

HOW TO BECOME TOXIC PERSON PROOF

Hi. This is Natalie Hoffman of FlyingFreeNow.com, and you're listening to the Flying Free Podcast, a support resource for women of faith looking for hope and healing from hidden emotional and spiritual abuse.

NATALIE: Welcome to Episode 115 of the Flying Free Podcast. I'm so excited to introduce you to our guest today. It's Sarah K. Ramsey. She's a toxic relationship specialist who has recently published a book called "Becoming Toxic Person Proof: Clear the Confusion and Learn to Trust Yourself." She's also the host of a podcast called Toxic Person Proof. She works with women who have experienced toxic relationships and who are stuck in a cycle of pain and confusion. Raise your hand if that sounds like you. She helps them transform their minds and lives by taking back their power, recreating a life that they are excited about living, and bringing renewed energy, clarity, and excellence into establishing careers and relationships they love. Welcome to the podcast, Sarah!

SARAH: Hi, Natalie. How are you?

NATALIE: Good. She just had me on her podcast a little while ago, which was fun. Just to connect some dots for some of you, I sent out an email to people on my mailing list letting them know about this Valentine's Day Summit that she had put together with all these amazing people who have books and podcasts and who are out there doing the work of helping people. She had interviewed each one of them for about thirty minutes and got some of their gemmiest gems into this little summit. Then she just gave it away for free. I'm not sure if that's still available?

SARAH: I'm now offering it as a book bonus for the people who buy my book. They can get access. I put the summit into a mini course, so they can get access for free. It's fifty hours! It's fifty hours of content.

NATALIE: Oh my gosh, are you serious?!

SARAH: Yeah. There are so many speakers. Getting your body back after trauma, dating coaches, several faith-based coaches: You, Leslie Vernick was on there for "The Emotionally Destructive Marriage," Gretchen Baskerville (who I know you promote quite a bit) with "The Life-Saving Divorce," Gary Thomas, who wrote "When to Walk Away," was supposed to be on there, but we had computer issues — so he'll have to be at my next summit. We're going to have to re-record later.

NATALIE: Well, it sounds amazing, and I'm so glad that you're offering... Get a book and get fifty hours' worth of training for free? Why would you not run out and do that?

SARAH: I'm just so humbled. Natalie, I know you do this work so much... This will kind of sound funny. We get used to people saying, "Thank you for changing my life." That just becomes a part of our norm. But I am humbled again by the summit and people reaching out and saying, "This is amazing." I'm so grateful. The book was supposed to launch February 14 after the summit. Word got out, and it just exploded.

NATALIE: It's available now. This episode will come out in April, so hello, future April people. (We're back in February right now.)

SARAH: "Becoming Toxic Person Proof." If you buy the book and want to email me at sarah@sarahkramsey.com, I'll make sure to get you that book bonus, since that is kind of in the future. I'm happy to offer that to you guys if you email me to collect that.

NATALIE: Great. Let's get into our discussion. Let's begin by having you tell us what it means to be toxic person proof. Do you consider yourself to be toxic person proof? And how did you get there?

SARAH: You know how doctors say that they practice medicine?

NATALIE: Yeah.

SARAH: Or people practice meditation because no one is perfect at medicine or perfect at meditation. I think about it as I am in the process of practicing becoming toxic person proof. I think I'm really good at it, and I think I'm really good at helping others through it. But one thing I want people to remember is their humanity. When you are emotionally connected to someone, you don't want them to be toxic. When you are emotionally connected to a situation, you don't want it to be toxic. So do I consider myself as toxic person proof as I can be at this stage in my life? Absolutely.

Part of being toxic person proof is recognizing that I'm human. If I'm emotionally connected to someone being toxic, I'm going to have to get some help around that and I will have to reach out to other people. That's what it means to be toxic person proof. We all work with people who have studied narcissism, right? So if I get on here and say, "I'm the best. I'm the world's best whatever," then danger, danger, danger! But it is the humility of humanity and saying, "I have weak spots. I have vulnerabilities. I have strengths that can be used against me." I need to be aware of those so when someone is trying to take advantage of those, I can keep myself safe.

NATALIE: I love that answer, because it neutralizes some of the shame that some of us who have been victims of this can feel. We can feel like, "There is something wrong with me that I attract people like that or that I stayed in a toxic relationship for too long or that I capitulated to my friend for too many years and let her run all over me or whatever." There can be shame in that. So that's good to know.

SARAH: That is so much of what the book is trying to combat. One thing I do is call it a toxic person encounter rather than a toxic relationship.

NATALIE: Ooh, I like that.

SARAH: Because a toxic relationship says, "How could you be so stupid to have married someone so mean?" A toxic person encounter... If I may tell you a story. There was a girl who graduated from an Ivy League school, a very high-level school, with a background in criminal psychology. She didn't have a job because it was in COVID. She ended up nannying for a sociopath whose children are sociopaths. She went to the father and said, "I have this background in criminal psychology. I think something is really wrong with your daughter. I think she needs help." He said, "Oh yeah." (This was an 8-year-old who has already been diagnosed with sociopathic tendencies, so it's not just this girl's assumption.) Apparently, the mother was gone. The father had cut off the mother from her life. He had closed court records. People had signed non-disclosure agreements. This is a brilliant girl who is in an Ivy League school with a degree in criminal psychology, but she was emotionally connected to this job working out because she needed a job during COVID. That is a great example of how knowledge is not enough. It's not enough to know what toxic people do. The most important piece is knowing where you can get sucked into toxic situations.

NATALIE: Right. All the time. I work with a lot of women who are already out of their relationships, too. It's like you are not suddenly safe. Now you need to take all those lessons you learned and apply them. The next question piggybacks off this, because we tend to think there is something wrong with us that we attract people like this. But I think, and have taught, that it is something right with us that causes us to be hooked into relationships... Not relationships! Now my brain is going to be always thinking, "No. It's not relationships; it's encounters."

SARAH: I love that language though, because it neutralizes the shame.

NATALIE: It really does.

SARAH: I go back to Bill Cosby. Do you remember when America loved Bill Cosby?

NATALIE: Yes! I did! I loved Bill Cosby.

SARAH: Exactly. Do you remember when America loved that Sandusky guy, that guy at Penn State who was molesting children in the shower?

NATALIE: Yeah. I didn't know him, so I did not love him.

SARAH: But when people said, "I think he's molesting children. He's taking showers with children," people made excuses: "Oh no. There's nothing going on. He just takes showers with teenagers." What?!

NATALIE: I mean, full stop right there. Hello? I don't get that. I don't get why people would think that is acceptable behavior.

SARAH: But I want to point out those examples, because if you are listening to this and think, "Yeah, I dated a guy, and he fooled me. I ended up marrying him, and then he fooled the church community." Right? How many times have we heard that story? So that's where I want to neutralize the shame. Some of the things the book points out... Neville Chamberlain was the prime minister for the U.K. (England, Great Britain, or whatever it's called.) But he was not a stupid man. He met Hitler and thought, "He's not that bad." (This is a little tongue in cheek. Warning — a little tongue in cheek.) There was a doctor who was trying to fix men's health — a little blue pill that we've all seen on commercials. He was trying to fix men's health by sewing goat's body parts on them.

NATALIE: Okay.

SARAH: He made a million dollars back in the 1800s sewing goat parts onto men's parts. I want to bring up all these examples of how people have been fooled and change the conversation to say, "People are fooled by manipulators," and not, "You are dumb for marrying a manipulator."

NATALIE: Right. I like to think that most people have good hearts and are kind. Most people are caring individuals who care about other people and care about the human race. I think there are some people who are especially sensitive to the emotions of other people and to helping. They are especially interested in being people helpers and rescuing the world, right? Those people get used often by these toxic people. Can you tell us some ways that these toxic people use others?

SARAH: Absolutely. I do not talk about codependency in my programs. I know that's a very popular word. But what I've found, and what a study at Purdue found... Sandra L.

Brown of "Women Who Love Psychopaths"; she wrote that book. She did a study with Purdue about the big five personality traits. She said that women who are in toxic situations or men who are in toxic situations score very highly on agreeableness and conscientiousness. I didn't know Sandra when I created this term, but her studies have backed up what I have thought to be true. I call it "Smart Girl Syndrome."

I go back to a client. Her name is Marcia. She didn't do well in calculus in high school. When she wasn't doing well in calculus, she stayed after with a tutor. She got extra help. She worked harder at it. She came up with creative solutions, and she passed calculus. That is a fabulous set of qualities. We want to hire those people. We want to be around those people. We want the co-worker who, if there is a problem to solve, comes up with creative solutions, puts the time and effort in, and is loyal to their company. But let's bring those same skill sets into a toxic relationship. You try to work on your communication. You try to be more understanding. You try to be more forgiving. You try not to take up too much space. In the Christian context, you try to die to self; be a better servant. These are fabulous qualities unless they are being manipulated. We are calling them codependency.

NATALIE: Right. These are high achievers.

SARAH: Absolutely! They're the best people in the world! They are all the qualities we want our daughters to have and our sons to have.

NATALIE: Talk a bit about why a toxic person would be attracted to a high achiever.

SARAH: Oh yeah. If they can get you to work harder, they don't have to. They can flip those best pieces against you. "I thought you were loyal. You say you're loyal, but you're ready to walk out? What kind of woman walks out on her family? Are you selfish or something? Why do you always have to get your way? Are you bitter? Are you unforgiving?" Right?

NATALIE: I love how you have reframed this for people, because there is so much... Because we are high achievers, we can beat ourselves up when we perceive that we've failed.

SARAH: I have an article called "My Friend Failure." It is heartbreaking even to go back and read and talk about how to embrace failure. It's still a word I butt up against if I'm honest, which is kind of silly. Here Sarah has a best-selling book and her globally acclaimed podcast and is struggling with a sense of failure. So if I can comfort anyone with that information. It's very tough to feel like you have failed in a relationship or

multiple relationships in your life.

NATALIE: Right. So that is “Smart Girl Syndrome,” then. You talk a bit about how we can be... Instead of being “Smart Girl,” we can just be sweet and savvy. Can you talk about that?

SARAH: Yeah. I think another barrier to healing... First, you get the wrong healing strategy. You’re trying to heal codependency, which is that you are needy and that you need relationships. When you go back to the very beginning of the relationship, were you needy and desperate then? Sometimes that is true, but Sandra said that seventy percent of the time that is not true. You thought you were doing the right thing, and you were in a relationship with someone who kept changing the rules on you and kept moving the finish line, so you were always losing. Think about “The Sound of Music.” “Let’s start at the very beginning, a very good place to start.” If anyone is listening to this and they have a loved one in a toxic relationship, I want you to think about what happened at the beginning, because we cannot slap a needy, co-dependent label on everyone who has been manipulated. Is the whole world needy and manipulated and co-dependent that Bill Cosby tricked us? That’s not fair!

One of my favorite interviews I’ve ever done was with a woman whose mother had been in a toxic relationship and flipping this for her, because she saw her mother as strong. Then she saw her mother as broken and weak. Then after I explained all this to her, she said, “No, my mother was one of the most confident people I know.” I said, “Then do you think it could be ‘Smart Girl Syndrome’ instead of codependency?” It’s not stupidity that someone else is good at manipulating.

NATALIE: Right. I think many people who find themselves in relationships like this really do just want to help people. We meet this person, whether it’s a friend or a future spouse, or it could even be a family member from our family of origin, and we feel responsible because that is just who we are. We’re just responsible.

SARAH: High conscientiousness. High loyalty.

NATALIE: Yeah. Plus, we have a desire to help them. Talk a bit about how we believe people. We just take people at their word. We believe the best about them. We believe they are being upfront and honest with us. When you believe everything you hear and everything someone is telling you, that can really get you into trouble sometimes.

SARAH: You asked the question about being sweet and savvy. This is where this comes

into play. I feel that, for the most part, there are two extremes. There are the people who don't let anyone in and think everyone is bad, everyone is a serial killer, and they have the door locked in their life. They have their back up against the door and think, "I'm toxic person proof. Look how safe I am. I got a gun. See who comes after me." But that is not what I'm talking about. That is fear and not wanting to do the work of discernment, so you just shut everyone out. Very clear — that is not what I'm talking about. Then you have the other extreme of, "All we need is love." Everybody is good. Everybody is wonderful. Your door is swung wide open. That's not toxic person proof. But so many times, especially from a faith background, that is who you were taught to be.

NATALIE: Zero boundaries, especially if you're a woman. If you're a woman, you are not allowed to have boundaries. That's not nice.

SARAH: It's not nice. "The Gift of Fear" — I can't remember who wrote that book — but in "The Gift of Fear," in the opening chapter, he talked about a woman who had been killed. This guy came up and said, "Here. Let me help you with your grocery bag." She said, "I'm okay. I don't need any help." He said, "No, come on. We got this. We have to feed your cat." Warning sign number one — we have to take care of your cat. He put them on the same team within the first two minutes of meeting. Super dangerous. Anyone who is doing that — danger, danger. But she was telling herself, "It's impolite. He's offering to help me. It's impolite for me not to take him up on it. It's not nice. It's not the right thing to do." But this can be at work. "Hey, it's your job to take care of the load. If I don't want to work and I've got something going on all the time, a pattern of avoidance, a pattern of irresponsibility, a pattern of not meeting deadlines, a pattern of whatever — it's on you." Then you are taking ownership of it, trying to do the right thing. So I think what we need is more people cracking open the door. That is being sweet and savvy. "I am open to you showing me who you are, and if I see who you are and I don't like it, I have absolute full permission without any guilt to shut the door."

NATALIE: Yes. Boom! That doesn't make you a bad person. That just makes you savvy.

SARAH: Gary Thomas, in his book "When to Walk Away," said, "I used to think that being a good Christian meant loving everyone, and there's a balance of grace and truth. So we can love everyone, but we also have a responsibility to be discerning." I also think there is not a Bible verse that says, "I'm a good person for helping you become a better sinner."

NATALIE: Right.

SARAH: So when you are not acting in discernment and not strengthening that piece of you that is discerning, that can crack the door and shut the door... The Bible does not say, "Swing the door wide open and let people act however they want." It doesn't! There is not that verse!

NATALIE: Jesus never modeled that either.

SARAH: No. That turn the other cheek thing has been so... The way I say it is Jesus was crucified on the cross one time to serve a purpose. His purpose on earth was not to let people beat Him up and attack Him, because that meant His purpose on earth would have been to help people become better sinners, right?

NATALIE: Right. I always bring up this example too. When He gets up in the synagogue and reads the scriptures in Isaiah that prophesies the Messiah's coming and He says, "Hey, this has been fulfilled in your hearing," He is basically saying to them, "Hey you guys. Guess what? I'm here. The Messiah is here. It's Me." Of course they gnash their teeth, are all angry at Him, and they kick Him out. They take Him out to this hill and are going to throw Him off the edge. He doesn't just let them do that. He just walks through the crowd and walks away. He doesn't sit there and try to explain, "No, really. If you just listen to all these reasons why, then you'd get it. I'll show you all the prophecies." No! He said His piece. They didn't like it. And He walked away.

SARAH: I'll explore this idea with you. If He had let them beat Him up, let them stone Him, and it didn't serve a purpose, then Jesus would have sinned, because if I am supporting someone's addiction... "Oh, here. You love drugs? Let me bring you some." I just want to support that addiction. What about the addiction of anger? What about the addiction of selfishness? What about the addiction of manipulation? Jesus was not here on earth to help people become better at being angry. You listening are not here on this earth to help cover up someone's anger and to help them be a better selfish butthole. It's not your job!

NATALIE: Right. I want to talk about one of your articles I saw today called "Are They a Narcissist or Just a Jerk? How to Tell and Why it Matters." I want to just talk about that a bit. I'll put a link to this in the show notes. By the way, all the links for everything we've been talking about here will be in the show notes. All you have to do is go to flyingfreenow.com/115, because that's the episode number of this episode. Anyway, this article. What platform was this on?

SARAH: Medium. It was published on Medium and has been quite popular there. Basically, I want you to imagine that you and I are sitting there talking, and we walk up

on someone who is in the water. They are wrestling with a crocodile. They are bloody and battered and are just fighting with this crocodile. We say, "Hey, are you okay? Do you need help?" They say, "No, no, no. I'm learning about crocodiles." You and I turn to each other and we're like, "What's going on with her? What do you mean she's learning about crocodiles?" But she says, "No. These crocodiles have really been hurting me, so I want to figure out what happened in the crocodile's childhood, what kind of scales it has, which breed of crocodile it is, and how many teeth it has, because then I can keep myself safe from the crocodile."

NATALIE: Yeah. This is a perfect analogy. It's just perfect.

SARAH: How many times did you and I do that? I'm raising my hand, not pointing my finger. I have come from the school of hard knocks, I assure you.

NATALIE: Same.

SARAH: But we get so stuck in processing and figuring out everything there is to know about crocodiles rather than building a fabulous life after crocodiles.

NATALIE: Right. So good! You guys must go read that article, because it's good. I posted it on Facebook today. But it's February, and you guys are April people. I'll put the link. You need to go check out that article. Here's the other thing as well. I hear people talking all the time about, "Well, I think I'm married to a narcissist, but I don't really know. How do I know?" I tell people too, "It doesn't matter. Who cares if he's a narcissist, a psychopath, or he's got borderline personality disorder or high functioning autism? It doesn't matter. What matters is what he's doing to you and to your life. He's got his model. He's got his life and his manual. He gets to keep all that. The alligator or crocodile gets to be an alligator or a crocodile. You need to figure out your life for you. What do you want to do? What do you want to live with?"

SARAH: I know people think, "Oh, if I can just figure out what's going on." I think people believe you can go up to someone and say, "Guess what, babe? I just read this article, and it says you're a narcissist. Now we have finally figured it out, and now that you know, you will want to be better."

NATALIE: Yeah. No.

SARAH: I have never, ever, not one time, ever seen that work.

NATALIE: No. Do you know what that does?

SARAH: It's dangerous.

NATALIE: It's like giving a crocodile a sword and saying, "Here. Your teeth aren't enough. Take a sword and run this through me." What they are going to do is take all that language that you just gave them, and they are going to say that you are all those things.

SARAH: Hundred percent. Hundred percent! Again, going back to "Smart Girl Syndrome" — "Okay, there are probably some things I need to work on too. I'll just work harder." Christian counselors are going to do this, right? "You are responsible for you. When you get to heaven, you're responsible for how you handled yourself in the marriage. You're not responsible for their behavior, so you need to work harder on yourself."

NATALIE: Here's the little gram of truth in that, though. They're right. You guys who are listening, if you ever hear someone say that to you, you say, "You are dang right about that. So I am going to take responsibility for me, and I am out of here."

SARAH: Exactly! There is a gram of truth. We need to work on things. But the things we need to work on are not the things we are already comfortable doing, which is being more forgiving, less needy, less angry, and all those things that we already feel comfortable in. It's getting better at the boundary-setting. It's getting better at the walking away. It's getting better at creating a life for yourself.

NATALIE: Right. You can be totally forgiving and totally accepting and totally loving and totally getting out of the relationship. There's not an either/or involved there. But what we all instinctively know is that the biblical counselor is not really, deep down, not really trying to empower you. What they are really trying to do is say, "Get your little butt back into that relationship where you are going to keep being used and abused by someone else, because what matters is not you. What matters is that marriage. We cannot break that marriage up."

SARAH: Yeah, we've made such an idol out of marriage. Such an idol out of marriage. Shame, shame, shame. Anyone listening who has made an idol out of marriage — shame, shame, shame. I want to point out that forgiveness is not the same thing as access.

NATALIE: Yes.

SARAH: That is language you can use. "I am happy to forgive him, but until there is a serious pattern of behavior change for an extended period of time, I am no longer

comfortable giving him access to me.”

NATALIE: Yeah. I love that. Beautiful. Let’s wrap this up. Why don’t you tell us about what you offer on a regular basis called “The Systematic Strategy that High-Achieving Women Use to Find Peace, Love, and Confidence After a Toxic Relationship.” Tell us a bit about that. What does it involve? Is it something that’s always available? Tell us about it.

SARAH: There are two tragedies to toxic relationships. One is the process of being in a toxic relationship and what they do to you. To me, I think the second tragedy is how much bad advice there is on the healing spectrum. You just talked about biblical counselors. But even some traditional therapists... There is an assumption that every therapist is a toxic relationship specialist, or that for every counselor, this is what they specialize in — understanding the dynamics of emotionally abusive relationships. They don’t!

NATALIE: Yeah, you’re right. They don’t.

SARAH: They don’t. Some of the biggest heartbreaks I have seen have come from the inexperienced, the advice of someone who didn’t know what they were talking about, who thought they could speak “truth” in my life. “I’m just here to speak all the truth to you.” No. No, you’re not. You’re here just to be an abuse supporter. So if you want to go to heaven and if you say, “I was a really big supporter of abuse,” have at it. I’m responsible for me, and I am not supporting... That will not be what people say about me. But it’s about creating a healing strategy for yourself.

Also, the other heartbreak is what I see people do, hopscotch healing, where YouTube ends up being their guru. When I say, “What are you doing for your healing strategy?” they say, “I look for the ‘What’s next? You might also like...’ on YouTube or Amazon.” That’s a bad plan. You need a healing strategy. You need to know what problem you are trying to solve and specifically how you are going to solve that problem. What are you doing to self-care? “I’m going hiking.” That’s great. “I’m getting my nails done.” That’s great. There’s nothing wrong with either of those two things. If I say, “What’s going on in your life?” and they say, “My adult children won’t talk to me anymore because my ex turned them against me,” do you really think you’re going to solve that by getting your nails painted?

NATALIE: Right.

SARAH: What I want to see, and what my next book will probably be about, is figuring

out how to match people's healing strategies with their actual problems, because there's a huge disconnect that I see right now. People think the way to solve this problem is to talk about toxic relationships all the time, wrestle with crocodiles, or to study everything there is to know about crocodiles.

NATALIE: Yep. You may know, I have a couple of different programs, and my listeners know all this already so I will not reiterate it. But that's one reason I started the second program, the Flying Higher program, because I felt like people were getting out of their relationships and then just staying stuck — just not moving forward and kind of obsessing a bit about what just happened to them. We could stay there for the rest of our lives, but why?

SARAH: Because (and again, all the love and grace and snuggles and unicorn sprinkles right now) when your life has been... They've trained you for your life to be about them, and then your healing strategy is still about them.

NATALIE: I see how it happens, but it doesn't work.

SARAH: No.

NATALIE: So what do you do, then?

SARAH: I have a coaching program called The Wonderous Woman program. It takes people through three sections. One is to connect with yourself. I believe in strength-based healing and figuring out what's right with you. I'm glad you said that. That's the terminology I use. You'll see it in the freebie I sent. Think about a triangle and having that solid base. First step is connecting with your strengths and connecting with yourself. Second step is figuring out how those strengths can be used against you, such as kindness, loyalty, and forgiveness. That's a piece on becoming toxic person proof. That's two points of the base of the triangle — connecting with yourself and connecting with your strengths. The second point is becoming toxic person proof — protecting yourself. When you create that solid base, then you can move up to the top of the triangle, which is creating yourself.

NATALIE: Nice. I like that!

SARAH: I call it designing a life you are excited about living. Whether people are getting raises or starting new businesses or writing books or whatever — anything other than obsessing over the crocodile or wrestling with the crocodile. Who do you want to be? When you were a little girl, your life goal was not to study narcissism.

NATALIE: Yeah, exactly. Let's talk about "The Systematic Strategy that High-Achieving Women Use to Find Peace, Love, and Confidence After a Toxic Relationship." This is a free thing, and I'll put a link to the free... What is it, exactly?

SARAH: It's a thirty-minute master class where I walk people through that triangle process and debunk some beliefs around insufficient healing strategies. I'll say it that way.

NATALIE: We'll put a link to that in the show notes at flyingfreenow.com/115. I had another question, and then I lost it. I hate that. That should not happen in a podcast interview.

SARAH: Eh, I'll forgive you. I'll forgive you and give you access to me, Natalie.

NATALIE: Awesome! It doesn't make you toxic to forget what your train of thought is.

SARAH: No, it doesn't. I really want to bring back that idea of becoming toxic person proof. I got to a place in my own life and said, "I am not God. I am not God." When I think I must have all the answers or think I can do it on my own or something like that, then I'm acting like I'm God. I'm not. I'm a humble human trying to do the best I can. That is how you become toxic person proof. These people who are talking in your ear and saying, "You're dumb. How did you miss that? I would never have put up with that. I would never have missed that red flag," they are not practicing humility. They are telling themselves lies so they can pretend that they are safe.

NATALIE: Yeah. The other thing is if you've got that kind of chatter going on in your brain, when have any of us been motivated by someone who is walking behind us and telling us all the bad things about us? Does that motivate us to want to go out and live our best life ever? No.

SARAH: That's why I do that strength-based healing. If you have two versions of you running the biggest race of your life — which, if you are trying to re-design your life, that's the biggest race of your life — and there is the devil in your ear saying, "You're dumb. You're stupid. You're broken. How'd you put up with this? How'd you miss that?" Then there is the other version. There is the angel: "Gosh. You were just loyal, weren't you? You were really kind and had that used against you. You really believed the best in people," and that's a good quality. It's just not a good quality in this particular situation.

NATALIE: Yeah. Beautiful. I am so thankful that you were willing to come on here and give us some of your expertise. Go get her book. It's brand new... Well, for the April

people...

SARAH: It will be a couple of months old, yeah.

NATALIE: Again, it's called "Becoming Toxic Person Proof: Clear the Confusion and Learn to Trust Yourself" by Sarah K. Ramsey. You can go visit her website, which is sarahkramsey.com, and find out all the things.

SARAH: Yeah. Sarah K. Ramsey. "Toxic Person Proof." Anything you do with them. I try to keep them both in those two realms of the Google world.

NATALIE: Smart. Thank you so much. For those of you who listened to this episode, thanks for joining us. Until next time, fly free!