

Episode 63: Connecting Language-"And" vs "But"

Jodi: Welcome again to ConneXions Classroom Podcast. Thank you for joining me this morning. I'm Jodi Hildebrandt, and today I wanted to talk about two words that seem really not very threatening: they're conjunctions in the English language, and the power of these words when you use them consciously is just amazing. The words are *but* and *and*. But, B-U-T, and the word and, A-N-D.

If you speak another language, I'm sure you have comparable words for *but* and *and*, and I would encourage you if you can decipher this through the language of English to take those words and see if they fit in your language as well, if they translate across, because it's what these two words mean in the language.

What they do is they support us to live inside of what I would call our integrity or not live inside of our integrity. And so, I'm going to create a case, or that's my goal anyway—my desire is to create a case for you this morning, and have you think for yourself and see if these two conjunctions, what the power is behind these two conjunctions. And see if changing the word from *but* to *and* does not create a very powerful, honest, responsible response for you and in your relationships, opposed to using the word *but*.

It is June 12th 2016, and again, I am sitting in one of the most beautiful spots in the world I think, and I feel very fortunate to be here in this sacred spot this morning amongst these beautiful red rocks, and blue sky, and billowing clouds. It's just gorgeous where I'm sitting.

Let's start off by positioning this new awareness that I hope to share with you from the position of connection. How interesting. So, I'm all about wanting to connect.

I want that in my life—I want to teach other people about their power of connection and so I'm very aware that all of us have an innate desire to connect and to feel a sense of belonging, a sense of importance, a sense of being needed, loved, wanted, seen, and witnessed.

We all have that need inside of us. And though we all need this kind of connection, most of us are consciously desiring it.

Now, there might be a handful of us that don't really desire connection, however the Truth is, you still need it. You might have learned from some part in your life where being around people was not safe, and so you might say I don't want any connection. However, if you were experiencing what I'm talking about, you would seek after it and desire it fully.

Many of us are unaware that connection is an outcome of living and behaving inside a particular set of principles of Truth. When I say **Truth**, I'm talking about Truth with a "-th" and a capital T, as opposed to true. So, living inside of a particular set of principles of Truth, which means the Truth is objective, it's factual, it's eternal, it's consistent, and it's constant.

Connection is a fruit on that plant of Truth. So, when you partake of connection or you partake of that fruit, you can only partake of it from a particular set of Principles of Truth. So, you can't have connection—you can't have the fruit of connection—by just trying to pluck a piece of fruit off of

any plant, you have to have the correct plant in order to live these principles of the plant of Truth. I'm trying to do an analogy there for you.

You must learn to use your choice to understand what Truth is and then to activate Truth in your life, and then to choose to live by the particular principles in order to enjoy the beautiful outcomes and tastes of connection. So, there's that fruit analogy, tasting that fruit and tasting that connection, having those experiences.

And as you taste those connections, you will be in a relationship with yourself, with God, and with others as long as they too are partaking of that similar fruit off of that plant of Truth.

When you connect with yourself, you alone can be present inside those particular principles. You don't have to have another person present in order to create that connection with yourself—which is good. It's good news because I don't want my connection to be contingent upon whether somebody else is showing up connected or not. I want to know that I have the ability to connect with myself, and connect with God or my Higher Power whenever I choose to participate in living those type of principles.

And we're going to talk about the principles here in a minute but I just want to give you an image that there is a plant called Truth, that is the analogy. In order to be able to feel the connection and be connected to self and to God or a Higher Power, you must pluck the fruit off of that tree, or off that branch, or off that plant in order to participate in those principles.

[00:07:04] Connecting with others

Here's the one part about connecting with others. If you desire to connect with another person, another human being, they too must be partaking of the same fruit, the same principles of Truth in order for them or for you to receive the benefits or the outcomes of the consequences of connection.

Consequences are just outcomes. So, they too have to be living the similar principles, or they won't be able to be connected. And if they're connected and you are, you can go towards them figuratively. However, if they're not available, they're not going to recognize your invitation to connect. Their distortion if you will, will preclude them from being able to connect with you.

Here are some examples, and they're kind of funny little examples, but I think they prove the point.

So, if you want Aunt Jemima's maple syrup, you have to buy Aunt Jemima's maple syrup. Not another syrup, not a cheaper brand of syrup, not a bigger bottle of syrup. If you want Aunt Jemima, you've got to buy Aunt Jemima.

If you want a luxury well-engineered and speedy automobile, and you know that that is a BMW or a Mercedes, you have to purchase a BMW or a Mercedes.

If you want to experience the majestic peaks and gorgeous valleys of the Alps, you have to travel to Switzerland to do so.

If you want to see and experience the Eiffel Tower, you've got to go to Paris.

If you want to take some pictures of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, you've got to go to Italy.

These are funny little examples but you get my point, is that if you want connection, truly want connection—because there's all sorts of counterfeits of connection, just so you know. And you might be involved in some kind of relationship right now either with yourself or another person that feels super connected. And I'm here to tell you that as you learn these principles of Truth, I would invite you to be really honest about the relationships that you're in, and see if there are principles of Truth inside what you would call connection in those relationships, and starting with yourself.

If those principles are there, then you got it, you're in connection. If the principles are not there, I would encourage you to start living those principles, to invite yourself and to invite your relationship into authentic, real, genuine connection where the principles of Truth reside.

In order to do this—in order to activate and live inside these principles—you've got to know what the principles are. I'm going to list them off for you. People could add to this, and I know that there's many other subsets of principles.

[00:10:25] The Three Principles

However, there's three biggies, and you've heard me talk about this at least a thousand times if not more, about the power of personal rigorous responsibility.

Being able to live an emotionally honest life, an impeccably honest life.

And then, the third one is to be humble.

Let's start with these principles. These are the principles that create an environment for connection to live and thrive and be present.

Let's start with emotional honesty. Being able to understand and **be** emotionally honest, which to me means live emotional honesty. Let's explain what that looks like. So, in order for me to live an emotionally honest life, I must acknowledge and be—**BE**, B-E—vulnerable. I must acknowledge my vulnerability, and I must be vulnerable.

So, here's the Truth about vulnerability. I am vulnerable. I'm vulnerable 24 hours of my 24 hours a day. There is never a time that I am not vulnerable; that is the honest Truth about us as beings. All of us, it doesn't matter where you live on this planet, on this beautiful earth, you are always vulnerable.

Now, you may not be conscious that you're vulnerable, however it does not take away the Reality that you are. And so, living an emotionally honest life means acknowledging that you're vulnerable.

I want to share with you a handful of quick statements that are principles of Truth around being vulnerable and around being honest. Here they are. This is about emotional honesty.

- All emotions are necessary and appropriate.

Now, I'm going to read these off pretty quickly because you're welcome to write them down and these Statements of Truth all exist inside that one principle of accept and be emotionally honest,

and part of being emotionally honest means you accept and you are willing to **be** or live in vulnerability.

So, when I say that I'm vulnerable, guess what that means. That means that I have needs. I have needs. I need validation, I need Truth, I need compassion, I need God. I need God or some type of higher being that I realize that I submit my will to, that is more powerful than I am. So, I know there's plenty of people in the world that struggle with the concept of God, and if you are one of those people, that's fine, *and* you must humble your little soul and realize that there's a greater power out in the world other than you. You need to practice living a life where you are humble enough to say, "I have needs of something greater than myself," and that will do.

Here are some other statements of Truth inside that principle of be emotionally honest.

- Pain and discomfort are appropriate and necessary experiences in life.

That one probably is going to blow your mind because for many of us, we're spending so much time and effort trying to get out of pain, and the Truth is pain and discomfort are appropriate and necessary experiences in life.

That's a powerful, bold statement and there are some exceptions to that statement. However, when you are living in Truth, the pain that comes from living in Truth, and the discomforts as a result of living in Truth are appropriate and necessary experiences in life because of the next statement:

You need oppositional forces in order to develop, mature, and "see", become aware, become conscious. *We need pain* so that we can understand pleasure. We need these oppositional forces in order to mature. And so, when I talk to you about Truth and I make a statement, you've got to remember to come back to, the statement is inside the framework of Truth. Because there's another framework that I talk a lot about, and that is distortion. I'm sure you've heard me use that word.

So, these are all statements inside this framework of Truth.

- You cannot control the outcomes of your choices. It is true that you get to choose, and it is the Truth that you don't get to choose your consequences.
- Another statement of Truth: you are vulnerable, and you live out of control. You live out of control. Now, there are three things you can control: your thoughts, your feelings, and your choices. Those things you are in control of. Everything else—**everything else**—is a state of being out of control.

You are at the mercy of the universe. You're at the mercy of experience and how it presents itself. You do not have the power to control anything other than **you**—and **you** rather limitedly: your thoughts, your feelings, and your choices.

- To connect with self and others, you must accept your vulnerability. Being willing to accept and be vulnerable. The reality is, or the Truth is, you cannot control anything other than your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors or choices. So, live in acceptance of the Reality that you are vulnerable to everything and everyone else. You are vulnerable. And

vulnerable doesn't mean bad, so there's some podcasts I've recorded on vulnerability. Go listen to those. Vulnerability is a wonderful place to live as long as you live in Truth.

- Another principle: you do and will make mistakes, and you **need** to make mistakes. Again, those mistakes are opportunities for growth and maturation **if** you will keep it inside the structure of Truth.
- What you do is not who you are. What you do is not who you are. You and I do lots of stuff, and so there's things that I do or that I've done that to me or to lots of people would be seen as really good or could be seen as really bad. And depending on whether I'm doing a "good thing" or a "bad thing" seems to affect my being, like if I'm doing good then I am good. If I'm doing something bad then I am bad. And that is not the Truth. My state of being, my soul, my worth, my identity, my spirit is unchanging. My worth as a spirit does not change according to what I do.

Now, my behaviors do affect the way I **feel** about who I am, and they do not have the power to change who I am. Thank goodness. My goodness, that would be disastrous if what I did changed who I am. That would be horrible.

- Accept and surrender the things you cannot change and the things you are not responsible for.
- You are limited and you have weakness. That means that you aren't God. You have limitations. So, there's nobody on the planet that could jump off a 100 foot building and land on their feet unless they had some kind of apparatus strapped to them to manage the descent into the ground. You would fall because of the principle of gravity. And so, recognizing that you're limited and that you have weakness. And that limitations and weaknesses are not bad things, they're actually connected to the human experience, and when you accept those in Truth they actually become your strengths if you will hold them in humility.

So, any one of these statements that I'm reading to you could be a podcast in and of themselves. There's so much information here, and I wish I could expound on all of them. However, I'm just going to hit them briefly.

[00:20:19] Accepting and Being Vulnerable

Accepting and being vulnerable is the most safe, the most responsible, and the most honest and real place you can live in life. Accepting and being vulnerable. So, what that means in a nutshell is, when I accept and I live inside my vulnerability, what I'm saying is, I can't do this by myself, I need help, I need support, I need my relationships who live in Truth—remember we're always coming back to that Truth paradigm—Truth to help me stay connected to the realities of what's going on in my life. And I need a God because if I just think that I can handle this on my own, there's no way I can do that because I'm limited, I'm human, I have vulnerabilities, I can't heal my own body, I can't just say, "Body, be healed." And all of a sudden it changes.

But if you call upon your Higher Power or a God, that power can assist you in succoring you in your weaknesses—your moment of weakness—even to the point of healing you, whatever that might mean to you.

- Accepting your mistakes and learning from them connects you to your vulnerability and creates safety. So, when I accept my mistakes and learn from those, it says I'm open and I'm humble. It says I can make a mistake and it's okay.
- You must give and receive validation in order to live in connection and love. That means you have to humble yourself and recognize that you are full of needs, and vulnerabilities, and things that are fragile about the human existence, and that you need to validate other people who live in the same situation as you do (which is everyone).
- Share your emotions and be responsible for them. So, when I share emotions, what I'm saying is, I am human, I feel, and all emotions are appropriate. So, I want to share those and be responsible for them. Not like, "I'm going to share my emotion with you, I'm really angry at you because you made me ticked me off when you took my mother's car and didn't ask her permission and left me stranded at school. I'm really mad at you about that." That's not sharing your emotions and being responsible.

You could say, "You know what? I'm really upset because I was planning on my mom picking me up from school and when you went over and asked if you could borrow the car or just took it without asking her, it left me stranded at school. I don't know if you're aware of that or not. Could we have a discussion about that?" That's being responsible for your emotions.

- You are the only one who can love yourself. You're the only one who can live in honesty and be responsible.
- Another statement: being loved can only be created by you. You are responsible for whether you feel loved or not. That is really the Truth. Again, there's a lot of podcasts talking about taking care of self and loving self.

Love is not something you can possess, or buy, or take from another. It is an expression of how I feel about myself and my desire for you to choose to live similar principles so that you can experience the all-encompassing warmth and safety of love. Love is not something that you can own, it is an expression of how I live, if I live in principles of Truth, I will learn to love myself and I will learn to love God or my Higher Power because I know that that power is helping me, supporting me to live inside this thing called integrity.

And then, I invite other people to live similarly so that we together can share love together—so you've created love for yourself, I've created love for myself, and we can share this thing called love back and forth.

- Love is the evidence of connection. It is a gift you first create within yourself and then offer and share with others.

There are no personal exceptions, or hidden motives, or strings attached when true and real love is felt and shared. What that means is I can't say, "Oh I love you," and then, "Will you do this?" "Oh I love you and I expect you to do that." "Oh I love you and you need to take care of me." Those are

all called strings and hidden motives that destroy this feeling called love because love is about learning how to self-contain that.

Let's go down to number two. So, that's the first principle of living inside Truth. That's what comprises this plant—the analogy of the plant is this principle of emotional honesty—living and understanding, and being emotionally honest.

The second principle is about being rigorously personally responsible. So, rigorous responsibility. Inside responsibility is the responsibility to be compassionate towards yourself and others. So, let me share with you some principles of Truth inside compassion and also inside this principle of rigorous responsibility.

- What is emotionally true for you doesn't equate to the Truth. So, true, what is true for you? Like, I like spaghetti, I'm really hot, you can't do that. Those are all statements that are true for me. So, what is emotionally true for me does not mean that it is the analogous with the The Truth because remember, The Truth is about objective, concrete, eternal, consistent, factual pieces of data.
- Your motive is the center of all your choices. What that means is you've got to understand what is driving you, what is motivating you, because that is the place from where you will choose. So, that is really important that you understand what your motives are.
- If you are unaware of your motive, you will distort reality. Now, I suppose that some people can be aware of their motives and still distort reality. However, I'm assuming that if you're aware of your motive and you know that it's in distortion that you're not going to follow the distortion, but I guess you could, because you could choose to do anything you want.

However, most of us because we're unaware of our motive, we will inadvertently distort the reality and the Truth, and that takes off our path.

- Pain is a result of the stories we tell ourselves. Now, what that means is there is pain that is in Truth and there's pain that's in distortion. So, the pain that I'm talking about that results from the stories we tell ourselves, what I mean by that is that this kind of pain is connected to dishonest story-lines.

So, the stories we tell ourselves are these made up, fill in the blank, explain the rest of the situation that I just assume is happening to myself, and I really don't check out and find out really what's going on with the facts of the story, the emotions of the other people, I don't gather the correct data. So, I just make up some convoluted story in my head that sounds good to me, and then I run it by a handful of people who all say yeah yeah yeah, that sounds right to me, too.

And then, all of a sudden, magically, poof, it becomes the Truth. The Truth is, that ain't the Truth. The Truth doesn't matter how many people tell you that that is the Truth, Truth stands alone. Even if nobody believes in it, the Truth can still stand alone, by itself, it doesn't need anyone to agree with it. The Truth is the Truth. And so, please don't be deceived by, "Hey, I had a hundred people agree with me so that means I'm right, that means that my Truth is right." Please don't get sucked in by that distortion because that is **not** the Truth.

So, pain is a result of the distorted stories we tell ourselves. So, when I have that kind of pain it means I am connected to a distortion because I've told myself a story that is not the Truth, and so boom, all of a sudden I feel the pain from this distorted storyline.

- Your perceptions and thoughts create your feelings. That one's kind of an easy one. What you perceive and think your feelings will follow. Thoughts drive feelings, and feelings drive behaviors. So, what that means is, I'll have a thought, then I'll have a feeling, then I'll have a behavior. That rapid-fire. And it can happen within a millisecond—thoughts, feelings, behaviors. And so, that's why we've got to know what's going on inside of us, to make sure that our thoughts are not in distortion, because our feeling will just attach to whether I'm in distortion or whether I'm in Truth.

You are responsible for your thoughts, your perceptions, your emotions, and your choices. You are responsible for those things.

You are *not, not, not* responsible for others' thoughts, perceptions, emotions, or choices.

You are responsible for your choices *and, and, and* their outcomes. Their outcomes, so the things that happen as a result of your choices, you get to be at some level responsible for those outcomes happening. You're not completely fully responsible because people get to choose how they hold the outcomes. And you are responsible at some level for the outcomes happening.

- You can only create change inside yourself. You can only be honest, responsible, vulnerable, humble ***within you***.

You are responsible to ask for help and let people know what you think, what you need, and what you want. Going back to that vulnerable thing, you need help. I need help. My gosh, I need so much help. I would love to have many, many more people help me with this project. And so, it shows me vulnerability. I only have 24 hours and I wish I had double that, because I have so many things I want to do, and so I need help, and it's my responsibility to ask for the help that I need.

- You are responsible to share your perceptions and what those perceptions mean to you. What they mean to you. This will invite you to check out whether you're in reality or not. Just because you have a meaning about a thought doesn't mean it's in Truth, my dear. You've got to look at what it is that it means, and see if the meaning reflects back to principles of Truth.
- Distorted thoughts and false beliefs are the outcome of being irresponsible for self. You are responsible for the meanings you place on words. **You** are responsible for the meanings you place on words. **You** alone are responsible. So, you have to look at what you say and say to yourself, "What does that mean?" And then, when you find out what the meaning is, you have to say, "Do I agree with that meaning?" Because words have all sorts of different meanings. Again, you can have meanings in distortion or you can have meanings in Truth.

And so, just because I use the word manipulate, most of you would think of the word manipulation as a bad word. It's a bad word. But really, manipulation could be done in Truth. Manipulation, when it's done in distortion, means I'm hiding, I'm concealing, I'm covering up what it is I'm trying

to do. I'm trying to get something or someone to do something that I want, but I don't tell them what I want because I'm hiding it from them. That's a distorted vantage point when I use the word manipulation.

However, I can manipulate and have it not be in distortion. I can have all of my desires known, I can be honest with the person, like I mean, right not as I'm recording the podcast I'm manipulating you, I am inviting you to move in a particular direction if you choose towards Truth. But I'm doing it very openly—I'm not trying to hide it from you. I'm being very clear about what I'm saying, I'm talking about very clear concepts, and my motives are very open and honest as to what my intention is.

- You are responsible to keep your commitments. Keeping commitments is evidence of self-love.
- You are responsible to create, articulate, share, hold your boundaries, and honor others' boundaries.

Alright, so those are a handful of statements inside this structure of rigorous personal responsibility.

The third one is about being humble. **Humble.** So, this third principle of living in Truth is about learning how to be open, how to be transparent, how to be teachable.

Being able to be willing. Willing. Oh my heavens, any time somebody calls me for an appointment, I will say to them, "How willing are you to change?" Or somebody says, "Hey, I have a child or I have a spouse." I'll say, "How willing are they?" That's one of the first questions I ask. It's like, if they're not willing, if they're not humble, change cannot happen. All these other principles that are awesome, that can transfigure people's lives fall on deaf ears if the person is not willing and open. So, humility is huge inside this trio of being emotionally honest and rigorously responsible.

[00:35:16] Being Willing

Here are some statements about being willing.

- You cannot make someone else change; they have to be willing.
- All experience is neutral. It's not good or bad. Experience just shows up and says, "Hi, I'm experience." And some of those experiences are really painful and they're not good at bad, they just are difficult. And again, those difficult experiences that show up and I personally have had plenty of difficult, difficult—it almost makes me want to cry—difficult experiences, and they're there to teach you. They're there to mature you. They're there to develop you. Those oppositional forces I was talking about.
- Do your best. You are responsible to do your best and guess what, you're the only one that gets to define whether you're doing your best. Nobody else gets to define that. But again, if you're going to be honest and live inside of honesty and being accountable, then you have to be honest about whether you're doing your best or not.

- Saying sorry without feeling the weight of what you've done, or making restitution, or committing to a plan to not go to that place again are shallow and hollow words. Saying the words, "I'm sorry," are shallow and hollow if you're not willing to really feel, if you're not willing to be humble, and feel the weight of what you've done, make restitution for what you've done, and commit to not repeat what it is that you've done.
- If you desire connection, you must ask questions of curiosity to gather the honest and correct meaning for the other person. Let me say that again. If you desire connection, you must get curious, you've got to get curious about them because remember what I said about there's meanings, there's lots of different meanings to different words. You don't get to listen to somebody and then put all your meaning on it, and then say I understand you and I connect with you. You've got to ask questions, and get curious about what in the world do they mean.

Okay. So you've got the three principles, right? That's the plant, the analogy of the plant, being able to be emotionally honest, personally responsible, and to be humble. And when you live like that, you'll live all sorts of other beautiful principles. Those are the things I just shared with you, all those statements of principles of Truth inside that structure of personal integrity: being emotionally honest, being accountable, and being humble is called living inside your integrity.

So, that's a lot of awareness to have, and I want to share with you a tool, a strategy, so you can learn to develop yourself into a being who knows how to connect and live a lifestyle of principles of Truth. And when you do that, you will create outcomes of connection with yourself, with God, with your Higher Power, and with another person if they are available and willing to live inside those principles as well.

So, I prefaced this podcast with desiring to connect and the need to connect before I started talking about the two words *but* and *and* because everything is going to go back to my desire for connection. So, this tool, this strategy, is learning how to use *but* and *and* appropriately.

So, you're probably wondering like what is the big deal about the word *but* and the word *and*? Sometimes, when I teach people this, they kind of snicker like are you kidding? I paid \$150 for this? I'm like hold on, let me just teach you this. And I have yet to meet a human being that doesn't go, "Wow, that's like magic!" It's not magic, it's just living in Truth.

So, if your goal and your desire is to live a life where you're speaking Truth and minimizing the amount of time that you enter into distortion, then you need to appreciate that using these words can actually invite you to *inadvertently* go into distortion. I'm not saying people are doing this intentionally, but not knowing what these words mean in Truth can invite you into massive distortions.

[00:40:21] But

Alright, so the word *but*. I'm going to give you a handful of examples of how the word *but* is typically used, at least in our language, the language of English.

But can be used to present an illusion that there is only one Reality, one Truth inside any given statement, when in fact, Truth can exist in several, many different statements simultaneously.

Here's an example: "...And the Truth is." So, this person says, "I was late. I was late but it didn't affect anybody negatively." That's what they say. So, that's a distortion. Here is an example of having several Truth statements inside one sentence, one paragraph, one idea because usually we say, "I was late **but** it didn't affect anyone."

So, here's the Truth. "I was late *and* the Truth is, my lateness affected others. And the Truth is, I don't know to what extent, what negative extent it did to other people. And the Truth is, I'm responsible for being late. And the Truth is, I don't get to make excuses as to why I was late. And the Truth is, I have a pattern, doggone it, of being late. I need to change that. And the Truth is, I don't have any desire to change it." I mean, I could go on, and on, and on, and on with these Statements of Truth, of and the Truth is, and the Truth is.

So, it is our responsibility, it's your responsibility, my responsibility, to listen to what I'm saying, and to what others are saying, and become clear on their meanings, their motives, in order to assess where the Truth is versus what is true for them or what is true for myself.

What was true for this person was I was late but it didn't negatively affect anyone. That is not the Truth. They don't know if it affected someone let alone negatively. So, they're just popping off and saying, "It didn't affect anyone." And trying to get out of being responsible.

However, that is not the Truth. It's just what's true for them, and that is the different between true and Truth.

But—the word *but*—there's three different ways that I want to share with you how the word *but* can be used inside of a distortion.

But can excuse poor choices I've made, and therefore not allow me to experience or feel the appropriate consequence for my choices.

So, here's an example. I'm sorry, I'm using the word I'm sorry. I'm sorry I was late *but* my alarm didn't go off, and my roommate was using the shower, and my car was out of gas, and the traffic was slow. That's one example of using the word *but*.

All of those statements are in distortion because it's suggesting that this person was not responsible for being late.

Here's another way that we use the word *but*. *But* can also be used to justify any choice or any decision I feel is right. So, it can invite me into amazing amounts of distortion by going through the pride door. So, I can justify anything by using the word *but*, because I feel like it's right.

Here's an example. I know you asked me not to (fill in the blank), can you hear the *but* coming? Hear it coming, hear it coming. I know you asked me not to... so let's fill in the blank. I know you asked me not to feed your cat **but** here's why I did what I wanted to do and thought it was okay.

So, here's an example. Here's why I did what I did and why I ignored your request and did what I wanted. The cat was crying, the cat was meowing, the cat was jumping up on my lap and crying for food, and it appeared hungry so I fed him. I only fed him scraps off my plate after dinner, so I didn't use your cat food. But that's why I justified or that's how I justified doing what I wanted even though you asked me not to, because I used that word *but*. That's number two.

Here's number three. *But* can also be used to negate or nullify all words, phrases, and acknowledgement that was spoken previously. For example, you hear somebody say, "You are so talented in (fill in the blank)—In your particular skill set—so many people acknowledge you and love you for your talents and gifts *but* you didn't take first place or you didn't win the award." So, here I am saying this wonderful compliment, and acknowledgement, and praising this person. And then, I throw in the word *but*. So, "You did an amazing job cleaning the kitchen, oh my gosh it's like sparkling clean, and all the corners, *but* you didn't sweep the floor. *But* you didn't wipe off the top of the fridge." "Wow, you are so smart, I cannot believe how talented you are in Mathematics, my goodness, *but* you didn't ace your test."

So, there are millions of ways to use this word *but* that negates and nullifies statements that come before.

Okay, all of these uses of the word *but* don't support connection which is what we all want, is connection. That's the whole reason we're listening to this podcast, is to learn how to connect. And the reason they don't support connection is because they're not responsible, they're not honest. All of those things were not honest, and if you look back at every single one of them, there's dishonesty in them, and there's irresponsibility in them.

[00:46:41] The Tool

So, here's the tool, the secret weapon, ready? You can use this secret tool (it's not really secret, I already told you about it) *but* you can use this tool and invite you and invite others into Truth, and stay in Truth. Stay in a place where you can live in a connected lifestyle. Use the word *and* in place of *but*.

I invite you, I dare you, I dare you to, I'm challenging you, try this. Put the word *and* in the place of *but*. So, when you go to use the word *but*, replace it with *and*, and see what happens. *And* is a connecting word—it joins together and keeps the responsibility where the responsibility lies: on *me*. The responsibility is on you, it's not on other people, it's on me, it's on you. *And* allows for me to be honest with myself, which then invites for me to be personally responsible for myself and not shirk my responsibility.

So, let's go through these again with the word *and* instead of the word *but*. Here's the first example.

Number one, *but* excuses poor choices. So, sorry I was late, *and* instead of saying *but*, I'm going to say *and* my alarm didn't go off, *and* my roommates were in the shower, *and* my car was out of gas, *and* the traffic was slow. Now, listen to that. Who is responsible for all of that? Who's responsible for my alarm didn't go off? Uh, me. Who's responsible for my roommates being in the shower? Uh, me. I have the night before, I can talk to them and say, "Hey, I've got to be in the shower between this time and this time. Can we make an arrangement?" Who's responsible for the car being out of gas? Uh, me. Who's responsible for the traffic being slow? Uh, me. And what I mean by that is, you know the traffic, you know where your work is, you know what time you go to work every morning, you know what kind of traffic flow there is, you're responsible for that. You know that you have to give yourself adequate time. You're responsible.

Number two, *but* justifies choices that I feel or think are right. Here's an example. "I know you asked me not to feed your cat, *but*..." Let's put *and* in there. "I know you asked me to not to feed your cat *but* here is why I ignored you and did what I wanted anyways." That doesn't feel very good, does it? *But* sounds much better. It's a hiding place. "*And* here's why I ignored you and did what I want wanted anyways. The cat appeared to be hungry, so I made the choice to feed it and ignore your request." Bam, the responsibility squarely on your shoulders.

Number three. *But* is used to negate and nullify. Here's what it would sound like if you used the word *and*. "You are so talented, awesome, wonderful, **and** you didn't take first place or win the award." "You did an amazing job in the kitchen, the counters are so clean, and all of the corners, **and** you didn't mop the floor, **and** you didn't clean off the fridge."

I'll tell you, you say that to someone using the word *and*, they will lick you up one side and down the other, because what you're saying is, "I'll be responsible for me, you be responsible for you, I will value you and compliment you and acknowledge you *and* request for you to sweep the floor and wipe off the top of the fridge at another time." Me being responsible for my choices with the word *and* is so, so powerful. So powerful.

If being emotionally honest and responsible are the principles of Truth, that support being you to stay in connection, if that's what this is, then I challenge you—I **challenge** you—to try these principles of taking the word *but* out of your vocabulary and replacing it with the word *and*.

We all want connection, and these are the principles of Truth which is, be honest, be responsible, be humble. This tool of *but* and *and* supports you to that end.

I invite you to try it, to practice it. It will feel kind of magical, though it really is not about magic at all, it's about consciousness and choosing to living a life of integrity, which means impeccable honesty, rigorous personal responsibility, and humility.

Those principles bear fruits of living a life of connection.

Thank you for listening this morning. I'm honored that you're with me, and I'm excited to hear how you use these principles and how they start changing your life. So, between now and next time, stay connected, and we will talk soon.

[ENDS]