



Transcript for Episode Two

Hello I'm your host, Christina Smith and I'm a full-time Life coach for women. The Inviting Shift podcast focuses on how we step through this messy journey of life confidently so we can feel good about how we show up, have more connected relationships and connect to purpose and meaning.

Or in short, how we manifest the lives we crave in practical, tangible ways.

If friendships are something you crave more of you aren't alone. Yet many of us have wounds from our girlfriend relationships that leave us hesitant to trust and connect to other women on the levels that we want to.

Today's show is how we can have better friendships and be a better friend with a special guest.

Christina Smith 0:01

Well, today we have a guest, just like I was just talking about today we have Joanna Klein and Joanna is from Journey to Legacy where she teaches women how to and men how to look relook at their life story so that they can see all the gifts and the goal of their journey. So welcome today, Joanna, thanks for joining us.

Unknown Speaker 0:25

Thank you for having me. Here. It's an honor.

Christina Smith 0:29

Thank you. And today, we're going to talk about something that Joanna has been doing a workshop on that I saw, and I was just so taken by it, because it really changed how I saw female relationships. So if you have a girlfriend wound, we probably all have one. And Joanna is going to tell us more about it, and how, how that impacts our confidence as we get older, not only in ourselves, but how we make new friendships. I know a lot of my clients are getting to that point of the empty nest syndrome. And they've just gotten to this point where they have their life back and they can do more things. But suddenly, they're like, how do I make friendships, and we have these wounds from our old friendships that have made it really challenging for us to trust other women. So again, welcome, and thank you for being here to talk about this. I think it's so important of a subject. So tell us a little bit about this girlfriend wound and what you've learned about it that really, that's really changed your perspective on how we make friends and be a friend?



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Joanna Klein 1:37

Yeah, it's interesting, because it's one of these topics that doesn't really get talked about much and, and the minute that I started talking about it, and started asking people about it, I just said it was as if I opened Pandora's Box, everyone seemed to have a story to share, about a time, at least one time, and typically more were, where they were hurt, as they felt they were wounded really emotionally as a result of a relationship with another woman. And it could be most of the time it was girls or women that they consider to be friends who, you know, something went awry in that relationship. And it has, this all came up for me as a result of having gone on a, an adventure with 17 other women just a few months ago to South Africa. And I found myself telling myself old stories, things that I had. This wasn't the first time that I was like, wondering if I was liked and whether or not I was bored and worried about whether or not I was feeling as if I was being accepted. And it was nothing to do with them. They were wonderful women. But I started looking at this and like, this is really strange. This isn't the first time that I've questioned myself in relationship to other women. And they were, for the most part, women that I most of them had met for the first time. So it was realizing like me in a new environment with women, making new friends, the stuff is coming up. So it caused me to do some research. And what I found from the research was fascinating. So would you like me to go a little bit into what I discovered that?

Christina Smith 3:34

Absolutely tell us about this? Because I was really shocked by some of this information, or I don't know if I was shocked, but I was it put a new light on how I was like, Oh, this completely makes sense now.

Joanna Klein 3:47

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, that's what happened for me too, as I was, I was looking at all of this. So one of the biggest pieces of research I found was done by a professor named Joyce Bening Benenson, who's done years of research on the social structure of human beings, like who affiliates with whom, who competes with whom, you know, where are the bonds, the strongest and the weakest. And she spent years studying children at a very young age and found some big differences between the way that male and female compete. And, and her research also shows parallel between non human primates like chimpanzees and humans. So she believes there's a biological and evolutionary tie to the way men and women differ in this area of competition. And, and this theory goes back to the hunter gatherer societies so you know, how 1000s and 1000s of years ago were women, their primary role was to have children and to care for the children. And so in order to do that, they had to protect their bodies. So the men were the ones who are out competing and fighting and risking their lives were as the women were the ones who stayed home and had children, and took care of children.



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And in those societies, they would surround themselves with family members, other women that they could trust to help care for the children. But then any women outside of that intimate community were seen as rivals, you know, rival for attention of men rival for the limited resources. And so there's theory that this goes back many, many years as far as how women see each other. And there's even been research that has shown, for example, that women's testosterone levels go up when they unknowingly smell the T-shirts of ovulating women, so presumably putting them in, you know, preparation for some aggressive competition, just by smelling these T-shirts of ovulating women. So there's theories that go back that essentially say, you know, this is an this is part of biology, this is part of evolution. So, you know, I tend to, to gravitate towards those kinds of theories. Not everybody does, but you know, there are, there's some research that showing, it goes way back.

Christina Smith 6:24

So it's not new. So just in case, we think it's like this new world that has us competing with each other competition between women has always seemed like always been a thing.

Joanna Klein 6:36

Absolutely. Yeah. And actually, it wasn't until the 1980s, that the women were the females was researched, you know, it was mostly done around men. But when they did start researching, they found that women were just as competitive as men, but just in a very different way. And the similarity was that both men and women were competing for the attention of the opposite sex, but they went about it in different ways. And so my research also, you know, revealed some of these ways that women compete so differently than men.

Christina Smith 7:12

And what are those ways? How do we compete differently, it's less physical, like, I always feel like men have, you know, they just have the fight, and then they get over it and go have a beer together, you know, where, whereas women are a little bit different?

Joanna Klein 7:24

Absolutely, yeah. And you And bingo, you hit the nail right on the head. That's one of the things that came out of the competition, because even in sports competition, boxing, for example, if you watch women and men that there's, there's proof there, there are shows that, you know, men will fight with each other, and then afterward give each other a big long hug. And, and then they do just that, you know, they, in sports teams, whatever, they will go out, they get over it quickly, they don't hold on to it, whereas women, it tends to linger. So whether it's in sports, or whether it's in real life, women have a harder time



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letting go when they're competing with each other, they're holding on to it. So the research that Ben Benenson has done shows that there are several unique characteristics of female competition. The first one is called veiled aggression. So that's where it's more covert. And this kind of ties in back to that whole theory of women needing to protect their bodies. So they don't want to get themselves in some kind of competition that could do them harm. So the way that they deal with their competition is by being like passive-aggressive, you know, maybe sarcastic, maybe going ganging up, talking about someone behind their back. There's something called competitor manipulation, which is that the gossiping, which is, you know, trying to round up other girls in, you know, to gang up on an on one of the girls get on a team. Yeah, on a team. Yeah, there's mate manipulation, which is if you have a partner or a male partner, and you don't want him to be around other beautiful women, so you avoid putting yourself in situations where you're with him, and he's going to be around attractive women. So that's those are forms of veiled aggression.

Christina Smith 9:28

So we do it on the down low a little bit. We're very sneaky about it sometimes, but sometimes, and I understand that because passive-aggressive seems to be like a really good female language. It's one way that we fight without pulling our fists out.

Joanna Klein 9:44

Exactly. Yeah. So it's very much behind the scenes, and as women, we're really sensitive or really tuned in to those kinds of nonverbal behavior. So we feel it, you know, we know it's going on but it's one with passive aggressive behavior, sometimes hard to put Put your finger on. So it's where we need to trust our instincts when we know it's happening, but because it can, it can really, it can really hurt on a deep level, but it's hard to, it's hard to shine the light on. So the second characteristic of female competition has to do with women wanting to be on equal footing, wanting to have a level playing field. And so when there are women whom the term is used high-status women, whether it is that they have a lot of social, you know, they have more of the resources, or they tend to be more attractive, you know, they tend to have the characteristics that are, are valued by men and women, those women, it's actually for them, they don't have to put as much effort into connecting with others, they tend to get a following, you know, that tends to doors tend to open up easier for them before the rest of the women who are not feeling like they're high status, there's an attempt to control each other by making rules by trying to get they choose each other where they feel like more on equal footing. And that's where women feel safer. And if women within that same who are in like a circle together, that feels equal, if one tries to one does better, let's say one might say to a group of women who are, you know, they're they're all single and, and they're supporting each



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other around what you know that that experience, but one ends up getting in a relationship or one ends up getting a promotion or doing better than the dynamics tend to change. And there might be new rules that get set, or the women might ostracize the one who is moving on with her.

Christina Smith 12:04

And I have a link to the example that I worked on when I went through your workshop was in high school, I had this really in high school, some of my friends had, there were reasons why we could no longer be friends or parents were had a big problem with us being friends. So I was kind of alone. And incomes this girl from, you know, a big city and she's got the attention. I mean, she looked like she was 20 when she was in high school as a slot as a sophomore. And she was gorgeous, right? Like, and even the seniors were like, ooh, she's, you know, she's that queen that you're talking about. Right? The one that comes in confidently looks beautiful. It's all trendy. Right? The big things in high school. And I became friends with her. And I feel like the relationship always works out as long as I she knew that I knew she was Queen, right? And I was fine with that. Because I was like, well, she's a friend. And she's popular. So you know, no problem. I'll be her friend, right? I don't mind being popular. But then what happened is as I got more attention from men, it's one day she was just like, yeah, no, we're not friends anymore. She never called me back anything. And then like two weeks later, she had a friend where, you know, she went down the ladder and was like, let me get someone who won't compete with me. Absolutely. And, and it really hurt because I thought that we were deeper friends than that. But then looking back, I was like, Well, I kind of used her for her popularity. And she used me to feel good about herself. Because wherever we went, she was in the spotlight, right? And I didn't mind being the side, the sidekick. So but once that dynamic changed, so did our relationship. And that took me a while to see all those dynamics and how it was working. But it really started helping when I was listening to you talk about this because I was like, That makes perfect sense. She didn't want another queen around. You know, she, she wanted just another woman, not another queen. And so once I became a queen, it became really threatening to her.

Joanna Klein 14:20

Absolutely, yeah, that's a fabulous example. And I love the way that you were able to expand that perspective. And see your part in it too, because now we're going to be talking a little bit about that as we, as we look back on these relationships, that we're still carrying some energy and some hurt around, you know, part of the process is broadening the perspective. Yeah. And there's a third characteristic to that, that comes up and that has to do with the that we tend to as women exclude each other. The characteristic of competition is the exclusion that will turn on our backs and reject her. And what's interesting is Joyce Benenson, you know, in her research was looking at girls as young as four years old,



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and again, comparing boys and girls. And there's a study of separating the boys and girls, bisects and then putting them in groups of three. And in this group of three, each was given a puppet. And they acted the same when they each had the puppet, the boys and the girls did. They take one puppet away so that three kids have two puppets. And they're pretty much boys and girls are pretty much acting the same. But when they left the one another puppet away, and so these groups of three only had one puppet among them, the boys and girls acted very differently. The boys were aggressive, trying to get the puppet from the other, give me that puppet or grab the puppet. Whereas the girls and again, only four years old, the two that didn't have the puppet whispered behind the other girl's back, they went and hid from her, they started this whole exclusion thing. And in my conversations with women, because I've, you know, in doing my workshops, I've offered some coaching to women who wanted to talk about some of these experiences. This is one of the biggest ones that were shared that wound of being excluded and even mentioned, it's like all of a sudden, someone ghosts, the other they just thought the friendship and the confusion as to why that is have been part of the pain that's been associated with it. And there's

Christina Smith 16:43

part of us that starts taking that on and going well, what's wrong with me? And you know, why doesn't anybody want to be my friend and, and not having that information? Not having that conversation? Just the ghosting, which I think is even more popular today. Is it can be so hard? It's so hurtful. At least it was me I had so many friends that have just ghosted me. I'm just like,, what happened? What did I do? And, you know, I think it's one of the ways that we learn to stop telling ourselves that and going well, they had something going on. And so I've had to, like reframe it in my head that it just wasn't meant to be I guess.

Joanna Klein 17:22

Yes. Yeah. And it is, it's like, it's such a painful thing. And one of the problems that I think we have is that we aren't really trained how to communicate, you know, when something isn't right, when we're having challenges with someone else, this whole notion of, you know, having, having a conversation about it, and doing it in a way that is safe. For everybody involved. We aren't really trained to do that. And so we tend to take our frustrations and our worries and our concerns to someone else, you know, so we'll talk behind someone's back rather than directly to them because we don't trust ourselves to do the direct conversation skillfully.

Christina Smith 18:13

Yeah, because we haven't. Yeah, exactly. Because we haven't been taught those skills. And,



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you know, conflict, I think scares so many people. Like, if we have a difference of opinion, or if something that you've done has hurt me, I can feel. Since we haven't been trained to deal with conflict at all, it's like, we start to see that as a negative. And I know a lot of my clients even are like, Oh, well, she just doesn't fit as a friend anymore. And it's like, well, hold on, let's split. Like, I mean, if all we're doing is looking for someone who's just like me, I'm probably not going to like that person, either. Because I mean, I need somebody that has some differences. And if we have differences, we're going to run into conflict. And so you know, being able to communicate, that is a huge deal. And again, men can do it really quickly with their fists, and then they get over it. But women, we just hold on to these stories forever and never even check them out.

Joanna Klein 19:11

Absolutely, yeah. And you're touching on something that I also found in my research that I think is really eye-opening. Excuse me, there's a book by Susan Shapiro barrage called tripping the prom queen. And she talks about the myths about female solidarity. And, you know, there, there is this, I think the media puts it out there and certainly, the woman's movement has helped move us closer to being more united as women but there are these myths about it as well and, and she breaks them down into three different areas. When she talks about that. It's appearing that we're being supportive and in relationship tip and you know, solid as women, but in fact, it's not really going on. Would you like me to share those three? I think, yeah, that's

Christina Smith 20:08

like, if it's jamming and a snarky thing.

Joanna Klein 20:13

Yeah, yeah. So the first one is what's called the mommy mistake. And that's when it's and this is I'm sharing these because for anyone listening, as they think back on their relationships, can you really you mentioned something that I'll point out when we get to that characteristic, but as they think back about their relationships, and, you know, I really believe that it's important to take ownership, you know, look at our part, which you did a beautiful job when you were talking about your relationship with that girl in high school, and where you realize that you did get some benefits out of hanging out with her. So it's like looking at what are we bringing what have we brought to this relationship. So the first one is called the mommy mistake. So this is where we're seeking unconditional love from the friend, where we're actually kind of depending on them to affirm us to give us what we wanted from our mother, to fulfill our, you know, unfulfilled childhood needs. And so typically, you know, you meet a friend, and all of a sudden, it's like, oh, it's like love, you know, you love each other, and affirm each other and say, all the positive things that you see, and, and then some women get dependent on that. And they're looking to one



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women, one woman to provide that for her. And as women, we tend to feel more comfortable in dyads. And pairing up. So that's another thing that's come out of the research is that women do tend to, like have this dyad relationship, these paired-up relationships. And so with the mommy mistake, we're looking for that person to give us and feed us in that in that way.

Christina Smith 21:52

And that's not shocking considering that if there are three or more women, two of them tend to you know, do some gossiping, right? I mean, so I can understand why women would feel safer in pairs if any more means that there could be competition or gossiping. Or triangulating.

Joanna Klein 22:10

Ah, right. Yeah. So if this is something anyone listening thinks about, well, maybe this, you know, that was showing up for me, then, you know, notice to what extent you might have been dependent on someone you might have been looking for someone to fill you up in ways where really, it's self-love. That is that yeah, and

Christina Smith 22:30

no one person can offer all of that to another people. Yeah. A lot of sense. I is relationships feel familiar?

Joanna Klein 22:40

Yeah, yep. Yep. Then the next one is called the twinning syndrome. And so this taps into what you mentioned, this is where we're expecting the girlfriend to just mirror exactly how we are, you know, to be just like us to think like us to, you want to enjoy the same things to have the same interest. And, and so there's this expectation of, you know, being for the most part exactly alike. And that's not realistic. And the minute that somebody does, you know, has some different interests or wants to go do something with somebody else, then the relationship can fall apart if there's too much dependency there. And the expectation of being just the same. And so, you know, the way to, to overcome that is recognizing, accepting these differences, accepting be wanting to be with friends that aren't exactly like us, and allowing for more space,

Christina Smith 23:41

and also, our own authenticity. Because it was, it brings me back to that quote that Brene Brown has, like, fitting in isn't the same as belonging, right? Fitting in is I'm going to pretend to be like you so that you will accept me and belonging is I'm going to be who I am. And I'm going to hope that you're going to accept me anyway. Right for whoever I am.



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So learning to get to that mature space where we realize we don't have to be like everybody else, we can be our own person. And that should be respected. You know, just as we could respect other people for being in their own authenticity.

Joanna Klein 24:19

Absolutely. Yeah. I so agree with you and, and, you know, in when I'm doing work with clients, too, it's like saying that the more that we're able to feel in our are our authentic selves. And for me, I feel like we get there. One way in my program is through looking back on our stories, writing our stories and looking for another perspective, and really owning who we were through all of our stories and once we start moving to that place of self-acceptance, and showing up as we are, we tend to attract people who are like-minded, you know, but I put By accepting ourselves, we also accept their imperfections too. So I think it's, you know, it, there's like a win-win in, in moving towards that place of, of showing up and as our authentic selves and not worrying so much about being like, you know, trying to find someone who is you're happy to pretend like you're exactly like them in order to be their friend, that people-pleasing piece that tends to come up for us as women,

Christina Smith 25:29

right, especially in high school. And I think that as we get older, I hope that as we get older, as I've gotten older, I've become a lot more authentic. And I'm just like, well, if you can't handle that piece of me, then I don't know what to tell you. We either have to have conversations about it, or maybe we're not, you know, maybe we this fit just isn't right. I mean, because that is who I am. And there are certain things that may not fit for other people. And that's okay.

Joanna Klein 25:57

Absolutely. Yeah. And I love I love that about you. Yeah, one of the thing about this whole twinning syndrome, because it does come up as a question is that it's absolutely okay to want to have friends, where you have similarities, you know, it doesn't mean that just because you want that, that it's an automatic twinning syndrome, but it's when the expectation is such that you just have like a total match around everything, and there isn't room for differences in a healthy way, then that's where it goes.

Christina Smith 26:28

And I run into women who, like, they were like, Oh, we were the same person. And then all of a sudden, they said this one thing or had this one view that was so different, that I just I couldn't be friends with them anymore, because they were so different. And I was like, but they were the same person as you up until that moment. And it's like, yeah, so when we need someone to be exactly like us. That's almost like a little scary because then that means that that friend doesn't have a whole lot of growth for you either. And one of my .



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one of the greatest gifts I think we get from other female relationships, its growth is learning, you know, how Juliana does things differently? And isn't that interesting? And can I learn something from that? Or can she learn something from me? I mean, that's, that's what some of the really valuable areas of relationship, I think

Joanna Klein 27:19

Yeah. And I think, I mean, certainly, we've seen relationships fall apart all over the place around, you know, in our current political climate and the differences and, and, you know, there's, there are, there are places to meet. And I think, you know, I think that that's an important thing to keep in mind.

Christina Smith 27:42

Yeah, but we focus so much on the differences sometimes that we forget, like, even amongst political parties, I still believe that most people in our country want to be happy, healthy, and have, you know, space for their family to grow. Like, that's really what most of us want. So, I mean, most of who we are, as human beings is so much the same, but for some reason, I think that women especially we find these divisions, and then we're like, Oh, we got to separate, we can't be part of that other and instead of being like, wow, how can I be more curious about this?

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Joanna Klein 28:17

Absolutely. Then the third myth about female solidarity is we're the ones that type this called foul weather friends, this is that misery loves, loves company, where, you know, a group of women gets together, they're all divorced, and they're all you know, complaining about their marriages and complaining about how there aren't any good men out there, and that kind of stuff. And then, you know, one finds a relationship and then all of a sudden, that relationship falls apart, you know, with the woman with the with women and so that we want to be we want to pay attention to is like are, are we surrounding ourselves with friends whom we complain about the same things, and then and then set ourselves up for not having that relationship endure. When of our one of us gets past whatever it is we're complaining about.

Christina Smith 29:14

Yes, I know this, I'm very familiar with this. Some women and my family were really close when what we would do is sit around and talk about the other women in our family. But once I did, like a lot of my personal growth, I went through a woman within weekend and I was like, actually I want to be really unsupportive of other women. It started becoming hard because I wouldn't participate in those complaining conversations



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any more and I like wanted ideas of how can we empower ourselves and we all know that person who wants to vent and really just gossip does not want to think about the personal Crow and wants to be justified and you know validated and her complaining and her thinking she doesn't really want As a solution, she doesn't really want to change that, that relationship for the better. And so I lost a lot of friends and family when I started doing my growth because I would no longer indulge in that kind of conversation as I would like, try to get them well, maybe she's maybe this maybe that like you don't know. And, and it just became really frustrating to have conversations and so that that's it, you know, leave some of my friends in the past because I no longer wanted to engage in that way.

Joanna Klein 30:30

I so relate to that. In fact, I remember making the decision, I'm not going to gossip anymore. Like that is not, that's not where I'm not gonna go there. And, and someone accuses me of not being any fun to be around anymore because I wouldn't gossip.

Christina Smith 30:47

Yeah, well, if that's not fun, then they just think that there's, there's probably, and I used to think to like, I mean, in that way, I used to think like, well, what will we talk about? And it's like, it's amazing when you stop gossiping, like, a lot of time did you stuff for yourself, and you know, really grow yourself, and then you have things to talk about. And this isn't to say that, like, if I have a problem with a woman, I still take it to a circle. But a circle is going to hold me responsible for you're not here to gossip, you're here to figure out what your trigger is. And that's a different piece, like if somebody can get there. But triangulation and talking about people when they're not around. I mean, that's not helping us. And for some reason, women have gotten to this point where they think like, that's helpful to do the venting, but me venting, unless there's like a purpose, or like, I'm trying to get to a growth point. And I don't really understand it, because it's really about me, those judgments are about me.

Joanna Klein 31:46

Absolutely, yeah, I that's totally true. Yeah, and I think that's how we, we start healing, how we start finding a path to having better relationships with women, you know, one of the things that I like to say, and the Dalai Lama said that the world will be saved by the western woman. And I think that's true. And I don't see how we're going to get there unless we learn how, to better trust each other. You know, and that I've, I've, in my discussions with women, here, this pain that they're carrying, and they're this distrust that they have formed around, you know, being with other women and, and they're also not trusting themselves to make good choices, and to enter into relationships with other women. And so, I think that understanding that what we have going on here does have those, you know, if you buy if you believe that evolutionary biological, you know, backstory



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there, you know, that's an art that's, that's in our DNA, and different and culturally, it's been ways that we've been trained to be nice, and to not, uh, not address things directly. We recognize that and start saying, we, as human beings have choices, we can choose to do things differently.

Christina Smith 33:12

Yes, and this talk has been so helpful, because I really had a shame around this for a long time, like, wow, what's wrong with me? Why don't I know how to be a good friend? Why why is that? Is there something and I used to think it was just in my DNA, right? Like, it must be in my DNA that I am going to be competitive and mean and judgmental because I still am, as much as I want to love and support women. Oh, if I'm scrolling through that Facebook feed, all of a sudden, I can see something and be like, Who does she think she is? And I have to catch myself like, Christina, that's another woman. Like, why are we what is? What is my trigger around that? And that's where the empowerment came. And that's kind of what your workshop did was like, Okay, you see the wound, you see how it hurt you? But do you see how you participated in that? And I think in all of our relationships, there are red flags, there are things that are telling us like, you know, maybe I could be acting better, or maybe I had something to do with the downfall of that relationship, not just me being different. And I think if we really look we can and this isn't to like blame or shame, like whose fault is it anyway? But for me, it's like, if I can find a way that I contributed to it, I can continue trusting myself because I can see that thing that I did. And I can be like, Oh, well, I don't want to participate like that anymore. I don't want to show up like that anymore. So I can shift that. And just like you said earlier, not only am I shifting that and going wow, yeah, that's a part of me that I'm not really proud of and maybe I want to shift the way I show up. But then I start having more compassion for other women and going Wow, I wonder what happened to them for them to show up that way. Right. I wonder how I can help them to show up, I'm sure they don't want to show up judgmental and harsh. So I'm wondering, you know, what? What happened to them that they are showing up this way? And how can I wonder how they can shift it?

Joanna Klein 35:11

Yeah, yeah, that's so powerful. And I totally agree with you. And when I have conversations with women and bring up about, say, a friend that all of a sudden stopped the friendship or turned against them. And when we start to dive deeper, it's most of the time, the woman, the woman I'm talking to will acknowledge that, prior to the breakup of that relationship, she was already having judgment about the person, you know, and she was already feeling the distance. And, again, because we pick up so intuitively, as women, what's going on, potentially, the friend could have picked up on that could have picked up on her having judgment. And so there's, so often we can see our own, you know, our own part, in this ending of a relationship that oftentimes we feel the victim of, when in fact, we



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probably were co-creating, we're co-creating the separation. Another one that has come up quite a bit is it's interesting, it's several women have shared a story about being in a relationship with a man and having a best friend, and then sharing the heartbreak that she was feeling around the relationship and how her relationship with the man was, it was breaking up, or he was mistreating her, and she would share it with her best friend. And then the woman would break up with the boyfriend, but then the boyfriend would come, she'd bring she'd come to go back into the relationship with the boyfriend. And the best friend would then not want to be friends anymore, or not want to be around the boyfriend. And how hurtful it was for the woman sharing the story. But as we explored it, I mean, the reality is that she has shared all these details, she shared all the dirt with her best friend, and the best friend is very likely feeling protective of her and then not knowing what to do with the feelings now and they having judgment that the woman talking to me, you know, the woman who's sharing this with me has made a bad decision. And so the friendships break up. But there's this whole piece to it, you know, it's complicated

Christina Smith 37:41

right, but it's about a judgment about the woman's life in the first place. Where is it? Yeah, it's very strange, isn't it? Like, suddenly we think like, Well, I would never go back to that man, how could she and she's only gonna hurt herself, and then it's going to be your own fault. And we act like that. Okay, but that's not mine to deal with, that's hers to deal with. And that we take it on as if like because she's uncomfortable, I'm going to be uncomfortable knowing that she's doing this to herself, right? And so like, suddenly, I have to be the right fighter and be like, we can't be friends because I'm right about your relationship.

Joanna Klein 38:19

Right, the right fighter. And you know, in those relationships, there's all this stuff that's been shared to the betrayed so that the ending of the relationship feels even harder, because it feels like such a betrayal when we've poured our heart and soul out to a friend who is now like, judging the decisions that we're making.

Christina Smith 38:37

Right, right, because we've shared all of our vulnerable parts. And now it feels like our vulnerable parts are being shunned. Yeah. So how can like what are some skills? I mean, I know some skills that I think women are missing in friendships. Because I gotta tell you, when I showed up to my first woman, within weekend, there was like, 60 women and I sat there going, I wish that was 60 men, it would feel so much safer if it was 60 Men, which is kind of insane. But it was my reality because of the way that I was raised around women, and we were so very, like, my mother was very competitive with me. So it likes competition



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was the essence of femininity. When people are like, women aren't as competitive. I used to giggle like that is insane. That's, they're just not overtly competitive, right? They're more like you said, undercover. They do like, like snarky ways. So how are some of the ways that we can start to really trust women and have better relationships?

Joanna Klein 39:44

Well, let's just take the example we were just talking about in terms of the friend who, you know, has his judging our choice to go back in a relationship that she doesn't think it's good for us. So one way is to have a conversation about it. And this is a very this is many of the women that I talked to say, Okay, I want to go, I want to go this relationship is important, you got to decide is the relationship important to me yes or no. So you got to start with that if you're going to have a conversation, but if you've decided it's important, and you want to repair this relationship, you want to maintain it, then having a conversation is a way of addressing some of this bringing it out in the open instead of behind the scenes. But you got to do it very, very carefully. And when I say that, what I mean is, you got to put yourself in the person in in the role of the person who's going to be hearing whatever it is that you're going to say. And I recommend, like writing down first what it is that you're going to say, maybe reading what you're going to say, into a recorder and listening to it. Because what's so important is to first honor what that person has meant to you honor what the relationship has meant to your honor, why you're even having this discussion, and even honor their behavior, because most of the time, like in the situation we just described, that friend is trying to protect you, that friend is certainly projecting her own stuff. And yes, she's judging, but she's coming from a place of protection. So acknowledging that and then letting her know that their relationship is important and letting her know what you want. You know, the use of I statements where you're really owning your own stuff, and you're not accusing nothing that you say could sound accusing is an important way to have a conversation with a woman within we call that a clearing conversation where we're really owning what it is that our part in it. But that can be an effective tool in repairing a relationship.

Christina Smith 41:45

Yeah, I love what you just said, because what I have always found is if I start with the intention, look, I want to have this hard conversation because I really value your friendship, I really want to be in connection with you. I'm having a hard time right now. And I really, I really value what we have in this deep connection, you know, and if we start from there, with what our intention is, it's so much easier, because otherwise, we can come off as like, what you need to do is you need to change and, and instead of doing all of that, starting with what is my intention? What am I hoping for out of this? I'm hoping that we're gonna get closer and that we're going to be able to work this thing out.



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Joanna Klein 42:24

Yep. Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, definitely. Another way and I'm sure you have plenty to add to this. So you want me just to go ahead and share a couple of words? Okay. Yeah. So another way that I see that we can improve our relationships with women has to do with something you've already talked about. And that's like really accepting and owning our authenticity, our authentic selves, and letting go of that people pleaser aspect and by owning who we are, and showing up who, who we are, then we can make those adjustments and we, you know, stop looking to other women to affirm us to give the mommy Mystique you know, the twinning look, you know, start looking at relationships from a more healthy, realistic perspective, where we're allowing the differences and allowing the differences within ourselves and showing up that way.

Christina Smith 43:24

Yeah, that authenticity is really, really important. And I think that that shows up in a lot with asking for what we want. I think that's part of our authenticity. And I think that we don't do it often. Because for some reason, we think everybody learned how to be a friend in the same way, or what's expected of a friend. And so we start assuming that well, she should know she should call me once a week, right? She should know that if I need help with this. And I don't just ask that she should just offer right? Instead of just saying what is it that I actually want and within that, like, sharing a vision for the relationship, because you know, one friend to another some friends love to talk every day and do the texting and everything that's not me if you need to everyday texter. I am not your friend. But if you need a solid phone call once a week, I can do, I can do that. So really sharing what your vision of a good friend looks like? And this good relationship looks like doesn't mean you're gonna get everything that you ask for. It just means that at least the other person knows what it is that you're expecting, and can negotiate that with you and vice versa that you know what the other person is expecting. So you don't when if I am one of those people who texts every day and I've been texting for three days and haven't heard back from you, I don't have to tell myself stories anymore. I just know she's like Christina, she doesn't really like my stories about it because that's usually what happens is we start telling herself have oh, they're not answering. It must be about me. Do I? Am I too much? Am I not enough? You know, all of those stories come right back in. Absolutely.

Joanna Klein 45:07

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. I mean, another thing that I think's important to bring up because feminists psychology says that, you know, debunks a whole biological and ecological theory around why women compete differently than men, and they believe that we've bought into the patriarchal values about what makes a woman, you know, what's i



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important in, in a woman, which, you know, it looks and femininity and, and kindness and being friendly, all those things, and so pleasing people pleasing. Yeah. And so and that causes us to, you know, that hurt, we're comparing ourselves to other women, you know, it just builds up all that stuff. So, really note taking note of that, you know, and being aware of that, and knowing that, there's a lot out there, social media certainly is contributing to it. And as far as putting what's valuable, and in women, the being, you know, attractive, and keeping their youth and all of that. So take a look and saying, you know, do I buy into that, you know, can I catch myself from buying into that. So there's a level of awareness that we can bring into how we view what makes a woman valuable and important.

Christina Smith 46:28

Yeah, yeah. And it's, you know, starting to share those things. And, and I guess what's coming up for me is, I hear women, but I was such a good friend to her. Right? And so that's like, well, you thought you were being a good friend to her, right? Because you were coming from the space where you did what you thought a good friend would do. And Susie might have a completely different idea of what being a good friend looks like. And so, it's hard to have these conversations, because I think, you know, the ego doesn't want to be wrong about but this is what a good friend looks like, right? Now, who doesn't want to be wrong about that? But I'd like the women listening that they would just consider that there are 500 ways to be a really good friend, and we can't possibly do all of those. So the easiest way is to have those hard conversations and go, Hey, look, I like to talk to people every day. What is it that you like, right, and start having? And it sounds like, you know, like five-year-old conversations. But that's really how we learned when we were five years old about, oh, she likes to play with dolls. She doesn't like to sing. So when I'm with Sally, I'm going to play with dolls. I won't necessarily say Right, like, so we, we learned that as we were children. But for some reason we got into this really competitive area where it's like, only one girl can be the prom queen, right? And so all of a sudden, we're like, oh, well, that means that there's only one person who's doing this feminine thing, right? Or whatever. Like, friendship doesn't have to be like that. It can have lots of friends for different reasons. And I just I really appreciate you coming on and having these conversations. If there was one thing that you wanted to leave us with, what would that be? Hmm.

Joanna Klein 48:30

And the concept of self-compassion, that I think of everything, if we're able to bring that to ourselves, and really accept that we're human, and being kind to ourselves, then it can open us up in extending that compassion towards others. And I think the more that we're able to bring that in to recognize, you know, I think one other piece to add to it is, you



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know, write down what you value in a friendship and, be that, you know, show up as that and recognize it might not happen overnight, but getting back to being who you are. And then also, you know, bringing on the self-compassion for the things that make you human. And that can really open you up to allowing some new opportunities for relationships in your life.

Christina Smith 49:22

Yeah, that's great, because the only point I had written down that I hadn't gone over was the biggest way to have better friends is to be a really good friend, like start focusing on the thing that you can control which is you rather than trying to control other people or how they see you. Show up in your authenticity and be a good friend in the way that you think you can be a good friend and I think that that works. Absolutely. Yes. Thank you so much, Joanna, for being here. I have Joanna's information around here somewhere. So just click on it and you'll be able to find To not only more about Joana but about her program journey to legacy if you've ever thought that your life story might be interesting, or if you've even thought that it wouldn't be interesting, she will show you how to what I use as the word re perspective eyes, your journey so that you can really see how you are the Hero, hero or heroine in your story and that you had a lot of power and a really great journey. So thank you so much for joining us, Joanna. Yeah.

Joanna Klein 50:34

Thank you. Thank you for your wise contribution to the conversation.