

The Divorced Christian Woman Podcast with Natalie Hoffman, Episode 12 - Your New Life Starts Now

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 the final episode, episode 12 of Season one of the divorced Christian Woman Podcast. This season was called The First 365 days after Divorce. Today I have with me Diana, the host of the Renew Your Mind podcast, and Loretta, Lisa and Marie. Who are all divorced Christian women. And in this very last episode of season one, we're gonna be talking about casting a vision for our new lives as divorced Christian women.

Now, before we get into it though, I just wanna say that season two is gonna be kicking off on October 4th, and the topic for season two is all about relationships. So we're gonna be talking about our relationship with ourself. With our ex, with God, with our younger kids or, and with our adult kids, with friends, with a church, with men, with family of origin, with coworkers, with our ex's family, with maybe a new partner and with our communities.

And so it's all gonna be about relationships, and I think relationships are probably. When I think about life on planet earth, relationships are where it's at. That's where we live or die. Have fulfillment and meaning. Make meaning out of our life is in relationships. So I thought that's maybe what we should focus on for season two.

We, we've got so many ideas for future seasons, but how the seasons are gonna look as 12 episodes per season with a four or five week break in between. So I, I hope that you'll join us again for the episode or for season two starting October 4th. Alright. Let's get into our discussion today though, and we'll start by having some of you share about a moment after your divorce when you surprised yourself, maybe you did something that you thought you never could, or that you never would do.

What wa what was that and how did it feel to do that?

Lisa: Okay, I'm gonna jump in. Oh, go ahead. Oh, sorry. I'm gonna jump in. Um, this is Lisa and, um, when my divorce was final in, um, December, January rolled around and my daughter and I were living in an apartment and we had rescued the family dog, and, and we saw, we saw. The dog actually start to relax as well, just being out of that tense environment, which was amazing in and of itself.

But I had a girlfriend that said, Hey, I'm thinking about like, um, getting a miniature Wheaton schnauzer. And, and she told me about it and I was like, oh, that's nice. And then she's like, if you know of anybody, and she's in North Carolina, I'm in Wisconsin. And she's like, if you know of anybody, this breeder's trying to, you know, get rid of 'em.

'cause she's got another, um, litter, uh, ready to to birth. And, um, and so, so I went, in my head I was like, huh. I wonder if, I wonder if I want a dog. Like, I wonder if I want a dog that's just mine. Like it doesn't have all the memories attached. Like our, our, the dog Clyde, um, he's sitting right here. Um, and so, uh, I was like, okay, I think, I think I want a dog.

I think I want my own dog that has only me in, in, in the picture. And. Yeah, let, oh, a beautiful white, um, schnauzer all the things. And, and, and so then I was like, well, Sarah, who's my, like, you know, 18-year-old daughter at the time, I'm like, um, would you drive with me all the way to North Carolina to get this dog?

Um, and she's like, um, I talked to my boyfriend and we already had plans and I'm not willing to, to break those plans. And then I spiritualized the whole thing and I was like, okay. Maybe that's God's sign that I'm not supposed to have this dog, because deep down I was afraid to travel by myself because I had never traveled by myself, let alone, I mean, maybe taken an airplane with a girlfriend, but never by myself.

Right? I never gone on a road trip from Wisconsin all the way to North Carolina, so I made that decision. It was so empowering for me to go, okay, well what's the worst thing that could happen? Well, I hit a snowstorm in in Lexington, and I was like, okay. Time to get a hotel, Lisa. You know, like it was just, and then on the way home, even on the way there, I was like, I, I started crying, um, going through the, the mountains because I was like, I'm here by myself.

It's God and I in the car, and I'm doing it. I'm, I'm doing what?

The joy I got to play whatever music I wanted. I could sit in silence. Like I, I was like, oh my gosh, why haven't I traveled like this before? Because this is liberating. But that was something totally foreign, my belief system that I needed. To be with someone else, you know, I wasn't brave enough to, to do make a decision, let alone, you know, go across country.

Um, it was so liberating for me and empowering.

Diana: That's cool. It wasn't a sign, Lisa, to not do it. It was a sign, it was an opportunity God gave you to go show that you're a badass and you can go do amazing things.

Lisa: Amen. I, I I received that fullheartedly.

Diana: You received the badass message.

Lisa: We're spiritualizing that what?

Yes, I do.

Loretta: Hilarious. Loretta. Well, speaking about. Um, okay. So mine's a little less, a little lighter than that, but, so one, I jumped off a waterfall cliff in Maui and it was exhilarating. I felt, you know, it was like the bucket list checklist, so it was great. Um, the other thing I did is I. Spoke at Butterfly Bootcamp and I had never, Diana was my coach, um, my speaking coach, but I had, I hadn't spoken unless I was forced for class at college or something in front of people prepared a speech.

And it was so much fun. I spoke on, um, what was it? Knowledge is your superpower, right? And it was just, I had so much fun. It was cathartic. I got to go through old memories and kind of. Bring some humor into the craziness. That was my life at the time. So it was just great. And the other thing that I found myself just laughing in my house by myself is my front door would not shut.

And it kept like hitting the, the, the friend, but the kids in and out and we just kept like. Jiggling it until the, the frame was busted basically. And then one day it wouldn't shut at all. And I'm the only one home. I'm like, I've gotta figure this out. So I go and I look, I'm like, what is stopping it? And the screws on the

hinges were coming out and it kept keeping it, but they were stripped, so they kept popping out.

And I'm like, okay. So I go get my son's drill and I put the screw bit in and. I'm like, it, it stripped. So I had remembered my handyman one time, grabbed some old wood chips and shoved it in there and, and I'm like, okay, I can do this. But I didn't have anyone to hold the door. So I'm trying to MacGyver it with the shoe and behind the door.

And I'm looking around and this is a year after, maybe a year or two after my divorce, but I had, I looked over and on my dining room table is this three inch binder that happened to be my divorce binder. And I had to get it out because something came up and I grab it and I wedge it under the door. It was perfect.

And I wedge it under the door and it fixed my door, and my door shuts perfectly. And I just started laughing and I'm like, this divorce is just the gift that keeps on giving. So great. Oh my gosh, that's hilarious. So

Natalie: anyway,

Loretta: that's my, um, my little accomplishment. So I'm feeling pretty good. That's

Natalie: funny.

Marie, tell us what, what is a daily or weekly routine that you created after divorce that brings you peace, joy, or a sense of stability?

Marie: Yes. Well, um, I've always been a hiker and, uh, you know, sort of backpacking in 2018. So a weekly routine is that I get on the trails at some point. Um. You know, during the week, usually on the weekend.

Um, so because that outdoor movement, all of that brings me such joy and peace. But this sort of goes into something that after the divorce that I never thought I would do, but that I've made into not a. Weekly routine. Routine, but I do it every spring and fall. So in October of 2022, I believe it was, I did my very first solo backpacking trip.

Um, and it was a two day, one night, but I had never been in this, uh, forest before. Um, and it is called Big South Fork. And I did it, and I mean, it's bear country, you know, you have to hang up your food bags so that the bears don't

come and get it, you know? And I thought I would be scared. Like I was, I was anticipating that when when the darkness came came, then I would be scared.

I had such peace. It was beautiful. And so since then I've done that. I, I make sure to do a solo backpacking trip every spring and fall now. Um, just as a time of solitude. It's like my little time of going off grid. I can't be contacted. It's fantastic.

Natalie: Wow. That. I don't think I could do that. That sounds, that really does sound terrifying to me.

This is

Diana: like, we didn't know it, but this is the badass episode. That's what, this is it.

Natalie: It is,

Diana: it is. It's scaring me. Well, you don't have to do all these, you've done enough of your own. Um, I, I'll jump in with some of the daily. Things that I did, the, the number one daily thing I did that I keep on doing. So I've been doing this since pre-divorce, since I moved out of the family home and ever since, and it's not exactly every single day, but it's gotta be at least five outta seven days a week.

Where I spend 30 minutes, I give myself 30 minutes every time where I can do whatever I want. It's, I mean, whatever I want is generally like not getting a task done. It's having. My cup of coffee or I've actually gotten off coffee, believe it or not, people who know how much I love coffee, um, where I'm drinking just one cup of black tea in the morning now.

But I take that cup with, I foam the cream and I pour it over the top and it's really special. And I sit into my chair and if I wanna. Play a game on my phone. I play a game on my phone. If I wanna listen to a podcasts, I listen to a podcasts. If I wanna read a book, I read a book. If I wanna just sit there and, and sip my tea and stare off into the room and pet my cat, that's what I do.

And so every day after the getting my daughter off to school, or if it's a weekend, it's just, when I wake up and come down, I get this. It's very grounding. It's very, it's just me. Like we have a day ahead. And here we are hanging out with us before we go do our thing. I, I, I wanna like, hanging out with me.

And so basically my daily routine is I started by hanging out with me and it feels really solid and grounding. And then to show my badass self, I added, I started, uh, after, after my divorce, I was unexpectedly. Because it was a lot. It was two and a half period from saying I, my divorce until that divorce happened.

I didn't know when we signed the papers that I'd actually go into a depression, and I did for about three months. And then when I came out of that. I decided it's time for me to be strong in mind and body. And so I started going to the gym minimum three days a week unless I'm sick and I just do it whether I feel like it or not.

And I do strength training because I want to feel strong. And so that is a habit and routine that I've put that's more badass, ery, everybody. Let's go.

Natalie: Yes, I like that. I, I'm badass in that way too. I work out as well. Um. Okay, so what is something in your home or life now that you choose just for you?

Something that reflects your tastes and values instead of someone else's? Because I think a theme throughout this whole season is just now we don't have to manage someone else's life. We don't have to like make ourselves. Disappear in order to make them happy. Now we can actually look around and go, well, what would make me happy?

What do I value? What do I wanna, what good things? What life-giving things do I wanna bring into my life to enrich me and not just someone else? And um, and we've given a lot of examples throughout the season, but let's throw out a couple more in this last, very last episode.

Loretta: Lisa, I would say that I'll, I'll talk.

Oh, okay. So, oh, sorry. Was someone else going? Nope, Loretta, go right ahead. Okay. Um, I, I often had, when I bought stuff for my home, I would have to return it. Because somebody didn't like it. Right? So one thing that I started doing was getting, as I was going, going through the divorce, I would buy little t-shirts with little sayings that only I knew they had meaning of.

And, you know, kind of made me feel kind of cool. And a little bit, you, you did a podcast not long ago about ways that we resisted. Even though we might have been fawning or surviving or trying to keep peace for our children. So I look around my home and the things that I kept that I thought were special was I got

this rock that, it's like a rock with a butterfly on top and it says hope on it because I had lost, I'm gonna start crying now, sorry.

But. I just really lost hope and decided, okay, I'm staying no matter what this you, this, this isn't an option. And I didn't have hope until the day I decided that maybe I could do something different and that hope came back. So that was important to me to keep in my decor. I also, when I think it was Last Butterfly Bootcamp, gave a testimony and you sent us the little.

The willow tree, like Freedom Angel. So I have that displayed, which just when I walk by I am like, yeah, yeah, I'm free. You know, I feel that every day there's just every day memories come up and I'm like, oh, I can breathe. But my favorite little resistance, and this is a rebellious part of me, but I was, um, at my.

My kids all play soccer, so I went to my friend's house and it's this couple that used to help me out with carpooling. 'cause I was like a single mom without being a single mom. I was a married single mom. As far as. Doing the kid stuff. And so I went to her house and she was one of my carpool, her and her husband, and they had this, you know, the welcome signs that are like tall.

If they say welcome or hey friend, when you come in, everybody's kind of got 'em on their porch and hers, the O was a soccer ball. I'm like, oh, that's the cutest thing. A couple weeks later, she comes knocking on my door and she had one made for me, and I like cheered up. Why would, oh my goodness. She's like, thank you for being the coach.

You've been so great and I'm thinking, you're the one that's been helping me out. Why are you getting me a kick? But I was so happy. But immediately. My ex started killing my joy in that moment. Why would they be doing this? Why are they trying to ingratiate themselves to you? Because he was always trying to isolate me from other people, and everyone had an agenda, so I put the sign up.

It's too big for the space. It's too big for the space. And complain about it all the time because he came in the front door and I always came in the garage. But, but he kept asking me and insisting and demanding that I took that sign down toward the end, especially. And my thought was, why don't you just take it down?

Like I wouldn't wanna put it back up. He just would not take it off that tiny little nail, lift it up and remove it. But he demanded that I do it. And now, um, it's been up there for another four years. I moved to the back porch at one time and

I put it back up front. But it's just great. And it reminds me of that I was always a relational.

Person that connects with people my, like, my whole life. And that was, and that I've got that back. And so when I do come in the front door and I look at that and I think, yeah, love that. I've got friendships and relationships again and a little bit of rebellion that was resisting all along. So

Natalie: yeah.

Lisa: That's beautiful. You've got that little bit of badass in you, Loretta. Yeah. Oh, she's got a lot. That's all. It's badass. That's right. So for, for me, um, a couple of things. One is a couple months post-divorce. Um, I bought my house and that was a big deal because like. I bought my own house, like I have my own mortgage that I'm paying for and I'm responsible for.

And, you know, listening to you, Loretta, it was a little bit like, I remember like coming out of it going, I don't even know what my style is. I don't know what kind of house I want, and I don't know if I, if I like green or I like blue, like I remember. In TJ Maxx, I, I picked up this candle and I was shopping with my sister and I was like, oh, I think I like this.

And my sister goes, that, doesn't I, that totally surprises me. I can't believe that you look like more of a silver girl than a gold girl. And I, and I was, I started crying in the aisle after she left because I was like, I don't even know. I don't even know what I like, you know, because you get so conditioned.

To think about everybody else and you lose yourself. So, um, my biggest purchase besides the the house was, um, just in the last six months and, um, I promoted within my drug sales company and, um, earned a \$4,000 bonus. And just from this promotion and, and. I was like, okay. I. I get to decide how I'm gonna spend this, because in my past chapter, it would've had to be a big discussion for one, a big sit down discussion, maybe multiple times.

And it would've been this, you know, well, we should pay off this bill and we could put this over here in savings. And you know, and it was this. Like, this is my, my bonus. Like this is an extra up and above what, you know, my income is. And so I had listening to, to God's spirit in me, I was like, what do you want, Lisa?

What? What would make you happy? And I decided to use my bonus money to buy myself a massage chair.

Natalie: Ooh.

Lisa: So when you come to the Haven, which that is the name of my home, you um, not only, um, can enjoy all the peace and quiet that this beautiful place of safety called the Haven offers, but you can also treat yourself to, um, a massage.

'cause I do now every day. That is so cool. I love that you named your house. What a great name. And, and my daughter, I, I think I'll tell, talk about it later, but she like, she like gave me a little, um, door knocker that's personalized with the haven on it for Mother's Day. Oh, that is so

Natalie: beautiful. I love that.

I just wanna jump in and say I, for me, getting rid of stuff was, 'cause I, I was married to two guys who liked stuff who my, my first. My first husband was not a spender, but he would go dumpster diving and bring stuff home and, um, and spend, you know, he would like buy th go to thrift places and buy things and he just collected, you know, lawnmowers and snowblowers and things like that.

And, um, so when I divorced him. Just moving out of that home and starting over with a clean space was wonderful. And then with my second husband, he was a spender and he just liked to buy lots of just stuff, just bought stuff and it just accumulated. And so just get, having, making my own space be like wide open spaces where you just have the furniture with a couple of throw pillows and a blanket.

It's just simple. And. It feels so much like my brain just feels so much clearer in a place that doesn't have a million things all over the place. I, I love it. All right, so how about this, do you have a friendship or a community connection that you've built since you got divorced that maybe wouldn't have happened otherwise?

And how has that changed your journey?

Diana: Natalie, do you uh, wanna repeat that question? It did freeze up.

Natalie: Oh, I'm so sorry. So this episode in episode 10, I am having internet problems, which I will have to look into, but I've never had this issue with podcasting before, but, so there's some must be something wrong with my internet.

But the question is, describe a friendship or community connection that you've built since your divorce that wouldn't have happened otherwise. And how has that relationship changed your journey?

Diana: I'll start since I'm already unmuted. And then, and then how about Marie? You go next. So be ready. This is gonna be short, but I basically knew that I, intimacy was important to me.

And I'm not talking about sex. We already did that episode. That's not this. This is intimacy in relationship. And I tried and tried and tried to get that in my marriage and there was a wall that I could not get past. So intimacy didn't really exist. So I knew that was one of my needs. I mean as a healthy human being, I believe healthy humans recognize that need and want to fill it.

So I've built purposely a handful of relationships that are intimate with women where when I've got something Natalie knows, 'cause she's one of 'em, and I just. The other day, Voxer her when I had a moment where I'm like, I wanna connect with someone around this very important moment. And so, um, I, and I chose people who are healthy, who always make space for me to be me.

They never have judgment. They don't expect me to do anything in my life or for them. They're just there and we do intimate moments together. So it was intentional and it took me a long time. I think I mentioned that in one of the other episodes that we did. But, um, yeah, that's what I have and I believe these women will be my closest friends for the rest of my life.

'cause I was so thoughtful in choosing them and I invest with my own intimacy and then they give it back.

Marie: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Yeah. Uh, I have two friendships, very similar, uh, to what you're describing, Donna, that, um, I just, it has, uh. Not only the intimacy, but we share vulnerabilities and it's brought so much healing to my life.

Um, and you know, when and when I was in my marriage, I just didn't have enough time to dedicate to friendships like that because I needed to be available, you know, always. That was what I thought. Anyway. Um, the other thing is, I just told one of my friends the other day, I actually have a social life. I'm so excited.

I, I mean, I get invited. Like last night I was invited to, you know, a wine tasting. Now I need, I wanted a quiet night at home, so I didn't go, but I'm, and

it's because of this meetup group I have made such good friends, or this meetup group, they just do a variety of things. They hike in the afternoon or we might go to a wine tasting.

We might go listen to live music or whatever. And I mean, at least once a week I'm invited to something unique around the city that I would never have. Known about, and I, that would never have happened in my marriage. Um, so yeah, it's, uh, I, I'm enjoying it. I really am.

Natalie: That sounds fun,

Loretta.

Loretta: Yeah. Um. I, this is one area that just exploded almost from the day I decided I was going to file, and I think it's because I just missed it so much. Um, I did the prodigal daughter thing in my twenties and when I was 30 I decided to go back to church and I lived in New York City and I prayed for one Christian friend, which I thought would be like a miracle.

Right. I ended up finding this church through a series of events and at the same time a couple of other girls who had been living their twenties showed up and all of our moms were praying that we would get back in church and you know, in their own little Bible studies spread out. But we ended up coming up having like a band of sisters there.

There's something about living in a big city where you can share authentically 'cause it's, you don't live in a small town. It's not gonna be like gossip spread out. So we were able to grow exponentially just in our lives, in our friendships. Well then I moved to a small town when I had my kids, and, um.

Going to Bible study, it just, I always felt like I couldn't fully, authentically share or in a MOPS group. And I remember sitting in a mops, I went for the first time and I sat at this table with all these women and I just started crying because I, something in me just missed that relationship so much.

And, um, but each time I tried to reach out and have relationships, it kept getting shut down. So right after I reach out to my. Rekindled relationship with my friend of like 50 years. Um, by the way, she ended up taking me on a trip to Hawaii, which was really great. And then, um, my friend who I met at the church, who'd been my friend for 20 years, we, she walked me through every day of going through the divorce and the day I finalized, she ended up, um.

Winning an award at work and took me as a plus one to Nashville on this all expense pay trip, which was great, but it's not about the stuff you get with friendships, it's just that connection and then through this would've never happened because all of my other, like deep friendships have come from. But Flying Free or the kaleidoscope, um, Diana being one of them, she also, you know, I'm a life coach because of that and, um.

And the relationships. I just went to the beach with my friend Kelly that I told you I'd met and it, you don't have, it's just this. It's, it just fills your soul when you're having relationships that help you grow, that you're a back and forth, that thing that you just craved so much to have in your marriage and that should have been there and wasn't there.

And it's, I don't know, there's just something I love about it and even my neighbor who you have all different kinds of friends. She's, she's like, hobby Lobby meets Pinterest exploded in her house and I don't have a creative bone in my body, but she shows up and helps me, like decorate my four pagan Christmas trees and we go shopping together and, and she's just the best, like, like cul-de-sac neighbor.

But I was forbidden to hang out with them before it was just, I don't know. Yeah, I'm, I, I just love if I could have a job just like having friendships and connecting people with friendships, I, it would be my favorite job ever.

Natalie: Yeah, I, that is such a good point. We'll talk about that next season in relationships.

But I remember get, you know, I had great friends before I got married, the first time I got married when I was 25. And I had these great friends in high school and great friends in college, and then great friends post-college. And then all of a sudden I get married and now I ha I don't have any friends.

I mean, my friends were like the friends that you had to have, 'cause they were in your Bible study, you know, or they were in your small group at church, but they weren't like really, really amazing friends you could go do stuff with. And now I feel like that's opening up. It's, I mean, that's what I'm hearing from you guys too, is that you, when you were in those marriages, you, you, there was so much control and, and, and.

Expectations placed on you that you were supposed to be in the home and managing the home and the hearth fires at all 24 7 and you, you forgot that you were actually a human being who needs girlfriends, and now it's like. I can have

girlfriends, I can go out with, I can go on trips with friends. I mean, I'm just dreaming now.

I haven't actually done anything like that yet, but the possibilities are so much fun. It's like, Ooh, let's think about what we can do with girlfriends. So anyway, I love that. Let's talk about faith. How does your faith look like now practically in your everyday life? And did you have like a specific moment maybe when your connection with God?

Just ignited or became real to you in a way that it had never been real to you before since you're divorced. And I, on the reason why I wanna bring that up, and again, we'll talk about this more in season two with our relationship with God, but is that a lot of times people, I think there's this perception out there in the Christian world that if you get divorced.

You don't have a relationship with God anymore because you did the big no-no. And so now God doesn't love you or, or maybe you're, you've got leftovers of God now, you know? Well, God loves you, you know, he, he, because he has to, but you did get divorced. So it is pretty tough for him to, you know, swing this emotion of love for you.

I don't know. That's kind of the impression that I get. So tell me about your relationship with God. What does it look like now?

Nobody has a relationship with. I'm just

Diana: kidding. I was, you know, because I'm on with you a lot, Natalie, I kind of wait and see who, who's gonna chime in. Yeah, but nobody hit the unmute button. Uh, which is what we're, I'm like, it's like on jeopardy. Who's gonna hit the button first? Nobody hit the button on this one.

I think everyone

Natalie: wants. To though on this one. Yeah, I do. I think everyone wants to, they just weren't sure, like, yeah. So Diana, you go ahead and, and yeah.

Diana: You know, I, there were lots of different times and, and we talked about some of this on some of the past episodes too, you know, how we wrestled with things.

But it doesn't matter how much I wrestle with things or even that moment, I described in a past episode about like, letting go of Jesus and he was still, and

then wait, next day he's like. Oh, you still here? Um, like I, it's not, I don't need that freaking hang on so tight to make sure I keep my faith because he's here the faith of a mustard seed.

Wow. That's, that's real. And I, I think one of my biggest moments when I realized God was there. Came before my divorce and it came with wrestling the, with the idea of getting divorced. And I would say every Christian woman who I know has gotten divorced couldn't have gotten through it without going way deeper with God, without knowing him more, without really digging in because.

Um, or you're not a Christian and you don't really care, you know, but we care like, God, am I honoring you? God is what, what does moving forward and living a life for you look like if, if I go through with a divorce, or it could be that your spouse divorced you and you think, well, now you're wearing this scarlet letter and God can't use you.

But I think these are the moments where we just dive in deeper. So I would, you know, any. Profess Christian who's quick to criticize a divorced Christian woman is not knowing God. I think they're an idiot. I'm sorry. Because there's no way to get through this without diving in. So my one moment was when I was like, oh my gosh, I, my marriage is dead.

So I either stay, you know, tethered to death. Like a handcuff to a dead, decaying body on the ground. Or I release myself and I get divorced and I thought I was wrestling with God with, I'm like, I, you know, I'd go on these long walks and think I'm just wrestling with him and my beliefs and all this, and then finally it hit me, wait, I'm wrestling with me.

And the parts in me, you know, sometimes we talk about internal family systems, the parts in me that have all these beliefs, different beliefs from different parts of our lives or different, you know, personality parts of us that are, you know, trying to like Alize or trying to please people or trying to, whatever those different parts are doing.

I was wrestling with me and so that moment where I was like, I felt God so immensely was when I, I realized that and it was as if he said. Yes, and that's okay. And I'm here with you while you wrestle. And it was so, um, there's no words, we don't have words in this human realm. I, for me, to describe what that even felt like.

But he was so real.

Natalie: Yeah.

Diana: Anyone else? I didn't wanna unmute

Loretta: yet. Yep, I do. I just had just talked, all my questions I wanna talk about all came together, so I didn't wanna like be monopolizing the whole podcast, but, um, I remember just distinctly going from shame, guilt, that background running noise of. Am I enough?

Am I walking the narrow path? Am I going to end up in hell, um, running on these, you know, random trips to Costco 'cause the apocalypse was coming and my ex had been doing a deep dive on YouTube and whatever. So just that constant pressure, um, to trying to become more and more watch, more pure, like I was, I was really pure.

'cause I only watched, um. Hallmark movies now, and I was no longer watching these other shows. Right. And after going through all the growth work and just kind of shifting beliefs, but also seeing that the God that I was, I was in a very spiritually abusive home and the things that were being taught were just not who Jesus was out of love.

It was just so fear-based and so like there's no way to have connection that way. And now. And I thought, I'm free. I, I felt free for the first time in my entire life, even as a little kid, I was always praying, please forgive me. Please forgive me. 'cause I thought if I didn't, I died. And I hadn't asked for forgiveness right before I was gonna go to hell.

'cause I, I, I mean, I, and, and I wasn't even raised, but it was, I don't know what it was, but now there's just. I don't know what it's supposed to look like. I actually had a counseling session about it, like, well, if I'm not teaching my kids all these rules, what? What does it look like to be a godly parent?

What does it look like to teach them? And I. I think I just have a knowing now that God's in me. He keeps showing up, but also a knowing that I'm going to get there. It's, it's a little elusive at times, and then sometimes I see it like that, that new relationship that's deeper, that's 24/7. That isn't about.

Reading your Bible and doing this at this time. I'm not saying don't read the Bible, but just in a new way who God really is. Who Jesus really is, and that's what I say when my kids, I have one that's, I don't believe in God, but he does. When I back off and I'm like, you know what? I don't believe in the Jesus we were taught about either.

I dunno what it looks like. And the more I'm free to let God show up as who he really is, the more my kids aren't resisting so much. Um, my son writes songs and God's always in his songs, even if they're about other things that probably I'm like, look. But um. Yeah. So it's just a connection of knowing and I'm not teaching the rules and I don't know what it looks like, but I also know that God has my kids and my pastor, um, my great new pastor said my kids are very programmed, but he trusts them.

And he trusts God because they have, and I may have shared this before, but that it gave me such freedom that they're critical thinkers and they will know the truth and they're on their own path. And I can kind of turn loose at that. Um, I keep reminding myself, 'cause sometimes I wake up with the panic in my chest about my relationship or what am I wrong?

Am I wrong? Am I really gonna go to hell? Right? So, but mostly it's just not having that weight is just so freeing.

Natalie: Yeah. And let me just jump in and say, I don't know if, I don't know if you've ever, uh, tuned into one of our bible studies, Loretta, but we, that is the main gist of all of our Bible studies in Flying higher now.

Yeah. Is I love, I love it.

Loretta: Yeah. I'm gonna re, um. Replay, what do you call 'em? Oh yeah. You just listen to it after it's live.

Natalie: Yeah.

Loretta: Right. Because I'm always in the car driving my kids and so I like to save them all up for my trip.

Natalie: Yeah. That's how mostly I listen to 'em all at once. Yeah, yeah. No, that's totally fine.

Um, but I wanted to put in a plug for those because so many of us have, have had to deprogram from our original version of God, which was what, what I called, you know, all the scary little gods and to discover. To discover what the, what, what God is actually really like. And we're in our Bible studies, we're using the Mirror Bible translation.

So if anyone has ever or hasn't heard of that, it's a newer translation that is so life-giving and um, it's completely turning on. On its head. All of the thinking

that we've had, you know, the, the, the traditional translations are very patriarchal and very rooted in, you know, just even the subtle ways that it translates.

It can just change one or two words and it completely changes the meaning of the verse and. That's not really what the original language of the verse was communicating. And so, um, anyway, it's been very fascinating. I love the Bible. I, I've always loved the Bible, but there was a time that I couldn't, you know, read the Bible for a long time and now I can.

But I view our relationship with God. My relationship with God is that he's a partner, he's in partnership with us, within ourselves, and he always has been there. We just were taught something so different about him, so we, if you don't believe. Faith. If you don't have God's faith believing in in who God really is, you won't get to experience who God really is.

You'll, your experience of God is going to be whatever you are programmed to believe about God. And that's why I think a lot of us have so much shame and guilt and fear associated with God. But now it's so interesting 'cause we're div, we divorced our husbands, but I almost called my, my book that divorcing God.

Because in some ways I was divorcing this other version of God that I had been taught that really went along with what my family of origin was all about, what my church was all about, what my marriage was all about, and I had to divorce that God who, which ended up being a scary little God in order to find the God who is already here, has always been in partnership with me, which you brought up Diana earlier when you said, you know, God is not.

You had to realize that God was there. He, you weren't wrestling with God, you were wrestling with yourself. God never rest. God doesn't wrestle with us. He just loves us. We can just rest in him. Um, okay, let's talk, let's shift a little bit and ta 'cause we gotta wrap this up. We're coming up to the very end of season one.

But, um, do any of you guys have a parenting win from your new life as a single mom? We're single moms. Isn't that weird? I never thought, you know, I never thought I'd be a single mom, but here we are. We're all single moms. Some of you guys, your kids are all grown up, but some of us still have like teenagers in the house.

I don't think any of us have taught, you know, anything like a toddler or grade school age in our house, in our homes. But some people, some divorce Christian

women do. But, um, what did any wins in parenting? What's it like to be a single mom?

Lisa: I'll jump in. It's Lisa. Okay. Um, mine's more general. I think. You know, I, that past chapter that we all were in together was so censored and I felt like not only did I have to be perfect myself, but I had to make sure my kids were all perfect.

So there was this underlying like. Tension between the kids and I, because even, even how I parented had to be perfect. And if he, it wasn't his version, then I was constantly, you know, wondering. And then I might even get spoken to about how I handled this situation, even though in the moment I thought it was the right way to handle it.

Um, and so my kids are all adults. And they were all adults. Barely. Um, when I, the divorce was finalized 18 to 25. And, um, I feel like they didn't get the authentic mom that like I, there was no way I could be me. In that chapter of my life, my authentic self, it, I just couldn't. And so I just, you know, took on all the survival masks and, and, and I wore thick masks, um, because I wanted to believe that I was doing the right thing, that God was, you know, looking down on me and saying, well, well done.

Good and faithful servant, all the things. And now my kids get. The real, raw, honest, authentic me, and what I've seen is by me like relaxing and just being content, being me. They have in turn. Shared more. They're more comfortable in their own skin around me because they had to be a certain version of themselves around me in that first chapter.

And so now they get to literally just, I said, I don't care if you swear, I don't care. Like I don't care. I don't care because I want them in my life. I want them to know that. I love them regardless of if they're going to follow Jesus or not. Like at, at this point in my life, just loving them where they're at is my job and they can feel that now and they couldn't.

I don't think they could authentically feel it because there was so much rules and red tape over here in that chapter.

Natalie: Yeah, it's that safety again.

Lisa: Yes,

Natalie: as as we are safe for ourselves and create that safety for ourselves and our own lives and what, then we create that safety for our kids. We become safe for them and others too.

Right, right. I know like in our family, we have fam when my teenagers, my teenage, teenage girls especially, are constantly second guessing themselves and um. We, they actually come and want family conversations with each other. Now. Now some of those conversations can be tough and as we hash things out, but they, they move toward hard, their hard thoughts and feelings and share them openly and vulnerably instead of hiding in shame or feeling like, well, we can't, there's certain subjects we can't talk about, or otherwise someone's gonna judge us or be mean to us, or whatever.

All of, all of it's open. And I love that. 'cause I didn't get that in my family of origin and we didn't really have that before in the original version of our, of our family because there was, there was a lot of fear and shame in that version. So I, I love, I think being a single mom, you, you think, I think I grew up thinking, oh, single moms like their, them, and they and their children are so vulnerable.

They're just like these, they're just open to being prey for predators, right? That's why you need to have a husband to protect you and be your head and your lead. And now we have this beautiful thing. The five of us get together around the table at dinnertime and we don't need there. We do have a head of our family.

God is there. He is the head of our family and he has always been there. And we are together. We are, there is safety. There's no vulnerability. Other than that, we're safe to be who we are. We're safe to have hard conversations. I, I love it. I love being a single mom. And I asked, I think I might have mentioned this on one of the earlier podcasts, I, I, as we were gathered around eating dinner one night, I said, do you guys feel weird like that?

Our family is, you know, we don't really. Have a traditional family. Everyone at your school has this traditional family, mom, dad, kids, and we don't. You don't, does that feel weird to you? And my daughter goes, what are you talking about mom? Like very few people have traditional family anymore, and these kids go to a traditional Christian school.

I actually, I think I would guess that maybe 85% of the families there are intact families, but she has enough of the knowledge of the world to know that that's actually. Unusual and that that what we have is probably more normal. And it's not a bad thing. It's, it's not this terrible, horrible thing. And it just normalizes it and it makes it good for all of us.

Um, before I, I'm gonna shut this down now, but I just wanna make sure that we, that no one else has anything. If anyone has anything that else they'd like to add, feel free to speak up. This

Diana: is

Natalie: it.

Diana: Thank you, Natalie, for starting this podcast. It was your brainchild when you texted me and said, can you believe there's no podcast for the divorced Christian woman?

I was like, what do you mean? And I go, I spent like a half an hour trying to find the podcast for the divorced Christian woman out there. It had to exist and it doesn't. And so, yes, I know there's some for divorced people and there's some for Christian divorced people, and there's some for divorced women, but not the Christian divorced women.

And so thank you so much for starting this and letting us all be a part of it and share our stories. I know it's just gonna keep getting better and better and I'm so, you know, I'm friends with all the people on the panel now if I wasn't already and talk about building friendships. So thank you for what you're doing here.

Yeah,

Loretta: thank, thank you. I'm very excited. I'm very excited for season two. I didn't know what you were doing, and as you were talking about it, I'm like, oh, I can't wait for October. We have to wait that long. But now I have something to look forward to. So I love that. It's all about relationships. It's just, it's so great.

Natalie: Yeah. Well, and you, you are more than welcome to come back on and talk about, you know, get on a couple of episodes too. All of you guys are,

Loretta: I, I've had a lot of incoming, a lot of incoming on parenting and things, so. I can write my own book.

Natalie: Oh, I know. When we talk about parenting, that is, I, I think in, in Flying higher and Flying Free, that is like one of the biggest subjects that women wanna talk about is parenting.

Because our kids are so important to us and we have, we experience so much pain and, uh, oh gosh, there's so much pain and love. Loss when it comes to

parenting. So that's definitely gonna be a big subject Next season. We could probably do an entire season just on parenting. I bet. Yeah. Alright, so anyway, um, I just wanna say too, Loretta and Diane both uh, talked about Butterfly Bootcamp and I, at the time I was thinking maybe we should explain what that is 'cause it sounds kind of weird, but, um.

Butterfly Bootcamp is something that I invite all of the women who are part of Flying Free and Flying higher, they get invited to Butterfly Bootcamp every year. Um, it's, it's a great time to get together in person and we just, we have sometimes we've had speakers This year we're gonna do ex. Experiences we're, we're going to, um, we're gonna play games, we're going to have discussions.

It's gonna be more experience related, uh, in instead of speaker oriented. So I'm really excited. It's gonna be at the Mall of America in, in the Twin Cities. If you're not a part of Flying Free or Flying higher and you would like to come to Butterfly Bootcamp, I think we have like maybe 10 or 11 tickets left, so you'd need to join as soon as possible.

Go to join Flying hire.com. Go ahead. Oh, did I? You

Diana: cut out, but I think you were saying there's about 10 or 11 spaces left.

Natalie: Yes. Yeah. Yes. Oh, it's that internet again. Anyway.

Diana: I know. You gotta get that fixed. That's all right. I know you, um, it's, it's been very little trouble. Just a couple words there. Yeah, definitely sign up for bootcamp.

I've been there a couple times with only 10 or 10 to 12 spots by the time this podcast airs. It could be that they're sold out 'cause we're recording this. About 12 weeks before this podcast is gonna show up. Yeah. But check it out. Anyway. What'd you say? Flying flyingfreenow.com dot com. It's,

Natalie: it's join Flying hire.com.

Diana: Ah, gotcha. And

Natalie: yeah. And um, and if you can't come this year, then you know, join and come next year. Right. So, anyway, uh, and then, uh, don't forget to join us for season two again. We're kicking off October 4th. The topic's gonna be relationships. I can't wait to get together with some of you panelists and with all of our listeners, be sure to share this podcast.

I'm sure you know divorced Christian Women in your life, so make sure that you share this podcast with them so they can be part of this online community with you. Alright, that's it. Thank you so much. Season one is completed. I love you guys. Is that okay? We love you back.

Marie: We love you. Yeah, we can say it.

Natalie: Alright. All right. I love you guys. We'll see you next season and until then, fly higher.