

Ep #284: When Your Heart Hurts: A Loving Approach to Navigating Heartache



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With Your Host

Amanda Hess

[How to Love Yourself No Matter What](#) with Amanda Hess

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Heartache is hard to handle, but not impossible. Today I'm going to lead you through a loving approach to navigating heartache that will leave you feeling relieved and empowered, with nothing in your life needing to be different at all. Whether you're feeling rejected or defeated, I've got you in this episode. Let's go.

This show is for women who've been labeled, misdiagnosed, or misunderstood. Whether you have a diagnosis or just know deep down that you experience life differently, this is your space to stop fixing yourself and start trusting who you already are. My name is Amanda Hess. Let's go.

Hey, my friend. Heartache is something that I think most of us can describe. It's visceral. It cuts. It takes everything out of us and it consumes us. We go to bed with it, we wake up with it, and sometimes it can feel impossible to shake. So today I want to help you make sense of this and navigate it. Whether you're feeling it right now, or you're scared you're going to experience it again and want to figure out how to handle it when it comes, I'm going to help you.

The truth is that heartache is something that all of us experience in our lives. Every single one of us has experienced heartache and will continue to be exposed to heartache. This is the truth. I want you to know that I understand and deeply get how hard it is to navigate heartache. It is something that I coach on a lot.

I have experienced heartache recently with my spin studio closing that I teach at. Even though it seems like such a small thing, it's something that has been so entrenched in my identity that the heartache that has come with the closing of that studio is something that I have been recently navigating. And that's why I was really called to record this episode for you today, because for one thing, I coach on it all the time, and for another thing, I also experience it. And I don't think it needs to be as painful as sometimes we make it. And when I say that, I want you to know that I'm not blaming you for your heartache, but I want to show you how you can feel empowered because it is possible. You can develop the skill to get through

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heartache. And when you do, you actually open up a whole new level of your life that you didn't even know was available to you.

So let's just first talk about what heartache really is. Heartache basically is deep emotion. It's emotion that we feel at a 9 or a 10 out of 10. It lives in the body. Emotion lives in the body. So what do we do? When we feel the discomfort of the emotion, typically what happens is it's so intense that we reject it. We shove it down, we tune it out, we try to ignore it, or we completely react to it.

But the reality is that it's not going to work to ignore it because it needs to move through. The only way to heal through heartache is to allow, to process, and to let it move through the body.

Now, let's be clear. When I say allow an emotion, people often think that I mean you should just sit there for hours and think your sad, shitty thoughts and cry incessantly. And I want you to know that no, never do this. This is not what I mean. Allowing is not wallowing in negative thoughts. It's about feeling the feeling in your body and letting it move through.

So what that means is that we need to learn how to regulate our nervous system first. Regulating your nervous system is what will prepare your body for allowing and processing the emotion and having the capacity for it. So that might look like pressing your feet into the floor, placing your hand on your heart, taking a slow deep breath in, and then exhaling longer than you inhale. We can do it together right now. So I want you to breathe in for 3. And then we're going to blow out for 5. And just noticing the effect that that has on your body.

Regulation isn't about fixing the emotion. It's about helping your body feel safe enough to feel. Now, the pain of heartache is interesting because there's the initial pain, that sharp moment where it hits when the thing happens, the grief, the sadness, the disappointment, the shame, whatever comes up. The pain, the initial pain, that sharp moment when it happens.

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But the ache part, that's heavier. That's harder. The ache part is like the devil on your shoulder whispering that all your deepest and darkest thoughts about yourself are true. And it's loud. It's like it's being shouted at you. And this is the point where a lot of us get stuck. Not in the feeling itself, but in the story that comes with it. So let's talk about how to break free of that.

I use a 3-part process to help my clients with this. It is called the Love Yourself No Matter What method. And step 1 is to regulate. The first thing we always do is nervous system regulation. But in this particular moment, with this type of emotion, I really recommend that we down regulate, that we ground. So we use our body. We breathe, we move, we touch something real, and then you remind your brain, I'm safe right now. I am not in danger. I am okay. This is just a feeling.

Step 2 is to process and allow. So what we're doing after we've regulated the nervous system is we're going to let the feeling move through. You want to tell yourself that no feeling lasts forever, not even this one, because it's the truth. You want to tell yourself that this feeling isn't the truth about you. It's just a feeling and that it has no power unless you give it power. And more than anything, you want to remind yourself that a feeling is a sensation that you feel in your body. And therefore you allow it in your body and you process it in your body because we don't think emotions.

And step 3 is to decide. Once your body has settled and the emotional wave has had space, now you get to decide. And you get to decide what you're going to believe, because your brain, it's going to offer you some thoughts and they're usually not cute. Here's some examples. I'll never meet someone again. I messed up and I'm eternally screwed. Everybody hates me. Nobody loves me. I'm all alone.

How do I know? It's not because I'm psychic. If you have those thoughts, I'm not reading your thoughts. I've just had those thoughts too. We all have. They're not psychic downloads. They're just loud. So I like to think of it like this. I want you to imagine a room full of tiny little kids shouting. They're

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running around. It's chaos. And I want you to think about what a seasoned kindergarten teacher does. She does not scream back. She does not yell. She does not race around after them. She stands quietly. She turns off the lights. She puts a finger to her lips. And the room settles.

You can do this with your thoughts. You don't have to argue with them. You can simply quiet the room, regulate yourself, process the feeling, and decide what you want to believe moving forward.

This is what I do with my clients. We take this process and we repeat it again and again and again. I'm always thinking of the Dirty Dancing quote where Patrick Swayze is telling Jennifer Gray that the steps are not enough. And this is what I'm going to tell you. It's not enough to know it. You need to practice it. And a lot of times doing that with me is going to give you the confidence to be able to do it again and again and again. And the more that you do it, the easier it will become and it will form a habit inside of you where every time this heartache comes up, you can just immediately move into the process because you've formed the habit.

Now, before we wrap up, I want to talk about something that often happens after heartache, and that's the instinct to guard and defend. We have an instinct to protect, to build walls, to be more careful with your heart, your trust, your openness because you don't want to feel that pain again. And it makes sense because your brain is trying to keep you safe, but I want to offer you something different.

The truth is, every time you go through heartache, whether you realize it or not, you get a little stronger. You build capacity. You understand yourself more deeply. So you don't actually need to be more careful because you actually know how to handle more than ever before.

Building self-trust is what we're talking about. And building self-trust isn't about protecting yourself from bad things happening. It's about realizing that you have everything you need to handle life, even the hard parts. You've proven it to yourself over and over again. Because my friend, life

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keeps living. Things will continue to come. You didn't do it wrong. You didn't fuck it up. You didn't somehow miss the signs. Life just happens.

So instead of saying, I need to protect myself so I don't get hurt again, I want you to try, I trust myself to handle whatever comes. I'm stronger and wiser than before. Every heartbreak you've lived through is evidence of your resilience. You might not love that it happened, but it's proof that you're capable, and that's self-trust.

Now listen, if your heart hurts right now, I want you to know this. You are not broken. You're human. You don't need to rush to fix it. You just need to hold yourself through it, and that's exactly what I help my clients do.

If this episode spoke to you and you want support applying this to your life, I want to invite you to book a free discovery call with me. We'll talk about what's going on for you and personalize this process so you can feel steady and strong again. And you can book your call at amandahess.ca/bookacall.

Thank you for being here, for listening, and for trusting yourself enough to show up for this conversation. My friend, you are stronger than you think. See you next time.

Thanks so much for listening today. If this podcast is helping you, please follow wherever you listen and consider leaving a review. It truly helps this community grow and allows me to support more women like you. I'm excited to see you back here next week with a brand new episode. Until then, take care, friend.