

# Episode 44: Emotional Honesty & Safety

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**[00:02:48]**

Good morning and welcome to ConneXions Classroom Podcast for December 27<sup>th</sup>. Today, we're going to be talking about emotional honesty—the characteristics of it, and also how emotional honesty creates secure attachments, not only to ourselves or within ourselves but also to our relationships, so whether it's to a parent, or to a sibling, or to a spouse, friends. If we aren't able to learn how to be emotionally honest with oneself, we therefore will not be able to be emotionally honest with another person because what I don't possess I can't give to another. And therefore, without being able to be emotionally honest we really cannot form secure attachments.

Now, I'm going to describe what secure attachments mean. We will be able to attach, but it won't feel safe. So, we'll be able to connect and it will be kind of peripheral, however without the emotionally honest piece, we won't feel the ability to relax inside of those relationships because they won't feel safe for us and therefore we won't be able to trust.

And so, it all begins with ourselves. In order to be emotionally honest, you must know yourself fully. How do you know yourself fully? What do you need to know about yourself? When you

know yourself, you're aware of what is operating within you. You know how to make conscious, wise, and supportive decisions that include knowing about your wants, your feelings, your concerns, your fears, your motives, your perceptions, your shame, your desires—everything about you—the things that you think, what your ideologies are, all of that, you have a pretty good idea of what you think and feel about yourself and how you interact with life.

Now, if I read those things off and you don't know about yourself in those ways don't be concerned or don't think you can't be emotionally honest. It just means that you get an opportunity to really practice learning about yourself. So, everything that you engage in in life is an opportunity for you to learn about you—everything, every single thing. So, pretend you're sitting at a buffet and you taste different foods or different liquids and your palate has a particular desire to it and so you taste something and you think *wow, I really like that*. Or you taste something else and you're not too keen on that. And so, you're really quick at being able to understand what you like and what you don't like, of what agrees with you, what doesn't agree with you.

In a way, it's very similar to other things in life. When you are interacting in dynamics—and they can be any kind of dynamics, they can be kind of neutral dynamics or not super emotionally vulnerable dynamics—you get a sense of what you agree with and what you don't, and how you feel about things, if you like something or you don't like something, or if you believe a certain way or not. You start learning about who you are and what operates inside you. If you are not super conscious to those things inside you, you oftentimes will react in very selfish and kind of a knee-jerk manner because you don't know who you are and so you don't know what you want, or feel, or know, or think, because you're not conscious of it.

That unconsciousness will begin to choose for you and prevent you from changing. What I mean by that is, if you don't know what you think about something, then you'll react in a fear position, you'll knee jerk, you'll react, you'll continue to make choices that will keep you from knowing about those characteristics I just talked about: what you want, what you think, what you feel, etc. Thus, this will allow you to not be able to manage those things or understand those things. But when you're emotionally honest, you then are willing to look at yourself in every moment, every situation, every experience, and in all of your choices you'll be able to stop and say, *what do I think about that? How do I feel about that?* Being emotionally honest means you are willing to come to a new perception, a new angle on everything. For example, your traumas, your pain, any kind of feelings of betrayal, you're willing to look at how that actually affected you. You're willing to look at all of it and repeatedly ask yourself questions like, *Why do I feel this way? Or, help me understand why I perceive things the way that I do*. So, you will be in a state of constant curiosity towards yourself in an attempt to understand what makes you choose, what makes you think, what makes you behave, what makes you feel the way that you do.

For example, you'll say things like this to yourself: why did I say that, what did I mean when I

did that, why did I do that, why am I feeling this way, why did I choose this, why did I react in this manner, what do I want and why? So, all these questions are a form of curiosity. If you are not conscious, you will not be aware of those motives, or resentments, or entitlements, or expectations, or hidden motives. And if you're not aware of them, then those are the things that will choose for you.

Developing emotional honesty means becoming willing to look at the Truth of your feelings, your thoughts, your behaviors, and choices. Being emotionally honest means being willing to accept the outcomes of your choices, becoming rigorously honest and responsible for your actions, behaviors, and choices, and for the outcomes and consequences of those choices. Being emotionally honest means understanding and knowing yourself so that you create boundaries for yourself. Because without boundaries you will use others to get what you want, and you'll allow others to use you.

Being emotionally honest means developing the habit of stopping yourself when you're in any given situation and asking yourself *why do I feel this way*, or *what do I need to do or say in this moment*, or *am I responsible for what's going on here?* You'll ask yourself any other question that creates curiosity to help you understand who you are and where you're responsible and where you're not.

These types of questions facilitate you getting to know yourself so you can best govern yourself in any situation or experience. I need to appreciate where I've been in life and what “makes me” who I am today. And then, I get to decide if I want to change anything about myself. I get to use my free agency and choice because nothing inside of you is set or rigid—it's all up for renegotiation, if you will. You can always change. And if you're interested in changing and becoming conscious, then you'll be able to be more flexible about how things come at you, and be able to accommodate, if appropriate, what's being presented.

So, getting to know yourself, getting to know your wants, your feelings, your concerns, your fears, your motives, anything about you. So, when we are conscious we are aware of all of these things that are operating inside of us, and therefore the outcome is that we make conscious, helpful, and wise decisions for ourselves. If we are unconscious we will remain unaware of these things that are operating within us, and consequently we will make unconscious, reactionary, and knee-jerk decisions. And unfortunately, these types of decisions will prevent you from becoming aware of your emotional systems, and all those things that we just talked about, you will not be able to be aware of them. So, those things will choose for you.

So, self-awareness, consciousness, and honesty are the only avenues to change, to create change, and therefore to have personal individual freedom and integrity. When you are emotionally honest, you will look at yourself in every moment, in every experience, and you'll be able to see yourself very clearly.

## [00:12:06] Emotional Honesty

Let's talk about the characteristics of emotional honesty. The way you know that you are forging emotional honesty is that you will have these following characteristics. And one of the characteristics is that you're willing to be curious about yourself. Have you thought about your willingness to become more rigorous in your honesty towards yourself and with others? Look at that and say *how open am I to become more curious?*

### **Characteristics of emotional honesty include:**

1. Learning to recognize and articulate your feelings. Learning to recognize, to be able to see them and share those feelings with another person—and also with self.
2. You learn how to grieve. Why would grief be connected with emotional honesty? Because all us have disappointments, sadness, pain, anger, have these experiences that go on that we need to grieve. There's loss that goes on in our life, and instead of just getting angry around everything, or becoming avoidant or only feeling sad, we must learn how to grieve those kinds of experiences and those expectations that never were met.
3. Learning how to manage uncomfortable feelings and emotional pain. It doesn't mean avoid those things, it doesn't mean go into an addiction. It says, learn how to manage, learn how to feel, and make a space for feelings that are uncomfortable or cause pain, because emotions aren't bad and even experiences that are uncomfortable aren't bad. It just means that we get to learn to manage those.
4. Learning to ask for help. That is such a critical piece, is being able to ask somebody else to help you. It's a humble position, it allows for the person to recognize that they are vulnerable and they need emotional support, so it's an emotionally honest position to humble oneself and ask for help.
5. Learning how to identify shame and faulty core beliefs and then change them. Another way to say that is after you've identified the shame and faulty core beliefs, you need to put it back into the Truth—because remember, shame, faulty core beliefs are all distortions of Truth. And so, when it talks about change those, it means put them back into Reality / The Truth.
6. Emotional honesty means understanding and setting boundaries for oneself and honoring the boundaries not only of oneself, but also of other people.
7. When you're emotionally honest you ask for what you want. You don't make someone guess or “prove” their love to you by doing the things that you think they should know to do for you. You need to ask for what you want.

8. Emotional honesty means letting go of resentments. Resentments are expectations that never came to fruition. That's what resentments are. Go find your resentments inside yourself and I guarantee you as you look for your resentments and you find them, you will see that you had expectations around either yourself, or someone else, or something else and they weren't met, and it turned into a resentment.
9. Do not expect expectations to be met. It's fine to have expectations, however **you** are responsible to meet them for yourself. Don't expect someone to meet what you want them to meet; those are your responsibilities.
10. Emotional honesty means to be vulnerable, to share, to risk.
11. Emotional honesty means that you know how to be compassionate with yourself and another person.
12. Learn how to be humble, willing to listen, and rigorously consider the opinions, thoughts, and perceptions of another person.
13. Emotional honesty requires safety, and trust, and learning how to trust yourself and be safe with self.
14. Emotional honesty means that you know how to validate yourself and others. So, learning how to have empathy towards self and another person, learning how to connect with oneself and another person. That is super, super important.
15. Emotional honesty is about loyalty to your own morals, your own values, your own principles, the promises, and commitments you've made.
16. Emotional honesty means to be not judgmental. There's a difference between judgmental and judging. You must be judging. You must create structure and sanity in your life, which means you've got to judge things. But being judgmental is where you look at something and you make up some kind of story about the thing or the person that you really don't know about. You're being judgmental instead of picking up the facts, like I'm judging that the person that I met yesterday, because I gave them my money to purchase an item, I am judging that because I have a receipt and because I have the phone number, that they're going to come today and deliver the item. I felt very safe with them and so I'm making a judgment call about them.
17. Emotional honesty requires assertion about yourself and being respectful towards self and to others.
18. Emotional honesty requires personal responsibility for your behaviors, and your choices, and the outcomes of those choices.

19. Being able to be open, direct, and transparent. Emotional honesty means being open, and transparent, and clear with your thoughts and your feelings as you share those in a direct manner with someone else.
20. Emotional honesty also requires that there's no manipulation, that you're really clear and honest and you're not using any kind of behavior that is meant to deceive either self or another person.

As I shared those characteristics, how do you feel about those? How do you feel about being able to live an emotionally honest life? Does it seem like it's not that big of a deal, like it's somewhat simple to live? Do you feel like it's going to take a lot of effort, a lot of emotional, mental, or spiritual effort to recognize what's happening inside you?

After going through that list of characteristics of emotional honesty, let's look at a similar list, but it's the antithesis of emotional honesty, which is emotional dishonesty.

**The characteristics of emotional dishonesty are:**

1. I don't pay attention to myself or another's feelings.
2. I don't acknowledge when I feel hurt, sad, fearful, angry. And I don't see any need to grieve.
3. I don't acknowledge pain or discomfort, or only notice my own pain to the exclusion of others'—like I'm the only one that's getting hurt.
4. I refuse to ask for help from another. Or I can't do much without help. It goes to one extreme or the other.
5. Emotional dishonesty lives in faulty core beliefs and reinforces shame messages.
6. Emotional dishonesty lacks boundaries.
7. I expect others to provide for my wants and my needs.
8. I hold onto resentments and feel entitled to have them.
9. Emotional dishonesty has all sorts of expectations and becomes offended when those expectations are not met.
10. I pretend to not need anything. I'm always “okay,” or “fine,” or “good,” I don't really need anything from anyone or anything, which is not the case. We all need to have connection with other people and we all need help.
11. Emotional dishonesty lacks compassion for self and another person.
12. It's not humble and it refuses to look at self. Or emotional dishonesty will *only* look at self. It either refuses to look at self or it will only look at self. So it's kind of like it's *all* about me or *none* of it's about me.
13. I distrust myself and or others.
14. I have no empathy for myself or others.
15. Betrays my own values, morals, promises, and commitments.
16. Emotional dishonesty is judgmental and critical of self and others.
17. Emotional dishonesty is aggressive, passive, or passive-aggressive. It is hypocritical.
18. Emotional dishonesty supports manipulation and lives in denial and confusion.

The dishonest part of the emotion is being driven by shame. And again, if you don't know what shame is, I implore you to go listen to the shame podcast or the faulty core belief podcast.

Because shame is caustic and destructive and it speaks to the person in terms of *I'm not enough*, *I'm not lovable*, or that *I'm better than others* and *no one will love me if they know me*, *I can't trust anyone*, *I can't ask for my needs to be met*, and so forth. It also says things like, *I'm perfect*, *I get everything right*, *I'm deserving*, *I'm undeserving*. And the Truth is, is that shame is always a lie and it will always speak lies. And it endeavors to gain admission into your mind, your heart, and your soul—to lie to you about who you are and what you feel.

All of us to some degree, large or small, have shame—or believe the lies of shame. It is a lifetime process to understand how shame speaks to you and how to eradicate it from your soul and your mind.

As you undertake this huge task, shame continues to speak to you as well as to everyone else on the planet. When I am being emotionally honest, I am not listening to my shame, I am not beholden to my shame. When I'm being emotionally dishonest, I am—I'm reacting to those lies that shame is telling me.

If someone is not conscious of shame's existence, they will be unable to prevent its lies from entering into their system and thus they will become infected with those lies of shame. And once infected, they typically speak in some variation of the following. Here's what they sound like. People are either saying this or it's being said inside your own head.

#### **[00:24:47] 10 Ways That Shame Speaks to You**

1. It's not my fault. Stop blaming me, you blame me for everything.
2. It's all my fault, I am to blame. If I would have done it right, it would have all worked out.
3. You can't make me. I can do whatever I want. Because of you, I had this experience happen to me, it's your fault.
4. I feel completely alone and incapable. I'm not enough and I never will be.
5. I don't deserve. I'm unworthy of your love and your attention.
6. I totally deserve anything I want. I am perfect and you should like me.
7. I shouldn't have done that. It means I'm bad, dumb, unworthy, inadequate, and a loser.
8. I should have won. Couldn't they see I was so much better than they were? They're incompetent at their job—I was clearly the best choice.
9. I can't ask for help. If I do, they will not help me and I will look like I don't know what I'm doing; I'll figure this out on my own.
10. Because of you, I am in this spot. You did this to me. I'm not willing to do anything more because I'm not stooping to the level where you are.

## **[00:26:13] Boundaries**

If you want to protect yourself from having your shame or someone else's shame gain admittance into your mind, the way is to have boundaries. Boundaries are the lines or the demarcations around me and you. It lets me know where I am, and then your boundaries let me know where you are.

Appropriate and healthy boundaries sound like this.

- I am not okay with you talking to me in a disrespectful tone in my home. If you continue to choose to do so, I will ask you to leave. That's a boundary. So, if someone's talking disrespectfully, they're in their shame and you get to ask them to stop. And if they choose not to, you can ask them to leave your space.
- I feel unsafe when I drive with you because you've had two accidents in the last month. I will not be loaning you my car until I feel safe with you again and you have evidenced to me that you are doing what is necessary to become more aware on the roads.
- I'm going to bed at 10 o'clock. That's a boundary.
- I feel upset when I hear you blame your issues on me to our neighbor. I'm not okay with you 1) blaming me for your choices and 2) talking to our neighbor about why you were mad at me and not being willing to take responsibility for your own choices. I feel disconnected and distant when you choose to behave in this manner.
- When the door is shut, it means do not come into my room. Boundary.
- I will be done cooking in ten minutes and so if you choose not to come to the kitchen and eat, you will be responsible for getting everything out again and cleaning up your own mess.
- I feel ignored when you walk into the room and don't acknowledge me. Would you be willing to acknowledge my presence when you walk into a room by winking at me, or nodding, or smiling, or saying hello?
- I need to tell you how I feel even though I know you are not going to be happy with the information.
- Please do not use my computer when I'm not home.
- I feel used and disrespected when you get into my purse and take my credit card without asking permission. Please do not get into my purse without my permission again. What did you hear me say?

The way to protect yourself around your shame and someone else's shame coming at you is to have boundaries and also to be able to be emotionally honest. So, as you heard me share those boundaries, you can hear how emotionally honest those things are. I'm not talking from a perspective of someone else, I'm talking about *my* perspective of what it is that I need, I'm being honest with the person. And when I do that, it creates or at least it invites secure attachments. The more that we're emotionally honest, which means we don't listen to our shame, we don't allow shame to dictate to us who we are or how we feel, then we have the opportunity to invite people to attach securely to us.

As we develop and mature, we go out into the world and attempt to bond and attach to others the same way we had modeled for us in our family of origin. If you feel safe, if you were taught to be safe and you could depend on connection in your family of origin—or another way to say that is people were emotionally honest with me in my family of origin—then I will have securely attached. If that wasn't the case then I will not feel like I can attach, I won't know how to do it.

Being securely attached means when you feel bonded to yourself, therefore you will feel connected and bonded to another person. What that means is I love myself, I care for myself, I hold boundaries around myself, I don't allow myself to be emotionally dishonest with myself. And so, it lets me be attached to me and when I am able to do that, I will feel connected, and safe, and relaxed inside my own skin.

Hopefully, that was helpful discussing about emotional honesty and how that creates attachments, primarily ourselves, and then the outcome of being connected to oneself is that I know how to connect and attach to other people. Now, let me say this one thing. Just because I am attached to myself does not mean that I can then attach or securely attach to another person. They must be doing the same thing in their own lives and be available to be attached to, in order for them and myself to have a secure attachment. I can only do my part and then I hope that they're doing their part, which is learning to live in honesty, learning how to be emotionally honest, and how to challenge their shame, and eventually eradicate those shame messages. Though they will not be able to get rid of all of them because they just keep coming, they know how to challenge them and get them back into the Truth. And as you do that, you will be able to attach, and bond, and secure your connectivity to self and then offer that to another person—like invite them to come attach to you.

My hope is that this was helpful to you and I would have you look at your relationships, look at your intimate relationships first, and then move out to more neutral relationships, and see if you feel securely attached to any of those relationships, knowing that you have to first be attached to self which means you have to live in honesty, responsibility, and humility—you have to be in your integrity in order to be securely attached to self, and then look outside yourself and say *who else am I attached to? Who else lives that way in my world?*

Take care of yourself and my hope is that you will look closely at you and I invite you to stay conscious and stay connected. Bye bye.

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