

**SHORE:**  
**Speak Honestly with Ownership in Order to Repair Empathically**

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**Jessica:**

No, that's it. I appreciate you listening. I feel really heard and understood right now.

**Jayson:**

Okay, cool. Are you sure there's nothing else? We're good?

**Jessica:**

No, we're good. You got it. You got everything.

**Jayson:**

Okay. Awesome. Well, okay. I just wanted a chance to share what happened on my side, if you're open to hearing that?

**Jessica:**

Okay. Yes.

**Jayson:**

Cool. Yeah. I know that, as I just shared with you, that you might be upset based on what happened, and it's important to me that I reconnect with you as soon as possible, because I want us both to feel like we're in a good place. Yeah. Again, I know I said it during the LUFU there, but I raised my voice and I was angry, because you were withdrawing. I did that and I just want to take responsibility that I probably drove you further away. I know that doesn't work for you. I got really anxious, and what I do sometimes when I'm anxious is I pursue and I feel agitated, and I imagine that's not very inviting for you.

**Jessica:**

Yeah, no; it just makes me shut down and withdraw further.

**Jayson:**

Right. Yeah. So that's, I was thinking, is what I keep noticing in our fights, is when I get anxious and try to come toward you, especially if I have heat or energy or I'm triggered, you feel, it seems like, more pressed upon and more pressured and that has you pull away.

**Jessica:**

Yeah.

**Jayson:**

Okay. Yeah. So that makes sense that you would pull away given that I do that and I'm not always skillful there. So to me it makes sense that you have that reaction.

**Jessica:**

Okay. Yeah. I mean, I understand what you're saying and yeah, I realize, also, how you would be upset by that.

**Jayson:**

Yeah. Thanks. Yeah. That's what I wanted to talk about next. It's good timing. I just need you to keep getting that I'm impacted when you retreat like that; I'm a person over here and I'm impacted and it doesn't always feel good. You know about my history and where I come from. I feel anxious, I feel scared, and I feel alone.

**Jessica:**

So you're saying when I withdraw, it has maybe a bigger impact than I realized, that it just affects you in the sense that you feel alone in the relationship and scared?

**Jayson:**

Yeah. Yeah, and the next layer down is, you know my family, I grew up in this family where it was, when I felt most scared and alone, my parents would retreat away from me. That just had me feel even more scared.

**Jessica:**

Yeah. I could see that connection. That makes sense why my behavior would impact you like that.

**Jayson:**

Yeah. So I know it's not all about you. I know there's projection going on here, because of my history and being together I still am impacted and I need you to keep remembering. Because when you retreat, it's like you forget about me sometimes. I just need you to remember, "Oh, right; there's this person over there that's scared. Feels alone. Feels, maybe, dropped." Yeah.

**Jessica:**

So basically, even though I might still retreat sometimes or withdraw, but to also maybe try to make an effort to think about you and maybe reach out and check in with you, maybe?

**Jayson:**

Well, this is—again, I'm glad you're bringing this up. It's what I wanted to ask you for. I'm trying to make a reasonable request here, that given your nervous system and your history and what you can and can't do, I'm like, "Hey, what's reasonable? What could I ask for?" I think it's reasonable that I say, "Hey, Jessica, at the very least, an hour into your withdrawal or 10 minutes or whenever you are aware that 'Oh, there's a relationship here.'" Because I know sometimes you actually go so inward that you forget, you don't even think of the relationship or me. I know that happens. So as soon as you can be aware of it, you could say something like, "Hey, I'm in my own shame pile over here. I'm just dealing with my own shit. It's not personal to you. I'm not trying to push you away." It could be anything like that. I'm just curious what you think about what you could do, what could you say if...

**Jessica:**

I think I could check in with you and just tell you where I am, how far down the rabbit hole I am, where I am I right now, but that I still care about you, still love you. I'm in my cave, my rabbit hole, and I'll check in with you. If I'm ready to come out, then I'll tell you that, but if I need a little bit more time, then I'll let you know that. Would that work?

**Jayson:**

Yeah, that'd be huge. Because I mean, anything is better than silence.

**Jessica:**

Yeah.

**Jayson:**

Yeah. So as soon as you're aware of it, if you could say anything like that, that would be amazing.

**Jessica:**

Okay.

**Jayson:**

Yeah, because that helps me know, okay, you're here, you actually are aware that I'm over here. There's two people. I know that's hard for you.

**Jessica:**

I think I can do it.

**Jayson:**

Okay. All right. Well, let's try it. All right. Well, now I want to just talk about... have us zoom out for a minute about our relationship dynamic here and ask, what are we learning, I guess, about us in this dynamic? Can we maybe stand side by side and look at it over here just for a second? Would that be okay?

**Jessica:**

Sure. Okay.

**Jayson:**

So, I'm reminded of when I was listening to you earlier, I'm reminded of how difficult it is for you to communicate and where you come from and why that is the case. That helps me soften more. So as I look at us, I'm like, "Okay, when you do that, when you retreat, I get anxious." It's like, we had the original conflict and now we have this other thing that now I'm dealing with. Then you get annoyed if I come after you, which is another layer. I'm just learning that we could potentially avoid that second layer of conflict if we handle this first layer a little better, if I'm able to work with my anxiety more and if you're able to be just slightly more relational. I'm just curious how you see it. That's how I see it.

**Jessica:**

Yeah. I mean, I don't think I actually thought of it that way, but now that you point it out, it seems fair. If we can deal with this lower level before things escalate, if we can just check in, you work with your anxiety and I check in with you when I'm withdrawing, I could see how that would keep it from escalating to a higher level. So I think that that's something that could work and I'd be willing to do it.

**Jayson:**

Cool. Yeah. I think you're right there. It escalates—that's a good way of saying it—when either one of us or both of us aren't really applying ourselves, maybe in a, I don't know, the best way possible. Yeah. Okay. Well, I'm wondering if you'd be willing to make an agreement with me here that...just make an agreement. I guess I can say, I can make an agreement with you that the part I have control over, which is myself, I can agree that I'm going to set a timer or not approach you from a place of anxiety and fear, and I'm going to work with that myself first. Then I'm going to come to you, having to hold myself in that terrible place, that it feels bad to me. I think that would help a lot. So that's what I can agree to.

**Jessica:**

Okay. I would appreciate that. That feels good to me. I think—not I think, I can—I can agree when I'm distancing and withdrawing within myself to reach out to you and let you know that I still care and where I am at the moment.

**Jayson:**

Yeah. I want to just tweak that a little bit, and it's your call, because it's your agreement. But given our track record, I don't know if it's going to be possible that you do it as you're

withdrawing—maybe it is, but maybe it's more realistic to do it after you've withdrawn and it's, as soon as you're aware that there's an impact and that there's two people...which, again, could be an hour, it could be 10 minutes. It could be two days, I don't know, but...

**Jessica:**

Yeah. Well, I think, when I'm aware would work, and then hopefully as I practice this, I'll become more aware sooner.

**Jayson:**

Okay. Yeah. That's fair. Okay. Yeah, that feels good. I feel we have a plan basically moving forward. How are you feeling?

**Jessica:**

I mean, I'm feeling good. I was like, I don't want a conflict, but I want to practice.

**Jayson:**

Right. Yeah. I hear you. Me too. Okay, cool. Thanks.

