

That's A Hard No Podcast Transcript

S2 Mini10: How to Share Insights Learned in Therapy with Friends & Family

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Heather: Welcome to That's a hard no, the podcast about saying no and setting boundaries.

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Sarah: So you can become the authentic and empowered you that this world needs.

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Heather: Before we start, a quick reminder.

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Sarah: While I am a licensed professional clinical counselor, this podcast is in no way a replacement for one on one therapy with a mental health professional. If you notice the content in this podcast trigger some big feelings visit our website: hardenopodcast.com for mental health resources and other helpful links.

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Heather: In season two, if that's a hard no, we're making it a priority to dig deeper into the process of finding and utilizing the help you may need. We want to take the time to discuss with our inhouse expert, Sarah Saunders, what to expect from therapy and all of its intricacies. Sarah, i'm so excited today. You know we've been talking about the process of getting therapy and the different types of therapy and therapists and stuff, but today we're going to talk about how to communicate your new-found insights from therapy with friends and family. These can be helpful in sharing, you know positive pieces of your experience, but it also can help people set boundaries with their family members. So, but there are some dos and don'ts I would suspect.

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Sarah: Absolutely, and one of my favorite things being a therapist and sitting in sessions is when clients have that like breakthrough moment, but that that lightbulb goes off and you can just see just the release that they have, what becomes difficult and feedback that i've gotten and from my own personal experience, is it's like: what do you do with that information? What do you do with some of that new gained insight? And so I want to kind of just talk a little bit about that, because there can definitely be a lot of co existing emotions when that does happen. I've gotten feedback of people feeling relieved and angry, they feel empowered and confused, they feel validated, but also and misunderstood

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Heather: right.

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Sarah: And so now that things make sense to them, now that things make sense to you in your mind and your learning, and and kind of, we use this metaphor a lot in our episodes of like we're driving in that car and we're really wanting to move forward-looking through the windshield. But oftentimes what keeps us from making that progress is constantly looking in the rear-view mirror. Now that we've looked in the rear-view mirror, we've gathered this information, we want to move forward and it's really important to be mindful of our new gained insight. And so now that things make sense to us in our mind, we want to share this

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news with family members or our spouse or our friends, but it can also feel very intimidating, or it can feel insane, and so some things to kind of keep in mind as you're navigating this is that there's many factors to think about regarding the relationship dynamic. So is this someone that you do feel safe with? You feel supported. You can share this. It's not necessarily going to offend them or create more discord, and we also have to remember to be gentle with our delivery when we're sharing some of these new things. And the biggest thing for me is that this is our experience and if it has brought healing and clarity to you, that's what's most important. I don't want anyone to ever feel as though they have to defend or justify or explain this new gained insight, but more to just be at peace with it. In earlier episodes we had talked about approaching loved ones about their concerns and encouraging them to seek therapy. So some of those guidelines kind of apply the same way if we want to share some of our moments with people being sensitive, you know, to the time and place again, being mindful of the current state of mind that that person's in the circumstances or season that they're in. I want to emphasize this again, that some people might not agree or feel the same way about what we had just discovered in our own work, and so we want to make sure that we don't put ourselves in a position where we're going to feel invalidated or dismissed, for that experience is going to be minimized because.

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Heather: I've witnessed this. When someone shares their insight, the other person might get defensive or like you're packing them because you know there's something having to do with your relationship or your your history or the way you guys grew up, or whatever it is. You have to be kind of careful because you don't want your new-found insight minimize the other person and then cause them to attack you back and, like it, just like feeds.

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Sarah: That dynamic right 100% and this is also something that you can roleplay or talk to your therapist about that. If you did have an experience like this and if there is a certain person that you really want to release this information, you can talk about different ways to do that. You can go back to our website and we have a lot of resources on communication and so, using those statements, things like that, one of the things that I cannot stress enough is letter-writing this will forever be one of my most shared interventions, as there's a lot of research surrounding it. Some research states that letter-writing or journaling are intended to extend the work of their beyond session by continuing the meaning making that occurs with a therapist. There's also research that suggests, and many of my clients hear me say this over and over and over again: you have to write it out to get it out. So writing is extremely therapeutic and can relieve anxiety. The actual motion of putting pen on paper provides clarity and peace and it's a really great release. It can also help you prioritize problems, fears and concerns and express what you can't verbally say. There's a lot of reflection that happens when you're writing and it's really bringing that subconscious to conscious. And lastly, research also shares the importance that letter-writing can do for closure and so kind of bringing all of this together. Use writing as a way to write to loved ones that may have wronged you, or maybe you could have wronged them and you want to

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apologize to them. Maybe you really want to hear an apology from that person, and so if you did learn or have this moment or this new gain insight, write it out right through that person and, like I had said, maybe you want to talk to someone, but that's just not possible. Maybe they're no longer in your life or that's not a safe relationship. I encourage you to write to yourself from that person. So, for example, maybe you really needed to hear something from your ma and so you could start the letter with your name on the top. So I'll use you heather, like your heather, and act as though your mom is writing to you, telling you what it is that you feel you would want her response to be, as you're sharing our new gained insight. Does that make sense? Yeah, it's it's it's.

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Heather: Were all playing, but on paper? Right, yeah, interesting!

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Sarah: And so I just want to close with. If you are seeking therapy and this breakthrough or a moment or that light bad moment has happened. I'm really proud of you. I'm proud of you for taking the steps to do the work and better yourself through personal growth and healing, and it's not easy. It's not easy to do things and remember that your experience is yours. You don't have to defend, justify or explain yourself to anyone, hold on to that new gained insight and share it if you feel comfortable and, if not, I encourage you to do some of that letter-writing as an outlet and a way to support.

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Heather: Or yourself, through this process. Fantastic advice, I love it. Thank Sarah, you're welcome and our next mine. So we're going to talk about the expectation of privacy and confidentiality in the.

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Sarah: That'll be a good one.

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Heather: Talk to you next time, guys. Thank you for listening.