

How To Love Yourself No Matter What

Episode 318

Navigating Family Drama Like a Pro: Patterns, Pleasing, and Perception!

Amanda Hess

Certified Life Coach & Self-Love Expert

It is summer in Canada, and one thing that I know weighs so many women down is dealing with family, dealing with weddings, graduations, vacations, visitors, expectations, drama. And I really wanna talk about this today because the issue isn't really the events that we have going on. It's not even necessarily the family members, although it could be. But what I really see being the issue is the patterns. Because a wedding is not just a wedding, right? Family is steeped in patterns, so we have the same fights with the same people about the same things, and you can almost predict the whole thing before you walk in the door. You already know who's going to say what, who's going to be talking about politics, who's going to be pissed off about whatever's happening at the time, who's going to have thoughts and beliefs that differ from everybody else, who's gonna be loud, who's gonna be passive-aggressive, who's going to have a problem. We know. You already know who's going to say the thing, right? And you know how you're gonna feel in the car on the way home. The thing is, is that these patterns that we've established with our family, these things that we have built in, baked into our family units, they aren't random. They're not random. We don't do it-- We don't even do it on purpose. It's really just that your nervous system learned how to handle this young, and in all honesty, this is where a lot of people-pleasing and hypervigilance gets wired in. Family is ultimately the original space where we learned how to cope with these experiences, with these people, with these emotions. And what happens is that when you walk back into family scenarios, your body really does time travel. You're a grown adult, but your nervous system just drops into the old role. And the character-- the pattern isn't a character flaw, it's just that your nervous system is doing what it was trained to do. The pattern is simply something that has been established with time and practice, and to an extent, it kind of works. It kind of works. And everybody is basically playing a part in the same play, right? And that's why we'll see it be repeated again and again and again. It's normal. So when I'm looking at patterns, when someone is talking to me about how a family barbecue is gonna go or someone is talking to me about how a wedding or a memorial or a family vacation is going to go, as your coach, I'm looking at it curious about what you're making it mean, what you make your relationship with those people mean, what you make the interaction mean, how you're taking care of yourself, how you're thinking about yourself, how you're coaching yourself through that scenario. Because there's a lot of moving parts, but what is so fascinating is they always kind of seem to move the same way because there is just this pattern. And in order to break a pattern, what really needs to happen is we need to learn how to put down blame. We need to learn how to stop blaming them, blaming your mom, your mother-in-law, your sister, your sister-in-law, your dad, your father-in-law, your brother, your

sister, your cousins, your grandparents. You need to stop blaming them because what happens is when we do that, we're waiting for them to change so that we can feel okay. We do not want them to be in charge of us feeling okay, and what we don't realize is that when we place blame on them, that is essentially what we're doing. We need to put down the blame of blaming yourself. Really blaming yourself is people-pleasing to an extent. If I'd have been quieter, if I'd have would-- if I'd have been better, if I hadn't have brought that up, if I could just remain calm, if I could just not have lost my shit, if I could, if I could, I wish I would. What it does is it, it keeps you small. It keeps you on guard. It keeps you in the scenario of there is a problem. What I will say is that when we engage in blame, it ultimately creates the experience of When we, when we engage in blame, either blaming them or blaming yourself, it feels like doing something. If I blame you, it feels like I'm doing something about the scenario. If I blame myself, it feels like I'm doing something about the scenario. The problem with it is that it n- is that neither-- The problem with it is that neither thing, neither type of blame changes anything. And what they actually do is they keep the pattern going. They keep it the same. So I want to tell you a story that I walked through with a client recently. I had a client who had the experience of walking into the kind of weekend we're talking about, right? She was at a family event. The whole extended family, including a sister and a cousin she used to be close to A client this wa- th- meh. I'm gonna start over. A client this week walked into exactly the kind of weekend we're talking about. It was a family event. The whole extended family, including a sister and a cousin she used to be close with who formed a f- this sentence is fucked. I have an example for you, and it's a client example. My client walked into exactly the kind of weekend we're talking about. It was a family event, and the whole extended family was included, including a sister and a cousin that she used to be close to who, in her words, had formed a family alliance against her. And the whole-- the old pattern was right there, right? The taking of sides. Did you hear what she said about you type of scenario. The defending of yourself to other people, the vigilance of what are they doing? What are they saying? What's happening? Did-- what did she say to you? The truth is that for this client a year ago, she would have gotten pulled in. I call it picking up the rope, right? She would have walked into that event believing that other people were talking shit about her, that this was a problem, that other people believed it, that this was somehow going wrong. And when I say picking up the rope, what I mean is she would have just picked that up as being the truth and started to pull against it, started a tug of war inside of herself about it, and she would have come home really upset. It would have felt like a disaster because the emotional roller coaster that she would have been on would have been exhausting. But what was different about this scenario is on the drive up, she and her husband actually prepared. They reminded each other. Okay, what was different was on the drive up, she and her husband actually got themselves ready, not from a guarding and get ready from a fight perspective. But instead, she would remind herself and him that they've built the kind of life they want, that they have everything they need in the life that they are experiencing, that they are exceedingly happy in the life that they have, in the way that they are, in the way that they experience it. And so they decided together that they would not engage, and that if someone were to start something, that they would just agree to not talk about that You might hear this and think, "I do that too, but I'm still hating it." And the difference is, is really a shift in mindset. What happened is she decided who she was going to be beforehand, how she was gonna show up, how she was gonna think about it. She did that instead of just letting the emotions lead and letting herself react in the

moment. There was actually drama that weekend. There was a blowup even, but she didn't have to take that on. It didn't bother her. It didn't consume her. She woke up in the morning and felt phenomenal. She had a real weekend with people who truly matter to her. Now, there is always places where we get drawn in, and what I say to my clients is what I'm gonna say to you right now, which is that you are a human, not a robot. You are not gonna do this perfectly. She actually got pulled in. She got pulled in because her mom was believing the sister's version about her, and even said to her at one point, "How am I supposed to know what's true about you?" And for my client, every cell in her body wanted to defend herself, to prove it, to set the record straight. But defending yourself in that moment is simply a manipulation to make yourself feel better, and it's important to know that because it doesn't even work. What I said to her, and what might help you, is it's like arguing with a flat Earther. You can show them satellite images, the decades of science, and they will call it fake. It's not winnable because the other person doesn't want to change their mind. So the real conversation isn't, "Let me prove I'm a good person." It's, "I'd hope you'd want to believe the best in me, and the fact that you don't is the actual problem here." And then you can walk away. Being the better person here is really not for them. It's for you. You're the one that has to live inside of your brain after the weekend over-- after the weekend's over. That's the elevation. This isn't about you being better for them. This is about you staying in alignment with you. The other thing that I really want to address is the story that we tell before, during, and after. Because two versions of every experience exist, and you get to decide which one you're gonna tell. What is important to understand is that your brain is listening to the version you choose to say out loud, and it will hyper-focus on whatever you choose to feed it. So this client, right, she could have told the story that my sister ruined the weekend. She could have said it was dramatic and difficult, and my mom just doesn't get me. But that's not the story she told. The story she told was, "We had a great time with the people who matter." Both stories could be true, but one of these stories kept her free. The truth is, is that when we are telling the story of ourselves, of our lives, of what we've experienced, we must have discipline. Not discipline in what we do and what we don't do, but discipline in what we think. We want to be disciplined about the roads that we let our brain walk down. If you allow your brain to perpetually go down the road of, "These people don't get me, these people don't like me, these people don't appreciate me, there's a problem with these people," it will create emotions for you that will make you feel frustrated. It will make you feel Angry. It will make you feel resentful. When you feel those emotions, the actions you take will be the ones you don't wanna be taking. They will also devolve for you internally because you will then have the dissonance of, "I didn't show up the way I wanted to show up. Why do I always react? Why do I always engage? Why do I let this happen?" It's the wrong place to focus versus, "I belong here. There's not a problem here. This can be a great weekend. People like me. People want me to be here. I have my own back. I tell the story of me, and I assume everybody else wants to know that story." This is a very high-level coaching concept, all right? Learning how to be disciplined in how you think about these things will allow you to show up in a much different way. It will create a much different vibe in these scenarios. It will allow for you to have a totally different experience with everybody else not needing to be different at all. And you get to walk through that experience feeling proud of yourself. You get to take the nuggets that were there that were for you and leave the rest behind. You're not arguing. You're not defending. You're not trying to change the way that people see you, affect your reputation. You don't need that. You need to

decide what you're gonna think about you As I said before, this isn't really about you being perfect. It's about learning how to interrupt the pattern. So when this is all going on, we've got to make sure that we're allowing emotion, right? We got to learn how to let waves of emotion pass through with doing nothing. We need to understand how to regulate our nervous system before we respond to anything. We need to have nervous system regulation in our weekend, before our weekend, after our weekend. And we need to rewire. We need to rewire ourselves to do the different thing, to think the different thing, to believe the different thing, to grab a hold of something that is essentially for us to believe the best in ourselves, to believe the best in other people, but also to stand up and say, "That's your problem to figure out. My problem to figure out is how to think about me. Your problem to figure out is why you want to think shit about me. You get to decide. I don't need to fix that for you." This isn't even necessarily something you have to say out loud. It's just something that you need to own You're not going to fix your family this summer. That's just not possible. You can't do that. But what you can do is you can arrive regulated. You can choose to do what you do differently. You can choose to have your own back. You can choose to be the person that believes the best in an experience unless you are given direct evidence to prove otherwise. You can decide who you're gonna be before you walk in the door. It's gonna change your whole summer. It's gonna change every event. It's gonna make everything easier. It's gonna make everything better. So if you are interested in learning more about this, I want you to know I'm teaching a class on this inside of my coaching program. I'm teaching it in about a week. And if you want access to that class, the way that you can get it is by becoming one of my one-to-one clients. My one-to-one clients get all of the classes that I do, and they have the opportunity to come live to every single class that I do every single month. So if you're curious about that, if you want that, you should book a discovery call. If you go to amandahess.ca/bookacall, you can book a discovery session. We can talk about you, what's going on for you. We can talk about what's going on in your family events this summer. I will help you see where you can create some serious change with everybody else not having to be different. And we can talk about whether or not coaching would be a good fit. And at the same time, if you decide to go forward with coaching, you get this class included. All right, my friends, this is what I got for you. I hope you have a beautiful week, and I would love to see you on that call. Bye for now.

Links:

<https://amandahess.ca/>

<https://amandahess.ca/book-a-call>