalate the situation and to continue to escalate. I'm going to leave, I'm going to leave, I'm going to leave your presence, I'm going to leave the house I'm like but I'm not leaving you. I'm not abandoning you. I'm doing abandoning you're doing it because I love you. And I will be back. I'm leaving to protect you. Because it's going to be much easier to explain the absence than it is to explain the hand grenade that's about to go off. But I've told her ahead of time, right? I've said, Hey, this is this is what's going to happen. I'm doing it because I love you. I'm doing it to protect you. I'm not abandoning you. And I will be back. And if I do leave, please don't chase me because you'll make the situation worse. And right. That's an example of where what could seemingly be withdraw is actually it is not like with the negative type of withdrawal would just be like when you just sit down and you just emotionally shut down. Right? And the woman doesn't know why you've shut down or the husband doesn't know what are you just, you just got up. I'm out of here, man, and you go down the local watering hole and you drink some some cold ones with your friends. And you come back a day later or later on that night and there's no, you've effectively abandoned your wife. Right? You've just you've just left her in a time of crisis and she doesn't know where you are, what's going on? How can she possibly feel safe under your leadership? If you're doing that?

D**David Sandstrom 39:20**

Yeah, you know, personal story. Our first year of marriage was very rocky, we've been married for 22 years, my wife. But we had one of those one of those conflicts. And I really didn't know what to do. I had none of these skills. And I got my car door to the airport, got on an airplane and flew out of town. And I didn't I didn't say anything like you just said I just took off. And I don't know how we survive that. I don't know. I mean, but I just didn't know what to do. I didn't know what else to do. And I'm an airline pilot, so getting on an airplane and flying out of town felt natural to me. All right, so I'm sitting there in a hotel room by myself stewing on all this, just, you know, all these toxic thoughts are just snowballing out of control. And God moved and brought a woman into my wife's life. And long story short, I don't have time to go into it all right now because we're, we're kind of running late on time. But it's a cool story. But she said she ended up inviting us to a weekend called Marriage Encounter. And it was all God ordained God, God brought this woman into my wife's life. And she, my wife called me up said, Hey, Dave, I think we're supposed to go to this thing. And God worked it out. And we got there. We went there, it was a turning point for us. And we've been doing marriage ministry ever since not in its present form. But it helped us so much. We learned so much that weekend, that we said, Wow, we got it, we got to continue on this path. And it hasn't been, you know, a smooth road every step of the way. We've had our conflicts. But man, we are so, so much closer today, because we have some of these tools, some of these coping skills, and some of these, you know, the knowledge of what breaks down a relationship and the knowledge of what builds relationship, relational connectedness, you know, we have the tools, and it's only when I get frustrated, or, you know, short tempered that I don't I just choose not to use them. You know, so we execute imperfectly, but man, it's made a world of difference.

C Cody Butler 41:28

Oh, it's why I mean, the divorce rates 50%. But it's worse than that. Because I mean, if you survey the 50, when surveyed the 50%, the state marriage, when you ask them, Are you happy and satisfied in your relationship? It's like 92%, say no. Right? Yeah, I mean, people just leave and the ones that stay for whatever reason, maybe it is because out of out of their commitment to their vows, or maybe it's spent for whatever reason, right? It's like the majority of those. So really, only four or 5% of people are actually happy, satisfied or fulfilled within their relationship, which is absolutely tragic. Because it doesn't it is to be that way. And it doesn't take a lot to change it. It doesn't take a lot.

D David Sandstrom 42:08

Yeah, you're absolutely right. So you, you talked about your alcohol addiction and drug addiction are early on, while back and you are involved in in rehabilitation. Right now, some some programs. So typically, you know, the 12 step programs have a very, very, very poor success rate. Most of those people relapse, they don't really have a lot of people they can brag about that if recovered. But in your programs, you get 80 plus percent recovery. What's the difference? What are you doing differently in those programs?

C Cody Butler 42:43

I'm not doing anything I'm allowing, I'm allowing God to do the healing is what's going on. I'm allowed to do the healing. So I'm also very particular about who I allow into it. So the success is like, you have to be ready for radical ownership and radical responsibility. You have to be open to the truth of the path to recovery is it's It's simple. It's like no the truth and the truth shall set you free. That is the path to truth. That is the path path to recovery. It's the truth that will set you free. But here's the thing, right? And when things are the truth, that's easy. Well, Jesus told the truth, and he got himself killed in there. If you want to, if you want to piss somebody off, tell the truth. The truth is the hardest thing to face and why the reason why we're drinking in the first place is because we're not willing to face the truth. The reason why we're drinking is because truth is so painful, that we'll do anything to avoid facing that truth. And I know for myself, like, looking back now see, I mean, it's hard for me to even think about some of the stuff that I did during that time. It's, I would rather just Black it out and suppress it and not, that's how painful it is for me to even just think about it inside of my head, let alone talk about it. That's how bad it was. And it's only actually shining light into it and confessing it owning it telling the truth. That it's like it's like this, right? I mean, let me show you I've got a light here, right? I've got a light 100 times out of 100 How many times will the dark if I if I turn light. If I shine light into a dark room, how many times out of 100 Will the light win

D David Sandstrom 44:22

the light is going to win all the time,

C Cody Butler 44:23

 Cody Butler 47:25

It's going to win 100 times out of 100 this this the solution to darkness and again, when I when I talk to people in this sort of the interview process because it is it is a selection process. It's like Are you ready to shine light into the darkness? Because when we shine light into the darkness, you're going to see the truth and the truth is going to be ugly. It's going to be what you've been running from, uh, you ready to turn around and do battle with a monster instead of continuing instead of to continue to run from it to hide. Yeah. Or do you just want an excuse for it? Do you just want an excuse for your drinking? Do you want to next excuse for your running? Do you want an excuse for your behavior? Do you want to be right? Or do you want to be sober? Do you want to be right? Or do you want to be married? When you choose because the only way we're going to get through this is like we have to shine light into the darkness, we have to deal with truth be transformed by the renewing of your mind. But we've talked about that what is the renewing of the mind, we have to unlearn the lies of your stolen identity. And we have to transform your your mind has to be renewed and transformed to adopt the identity of who and what you are. You're saying, I went to Alcoholics Anonymous one time, because they require to you to raise your hand at the beginning, like for demonstration purposes only, you have to say, I am an alcoholic. And I'm like, and then they tell you that you have an incurable disease that you will have to manage for the rest of your life. I'm like, I'm not an alcoholic. I've been set free by Christ and those who Christ is set free is truly free. Indeed, I refuse to deny the healing, I refuse to deny it by showing up and saying, you know, for demonstration purposes only, I'm an alcoholic. And I refuse to believe that this is an incurable condition that I'm going to have to live with. None of that is biblical, none of that is biblical. I mean, Jesus will set you free. And when you are set free, you're not an alcoholic, you've got to renew your mind, you got to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, you got to change that identity. You've got to change, you got to shine light into your darkness, you've got to face the truth. And you've got to accept radical responsibility for your own life. You got to expect accept radical responsibility for the damage that's been done under your leadership. You've got to accept radical responsibility for everything. Everything in my life. Look, it's like it's like this. If I'm at the grocery store, I've got three kids, right? I got a two year old, a five year old and six year old if they find a hammer, and they're in the parking lot smashing taillights? Whose responsibility is that? It's mine.

 David Sandstrom 46:59

I can't say it's yours for not watching them. Yeah. So

 Cody Butler 47:01

someone can't come and say, Cody, your kids are smashing their cars out in the car park. And I go that do? And it's like, no, no, no, everything those kids do is my responsibility, everything. And I'm like you as as a man, you've got to accept the responsibility that everything that's gone on in your house, in your marriage in your life, which now includes your wife, because two flesh has become one, you're one in the same. Everything that's going on is your responsibility. If you're an airline pilot who's responsible for what happens on that, on that flight,

 David Sandstrom 47:31

D

David Sandstrom 47:32

The the federal aviation regulations say the captain is the final authority as to the operation of that aircraft, Air Traffic Control can tell you things. A dispatcher can tell you things. You can have all kinds of expectations thrown upon you. But at the end of the day, you're the one who has to do the carpet dance, and explain yourself, why you made the decisions you did. So they give captain's a great deal of authority. In fact, it's the ultimate authority as the operation of that aircraft, you can break any rule or regulation, you have to, to the extent necessary to meet that emergency. And I think what we're talking about here in relationships is, you know, many couples are in crisis. And that can be thought of as an emergency. So imagine, you know, what, you got to be the captain and be the final authority as to the operation or the well of functioning of your marital relationship. Exactly.

C

Cody Butler 48:28

And I and who's responsible for that crisis, as when you get off that plane, you are held accountable for the success of that flight or your cat held accountable for the failure of that flight.

D

David Sandstrom 48:38

That's right. That's right. You are accountable. Pilots have gone to jail for making mistakes up there.

C

Cody Butler 48:45

Yeah. And it's like we got we got to be, we got to be excuse free. It's like, you got to own it, you've got to own it. It's like that. And again, that was like, I, I had this vision. It wasn't a vision vision. But it's like I had this like, kind of idea in my head where I just saw like, in real terms, what was going on in my house. And it's like Jesus says, Jesus has given me this precedent, precious vessel vessel stewardship over this precious precious vessel and over this house, and it's like, this is what's going on in my wife, just like, I'm going to have to give an account for this. It's like, whatever's happened in this house is my responsibility. I've got to take ownership of that. 100% Radical responsibility. And a, I've got to own what's happened because when I own what's happened and say everything that's happened is my responsibility, then everything that happens moving forward is also my responsibility. And that's a beautiful thing as well. Yeah. So really, the key the short answer to the to the question is what is the cause of the success? It's like, I'm very selective about who I work with if you if you're not ready. If you're not at the point to where you're going, not another day, not another hour and not another minute. Am I going to live like this? I will do whatever it takes. I One of the things I say is, is We do. We choose convenient, we choose commitment, our convenience, which is commitment, our convenience, that's a choice. And everyone goes, well, I'm committed. And it's like, yeah, until you have to do a, until you have to get your checkbook out, do you have to get your credit card out? Then you're not so committed? Or do you have to do it interview interviewing, I'll be doing an interview for somebody that wants to join the program. And they'll say, Well, what time are the coaching calls? I'm like, wrong question, dude, what does it matter? Right? What is

the time to get there, you will make time to get there. Right? It's like, the fact that you've just asked me what time are the coaching calls tells me that maybe you're not committed, right? It's like, people are committed to they have to sacrifice sleep, people are committed to they have to sacrifice a meal, people are committed to they have to sacrifice a vacation or a new car, people are committed to they have to sacrifice themselves, their lifestyle, their friends. And, you know, I've got to see, I've got to know that. Like, when we work together, it's like, you come on board. And you genuinely, I've got to know that you will come into town with an attitude of I will do whatever it takes. And I'm committed to this, regardless of the inconvenience. I choose commitment over convenience. And yeah, I know that I'm gonna get the healing, I know that I'm going to be set free from this. There's no doubt in my mind. Yeah. And then if there's three of those elements are present, we're getting the results 100%

D David Sandstrom 51:21

I'm starting to see why your book is called cut the BS a no nonsense guide to help because you're a no-nonsense kind of a guy.

C Cody Butler 51:28

But life is short. Life is short, you know, we don't we don't have time to. I always say you tell lies to your friends, and I'll tell lies to my friends. And we'll just be honest with each other. How's that for a deal?

D David Sandstrom 51:39

Good. You know, I just want to point out one other thing here is, is the biblical account of the fall in Genesis two and three. And you know, after Adam and Eve had sinned, God comes around and see obviously knew what they were. But he says, Adam, where are you? And Adams reply. Well, I knew I was naked, so I hid. So there's there's that escape part, right? It's hard to hide. And then what did they do? They started pointing the finger at one another, neither one of them wanted to accept the blame. Well, it's that woman you gave me. So it's the woman's fault. And if it's not her fault, God, it's your fault because you gave her to me. Wow. Adam chose to speak to God that way. That's a great example of what not to do when you want to make some change some positive changes.

C Cody Butler 52:28

Yeah, it didn't it didn't work out too well for him, for any of us really did it.

D David Sandstrom 52:35

Cody, I really enjoyed our conversation. If people want to get go further with you and get a hold of you. What's the what's the easiest way to get a hold of you,

C Cody Butler 52:42

CodyButler.com is a is a great place to start. I'm not I'm not hard to find. It's like, again, if you if you want to talk to me, you'll find me if I have to spell out where to find me. You don't want to talk to me that bad. So you'll find me if you want.

D David Sandstrom 52:58

Very good. Well, I'll be sure to put links in the shownotes. Cody, thank you so much for spending time with a Natural Nation today.

C Cody Butler 53:04

Thank you, David. Thanks for having me.

D David Sandstrom 53:07

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