

Episode 364: Interview with the Founder of Aimeesays.com

Heads up, friend: What you're about to read is a raw, unedited transcript straight from the robots. That means you'll find some weird words, funky punctuation, and moments that make you go, "Huh?" If you want the real experience (and to actually know what's going on), I recommend reading the polished article, listening to the full episode, or watching it on 1.5x speed with captions on. Your brain will thank you.

Natalie: Welcome to episode 364 of the Flying Free Podcast. Today we wanna welcome back Ann Wintu mute. I meant to ask you again. It's win to mute, right? Did I say that right?

Anne: Perfectly. Okay.

Natalie: Awesome. Uh, she is a champion for the rights of survivors and children and in her passion and desire to help victims. She co-founded Amy says, which is an incredible AI companion for victims and survivors of domestic violence.

Natalie: So welcome back Anne. Thank you so much for having me, Natalie. I'm so excited to be back. Me too. We were having so much fun just having a conversation even before, and we, I think we ha we spent a half an hour talking before we, we did, we did button. So we're gonna try to remember all the fun things that we said, but we also had a conversation a year ago, which was my first encounter with Amy says, uh, the a, this AI tool.

Natalie: And since that time I've been recommending Amy says. To all of my clients and members of Flying Free, and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. So I just wanna, first of all, thank you and your team for doing this work, and I am looking forward to talking more about what has happened over this past year.

Natalie: 'cause a lot of things have changed and, um, just how, how Amy says has evolved and what new ways that, I don't wanna say she, what new ways she is helping survivors. So. Let's start with telling our listeners what it is exactly, because some of our listeners maybe have never heard of Amy says, and so just in case this is their first encounter with it, why don't you tell us exactly what it is?

Natalie: Absolutely.

Anne: Uh, Amy is a digital health tool, um, for anyone who's been impacted by, um, power and control dynamics in their relationship. Um, domestic violence, narcissistic abuse, other forms of relationship abuse, and she's enabled by AI to fill kinda a rut, a variety of really critical roles for people, um, that might be kind of helping them understand what they're experiencing.

Anne: Um, 'cause AI does this great job of pairing everything that we already know directly to the person who really needs that information. Um, and beyond that, she's a, uh, she's a data tracker. She populates your timeline. She helps you understand patterns, help visualize those patterns, help organize your information.

Anne: She can review documents, uh, you know. I feel like we have a lot of text messages where, you know, I just feel really bad after I get them, and you can comb through and help, you know, help people understand exactly what's happening in there that's making them feel so bad. So it's a, it's a suite of tools from everything from being able to chat to really kind of empowering the, the victim or survivor to see and interact with that information about their own experience so they can do whatever is best for them as their next step.

Natalie: Yeah. Okay. So I know some people will ask this chat GA year ago. I don't know that well, at least in my circles, I don't know that there were very many people using chat GBT quite yet, but I think it's exploded now. And now pretty much everyone I talk to is like, oh, I use chat GBT all the time. People are using chat, GBT to search for things, to ask advice about things.

Natalie: Some of them are using it kind of as therapy. Um, so how would you say Amy says is different? Like, why would someone go to Amy says when they can just go to chat, GBT.

Anne: Well, I love chatt. Um, it's a friend that I keep open on my, my browser, um, and I talk to chatt t about all sorts of things in thought partnership, especially things that I don't need to be concerned about.

Anne: Privacy risks. Um, you know, Chatt t is gonna be using that information in order to train their model. Um, so we have to be really careful about making sure we don't put any personally identifying information into chat, GPT and, and. That frontier model is, it's a generalist. It's great at a really broad spectrum of things.

Anne: It's especially, um, good in really technical work like coding type work. Um, but it's not a, a refined vertical is kinda what we call it, like an AI for very specific use case. We see all sorts of AI verticals built on top of chat GPT models. And what it gives you the opportunity to do is really design for the very specific.

Anne: Person who needs that. Right? So if I go to chat GPT and I'm talking, it's not gonna make a timeline of, of the abuse that I experienced, but Amy, yes. You know, if I go to chat GPT and I say analyze this message, um, it's not built out with a framework of understanding power and control dynamics. But Amy is, um, it's a, it's a one-stop place to store all of that information.

Anne: Um, you know, I like to keep people typically like to keep that kind of triggering or, or potentially re-traumatizing stuff in one space and then use chat GPT to ask, you know, what do I do with the two chicken breasts and the bag of frozen broccoli that I have? Um, you know, I gotta make something for dinner tonight.

Anne: Um, but we really engineered around the safety and privacy concerns around the ownership of the data. Um, and then built all these really awesome tools that make. Amy more and more valuable to the people that rely on her for their own kind of clarity, understanding, safety, being able to protect their kids, you know, family court, et cetera.

Natalie: Yeah. So Amy says is basically educated and trained in, uh, I remember, I think last year you described some of the things that it'd be like, uh. It'd be like talking to a generalist with Chet Bt, or versus talking to someone who's highly expert at understanding different therapy modalities, understanding the court system, understanding, um, now they're not gonna be able to give you le, I don't think Amy is gonna be able to give you legal advice, but she can give you ideas of where to go to get, she can give you high level information and tell you where to go to get that advice.

Natalie: But tell us more about how she's trained. What kinds of things did you input into her to educate her that's going to actually come up and be useful to a, a victim?

Anne: Yeah, absolutely. And this is, it's two parts. So you were asking about the library, but then also like, um, you know, how does Amy um, uh, bring the value between that library and all of that training to people's experiences in these really broad context.

Anne: Like, you're right, she cannot give you legal advice. She cannot make a safety decision for you. But what she can do and what she's trained to do is apply the information about power and control and your experience. To the world around you. Right? So a, a typical family enters into, you know, into family court or into a therapist's office where there isn't a power and control dynamic.

Anne: And that system was designed for them, it was built for them. It works more effectively for them. As soon as we bring in, you know, gender-based violence or, you know, abuse, domestic violence, there is a whole new layer. Yeah. Uh, information that's really can be difficult to access and that very few people truly understand.

Natalie: Yeah. Right.

Anne: And it's the ability to take that understanding, to pair it with that lived experience, and then let you engage with those systems that weren't built for you. Right. Your boss that doesn't understand why you can't get work done or, um, you know, your kids' school who, um, is struggling with the dynamic between the parents or, right.

Anne: It's, it's. Abuse colors every aspect of your life. And aiming is that layer that makes you feel a little less like an alien. Yes. Right. Yeah, so, so that's the first part. And then the other's, the library, there's all sorts of information that an AI would need to have. It's kind of like a victim advocate has a really specialized training and we wanna make sure that, you know, Amy isn't retrieving bad definitions off of, you know, that Reddit somewhere.

Anne: So that means we get to control that library and where she's retrieving information so that we can, um, you know, predict a much higher quality response.

Natalie: Yeah. Yeah, I was just thinking like even, uh. Something that's very common that I see in my community is women will say, well, my, uh, my husband's therapist or my therapist says that we should have couples counseling.

Natalie: Well, that's a, the not all, there's, I mean, there's amazing therapists out there, but there are also a lot of therapists out there who don't understand that you don't either they, they weren't educated, they get the training that they needed, or they don't have the experience to understand that you don't do couples counseling where there's abuse.

Natalie: Yes. That's not couple's problem. That's a, that's an individual problem and there's needs to be counseling for the abuser and then separate counseling for the victim. And so something like Amy says is going to understand all of that and know, have all of that knowledge that you wish your therapist knew, but that she may, he or she may or may not.

Anne: Well, and your therapist isn't educated in abuse unless they have made that a personal specialty, unless kind of postgraduate they have gone on and, you know, acquired a great deal more information and they've had to struggle with the dissonance and realize like, wow, a lot of the things that I learned in school, um, would actually cause harm in these situations.

Anne: Yes. But a therapist that isn't trained in it, which is going to be any therapist frankly, that comes, you know, out of a program recently or that hasn't chosen to take on additional education, they're likely to. To perpetuate, to create more harm, not because they intended to, but because there's a lack of integration about the impact that power and control dynamics have, and that's Amy's jam is always integrating within that context.

Natalie: Yeah. Yeah. Okay. So what have you, I'm just curious. I would like to share some things that I've seen on my end in my community of women who've used. Amy says, but I'm also wondering, since it's been a year. What has changed or like what are you seeing? What kind of feedback are you getting from people who have been using?

Natalie: Amy says. I'm just curious about that.

Anne: Yeah. Um, amazing, wonderful feedback. And sometimes it's, Hey, this button isn't doing the thing that I would like it to do. We build out a new button. Uh, we've heard people getting the first course of control finding in their jurisdiction or the first, you know, financial abuse, finding that this judge has made, um, people who have saved, you know, tens.

Anne: Many tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees by being able to make sure they're doing everything that they're able to do to be most, you know, economical, um, with their attorney. Um, we hear over and over, you know, Amy's a life changer. Um, I have friends because I have Amy. I can just be friends with my friends instead of needing them to, you know, to hear everything that I've gone through.

Anne: I can work again. Um, I'm not spending all of my time triggered. I can go to Amy, I can talk, I can get the thing documented. Um, there are, you know, as,

as many ways for people to, you know, have a relationship with, uh, uh, rely on Amy as there are people. Who are relying on her. Um, we have learned a tremendous amount, um, directly from victims and survivors about what Amy's done for them and what Amy

Natalie: means to them.

Natalie: That is awesome. So in my, I just did a quick search this morning in my community just to like, look at the, the stats on how many posts, like original posts there are on that have Amy says in the heading. And then, um, how many comments referring to Amy says, and there were, se there's 72 original posts.

Natalie: That's a lot of people ta like wanting to, you know, initiate and talk about, Amy says specifically, and there are 220 comments as of this morning referring to Amy says, and wanting and talking about it in co just comments underneath posts. So, um, I, I thought I would share just maybe two or three, um, of what I read, uh, and remove all of any personal things.

Natalie: Read the part where they're talking about. Amy says, so this one woman wrote, she explained her situation and then she said, I asked Amy what to say. She gave a great message that is supportive and yet maintains my boundaries. Then she started asking how I feel about mediation. We had this whole wonderful conversation.

Natalie: She asked great feeling questions and was so validating. It was like a free session with my therapist. Thank you for introducing us to, Amy says. Now the thing I wanna bring out about that is, that is Amy says, A therapist, no, but when, but a therapist, a good therapist, or even a good life coach is going to ask the other person questions.

Natalie: Really good questions because you, what's inside of you is, is the stuff that you need to process and asking, answering questions like that gets your brain going to help your brain process through things. A therapist doesn't magically wave a wand, or a coach doesn't magically wave a wand and give you all of the answers and embed them in your brain.

Natalie: Your brain has to find those answers and get those epiphanies on its own, and Amy says, can help you do that. So I just wanted to bring that out. Before I read the next one, do you have any comments about that?

Anne: Yeah, just what you were saying that, I mean, certainly she's not a therapist in so much as there is, um, mental health value.

Anne: Um, we get mental health value out of talking with a good friend who understands our situation as well. Yeah. Um, you know, therapists are, are licensed to create treatment plans to monitor those treatment plans to report as necessary. Um, you know, those are things that an AI. Never should be doing. And, and, um, certainly that Amy's not, but, but the asking of questions, that's a part of the training, right?

Anne: Um, how she's engineered. Because when we're stuck on something and it's distressing us, we have a limited kind of aperture and like narrowed scope of the ways that we're able to approach the issue. And that is part of why we sit and we chew and we ruminate and we spin on it. And there's something valuable about just.

Anne: Oh, I hadn't thought about it from that perspective. Let me consider it from that perspective. It creates this like cognitive flexibility that is so empowering.

Natalie: Yeah.

Anne: Right. It's so empowering. It's giving you access. It's opening doors inside of your own head that you, you know, you didn't know existed. Yeah.

Anne: And you know, in so much, just people feel better after that. It doesn't mean Amy's a therapist, but super happy that she's provided that relief.

Natalie: Yes. And the other thing too is when someone, when someone else tells us. What we should think or how we should change our thinking, our brain automatically puts up some resistance to that.

Natalie: It's just human nature for us to do that. But when our brain comes up with an idea, when our own brain comes up with it, there is so much more buy-in that's actually, uh, brings about change and rewiring those neurons in ourselves. So, um, I, for that reason, I alone, I think Amy says, is amazing. Here's another, what another person said.

Natalie: I just used, Amy says to help me unravel a long text from my husband. It was very helpful. I asked advice about answering it with a short text stating that neither of us should be in control. We should be working together as partners. And Amy says, told me that if I'm not sure, it won't lead to more

discussion, which I can't handle right now, that I might want to consider not responding.

Natalie: So I'm gonna go get lunch and listen to some music.

Anne: Oh my gosh, I love it. I absolutely love it.

Natalie: That's great. Yeah. So, um, and then this last one I'll share is someone responding to she actually, so. Ann and her and her team, they have given us free like coupons and, you know, for a free year or a free two or three months of Amy says the paid version of it.

Natalie: And it's very affordable. Even with a, without getting it free, it's extremely affordable. Actually, we'll talk about pricing too, 'cause it. You can go and use, Amy says, for free any time of the day. Okay. But they also have some paid versions that offer extra tools that are really, really helpful. Um, and that will keep you even, it'll just keep your, it'll keep your stuff safe and it will help you to be able to track things that are happening.

Natalie: But, and it will also be able to refer back to past conversations so it'll be able to remember, you know. Who you are and what your situation is without you having to re-explain everything. And then you can build on that information and relationship with Amy says. But anyway, this person won. Uh, so Ann gives away, she gives us these codes and we give away free versions of free paid versions of Amy says, uh, here and there.

Natalie: But anyway, this person won one of those free, uh, versions, and this is what she said. This is her feedback. Um, I want a year's worth, oh no, wait, let me back up here. Having a paid account is amazing. Oh, she just wanted everyone in, in the, 'cause we, she's in my private forum. She's like, oh my word. Having a paid account is amazing.

Natalie: I want a year's worth, and I love it. I probably wouldn't have tried the paid version. Now that I have it, I think it is totally worth the money. It is so good at identifying patterns and summarizing things. I would absolutely have confidence that it is, oh, I had just, you know, what she's responding to. I had just told everyone that you would added all of these new tools, like Doc, like, uh, putting things into folders, and you can explain that in just a minute.

Natalie: She was responding to that. So she said I would absolutely have confidence that it is probably great at organizing all that stuff, finding themes, et cetera. I have been blown away by how helpful and insightful it is. So, and I

really wanna talk about this new stuff that you've added because one of the things I'm seeing so much in our private forum, especially with women who are beginning that divorce process and they have to put together.

Natalie: They have to put together custody cases. They have to put together information for their attorneys. And not only are they, you know, are their brains fried from just like being around abuse for so many years, but now they're on, it's now it's on steroids because they are super activated because now they're going through this divorce process.

Natalie: They're probably getting a lot of flack from there. Family of origin from their friends, from their church, and certainly from their abuser, and sometimes from their kids. So they're getting attacked from all angles, and now they're supposed to put together a custody case. Like that is just so overwhelming for people.

Natalie: And, but Amy and, and I actually teach in my, uh, prep for divorce course. There's a documentation lesson in there, but. They still have to go and figure it all out and go to Google Docs and try to, you know, try to or make their own organization, uh, use their own organization tools this way. They can, and actually I should really do an updated version of this and show them.

Natalie: Maybe you could do the help me with that. Or you could show how this actually works. So they could see how they could use, Amy says to actually organize their documentation. Do you know what it's like? I'm gonna, okay. I'm gonna give an a different, I'm sorry I'm blabbing, but this is so important. Even with ai, I have a different AI tool that I use for my business where I can input.

Natalie: A bunch of coaching calls or a bunch of q and a calls that I could never, it would take me literally weeks to go through all of these things and try to organize them into themes. I can pop them into AI and within minutes I have everything organized by themes. Okay. That's what I'm talking about. That is the power of what a tool like this can do.

Natalie: You can pop years worth. Of content, of information that you have of anything that you've documented already. And it will, or you can, and you can ask any questions that you want about it. You know, what are the themes that, I'm se what are the abuse themes that you're seeing here? What are you seeing as the main issues that my kids are dealing with?

Natalie: What are, and then you can also ask for advice about that. Like what are some ways that you think I could. Manage this or how could I put this

together in a custody case? Alright, I'm done talking. Now you tell us what your, because I haven't used it for that. I'm just guessing that, that that's some of what it can do.

Anne: Yeah, so, you know, AI's greatest utility is going to be in doing all of that kind of heavy lifting, data, sorting, uh, you know, retrieving of information. And in this particular context where, like you were saying, people, I just went through years of abuse, I finally got out of that, or I'm planning, I'm trying to, you know, to get to a point where I can get out of that.

Anne: The abuse is likely escalating, the self-doubt is escalating. You know, the impact on our ability, our executive functioning, our ability to like, you know, walk through and take up space and the world is impacted. And now, and now I have to write a dissertation.

Natalie: Yeah,

Anne: exactly right. On my life like this is, it's, it is, um, impossible in even the best, um, uh, best circumstances.

Anne: Yeah. So. AI should be doing that, right? That's the kind of thing that AI should be doing, presuming that you're in a safe and enclosed, uh, model that is not inadvertently or intentionally sharing your data. Yeah, so when we first started with Amy, it was all about the chat. People were like, oh my gosh, chat's amazing.

Anne: And we were like, look at this. Chat's amazing. And it was impacting people's lives in, in so many ways. And then as we kind of matured as a company, it was like, okay, I mean, I had an epiphany and my epiphany was. We have a long history of extracting information from people who have been victimized in order to create a bigger picture about domestic violence in our country, or for like a specific organization to be like, we talked to, you know, 45 people this month and these are the things they were experiencing.

Anne: So this justifies the continued funding to us. We have extracted people's data. Data from them, right? And we've used it for other, other reasons that data, that information, those experiences have value for the individual and it belongs to them. It is theirs. So when you talk about someone having to retell their story over and over and over, they have to give, uh, you know, to other people over and over their experience.

Anne: Amy, once. You have an account, she remembers it. When did such and such happen? She can produce that for you. I'm meeting with this new person. She needs a background on my case. Write that up for me. Right. And then this, so that's, that's one aspect. And then bringing that data back to the user means we brought on a, a, a rocket scientist, we kind of joke, she's a, a nuclear astrophysicist PhD.

Anne: Um, it shouldn't be rocket science to like solve this problem, but we brought on a rocket scientist anyways. She's a, she's a, she's a data scientist. To build out kind of the back end of what does it look like for someone to just show up with their own experience. Oh my gosh, I'm so upset this thing happened.

Anne: My kid said this. And have that converted into, for example, on such and such date, it's plugged into a timeline. This event occurred. This was the impact. It was this form of abuse instantly without you doing anything right? You're just there having a conversation as your authentic self. And that information has been tagged, collated, populated in a way to give you access you never had before.

Anne: And the reason that access is so important, I'm getting a little bit worked up, Natalie. Yeah. I love it. When you are experiencing that abuse, your abuser is relying on chaos to continue to perpetuate abuse. That's the first stage I gotta rely on. Chaos. I, you know, you're crazy. That's insane, right? And when that data is in front of you and it's on a calendar and it's color coded.

Anne: You can't not see it anymore. Yes, it is incredibly clarifying. And then the second phase of what they rely on is if you try to hold them accountable, they will make other people not believe you. Right? Yes, it is. It's, it is not difficult to disbelieve someone who's like, oh, I don't know. Then there was this, and then there was this, which is a totally normal response.

Anne: It's a lot easier to believe someone who's like, here's the receipts, here's the past three years of coercion. Right. Here's what the post separation abuse looks like. Here's how my church is weaponized against me to keep me silent. Right? Here's how these things happened in kind of data enabled, data driven ways that we are two birds, one stone, if you will, overcoming some of the two most powerful tactics that abusers have to keep you scared and silent, or to keep from, from being accountable in a, in the more public sphere.

Natalie: Yes. Okay, so to that point. The other thing that when you're describing how it takes that information and it bullet points it and lays it out, it

also removes all of the emotion, which means you can put the emotion in and it will take it out to bullet point it like if you're, 'cause if you're going to give a high level overview to a judge, for example, they don't wanna read through papers and papers and papers of all of your emotional responses to what's happened to you, all of your trauma.

Natalie: They don't have time for that. And also that bugs them. It does. They're allergic

Anne: to it. Yeah, they they're allergic to your feelings. They are.

Natalie: They're, they are. And they'll actually, they will act that will actually bias them against you. Okay. So, but if you can present to them something that's emotion free, high level, they can read through quickly.

Natalie: It's sounds, professional, looks, sounds credible. And, and it's laid out in a. In a way that they can easily glance at it and see the abuse and all of the different things that have happened over time. They are going to, now all of a sudden, they love you because you've made their job super easy. And also you come across as intelligent, someone who cares enough about your case.

Natalie: Someone who is, I mean, you and you, and you don't, and you don't have to have done any of that on the backend. You can give all of the emotion stuff, which you need to get off of your chest in, Amy says, and Amy says, is gonna help you. I wanna use the word collate, but I don't think that's, is that the right word?

Natalie: That I, I, I use

Anne: that all of the time. Yeah. You know, I. People's lived experiences. Trauma is chaotic. Yes. Trauma lives in con in a confusing, you know, context of chaos. That's why it is so, um, you know, dissonance producing. Yeah. And data's clean. Data's correlatable. Yes. Data's organizable. It's toggle is tolerable.

Anne: It's filterable. It tells data, tells stories. In ways that other people have access to. Yeah. Right. Yeah. And, and that's what we need. We need to have access to our own stories. Many people will never go through, you know, a civil, criminal, legal system. They're on their own to figure out, you know, their, their future and move forward.

Anne: And some people will have to not only, you know, organize that for themselves and their own perspective, but for somebody else. And, you know,

being able to take the emotion out. I wanna be clear. It's not like when you read your doctor's notes and you're like, wow, I spent 30 minutes lamenting all of my health issues.

Anne: And it's like, you know, uh, sx, um, negative, you know, patient denies X, Y, Z. You know, her interpretation still honors your experience. It honors that impact. Um, but in ways that, that don't produce the same allergic reaction right. That many decision makers have towards trauma.

Natalie: Yeah. Yeah. I'm glad you said that.

Natalie: All right, let me back up just a little bit. 'cause you said something earlier and I was thinking, sometimes I'll be thinking, oh, what might the listener think when she said that? And you made a, I think you were, I think you were saying that your. Company was giving data to, um, other people to, um, to get funding.

Natalie: But I, but I wanna, I want, I'm pretty sure that you weren't taking people's private conversations. You guys don't have access to those. You were, I think you were referring to, I think maybe people might have gone, oh, wait a minute. Are they using my data to get funding? So tell, tell us where you're actually getting that data from.

Anne: Uh, that was, I I was attempting to refer to, um, the ways in which we as a, as a culture and community, not as a company, a role will be that we have a long history of being like, okay, did you experience this? Did he call you names? Um, did he, you know, strangle you or attempt to, you know, block your exit and we take that information?

Anne: You know, we, we derive it, we extract it from the folks who frankly, desperately need help. And then we go the victim service organization, whatever, goes and uses that information to be like, Hey, government funders, look at this work we're doing. We helped 12 strangulation victims in, you know, in October.

Anne: Mm-hmm. And that the data, the value of the data never flows the other way at. Now let's talk about our company. 'cause we, no, we know, we do not share your data and we are not publicly funded. Right. We're funded like a, a typical digital health platform, which is a, you know, a subscription model. What we are saying is stop taking their experiences and justifying your existence.

Anne: Take their experiences and give it to them.

Natalie: Yes. Okay.

Anne: But no, we are not reading what people say to Amy and that is not like, you know, selfishly, that's not just because, you know, we want you guys to have privacy. Your experiences are often horrific, and we wanna be able to come to work every day, right?

Anne: Like, it would be incredibly traumatizing for us to see or read 10,000 people's monthly, um, traumas, right? You know, uh, over, over a given month. We are not reading it. We're not reading what Amy says back to you. People will share chats with us, like, Hey, what do I do here? I'm trying to get her to do this.

Anne: Or, oh my gosh, I had to share this wonderful thing that Amy just said to me. That's the kind of insight that we have into that data. Our, what you submit is also not used to train our model, right? So it's not gonna accidentally, inadvertently, you know, your ex-husband's name show up because we had a data leakage internally and it can't be used to train, uh, or improve the models of any of our AI partners.

Anne: We are, uh, arguably I would say the securest data modeling, uh, uh, um, AI. That's, but that's by design. We want people to feel comfortable having those conversations, submitting private information. Um, so we've done everything that we can to limit anyone's access to that, including our own.

Natalie: Mm-hmm. Okay. I wanna say to, so we kind of talked about how you can use these new tools that Amy says has for documenting and organizing abuse situations to plan for custody cases and for, for court, and for judges, and for your attorneys.

Natalie: Also before, I just wanna bring out the point that one of the things I, again, one of the things I'm seeing a lot in my community and that I've seen over the past 10 years is people don't, a lot of times abuse victims aren't really sure that they're being abused. 'cause there's this, uh, amnesia that we get in our minds.

Natalie: 'cause we really don't want to go there. It's just so horrible to think and it, I don't know, there's just like a level of, I remember when I was waking up, it was like, no. No, it's not abuse. Partly because I grew up in the same

environment and I just thought that was how everyone's families were, right. I didn't know what emotional abuse was.

Natalie: I didn't, I didn't know what it was. So when I started writing things down though. Every time that there was an altercation of any kind, that left me feeling nauseous or that left me feeling like I wanted to die or like I wanted to crawl in a hole and never come out again. I started writing down what was said because I couldn't remember even sometimes an hour later, I could not remember how the conversation started.

Natalie: I couldn't remember where it went. I couldn't remember what, and I couldn't remember anything that happened to this day. I have huge gaps in my memory. That are just, they're gone because I just didn't, my brain was just like, I don't wanna think about it about that anymore. Yeah. But if you hit it down as soon as you can, if you, or if you go, if you have a tool like Amy says, she can track all of that for you.

Natalie: I, I think you'd have to have the paid version though. Am I right? It's not gonna remember if you're using the free version, it's gonna let go of everything that you give it. It'll fly off into the. You know, into the, into the clouds of nothingness, um, as soon as you get out off of that website. But, but if you have a paid account, it's going to keep everything that you have in your account for you.

Natalie: And does it organ, can you see things on a timeline at all or, yeah. So,

Anne: um, it. Yes, it, so there's a, a feature called events, right? So the timeline is in events, it's not gonna show up on your, on your chat screen. Um, a couple of days ago we introduced a new feature where you click generate event out of a chat and it'll extract the events from that chat you had and populate drafts.

Anne: Um, for these events, it's like journal entry, right? And it popul. It goes on a calendar, it goes on a timeline. We've got some new data visualizations that it'll, that it'll populate as well. Um, soon, Anne Eska is working on it right now. It'll just automatically through any of your chats, pull that information out and what you were talking, you know, about this, you know, just write it down even if you don't know if it's abuse.

Anne: It's really, really, really important because abuse is a pattern of behaviors, and we typically wanna see it one at a time. We explain the thing away one at a time. It is absolutely a hundred percent okay if you use Amy for a

year, and at the end you're like, no, I still, I'm still, no, this wasn't abuse, but least you had it.

Anne: Your future self will be very happy. And also if you're using Amy. Um, it's just a matter of time if you don't yet recognize the, the impact of what's happening to you. And if you are a person who is answers yes to the following question, whether you wanna use the term abuse or something else is perfectly fine, but it still falls under that clinical abuse umbrella.

Anne: And the question is, does it feel unsafe to disagree with your partner? Oh, that's,

Natalie: yes, that's it. That

Anne: is it, whether that's emotional or, you know, psychologically or physically. Certainly, you know, if I disagree with my partner, I know that there's gonna be a conversation where I feel nauseous, right? So I'm anxious.

Anne: I don't, I'm afraid to disagree with this person if I disagree with this person and, you know, no, that's not how it happened. And, you know, their response is something that feels shammy, um, of me. If I just, you know, if my partner is in the mood tonight and I disagree. Am I gonna be bombarded with guilt or threats that like, well, you know, somebody else would be willing.

Anne: Right? Is it safe to disagree with your partner? And it's totally fine and should be fine with anyone if you'd never wanna use the word abuse to describe that. But there is someone who is relying on the fact that they can make you feel bad enough, or scared enough, or confused enough that you'll do what they want.

Anne: That is what abuse is at its core, no matter what you want to call it, and the symptoms are similar, you're confused, you feel sick, you don't understand why is this happening. You don't wanna share it with friends, but you don't ever have to call it abuse if you don't want to.

Natalie: Yeah, I was, I just did, uh, released an interview with Dr.

Natalie: Christine Ola, and she calls it coercive control. Mm-hmm. She doesn't really refer to it as, uh, as abuse anymore, but coercive control, that terminology maybe can resonate with you more. And even when you think about like the silent treatment mm-hmm. The silent treatment technically isn't doing anything right.

Natalie: So you might not think, well, that's not abuse. It is, it's coercive control because through that, through their silence, they're trying to get a response from you or trying to get their way from you. They're trying to get you to change back or to agree with them or to do something and comply with their wishes.

Natalie: And that is coer. So silent treatment is coercive control.

Anne: Absolutely. And coercive domestic violence is coercive control. Do you think that's what

Natalie: it's

Anne: all. Layers. And, and Dr. Coill has done an incredible job of bringing that terminology and the concept of non-physical abuse, like bubbling this up, it, you know, so, so lay people can see it, but also, so all of the people who've kind of like comparatively minimized their experience, well, you didn't hit me.

Anne: So that they have a space to, right? Yes. No, your autonomy is limited. When, when, when you got the silent treatment, it meant that you acquiesced, you apologized first. Yeah. You took it all on. I, I never should have brought that thing up. Right. Or it means that next time he says something that's upsetting to you, you won't tell him.

Anne: 'cause last time you got the, you got the silent treatment. So there're using whatever is necessary, everyone has their own blend, their own flavors. Yep. To get the privilege of not being accountable and having their needs met first.

Natalie: Yep, that's exactly it. Okay. So I wanted, we were talking, um, before we started the podcast and I wanted to bring it out.

Natalie: Um, one of the things that I like to do in my particular program is teach that nobody else is coming to rescue you. You are called by God. We, uh, this is, I work in within a Christian, uh, worldview. You are called by God. To rescue yourself. You are the one. God is appointed. If God has appointed anyone on the planet to rescue you, it's you.

Natalie: So he's going to give you the tools and equip you with the mindsets that you need to rescue yourself. And that's what I, that's what I do in my program. I try to provide the tools and the strategies to, and the mindsets to help the women that are, that come into my program. Learn how to rescue themselves.

Natalie: 'cause they're, they're, they're the ones And you, you had a question, and I can't remember what it is now, um, that if the answer was, no one's coming to rescue you, it, what was that? Do you remember? I,

Anne: I was talking about how, you know, in my own direct one-to-one work, which I, I don't do anymore with Amy. Like I could tell you from the very beginning, which.

Anne: Um, which survivor was, was going to fare better than another, and it was whether or not that person still believed that someone would rescue them. Yeah. And like, I'm sorry, the systems made us believe that. Like we didn't just imagine that and foment it into our brains like we were told over and over, like, you know, if someone's hurting you, you know, they should be, uh, you know, uh, uh, the police should come and get 'em.

Anne: If someone's hurting your kids, you know, the court will protect them. Like we've heard over and over that there are systems that will protect you and it's not true. And the longer we hold onto that, the more harm. The, the more latent, you know, any recovery or the ability to, to feel like you regained control of your life because it continues to put the nexus of control with someone else.

Anne: Modify his behavior. Judge, you have to see this. We give up all of that control to a system that's not really willing to hear us right, to perpetrators that don't wanna hear what we have to say. They're never going to agree with us. Us and when we take that locus of control back and we say, this is my situation.

Anne: I have to use the strength, I have to take my next step. I have to to control what I'm able to control. I can tell you with 99.99% confidence, that is a person who's going to fare better, feel better, feel more in control, have friends, have their job, have positive relationships with their children and their community.

Anne: That's like the most important nugget that I could give someone.

Natalie: Yeah. Yeah. So I, I, I think I'm gonna use that to, to help people determine their readiness because my program really can't help anyone who is still expecting that someone else, if, if, if you're still hoping and expecting that your husband will change.

Natalie: I probably can't help you if you're still hoping and expecting that your pastor is gonna come in and swoop in and rescue, I probably can't help you. Or that your family of origin is gonna. Now, that doesn't mean that you're not going

to get that kind of support from people. I, I, there are people who do thank God, get support from their families, from their churches, from their friends, but a lot of people, a large, and sadly, a large percentage don't.

Natalie: And as long as we are, and I can speak from personal experience as long as we are looking for someone else. To create those changes for us. We will not be able to, we can, you can come into a program like I have, and you won't be you, you won't be, you won't be able to get the help that you need because it's just not, it's just a completely different mindset.

Natalie: Yes. Um, can you actually, you were also sharing how you've actually heard from a lot of people inside of Flying Free. Oh yeah. And, and, and the way you describe them. It just made me so proud of them. I guess

Anne: I was proud of them too. And I'll, I'll redo that. I will say that again. Um, yeah, so for subscribers we have office hours.

Anne: Um, it's awesome 'cause it's typically just one person who comes to office hours and so we get this hour together and it's like, you know, somewhere between coaching and, and working on Amy. And, you know, when we first started working together, Natalie, you and I, um, lots of folks from your program were, were coming over and, and, you know, really merging the benefits of both.

Anne: And I found them s. So much readier, they had the language, they understood that this thing related to this thing, they had more emotional regulation, they had more access to their own experiences and understanding like what different things mean. Um, and you know, like we were talking about, like they were centered with, here I am the captain of my ship, here is where I want to go.

Anne: How do I get there? What recommendations do you have? This is a thing that happened, you know, how do I utilize it in this way, which is very different. That's super, like nexus of control is centered. That's very different from, you know, a a, a more common experience is, uh, you know, a lot of the trauma still coming out.

Anne: The inability to kind of, uh, uh, regulate to understand how specific pieces of information relate to each other. Um, what kinds of options for, you know, remedies are available to them and it's. You know, it's unfortunate because it just means they're that much further from being able to, you know, to helm their ship.

Anne: Yeah, right. Incredibly educated, ready to take the next steps, um, using the things that they've learned, um, and they're gonna have better outcomes. That's just, that's just the truth.

Natalie: And they do, I, I wa I hear their stories. Every si really. Every day I hear stories of people. They share in the wins section of our forum, and they're sharing wins.

Natalie: We get lots of wins in every single day. So I, so let me just shout out to members of Flying Free and Flying Higher, those of you who are divorced, um, you guys are amazing and people can tell. People can tell that you have done your work and it has changing your life, and that's gonna have a ripple effect on your kids.

Natalie: On everybody that you touch. So be proud of yourselves. Yes. Okay. Is there any last words that you have? I think that's all the questions I had for you. Um, I, I, I, I

Anne: didn't mention binders, um,

Natalie: which is, oh, let's talk about binders.

Anne: Yeah. So, um, binders, uh, are a feature where you're like, oh, okay, so Amy knows everything and I have all my documents uploaded, and we've had these chats and all of my events, and everything's on the timeline.

Anne: Um, but um, I just found out that this motion got filed, um, and now I need to respond to it. I need to prepare all the information that I have to respond to this, um, or, um, I wanna file a custody modification, or my attorney has requested, you know, this, that's kind of a little bit more niche than all of the things that you've put into Amy.

Anne: Um, and with literally just a couple of sentences and then pressing a button and waiting about 30 seconds. Amy will instantly create a binder that

Natalie: here's

Anne: all of the information that's inside of this. Here's the patterns that are here. Here's the timeline, um, that is relevant to this. Here are four tabs with information.

Anne: You know, maybe you have 40 cards of information within them. This document relates to this. Now it is in beta and like, I wanna be honest, guys, like it is definitely in beta. This is a really complex tool that's gonna continue to, to benefit from some other kind of data, things that we have, um, going on.

Anne: But it will give you an 80% lift and that, I mean, 80% is still a huge lift. Yes. You can add content. Oh, actually I have a picture of this thing. I wanna add that in there. You can remove content. Nope. Amy, you missed the mark that the Canadian, you know, I, I Declaration of Independence does not need to be in.

Anne: And to modify that and make it your own and then export it. And that's, I mean, it's gonna be the pinnacle of where we get that, you know, a district attorney will say every, you know, domestic violence, uh, you know, victim should have one of these because all she has to do is talk and it will literally give me the case that I need to.

Anne: You know, prevent her stalking or get the protection order or get a conviction we're, we are on our way. Um, but binders is awesome and I wanted to too, the binder horn.

Natalie: Yes. I'm so glad you did. So they can upload PDFs maybe, or information letters that they get from their attorneys, letters that they get from the court.

Natalie: You can upload all of that and, and ai this Amy says, can read those documents within seconds and organize. The information and then put things, relevant things into binders with tab. Yeah.

Anne: Yeah. So you're saying I need, um, I'm trying to get decision making in my divorce. Um, and Amy will pull the records for all the educational issues that have come up, all the medical issues that have come up, um, power and control dynamics that might prevent joint decision making.

Anne: Um, and stick those into, into one place, um, right there. There.

Natalie: It's, I mean, this is, okay, so tell us about what, how much does it cost? And, and by the way, you can go to amy says.com just right away. It's A-I-M-E-E. That's how my daughter spells her name a, well, actually, I, I guess I spelled it that way, right when she was born.

Natalie: Yes. A-I-M-E-E says SAY s.com. I will put a link in the show notes, of course, but, um, you can go straight there. Tell us what it, the, if there's a free version, but then the paid version is what includes all of this. Like stuff that you'd probably want if you were going through a divorce or even just trying to keep track of everything that's going on in your life so that you don't have to keep track of it.

Anne: Exactly. Um, you know, in this case, you know, send the free version to your friend who you're like, Hmm, you know, you were asking me some things last night at dinner and I thought you might wanna talk about it with Amy. Uh, and, you know, reserve the, the subscription for yourself. It's very affordable for \$20 a month, you can save yourself, your job, your friend.

Anne: Uh, you know, tens of thousands of dollars in, in legal fees. Um, but that funds our ability to build out those new features to ensure the safety of the storage, you know, everything's, is stored, encrypted at rest and in transit. Um, and to invent these things that never before existed, um, to try to, to turn the tide and give survivors the, you know, we, we should come to this with the upper hand.

Anne: Right. Like we are the ones, we are the deserving people who should be able to walk with our heads held high, with dignity, with agency, you know, with the ability to advocate for ourselves and our children and to feel safe to be able to do that. I mean, that is our, that is our pinnacle goal. Yeah. By leveraging this very scalable, um, you know, technology literally across the.

Natalie: Globe. Well, I'm just thinking when you think about what we're paying attorneys, you know, \$300 minimum for most attorneys, all the way up to sometimes way more than that an hour, and then you think about \$20 a month and how much time that you spend is your time. To me, I just, I always ask myself, is my time worth that?

Natalie: I would spend out, and not only my time, but my sanity,

Anne: that that's what it's, it, it's the sanity. And heck, get yourself the annual subscription. It's 200 bucks, so there's a discount on it. And when you look at \$200 for an entire year, it's half, it's a half hour.

Natalie: Yes. With your attorney. Exactly. And, and the, the, you brought this out, you brought this point out before, but I'll bring it out again.

Natalie: The um. The amount of time, every time you have a question for your attorney or every time or every time that you, uh, give them a whole bunch of information and you want them to parse through it, now you have to pay for that time when you could have Amy do it for pennies, uh, on the dollar. And it's just, it's kind of, I don't know, to me it's just kind of a no brainer.

Natalie: But,

Anne: and she will, you know, answer your emails and analyze Yeah. He just sent you and helped draft a response and I mean, it's like exactly other thing too.

Natalie: If your attorney asks you a question and you have to answer it, you can just talk into, Amy says, and then have Amy says, draft the email, and then you can just, then you're done.

Natalie: Good to go. Yeah.

Anne: Yeah. Or this is the email I just got from my attorney and I'm feeling super invalidated and she doesn't understand, and you know, what do I even say? Yeah. Seconds, right? Yeah. And always, you know, caveat, always review AI generated information. You should absolutely read it. Um, you know, models can sometimes if they, they want a complete answer.

Anne: And so if they don't have a specific information, you know, sometimes they'll stick a couple words in there, go ahead and read it. But in, you know, you were upset, you were gonna be upset when you were going out to dinner with your friends, or when you picked up your kid from school and instead Amy wrote a response, you were like, wow, that's way better than I would've said it.

Anne: And probably just saved me a lot of money. Yeah. Said,

Natalie: you know, I, I'm gonna say this too. Um. One of the things that I struggled with when I was going through my whole SEP two year separation and then two year divorce is people would send me people from my church. So if any of you guys are listening and you're getting people, you know, busy bodies from church who wanna know what's going on, and I would try to send emails back to them explaining things and defending, and of course, I was activated and emotional and traumatized.

Natalie: And all of that came, even though I tried to keep that outta my emails, it came through and that stuff irritates people. Yeah. I'm telling you, I did not get positive responses from that stuff, and which really is not fair. It's not fair to

survivors, but I just don't think people who understand or who have lived with it.

Natalie: Have a lot of, uh, because they just don't have any understanding of it. They don't have a lot of empathy or compassion, and they're just annoyed. 'cause now they have to read this long letter from you. That's just a bunch of, you know, in their minds, they're, they're thinking, oh, she's just whining about her husband again, or whining about her life again.

Natalie: Whereas if I would've had a tool like this, it would've changed everything for me. It would, I could have probably kept some of my friends actually, if I would've ha been able to respond. 'cause Amy, Amy says, we'll be able to take out all of the emotion, but still be able to communicate the, the things that you need to say without the emotion.

Natalie: That is, that tends to cause people to get triggered or to get turned off. Yeah. I mean, it's not to say but that, that's just a fact. That's just, we're, we're talking about human nature here, so we gotta work within that. Right.

Anne: Yeah. And, and there's um, you know, that emails, those emails you were sending fit the, if I explain it in the right way, they will rescue me.

Anne: Yes. Yeah, exactly. That's where all that power goes out to someone else. And then when they don't do the thing that is ethical and justifiable, right, like, I'm not saying no one should come rescue. Like when they don't do it, it's so painful, it's so invalidating. It takes away our power. And you know, people don't like feeling like the thing you're saying to them is requiring something of them.

Anne: Yes. Yeah. I think you're right. That's it. That's it. Yeah. Your emotions require response from them and, and, you know, most people are just frankly, not enlightened enough, not, you know, evolved enough to answer that call. It falls flat and, and you're the one who ends up. With what I call a disclosure hangover, where you're like, Ooh, yes.

Anne: I regret having said that stuff because, um, that was not the audience that was receptive to it. Exactly, exactly. Disclosure, hangover.

Natalie: Oh yeah. There's so much shame. I mean, yeah, I, I love that disclosure hangover. I had a lot of those.

Anne: Mm-hmm.

Natalie: But that, and that is so, I mean, I learned from those lessons. It's something that I, you know, try to help people within my program now so they can avoid those same mistakes.

Natalie: But yeah. I think Amy says is incredible, and I'm so thankful that it exists and it's so exciting to see how it's changed over the past year and how it's helping people even more than it did a year ago. And I hope that it just continues to explode because we definitely need all of these amazing tools in as many hands of survivors as we can possibly get it in.

Anne: Yes. And thank you Natalie for everything you do in your direct work and your community, uh, and for sharing this tool because it's entirely word of mouth. So if Amy has, you know, if you have benefited, please safely, anonymously. So nobody needs to find out except your targeted audience. Um, let them know that Amy's been helpful for you.

Anne: That's how we grow and that's how we build new features. Yeah.

Natalie: Yeah. So share this episode with someone that you know. All you have to do is share the episode and so that they can get all of the information that they need to make their own choice about what they wanna do about it. All right. Thanks Anne.

Natalie: Thank you so much.