

Candice Schutter: Welcome back to The Deeper Pulse and a surprise Patreon preview. The bonus episode I'm about to share with you is part of the ongoing Deconstructing Dogma series that Tracy Stamper has agreed to join me for.

This particular episode feels incredibly pertinent right on the heels of our conversation with Yamuna Benedict, and so I wanted to share it here on the main feed, just to give you a taste of this series and also because this conversation is timely.

So give it a listen and if you wanna go deeper into topics such as this, consider joining the growing community over on Patreon.

If you're not familiar with Patreon, it's a place where I can offer bonus content, provide space for regular listeners to interact with one another, and gather donations that support podcast production. Patreon donations help me to cover overhead costs and keep the podcast ad free.

And over on the Deeper Pulse Patreon page, there are no culty hierarchies. So you essentially have the option of paying what you can safely and honorably afford, and regardless of your level of donation, you have immediate access to all of the bonus content.

So if it's something you wanna check, head over to patreon.com/thedeeperpulse. And either way, I really hope you enjoy today's bonus episode.

All right. Hello everyone. We're back to deconstruct some more dogma here on Patreon. Just wanna first say thank you to all of you patrons for being a part of this community first and foremost and for helping to support the podcast and our ability to do this work. So thank you for showing up here.

And today we want to talk about the very common, definitely at the Org and in many, many, many circles. I can speak specifically to new age wellness circles. This is one of the, I think, rules that didn't go unspoken. There's a lot of unspoken rules around how to conduct oneself in this kind of culty environments. And, this one was spoken to quite explicitly. I actually remember having a bracelet. Did anyone else join the movement that was called a complaint-free world? Do you remember this, Tracy?

Tracy Stamper: I do.

Candice Schutter: It was like these rubber bracelets.

Tracy Stamper: Oh, my g.

Candice Schutter: I remember I got them and I gave them out to all my clients. Um, and again, not to say there wasn't anything good there. So the message basically is against the idea of gossiping or complaining. That's what we wanna talk about today. And how this feeds into two other really clear messages, how they're all sort of connected. So no gossiping. No complaining. And how obviously it feeds a culture of silence in many ways we're gonna talk about. But also how this also sort of was presented in other ways.

At the Org it was like, you don't create drama. We, we've spoken to this in previous episodes; creating drama is like one of the worst things that you can do.

Like don't create drama. Which sort of falls into this camp of no gossiping and complaining. If you do those two things, then you're creating drama. And then also this other, again, explicit teaching. And many of these circles, not just at the Org around there are no victims.

I actually had a colleague say to me, I don't believe that there are victims and perpetrators. I don't believe in that.

Which is a whole other conversation, whether you believe in something or not, that doesn't make it true or not, like, those are two different things, right? So there's that. And I have compassion for her saying that because I was under that influence as well.

So no gossiping, no complaining. We're gonna start coming in at from that angle and we'll see kind of where it takes us.

To speak about my own personal experience at the Org, I very much internalized this message. I think the 4 Allies in some ways, as we spoke about in the last series of deconstructing dogma videos, really the way that they were appropriated and used at the Org sort of contributed to this framework of no gossiping and complaining cuz you can't make up any stories and you're not supposed to be reactive and blah, blah, blah.

And one of the most clear messages to me was that it was not okay to speak about somebody if they weren't present. It was not okay to share about an experience I had during the day that left a yucky feeling inside of me. To be negative in that way, that was complaining. Like to express about a negative experience was to complain. And to not take responsibility. To express an observation around, let's say that I was in a training and I witnessed Raul speaking really cruelly to someone. If I went to Tracy and I said, does that feel weird to you? Like, that didn't feel good to me. That was gossiping. Like that's how I internalized the message.

I wouldn't have done that because it was gossipy to just ask for that clarity. And that, was that how you experienced the idea of gossip?

Cuz like ultimately we all know what gossip is. We know when we're in it, it's sort of this toxic, slimy thing where everyone's just, conversation just goes into this place where well, there's really no point to it, first of all. Like that's the biggest thing that I feel. I'm just kinda like, this is the most pointless thing in the whole world, that we're doing. And there's no real sense of personal accountability. It's talking about people without self-reflecting. It's talking about people rather than speaking to them, which is another way this got twisted and weaponized.

Like we even have heard recently from more than one person, well how could you make this podcast and talk about all of these things publicly? You should just go to the source. Like, how often did I hear that? Go to the source.

That was what you were told, right, when you got fired? Which is interesting. It's interesting advice if you really zoom out and look at it, like, this person does something really harmful to you and the advice you're given is, I don't wanna hear it, la la la, la, la. You can't talk to me about it. Go talk to the person who hurt you. Which can be useful in a marriage.

Tracy Stamper: Absolutely.

Candice Schutter: Right. But when the person that hurt you has a certain amount of power of you and they did it in a way that's abusive, is it good advice to continually tell someone to go talk to the source? That in of itself is problematic.

And then there's also a purpose to our sharing with one another that when we think of everything as gossip, we stop sharing with one another. And I guess that's my point that I wanna start with, cuz I feel like I'm being pulled in like six different directions with this, cuz there's so much here.

Tracy Stamper: So much.

Candice Schutter: But that's the point I wanna start with is just how this message that I internalized around don't gossip, don't complain. I think about episode 42 with Trina Studebaker, who was in the Christian fundamentalist cult and I, I'll never forget her words, saying the 14 years I was in that church were the loneliest years of my life.

This isn't unique to the Org or New Age Wellness, when we're taught that we can't speak to one another openly about our experiences, and they put words like gossip and complaining around just what is just normal human relating, it becomes really problematic, toxic, and in some ways life-threatening.

You know, isolation is, is really a big part of what leads people to hopelessness, depression, suicidal ideation. It's a really life-threatening thing that we're talking about here. This isn't just about, it's not nice or it doesn't feel good. This is a big, big topic. So Tracy, I'm gonna let you speak now and, yeah, take it where you will.

Tracy Stamper: Yeah, the, when you asked if that resonated with me. If, if your experience was how I had experienced it, that it would have not been well received for you to have come to me and said, "wow, Raul, just, that didn't feel good. What were your, what was your response to that? That kind of messed with my head a little bit."

I chuckled when you said that because the first thing that came to me was that would never have happened. Like that just didn't happen. We just did not do that because we all chose a path of self-development, and I wholeheartedly believed that everything that fell under that umbrella of gossip was bad, was negative, was my lower self, was drama.

So I, to use a word that I had heard you use before, which just immediately resonated, I bridled myself.

Candice Schutter: Mm.

Tracy Stamper: I stopped sharing.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Tracy Stamper: When there's a dangerous situation, potential for harm, why would I not let my loved ones? No. Why? Why would I not? Why would I not let strangers know? If I'm traveling across the country in a tornado, I know it's coming three miles up the road. Why would I not stop my fellow travelers and say, you know what, there's a problem up there. Just hang, hang out with me here.

What happens when the potential for harm is interpersonal? But I've zipped my lips?

I am not getting the reality checks. I'm not getting information. I'm not getting cues that will help me take care of myself.

We've all heard the term. See something, say something.

Candice Schutter: Yep.

Tracy Stamper: It's been a very conscious attempt, endeavor, push to encourage folks out in everyday world to speak up if you see harmful behavior.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: If you're worried about a home, a child getting abused, speak up. Find a way. That's what we have, we have our voices to advocate for ourselves and others, and if that is stifled, I'm just gonna be thrown into the lions den again and again and again.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: Is this making any sense?

Candice Schutter: It makes perfect sense. And I think part of the, the bridling, that's why we have to be so careful with dogma and why, just this week, in fact, I was invited to go to a full moon ceremony or something. And I was like, I, I just can't. And like I love the person who's leading it and right now, I have to not be influenced by anything that speaks and paints and broad strokes, any dogma, any rituals, any ceremony. It's just not what serves me.

And I say that not because that should be true for everyone. Not at all. Just to say that I think that bridling, when we're unbridling, it's really important to be conscious around those choices. And I share that because, it's so intoxicating and it's like actually like nervous system arousing to, to paint in broad strokes, to find simple truths, thought terminating cliches that we can lean into. Like we need them from time to time. They keep us afloat in a world that is uncertain. And I think about like the circling back to the four agreements and don't make assumptions. And this, I think sometimes we're like, oh, we're not supposed to make

assumptions. So I look over and I see something that I feel an alarm in my body go off that's like say something! See something, say something.

And then I'm like, well, I don't really know what's going on. It's none of my business. I shouldn't interfere, right? So this is why I say the problem with dogma is that it often does become like a blanket that we just throw over fires that doesn't really put them out. Or a blinder that we put on. And it was useful over here, but when we start to apply it over here where it's not appropriate or we misunderstand it. Cuz like I said, Don Miguel Ruiz is like, well actually it's not about don't make assumptions turn away. It's about lean in closer and ask more questions.

What's really going on here? Right? So if we get super simplistic in our thinking and ritualistic, this is why I'm not into ceremony. When we become ritualistic in the way that we think and the way that we behave, it shuts down critical thinking. And then we start to not say something when we see something, because we thought terminating cliché, which by the way is from the work of Robert Jay Lifton, who's one of the early experts on cult dynamics. It's a term he came up with. Thought terminating clichés are things that we say to each other and ourselves that, that shut down critical thinking. And they actually reinforce cultic dynamics.

So all of that to say, I think sometimes I didn't say something because one, I wasn't brave enough. Two, I was in denial. I wanted to believe something else so strongly that I just refused to see what was right in front of my face. And three, I would numb out using something that I had been taught to justify my silence. Cuz it's actually kind of more comfortable at first, not long term, but at first it's more comfortable to not deal with shit.

Tracy Stamper: Yes. Very freeing, it felt.

Candice Schutter: Like the first time somebody gets fired at the Org and it seems really weird. Like they just disappeared and nobody's talking about them and it doesn't seem okay to even mention it. It actually feels kind of relieving. Well, whew. I don't have to think about that tension. I don't have to feel that tension. I don't have to have that conversation. I don't want the information. Like you said in one of the early episodes, like I don't wanna know why Candice left. Ah, I don't wanna hear.

Long-term though. It wreaks havoc. I mean, you were in physical pain because of all the communication that you couldn't have. So I, yeah, I just feel like this is just such a huge topic, but that this, I'm really glad you brought in this piece around see something, say something. And you mentioned when we were talking about this, the Me Too movement and now the I got out movement that's, that's happening. And the critical nature, like how important it is that we speak up and share our experiences and what we're witnessing and what we're feeling in order to create accountability. And that these mechanisms of silencing us.

Just, that's, I think what gets me the most is like this I don't wanna be negative argument, is actually what brings more negativity in the world. Our refusal to turn toward what's negative and address it is what actually fuels it. It's like fuel on the fire. And people who abuse power know that. So they shut us up or they distract us by making us enemies of one another. They know it. They know it.

Tracy Stamper: Yep.

Candice Schutter: Rant over for now. You have the floor again.

Tracy Stamper: I, so I shared before we started recording something about having recently been in a completely different environment, not Org related, not Org adjacent, not Org-y in any way shape or form.

Candice Schutter: Orgy. Not an orgy. Orgy. Orgy. That's another, that's a whole other series.

Tracy Stamper: Oh, I need to be, uh, yeah, maybe I should think about. It, you know what, it was not Org-y and it was not an orgy just

Candice Schutter: Okay. Good.

Tracy Stamper: to be impeccable with my word. So there were similarities in terms of, I was in an environment that could go sideways and toxic at the drop of a hat, and it happened again and again and again.

And there were no rules about how to interact. Well, there were no written or spoken rules about how to act with one another. There were, there are plenty of rules that are just understood through repetition. Not a safe environment emotionally, since within this group, there is an individual who lashes out and gets angry and just doesn't seem to have any filters or barriers or boundaries or anything.

Candice Schutter: empathy,

Tracy Stamper: Yeah, no empathy, just not the ability to even go there.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: And what I observed happen within this group was that there was the center of activity at all times, like the couches where people were sitting and chatting and having interactions. But then I would notice something interesting where it was usually two or three folks, sometimes four would remove themselves from the central circle and they'd step out here and there would be a lot of this and then a lot of this.

And I observed that a few times. And then next thing I knew, I was kind of surprised to notice that all of a sudden I was in one of those little twosomes or threesomes that would separate and psst psst psst psst and then come back.

Candice Schutter: If you, yeah. If you can't see Tracy, she's sort of whispering. Like the, the folks speaking in low tones to one another out of ear shot.

Tracy Stamper: Thank you. I forget that. Yeah. So it was interesting to notice the difference between how I perceived it when it was someone else on the sidelines.

Candice Schutter: Mm.

Tracy Stamper: And then how I perceived it when I was one of the ones on the sidelines. And what I can tell you is that, and it happened more than once, that I stepped out to the side with one or two trusted confidants. What was happening in those moments where I stepped outside was that my nervous system was going haywire because there were interactions and just weird interpersonal dynamics that can be summed up as emotionally abusive. When the individual would get angry, it would result in behaviors that feel emotionally abusive.

Well feel, because they are, let's just, uh, clarify that.

So every single time that I stepped outside of the funk in the nucleus, what I was doing was trying to get my bearings. I was asking others who I knew I could trust, who I knew, trusted me. Holy shit, I, I just saw what went down, and I feel really depressed. I am heartbroken right now by what I just saw transpire.

How are you? Are you okay? Like, can you tell me, is this just? Am I the only one spinning out here? Did you even fucking see what just happened?

Because in the center, things just kept moving along as if it hadn't happened because we've all been trained to not talk about it because nothing good happens when we talk about it.

Candice Schutter: Right, right.

Tracy Stamper: I should say nothing good happens in the moment because if this individual is pressed, they'd blow up. And it gets ugly. It's happened many times before.

So for the first time, I was really able to see clearly that had I, had that same scenario happened in the Org, the people on the outside would've absolutely been accused of gossip.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Tracy Stamper: Of creating drama. Absolutely.

Candice Schutter: Well, it just would've created even more anxiety.

Tracy Stamper: Yes.

Candice Schutter: Right. Because really what I hear you saying is we come together to regulate our nervous systems. I mean, we know that from birth, like that's what connection is about, is regulating our nervous systems.

And sometimes we need reality checks in order to do that. Sometimes we need closeness. Sometimes we need validation. Sometimes we need to listen. There's so many ways that we do that and we do it in connection, authentic connection, present connection.

But when you pull away, like I think about if you had pulled me aside. We were in the brown belt together. If you had pulled me aside and been like, "Hey, I wanna like process this thing with you." And I could feel that people could see that that's what we were doing. Like I might have had a different experience if we were just doing it privately.

Cuz that did happen on occasion with folks, right? And I think I had the benefit of being, it's like blessing and a curse being so close to the center, I felt a little braver in a way to have conversations with my colleagues. Like sometimes we would, my closest, closest colleagues, we would talk about the dysfunction a little bit, although always in like a high-minded manner that was annoyingly filtered, um.

But that if you had done that, and I knew that the group, or particularly Raul, and I say Raul rather than Marissa, cuz Marissa wasn't at this particular training, was witnessing that we were doing that. And I felt his face do that thing that his face would do.

Tracy Stamper: Yes.

Candice Schutter: where it'd sort of like purse his lips and give a sideways look. That's all it took. If I felt that energy, I would've felt so anxious I wouldn't have even been helpful to you. Even if I had the capacity to be present to what you were saying, I would've been like, oh my God.

Oh my God. Oh my God, my God. Oh my God, I'm totally gossiping. Am I gossiping? Is this what gossiping is? I shouldn't be. Oh my, she's totally taking things personally. A little like that. That noise, noise, noise, noise, noise.

It's sort of this thing where the alarm that's saying this doesn't feel right is going off, but the alarm that's saying you're not doing it right is louder.

Tracy Stamper: Yes.

Candice Schutter: And it's like, ah. You're breaking the rules. You're gossiping. You're complaining. You're, you know, she's being a victim, like all the things. Even if I don't believe all the things that are running through my head, it's so noisy

Tracy Stamper: mm-hmm.

Candice Schutter: that I can't even be present with you. And this scenario never happened. And I can imagine it clear as day and feel it in my body.

Tracy Stamper: Absolutely. And the judgment that follows, and the internalized shame then that results from doing something wrong visibly. Um, it was just so fascinating to be in this

completely different environment and to all of a sudden realize, wow, I'm one of the ones who stepped out of the circle here.

I didn't used to do that back at the Org. I would have judged this as X, Y, and Z. And in that moment I remember thinking, okay, what is actually happening here?

Candice Schutter: There you go.

Tracy Stamper: Is x, y, or Z happening? Am I being gossipy? Nope. Am I talking about an individual? Yes, I am. Because I feel threatened.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: I feel unsafe.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: I feel like I'm walking on eggshells, and I am trying to get my bearings.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: Even just knowing that someone else is struggling to find their bearings is hugely helpful information to me that I was cut off from when I am not supposed to talk negative. It is a masterful tool for someone who wants to control an environment, and I am not. I have no idea. I have no idea why those were introduced.

I, I'm not gonna pretend to know the intentions on the part of leadership originally. I saw how it played out. , I saw how it bridled and stifled me. And then I also saw in my last few years there when there were really troubling things happening that I saw and that I didn't understand without being able to have an honest to goodness, no holds barred chat with someone. I just kept spinning. There was nowhere for it to land and it was very, very disorienting. And I feel like that who that really internally conditioned me to close myself in.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Yeah. I think the thing that gets overlooked in all this and why defying orders and critically thinking about so many of these things is that so much of this, it's like you can find the good and the usefulness in something and, it's sort of painful to realize that so much is about, and this is where it goes all the way back to capital C, cult patriarchy, white supremacy, you know, capitalism. And I feel like, you know, I keep saying that over and over again cause I just can't stop reiterating how it's not about like these specific leaders and their agendas. It's like the water we're swimming in is so many interpersonal rules that we set are ultimately about obedience and compliance.

Tracy Stamper: Mm-hmm.

Candice Schutter: Whether we have that intention when we teach them, when we guide one another, when we provide accountability. It feels like, sort of, the acid test now.

Like, what is this in service to really? And is this contributing to an atmosphere of obedience and compliance? And the truth is that obedience and compliance is much more convenient. It's much smoother sailing. When you're leading, it's just a much easier ship to steer when everybody's like leaning to the right when you turn right and everybody's leaning to the left when you turn left. It's like there's a reason why it exists. And it's also really the cost to the culture and to the individual is too high. And when we're taught that we can't complain.

And again, we know just like we know what toxic gossiping looks like, we know what toxic complaining looks like too, right? We know what that feels like, but when we can't complain at all? Like mm-hmm.

I can't say this, this sucks. I mean, 10 years ago I would've never said, this sucks. I would've never even said those words.

Tracy Stamper: God no.

Candice Schutter: It's so low vibe and like, you know, like.

Tracy Stamper: It's not your self coming to the table.

Candice Schutter: But it's not my higher self. Right?

So all of that to say like, so much of this, whether we wanna admit it or not, is about upholding power structures and about sustaining supremacy.

And I recently heard, this totally random thought just slid in, so I'm gonna say it. I was actually on We Can Do Hard Things where Glennon, she says, being thin is not about portraying the perfect look. It is about being an example of obedience.

Tracy Stamper: uh.

Candice Schutter: What we're actually saying is, I know how to follow the rules. I know how to look the way that you're meant to look, and I will do what I need to do to fit that standard.

And I feel like this example applies here. Like I will become model rail thin in the way that I communicate, and the way that I hold myself, and the way that I express my emotions. And that it's about obedience. It's not about freedom. And there's selling of this lie that it's about freedom.

Free yourself and become this perfect superhuman persona, and we'll tell you how to do it. Don't do this, don't do that. Don't do this, don't do that. I mean, think about how many things we're not supposed to do. Like if that isn't about obedience. I don't know what is.

Tracy Stamper: Absolutely. And when it becomes obedient to not discuss anything troubling that happened.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: We are stripped of our permission and our natural desire to get our bearing.

Candice Schutter: Yep.

And then we're to, we're actually taught to say that that's a good thing. Right? We're like, look how strong I am that I don't ever need to regulate myself in connection with someone else, with the honest to God truth. Look how strong I am that I don't ever need to express anger, outrage, disgust, contempt.

That's why it's indoctrinating. It's like some people are probably like, why are you using our own indoctrinating such a strong word, like brainwashing. It's like, it is. Cuz we're actually taught to think it's something different than it is.

Tracy Stamper: And that stay, that conditioning stays with us. I am constantly, if I want to verbally process something, which is how my brain works by the way. It's, I've always known that is, that is how I move through things. That's how I navigate things. And there are some of us, like that's gonna be our, our MO. Those are the waters that you and I both swim in. We happen to be similar in that way, and maybe the people who impose those rules on us weren't like that. I can't fit into that box when I am. I'm not, I'm just going on a weird ass tangent here.

Candice Schutter: No, I think it's interesting actually. I think it's interesting because I don't know the answer. I think it poses a question.

Like I was just having a conversation with somebody the other day about neurotypical and not to like open that whole can of worms. There's so much there that's really important that needs to be discussed. And I, I'm not gonna take us still on that path. And one of the things as we were talking back and forth and this person was having insights around, like how they sort of fell into certain categories in terms of being non neurotypical.

It, it was really helping them to understand and have that language like it is for so many people and it's phenomenal and amazing. And I just couldn't help but toward the end of the conversation to just feel like, is it typical? It's neurotypical in the sense that it's the norm, but does that mean that the people who are divergent, like, oh, there's this minority of people that are neuro divergent and it's like, maybe not. And is it, is it that we verbally process out loud and other people don't and they shouldn't? I think there's some truth to that, but it's like, again, these broad strokes around I'm gonna put myself in this category and give myself this kind of permission.

It's like, well what if there isn't a typical way of being and expressing and we just get to express ourselves the way we are. Very much like gender. It's like, instead of having these categories, okay, no, or we just came up with another gender category or we just came up

with another category in terms of sexual orientation. Like what if it's not about categories? Like that to me is evidence of culty culture. That we need categories to put people in.

Tracy Stamper: And labels.

Candice Schutter: And labels. And this is right and this is wrong, right? and we need the labels because we need to know how they need to conform. I need to know, and I'm saying this in terms of how the culture orients itself and myself in the past, I need to know your gender so I know how to expect you to be.

And I'm really anxious. I need to know. Like let me know which is it? Like what I need to know cuz I can't conceive of the fact that you're just a human being who you are apart from all of those boxes that I wanna put you in. And it's natural for the human mind to categorize. I'm not like demonizing that. I just wanna say, I feel like we did go off on a big tangent here, and that it connects though in terms of is it okay for me to speak about this this way with this vibe about this topic around this person? Like all the rules, they're meant to keep us in compliance with the culture that we're in.

Tracy Stamper: And an interesting thing is that because it is a human need and desire to read other people and to get our bearings and to have a sense of what environment we're in, because that is such a natural thing.

So earlier I heard you in this conversation, I heard you reference something that we had talked about in a previous episode about workarounds. Right? So, we know what is permitted, we know what is not permitted, and we also know that sometimes we just need to blow off steam and be fucking real with people.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: And there were workarounds that we had for those. I'm gonna guess that most everybody, if not everybody who fed into the this is how I'm supposed to act, probably explored workarounds because sometimes it is essential to share the information. So what that would look like in Org conversations or circles would be, you know, those two people or three people or four people stepping out.

Now it, Candice, as you were saying, we wouldn't have done that in the line of vision.

Candice Schutter: No. It's like when nobody's looking.

Tracy Stamper: Exactly.

It would look like something. Um,

Okay, Candice, I'm really struggling right now. Will you please pardon me? I've gotta bring my lower self to the conversation. Just for five minutes. In five minutes I will go back.

Candice Schutter: Uhhuh, right? Yeah. I'm gonna step outta bounds. I know that I'm stepping outta bounds. Just so you, so I'm conscious of the fact that I'm doing this. Will you just let me do this and I'll puke in the bucket and then you can throw it away and we'll pretend it never happened.

Tracy Stamper: Yes, exactly. And I have had those conversations with the best little soldiers out there. And, and what I mean by that, I've been,

Candice Schutter: I was a good soldier.

Tracy Stamper: good soldier,

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Tracy Stamper: The reason I share that is to remove the stigma from it. It's natural. It's human. It's important. It's adaptive. It's information seeking.

And I can't say for sure that we are all doing it, but if I had to guess, probably we're all doing it or almost all of us are doing it. I've seen it happen. That's an indication that we need to process.

Candice Schutter: Exactly.

Tracy Stamper: toxic information and environments.

Candice Schutter: Yes. Thank you for speaking to that. And, and I love what you said about removing the stigma around it. Just normalizing it, you know, just normalizing that this is what we're doing. It's an adaptation to the environment. It's a healthy, in fact, adaptation. Are there healthier ones? Sure. It's the healthiest one we have access to in the moment. So that's what we do.

You know, we're doing what we need to do. And I wanna actually, the segues perfectly into the final piece I want us to explore around this. And there's so much more to this. If you guys have other ideas about where you want us to take it, let us know. We just have only so much time in the day. I'm trying to keep these under an hour or right at.

So I wish that I had, if there was a way that I could take the hundreds, the many hundreds of folks who have been listening to our conversations Tracy, on the podcast.

I wish that I could somehow have them all in a room, and I could ask this question and see how many hands go up. And you can raise your hand if you're listening and your patron, whether you were in the Org or not. And particularly if you were in the Org when I ask this question.

How many of you at some point in time had a feeling of guilt or shame around listening to Tracy and I talk about our experiences?

I'm betting that a lot of hands are gonna go up and that a lot of listeners are still reckoning with that. I still all these many years later feel that from time to time. Like, oh, like, oh, what are we doing? Like, oh, maybe they're right, like maybe we're just making drama. You know, like it's pretty subtle for me now and it's a flitting thing that comes and goes really quickly, thankfully.

Tracy Stamper: But it's there.

Candice Schutter: It's there.

So first of all, I wanna say to those of you who raised your hand, that I know for sure that a lot of hands went up.

Tracy Stamper: Yeah.

Candice Schutter: I can't prove it, but I have a sense that a lot of hands went up.

And I wanna take the stigma away from that too. I wanna normalize that and say that's a normal response given the indoctrination to have. Perhaps you've even felt it engaging in the After The Org group, posting a comment on a Patreon episode. That's cognitive dissonance. Like I've been taught to believe a certain thing and I'm acting in discord with it, and I either have to believe something different or I have to resort back to the way that I was behaving before, which was compliant. I'm not gonna pay any attention, la la, la, la, la, la.

So first I wanna normalize that, and I also wanna congratulate those of you who are showing up anyway. And say, fuck ya. Because see something, say something. Not, cuz I'm on some sort of high horse and I think we're doing some high and mighty thing. That's not why. We're just see something, say something-ing. That's what we're doing. We saw something. We felt something. We're finally saying something.

And when you pay attention to people who are saying something, whether it's us, you can turn this off and never listen to us again. But if you listen to a Me Too survivor or whoever, like that is something to celebrate. So fuck yeah. Yay.

There's also, and this breaks my heart, not cuz I need more listeners on the podcast, but because I know how many people within the Org will refuse to listen to any of this because of this indoctrination.

And if there is any illustration of this indoctrination that I can offer that is compelling, it is this, it fucking works. It keeps people from tuning in to conversations about what happened. It keeps them from leaning in and hearing like, maybe they might validate something I say. It's not just the cognitive dissonance that keeps them away saying like, ah, I don't wanna know. I don't wanna know. It's the fact that they have been trained in willful ignorance, which is the language that Nippy used on a recent podcast. And I was just like, what a perfect phrase to describe it.

Tracy Stamper: Perfect.

Candice Schutter: That is something we're conditioned into, and we're conforming when we refuse to pay attention and listen to the voices of survivors or people who are just simply naming their experience.

And it breaks my heart. And I can only imagine, and I want you to speak to this Tracy. I left so long ago. Most of the people I had intimate connection to are also long gone.

Tracy Stamper: Oh wow.

Candice Schutter: I was in, cuz I was in the work inner circle and people turned over a lot there. So I've gotten to have conversations with people like that and I know some of those people who are even patrons who I love and adore, who had been close friends with for two decades who are listening.

You got out so recently and there are people in who are not only refusing to listen to your story and hear your story, but are probably thinking that you're just stirring up trouble. You're just creating drama.

Like what is that like? Is that true, first of all? And then what is that like?

Tracy Stamper: It is true.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: It is absolutely true. It is scary as hell.

It is frustrating. It is worrisome because there are folks who are still in who I love deeply. And so we, we do know that there are some folks who have specifically said that they refuse to listen.

Candice Schutter: Yep.

Tracy Stamper: We do know this. Um, why is there not room for me? Why is there not room for my story? If you knew me in the Org and you trusted that I was coming from a place of love, and although I don't like this language, doing my best.

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: If you can see me and you can know me, and you cannot listen to me now, that's problematic. That is hugely problematic. If there are assumptions, stories that we and I are doing this because we wanna blah, or, um.

Candice Schutter: Which is so us, you know, that's just so us.

Tracy Stamper: I mean, I do hope that you've got the three hours on your calendar where we're just gonna go down the list and just rip everyone a new one because,

Candice Schutter: Oh, I love taking people down. It just.

Tracy Stamper: Oh God, it feels so good. Not me, not Candice.

Candice Schutter: right.

Tracy Stamper: Why are we not getting the benefit of the doubt right now?

Why?

Candice Schutter: Mm-hmm.

Tracy Stamper: It feels really sad. It feels

Candice Schutter: Mm.

Tracy Stamper: kind of lonely, but at the same time, at the same time that that feels lonely, I'm also very grateful to be in this circle and this community of people who are willing to say what they saw and share what they felt and validate and just be by one another's sides without telling stories about one another.

When I'm not willing to hear what's really happening, the possibility for me to continue doing harm is exponential. If I'm not willing to look at and to see and to be truthful. Or even just to shut a fuck up and listen to someone else, I am missing out on information that would steer me differently.

Candice Schutter: Yeah.

Tracy Stamper: It's, It's really, it sucks.

Candice Schutter: There I said it.

Tracy Stamper: It fucking sucks that there are people out there that I love who I know are telling themselves stories and assuming a lot of things about my intent, about your intent. It's, it's a very weird place to be and very freeing.

Candice Schutter: And it's the price we pay for authenticity. That's the thing, you know, to really kind of land in a place that's constructive around all this is that when we defy the rules and we're willing to. And, and just to be clear, like rebellion and obedience are on the same continuum. I mean, they, they serve different purposes in terms of the outcome, but like you're enslaved by a structure, whether you're compliant or rebelling against it.

Right? If your whole identity is about rebelling against something, taking it down, like it still has control over you. So I'm not saying the opposite of obedience is rebellion. That's not what we're doing here. We've made it clear from the beginning, this is not a rebellion. This is about stepping into authenticity and reclaiming a sense of, of inner authority and our right to share

our stories. And to invite other folks onto the podcast and into our group chats, even if somebody doesn't wanna be on a podcast and everybody wants to be on a podcast, I get it. Like, who want that too? And to show up with authenticity. The antidote to obedience is authenticity. And sometimes that means going against the norm, and often it means subjecting oneself to judgment and stories.

And, um, there's ba there's always gonna be backlash when you're not complying. You know, there's always, and I'm saying we're actually really fortunate. Just to be clear, as of now, we haven't had any crazy negative backlash. What Tracy was just describing isn't really backlash. It's just an unfortunate blinders that people put up.

But it feels personal or, I don't wanna speak for you, Tracy, and if I was in your position, it would feel kind of personal if somebody that I loved and was close to, or a number of people for that matter, who I loved and was close to, were unwilling to witness the truth of me. That's, that's a painful thing. And it's the price of authenticity though.

Like the, the alternative is just to comply and fall in line and be a good soldier again. And that's the you c, There's no going back now. Right, sis? Like that's not gonna happen.

I think

Tracy Stamper: we're beyond that point.

Candice Schutter: Exactly. So, so then that's the, that's the personal reckoning. And I will say though I agree with you, like it feels so much better being here.

And it's sort of the opposite of what I thought. I thought if I just pleased everyone, that I would finally feel settled, and now that I'm not trying to please anyone, I feel more settled than ever.

Tracy Stamper: Right.

Candice Schutter: Right. Isn't that fascinating?

Tracy Stamper: Yeah.

Candice Schutter: Ah, the wisdom of the middle age.

Tracy Stamper: It's phenomenal to be here. It is phenomenal.

Candice Schutter: And we get to say what's real and what's true.

Tracy Stamper: yeah.

Candice Schutter: And people can call it gossiping or complaining, or they can say we're playing the victim card or whatever they want. As long as we know what our motivations are,

Tracy Stamper: And they will. And the reason I know they will is because they are.

And I remember so clearly being in that exact same spot, and I know I shared this with you earlier when as a trainer, I was asked, all of the trainers were asked to, during our free time for no pay, important information, to go through a list of all of the folks who had left the Org for I don't know how many years.

And the ask was that we would call individuals and do our best to schmooze them and bring them back into the Org. And despite being a good little soldier that I, that I was in very many ways, the moment that that ask was put on the table, I remember, oh, no, I am. I didn't say this, but I knew I was not doing that.

The reason, and I could articulate this at the time, I did not wanna hear what they had to say. I did not want to know why Harriet was so pissed off at X, Y, and Z and had been blowing off steam and just irate. I don't wanna make that call. Then I'm not only processing all the shit that is internal to me, but I'm also carrying Harriet's story. I do not know a Harriet, by the way. I'm carrying Harriet's story on my shoulders.

And there's so much hypervigilance as we've both talked about. There's so much hypervigilance required to track all the things and appear in the right way, and to remember what we're not supposed to do and what we are supposed to do and not be reactive and, and, and, and, and that was enough. I didn't wanna take on Harriet's drama, which I probably would've called it at the time.

Candice Schutter: And it's, it's your reckoning with your own experience. And then there's this added layer of another story that's underscoring certain feelings, or it's creating a sense of cognitive dissonance. Like, I believe this is what we're doing, and she's saying that this is what she's seeing and experiencing. And I think also a lot of it is this obsession with purity culture.

Like, I need to be pure. And so I can't, ooh, like I remember getting to a point where if anybody ever expressed a negative emotion, I was like, oh, I'm just being slimed. Like, I just felt like hyper vigilantly, ah, like I have to stay away like this person. And actually in my,, my relationship with Chris has been really healing in that.

Cause he's very, every emotion he's very open to expressing. And that means every emotion though, right? Like there's a really wonderful, you know, ooey-gooney, warm, light side of that. And then there's like the other side of that. And I just remember early on in our relationship, this was 10 years ago, being like, oh my god, he's so negative.

And I would just enforce and police his emotions cuz I needed to be a pure vessel. And he was like. No, I'm pure. Like I don't, ugh, I don't do that.

Again, I just wanna reiterate, my need to be pure, just like what Glennon was saying about need to be thin, and is really about reinforcing the cult, like the larger cult of perfection, and, and white supremacy. The whole purity obsession comes directly from white supremacy.

That's not a hard line to draw. Like it's a pretty firm line. And it shows up in these circles in this way. And we think it's not that because we're not talking about race, but it's so that.

Tracy Stamper: It's so that. It's. Yeah.

By the way, when I think about drama, I do remember when I was really sad when Yamuna was suddenly gone from the Org. I love Yamuna. I love her, and all of a sudden there was just a Yamuna-less world is just not as much fun.

And I did what we're not supposed to do, I asked what had happened to Yamuna, and I was told that Yamuna was causing drama.

Candice Schutter: Right? Of course. It's the go-to explanation.

Tracy Stamper: So she had to go. And what, what happened in the moment? I shut down. I, oh, if that's happening there I don't wanna go there. So I didn't, I did not reach out to my friend Yamuna, who was suddenly gone.

Candice Schutter: Right, right.

Tracy Stamper: Because the weight of that word. Drama is judgmental. It is condescending. It is patronizing. It is meant to shut us down. And it is fucking rude and mean. And somehow that's become normalized in that circle to just shut down, oh, they're creating drama.

Candice Schutter: And isn't it weird that it's even has all those connotations. Because like the word itself doesn't. So when we're taught to turn away from drama and all the feels, we actually condition our nervous system to not be able to handle it. It impacts our resiliency.

Tracy Stamper: Wow.

Candice Schutter: So it's very much like the white fragility argument in certain ways, right? It's like if you're isolated, insular environment enough, you can't actually handle the tension that is needed to move through real challenge in terms of seeing your blind spots.

But also in terms of just the word drama becomes sort of this flag for like, you're gonna feel things if you hear about this. And it's like, ah. Like no, no. If you're in an environment where you're continually shielded from feeling things, that notion becomes overwhelming.

And also in the larger culture of new age wellness at the same time that I was in the Org, I was totally buying into this idea that, like I remember bragging. Actually, I don't think it was ever true that I didn't own a tv. I wanted to be that person, but I would secretly watch Friends reruns and stuff.

But even then, I wouldn't watch anything dark, negative, emotional. Like I kept myself protected from drama in every way, not just in my interpersonal interactions at the Org.

I paid no attention to the news. I thought I was doing a public service by ignoring everything that was going on cuz it was keeping the vibe higher of the planet.

Tracy Stamper: Been there, done that. Yeah.

Candice Schutter: But I wouldn't even watch like a movie with tension, a thriller, a sad movie, a tragic movie, nothing.

And I think like what you're speaking to when you ask where's Yamuna? And you get, she created drama and you're in this environment where you're used to like drama bad. Drama bad drama. Feelings, bad, bad. It's not just a matter of like Tracy, the individual making a choice to turn a blind eye. It's like your nervous system is such that, that seems absurd. Like I don't turn towards tension. It's like it becomes an adaptation and a way of responding to life that this is the healthy thing to do. We teach ourselves it's healthy to turn away from drama of all kinds.

And the word drama becomes a bad word. And now, like, I watch Game of Thrones and I'm watching Secrets of Playboy and I'll go to all the places. And I don't have shame around it.

And yeah, there are things I would say that I do believe certain things can be sort of toxifying and not great to watch. I'm not saying that, but to expose ourselves to a full spectrum of emotional experience is a really healthy thing. It entrains our nervous system to respond in a healthy way. So yeah, thanks for leading us there.

Tracy Stamper: I had not thought about the the thermostat. So when I just refused to acknowledge something, I'm turning down the thermostat on my capacity to handle it.

Wow.

Candice Schutter: And over. Especially when you're doing it regularly, right? And like it took me a while to get to the point where I could even stomach watching something uncomfortable. Yeah. So.

I just got the signal from my earbuds that they're dying. So maybe that's our, our cue.

Tracy Stamper: Maybe it's a signal to all of the above.

Candice Schutter: It's a sign from the universe. We're gonna go with that.

Tracy Stamper: That works for me.

Candice Schutter: Thank you for that final thought that led to a really important piece of this I think, so there's so much here. I feel like we could go on for hours and I'm so eager to hear what your experiences out there, patrons, around this content specifically. I know that they'll have lots to say, hopefully that our sharing of our experiences has helped you to think about your experiences in different ways. And hopefully as Tracy said, to destigmatize some of the

really normal experiences that we have coming out of all of this and, and waking up to these dynamics.

Tracy Stamper: And we just keep digging. Keep digging.

Candice Schutter: Just keep digging in everybody. So pop your comments in the feed here, over at ATO, wherever you want private messages, whatever works best for you.

And we'll keep incorporating your ideas. And if you have a story you wanna share, you can also send us something if you want us to read it anonymously, if it's something you wanna share. Um, we we're open to all sorts of ideas in terms of how to bring you all into this conversation.

So, and if you have another idea that we haven't thought of, present it. We're open, so. Thanks Tracy for rallying.

Tracy Stamper: Thank you.

Candice Schutter: Yeah. To all of you out there, we'll see you next time. Bye.

Tracy Stamper: Yes, we will. Bye.

Candice Schutter: That's just a taste of deconstructing dogma with Tracy and I. There are roughly a half a dozen bonus episodes over on Patreon as we speak and more being added by the week, so we'll be there if it speaks to you.

Either way, I hope you'll tune in next week for episode 47.

We'll see you next time.

Caio.