

Episode 61: Drama-Connection vs Disconnection

Welcome to ConneXions Classroom Podcast. We are so excited to introduce to you the opportunity for you to join us in a classroom setting where you will be taught the principles of connection. For those of you who have already joined us on the podcasts, and for those for you who have not, you are now ready to step into an extensive, hands-on, all-star classroom experience to better understand why you are experiencing and interpreting life the way that you do.

You will be introduced to the foundational principles of personal integrity, which are: how to live impeccable honesty, rigorous personal responsibility, humility, vulnerability, openness, willingness, transparency, and boundaries.

This is a 12-week intensive course that consists of meeting one time a week for two hours. You will be given six workbooks. In each workbook, instruction will be given to you on core concepts of how to live your life from a position of emotional honesty, Reality, Truth, boundaries, validation, being able to recognize your distortions, and how choice plays a central role in all of your experiences and emotional outcomes.

Some of the concepts covered inside of the classroom include: what validation and vulnerability are and how to animate those principles your life; how to live in Truth rather than distortion; how to recognize your distraction and your controlling behavior in your relationships; and how to live a life of peace rather than pain. Powerful concepts that change lives, beginning with yours.

Hundreds of people have participated already, and have drastically transformed their lives by living and being in Truthful, emotionally honest relationships. They report experiences of personal empowerment and emotional and mental sophistication being introduced into their relationships.

So, now it's your turn to come and participate. This classroom experience will change the way you interact with yourself and others in powerful ways, giving you the tools and emotional sophistication to connect deeply inside yourself and invite other in your life to do the same.

Come and experience connection. Go to www.connexionsclassroom.com, and hit the "Go to Academy" button and sign up. I look forward to meeting you and connecting.

[00:02:48] Episode 62: Drive-By Disconnection

Good morning and thank you for joining us here on this beautiful day, July 4th, 2015 at ConneXions Classroom Podcast. I want to welcome you and if you're a first-time listener, thank you for coming. If you are a long-term listener, again thank you for coming and making ConneXions Classroom podcasts possible. It's because of you that we record these podcasts and share this information, because we've been given lots of feedback telling us that what you're hearing is something that you enjoy. And so, thank you for making this really successful.

I am getting ready to write a book and I want to invite you to help me with some market research. We have thousands of people that listen to the podcast on a monthly basis and because of that, the desire for more written material has come to my attention. And so, I'm going to be writing a book on all these concepts. If you would like to be a part of helping me create some market research, I would really appreciate it.

Two things I need you to do. One, I need you to go to www.connexionsclassroom.com and give us your email address. When things change here at ConneXions Classroom, we want to have people's email addresses so that we can inform them of the changes. Every month, we're going to be sending out newsletters and letting you know what we're doing here. We are in the middle of revamping all of our books and making facilitator's manuals so that we can start creating groups for people to join around the country, and eventually around the world. Super excited about that.

Also, if you would share some of your stories with us. So, as you're listening to these concepts, these principles on connection, or addiction, or shame, or triggers, or anger, or fear, or codependency, drama, on and on. As you listen to these topics, all of these topics affect everyone. So, you cannot be on this planet and not be experiencing these particular topics.

And so, if you have a good story that demonstrates one of these principles—or you feel like something has happened to you, that maybe you haven't come full circle and actually healed yet but you're in the middle of it, like you're still in the middle of drama—and you want to share that story with us, I would really appreciate if you would get on the website, www.connexionsclassroom.com and write us an email and tell us about the principle that you want to share and then the story that goes along with teaching you that principle.

These stories are going to be used in the book that I'm writing. And so, if you'd like to share that with us, we would love to have it.

So, two things. Give us your email address and we'll send you newsletters and keep you updated. And then, number two, if you want to be in the book with your story, go ahead and write us a story and let us know what principle you're wanting to share, and then tell us a story about how that principle is playing out in your life.

[00:06:27] Connection Versus Disconnection

Today, we're going to be talking about connection versus disconnection. What both of those are and how they play it in our everyday lives. All of us are either in one state or the other. We're either in a disconnected state or in a connected state. And connection and disconnection "happens" with the power of our choices, or the vibrational energy, or outcomes of the choices that we make.

It's kind of positive to know that there's only two places to be. You're either in a connected state or a disconnected state.

I just had one of my children ask me this afternoon, "How often are you connected during the day?" And I sat there and I thought about that. My answer was, anytime I'm not in drama, I'd be connected. And so, drama pretty much covers everything, so if I'm in fear, anxiety, if I'm self-loathing, if I'm in a place where I'm being really reactionary.

Once you understand drama, you can appreciate why that would be kind of a catch-all. So, if you don't understand drama, go to the [podcasts that talk about drama](#) and learn about those. See if that fits for you.

That was my answer, is "anytime I'm not in drama." And then, he said to me, "So, when are you not in drama?" And I chuckled at him and I said, "Well, I hope that I'm not in drama very often." And I explained sometimes over the weekend that I had been in drama and had been disconnected.

I had driven down to the southern part of the state and I had my dog who's a fairly good sized dog—she's a German Shepherd—in the back of my truck and it was late on a Saturday afternoon, I had worked all week, I was tired, I was exhausted. And she had been home alone all week, so she was quite anxious as well and wanted to get out and run around, and here I'd put her inside of a cab of the truck and kind of cooped her up. And so, she was antsy and she was jumping all over the place. And I started going into drama with her—the dog was persecuting me.

And so, I was telling him about that story and how I could *feel* the drama happening as I was making my choices of how to perceive the experience with the dog. And so, it took me some time to reframe everything and realize that I was overwhelmed, she was anxious, I was anxious, and change my thoughts and make different choices to help her calm down and thus help myself calm down and thus get out of the drama.

[00:09:37] Connection

Let's talk about connection. What is connection? And then, let's describe what is disconnection.

So, connection is about the ability to empathize. So, sometimes, people don't know what empathy is, sometimes they think it's sympathy and it's actually not. Empathy is more about emotionally connecting, like being vulnerable with a person.

Whereas sympathizing is only mentally connecting with somebody. So, it's like, if I were to say my dog got hit by a car, someone might sympathize and just mentally say "Oh, I'm sorry." Yet not feel any kind of sadness, or grief, or loss, or pain. And so, sympathizing is more of a mental experience, it's not risking with the person, it's not being vulnerable with the person.

Whereas, empathizing is about **feeling** that person's pain. So, imagining something that you love now being gone. Feeling grief, feeling sadness, feeling loss. That's empathizing with someone. It's a much more vulnerable thing to do, to empathize.

Connection is about learning how to empathize, about learning how to relate mentally and emotionally. Being able to see what's going on, like witness the other person. Being able to validate and be vulnerable. It's about being raw, being open, being transparent, being willing to risk. Being emotionally available to appreciate what the other—or even myself—is experiencing.

You don't have to agree about what you're experiencing, or say that I'm fine with what I'm experiencing (or the other person), or like what you're experiencing, or even want the experience. You only get to connect with it; you get to accept it. And that's what connection looks like.

There's many, many other ways to describe connection, but those are kind of the seedlings, the foundational structure of connection, are those characteristics.

[00:12:15] Disconnection

Disconnection, what is that? It's being able to recognize when you're not open. Disconnection is about being in drama, so it's about not relating. Not relating emotionally or socially. And it doesn't mean just because you don't agree, you're not relating. It means that you're in some kind of a place where you are being very judgmental. Again, it's more of just being in drama. I mean, disconnection is about being in victim, being in persecutor. It's taking things personal, which you'll probably recognize if you listen to these podcasts, that taking things personal is about being in shame.

So, disconnect is where I don't know how to be vulnerable, I don't know how to validate, I don't either want to, or know how, or feel safe that I can empathize. It's where I invalidate. Invalidation, if you don't know what this is, I have a [podcast on validating](#) and it also includes invalidation.

So, these two experiences of connection and disconnection. Connection versus disconnection. They're always a choice away. And the way that we animate these two principles is that we have experience. So, we are constantly having experiences. We can't **not** have experience.

So, experience is constant—it's as constant as our breath. I'm having an experience right now talking to you. And though I can't see you, I'm imagining what you might be thinking about these concepts.

Really quick, I want to put a pause right there on experience, and go back to connecting and disconnecting. Connection and disconnection can also be seen or experienced through non-verbals. So, connection can be—or actually both of them, connection or disconnection—can be experienced through people smiling, handshakes, hugging, verbally sharing gratitude, becoming curious, asking questions, engaging in the act of surrender, knowing what your motives are.

And so, if someone gives you a smile, or if someone slaps you on the back, or gives you a hug, you may not know if that's a connecting kind of a thing or a disconnecting kind of a thing, because you don't know what their motives are.

However, when someone surrenders or someone's asking questions about you, there's a high likelihood that they are doing that because they are very connected to themselves, and they're curious about you, and want to get to know you better.

But the non-verbals are more difficult because you don't know what they mean. You only know what your motives are, so if you're smiling, you're hugging, you're winking, or handshaking, you've got to know, is that coming from a connected place or a disconnected place? Because you could give somebody a smile and it could be false, or fake, or disingenuous.

[00:16:09] Experience, Connection, and Disconnection

So, let's go back to this idea of experience. This is how we act out connection or disconnection, is through experience. So, our experiences are neutral and we will project connection or disconnection onto those experiences. You get to know who you are and if you connect or if you disconnect. If you just look at your life, it's kind of like the question my child asked me, was like, "How often are you connected or how often are you disconnected during the day?" And I think about this kind of stuff and so I for the most part know whether I'm connected or disconnected because I know what it feels like inside my body.

Another way to know if you're connected or not is *how conscious are you?* Our consciousness level will absolutely relate or correspond with our connection or disconnection level in that when we're conscious, we are then choosing to either be connected or not. When we are unconscious about things, we probably are in disconnection.

And so, my son said to me, "So, do you ever like, zone out?" And I said, "Sure I do. But usually, I'm very aware of the fact that I'm zoning out, and I'm kind of consciously zoning out. I rarely will just zone out because of disconnection."

But a lot of us could do that. The only reason that that doesn't really resonate with me anymore is because I've really practiced staying aware of where I'm at emotionally and what I'm thinking from moment to moment. But there have been many, many, *many* times before I learned how to do this, where I would absolutely check out because I wouldn't know what was happening. I wouldn't know how I felt about something and so I would disconnect from it and go distract myself by exercising, or eating, or sleeping, or going out with friends, or things like that.

[00:18:29] The Story

So, I'm going to share a story that actually happened in the last couple of days to myself, and interweave connection and disconnection throughout this story because again, we all have stories. We have millions of them because we have millions of experiences. And there are some experiences that are just fantastic and they illustrate these principles in such dynamic, and sometimes dramatic, or traumatic fashions.

So, this story happened to me this weekend. And so, as I tell this story, I'm going to stop and put the term connection or disconnection to certain things. Now, what I want to say is that if someone else would have had this experience, they might have done things different—which they probably would have. And they might have done the same things but they could have come at it from a disconnected position. If I came it from a connected position, somebody else might have been disconnected, and vice versa. I could have been disconnected and somebody else could have done it in a connected way.

And so, this isn't about good, bad, right, wrong. This is more about my level of consciousness and these kids that came with me on this experience, their level of consciousness and how they experienced this along with how I experienced it. That's what's wonderful, is that when we have an experience, depending on how many people are involved in the experience can be as many ways that we can interpret the experience.

And so, remember experiences are neutral and we are going to put our own stuff onto the experience. We are either going to experience it through a connected lens or a disconnected lens. And remember, because we can always choose, at any moment during the experience, you can flip-flop from connection to disconnection, from connection to disconnection, back and forth, back and forth.

The goal—from my vantage point—the goal for me anyways, is to be as connected as possible during life's experiences. That's my goal.

Here's the story. Every summer—the past six summers—we have taken a boat down to a beautiful lake here in the state that we live in. It's a very popular tourist site. And so, I was getting the boat, and the trailer, and the truck, and everything that we needed to have, ready so that we could take off right after I got done with working.

I had spent the last couple of weeks getting the boat ready for the season, and had the tires checked on the truck and also on the trailer. It felt like I had everything ready, the boat was

packed, the truck was packed. Getting permissions slips from the children. There were four of us that went. There were three teenage boys and myself. And so, I needed permissions slips from all of their parents to make sure that if something happened, I had permission to take care of them medically.

And so, all of those things felt really connected, being responsible about checking the truck and the trailer that the boat was riding on, and getting the food. All of that felt really responsible, really honest, and I appreciated that it was going to take a lot of time. And so, between myself and my son, we got all these things ready. So that felt like a really connecting experience.

So, then we get in the truck, and it's about 7:30 in the evening, so it's not dark yet but we were heading into nightfall. And we're driving along and the boys are talking to each other and we're all kind of discussing stories, and discussing their high school experiences. Some of them had graduated, some of them were seniors this year. They were laughing and joking around. Everyone was participating, there was no sarcasm, or aggression, or passive-aggressiveness, or drama. And it felt really connecting. I remember thinking as I was driving how enjoyable this experience is.

And so, as we are going along, I really appreciated these boys, though they didn't realize how connected they were probably, for their attitude, their angles on how they had been experiencing their 17 or 18 years of life.

So, as we're going along and they were listening to music and things like that and talking, the check engine light came on. And I had an experience right there to either show up in a connected or a disconnected way. So, in my head, my first thought was *oh my goodness*.

Now, just because I said *oh my goodness* does not mean I disconnected. You can have animation and intense emotion when you're connected as long as it's equal to the experience. Now, I'm the one that gets to choose whether it's equal to the experience, nobody else is. But if I would have slammed on the brakes and said "*We have to stop, we can't go any further, the check engine light came on, we have to turn around and go back home*" - that might have been disproportionate for what just happened.

Now, I know my automobile and sometimes when I'm pulling a heavy load, the check engine light will come on. And I've had it checked before and they've told me that it's not anything significant, it just pops on when the engine is really being challenged.

And so, when I saw it, I just had that thought in my head and I stayed really calm and thought that's probably what's going on. And so, I didn't disconnect at that moment.

So, then I was noticing the beauty, the sunset, the landscapes. I was feeling grateful for my health and the opportunity to go on this vacation. And I appreciated the laughter in the car. And so, those kinds of things were very connecting for me.

One of the things that was going on simultaneously to all of this was that we did not have any air conditioning in the car. It had stopped working probably three months ago and because it was winter, we really didn't need it. But here we were in the end of June / beginning of July and it was very, very hot. And we had told the kids that we were going to stop halfway to our destination and meet Rick.

Those of who have listened to podcast number 52 around validation, and vulnerability, and shame, I talk about Rick. Rick is the gentleman that I met about two years ago who helped me with my truck last time I had an experience around trucks, and boating, and those kinds of things.

And so, we had a plan to meet Rick. He was expecting us to be there at about 10 o'clock at night and he was going to fix the air conditioning for us. So, though the truck was very, very hot and with that many more bodies in it, it was even more warm. For me anyways, I was doing what I could to stay connected even though I was very, very uncomfortable. I could hear the drama of my shame coming in and saying *you know what, this is really uncomfortable, and this isn't fair, I don't know if I can stand this anymore*. But I was aware of it, and so I was able to challenge those thoughts and not follow that kind of thinking. Because if I would have, then I would have started feeling those kinds of emotions of *poor me, this isn't fair, I'm going to quit*, those kinds of things.

So, instead I turned it into *I'm so grateful that I know Rick and I'm going to be able to stop in a few minutes and have Rick help me fix the air because he's very knowledgeable about those kinds of things*. So, I just flipped it into gratitude instead of shame.

So, we pulled up to Beaver at about 10:30. It was really late at night, it was pitch black. And we jumped out of the truck and we had just been in a really connecting experience for the last hour and a half, two hours. And as we all jumped out of the truck to go into the gas station to find Rick, a woman came up from behind me and she tapped me on the shoulder and she said, "Excuse me." Like I said, it was dark outside and so I couldn't really see her very well. I said, "Yes?" I had all the boys with me. She's like, "I think something flew off the back of your boat." I said, "Really?" And she said, "Yeah, something flew off and it hit the ground, and it sparked, and then it disappeared in the night."

And so, we all just kind of walked back over to the truck towards the boat and I was looking up at the tower, and I was looking at it to see what could have flown off because everything was buttoned down. And as I was looking at the boat, my eyes glanced down to the tire well. And right as I saw the tire well, this woman next to me said in this very—I mean, I'm going to say it the way she said it, because *to me*, it was so disconnecting, the way she said it. It really caught my attention. So, here I am and all of a sudden I see in the tire well that one of our tires is gone. It's not just loose, it's completely gone. And the axle is completely broken off, like the metal was all twisted. So, right as I'm looking at it, I'm feeling this panic, and terror, and fear of what could have happened because that tire flew off. And right as I started feeling that kind of horrific danger response, she says, "Oh, your tire flew off." And she kind of chuckled afterwards.

I was in such a state of connecting to the danger that we were in, and had been in, and the panic, and the grave concern of what could have happened, that when she presented it that like, it felt really disconnecting to me. Because it didn't feel like her response fit the gravity of the danger that we had just been in. If that makes sense.

Now, again, this is my experience. This isn't right/wrong stuff, this is about me interpreting my experience. And so, for me, it really was—it felt like conflict inside me. Emotional conflict. Because I had been in that truck with all those kids and we were driving down the freeway at 80-plus miles per hour with a boat behind us that was about 13,000 pounds on three wheels. And so, I didn't know the kind of danger we were in because I didn't really understand what that meant, but I could feel it—I could feel that that was not good.

And so, to have her chuckle, “Oh, your tire flew off.” It just felt really disconnecting to me. And I actually looked—because I was kind of leaning over looking at the metal—and I looked at up her like, *what?*

So, right then, Rick came walking over to the truck because he saw us pull up, he's like, “Hey, Jodi, how are you doing?” And I said, “Rick, we have a bigger problem on our hands than the air conditioning.” He's like, “What is it?” And I said, “We lost a tire.” And he's walking over, and he's looking at it, and he's assessing it for like 10 seconds. He's looking at it, and he looks at me and he's like, “All I can say, Jodi, is that you have someone looking out after you. You didn't just lose the tire, you lost the whole axle of the tire.” I said, “I don't know what that means. I know that's bad. I know I can hear the danger and the fear in your voice. What does that mean?” He goes, “You're just fortunate that you made it here and you're not going anywhere on this tire. You've got to get a new tire.”

By the way that Rick responded, it let me know that we had absolutely been in grave danger, and that we were fortunate to be stopped, and that nothing horrific happened. And so, he just said, “You're going to have to get a new tire.” And I said, “Well, how do we do that, Rick?” He said, “Well, this is a specialty trailer and so chances are they're back east.”

And right then, I disconnected. Right then. Because I had just taken a week off of work and I was very excited about going down and playing for a week on the boat and the lake. And when he said that to me, I went into total drama because he had suggested that we would have to get an axle from back east, which could take two weeks or something. And I went into *oh no, this is bad, I can't believe this is happening, this is not fair, why does this happen to me?* It was the same thing, it felt like a repeat of two years ago.

And again, if you have listened to podcast 52, you'll hear the exact same story. It was the night we had left to go on the vacation when the engine of the truck seized and we had no truck to pull the trailer. So, same kind of deal, the very night we had left, I had the whole week off, and he said, “Your boat's not going anywhere.”

So, as we talked about options, I just kept saying, “Rick.” I kept trying to get connected back to myself, like okay, *how do we fix this? How do we fix it?* And I went into fix-it

mode. I was trying to resolve the issue ,but I wasn't really paying attention to the emotions that were going on.

Now, there's nothing inappropriate about trying to fix something if it's yours to fix. The issue comes when you try to fix something that's not yours, when it's somebody else's and you're just trying to fix it because it's so uncomfortable for you that you just want to get it resolved, so that you get it off of your purview, so that it's not in your experience anymore. That's when it becomes disconnecting.

So, the fact that this was my issue, me going into fix-it mode without really thinking about how I was feeling was an appropriate thing to do. There was plenty of time to feel the experience after we got some kind of resolution going. So, Rick found a number on the trailer and said, "Well, there's a number here and they're actually in the town that you live in. Why don't you just call them tomorrow and see if they have an axle?" And he got down there with his flashlight and he goes, "You're really lucky. This particular axle is one that you can take on and off. You don't need the whole entire undercarriage of the trailer fixed. You've got one thing going for you." I'm like, "Hey, I'll take it. That's great."

And so, we had our dog with us. And so, we were going to drive down another hour and a half and drop her off at a location. And so, I said to Rick, "Here's what we'll do. We'll drive down, we'll drop the dog off, we'll spend the night and then we'll call the store in the morning and if they have the part, then I'll send the boys up in another car and they can go get it back at our hometown which is like three hours behind us." And he goes, "Okay, great. Just bring it down and then we can put it on Friday afternoon and you guys can be on your way."

So, we got in the truck to head even further away from where the part was because Beaver is like in the middle. We live in a place that's about two or three hours from Beaver and the place that we were going for the night was another hour and a half in the other direction of Beaver, so south of Beaver, and we live north of Beaver.

And so, we go down and it's about 11:30. I'm just sitting, it's quiet in the truck. The boys are a little bit somber. We unhitched the boat and left it there at the gas station. And we're driving down to Southern Utah and one of the kiddos in the back, who I didn't know very well—I'd seen him several times over at my home and I know that he's my son's friend but I don't know his parents and I don't know him very well. And he says to me, "I'm wondering if something could work." And I said, "What do you mean?" He goes, "Well, my dad has a jet." I'm sitting there driving and I turn around and I said, "A jet plane?" And he said, "Yeah. He's a pilot and he has a jet. He likes to fly a lot and so maybe if he's flying tomorrow and the people have the part, then my mom could just go get the part from the store and take it to my dad and he could fly it down to the airport in Beaver."

And I was flabbergasted. I was like wow, I don't even know how to think like that because my lifestyle doesn't include flying around in a private plane. He said, "Let me call my dad and see if it's a possibility." I said, "That would be great. That would be wonderful."

So, as he's calling his parents in the back seat, I have another kid in the front seat calling his parents letting them know what happened. And it was very interesting to listen to both of the conversations. One was very connected and one was very disconnected.

As the kids were talking about their experience to their parents, the child in the back seat who was asking his dad if he could fly the part down was very validating and I could tell that he was being validated. I couldn't hear the conversation on the other end but I could tell that he was very connected, he was being very vulnerable, he shared how he felt, he was being emotionally open and transparent, he was empathizing, and I could tell they were empathizing back, he was relating to his parents how he had experienced this.

And then, simultaneously, the person in the front seat called his parents and the parents were fear-based, and worried, and were dramatic, if I can just put it that way. And I won't go into much detail but it was a very different experience even though we were all having the exact same experience. It was other people's connection or disconnection being projected onto the experience.

The kid in the front seat whose parents were being disconnected, he was being very connecting. He was saying "we're fine, everything's fine." And then he'd pause and then say, "No I hadn't thought about that," or "Don't worry about that, mom." Or, "It's okay," or "I'll tell that Jodi that." Or, "Don't be scared." He was trying to invite his parents into more connection.

Whereas, the person in the back seat, the parents were like "Those kinds of things happen, I'm glad you're safe." And so, he gets off the phone and says to me, "Yep, it's a go. My dad is flying tomorrow morning and so we'll just call the store tomorrow at 7:30. If they have the part, my mom will go pick it up, she'll take it to my father and my father will fly it down to one of the airports around here."

When I tell this story, it's still just amazing that someone would be so kind, and loving, and thoughtful, and connected to do such a generous and compassionate act of service for us so that we could get on our way.

The kid in the front seat, he got off the phone and he was quiet. I said, "What did your parents say?" And he's like, "Oh, my mom is just really scared now." And I said, "Would it help if I called her?" And he's like, "Yeah, maybe. Maybe you could call her tomorrow morning." I knew this woman. I said, "I'd call her tomorrow morning and let her know that everything's fine and that you're safe."

And he just was silent, he was just kind of quiet. I could tell that he was sad because he didn't feel like he was in any kind of danger, or he wasn't worried until he got off the phone with his parents, and then he was. And so, he went from a connected space into a very disconnected space. And it only took a few minutes for the kids to be talking to him to have him kind of snap out of that. But that was just the juxtaposition of what was going on in the front seat versus the back seat.

And so, we wake up the next morning. Sure enough, we call the place, they have the part. We tell them what we need, we tell them what side of the boat it's on, we need the axle, it's a particular specific part that hooks onto the boat trailer, and called this guy's parents, and the mother went and picked it up. And by 10 o'clock, the father was in the air delivering that part down to where we were at.

It was very interesting because he was going to fly into a particular airport and the father was so helpful and willing to support us that he flew right into the town that we were in, whereas he was going to fly into a bigger airport. But he was willing, instead of us driving to another airport which would take more time, he went right to the municipal airport of the town that we were in.

And by 12 o'clock noon, we had the part in our hands and one of Rick's family members went and picked it up—so more connecting behavior—and took it over to the store so that Rick could put it on the trailer.

So, as all this was happening, we were in Southern Utah at the location where we stayed. We were trying to print off some papers that I needed to take on this trip. A family member of mine knew how to work the printer and I did not. And so, as I was going into drama again like *oh my goodness, I can't print this thing off and we've got to get back up to Beaver to get the part, and his dad's already in the air, we've got to get on the road.* And I was just panicking, feeling fear, worry, concern. My family member took time off of work and came home and within 20 or 30 minutes printed that thing off. Very connecting behavior. He's like, "Don't worry about it. I'll come home. I'll help you out."

Whereas my family member could've said, "No, I'm not helping you. I'm not interested in getting time off of work. You didn't tell me about this and so you're going to have wait till I get home."

And not that that kind of a boundary wouldn't have been appropriate, but with that kind of attitude, that kind of motive, kind of like *I want to punish you or I'm just going to be selfish*, that's the stuff that makes it disconnecting. It's not so much the words, it's about the motive behind the person speaking. That's how you know if disconnection's coming at you or if you're in a disconnected state.

So, he came home very helpful, kind, loving, helped us with the printer. So, we got on the road, started heading back north, and by the time we got to the town of Beaver, the plane had already landed and the part was in Rick's hands.

Rick was really busy that day and couldn't get to it until that afternoon. And so instead of moping around, and being disconnected, or complaining, everyone had really great spirits, everybody was projecting connection onto this experience. And so, they spent time playing board games, playing cards, Rick's wife came over and all of us were talking to her throughout the afternoon, and just having really good connecting conversations.

We left there around 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock at night I think. And we still had another four hours to drive. And so, we were going to get in around midnight or 1 o'clock. As we were driving along, some of the boys started becoming tired and one of the boys started complaining a little bit. And so, another example of disconnect but we did have the air conditioner and so they appreciated that, so that was an experience of connection.

Again, watch the motives, it's the **motives** behind the way that you are experiencing your experiences. It's not just the *words* that are connected or disconnected, it's what *driving* the words.

So, someone could be complaining and it could be legitimate, like I'm super-hot. Now, that could sound complaining but the Truth is, is that in our truck prior to stopping and getting the air conditioner fixed, it was super-hot. And so, that would not have been a disconnecting comment, but if I would have continued and if I would have started going into blame, or shame, or entitlement, that's when I start disconnecting.

So, as we were driving along, I realized that I did not have my credit card. And so, I had called Rick and said, "Hey, did I take my credit card from you?" And he goes, "Yeah, you did." And I couldn't find it. And I started going into disconnect as I was driving, thinking *oh my goodness, what if it dropped on the ground, what if somebody picks it up, what if somebody uses it before I can get it cancelled, what if, what if, what if?* And that was very dramatic and so I started disconnecting. And then, I caught myself and said *stop, if somebody picks it up and somebody uses it, I'll just take care of the consequences, hopefully my credit card company will not charge me, and if they do, then it's my responsibility, I'm the one that lost it.*

And then, I was experiencing that, a deer ran right across the road and we just about hit it. In fact, I don't know how we didn't hit it. It disappeared in front of the car because the truck is so big, it got so close that we couldn't see it in front of the grill. And after that deer ran in front of the car—everybody saw it because I had to slam on the brakes and I had this boat behind me, so it really lurched forward. All of us were shocked and a little bit scared but it didn't appear that anyone disconnected. They just responded according to what the experience was. I mean, shock, and fear, and concern were appropriate emotions for the experience. Gratitude that we didn't hit the thing.

And so, we get to our destination, to the lake, and everybody was tired. They weren't grouchy but they were tired, and so we went into the hotel room and just slept until noon the next day. I'll just stop this story right there because the real part that I wanted you to hear was the experience around the tire and all the connecting and disconnecting things that each person could project or not project onto the experience.

[00:48:57] Examples of Disconnecting Behavior

Here's an example of disconnecting behavior. Just specific situations.

I had a woman tell me one time that she was doing a humanitarian project and she needed to go to the airport, to a hangar, to put a bunch of pallettes onto a plane and she was the only one in charge of it and so she had to be there. She was the one that had organized this whole thing. And all of a sudden, she started having chest pains and she said she was in physical pain, and she needed to stop what she was doing and sit down or go get some help. She said she was even crying because the pain was so great.

And when people would say, "Are you okay?" She'd say, "I'm fine. I'm okay."

Her concern was that she didn't want people to feel like she was a bother or that she was not going to follow through with her commitments. And so, that kind of experience is a very disconnecting experience because here she was having pain, she wasn't feeling well, she was even crying because of the pain and when somebody noticed it and said, "Are you okay?"—which is a very connecting comment—she disconnected and actually invalidated herself and the person, saying, "No, I'm fine." Because her shame message is *I don't want to bother people*. That's a disconnection.

Road rage is disconnection.

A lot of times, I or somebody else will walk into a facility and the person in front of you does not hold the door, they just walk in, it's like they don't sense that somebody's behind them, they're just not connected to their environment, so they just shut the door behind them.

Or you'll be having a conversation and you'll say something that's quite emotional, and the person that's "listening" to you doesn't respond in a congruent manner with a congruent emotion according to what you are emoting with. So, it's very, very confusing, it feels really disconnecting.

So, disconnection is supported through feeling emotions that are uncomfortable. So, when I feel emotions like anxiety, fear, shame, confusion, entitlement, worry, pride, go into victim, have expectations that I want someone else to meet, if I have skewed perceptions. When I feel those kinds of feelings, it's a set-up to go into disconnect.

Now, just because I feel those feelings doesn't mean I will disconnect, but if I'm not conscious and I'm feeling those things, I have a high propensity of going into disconnect. It's only by being conscious and recognizing what I'm reacting to that I'll be able to not disconnect, and I can change it. So, once I'm conscious, then I can be responsible to *choose* my response and I can respond in honesty, in health, and in vulnerability, in validation.

And if I feel too scared to do that for whatever reason, like it doesn't feel safe to respond in validation and vulnerability, I can look at what or why I'm afraid, and connect to what is uncomfortable.

And when I do this, this will lead me right into understanding myself and give me an opportunity to choose a different way—a way to connect. So, it's really, really powerful. Connection vs disconnection.

I want to say it again. Experience is neutral. We were all having experiences during that 10 o'clock at night till 1 o'clock in the morning timeframe. It was actually 1 o'clock in the morning the next day. And everybody was projecting their own thoughts and their own feelings onto the experience.

And so, *I* can only interpret what other people are sending to me and what it feels like. It either feels connecting or it feels disconnecting. The person I'm really responsible for is myself. I am responsible to identify if *I* am connected or *I* am disconnected. And so, remember, connection is about being vulnerable, being validating, being open, being transparent, being willing to be responsible for myself, being emotionally available, having empathy, being able to witness myself and other people.

And disconnect is when I go into drama, where I have fear, and I react to it, and I have anxiety and I'm reacting to it. Or I have perceptions that I don't check out the Reality of the perceptions, I just make up a story around my reality and I react to it. That is how I disconnect.

There's no way to describe all the different ways to disconnect because there are millions of them. But the one thing that disconnection always has in common is that I will go into a state of drama. And again, if you don't know what drama is, please, please listen to the [podcasts on drama](#). There are two podcasts that are titled drama and then there's a couple of others that are in the list that have drama stories in them.

So, I hope that this was helpful—understanding the power of connection and also the power of disconnection. And how quickly with the power of our choice, we can either animate one or the other. And what's awesome is that because we have choice, if we are in a disconnected place we can stop, and we can become conscious, and we can choose with our next choice to become connected.

Going back to the story with my dog over the weekend. When she was acting out in anxiety, one of the ways that I connected with her is I sat in front of her once I got to my destination and I just looked in her eyes and I apologized to her. I said, "I'm sorry I yelled at you. I'm sorry that I was really upset. I was anxious and I apologize. I shouldn't have yelled at you, I really feel badly." She's kind of looking all around and who knows if she understood but hopefully she could feel that I was being sweet, and loving, and gentle with her. That is one way that I use to get from disconnect back into connection, is to own my

behavior and make restitution for it, or repent of it, or go into a place of forgiveness towards others. It is instantaneous connection.

So, I hope you enjoyed that story. And between now and then, stay connected to yourself, and if you find yourself disconnecting, which you will, because you can't be connected all the time, just be gentle, be loving, be compassionate, and use your free agency—use your choice—to make a conscious next decision to get back into connection.

Take care and we'll talk to each other soon. Bye bye.

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